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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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REMARKS BY ALAN S. BOYD, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BEFORE THE WASHINGTON BOARD OF TRADE, MAYFLOWER HOTEL, WASHINGTON, D.C., SEPTEMBER 26, 1967, 12:00 NOON.

In a major message to Congress last year, President Johnson called transportation "the web of union." In the same message, he asked for a Department of Transportation to help get some of the bugs out of the web.

This concern over the condition of transportation in America is not a new one. Talented planners and engineers, community organizations and the transportation industry, itself, have been working to improve one element or another - working harder in recent years as growth increases the strain on our transportation network.

But that was just the point the President made. The work has been done piecemeal. Now, for the first time, a balanced system of transportation is a national goal, backed with national resources.

The new approach to transportation has a unique application here in Washington. In appointing a new commissioner for the District recently, the President said he wanted him to make this a "showcase for the world."

Without a good transportation system, Washington cannot be a showcase either for the world or - more importantly - for other American cities with the same transportation problems we face here.

A great deal of the planning that is needed to develop a model metropolitan system of transportation already has been done in Washington.

There is a plan for an 83-mile rail rapid transit system to link Washington and its suburbs. For the year 2000, the Regional Planning Council is considering a network of nine radial freeways, three circumferential freeways and an Inner Loop System. Planners have recommended five general aviation airports to accommodate the upsurge of private aviation which they anticipate in the area. Helicopter airbus service to link the city and the three regional airports which serve the National Capital Region is under consideration.

That, the planners say, will give Washington a transportation system fit for a showcase. And it certainly sounds like a welcome change from what many of us experience today.

Washington's streets are crowded at peak hours. Its subways are still under study, not under ground. Increasing congestion in the air and on the streets at the National Airport is a frustration and perhaps even a hazard to the traveler. Union Station is under-used while congested bus terminals can't keep up with demands for more and better services. And the effort to park in the downtown area is a growing cause of irritation for those who live and work and shop in the heart of the city.

Despite such frustrations, Washington's business community is a healthy one. Sales in the Central Business District continue to increase.

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Business leaders of the National Capital Region should be encouraged by the obvious economic health of the community and by the forecasts for the future - more jobs, more construction, more money in circulation, and more people. The Planning Commission anticipates "continued vigorous growth" with a regional population by 1985 of 3.7 million people, an increase of 60 percent in less time than has passed since World War II.

Washington has prepared well for the growth. Ground breaking for its subway is scheduled for the summer of 1968. When the subway is finished, it can move more than 400,000 Washington area residents a day in and around and through the heart of the city. Limited subway operations are planned for 1972 - five years from now. Suburban commuters will have to wait longer than that.

New construction will add many miles of highways and freeways to the Washington area. They will make it easier for many residents of the Capital region to get downtown and to other parts of metropolitan Washington.

But so far these new transportation services are no more than dotted lines on maps. Most of us take little comfort from the news that the traffic jams will clear up in five or six years or certainly no later than the turn of the century.

Any doctor whose prognosis indicated that recovery "could be anticipated within 33 years" would have to take down his shingle.

For Washington, then, as for many American cities, the transportation crisis involves short-range answers as well as long-range planning. The problem is what to do until the subway arrives.

For many Washingtonians, more highways are not the answer to their transportation problems. They need more and better public transportation and they can't wait until 1972 or 1985 for a fast and comfortable ride to work. For many others, their most urgent need is not for a better highway system but for a better parking system.

As a result, Washington must program its efforts to improve transportation much as we have at the Department - on two levels. We are involved in research and testing new techniques for the future. At the same time, we are working on programs to improve the transportation system we already have.

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The obvious place to start is with the way in which we use our highway system.

Highway facilities have played a vital role in the pattern of Washington life. The broad avenues laid out under the L'Enfant Plan have served this city well ever since the first horseless carriages rolled up Pennsylvania Avenue. But automobiles are not and will not be the only answer to Washington's transportation needs, just as they are not the only answer in any other city.

