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

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION,
ALAN S. BOYD AT THE "HEAR THE PEOPLE" PANEL, RIDGEWAY SCHOOL
IN WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK, ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1968, 8:00 P.M.

I did not come to New York to read to you from the
Times.

Although - in view of the fact that the Times says
that on transportation issues Vice President Humphrey is
the obvious choice - it wouldn't be a bad idea.

Nor did I come all the way to New York to suggest
that you cast your vote solely on the positions the two
candidates have taken on transportation.

Although - on their records - that's not a bad idea,
either.

Actually, I came to see whether there's any mileage
in transportation as an issue.

There is almost no limit to the statistics that can be cited to emphasize the importance of transportation in an industrial nation. You can no more fight a war without it than you can mail a postcard. And it is essential to just about everything in between - to finding a job and holding it; to education; to fishing trips; and to eating regularly.

It is a major factor not only in the national economy but in the family economy. A family of four people with a \$10,000 income spends more on transportation than it does on anything else except food. It spends more for transportation than it spends on clothing, more than it spends on rent or house payments, more than it spends on taxes.

That alone - not to mention considerations of defense, of trade, of economic growth - would make it essential for the Federal Government to make major investments of time, energy and money in making the transportation system work better.

And that was one of the missions President Johnson assigned to us when he asked the Congress two years ago to create the Department of Transportation.

The transportation network, he said, is big and dynamic, but it is not good enough.

It is not good enough as long as it kills people on the highways at the rate of 53,000 a year; as long as its highways tear up landscape that can never be replaced; as long as it takes as long to drive from some cities to their airports as it takes to fly from airport to airport.

The first step in making improvements to the system was to consolidate all of the Federal transportation programs under one agency. That has been done. And we have spent the past 18 months analyzing the system; looking for ways to make it run more smoothly; getting research under way on concepts or hardware we think may lead to better coordination.

The system can be improved.

We can build better highways - highways with electronic guidance systems and computerized traffic controls; highways that flow through cities, not smash through them.

And we are moving in that direction.

We can build a better aviation system - a system that will carry more people at lower fares; a system that runs with greater safety on quieter engines through more efficient terminals.

And we are moving in that direction.

We can build clean, comfortable rapid transit systems that will give commuters faster trips; give cities cleaner air; and give pedestrians a fighting chance.

And we will build them.

We will build public transportation systems not only for commuters but to give the poor a better chance to find work; to give mobility to the elderly; to give people a choice they do not now have between driving and riding.

We can do all of these things sooner or later.

But we can do them sooner if we make one major transportation decision on November 5 - the decision to walk or ride to the nearest polling place and elect Mr. Humphrey President.

I confess to a provincial view of the election. I see it as a transportation issue where many people might not. And I would like you to look at it my way for a moment.

In the first place, what does the Republican platform say about transportation?

Well, it makes a four-square, ironclad guarantee to give air traffic control - and I quote - "expert evaluation." It doesn't say anything about the computers that will be needed to improve the system. It doesn't mention quieter engines. It doesn't say anything about lower fares. All it says is that it will provide "expert evaluation," and I think reasonable people have a right to regard that as a semantic shell game.

If the demand for transportation continues to expand as fast as its economy, the United States must double in less than two decades all of the capacity to move people and goods that it has taken the lifetime of the nation to build.

Nothing this country is doing - not the Interstate Highway program, not the space program - nothing will require the kind of research, planning and financial investment that this sort of massive expansion will mean.

And to meet that challenge, the Republican platform makes another of its no-nonsense, forward-looking pledges. It says the party will "explore" the use of trust-funds. It doesn't say it will establish them. It just says it will explore them.

There is not one word in the Republican platform about the high-speed train. There is, in fact, no word about railroads of any kind. Mr. Nixon has since elaborated on the Republican platform. He said the other day that he had serious doubts about whether the Federal Aviation Administration should remain in the Department of Transportation.

The Congress placed the F-A-A in the Department for a variety of reasons, but the most important reason is one you can see almost any day of the week simply by trying to drive to Kennedy International Airport during rush hour.

