

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
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John T. Connor, Secretary

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REMARKS BY ALAN S. BOYD, UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR TRANSPORTATION, PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BEFORE THE 64TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN ROAD BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION AT DENVER HILTON HOTEL, DENVER, COLORADO MONDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1966, AT 3 P.M.

Back in the spring of 1803, President Thomas Jefferson doubled the size of the Nation with a single stroke of the pen.

In signing the Louisiana Purchase, Jefferson declared that only by effective transportation could the western territories be made an integral part of the country.

His Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin, was even more emphatic. In advocating the creation of a system of good roads and canals to open speedy and easy communication to all parts of the newly-acquired territory, Gallatin asserted:

"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."

We took the advice of those early leaders. We have built a transportation network of air, road, rail, water and pipelines that is unmatched in the history of man; that stretches to every corner of the Nation and the world; that leaves none of our communities isolated from the mainstream of modern life.

But the job has only just begun. Today, we face a challenge not unlike that which Jefferson's vision gave to us in the beginning of the 19th century.

As President Johnson has noted, this Nation's population will double by the end of this century. This means that all the facilities required to service such a population will have to be doubled, too.

The development of our transportation systems will have to move faster than that. The demand for transportation, if it matches our current economic growth rate, will double in the 20-year period ending in 1980. It may have to double again in the remaining 20 years of the century.

The rate of expansion may well depend upon how successful we are in our determination to conquer poverty and disease and develop the kind of society in which all our citizens share more and more in the things that make life really worth living.

It is within the framework of such a challenge that President Johnson has called for the creation of a Cabinet-level Department of Transportation -- to provide guidance and leadership which will be required to give our people the efficient, low-cost dependable and safe transport to which they are entitled; to strengthen and perpetuate our country, as Jefferson's Secretary of the Treasury foresaw.

This kind of challenge is not new to the United States. Most of us have seen it fulfilled several times in our own lifetime. In the past 20 years, the motor vehicle population of the Nation has tripled -- from 30 to 90 million vehicles.

And in the past five years, freight carried by our cargo aircraft has increased by some 260 per cent. The air passenger business enjoyed a growth of better than 163 per cent in the same time. Pipelines are enjoying a similarly phenomenal growth and virtually all modes of transport are enjoying the best times they have in years. The total of intercity ton miles hauled has increased more than 20 per cent in the last five years.

Our overall record shows we are in good shape to do the job. Our Gross National Product has tripled since the end of World War II. The recent Economic Report of the President predicts a GNP of \$722 billion for this year. And if we match the pace of the past five years, the GNP in 1980 will exceed the one trillion dollar mark.

How do we make sure our transportation system will be able to keep pace with such growth? How do we go about allocating the resources to accomplish the job? Last year, transportation accounted for one of every six dollars in our vibrant economy -- approximating \$120 billion. Is this what it should be in the years and decades ahead?

How do we cope with the growing tangle of transportation in our urban areas where the vast majority of our citizens will be living by the end of the century?

What effect will this have upon the business of road building which I am sure is upper most in the minds of most of this audience here today?

To cope with such problems demands a new marshalling of knowledge, new applications of technology, new peaks in research and development of ways and means to continue moving more and more goods and people at the lowest cost, safely, and in response to the varied requirements of our complex society.

We seek to attain these objectives under the same tried and true system of free enterprise that has marked our progress from the time of Jefferson and before.

To accomplish this, this Administration is dedicated to the principle that our transportation system should be privately-owned, privately-operated, subject to the checks and stimuli of profits under free competition, and functioning not within narrow and detailed rules and regulations, but within broad guidelines that will give management the widest flexibility to make decisions that will enable the industry to grow and prosper.

This is a basic reason for a Department of Transportation. We see it as an instrument which will help provide the industry reliable information for intelligent decisions; mobilize scientific and technical capabilities to maximize the advantages of all modes; clear away institutional and political barriers which impede adaptation and change; centralize leadership to support broader social, economic and national security objectives.

Any such new proposal or departure is bound to stir anxiety in the hearts of the lovers of the status quo. The immediate question usually is: "What does this mean -- or what's this going to do -- to us?"

I recognize that the American Road Builders' Association is not a status quo organization -- as evidenced by your wholehearted support of the Highway Beautification Program -- but I'm sure many of you are wondering what impact, if any, the creation of a Department of Transportation might have on your business affairs and your future plans.

I don't think you will see any revolutionary changes. The proposed new Department won't disturb the independent regulatory agencies of the Federal Government, and it will bring no drastic changes in the operations of most Governmental programs in transportation as we know them today. Its most immediate effect will be to bring a new degree of managerial efficiency to the era of rapid change and expansion that the entire industry is facing.

The Interstate Highway System will be completed as planned. The Highway Trust Fund will continue to be the source of funds for our highway program.

