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DRAFT OF SECRETARY BOYD'S REMARKS

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS FORUM

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

APRIL 14, 1967

Your theme for this Forum is an interesting one to someone like me who is in the process of organizing a new Cabinet-level Department; for, in a way, I am developing a bureaucracy. That is, I am seeking to establish a system under which more than 90,000 employees can work together in carrying out large and important functions of our Government. At the same time I am concerned with avoiding the establishment of a "bureaucracy" if, by that term, we mean a group of public servants obsessed by jurisdiction, prerogative and employment security.

Our conceptions of bureaucracy vary depending on our direct experiences and on what we have learned from others. I believe most citizens feel that the word "bureaucracy" carries with it an unfavorable connotation. Bureaucracy is certainly usually associated with red tape, caution, and timidity. The bureaucrat is viewed as a person who is unimaginative, overly concerned with personal security; a person unable to compete successfully in the business world. At the same time, there is a somewhat contradictory fear

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that this cautious time server is a potential tyrant who is about to put a strangle hold on American society and regulate, tax, snoop and generally shove around any citizen who gets in his way.

It is interesting to note that this stereotype is not consistently applied. It is used in the abstract to describe the people and organizations about whom we know little and from whom we expect no direct benefit.

Almost no one would call a civilian astronaut a "bureaucrat."

The resident of the Pacific Northwest does not consider the Forest Ranger a "bureaucrat." And, of course, everyone knows that the FBI agent wears a white hat and is a resourceful defender of our society.

The "image" problem of the bureaucracy is a serious one, worthy of time and attention; but for me, as the Secretary of a Department, and for most of you, it is not our basic concern. We are required to be more concerned with the substance of our responsibilities.

However, as we go about doing our basic jobs, we should recognize that there is in fact some basis for the poor reputation

the bureaucracy has acquired. We all know some marginally competent people. We also know a few civil servants who deal regularly with the public and who are not exactly choice representatives of the Civil Service.

As a Cabinet official, one of my jobs is to provide leadership within my Department. If I lead well, I can do much to destroy the unfortunate image which the bureaucracy has developed.

Since my Department is a new one, I have an opportunity not given to every Secretary. I thought you might be interested in some of the things we are going to do in the establishment of the Department of Transportation in an attempt to provide that lively and rewarding public service career which so many seek.

First, in filling key posts in the Office of the Secretary, the President and I have, of course, looked for the best man. We have been especially on the alert for those who are aggressive, dynamic and vigorous. Frequently, those characteristics are associated with youth. As members of a group whose membership is restricted to those thirty years old or younger, you will be interested to learn

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that the General Counsel is 36, the Assistant Secretary for International Affairs is 38, and the Assistant Secretary for Policy Development is 38.

I hasten to add that these are not only youthful people, they are also very bright and they bring to the Department a wide variety of experiences. They are a lively group.

Another device for keeping our part of the bureaucracy dynamic, bold and innovative is that we have recruited from outside the Department for several of the key jobs. By bringing in "outsiders", we hope to assure a steady influx of new ideas and generate a healthy sense of challenge about the way things have been done in the past. The backgrounds of our appointees include a wide variety of experiences in private industry, in the academic world, in foreign trade, in the Legislative Branch, in State government and in trade associations, to name a few.

We hope to introduce in DOT a new concept of staffing the Office of the Secretary. We intend to have a significant number of jobs filled on a rotation basis. That is, we will pick a man from one of the operating elements of the Department (for example, from the Coast Guard, FAA or Federal Highway Administration) and place him in

one of the staff offices in the Office of the Secretary. After a year or two he will return to his parent organization or perhaps he will go on to work with another element of the Department. This type of assignment has been made in the past on a limited basis. We hope to make it a large and significant part of the regular process of staffing the Office of the Secretary. The rotational assignment system will also fit in well with our intent to use the skills of U. S. Coast Guard officers in key staff positions. The Coast Guard has an outstanding group of able officers, with a high degree of expertise in various fields. They bring with them a knowledge of how to work well with civilians based on their long history in the Treasury Department and on contacts with the public in marine safety activities.

On a broader basis, I will encourage the advance of career development throughout the Department. Career development should provide opportunities for all employees to improve their skills.

I am particularly interested in assuring that our career planning makes it possible for those who show outstanding potential to get the kinds of fundamental experiences they need and, at the same time, to advance rapidly up the line toward positions of real importance.

We hope to make extensive use of training opportunities which will provide genuine stimulus and an opportunity to grow. We intend to make good use of fellowships which may be available from such organizations as the National Institute of Public Affairs. We will plan to make full use of Civil Service Commission sponsored training activities. And, we hope to come up with a few new ideas of our own.

In addition to recruiting good people and looking after their development, we will provide an atmosphere in which able people can exploit their talents to the fullest. There are many facets to such an atmosphere but I refer specifically to a setting in which one can put forth a bold new idea without fear that it will be quashed before receiving real consideration.

We have many problems in transportation which are going to require new thinking. We must be willing to listen when those new ideas come along.

Finally, while it would be improper for me to use this rostrum as a means of pirating people away from other organizations, I would like to mention this: We have only a few positions to fill right now

in the Department of Transportation but we want to fill them with outstanding people. We have already received thousands of applications but if anyone would like to join the competition for a challenging job and a lot of hard work in a new Department he should know that our personnel office is located at 800 Independence Avenue, Southwest, just across the Mall and a few blocks east of here.