The F-A-A is in the Department because we have reached the point in this country where transportation must be treated as a total system.

We can no longer afford to build elegant airports without including in our plans for them a system of roads and rails and vertical-lift aircraft that will make it possible for people to reach them.

The transportation editor of a national magazine recently told of calling the airport in Chicago at 7 o'clock one night to ask whether he could get space on a plane leaving at 10:30. The ticket clerk told him there was plenty of space on the plane but that traffic to the airport was backed up so far there was no way he could get there before the plane left.

Now
We ~~not~~ have the agencies that plan highways and the airports in close coordination. What Mr. Nixon proposes is to go back to the old way - the method that produces the traffic jams around Kennedy and other major air hubs.

And if that is the sort of feeble notion he was feeding to the White House in the 1950's it is small wonder that President Eisenhower could never think of any of Mr. Nixon's ideas he was ever able to use.

The creation of the Federal Aviation Administration was a major advance, and Mr. Eisenhower is entitled to a great deal of credit for it.

We simply took the next logical step - made the F-A-A part of a team that works with transportation as a total system rather than with one part of it at a time.

We have taken the next logical step with projects like the Interstate Highway System, as well.

This 41,500 mile network of superhighways has made a significant contribution to travel and commerce in the United States.

But in too many cases, it helped the cities of the nation the same way you would be helping a man with a bucket full of water if you turned on another faucet.

Until this year, there was no provision for Federal aid for parking. And all of the highways we have been building into urban areas simply made it easier for more cars to get to town and harder for the cities to deal with them once they arrived.

This year in a series of major revisions in the Federal Highway Act, we made it possible to:

--Move ahead to complete the Interstate program.

--Soften the impact of highway construction on families - particularly the poor - who are displaced from their homes by giving them the help they need to find and move into decent dwellings. Under this bill, a highway cannot be built until the Federal Government is assured that families in its path have been resettled.

--Authorize state highway departments to buy rights-of-way in advance to help assure better planned and less expensive highway routes.

--Provide up to \$250 million a year in matching funds for cities to install new traffic control devices or create express lanes for buses or make any one of a number of adjustments that will increase the capacity of the streets and highways they already have. In some cases, these adjustments will make it unnecessary to go into major and expensive construction of new highways.

--Provide financial help for the construction of fringe parking facilities to tie in with public transportation, and thus make it possible to cut down on congestion in crowded downtown areas.

--Require highway planners to consider social and environmental factors in determining the location of highways in and around cities.

The Democratic platform made some real and relevant promises about transportation. But I think the new approach to highway construction and other achievements are as good an indication as any of this party's commitment to improving transportation in the United States.

These achievements include the first program of Federal aid for mass transportation in history. The amounts available to cities for subway construction and bus service are still small compared with the aid available for highways. But we are committed to a major effort to provide more funds in the future; to make it possible for cities to invest in public transportation on a scale that will make it fast enough and attractive enough to compete with the automobile.

The automobile and highway safety programs of this Administration represent the Federal government's first effort to - as President Johnson put it - replace suicide with sanity on American highways.

This program has been in operation for just two years. But our researchers tell us that such requirements as collapsible steering wheels, pop-out windshields and seat and shoulder belts will mean substantial reductions in traffic deaths over the next ten years.

The high-speed ground transportation program - which represents the first effort by anyone in or out of Government to produce a significantly new passenger train since World War II - was begun by this Administration.

Next Monday - in New London, Connecticut - I will take delivery of two jet-powered trains capable of speeds up to 170 miles an hour to start a two-year test program between Boston and New York.

These trains, which will run on New Haven track, will cut the travel time between those two cities by an hour. We hope they will tell us whether the people who say they miss luxury train service really mean it. And if they do mean it - and if the trains attract enough people to earn money - perhaps we will see a revival of passenger service over runs of intermediate distances.

This is not a one-issue campaign. There are many areas in which solid beginnings have been made to solve problems which must be solved if the country is to continue to prosper.

Transportation is certainly one of these. I know how the Democratic party feels about transportation. I know how Mr. Humphrey feels about it.

I think it is essential that he be allowed to build on the foundation that exists.

Thank you.

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