The automobile demands more valuable space than a city such as Washington - or many other cities - can afford. Across the nation, 28% of city space is devoted to the automobile; in Washington that figure is more than 30%, perhaps substantially more. In 1964 the D.C. Motor Vehicle Parking Agency said that 48% of the Central Business District was devoted to streets and alleys. Another 10 to 15% was devoted to off-street parking.

In 1964, Washington had more freeway mileage per square mile and per capita than any other large urban area in the Nation, probably more than any other in the world. The people of Washington had more than twice as much freeway mileage per million population as Los Angeles which, as we all know, has been called "the freeway capital of the world."

Lewis Mumford in *The City in History* said:

"Washington has proved a classic testing station for the question of whether a city dedicated whole-heartedly to traffic could sufficiently survive for other purposes."

And he continued on the subject of Washington by saying:

"The assumed right of the private motor car to go any place in the city and park anywhere is nothing less than a license to destroy the city."

I am not saying that the people of Washington should abandon the automobile. But I am saying that the automobile already claims a substantial amount of Washington's premium space. And I am saying that the city and the community should make sure that they get full benefit from their streets and freeways. I do not

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believe Washingtonians will receive the greatest possible return on their investment - returns in service and convenience - if the community tries to resolve today's problems by the simple expedients of more automobiles, more freeways, and more parking lots.

There is a large backlog of proposals for improving the efficiency with which we use city streets and highways. Few have been given the kind of testing that is required before you can say they will or will not work. For example, an express bus service cannot be tested as an alternative to the automobile simply by making a bus go faster and stop less. It must be advertised. The bus, itself, must be smooth-riding and comfortable. Parking must be provided. Americans have demonstrated they will not give up their cars unless the alternative is genuinely attractive.

We believe there are attractive alternatives that merit testing. Most of them are short-term. None requires massive outlays of capital. For many reasons, Washington is an ideal testing center. And from my point of view, one of the best reasons is that our Department could monitor the tests in detail, could learn more from the tests and learn it more reliably. And I hope it will be possible to schedule such demonstrations in and around Washington in the not-too-distant future under whatever auspices are determined to represent the Federal government in urban transportation.

One possibility is the wider use of a flexible system of bus transit which might move large numbers of people at high speeds on the radial routes toward jobs and shops without the slowdowns which result from traffic congestion. Such a system would reserve highway and street lanes for the exclusive use of buses. Buses traveling on such a freeway lane might move 25,000 or 30,000 people at 35 to 40 miles an hour. In the same lane, automobiles can move 3000 an hour. Reserved and reversible bus lanes are now being used to a limited degree in the Washington area. Extending this system would seem to be one way to provide truly better service, more attractive in the fullest sense, to more people both inside and outside the District line.

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The president of the privately-owned Atlanta Transit System has suggested that cities consider providing free public transit. He believes that free transit service might prove such an attractive means for luring shoppers to central business areas that businessmen might wish to underwrite the service themselves.

Along the same line, local merchants provide free or cut-rate parking in the form of stamps on "Park and Shop" tickets. Perhaps these same merchants should ask themselves why they subsidize only drivers of private automobiles. Perhaps they should consider providing a comparable subsidy or incentive to bus travelers. If buses issued return trip transfers, a merchant's stamp--given with specified minimum purchases--shoppers might consider it just the right incentive for using the bus rather than driving a car. It should be tested as a means of stimulating non-peak hour travel.

Within my Department, the Federal Highway Administration has undertaken a program of traffic improvements called TOPICS which, with a minimum expenditure, offers the possibility of greater safety and improved travel on city streets. These improvements might include such simple steps as better patterns of light timing at intersections for an improved flow of traffic. Other remedies, almost as easy and as inexpensive to come by, should be examined for their application to the Washington area.

