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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE AT THE DAN RYAN RAPID TRANSIT DEDICATION CIVIC LUNCHEON, CRYSTAL BALLROOM, SHERATON-BLACKSTONE HOTEL, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, SEPTEMBER 26, 1969, 12:15 P.M.

They say Chicago is one of those places where the shortest distance between two points is always under construction. But that's good because if ever a nation needed to replace its outworn facilities this one does. The people of Chicago are to be congratulated for the leadership which produced an integrated transportation corridor of such scope and imagination.

I think we can all be proud of the exceptional cooperation among all levels of government which has made this project a success.

You are setting an example for the nation, and such examples are sorely needed. We see about us everywhere the consequences of failure to plan balanced transportation for our expanding cities. The job is tough and some people -- apparently -- would rather not think about it. But we must re-think our old fashioned attitudes and above all act if the urban centers of America -- the centers of productivity and creativity -- are to be saved from traffic paralysis, pollution, ugliness and decay.

With this project you have put your money on the same table with your beliefs. And we in Washington have followed through on our own commitments in good faith.

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The Dan Ryan Rapid Transit Extension is the largest passenger-carrying, federally-financed rapid transit project to go into service thus far in the United States. The Department of Transportation has invested \$52 million in the Dan Ryan rapid transit line alone, and \$79 million for transit throughout the Chicago area. And while we're citing figures, the entire federal commitment for transit in Chicago, including DOT and HUD funds, is \$113 million. That's substantial for even a city of this size. Then, of course, you added \$45 million from your own resources.

For that kind of money you have every right to expect results, and the projections say you'll be getting results. The Dan Ryan line will attract 95,000 passengers per day. About 29,000 will be lured away from other rapid transit lines, and 50,000 will come in by bus feeder lines. But 16,000 will be brand new riders -- and at 1.6 persons per automobile, think of how much traffic that will lift off crowded streets in the Loop!

It would be easy at a moment like this to think of this progress in conventional terms, and for the average commuter who travels on these new lines the big advantage will seem to be a few precious minutes saved off his schedule morning and night. But that is only the obvious part of the payoff. The rapid transit line we opened this morning means much more than a fast trip into town. It symbolizes the importance of using public transportation to reshape today's cities and build the better cities that we must have tomorrow.

You all know that we have submitted a Public Transportation Assistance Act to Congress which could help us to do nation-wide what you have achieved here in Chicago.

The President and I have asked for \$10 billion over a 12-year period to give this nation the mobility we must have if we are to maintain our productivity and assure a decent life for all Americans.

We have gone part of the way by building a magnificent Interstate Highway System. But highways alone are not enough. Highways can't always handle the traffic they generate. Highways must be supplemented by public transportation at the crucial points of overload and breakdown.

The states and cities do not have the resources for such expensive programs they need the federal help that the new bill would provide. Our request for "contract authority" -- a wholly legitimate financing device -- will assure them of the continuity that they need and that has guaranteed the success of the Interstate System.

The Public Transportation Act of 1969 should get the solid support of the movers and doers in every community, large and small, because it will help every one of those communities, regardless of size. We are working steadily with mayors, congressmen, senators and governors. Support is building up. I'm confident we'll get the bill we asked for.

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The time is ripe. People sense that transportation is not just either rails or rubber tires. Good transportation is the key to integrating and making effective all of our programs in education, housing, welfare, and employment. After all, what good are junior colleges and job training if you can't get to class? What good is housing that is inaccessible to jobs and shopping centers? The best opportunities in the world aren't much help if you can't get to where they're located. I'm particularly delighted that you have arranged for buses to feed into the Dan Ryan stations all along the way, thus serving patrons from lateral neighborhoods all over the South Side.

As I stood on that platform this morning I could see all about me the modes we need -- cars and trucks to one side, rails on the other. And overhead the third dimension of air travel.

I have no doubt that these modes are compatible. Over the next few years we are going to see many more examples of transportation corridors like this one. I'll go so far as to say that the intermodal corridor will become the wave of the Seventies. There just isn't any other way to achieve efficient mobility. We can't keep slicing our cities up with separate lanes for rails and highways and the newer modes that will be coming on line, like the air-cushion train and the personnel conveyor.

The ultimate reason why we must combine our corridors is that there just isn't enough land to go around. Joint planning and joint development along the rights-of-way is much cheaper than a lot of uncoordinated programs. The time will come when we shall routinely design and place apartments, schools, shopping centers and offices right alongside our transportation corridors.

Chicago leadership has taken us a step closer to that goal. The Dan Ryan line is the coming way to go.