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REMARKS BY ALAN S. BOYD, UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR TRANSPORTATION PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BEFORE THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION CONVENTION IN THE RITZ CARLTON HOTEL, MONTREAL, CANADA, AT 2 P.M., MONDAY, AUGUST 8, 1966

This great Canadian City of Montreal is an ideal setting in which to discuss mass transportation, high speed trains and the future challenges of transportation in general.

Like many of our American metropolitan hubs, Montreal is a center of international trade with all modern means of transport linking her to the rest of the world.

But her streets are clogged with time-wasting traffic jams just like ours, and she is expanding her urban freeways at a frantic pace in an effort to catch up.

A new subway, the Metro, will open next spring in time for Expo '67, and this will help thousands of her citizens to get to work on time with a little less effort, perhaps. It will also be helpful to the tourists who flock here for the expositions.

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But by the time the freeways and subways are built, the problems will still be there. For example, you will still have the problem of trying to find a place to park.

Sound familiar? It should, for all of our great American cities are in the same boat.

Generally speaking, we don't even know yet what the problem is. We can't figure out whether it's an urban transportation problem. Or an urban problem, period. I suspect that as we keep trying to get a handle on it, we will find that it is a little of both with all the other problems of living in a city thrown in to boot.

We do have a wonderful opportunity to tackle this monster in the United States, however.

As President Johnson has reminded us, our Nation's urban population will double by the end of this century. This means we will have to build and re-build at a pace to match everything we've accomplished since the country was first founded.

In other words, we now have a chance to do some things right, to profit from our past mistakes, and take advantage of some of the new planning tools -- systems analysis, for example, -- which are now available to us.

This, I am sure, is what President Johnson had in mind when he called upon the Congress to create a Department of Transportation in the Federal Government -- to give some overall guidance to this project, to get the government organized to help our states and local communities and private industry to take on this big assignment.

There is nothing new and startling about the Federal Government taking such an interest in the country's overall transport problems. It has been a traditional approach since the framers of the constitution drafted the interstate commerce clause.

From the early days of the Nation, the Federal Government has worked in partnership with the States and local communities and private business to unite distant regions of the country with transportation facilities.

Back in 1803 when President Thomas Jefferson signed the Louisiana Purchase and doubled the size of the Nation in one stroke of the pen, he declared that only by effective transportation could the western territories be made an integral part of the country.

President Jefferson's Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin, put it a little more forcefully. He said:

"No other single operation, within the power of government, can more effectually tend to strengthen and perpetuate that union which secures external independence, domestic peace and internal liberty."

Jefferson and his Secretary of the Treasury were talking about roads and canals. Our transportation system, or systems, have become much more complex as we edge into the space age. But the Nation has heeded the wisdom of the founding fathers, and has played a central and vital role in developing our transport. It has been deeply involved, the prime mover in fact, in:

- The construction of locks, dams and channels on our rivers and inland waterways.
- The development of a vast road network of highways which, with the automotive vehicle, account for more than 90 per cent of the country's personal travel.
- The construction and operation of airports and airways.
- The development of ports and harbors.
- Direct financial support to our merchant marine.
- Grants of eminent domain authority.
- Grants of public land to assist in the building of our railroads, and
- More recently, capital equipment grants and demonstration projects for mass transit.

The lesson from history is clear. As new transportation problems have arisen, the Federal Government has generally been involved in their solutions.

From this has grown a working partnership between private industry and government that is one of the marvels of our democratic society. It is a partnership unmatched anywhere else in the world, and if there is a consensus on any issue in this country, there is a consensus on this one: Everyone agrees we should "keep it that way."

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This is the idea behind the President's proposed Department of Transportation -- to strengthen that working partnership "with all the means that creative federalism can provide."

"We must coordinate the executive functions of our transportation agencies in a single and coherent instrument of government," President Johnson asserted in his Message on Transportation to the Congress last March 2nd, "Thus policy guidance and support for each means of transportation will strengthen the national economy as a whole."

The Federal Government now supports or regulates every form of transport we have. Thus, as the population explosion brings its demographic upheavals, we can expect the National government to become more and more involved in the transportation problems of our cities.

Nearly three fourths of our people now live in urban areas. By the turn of the century this figure will be closer to 90 per cent. It will be a major task to provide adequate transportation during this time, and this will undoubtedly be a major assignment of the proposed Department of Transportation -- to help guide and develop and promote consistent intermodal transportation programs and policies to meet that challenge of mobility.

We are accustomed to thinking in terms of progress when we think of the development of transportation through the years. In spite of advancing technology, there are many areas not characterized by progress. For example, today it actually takes longer to travel from downtown Washington to downtown New York than it did in 1950. The aircraft fly faster now, of course, but other en route delays eat up the time. Air traffic congestion is greater, causing long holding periods. Terminals are overloaded with people and perhaps the biggest delay is the trip to and from the airport and the downtown area in traffic-clogged streets.

The problem of urban transportation is becoming more and more acute. In spite of vast outlays for urban freeways, we have not been able to reduce significantly the average commuting time for workers going to and from the city center. And we have befouled the air we breathe with fumes, making life in our cities less pleasant and accelerating the rush to the suburbs.

There is also the problem of the megalopolis. As our cities expand outward they are tending to grow together at the edges. This trend is most apparent along the Eastern Seaboard of the United States in the area stretching north from Washington to Boston -- the so-called Northeast Corridor. There can be no doubt, however, that the same problems are building in many

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other areas of our country. The evolution of the megalopolis has tended to blur the traditional distinctions between urban transportation and intercity transportation. In a very real sense we are now trying to transport people from one downtown area to another downtown area of a single enormous urban region.

