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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
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REMARKS OF ALAN S. BOYD, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION,  
PREPARED FOR DELIVERY AT THE JOINT LUNCHEON OF THE  
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY ASSOCIATION AND THE PROPELLER CLUB,  
CHASE-PARK PLAZA HOTEL, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, 12:30 P.M.,  
FEBRUARY 5, 1968

I thank you for a good reason to visit St. Louis. I only regret the serious scheduling error that brings us here so many weeks ahead of time. I was under the impression that we would all adjourn after lunch and make an official investigation of some of the serious transportation difficulties involved in moving from first to third on a wild pitch.

As the Dodgers used to say, maybe next year.

One cannot come to St. Louis without being struck again by the fact that this is the heart of one of the few transportation systems that manages to combine romance with utility. The inland waterways of the Mississippi Valley and the Cable Car of San Francisco are two of a kind. And I suppose you have a slight edge because Sam Clemens never piloted a cable car.

We do manage to squeeze most of the romance out of transportation these days in the name of efficiency. I only hope that what lies ahead isn't going to make us nostalgic for the mid-twentieth century when we were only doubling the capacity of the nation's transportation network every 20 years. Or in the case of the inland waterways, increasing the number of ton miles carried by five times in 20 years.

The Department of Transportation became an official branch of the government on April 1st of 1967, which means we are approaching our first anniversary. Being human, we are reacting the same way most people do. We are adding up the good and the bad to see what kind of a year it was. And so I have today what amounts to a preliminary draft of the first annual report.

St. Louis is an appropriate place for such a report. For one thing, it is the heart of one of the major segments of the transportation system.

For another, the essence of the report is that we do not yet know all of the answers but we are certain we can find them.

And it is just this sort of thinking that Mark Twain had in mind, I'm sure, when he wrote that "all you need in this life is ignorance and confidence and then success is sure."

Mr. Clemens to the contrary, we have had a productive first year and we have made progress.

For one thing, we are now nearly at full staff strength. It has been a slow process. We have chosen our people with care and I believe that whatever time we have lost we will make up for in the quality of future work.

We have made real progress in safety on the highways, in the air, on the railroad system.

An expanding program is underway to improve the capacity of urban streets at moderate costs by rebuilding inter-sections, improving signals, creating so-called reversible lanes and making other relatively minor adjustments.

We have started another program to eliminate high-accident locations on existing highways.

Work is moving ahead on the prototype of the supersonic transport.

Both types of high-speed trains that will go into service this spring between Washington and Boston have been tested -- one at more than 150 miles an hour, the other at over 170 miles an hour.

In Baltimore and Chicago, we are trying a totally new approach to one of the most critical transportation problems -- the conflict between the expressway and the city that it serves.

In those cities, sections of the Interstate system will be designed by teams of engineers, architects, planners, economists and other urban specialists. Their mission is to design not only the highway but the corridor so that the highway becomes an integral part of the city.

None of these programs will solve our transportation problems. But they will all contribute to a better system. The only thing about this country that is more complicated than its transportation network is the people who live in it. And we will show results, not with sweeping changes, but with what seem at first glance to be insignificant adjustments all through the system -- from better synchronization of traffic lights in one town to elimination of a grade crossing in another.

We have also, I believe, made clear our general policies in the briefs we have filed with the regulatory agencies. We supported an application for helicopter service in the Washington-Baltimore area because we want to encourage innovation. We oppose an attempt to bring air taxis under economic regulation and we argued for greater freedom for trucks to use the Interstate Highway System because we want to encourage competition and more efficient use of the system.

We have a task force rewriting all safety regulations -- air, rail and highway -- to eliminate contradictions and to try to make them clear and consistent. In this, as in other projects that affect industry's ability to function, we are doing the work in consultation with industry.

We have tried to demonstrate that we do not intend to withdraw into a fortress Washington, bolt the door, draw the blinds and issue Draconian instructions for building a better transportation network. In the last analysis, private industry must finance the faster, safer, more efficient transportation which the public interest requires. We will help with research, analysis, recommendations for sensible regulatory policies and with a portion of the total investment. We are also required to advise the government on which of its investments will bring the greatest benefits in transportation. But neither government nor industry can produce the final product by itself. And we intend to continue working closely with industry.

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Perhaps the most encouraging sign of progress this past year came not from inside the Department but from outside.

We find an increasing awareness among American business that transportation is a total system. It shows up in the creation of new systems-oriented divisions of companies that once were preoccupied with their own products as the ultimate transportation weapon. It shows up in a scramble for men with experience in broad transportation planning. This new feeling that -- to paraphrase Calvin Coolidge -- the business of business is America -- is not confined to transportation.

Last month, Fortune magazine devoted most of its issue to efforts of business to help cope with social problems which have, in the past, been considered the private preserve of local, state and Federal governments. The use of systems analysis and engineering which were developed by the aerospace industry is an important ingredient in many of these efforts. As Fortune put it, the notion that social problems might be solved with systems engineering was regarded as an "eccentric boondoggle" when it was pioneered in California three years ago. That is no longer the case.

We are building a strong office of systems analysis in the Department. It is, in many ways, still an infant art, but it has a great potential if for no other reason than that it makes you face facts. It is common sense plugged into a computer. And its guiding principle is the same as that on which any good detective operates -- assume nothing, challenge everything. It is a great destroyer of myth and folklore. And it gets you into the habit of measuring all of the consequences of an action instead of just the good consequences. And it forces you to explain in detail why you are in business not just what your business is.

Systems analysis has also turned up some broad gaps in what we know about the transportation network we are trying to improve. For example, we have a report that tells us that if we build a highway through a corner of a primitive area in the west, it will cut the population of bighorn sheep from 10 to 2. We have no such precise information about where the nation's millions of railroad cars are and how productively they are used. I think one of the most important missions of the Department must be to help industry fill in this and other information gaps so that we have a clear idea of what impedes a more orderly flow of goods in the system.

