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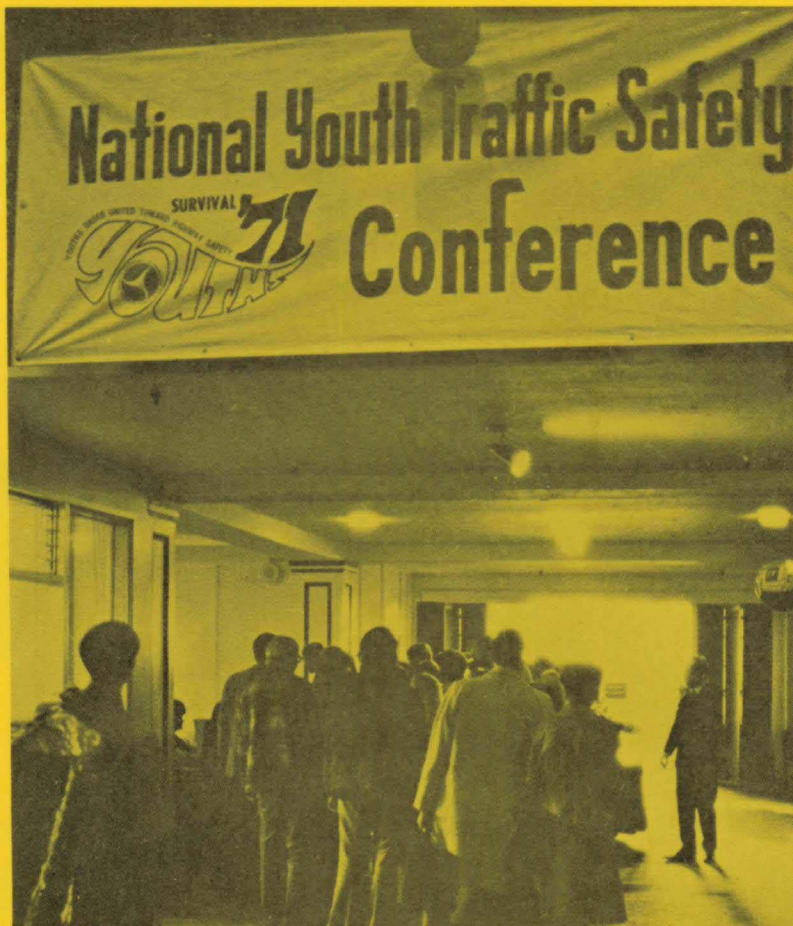
*Youth Highway Traffic Safety Conference,
Oakland, Calif., 1971.*

Report by the
**YOUTHS Highway Safety
Advisory Committee
On Survival '71.**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

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**Oct. 5-11, 1971
Oakland, California**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

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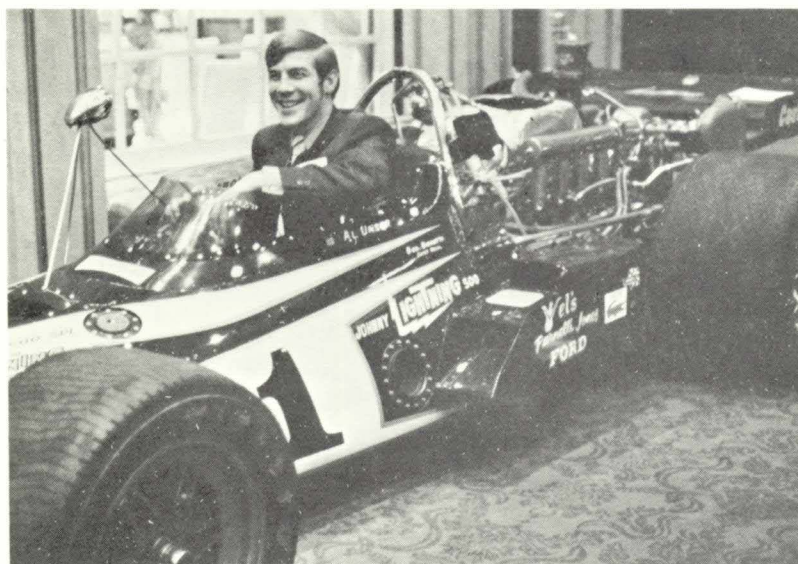
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FOREWORD

Of all the problems and dangers faced by the young people of our Nation, no other threat surpasses our endangerment on the highways and nothing claims more young lives than the automobile. Time has come for young people to face up to a problem which really is our own ... our disproportionate involvement in highway crashes which not only take a tremendous toll in death and injury from our age group, but which affect the lives of older citizens as well.

Recognizing our involvement in the problem and the great potential in our energy and creative thinking, Secretary of Transportation John Volpe Has created a means by which we may now contribute to the solution. In early 1971, YOUTHS (Youth Order United Toward Highway Safety) Highway Safety Advisory Committee was formally created and fifteen young people were sworn into the role as the first membership of this action and advisory body. In the brief months of our existence, great time and thought has been devoted towards our initial plans for tackling this highway menace. One of our first significant projects was the planning and execution of a national highway safety conference, "SURVIVAL '71". Out of this national gathering came the type of youthful input and enthusiasm needed to pave the road for our future efforts.

It is gratifying to see our progress in setting up a YOUTH Order which will serve as an informal nationwide communications network. Furthermore, since YOUTHS is now becoming widely recognized by both public and private organizations and agencies as a viable means to a youthful solution, the Committee looks forward to even greater impact.



I hope the contents of this report will serve to both initiate your thinking and to inspire your involvement. If we are to turn around the direction of this youthful problem, concerted energy, thinking and participation by you and other leaders is going to be essential.

LET'S GET ON WITH THE JOB!

Gary Swan, Chairman
YOUTHS Advisory Committee

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"SURVIVAL '71"

The first National Youth Traffic Safety Conference, "SURVIVAL '71", brought together over 120 young people from every part of the country to explore the nation's highway transportation system as it relates to youth. The conference, planned and sponsored by the YOUTHS Highway Safety Advisory Committee, focused on four main areas: Communicating the problem, "Getting it Together"; crash survivability, "How to Crash"; Alcohol, drugs, and driving, "Rolling Stoned"; and Driver education, "How Do You Rate". Each of these areas was covered in a workshop of the same name, and are reviewed by the topic chairman in each area inside. A review of the total conference is reported by one of the delegates. Pictures were provided by the Allstate Insurance Company.



