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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

REMARKS OF ALAN S. BOYD, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION,
PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BEFORE A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE
AIR LINE PILOTS ANNUAL AIR SAFETY FORUM, AT THE
WASHINGTON HILTON, WASHINGTON, D. C., WEDNESDAY,
JUNE 21, 1967, 12:00 NOON

I am delighted to be here -- both as a former pilot and as Secretary of the new Department of Transportation.

It doesn't seem very many years ago when I first sat in the cockpit of what seemed to me one of the most advanced transports in the world -- the old DC-3. Yet to you -- who man today's fabulous jet fleet and look forward, in eight years or so, to manning supersonic jets -- that airplane that once seemed so awesome an achievement represents simply a relic of a distant time. And thirty years from now the supersonic jets will seem to those who succeed you in the cockpits equally as antiquated as the DC-3 seems to us today.

As much as any field, and more than most, aviation exhibits most visibly the incessant and accelerating change -- the dizzying pace of technological advance, the phenomenon of sheer growth in size and complexity -- that characterize our age.

The late distinguished mathematician Norbert Wiener once observed of "modern technique" that "every apparatus, every method is obsolete by the time it is used." Techniques are developing so rapidly that we cannot, unless we are going to have a large period of chaos, allow our thinking to lag behind the techniques and the possible modes of development.

It is to help us avoid such a period of chaos, to enable our imagination and our understanding to keep pace with our technology and to explore fully the possible modes of development in moving goods and people that the new Department of Transportation was established.

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It is not that we have done badly -- for we have succeeded in developing the best transportation system in the world.

It is simply that the growth of that system -- and the society it serves -- has been so great that we can no longer cope with either the problems or the opportunities it presents by continuing to follow the fitful, fragmented approach of the past.

The significance of the new Department is that, for the first time in our history, we have an instrument, a framework, a focal point that enables us first, to look at our transportation system as a single whole and second, to relate it to the total needs of our society.

And let me emphasize that it is no more, and no less, than an instrument, a framework, a focal point for developing a coherent and cooperative approach -- involving all levels of government, Federal, state and local, and all segments of our society -- toward meeting the nation's transportation needs.

The new Department is not -- as no doubt some may view it -- simply another example of a burgeoning Federal bureaucracy, of creeping or galloping centralization, of another attempt on the part of the Federal Government to extend its sway over areas more properly reserved to other levels of government or to private enterprise.

President Johnson intended -- the Congress intended -- the new Department to serve as a working example of the approach which President Johnson has termed "creative federalism" -- an approach that involves, as Senator Edmund Muskie of Maine has put it, "a recognition of the expanding roles of State and local governments as planners and builders of better and more secure environments for our expanding population, and a strengthening of the Federal role as a source of new ideas, incentives for reform, and financial and technical resources to help the States and the local communities better meet their needs."

It is, in the first place, impossible to sit in Washington, alone and unaided, hundreds or thousands of miles from where the problems exist, and come up with adequate solutions.

And, in the second place -- as a purely practical matter, let alone a matter of principle -- no Federal program, no matter how extensive or expensive, can succeed unless it is accompanied by effective effort at the state and local level, and in the private sector.

In the days and months and years ahead, we will be looking to organizations such as yours, we will be looking to industry, we will be looking to our states and localities, for advice as well as for assistance, for counsel as well as for cooperation. For the problems before us in the field of transportation are as complex as they are critical -- they affect every aspect of our lives -- and we must all be involved in their solution.

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One of the most complex and critical of these problems -- as this audience well knows -- is the problem of airport congestion -- of crowded terminals, crowded runways, crowded airlines.

I could recite a long list of statistics to illustrate the phenomenal growth in air travel over recent years. But they would do no more than document what every air passenger knows, and what too many air passengers have experienced -- delay getting to the airport, delay at the airport, delay waiting to land, delay at the airport after landing, and delay in getting from the airport to his destination -- a sequence of delays that, when you add it up, often exceeds the actual time in the air.

Already, the spectacular expansion we have experienced in air traffic over recent years -- in commercial air passenger and air cargo traffic, and in general aviation traffic -- exerts a severe strain upon our airport and airport access facilities. And we have every reason to expect that over the next decade air traffic will expand at a far more rapid rate.

The so-called "stretched" jets now entering service, the "jumbo" jets, the supersonic jets, and the very real possibility -- within the next ten years -- of the entrance into our air fleet of the "airbus" and of vertical and short takeoff and landing aircraft, will help generate, as well as accommodate, an enormous growth in air traffic -- a growth far surpassing anything we have yet seen.

To handle this growth -- as well as to ease the current strains and to improve continually all aspects of air service -- will require both more and better facilities at our present airports and more airports. Moreover, the advent of "jumbo" jets -- with their greatly enlarged capacities -- will require entirely new kinds of terminal facilities.

Obviously, we are going to have to move -- and move soon -- if the current strain upon our airport facilities is not to become intolerable.

I cannot yet detail any proposals we may make -- at the Federal level -- to meet the problem of airport congestion. But I can assure you that, at President Johnson's direction, we have undertaken an intensive look at the entire problem, both in its present and in its prospective dimensions. I can assure you that we will act -- and act in time.

I can assure you, as well, that any program we propose -- any effort we undertake -- will be consistent with our conviction that our job is to assist our states and localities in developing transportation systems suited to their total needs.

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I stress the word total, because I am convinced we have long since passed the point where we can make transportation decisions -- affecting any or all forms of transportation -- without weighing carefully and in advance their social as well as their economic impact upon the communities and regions they serve.

We can no longer, for example, seek to furnish more and better air travel facilities -- and more and better aircraft -- without seeking at the same time to alleviate or eliminate some of the annoying or intolerable side-effects these may have.

We can no longer afford to assume that just because a piece of land is flat it will make a good airport.

Airports must be designed not only as part of a broader system of transportation but of the neighborhoods around them.

An airport can have 13,000-foot runways, a superb tower team and 50-mile visibility 365 days a year and still be a poor airport -- as any pilot can tell you who has been caught in a traffic jam at the end of his run.

Airports from now on -- and without compromise -- must be designed as elements of a total system and we should do everything in our power to correct the mistakes we have made in the past.

They must have good access roads both for passengers and for the shippers who use the air to save precious time for their cargoes.

And they must have clear zone approaches. A mother of a large, noisy family needs nothing less than she needs the melody of four fan-jets directly overhead.

My mail makes it clear that there is only one thing that can drown out a jet on take-off and that is the understandable roar of protest from the outraged citizens who live in airport neighborhoods.

As I said before, that is basically a matter of airport design and it is a matter which is getting the urgent attention of the best minds in our department and among the industrial and urban planners.

I share fully your concern over the mistaken idea some people seem to have that the airline pilot is somehow responsible for this noise.

Indeed, the representatives of ALPA are working closely with the Federal Aviation Administration in an effort to devise an optimum flight procedure that will help reduce noise exposure.

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I want to assure you that in this effort to reduce aircraft noise -- as in any other effort we undertake -- we will not countenance, we will not even consider, any unsafe procedure. Safety is -- and must be -- our supreme concern. We cannot -- and will not -- cut corners on safety.

As you know, our effort to meet the problem of aircraft noise involves not simply flight procedures, but the development of quieter engines as well as more compatible land use around our airports. I know we can count on your full support in all aspects of this effort.

Indeed, I look forward in the months ahead to your advice as well as your assistance in meeting the monumental challenges before us. I cannot assure you that I will always follow your advice -- but I can assure you that I will consider it with the greatest care. And I promise you that I will never ask for your cooperation in any endeavor without first seeking your counsel.

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