PLANNING A STATE WARTIME TRAFFIC PROGRAM

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In the late summer of 1940 concentrations of traffic in unusual places made it necessary for many state traffic departments to add to their normal duties and to face some entirely new problems. The construction of war industry plants on a scale never encountered before was accompanied by congestion on adjacent highways and rapidly rising accident rates. Roadside development of parking facilities, trailer camps, restaurants, bulging population in small towns, all demanded regulation and control.

The magnitude of the situation increased rapidly throughout the spring and summer of 1941, and national organizations began to formulate plans for assisting and guiding local groups in solving the growing number of problems. In October of that year the Institute of Traffic Engineers put forward a program for the guidance of its members in planning their work in both rural and urban areas. It was apparent by that time that the major problem to be faced would soon be transportation rather than traffic, and that, while accident prevention was a conspicuous need, the orderly and convenient movement of traffic had to receive first attention, as necessary movement of men and materials depended on it and safety could not be achieved without it.

The condition was acute when we entered the war on December 7, 1941. Immediately thereafter orders were issued from Washington to conserve cars and tires, and soon it was realized that existing transportation units were all that could be counted on for some years.

Traffic volumes soon began to decrease, and transportation became a universal problem requiring some action by every man and woman in the country. Real, long-range planning was then undertaken in earnest. All data that had been gathered anywhere were studied and the best elements found were combined and molded into a concrete program.

PROGRAM OF CO-ORDINATION

Official agencies, federal, state, and local, were set up to co-ordinate and carry on the work. In Indiana, a group known as the State Technical Advisory Group was created, consisting of representatives of the Traffic Department of the State Highway Commission, the Division of Public Safety, and the Public Service Commission, to assist and direct the work of city communities in putting the program into effect. A great deal of work was done and much good accomplished during the summer of 1942. Early last fall, twenty-five major organizations.
consisting of universities, the national labor groups, and associations representing every activity of the national life, put forward a complete program covering every phase of the work. It was endorsed by the President and government authorities, including Joseph B. Eastman, W. M. Jeffers, Thomas H. MacDonald, Leon Henderson, Donald M. Nelson, and Major General Charles P. Gross, Chief, Transportation Corps, U. S. Army.

The Institute of Traffic Engineers was one of the endorsers, and an immediate distribution of a booklet setting out the program was made by that and other organizations. The booklet was published by the Automotive Safety Foundation. The planning was done by engineers and laymen all over the country. The program itself is as follows:

I. Objectives:
   2. Conservation of man-hours and man-power through accident prevention.
   3. Most efficient use of roads and vehicles for essential transportation.

II. Method of Achievement:
   1. Official agencies—federal, state, and local—to co-ordinate and carry out the entire program, each maintaining sufficient personnel to discharge its vital responsibility.
   2. Co-operation of non-governmental organizations to mobilize public participation and support.

III. Recommendations:
   1. Legislative Action—
      a. Create, finance, and define authority of state traffic co-ordinating body.
      b. Enact such provisions of a uniform vehicle code and such supplementary regulations as are necessary to meet emergency conditions.
      c. Eliminate arbitrary barriers to war traffic at state lines.
      d. Create, by statute, authority for use of chemical tests for intoxication.
      e. Appropriate adequate funds for police, highway, motor vehicle, and other essential war traffic agencies.
   2. Motor Vehicle Administration—
      a. Collect and analyze accident records to uncover emergency traffic disruptions and make the data available to proper officials for action.
b. Step up suspension and revocation of licenses of bad-record drivers to conserve war man-power.
c. Use driver examinations and re-examinations to meet war traffic needs.
d. Maintain bus and truck inventories for military and other emergency uses.
e. Inspect tires and vehicles to insure maximum use.

3. Police Control—
   a. Adopt traffic law enforcement to meet special needs of military and war-production areas.
b. Secure observance of rubber-emergency speed limit.
c. Prevent vehicle overloading, to conserve tires, vehicles, and highways.
d. Meet enforcement needs of blackout, dimout, and other war hazards.
   e. Develop co-operation of police and courts with military authorities on traffic violations by military personnel.
f. Co-operate in emergency law-enforcement program with prosecutors, judges, and driver-license departments.

4. Engineering—
   a. Designate preferred and alternate routes to facilitate essential traffic.
b. Adapt signs, signals, and markings to war-traffic needs.
c. Construct essential access roads.
d. Make minor construction improvements to increase efficiency and safety of war-traffic roads.
e. Maintain essential thoroughfares.
f. Conduct surveys and prepare detailed plans for staggered working, shopping, and school hours.
g. Increase mass transportation efficiency, through rerouting, rescheduling, fewer stops, elimination of duplicate services.

5. Public Participation—
   a. Eliminate non-essential vehicle use.
b. Stagger working, shopping, and school hours to reduce peak-hour congestion on highways and public carriers.
c. Share cars, revise shopping habits, and adjust commercial-vehicle operations to conserve tires, vehicles, and fuel.
d. Improve vehicle and tire maintenance.
e. Improve driving habits for conservation and safety.
f. Walk more and walk safely.
g. Reduce driving speeds for conservation. Observe rubber-emergency speed limit.

h. Enlist children’s co-operation in wartime traffic program.

6. Training—
   a. Train army, school bus, truck and bus, and emergency vehicle drivers to meet war-traffic conditions.
   b. Train high-school drivers for future military and essential civilian needs.
   c. Train regular and replacement, auxiliary, and military police in traffic control.
   d. Train other essential war-traffic personnel.

Many of these items are difficult of accomplishment, especially the maintenance of sufficient personnel by state and local agencies to discharge fully their vital responsibilities. Successful execution of the program requires continued planning to secure the vital co-operation of non-governmental agencies to mobilize public participation and support. Publicity through all available channels is necessary, for without it, many elements of the program cannot be carried out. Intelligent planning of this publicity is a prerequisite to success.

GROUP-RIDING PROGRAMS

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Why, many impatiently ask, do we Americans have to double-up or quadruple-up with others in our own private cars? America has over 27,000,000 automobiles. Is that not enough for all? Why gas rationing? Why tire rationing?

Our reply to all such questions must be that our country is at war—not just a little border skirmish, but a gigantic war for our very existence as a free nation as we have been from the beginning—and this war must be won by our armed forces on land, at sea, and in the air.

You hear the word “logistics” used more now than during the first World War. Logistics is that science which treats of moving, or supplying, armies and conducting campaigns. The words “moving” and “supplying” tell the whole story—and we do this moving on RUBBER.

In 1918, the year of the ending of the first World War, the U. S. A. had 6,146,817 registered automobiles and trucks. Today we have this number increased by five-fold. Almost every ounce of war material from source to battle line at some time rides on rubber tires.