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It is significant that in a year of tight budgeting for the Federal government, we are prepared to increase expenditures during fiscal 1969, including the highway trust fund, by a net of \$500 million.

There are off-setting cuts in some programs. The highway construction program is essential to shippers and truckers. But the delay of release of funds is just that-- a delay. And the cut works out to about five percent, as compared with an average cut in other public works of closer to seven percent.

We are asking the Congress to keep the supersonic transport program going forward as fast as technology will permit. This is a project that will maintain America's leadership in aviation. It is a program that we hope will set a pattern for sharing the risk of developing new technology in transportation where the public interest is involved.

We have asked for an increase in the Federal Aviation Administration budget that will permit us to hire 1,200 more controllers and install radar and instrument landing facilities at more hub airports.

We are asking for a 50 percent increase in research funds for automobile and highway safety. And we will make available \$140 million to the states for improving the quality of their safety program.

We are, in fact, asking for more money for research all down the line -- in high-speed ground transportation, in the Coast Guard, in all departments.

The Coast Guard, for example, wants to study classification of chemicals and develop a system for rating the hazards of dangerous cargoes shipped in bulk.

The Coast Guard wants to study the effects of elevated temperatures on tank corrosion and on tank structure and adjacent cargo. The feasibility of developing a hypersensitive, short range, aid to navigation system which would provide all weather positive positions for use in harbors and entrances is under study or soon will be.

The Torrey Canyon disaster and other less spectacular but still damaging incidents led President Johnson to direct us to make a thorough study of the future threat from oil and sewage spills. We are studying the possibility of developing equipment and techniques to prevent such occurrences as well as searching for methods of dealing with such spills if they occur.

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All of these programs have two things in common: They will help give us better transportation, and they will cost money.

To pay the cost of such new programs, the Department of Transportation is going to have to rely on help from the industries which will benefit from them. To help offset the initial cost of certain programs, we intend to work again this year for the enactment of user fees through a Waterway User Act.

We will make this request in the same spirit that airways users will be asked to accept a share of the expenses required for maintaining the safety systems.

We also intend to work for better coordination on the design and clearance of bridges over navigable rivers. I have asked the Coast Guard -- which will be assuming the responsibility for bridges from the Corps of Engineers -- and the Federal Highway Administration to work out a better system for settling questions that arise over bridges fast and early. We realize that this is an important matter to the users of our waterways. We want to work closely with you on these problems.

The changes I've mentioned for the future -- the research programs, the need to find new sources of revenue -- are the basic ingredients of better transportation.

All of transportation is changing, but in different ways.

The trucking industry is reaching for economies of scale with double and triple bottoming.

There are economies of scale in river and canal shipping. But new shallow draft equipment, towboats and barges and the like do not result in far greater capacities and do not demand super-costly terminal facilities. These are improvements in efficiency but not the kind that require a much larger operation.

Here in the Mississippi Valley, technology is not the only force for change. Even the river is changing. The Missouri, for example, is more than 100 miles shorter than it was ten years ago and this means the current is swifter and the power needed to push barges upstream is greater. The Mississippi has shortened itself more than 100 miles since 1942 and swifter currents have resulted.

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The key word in our search for better transportation is cooperation. Progress will come only from the efforts of government at every level combined with the contributions of business.

There is some urgency about the research we have planned. If the demand for transportation continues to expand at its present rate, we must double the capacity of the system in the next 13 years. It is a job of such dimensions that, to my knowledge, nobody has even added up the cost, let alone worked out a plan for achieving it.

And while the increased demand puts pressure on all of us to produce better methods for moving people and cargo, it may well be a blessing for everyone involved in transportation.

For one thing, it provides an immediate opportunity to improve the system. As we expand what is already in place, we will pay closer attention to access roads for airports; to consolidating terminals so that you are not deposited by a train several miles from the bus you must board for the next stage of the trip.

The expansion should bring a new spirit of cooperation among the modes. With any luck at all, each mode will have its hands full just trying to keep up with new demand. There will be no time for scheming to impede the growth of other modes or trying to coax away work that can be done more efficiently by other carriers.

Finally, it gives us an opportunity to apply the lessons we have learned from the past about the hidden costs of inadequate planning in the system.

We have the best transportation network in the world. But we pay two prices for its service -- one in cash and the other in noise, polluted air, accidents and delays. We have learned that transportation can change the environment. We did not even have to plan for it -- it just happened. I am persuaded that we can change the environment just as easily by planning for it -- only this time we can produce more desirable changes.

I have addressed myself more to the users of the inland waterways than to you members of the Mississippi Valley Association whose main goal it is to see that our water supply for these waterways is perpetuated from year to year.

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Because I concentrated on problems of the barge industry, I don't want anyone to feel that in a sense you're being overlooked. Yours is a venture and a challenge which must be pursued. And although the water from the Mississippi may not make corn grow in your stomach like it did in Mark Twain's day, it nevertheless contributes to the well-being of the Nation.

We are a country that does not know its own strength. We have the knowledge and the material resources to achieve more than most of us really understand.

President Johnson raised the question in his State of the Union message. "We ask now," he said, "not how can we achieve abundance, but how shall we use our abundance."

I think the answer is in improving the quality of life for our people -- in better health, better housing, better job opportunity, better education, better transportation. It lies in clearing the air, cleaning the water and making the country as pleasant as it is prosperous.

It lies in offering to every American a full share in a rising standard of life as well as a rising standard of living.

We have the resources to reach this goal. I believe, as the President does, that we also have the resolve.

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