And we won't stop building roads when the 41,000 miles of Interstate are finished. As a matter of fact, it is a foregone conclusion that we will have to build more high quality, limited access highways.

It is a foregone conclusion, too, that we will have to give renewed attention to the so-called second tier system of roads -- those highways that don't have to meet the rigid access controls of the Interstate.

We like to emphasize that the Interstate System when completed and in full operation in 1973, will carry more than 20 per cent of the Nation's motor vehicle traffic. But the rest of our roads and streets will be carrying 150 per cent of the traffic they had back when the Interstate got underway in 1956.

We won't know, of course, until the Post 1972 study is completed what this will mean in terms of construction mileage, but some seat-of-the-pants estimates I've seen reckon it in the realm of 80,000 to 100,000 miles.

As you know, the last session of Congress instructed the Department of Commerce to submit biennial estimates of our highway needs. The first such report is due in January of 1968.

The Post 1972 study also will proceed as planned, but President Johnson has written some new ground rules for this endeavor. In his instructions to the Secretary of Commerce on the Post '72 planning, the President asserted.

"I want it to be absolutely clear that proposals for a post-1972 program must be carefully evaluated in the light of overall national transportation needs and objectives, balancing national benefits against costs."

"Consistent with my firm determination to require a searching re-evaluation of all continuing programs, the Federal-aid highway program should be reviewed in depth. It will not be enough merely to estimate how many miles of additional highway can or should be built or how much Federal money will be required to provide this mileage."

The President insisted that every element of the existing program should be reviewed, and added:

"Most important is a full and fair appraisal of the urban transportation problem and of the relative capability of various Federal programs, such as the highway program and the urban mass transit assistance program to meet various urban transport requirements...."

Thus, I think it is safe to predict that the sights of our road builders will be turning more and more to the problems of the cities in the years ahead. The Bureau of Public Roads already is in this field in some depth in the community planning program it carries on in conjunction with the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The problem of urban congestion is a gigantic one, but I'm sure we can do a better job with what we have than we are doing today. We may have to rely more on computers than on concrete to get at the heart of this problem. Computers already are being used to help us develop a better understanding of how traffic flows so that new control systems and techniques may be developed.

Better mass transit facilities, of course, are an important phase of the urban congestion problem. But regardless of how good a job we do in this field, the preponderance of our people still will be travelling by automobile.

A Bureau of Public Roads official predicted in a speech out here in Denver last fall that 90 million new cars and 14 million new trucks would be required to meet the peoples' demands in the next 10 years.

If this prediction holds, it will mean the motor vehicle population figure will hit 116 million by 1975.

What are we going to do with all these vehicles?

One of the first things we are going to have to do is find some place to park them once they get into the cities. There is a wealth of information and studies on this subject in the Federal Government's files., advancing such novel ideas as giving freeways direct access to parking lots to help kleep as many autos as possible off the city streets.

But there is no Federal program for helping cities to solve this problem, and there isn't a city in the country that can say it has the problem licked.

Urban congestion isn't the only challenge. Aesthetics and the tremendous cost of road building inside cities will test our ingenuity as well.

And on top of all this is the growing challenge in the field of highway safety.

President Johnson has announced that he will submit to this session of Congress a Highway Safety Act to stop the slaughter on our highways -- "to replace suicide with sanity."

The President considers this problem second in importance only to our current effort in South Vietnam.

Two years ago, he ordered an accelerated program in the spot improvement of high accident-frequency locations. This has grown from a program of virtually no activity to one which has seen 624 projects programmed in 46 states and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico as of the end of last year. These projects represent a total expenditure of some \$130 million, \$62 million of this representing Federal funds.

Immediate future plans call for rapid expansion of the spot improvement program, for this is an area where immediate and concrete results can be achieved. The Bureau of Public Roads is inventorying all such accident-prone locations in the Nation. Many states, as you know, are involved in this work, using their own funds. Our goal should be to eliminate every single one of these hazards. To do less would open us to a charge of dereliction.

It is too early to discuss the details of the President's Highway Safety Program, but contrary to some recent press reports, I can assure you that it will touch all the bases.

There is a new emphasis on research and development these days as the Nation moves to meet these future challenges. These new approaches, new ideas, new looks generate news stories and headlines. Everytime another one appears in print, another segment of the economy begins to grow uneasy.

They start asking that inevitable question: "What does this mean to us? Does it pose any threat to our business?"

People in the transportation business shouldn't be troubled by such doubts. The future demands are so overwhelming that we'll all be hard put just to keep pace with economic growth and expansion. It looks like there will be plenty of business for everyone as far ahead as we can see.

The same holds true for you people in the road building business. Your job won't be finished with completion of the Interstate System. There will still be plenty of work to do. Automobiles still will be the bulwark of our overall transportation network, and we will still have the job of providing better and safer and more enjoyable roads.