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REMARKS BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ALAN S. BOYD, BEFORE
THE 1968 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GREATER DALLAS PLANNING
COUNCIL AT A LUNCHEON MEETING IN THE SHERATON-DALLAS, DALLAS,
TEXAS, ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 1968

I am delighted to be here in Dallas - and with a group that has given not merely lip service, but magnificent life to the well known words of James Burnham: "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood, and probably themselves will not be realized."

I am fully aware of the number of impressive and exhaustive studies and plans you have undertaken here within the Greater Dallas area to help you discover and decide how transportation best serves your needs now and in the decades ahead.

As an old pilot and inveterate aviation enthusiast, I particularly want to congratulate you on the design of the proposed new airport between Dallas and Fort Worth - which surely represents one of the most advanced efforts yet to help keep both passengers and planes from losing on the ground all the time they save in the air.

In this connection, I am pleased to announce here today an important new effort by the Federal Aviation Administration that we hope will do a great deal to clear the air in and around our airports. The FAA is embarking on a three-year program which includes working with other government laboratories and industry in devising cleaner jet engines and cleaner fuels, as well as in establishing standards for measuring aircraft engine pollution and establishment of acceptable engine emission levels.

We plan to spend \$250-thousand during the next three years to deal with this problem. Preliminary studies indicate that airplanes contribute only about one-percent of the total waste matter in the air in metropolitan areas. But if we can trim even that small amount, we want to try.

We also have in the works - and I hope we will be able to announce shortly - a comprehensive program to insure that in all our aviation activities we fully comply with those sections of the Department of Transportation Act that call for the preservation and protection of our natural environment and our historic heritage.

These are but some of the small beginnings we are making toward insuring that our transportation system serve to enhance, not erode, the quality of our environment.

But I have no misgivings in talking about small beginnings in this city of great accomplishments.

For this city - now one of the greatest in the world - was launched over a century ago when an itinerant Tennessean named John Neely Bryan decided to settle down and start a ferryboat service below the West and Elm Forks of the Trinity River.

As far as I can see, you haven't missed the boat since.

An even longer time has passed - over a century and a half - since the idea of a Federal Department of Transportation was first broached during the Presidency of Thomas Jefferson.

Yet it wasn't until two years ago that another pioneer on the banks of another river was able to produce what succeeding decades had only postponed: when President Johnson asked the Congress, and the Congress agreed, 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 people.

And the key word here is people.

We have any number of highways that move many vehicles, but not very many 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 more 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 - assault our ears, erode 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.

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.

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 know how ably and energetically you here tonight have worked to develop in the Dallas area the kind of environment that allows its citizens the opportunities they need to live a fully human life.

I urge you not only to keep up - but to step up - your efforts.

Recently one of the country's leading urban "eggheads" reported that in study after study on metropolitan problems he "noted a surprisingly close relationship between the appearance of the city and the degree to which the layman had been involved in its plans - not merely as a supporter of a plan handed to him, but as a person deeply involved in the planning himself."

He went on to say that: "In every city where there has been first-rate planning, the businessmen have had to become involved in the politics of it, and in so doing they have learned to understand the function of urban design."

You have had a great deal to do with the pace-setting progress Dallas has made in transportation as in other areas.

But I know you would be the first to say there is a lot more that must be done. And I have every confidence that you're the kind of people who can get it done.

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