

If we are sensitive and charitable and possess a sense of responsibility, we ask ourselves the question: What can we do to change all this?

Well, for one thing we can refuse to become callous to these events, as much as we may be inclined to do so by the sheer repetitiousness of them. For another, we can give serious thought and study to the problem, just as all of you have done here at this two-day conference. And finally, we can make an effort to translate into action the conclusions we have reached from such thought and study.

So many solutions have been offered that it seems a little surprising that today the problem of traffic accidents remains unsolved. There are, it seems, as many suggested cures for this social ill as there are persons who have thought about it. So many remedies have been suggested, in fact, that it becomes difficult for us to choose between them.

In formulating a program of traffic safety, this Administration has elected to proceed with caution, weighing carefully all the solutions that are offered but adopting them as a part of our plan of action only if it appears they will be effective. We have begun with a modest program, but it is a program that will be effective, in my belief, if it is properly administered and is strengthened and expanded as the need arises.

With all the proposed new legislation that was laid before it, the General Assembly this year focused its attention mainly on two bills—one setting up the point system for driver's licenses and the other establishing chemical tests for persons charged with drunken driving. We think that both laws will assist us in reducing highway accidents, although it is too early to make an assessment of their true value. Because of the problem of administration, the effective date of the point system was postponed until 1961. Our police agencies are just now getting set up to administer the chemical tests in drunken-driving cases.

Other legislation is being given careful study by a special committee of the Legislative Council. Proposals before this committee, I understand, include driving instruction in our high schools, annual inspection of motor vehicles, periodic renewal of driver's licenses and many other safety measures. I have no advance knowledge of what this committee expects to recommend, but I can assure you that its proposals will be given the most careful consideration by me and by the General Assembly when it convenes next February.

But this Administration will not rely entirely on new laws and new systems in its undertaking to make our highways safer for travel. There are among us those who believe that we already have enough laws on our statute books, if they are properly administered, to accomplish our