

And then the report went on to explain:

“Alcohol was a contributing factor in five of the deaths; speed in eight; driver error in eleven. In four of these accidents, in which six persons were killed, we note that the single car involved ran off the road and struck a fixed object. In all of these four accidents, alcohol and/or speed were involved.”

We ask ourselves the question: Can't we, as enlightened and civilized people, find the measure or the means to halt this useless carnage? Why do men, with all the knowledge and all the resources they possess, tolerate this self-destruction?

I regret—I deeply regret—that I can provide you with no satisfactory answer to these questions. It is not flattering to us as a people that no satisfactory answer has yet been devised. Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of the situation is that we have not given up hope. Not knowing exactly how it is to be done, we still hopefully try to find a solution to our problem.

Gravely concerned by the problem, about a week ago I issued a series of orders and directives which I hope may be effective in the curtailment of death-dealing highway accidents. I instructed the Superintendent of the State Police to use to the fullest extent his arm of law enforcement to arrest and prosecute every speeding motorist, every drunken driver, every reckless operator of a motor vehicle.

I was pleased to see that Colonel Jarman, in his report to the people this week, said: “This is exactly what we intend to do.”

I directed the Chairman-Director of the State Roads Commission to make a survey of highway signs to make sure that all motorists are properly alerted to potential hazards and stipulated speed limits. And may I say, parenthetically, that I think that modern highways such as we have been constructing so rapidly in Maryland are among the most effective of traffic safety measures.

I know that a mere passage of laws is no guarantee of the removal of an evil. But I asked the Legislative Council to review carefully and conscientiously all the motor vehicle laws of our State to see if they contain gaps and deficiencies which if corrected would improve traffic safety and provide a more effective law enforcement. I asked the State Board of Education to impress upon local school boards the paramount importance of the driver-training programs which we have authorized. Undoubtedly there is no greater menace than a driver who does not know how to operate a car, or does not care how he operates it.