

NOTES FOR GOVERNOR EDWARDS  
SILAS PEARMAN RETIREMENT DINNER  
FRIDAY, JUNE 25, 1976

SILAS PEARMAN HAS BEEN A FORCE OF CONTINUITY OF THE GROWTH OF OUR STATE'S HIGHWAY SYSTEM. HE HAS SERVED EITHER AS STATE HIGHWAY ENGINEER OR AS CHIEF HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER UNDER EIGHT GOVERNORS.

HE BECAME STATE HIGHWAY ENGINEER IN 1947, UNDER GOVERNOR STROM THURMOND. AND DURING GOVERNOR HOLLINGS' TERM, HE WAS APPOINTED CHIEF HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER.

AS GOVERNOR, I HAVE GAINED A GREAT APPRECIATION OF MR. PEARMAN'S DISTINGUISHED CAREER AND THE PROGRESS HE HAS BROUGHT TO OUR STATE.

ALTHOUGH HE IS RELUCTANT TO TAKE ALL THE CREDIT FOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HIS CAREER...HE OFTEN SAYS HE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE, THE LEGISLATURE, THE HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER, AND THE GOVERNORS OF THIS STATE.

SILAS PEARMAN HAS PROVIDED THE LEADERSHIP NEEDED TO TAKE  
OUR HIGHWAY SYSTEM INTO THE MODERN WORLD OF TRANSPORTATION.

SOUTH CAROLINA HAS BENEFITED GREATLY FOR EVERY  
DOLLAR THAT HAS BEEN INVESTED IN OUR GREAT SYSTEM OF HIGHWAYS.  
THE 680 MILES OF INTERSTATES THAT STRETCH ACROSS OUR STATE  
HAVE OPENED NEW AVENUES TO TOURISM AND TRANSPORTATION  
INDUSTRIES AS WELL AS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

TODAY, WE ALMOST TAKE OUR SUPERIOR HIGHWAY SYSTEM  
FOR GRANTED. BUT WE MUST REALIZE THAT WITHOUT THIS SYSTEM,  
THE ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF RECENT DECADES WOULD NOT HAVE  
BEEN POSSIBLE.

IN ADDITION, MR. PEARMAN'S ADMINISTRATION BROUGHT  
ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FARM TO MARKET ROAD SYSTEM  
BEGUN IN THE 1950's. THIS PROGRAM HAS BEEN OF BENEFIT TO OUR  
AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY AS WELL AS DRAWING NEW INDUSTRY.

WHEN SILAS PEARMAN BECAME STATE HIGHWAY ENGINEER  
IN 1947, THE HIGHWAY DEATH TOLL IN OUR STATE WAS 12.1 PERSONS  
PER HUNDRED MILLION MILES OF TRAVEL. LAST YEAR, THAT DEATH  
RATE WAS REDUCED TO 4.0...THE LOWEST IN THE STATE'S HISTORY.  
THIS FACT IS A TRIBUTE TO THE ROLE THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT HAS  
PLAYED IN PROMOTING HIGHWAY SAFETY.

MR. PEARMAN'S LONG CAREER IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE  
KIND OF LEADERSHIP THAT HAS GIVEN OUR STATE SO MUCH PROGRESS.  
HIS LEADERSHIP CAN SERVE AS AN EXAMPLE TO OTHERS IN THE YEARS  
TO COME. WE OWE HIM A GREAT DEBT OF GRATITUDE. I AM PLEASED  
TO BE A PART OF THIS EVENT...AND TO PAY TRIBUTE TO MR. SI.