Dr. Hartman, far right, chats with Hal Parris of the NHTSA, and Susan Huskisson, a YOUTHS Committee member, and a youth delegate.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS: "YOUTH AND HIGHWAY SAFETY: ANSWERS BLOWIN' IN THE WIND?" BY Dr. Charles H. Hartman, Deputy Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, U. S. Department of Transportation.

".... Each one of us, to varying degrees, has learned to accept losses on our highways without question. We typically use the term "accident" denoting a fatalistic attitude toward the situation. We seldom look at crashes as the result of failures--failures which are capable of being corrected....

"These problems have been almost blithely accepted as the "price of progress." Only quite recently has this nation, and particularly you, its youth, realized not only the immensity of the problems of ecology, but more importantly that we need not pay for progress with a polluted environment.... Perhaps, the biggest problem you face is how to communicate to your own generation the fact that there is a highway risk problem, and that there are solutions to that problem....

"We are not here to assess blame, but rather to develop a working relationship with your generation. We hope you'll find the ways and means to get your peers involved in this effort, and to develop specific and effective ways to deal with the problem....

"Perhaps the most important thing which each of you can take away from this conference is an appreciation, a true belief, in the tremendous risk which faces you when you drive an automobile. For it is only through a realization and understanding of risk that you and your peers will be sufficiently motivated to declare this violent problem to be an intolerable situation that must be changed....

"Once this declaration is made, we know you'll take action--both in terms of driving performance itself and the environment in which you drive. This we have seen in the environmental issues as well as the Vietnam War. Youth, has, in fact, put its collective feet down on those issues, and I sincerely hope that youth will do the same for the tragedy of youthful deaths and injuries suffered, unnecessarily, on the highways of America. We in the U. S. Department of Transportation, as well as the thousands of others at the State and local levels of government, pledge our enthusiastic support of meaningful youth involvement in highway safety."

I. "Getting It Together" by Susan Huskisson

In this workshop the delegates dealt with means to utilize the content from the other three workshop areas. The purpose centered on communication and organization. With the assistance of the resource people: Charles Jenkins (Grey Advertising Company), Marshall Antonio, (Allstate Insurance Company), and Daniel Fulmer, (NHTSA), delegates explored various ways to increase youth's awareness of the risk involved while driving and how to channel this awareness into effective program activities in areas suggested by the other workshops.

"RESOLVE, that youth, nationwide, must be made aware of the magnitude of the tragedy of highway deaths afflicting their group and must be motivated by us, the aforesaid members, and others to act to alliviate and end that tragedy...."

Towards this purpose, resolutions were adopted that established the delegates as embassaries and initiators of local and statewide programs to form a national network of youth safety groups, those in existence as well as those to formed; with the YOUTHS Highway Safety Advisory Committee "...organizing this work and...disseminating to our membership those specific ideas which have been raised at our convention."



Charles Jenkins, resource person from Grey Advertising Company, and Patrice Yager, YOUTHS Committee member, talk with delegates in "Getting It Together".

The workshop strongly adhered to the use of mass communications, particularly that of radio and television, in making young people more aware of hazards on the highway and for soliciting their involvement in the safety movement.

"To this end, let a theme for our movement and appropriate symbols be devised and let appropriate media contacts be made with our fellow youth."

The delegates also adopted a resolution that recommends to the President and Congress that Highway Safety be a top priority issue in the national mind, and that significant additional funds be made available to support the highway safety effort.

"Getting It Together" provided a means for the other workshops to initiate their programs, and stressed the extreme importance of organization and communication in carrying out these programs.

* * * * *

II. "How To Crash" by Michael Banta

The "How To Crash" workshop dealt with the problems of crash survivability. While driver error certainly plays a role in the occurrence of an accident, very little thought has been given to eliminating injuries and deaths in spite of it. The question that arises is: "Which can be more easily changed, driver behavior or the driving environment (vehicle and roadway)?" The emphasis in this workshop was on the latter.

To insure that all the delegates had, at least, a basic understanding of the ideas discussed in this workshop a film containing clips of airbags in action, vehicle modifications, roadside hazards and other environmental factors was prepared by the YOUTHS Committee and shown to the delegates in this workshop.

Since very little emphasis has been placed on crash survivability in the past, and it is now becoming an area of high priority, it was essential that the resource people for this workshop have a thorough knowledge and deep involvement with the highway and traffic safety problem. One such resource person was Mr. Lowell Dodge, the Director of the Center for Auto Safety in Washington, D.C. His presentation discussed the various different priorities which those in highway and traffic safety work could establish. It was pointed out that the modification of the vehicle is considered to be the area of concentration which will drastically reduce death and injuries in automobile accidents. A second resource person was Mr. Albert E tep, a highway engineer from the California

Division of Highways. His presentation demonstrated the changes possible in design of roads, such as; the placement of signs, types of guardrails, and bridge railings. By changing the manner of constructing such equipment they do not present the inherent danger in accident situations as most do now. In addition Miss Connie Backhouse from the Canadian Council of Young Drivers (CCYD), lent her experience with roadside boobytraps programs to the discussion in the workshop.



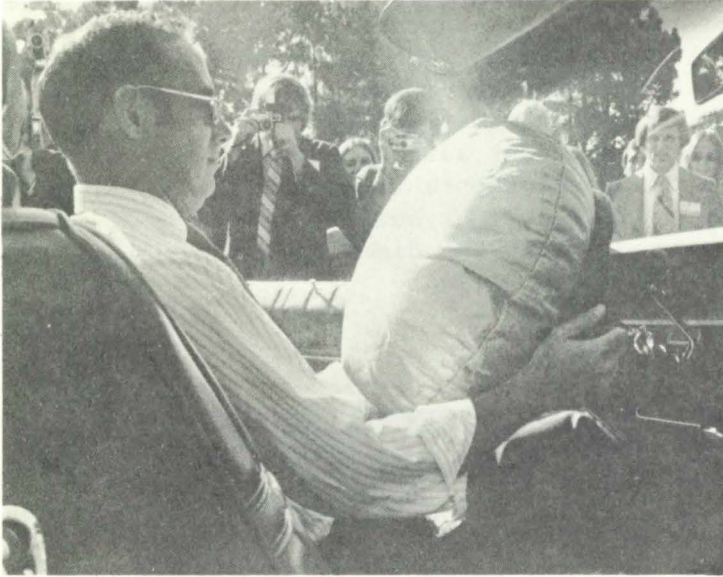
Lowell Dodge, Center for Auto Safety, discusses "How To Crash" workshop with delegates.