The results we have so far achieved have not been spectacular. If anything, the problems have grown more acute, even though we have not been sparing of money.

There is no simple solution to this difficult, persistent problem, but there are a number of areas where we can make progress.

The Federal Government must continue and expand its leadership in transportation. There is no matter so uniquely national as transportation. The flow of people and goods is heedless of jurisdictional boundaries. In striving to meet these challenges, however, the Federal Government must work cooperatively and creatively with State and local governments. We cannot afford to overlook the importance of preserving, and indeed fostering, the strength and independence of State governments.

At the same time, the Federal Government, itself, must organize to deal with these new problems. The Federal Government's transportation agencies have grown up independently as the need arose. In an earlier time this may have been adequate, but we can no longer tolerate this diffusion. Transportation today is more complex, sophisticated and inter-related than it has ever been.

The conclusion is inescapable: transportation must become, or at least approach, a single system concept, with each part of it capable of utilizing the best characteristics of each of the modes.

This means we must try to create within the new Department of Transportation a structure which approaches transportation from a systems point of view.

We have taken a first step in that direction in our Northeast Corridor Project.

Through it, we hope to determine the most efficient way to provide the transportation that is needed by a large metropolitan region. The immediate focus is on the Boston Washington area, but the lessons learned will have broad applicability to many parts of the country. This project is not wedded to any single form of transportation. It is studying all the modes and how successfully they work together.

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One of the first conclusions reached was that passenger rail transportation had a potential that was not fully realized. Whatever the role rail transport is to play, it is not now demonstrating its full potential.

Passenger trains have a number of inherent advantages. They can carry a relatively high volume of travelers; they can do so at relatively low cost; and they travel directly from city center to city center, along an exclusive right of way. The latter is particularly significant because it avoids the delays caused by urban congestion.

Rail passenger growth in the Northeast Corridor has been hampered by a number of factors. Primarily they boil down to a lack of quality of service, including ancient rolling stock, irregular scheduling, and long total time en route. The competition, in the form of highway and air transport, have progressed in technology while rail transport has not. The result has been a sharp reduction in patronage, which in turn meant reduced investment incentive for management.

The Northeast Corridor Project is operating under constraints of budget and time. It does not have the resources to propose a revolutionary restructuring of regional transportation systems. We have tried to reach an intelligent balance between basic research and visible demonstration projects.

In the basic research area we are studying improved steel wheels on steel rails: elevated systems of exotic design such as monorail and duo rail; multi-modal vehicle systems in which the vehicle transfers to a different guideway; air bearing vehicles; and vehicles operating in tubes or tunnels. We are also collecting data about the precise nature of travel in the Northeast Corridor. The lack of this information in the total transportation picture is a problem of major magnitude in itself.

As a part of our effort to gather more information on the Corridor's needs, we are launching two rail passenger demonstration projects between Washington and Boston in the fall of 1967. These are, in fact, market tests, seeking to determine how the public will respond to better, faster, improved and more frequent rail service.

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One of these will run between Boston and New York. It will feature gas-turbine driven trains built by a newcomer to the rail car business -- United Aircraft Systems Corporation.

(I might mention here that the Canadian National Railroad recently has ordered a fleet of similar turbine cars for use between Montreal and Toronto.)

One of the big problems of the Boston-New York demonstration is the winding right of way of the New Haven Railroad which may inhibit full use of the speed potential of the new equipment.

The other demonstration project is scheduled between Washington and New York. The Department of Commerce and the Pennsylvania Railroad have jointly agreed to sponsor a high speed service provided by 50 brand new electrically propelled cars capable of sustained speeds of 150 miles per hour. The Pennsy has agreed to upgrade the right of way to standards superior to any in the U.S. and equal to the famed Tokaido Line in Japan. The interior of the cars will be very comfortable and modern -- a refreshing contrast to the current state of the art for passenger cars. Perhaps the greatest step forward in terms of quality of service will be the reduction in trip time. We are aiming for a total journey time, including four intermediate stops, of three hours from city center to city center.

Let us look into the future for a moment to see if we can clarify our goals.

First, we must seek to increase the speed of movement in urbanized areas for distances up to about 200 miles. Modern aircraft have provided significant time savings over long distances, but they have been less successful over shorter distances in urban regions.

To realize this goal we must build a system which has a minimum of congestion and which has en route speeds comparable with those of air transport.

Next we must provide regular, fast, low cost service from door-to-door -- or to put it more accurately, from point of first origin to point of ultimate destination. This recognizes that people do not travel from airport to airport, or from train station to train station. These transfer points, where so much time is wasted, are merely way stations on a longer journey.

Finally, we must coordinate the three basic modes so that a traveler can transfer quickly from one to another and can maximize the advantages of each. For example, not a single airport in the U.S. is linked to a railroad. Only two can be reached, rather inconveniently, by rapid transit systems.

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In planning the New York-Washington train service we are giving serious consideration to building a station where the Washington Beltway crosses the Pennsylvania's tracks. It would thus be possible for passengers to go from their suburban homes to the train without fighting downtown traffic.

No one can predict with finality the ultimate form of our transportation system in the future. It may be that some new mode, such as a vacuum tube, with vehicles traveling on bearings of air with an entirely new propulsion system, will supplant what we now are familiar with. In the development of these systems, as in the development of virtually every present form of transport, the Federal Government will have an important role.

In the meantime, it is incumbent upon us to maximize our existing resources. The Northeast Corridor Project is a step in this direction. The final outcome of the project is still a matter of conjecture, but the potential for success is very favorable. In any case, the attempt to revive rail passenger service in the urbanized Northeast Corridor area is only the opening gun in a long struggle to provide better transportation systems to a Nation undergoing revolutionary growth and change.