

S.C. drivers won't increase their speeds after national speed limits abolished

Associated Press
COLUMBIA — Though states will get a green light to lift national speed limits, top South Carolina highway officials say there are no plans to let drivers here step hard on their accelerators anytime soon.
 President Clinton signed the bill eliminating the federal 55 mph speed limit on Tuesday, a White House spokesman said.

While some states, particularly in the West and the South, already have laws to immediately raise speed limits once the federal measure becomes law, South Carolina only plans to study the matter, Buck Limehouse, chairman of the state Transportation Commission, said Tuesday.
 "Safety should be proven in any adjustments to the speed limit. I'm in favor of looking at realistic speeds," Limehouse said.

"I really don't expect to see unlimited speeds, like they have in Europe on the Autobahn, but I think we could expect 5 or 10 miles faster," Limehouse said.
 South Carolina already allows 65 mph speeds on interstates, except in urban areas.
 Critics of the change say the 55-mph limit saved lives after it became law in 1974 as an energy-saving measure. Highway fatalities declined by nearly 9,000

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 Transportation Commission

the following year. States later were permitted to set a 65-mph limit on rural interstates.
 On some roads, particularly rural

areas, higher interstate speeds would make sense, Limehouse said.
 "Let's be honest. On the interstate, particularly, they drive over the posted speed limits," he said. Raising the limits but enforcing those limits more strictly would balance out, he said.
 "But if you just raise the speed limits 10 miles an hour and everybody drives faster, then we'll have more accidents," he said.
 No legislation is pending to change

the speed limit. The Legislature must approve any change because state law now sets statewide speed limits at 55 mph, except on federal highways where higher speeds are allowed, said Rick Werts, who directs the Transportation Department's traffic engineering division.
 The federal speed limit would be repealed 10 days after Clinton signs the bill.

CRIME continued from page 1
 icycle and \$200 for the interior.

Monday, November 20
Assault (Verbal), Douglas. Victim reported that suspect threatened bodily harm over money due the suspect from the victim.

Malicious Injury to Personal Property, S-18 Lot. Victim reported that unknown persons broke out the rear passenger-side window. Estimated Loss: \$150.

Retired general says success in Bosnia uncertain

Associated Press
CHARLESTON — Retired Army Gen. William Westmoreland, who commanded U.S. troops in Vietnam, said Tuesday it is unclear whether American troops can help forge a lasting peace in war-torn Bosnia.

"We certainly are capable of being a go-between between the religious and ethnic factions that have faced off militarily and I'm sure we can keep the peace," he said. "Whether that will be a lasting success is another matter."

President Clinton has proposed sending 20,000 troops to the former Yugoslavia. Westmoreland, who lives in Charleston, said the deployment will stretch the army's capabilities in Europe as a member of NATO.

"We are not a European nation but we are a European power," he said. "It was now carried over to our getting involved in a geographically remote part of Europe which is very diverse, ethnically and religiously."

Westmoreland does not equate Bosnia to another Vietnam. Unlike Vietnam, where America aided an ally, in Bosnia, Americans would be peace keepers in an area of warring ethnic and religious factions, the retired general said.

However, Westmoreland said, "If we are able to pull them (troops) out after a year it would be somewhat of a surprise."

Westmoreland said there could be morale problems among volunteer troops, many of whom live with their families in Germany, if they are deployed for months to the mountains of Bosnia.

"It's going to be a difficult situation for the Army to cope with," he said. "Whether our efforts will be successful is a question mark in my mind."

Westmoreland recalled how he once was invited to Yugoslavia to review troops with Field Marshal Josip Tito, the Yugoslavian leader who died in 1980.

"His troops were from different ethnic and religious factions. But his discipline and control were of such magnitude, he kept things under control and developed an esprit de corps," Westmoreland said.

When Tito died there was nobody strong enough to keep the nation together and Yugoslavia fell back into a decades-old cycle of ethnic and religious fighting, Westmoreland said.



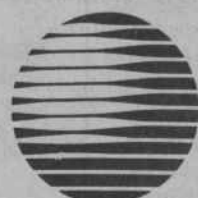
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