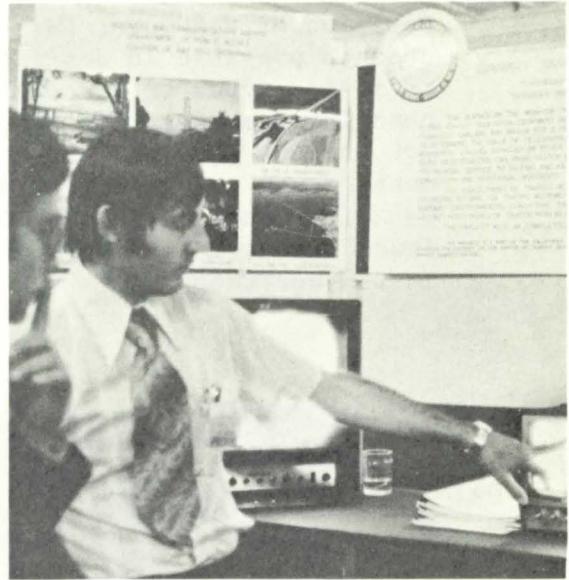
James Foley, FHWA, Al Estep, California Division of Highways, and Connie Backhouse, CCYD, listen to presentation.

One of the objectives of this workshop was to give the delegates a better understanding of the possibilities for safer traffic environments. This was the main purpose of the previously mentioned film. The presentation of demonstrations and exhibits was also for this purpose. A live demonstration of the activation of an airbag was performed by the Rocket Research Corporation. The exhibits consisted of a Department of Transportation display of an improperly designed roadway, a Television set up illustrating the principle of traffic safety improvement through TV surveillance. This exhibit was set up and manned by people from the Bay Bridge Authority. A crash analysis team from Stanford University displayed a car which had been

involved in a serious accident. Their explanation of their research found many receptive minds.

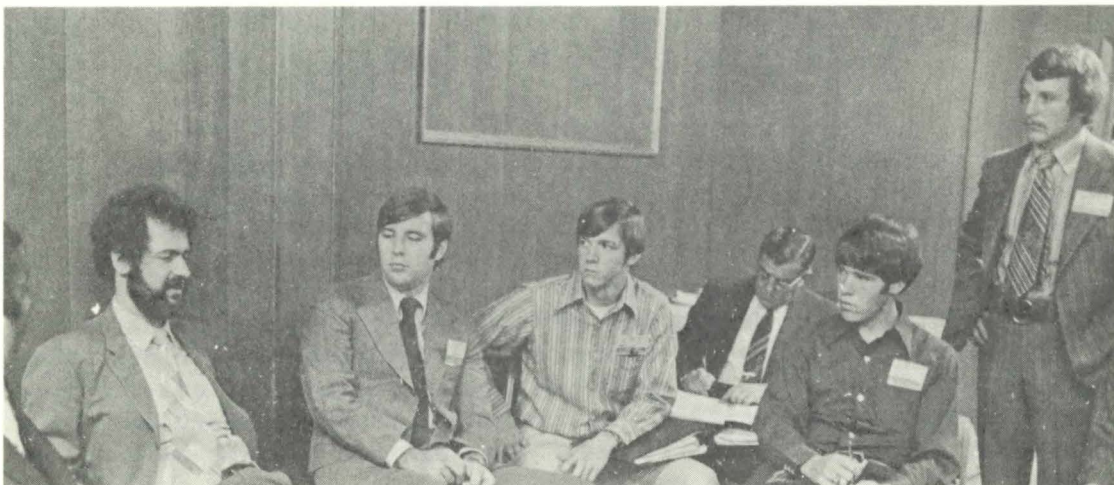


Live demonstration of the airbag, passive restraint, by Rocket Research Corporation.



TV surveillance exhibit by the Bay Bridge Authority.

One of the greatest concerns of the YOUTHS Committee was delegate participation in discussions. There was no disappointment in this regard. Three Resolutions were developed and passed by the delegates. The first was an expression of support for the crash survivability standards which the Department of Transportation presently requires. The delegates censured the Department for postponing the requirements for passive occupant restraints (air bags). The second Resolution called for ensuring accuracy of information in advertisements by the automobile manufacturers. The third Resolution stated, "Local youth action committees set up the necessary channels to generate interest and action on the part of youths to eliminate hazardous roadside booby-traps."



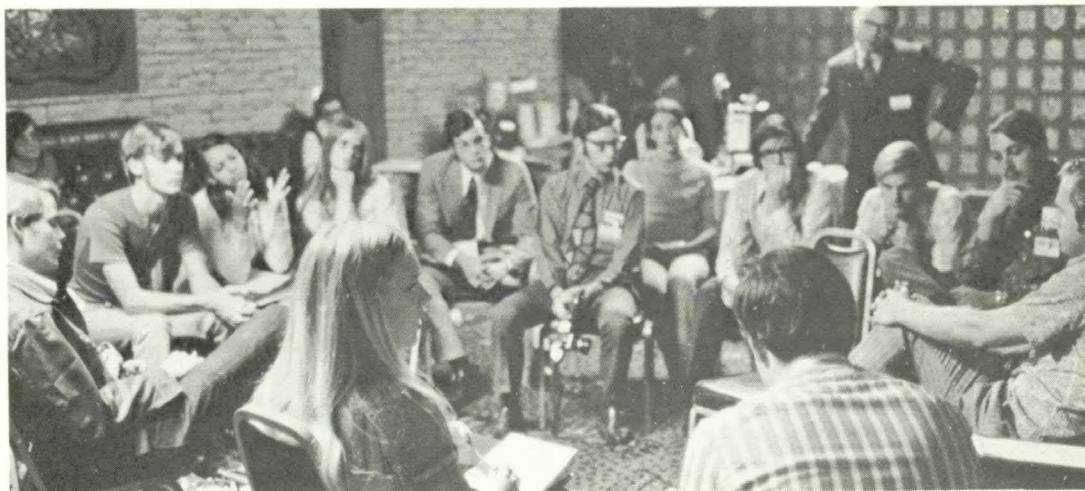
III. "Rolling Stoned" by Paul Sullivan

"Buckle your seat belts everyone!" Phillip said happily to the four other young people in the car. They were off for a picnic in the mountains on a beautiful Sunday in March. Phillip was known to his friends as an especially safe driver, so his passengers weren't worried, but they weren't aware of George S.. At 4 p.m. that Sunday, after being told he had had too much to drink, George got into his car and drove away. At 4:05 p.m. the car full of young people came driving through the one way underpass, but half way to the other side, a car loomed up coming straight for them, there was no where to turn. At 4:10 p.m. they pulled the burned bodies of Phillip, 25 years old, and his four passengers, ages 22, 24, 21, and 4, from the bent little car. George S., with only a cut on his chin, had killed five people--on a Sunday afternoon, in March, after having drank too much.