Several years ago at a transportation conference at Woods Hole, someone suggested that merchants or bus companies or local delivery services, or a combination thereof, consider the possibility of a "quick-change bus." Such buses would serve during peak hour periods. They could be quickly transformed - to serve from mid-morning to mid-afternoon as delivery vehicles and then, could be transformed back again into commuter buses for the evening rush hour. Some airlines already do this with their quick-change jets. This 20th century variation on Cinderella's pumpkin merits further exploration. The facilities provided for meeting peak-hour needs would, in effect, be subsidized by their off-peak hour utilization as delivery vehicles. In addition, the expansion and improvement in delivery service would offer a double inducement to shoppers to leave their cars at home or in fringe parking lots to take public transportation for their errands. Who knows? They might even walk.

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Groups of employers located at the heart of the city or, conversely, on its rim might find it worthwhile to combine fringe area parking lots with a private express service for their employees.

Many suburban shopping centers provide parking facilities which are seldom used to capacity on weekdays, if some of this space was devoted to park-and-ride use commuters would be likely to do their late-day shopping where they parked. This should appeal to the shopping centers, especially since commuter shoppers would mean business during traditionally slow periods.

We would like to test the use of space within the shopping center complex for express bus loading facilities during early morning and late afternoon hours. This again would expose shoppers to the shopping center - a plus for the merchants - and would relieve the congestion and delays caused by express bus-loading at the curbside - a plus both for bus riders and for automobile drivers.

Fringe facilities for "park and ride" commuters are a definite part of subway plans. Perhaps the Transit Authority should build these facilities now - and soon - rather than waiting for the eventual construction of the subway. They could be tied to express bus facilities - they might even serve the general subway route with its limited number of stops. This might have several distinct advantages. For example, some far-seeing developers have already tied planned and actual construction to subway construction. Their foresight will place added pressure on existing transportation facilities until the subway is finished. Subway parking facilities could serve the public now as well as later.

And finally - although this is not a short-term alternative but a long-range one - some metropolitan areas which have franchised local transit operations have found that only by acquiring local transit companies can they respond fully to the needs of the entire community for an adequate, comfortable, and dependable transportation service. Privately-owned companies, necessarily responsive to their stockholder's interest, determined their fares and the service which they provide in terms of profit and loss statements. They may not be able to afford experimentation and innovation simply because of the cost of providing experimental service. Public ownership of bus facilities does not necessarily mean public operation. In some areas, community or city-owned facilities are privately operated under city-let management contracts.

Some of these ideas might prove to be infeasible or uneconomical or even illegal. You will never know unless you try them. And it is possible to change the law when a need is demonstrated.

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Now I've tried to limit myself to possible remedies which won't require dozens of years or millions of dollars. But short-term solutions will require a reconsideration, a re-examination of attitudes. They will require dynamic support from those who combine ability and authority with willingness to experiment and innovate. And they will require the support of leaders of the business community, one of the healthiest metropolitan business communities in the Nation.

Washington's transportation problems are - in one form or another - a microcosm of our Nation's transportation problems.

Across America nearly 100 million cars, trucks, and buses are rolling along nearly three million miles of streets and highways. More than 100 thousand commercial and private planes are flying more than one billion miles each year. As the Nation continues to grow, its need for transportation continues to grow. Unfortunately, meeting that need is no longer as simple as doubling the highway mileage or tripling the number of runways.

And providing transportation has become more difficult because we, as individuals, as communities, and as a Nation, can no longer ignore transportation's fourth dimension - its effect on the environment.

I do not intend to try to dictate the terms of the transportation system in Washington or in any other city.

But the Department can help here and elsewhere by giving financial and technical support to the search for better ways to give the American traveler variety, comfort, efficiency and safety, which at the same time, preserve the cultural grandeur and the scenic quality of America's natural heritage.

In the past, Washington's business community has shown itself most willing to experiment with innovations in transportation and the transportation system. They must join their efforts to those of the community's leaders and the Federal community. Together, we must pursue all the possible short and medium-term alternatives which might resolve the community's transportation needs until such a day as the Federal City has become a true showcase for America's cities, in transportation as well as in other categories.

We look to the day when the availability of the best will make it possible to forego the consideration of alternatives which are merely good.

That day has not yet come.