

dollars available annually for road construction, maintenance and reconstruction.

To the credit of Maryland, it can be said that ours was the first State in the Union to build a system of hard surfaced roads in accordance with a pre-conceived plan. Such an undertaking gave the State a position of eminence. It was in June of 1909, just thirty years ago that the first contract for a State road was awarded. By 1915 Maryland had 909 miles of new roads and it had taken into the State system additional roads increasing the State mileage to 1,304 miles. As of September 30th, there were included in the maintenance of the State Roads system approximately 13,200 miles of roads.

Considered from another angle, it can be understood why there has been the astonishing development of a road program. Just thirty years ago when the State system got under way Maryland had only 4,500 licensed motor vehicles. In 1915 it had 29,000. Now 419,000 licensed motor vehicles, commercial and private, are recorded or an increase of 1,300% in fifteen years.

It is no wonder, therefore, that roads constructed for transportation as known a decade and a half ago are now crowded and hazardous. The primary purpose in referring to the development of the past is to enable us to profit by the experience in order that our State shall not lag behind in the further increase and fulfillment of a program for roads and bridges. The development and economical construction of a complete and comprehensive system of roads embodying all possible safety precautions for the motorists and the pedestrian constitutes a major problem in State, County and City governments today.

Maryland blazed the trail for all States of the Nation but as is the usual characteristic of the pioneer, there was not the vision for a pre-conceived plan to meet the inordinate traffic demands of the future. The road builders of thirty years ago had not the slightest comprehension of the growth of automotive transportation that was to come.

It may be expected that on such an occasion as this with the consummation of a great plan evidencing the vision and determination of our officials and citizens that we should give voice to it as being a plan for the future. Through the cooperation of the United States Bureau of Public Roads, the State Roads Commission of Maryland had organized a highway planning survey and already there is under way in our State extensive studies along three general lines; namely: First, TRAFFIC (concentrating upon basic information as to the volume and intensity of present day use as a forecast of future utilization); Secondly, INVENTORY (to comprise a complete check up on the physical condition of every road in the State); and Thirdly, FINANCIAL (to scrutinize all provisions dealing with road revenues and to make workable the outlays for the future.)

This notable event, representing as it does such a remarkable advance not only for Washington County, but for the entire State should spur us all to even greater combined effort. There exists a nation-wide interest in Maryland roads.

While our highways are essential to the well being of the people of this State, they are also of importance to traffic passing through Maryland and originating particularly in the thickly populated Atlantic Coast States, all the way from New England on the North, through Baltimore and Washington to Florida on the South. It is reliably stated that 72% of the population of the