It is estimated that in addition to Phillip and his four passengers, some 25,000 to 35,000 Americans die each year in alcohol-related accidents.

30,000 American lives per year is a formidable number. And what is particularly tragic is the fact that while many of the victims are drinking drivers themselves, countless others are innocent bystanders, women and children, whose only crime was to venture onto a highway being used at the time by a problem drinker or late night party goer.

American youth have dedicated themselves to ending wars, cleaning the environment, and eradicating poverty. But, despite the enormity of the drinking driver problem, and the relatively great possibility that they or their families may be killed or maimed by a drinking driver, young people have done little to



In "Rolling Stoned" workshop, delegates discuss the problems of alcohol, drugs, and driving; Dr. Voas looks on.

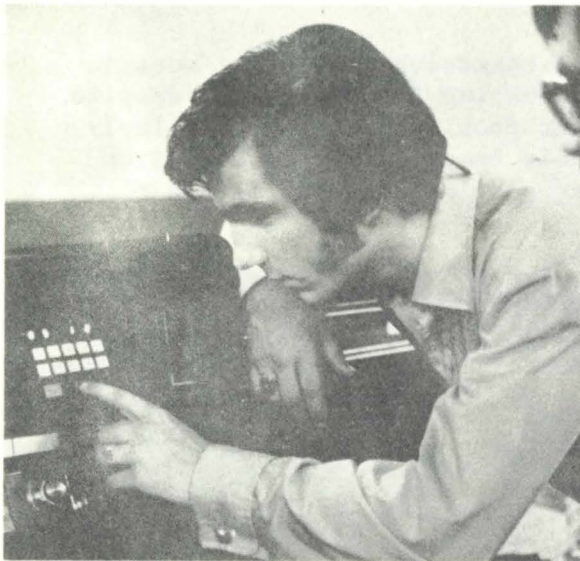
help themselves or their fellow man to stay alive while driving.

Through the efforts of Dr. Robert Voas and Dr. James Nichols of the Department's Office of Alcohol Countermeasures, delegates to "SURVIVAL '71" were made keenly aware that the greatest single threat to their lives, and the lives of all teenagers and young adults is the automobile, and that alcohol played a predominant role in at least 50% of all fatal highway crashes.

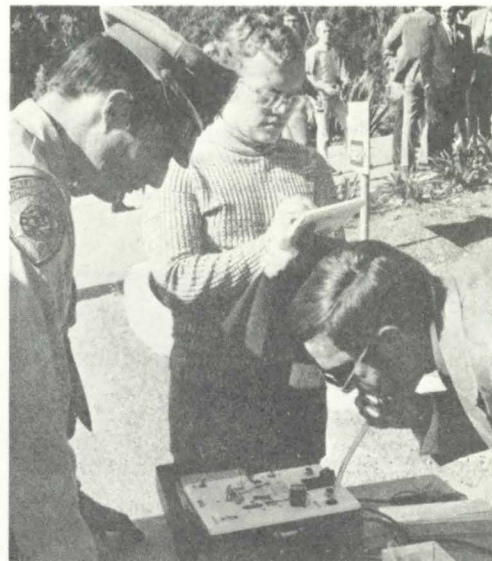
The delegates were clearly impressed. Before leaving the conference, they committed themselves to saving lives on our highways and adopted several resolutions aimed at the problem of drinking drivers.

The adopted resolutions included recommendations that 18 b made the legal drinking age throughout the nation; that inexpensive ballon bmeath testers be made readily available to the general public; and, that up-to-date, factual material on the effects of alcohol and drugs be realistically presented in classrooms, mass media, and included in licensing examinations.

Further resolutions dealt with proposed action programs by the delegates in the areas of the drunk-driver interlock system, the .10% Blood Alcohol Concentration as the legal point at which a driver can be arrested for driving while intoxicated, and the establishing of drunk patrols by delegates local enforcement agencies.



Delegates were given the opportunity to test a device designed to prevent drunk drivers from starting their cars.

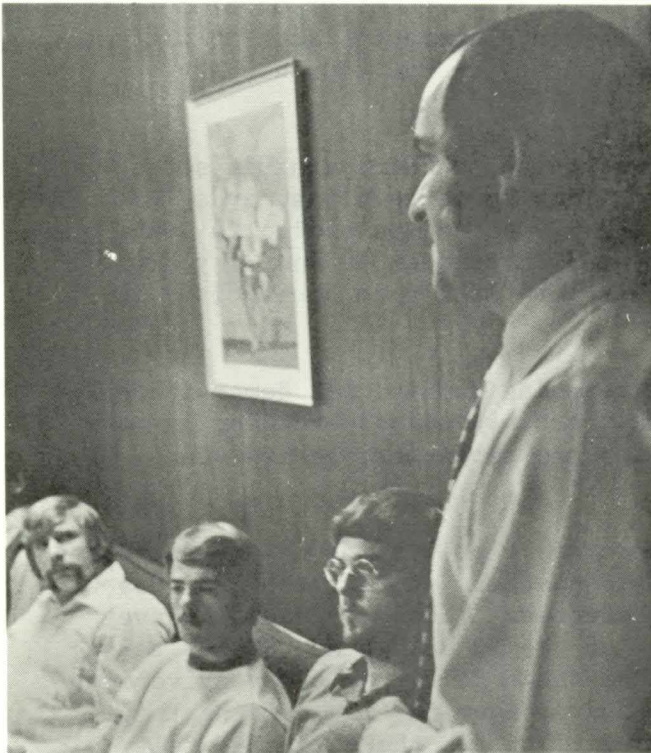


Delegates observed first hand the effects of alcohol on the driving abilities of fellow delegates partially impaired by alcohol.

