

Dr. John A. "Jack" Deacon, Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Kentucky, has been teaching at UK since 1957. He has worked as senior research advisor for the Transportation Research Board (on Special Assignment), Associate Director of Research at the Transportation Center, and research engineer at the Kentucky Department of Highways.

Dr. Deacon earned BS and MS degrees in civil engineering at UK and a doctorate from the University of California at Berkeley.



GENERAL SESSION
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Dr. John A. Deacon, Professor
Civil Engineering Department
University of Kentucky

TRANSPORTATION OF THE FUTURE AND THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION

It is a pleasure to be with you at this the 29th Annual Kentucky Transportation Forum. We have been sharing the celebration of 200 years of transportation in Kentucky and this has made for a very, very unique Forum. I don't think there has ever been one like it before and I hope you have enjoyed it. One thing we can say for certain is that none of us will be around for the 400th. We will hope there is a 400th—we hope there is a promising future for transportation and for the Commonwealth.

I would like to take just a few moments to reflect upon the last time that I had the opportunity to talk to many of you at a transportation forum, which was three years ago. The topic to which I had been assigned was IVHS, Intelligent Vehicle Highway Systems. At that time, IVHS in the United States was really only very vaguely understood. There was no national agenda for IVHS and there was not even a consensus about whether or not we should have a national agenda. My purpose, I felt, was to describe as best I could the new technology and its potential, and to identify the efforts that were underway to develop and to exploit that technology. I was quite concerned that many in the audience (and myself as well) might really not know how to respond to the changes that seemed to be on the verge of happening in our highway systems at

that time. I closed my remarks by issuing a challenge to the audience which I would like to share with you one more time.

There were several aspects of this challenge. First, stay well informed, keep up with what's going on. Second, support, to the best that we can, regional and national initiatives in the technology arena. Third, seek opportunities for local demonstrations of technology. Fourth, support private sector initiatives to the maximum possible extent. (That's an area where we still really haven't learned what to do and how to do it, but it has very important potential for the future.)

Next, implement current technology. There certainly is a feeling that there's more technology there than we are able—or willing—to use effectively. Demand optimal performance from that technology. And finally, exploit the new kinds of information that both current and future technology offer for us as engineers.

I think these would be good challenges again today. Perhaps they weren't ambitious enough, but I want to point out that each of us has a challenge, and I want to challenge you somewhat further today. The high-tech future is, in fact, much closer at hand today than it was three years ago. Nevertheless, we still face enormous obstacles to its implementation. There's much that remains to be done, and we need to marshal all the help that we can. I challenge you to personally seek and discover new ways in which you and your coworkers may take the lead as we move rapidly toward the pressing challenges and promising technologies of the new century. That's my new challenge, listen well, try to seek out in your own mind activities that you can support, and advance the technology to the common good. ■