



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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REMARKS BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE, DASH 80 CEREMONY,
TRANSPO 72, DULLES AIRPORT, WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, MAY 26, 1972

It is my great honor as Secretary of Transportation to welcome to TRANSPO my good friend Bill Allen, Chairman of the Board of The Boeing Company, and the Dash 80, the aircraft that introduced commercial jet travel to America.

Twenty years ago there was a lot of debate in this country over the probable direction of our future air transportation. Most of it revolved around the possibility of jet powered airliners. Some people believed that jet transportation was not practical. Some said the airliners would require too much power to make them practical. Others claimed it would not be economical. Some implied that jet transportation would never be safe and would best be left to military aviation. Others questioned who would even want to fly across the Nation in four hours when there were already airplanes that would get you there in eight to ten hours?

But there were men in the United States who did not accept those arguments and one of them was Bill Allen, then President of The Boeing Company. He bet his company's financial future on the premise that jet transportation was not only a faster and more desirable means of moving people, but could be made safer and cheaper.

He took that risk and built an aircraft in Seattle called the Dash 80.

You saw it arrive today -- the Dash 80 is the prototype aircraft of what you all recognize as the 707.

Not only did Bill Allen and Boeing get their money back on that initial investment, but they introduced the world to a newer, faster, safer and far more pleasant means of travel.

Since the first flight of the Dash 80 in July 1954, some 18 years ago, America has discovered a new mobility in jet travel. The most distant reaches of this Nation are now less than lunch and dinner apart.

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Foreign nations have become international neighbors. And our quest for world understanding and cooperation can now be conducted on a personal basis.

Jet air travel is no longer a stranger. It has become the accepted means to move man in comfort and safety, at a reasonable cost, across great distances.

This seems like a lot of pioneering for one aircraft, but several years ago the Smithsonian Institution recognized that contribution when it selected the Dash 80 as one of the 12 most significant aircraft of all time, giving it a unique place in the world's aviation history.

With me here today are two men who helped write that history. One of them is Bill Allen, the man who had the foresight to gamble on the future of jet transportation and brought the lion's share of the commercial jet industry to America.

The other is Mike Collins, who I need not remind you, has traveled as far in a single trip as it is possible to fly when he piloted Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin safely to the moon and back. He is now Director of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Bill Allen:

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