IV. "How Do You Rate?" by Phyllis Swearengen

The "How Do You Rate" workshop dealt with the controversial issue of driver education. The major area of controversy is over its effectiveness. There has not been any conclusive research in either direction, and thus there are those that believe that since there is no proof that driver education is a positive factor in reducing highway deaths and fatalities, that it is a waste of time. Luckily, there are also those who believe that although there is no firm evidence, it is just common sense that a well educated driver would be more likely to identify accident situations and either prevent them or avoid them.

However, the mere fact that driver education is a controversial issue indicates that it is not as effective as it could be. Thus, to delve further into the potential of driver education, we were fortunate to have three experts in the field--Mr. Robert Bondurant, Mr. Fraser Smithson and Dr. Robert Ulrich.



Mr. Bondurant with delegates in the "How Do You Rate?" session.

Mr. Bondurant is a former racing driver who has developed a school for high performance driving. It is located at the Ontario Speedway in Ontario, California. He spoke about some of his school's objectives and showed slides of some of the exercises he puts his students through; such as, the accident simulator, the oval, the skid pan and controlled braking.

Mr. Fraser Smithson heads a research team in driver education at the General Motors Proving Grounds in Milford, Michigan. He and his team have developed an improved driver education pro-

gram which includes skid practice, training on how to handle blow-outs, off the shoulder recoveries, controlled braking, and an accident simulator.

Dr. Ulrich is director of the Safety Center at Central Missouri State College. His program is taught at several local high schools.

They have extended classroom training, training on simulators, behind the wheel experience on an elaborate driving range where they can even practice getting on and off an expressway.

These men believe and demonstrated at the conference that driver education can indeed be effective.

To show us what young people themselves are capable of doing, Paul Hadfield of the Canadian Council of Young Drivers related his experiences this summer when he helped plan and implement a driver education curriculum.

We also had several exhibits which included some specific problem areas that could and should be included in a driver education course. Mr. Roxy Rockwood, a former policeman, gave a demonstration of techniques used in training motorcycle drivers. He pointed out that the majority of motorcycle accidents involve people who have been riding less than six months. Ignorance seems to be a major factor in cycle accidents. Novice riders often neglect to learn how to safely operate the bike. One major problem is that the throttle, clutch and brake are in different places on different bikes; thus, the brake may turn out to be the clutch when you need to stop quickly.

Another area of interest was the auto theft exhibit set up by Allstate's Marshall Antonio. This is certainly an area that affects young people since of the 121,400 autos stolen in 1970, an estimated 79% were stolen by people between 10 and 21 years of age. These cars are 200 times more likely to be involved in crashes.

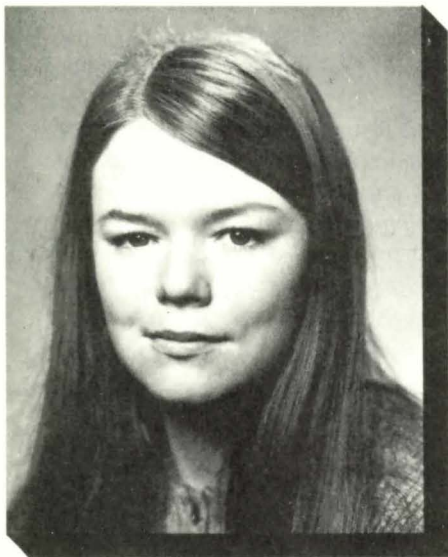
The Air Force multi-media teaching machine was demonstrated by Sergeant Walter Bradley. This exhibit was an exercise in concentration -- slides, movie clips and tapes were interwoven throughout the lesson.

Before the conference, there was a polling of delegates to see what their ideas were on driver education. Out of the 122 questionnaires sent out, 93 were returned. This very casual survey had many interesting results -- of the 93 delegates, 80 had taken driver education. Exactly 50% of those felt that their driver education course had adequately prepared them for the driving they did and 50% felt that it did not. 100% of the delegates felt that driver education should be aimed at preparing drivers for actual situations which drivers are likely to encounter. Some of the suggestions made on how to improve driver education courses were: More behind-the-wheel training, experience in emergency procedures, driving under hazardous conditions and in a variety of automobiles, more emphasis on risk appreciation, safety consciousness, occupant protection and safety equipment in the auto and a more knowledgeable, concerned instructor.

Karen Yengich is a press representative in the public relations department at Aetna Life & Casualty.

A graduate of Utah State University, Mrs. Yengich was editor of the student newspaper. She was a prizewinning reporter-writer for the Deseret News in Salt Lake City, Utah, before moving East. Since joining Aetna in 1970, she has worked closely with the company's driver education staff in publicizing their driver education and driver licensing programs.

Karen Yengich



Knowing that highway fatalities for our age group are the highest in the nation, 125 sixteen to twenty-four year olds, of which I was one, convened in Oakland, California, to do something about it.

The conclusion of the first YOUTHS National Highway Safety Conference, appropriately titled Survival '71, was outrage—outrage at the slaughter of young people on our nation's highways.

Soon every city, town, and state will see the embryonic stages of youth groups organizing "to stop the slaughter of young people at the hands of those who take young lives with inadequate educational systems, with poorly built cars, and poorly designed and maintained highways."

Armed with up-to-date traffic statistics and a plan of action, we will be knocking on our state governors' doors pressing for support of more positive and aggressive highway safety programs.

This national network of youth groups will be guided and directed by YOUTHS (Youth Order United Toward Highway Safety) National Highway Safety Advisory Council in Washington, D.C.

YOUTHS was formed in January 1971 by Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe in an effort to harness the energy of the nation's young people in a national crusade for increased highway safety. At that time 15 members were appointed to the YOUTHS National Highway Safety Advisory Council. This "think tank" explored highway problems ranging from the role of alcohol in fatalities to poorly designed highways and automobiles.

Realizing the importance of the knowledge they had obtained, the YOUTHS Advisory Council decided all young people needed to be involved. The Council believed they could generate the same impetus toward alleviating highway problems that zealous mobilizations against other social problems had aroused.

