

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

REMARKS BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, ALAN S. BOYD, BEFORE
THE GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, AT THE
HOTEL duPONT, IN WILMINGTON, DELAWARE, 7:00 P.M. THURSDAY,
APRIL 4, 1968

It is a pleasure to be in Delaware.

It may surprise you to know that we considered Delaware when we were looking for a site for the Department's headquarters last year. I thought it might be easier to get everybody to work on time Mondays if we were closer to Rehoboth.

But we finally settled on Washington. In our line of work, being in Washington has certain tax advantages.

I am also pleased to report that I have finally found a way for you to deal with people from the west who tend to come to a state like Delaware and complain about the lack of open space.

The next time that happens - the next time someone says to you that out where he lives he can get up in the morning and drive all day without getting to his property line, you just say: "I know the feeling. I had a car like that myself once."

I want to congratulate your state administration - Governor Terry and the legislature - for the effort they are making to establish a Department of Transportation for Delaware.

One of the most fundamental problems with the transportation network in America today is that each form of transportation tends to build what best suits its own purpose.

I realize that the circumstances under which your decision to establish closer coordination among the various elements of the network are painful. But I think that in the long run the entire state will benefit from a structure in which airport needs and highway needs are dealt with together; in which rail service and shipping service are considered part of the same total system.

This was what President Johnson had in mind when he asked the Congresss to establish a Department of Transportation to help America achieve a transportation system in more than name only.

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"Our transportation system," the President stressed, "has not emerged from a single drawing board, on which the needs and capacities were all charted. It could not have done so, for it grew along with the country itself - now restlessly expanding, now consolidating, as opportunity grew bright or dim."

"The result," he said, is that America "lacks a coordinated transportation system that permits travelers and goods to move conveniently and efficiently from one means of transportation to another, using the best characteristics of each."

Instead, "both people and goods are compelled to conform to the system as it is. . . ."

Our job - in the broadest sense - is to reverse that order - to compel the system to conform to the needs of travellers and the shippers of goods and of the people who live by the side of the road or off the end of the runway.

The problem isn't so much that we have been going in the wrong direction. The problem is that we have been going off in all directions and we've begun running into each other and falling all over each other. We know we're really going places, but we often have very little idea where we're going.

So in the simplest sense, the job of the Department of Transportation is to help us decide where we want to go and what are the best ways of getting us there.


That means at least two things:

-First, we have to start looking at transportation as a whole - as a single, integrated system. We should not, for example, build airports without adequate access roads or rails - or undertake extensive road-building without taking into account the feasibility of rail or other mass transit.

-Second, we have to start looking at transportation in terms of its impact upon the total environment in which it operates and upon the total society it is supposed to serve.

And we have started doing some of these things.

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For the first time, we have started dealing with transportation for what it really is: a system designed to serve the total society in which man lives - and that means, for the most part, our urban society where most Americans - some seventy percent - live.

Americans have worked very hard for the past two centuries building the most advanced industrial society known to man. But about 30 years ago, we began to look around at the cities we had created in the process and said, this is not exactly what we had in mind. It needs more parks and trees. Too many of the people live in squalor. The schools teach, but too many do not educate. What's more, they said, the bus service is terrible. The streets are too crowded. The air is not safe to breathe. And all in all, it's a place we'd rather leave than live in.

So we decided some time ago that we had to do something to make our cities places where men could live and work and thrive.

And we started arguing about it. We haven't stopped arguing - but we no longer let our arguing stop us from doing something about it.


Under President Johnson's leadership we have made great beginnings over the past several years. And over the last few weeks - with his new programs for the cities - the President has moved to build even more upon those beginnings.

In his recent message to the Congress on housing and the cities, the President called the nation to an even broader and bolder effort to "change the face of our cities and to end the fear of those - rich and poor alike - who call them home."

As part of that effort, he asked the Congress to approve the transfer of certain urban transit responsibilities from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to the Department of Transportation.

The transfer does not represent a major change in administration. It represents no change at all in philosophy.

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It represents, on the one hand, the recognition that you can't deal with transportation as a system unless you look at all modes in relation to each other - and, on the other, the recognition that transportation is not, and cannot be, a system sufficient unto itself.

Transportation is a system that must serve a larger system: the city, which must in turn serve the people who live and work there.

Before a city can decide what kind of transportation system it needs, it must decide what kind of city it wants to be. It must decide what kind of life and work and recreation it wants to offer its citizens.

And the key word here is people.

We have any number of highways that move many vehicles, but not enough people.

