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REMARKS BY ALAN S. BOYD, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, BEFORE
THE GREATER CLEVELAND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, AT THE STATLER
HILTON IN CLEVELAND, OHIO, AT NOON ON THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 1968

It is a pleasure to come to Cleveland; the only city
in the United States where - in a matter of months - the
fashionable way to start a trip by air will be to get your-
self ridden out of town on a rail.

You may have read that we have signed a contract for
continuing study of your project to link the downtown area
and the airport with rapid transit. Of course, there are
sound professional reasons for this. We want to know how
the project affects travel habits and whether it will work
in other cities. But I think we also want to be around
the first time a stranger asks what is the fastest way to
Los Angeles and is let out at the Cleveland Transit System.

(more)

This is my first visit to Cleveland since I became Secretary of Transportation. And I want to thank Mayor Stokes for the invitation and the opportunity to talk about what lies ahead for us - the Department; Cleveland; and other American cities.

As you know, President Johnson has asked the Congress to agree to the transfer of certain transportation responsibilities from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to the Department of Transportation.

It is a logical move. It is a responsibility and a challenge we are glad to accept. But I must confess that adding urban mass transit to our other transportation problems, gives me a pretty good idea of the way a father of six children would feel if his wife had quintuplets. He would try very hard to look happy. But he would know almost to the minute how much sleep he was going to lose.

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

It is still evident that, with nearly 70 percent of all Americans now living in metropolitan areas, the cities of this land are America's major sources of strength and of weakness.

It is also evident that the fundamental problems of the cities are not caused by what has been called "chaotic whimsy," or by congestion. As a matter of fact, if you take away the whimsy and the congestion, you have no city at all.

The problems are caused by schools that teach but do not educate; jobs that are filled but do not fulfill; asphalt where the parks should be; slums that rob a man not just of peace but of dignity.

It is these fundamentals to which President Johnson has addressed himself on a scale unknown in American history. And it is this venture which makes serving in his cabinet the most challenging job any man could ask for.

Under President Johnson's leadership, the Federal government today is providing millions of dollars to improve schools; to train more and better teachers through such institutions as the Teacher Corps; to knock down educational barriers where they isolate the poor.

We have expanded training for the unskilled and encouraged industry to return to the city where the jobs are so urgently needed. And I might add that one of the most hopeful signs is the number of industries that no longer need encouragement - that are volunteering to help.

We have stepped up slum clearance and revitalization of decaying neighborhoods and creation of more parks through programs like Model Cities.

We are - in short - carrying out the President's mandate to "change the face of our cities and to end the fear of those - rich and poor alike - who call them home."

We are joining you in an effort to save, not just cities, but the lives of the people who live and work there.

Formation of the Department of Transportation is just one phase - a phase that has little meaning if it is separated from the entire effort.

There never will be - or certainly should not be - a clearly marked line between a city's transportation system and the rest of its services.

It is not possible to design a city and then put in transportation services wherever they will fit. We know it isn't possible because it has been tried in just about every city in the United States.

As a result, you will find a great deal of joint effort on the part of Housing and Urban Development and Transportation in the future.

And you will find agreement between us on two major points:

The basic responsibility for deciding what a city should look like; how many parks it should have; where it should locate its highways and its houses; that responsibility must remain with the cities and their suburbs.

The Federal government will help with funds as available; with technical assistance when it is needed; with a sort of warehousing of ideas that have worked in one city and may be useful in another. We will provide these services and any others that we can. But they will be suggestions not instructions. The cities must continue to choose their goals. We must continue to help you achieve them.

We are in agreement with HUD, also, on the fact that there is no single massive venture that will solve the problems of the cities or of their transportation networks.

Any success we have will come with patient building and re-building; experimenting and re-designing. The job must begin with what we have. It must end with improving our cities, not replacing them.

We are, I'm afraid, inclined too often to think that if we can solve one big problem, everything will fall neatly into place. There is a preoccupation among some of our philosophers with the ancient struggle between man and his technology. They keep asking whether man can control his machines; temper their impact on his environment; and live in harmony with his technology.

I am concerned about that.

I am just as concerned about whether man can control himself; temper his own impact on his environment; live in harmony not just with his technology but with his fellow man.

You here in Cleveland have taught us one lesson on that score. Much is going to depend on the marks we get in the course you are conducting for the rest of the United States.

I said earlier that if you deprive a city of congestion, you will wind up with nothing more than a pasture with buildings on it. But that does not mean you cannot do a better job of organizing the congestion. And I suppose that is a good description of what we hope to help you do.

When it comes to transportation, Americans are still too much like track teams that spend all of their time training to beat the four-minute mile, ignoring the fact that most of the medals are given for short dashes.

We have simply never concentrated enough money and effort on the trips that fall somewhere between supersonic flight and a walk around the block. There are signs this is changing.

There is a new interest in mass transit.

The old philosophy that a transportation device which moved people and goods efficiently was a good device no matter how much noise it made or how much dust it kicked up is no longer acceptable.

The Federal Highway Administration finds a ready market for a program which - for relatively little money - will increase the efficiency of existing highways.

In Baltimore and Chicago, we are involved in a test of a new approach to the design and location of highways. The burden of the highway engineer there is being shared by a team of urban planners, economists, architects, sociologists and other specialists in human behavior. Their goal is a highway that will become part of the community and contribute not only a way to move but a way to live with new parks, new housing, new locations for industry. We are - in short - trying to come to the aid of men like an engineer who was quoted in a recent article about a dispute over a road: "We had to design it in a vacuum."

To borrow a phrase from one of New York's more successful advertising efforts, all of us in transportation these days should be starting to "think small," or at least smaller - think in human sizes rather than in the sizes of systems.

We will be thinking of transportation as a service - not as a shiny, fast gadget with rights and privileges of its own.

We should be thinking of transportation as one of a range of functions of a city - obligated to bend with the city as does a library, a theater, a row of specialty shops.

Ultimately, our success in these efforts - and the success of our urban areas in dealing with their transportation problems on a comprehensive basis - will determine whether the central city as we know it today will survive.

There are those who are convinced it can't and won't. There are those who think we ought to forget about our central cities - except in terms of a kind of holding operation - and concentrate upon building so-called "new towns."

I don't know for certain what the future holds. I do know that we have to start where we are and with what we have. I do know that wherever we're headed, we must get there from here.

Recently I ran across this instructive description of the city of the future:

"From the train of moving seats in the darkest building, a visitor looks down on a miniature landscape far away. . . and finally he beholds the city itself with its quarter-mile towers, huge glass, and soaring among them four-level, seven-lane directional highways on which you can surely choose your speed - 100, 200 miles-an-hour. The city has abundant functions: fresh air, fine green parkways, recreational centers, all results of plausible planning and design. No building's shadow will touch another. Parks will occupy one third of the city area."

I found this vision instructive because it is not - as one might imagine - what some city planner in the year 1968 thinks we can achieve in the year 2000.

This description dates back to the 1939 World's Fair. And it refers to the city of 1960.

The moral, I think, is not that we should dream less, but that we should do more.

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