In Oakland, the idea for a youth highway safety movement became reality. The conference delegates adopted strong resolutions and recommendations for highway safety. These resolutions were passed after much discussion on crash survival, alcohol and drugs, driver education, and a youth national organization.

Crash Survival

One of the first resolutions the delegates adopted was to censure the Department of Transportation for postponing requirement of airbags as a passive restraint system.

We were convinced that seatbelts have now been proven ineffective and that the auto industry is capable of producing passive restraints immediately and at a reasonable cost.

It was also resolved to pressure the auto industry to discontinue its misleading advertising about airbags, to encourage the Department of Transportation to provide more information about them, and to recommend to the Federal Trade Commission that it require substantiation of all public statements regarding passive restraint systems.

These crash survival resolutions clearly are a slap in the face for both DOT and the auto industry. And there were many delegates who felt they should have been stronger.

Alcohol and Drugs

In the area of alcohol and drugs, a comprehensive program was launched. By far the most potentially far-ranging recommendation adopted was one that would lower the drinking age to 18 in all states.

The delegates agreed that present drinking laws encourage them to combine drinking and driving. An 18-year old drinking age would stop 18-20 year olds from driving long distances to obtain alcohol in states with lower drinking ages and from drinking in motor vehicles because they aren't allowed to drink elsewhere.

Realizing that alcohol is a social problem, the delegates devoted much of their discussion to "giving up the keys" to dates and friends who were sober and able to drive safely.

It was further agreed that driver education courses should inform students of the effects of alcohol and drugs on the human body and in relation to driver performance. It was also felt that driver licensing examinations should include questions about the effects of alcohol and drugs.

The group recommended that driver rehabilitation clinics and driver reeducation schools be made an in-

tegral part of the legal system. Instead of punitive fines, the group reasoned, let's help the convicted driver realize drinking-driving dangers.

Because the laws differ in many states, cities, and counties, the group charged the Office of Alcohol Countermeasures of the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration to undertake a detailed study of penalties for driving while intoxicated. The study would evaluate the overall effect of laws in reducing the incidence of drunk driving, eliminate ineffective or unreasonable penal provisions, and establish model criteria for penalties for first, second, and third offenses.

There was much interest in General Motors' Alcohol Safety Interlock System. The interlock system is a built-in dashboard device containing numbered buttons and a screen. Numbers flash automatically as soon as the driver's door closes. He must memorize the sequence and push the appropriate buttons for the system to clear. After he has done this three times, he can start his car.

For incentive reasons, the group decided to explore the possibility of insurance rate reductions when a driver convicted of drunk driving voluntarily agrees to install an interlock system, and of giving him the option to install the interlock system as an alternative to a fine or jail sentence.

Survival '71 also moved to win public and legislative support for setting the national definition of intoxication at .10 % blood alcohol.

It was further moved that backing be sought for the requirement of quantitative tests for alcohol and other drugs in bodies of all crash victims in order to obtain more precise data relating drugs to fatalities.

One of the conference's specific "action programs" urges all delegates to press governors' highway safety representatives and local law enforcement agencies to establish special "drunk patrols" at times and in areas where there is a high probability that intoxicated drivers are on the road.

The suggestion grew out of the most unique activity we participated in: a Police Drunk Patrol Ride-Along sponsored by the California Highway Patrol. We were invited to observe the patrol on the job, and see them

pick up drinking drivers, stop speeding violators, aid stranded motorists, and investigate accidents.

I rode with two officers on the Nimitz Freeway, one of the main highways in the Bay area. The officers told me their experience in picking up drunken drivers pretty much exonerated youthful drinkers. Most of the drivers they stop are males in their late 30s and 40s who have already been convicted of drunken driving, they said.

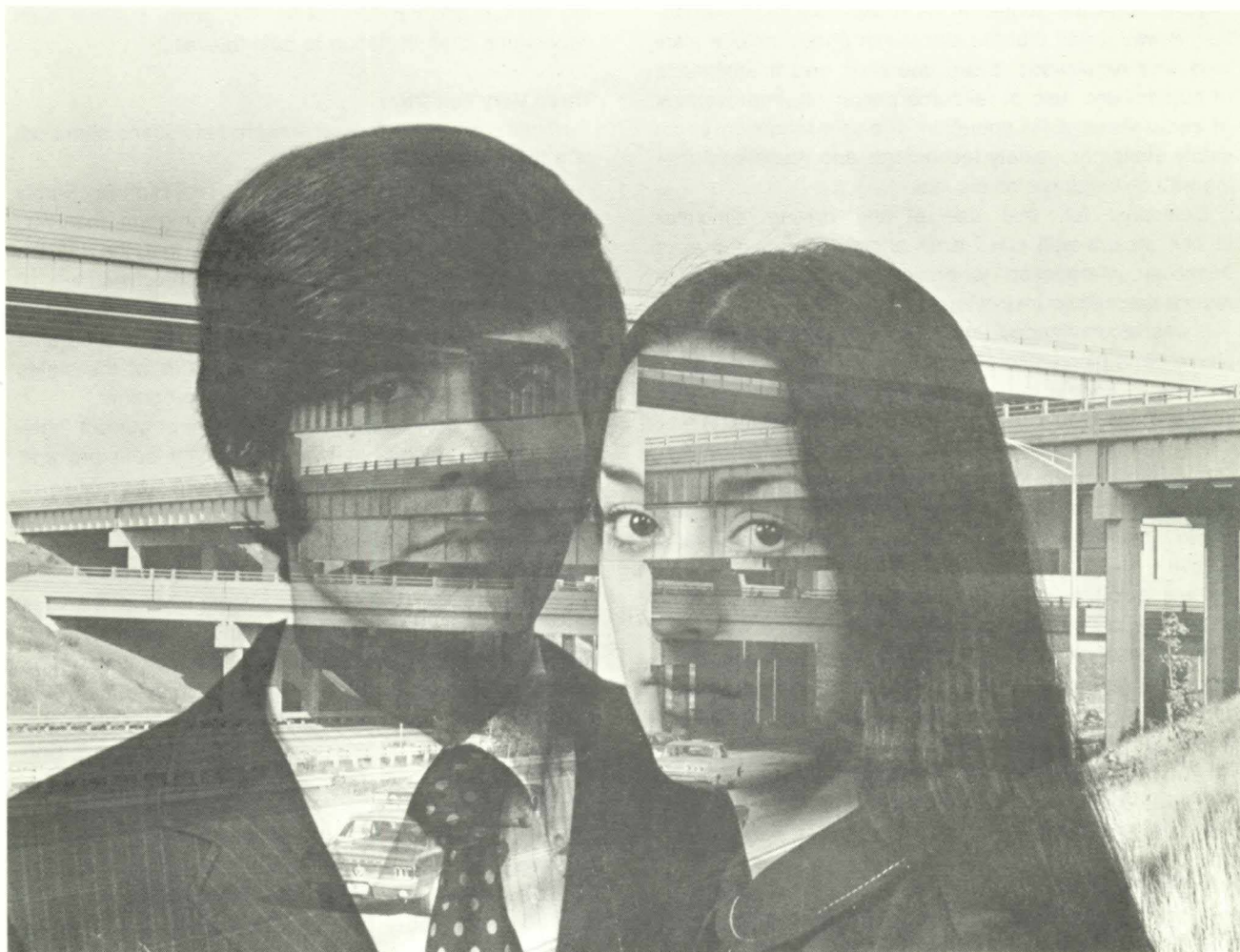
These alert highway patrolmen know that when a driver is going slowly and weaving in and out of traffic lanes, it's likely he's been drinking. Once they have stopped the driver and talked to him, they may give him a Field