We have built cities with space for highways, and skyscrapers and cars, but not enough space for people.

It is, I grant you, an oversimplification to suggest - as some have - that we may someday reach the point in some cities when we must choose between people and pavement.

But that is certainly far less - and far more preferable - an oversimplification than the one which suggests that the answer to all our ills is simply pavement.

And in times as complex as these, the simplest things are those we are often most apt to forget: such as that cities are for people. Or at least they're supposed to be. And that transportation is for people. Or at least it ought to be.

In today's world - even more in tomorrow's - any urban transportation system designed to do no more than move people and products from place to place is a failure, no matter how magnificently it performs that function. Because if that is all it is designed to do, it will inevitably do a lot of other things it was not designed to avoid - pound our ears, pollute our lungs, usurp our land, destroy or disrupt our neighborhoods.

We simply cannot afford to continue to build transportation systems, or segments of systems, if they serve only a transportation need and do it at the expense of others, often more important considerations.

The answer, of course, is to take these considerations into account - not as afterthoughts, but as matters of prior and prime concern.

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You may know of how, for years, Baltimore has been embroiled in a bitter struggle over the city's 21-mile share of the Federal Interstate Highway System. The issues were the usual ones: some of the city's most historic sections were threatened as well as at least one viable, stable neighborhood.

Last year, the State of Maryland and the City of Baltimore came to the Department of Transportation and asked us to finance a new approach to breaking the impasse. That approach involved the creation of a so-called design concept team that would bring together the social as well as the highway engineers, the urban as well as the highway designers, the urban as well as the highway interests.

It is far too early to speculate about what the final results of this effort will be. It does operate under certain restrictions and handicaps - stemming mainly from the fact that the design team was set up rather late in the game, after the routes for example were already irrevocably established, and the fact that the team is not looking at the freeway problem in relation to any other alternatives, such as mass transit.

But thus far - despite these handicaps - the indications are extremely encouraging.

When the team was first formed, for example, one planned section of the freeway - that would have run right through a neighborhood, cutting it in two and eliminating a substantial number of homes and jobs - was regarded as unchangeable.

But as the team looked more closely at the situation, as the architects began to talk to the engineers, and the sociologists to the leaders of the community - as everybody began to talk to everybody else - they began to be aware that there were indeed alternative routes and alternative designs. They began to be aware that by talking with each other and with the leaders of the community they could discover possibilities - and problems - they had not seen before. And in the process they could see the freeway becoming, more and more, not simply a means of moving automobiles and trucks and buses, but as an occasion and an instrument for improving and enhancing the life of the entire neighborhood.

I do not - as I have said - know what the results of this effort will be. But I am convinced that it is only from efforts such as this, in cities across the country, that we can arrive at acceptable solutions to our urban transportation problems.

Through devices such as the design concept team we can do a great deal to ease the transportation afflictions in urban America as it already exists.

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I think it is also about time we began giving some serious thought to the vast new areas that are coming into being. I think it is time we started making sure we don't make the same mistakes all over again.

And I think we have to start by developing comprehensive land use policies that take transportation needs fully into account - as well as by developing transportation schemes that take urban needs fully into account.

We hear a lot, for example, about the virtues of greater and greater mobility - as if mobility was an end in itself. Yet there is absolutely no virtue in travelling 7 miles to work rather than 5 unless it means a better job or a better house or neighborhood.

Alan Voorhees, for example, the distinguished consultant on transportation affairs, has pointed out some time ago - and cited study after study to prove his point - that our aim, in transportation and land use planning, ought to be the reduction of transportation requirements rather than simply increased mobility.

He and others have demonstrated that changes in techniques in land use planning can reduce travel requirements by 20 percent or more compared with prevailing patterns of land development - without at all reducing the range of opportunities for jobs or housing or other services. People, in other words, would enjoy all the advantages of "increased mobility" without having to travel as far or as often.

In short, we can do a great deal to solve the so-called urban transportation problem - in the cities and communities we already have and in those yet to come. And we can do so with the technology and the know-how we already have in hand.

Our problem is not that our technology is inadequate. Our problem, instead, is that our attitudes and approaches are too often obsolete.

I think that holds true in any field of community endeavor. There is a growing awareness of the need for business involvement in solving the social problems of America in this century. And I am encouraged by meetings such as this which are a sign that government no longer believes it can solve the problems alone; that business no longer believes government caused the problems; and that the men and women in the public and private sector are pooling their talents to achieve the goals of this nation.

Thank you.

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