Sobriety Test. The driver may find himself walking a straight line, reciting his ABCs, and touching his nose with his finger. In extreme cases, he may be asked to submit to a chemical test.

Driver Education

The third area of major concern was driver education. There was universal agreement that instructor qualifications must be upgraded.

In order to improve instruction, the group recommended that colleges and universities offer a greater quantity and better quality of safety education curricula,



more extensive training, periodic reevaluation of driver educators, and more thorough study of state traffic laws.

It was also recommended that regional meetings of instructors be held to correlate resources, that an instructor be required to maintain an excellent driving record, and that minimal certification requisites be raised.

To enlarge the scope of the driver education curriculum, it was urged that the classroom phase include state laws and regulations, basic operation and maintenance of automobiles, use of resource personnel, improvement of audio-visual aids, operation of and information about safety equipment, safety technology, and drugs and driving with an emphasis on alcohol.

Delegates felt that use of the driving simulator in conjunction with class work should be retained as a beneficial introduction to driving and as a means to reduce the load on instructors.

It was recommended that a two-part behind-the-wheel phase be implemented. The first phase should consist of learning to handle the car under normal conditions. The novice driver would then receive a driving permit.

The second phase should include skid control, blow-out control, panic stop, throttle control, and related driving skills needed in emergency driving. After the second phase, the young driver could qualify for a driver's license.

It was also urged that driver education courses become mandatory in the school system (K-12).

Because of the flaws in the present driver education program, delegates pressed for more difficult, comprehensive state driver license testing and mandatory re-testing. It was felt that this would upgrade driver education by concentrating less on passing driver's license exams and more on handling driving emergencies and hazardous situations.

Auto Thefts

In addition there was much concern about rising auto thefts. A stolen car is 200 times more likely to be involved in a highway traffic accident than any other car.

Because young people are more involved in auto thefts than any other age group, it was suggested that

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1. *Sergeant McDonald divides the conference delegates who will take part in the evening Drunk Patrol Ride-Along sponsored by the California Highway Patrol.*
 2. *A static demonstration of airbag protection was presented by the Rocket Research Corporation of Redmond, Washington. Fully inflated, it covers only the steering wheel. The auto industry's airbag would cover a much larger area.*
 3. *This crumpled car—the result of a fiery accident— was exhibited by the Stanford University Crash Analysis Team at the Youth National Highway Safety Conference.*
-

the states with the highest rates of theft—California, New York, Illinois and Ohio—be contacted by organized safety groups to run pilot youth-oriented public information programs to counteract the problem.

It was also recommended that a massive campaign be waged to urge automobile owners not to leave keys in the ignition and cars unlocked. The group felt that such negligence is an invitation to auto thieves.

Three Very Full Days

How did so many comprehensive resolutions come out of a three-day conference?

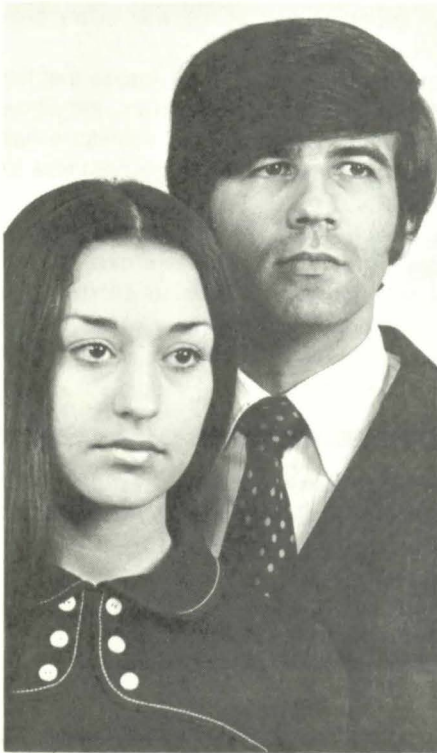
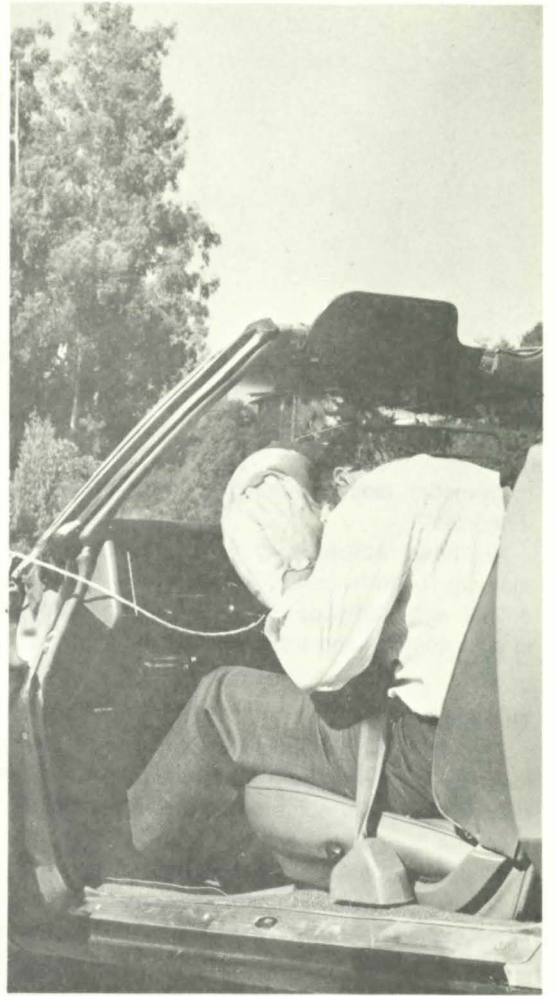
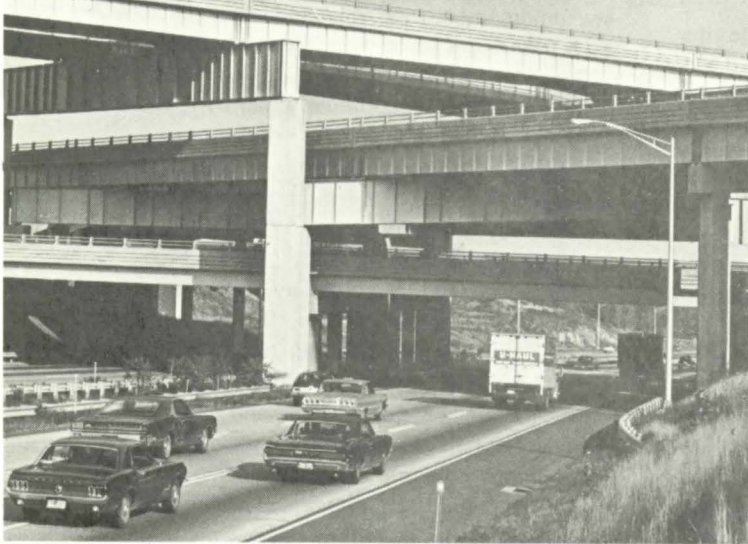
Much of the credit goes to the YOUTHS Highway Safety Advisory Council. They prepared a program that was organized and relevant—and one that put the burden of achieving results on the delegates themselves.

Some of the delegates had already been exposed to highway safety problems and were involved in programs in their cities and states. About one-third of the states represented have youth highway safety programs.

In order to provide us with knowledge of current highway safety problems, material presenting both pro and con views of the major topics of concern was mailed to the delegates prior to the conference.

The presence and contribution of highway safety professionals provided the delegates with on-the-spot authoritative information. The resource people include: Marshall Antonio, Allstate Insurance Company; Charles Jenkins, Grey Advertising; Daniel Fulmer, Consumer Information and Public Affairs, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA); A. C. Estep, California Division of Highways; Lowell Dodge, Center for Auto Safety; Bob Michaud, SCORE (Student Competition on Relevant Engineering), Urban Vehicle Design Competition; Dr. Robert Voas and Dr. James Nichols, Office of Alcohol Countermeasures, NHTSA; Bob Bondurant, Bondurant Driving School; Fraser Smithson, General Motors Proving Ground; and Robert Ulrich, Safety Center, Central Missouri State University.

Exhibits on the airbag passive restraint system, motorcycle training, safer highways, alcohol safety interlock system, drunk driving, auto theft, and the driver education



multi-media teaching machine were presented to the delegates.

All these factors—organization, advance resource material, highway safety professionals, exhibits, racing drivers, and the Police Drunk Ride-Along Patrol—resulted in a meaningful and productive conference.

The Verdict

The future of a national youth highway safety movement is unsettled. There are some who will scoff at the notion. There are some who think it started as a good idea, but Survival '71 will sink into San Francisco Bay.

While there is always some basis for pessimism, there is also basis to predict that these beginnings of a national youth highway safety movement will mushroom.

The impetus for mushrooming was described by Charles H. Hartman, Deputy Administrator, NHTSA, in his remarks to delegates at the beginning of the conference:

"Perhaps the most important thing that each of you can take away from this conference is an appreciation of, a true belief in, the tremendous risk that faces you when you drive an automobile. For it is only through a realization and understanding of risk that you and your peers will be sufficiently motivated to declare this violent problem to be an intolerable situation that must be changed."

The delegates were obviously aware of the "violent problem." The resolutions adopted at Survival '71 are their basis for solving it. A plan of action was outlined to force a change in the "intolerable situation."

Next Steps

First, Survival '71 delegates charged the YOUTHS Advisory Council with the task of supporting and encouraging YOUTHS' efforts in the post-conference phase.

The YOUTHS Council will be responsible for disseminating specific ideas and proposals for highway safety programs. They will also be responsible for aiding representatives in every state in organizing youth highway safety groups on the local and state levels.

The Council will also begin developing a theme and

symbol for the movement. They will publish a monthly newsletter for all delegates informing them of actions on national, state, and local levels.

Secondly, the delegates have designated themselves as the designers and executors of highway safety programs in their states. Their plan of action involves making their generation aware of the great risk involved in driving. They will then enlist interested members of their peer group to begin a program.

Every delegate will contact state authorities and will attempt to utilize the existing educational, highway safety, law enforcement, and private institutions in every state as a framework for a highway safety movement.

Some of us doubted that anyone would listen. Gary Swan, YOUTHS conference chairman, didn't doubt it at all.

"We've expanded to a force of 150. In the post conference phase, this will give us more leverage in pushing for highway safety programs. YOUTHS now can play a stronger role, especially in the political area," he said.

Obviously, federal highway authorities know what YOUTHS is all about. Many at the state and local levels do not; and they must be our target. Youth involvement in highway safety programs will depend to a large extent on the recognition, cooperation, and patience of state and local authorities. Hopefully, they will view this involvement as a serious concern for increased highway safety.

Only state and local authorities can give youth highway safety groups the push they need. Only they can include the groups as an important part of highway safety programs in their cities and states.

But we who attended Survival '71 also realize that the real burden of safety lies with every driver. We know there must be sweeping changes in our society to halt the indifference that allows unquestioning acceptance of losses on our highways.

There was so much feeling and genuine concern among the delegates that their enthusiasm must spread to others. It has to happen. Only through effort on the part of the entire U.S. population can there be safer highways. We graduates of Survival '71 will not be denied our part in making it happen. □

If you're interested in finding out what Youth Order United Toward Highway Safety can do in your state and what you can do to help, contact :

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