



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

Remarks prepared for delivery by John A. Volpe,
Secretary of Transportation, before the Equal
Opportunity Conference, Washington, D. C.,
April 24, 1969, 10:00 A.M.

"DEEDS NOT WORDS"

I think the success of our efforts in equal opportunity will depend very much on the attitude with which we approach the job.

One way to begin this program is by telling yourself "I'm going to do it but I'm only going to do it because Volpe has ordered it."

Another way is to tell yourself, "I'll do my best but I know right now the whole thing isn't going to work."

If this is your approach, then -- to put it bluntly -- your attitude is unacceptable.

My friends, there is only one way to look at this assignment. I want you to tell yourself: "The Secretary is asking the impossible -- but I'm just the kind of a guy who can do the impossible."

The fact is, ladies and gentlemen, I am asking the impossible. I am asking you to help correct -- in a matter of months -- the end result of three hundred years of injustice. It can't be done you say. Well, the fact is that it must be done.

I know all the difficulties. I know we are operating under an employment freeze -- but we shall still be doing some hiring. In fact, it amounts to roughly 10,000 positions in the budget year.

I know, too, that we are required to hire only qualified personnel and that the competition for the qualified among our minority groups is keen. But we shall beat the competition. I know too that we must meet the requirements of the merit system. And I say we shall, for merit is what we seek.

I know 20 additional difficulties in achieving our goal. But I am asking you for 40 or 50 new approaches to overcome these difficulties. I want new directions -- new imagination -- new daring.

We must bear in mind, ladies and gentlemen, that we are not trying to resolve here a traditional or a customary problem. America's racial problems are unique. No nation in the history of the human race has ever faced an internal problem of the magnitude and intensity of the minority problem Americans today have inherited. Its resolution, consequently, will demand new dedication and purpose. It will demand the best of everything we have.

We Americans have, in our time, shortened the distances of the world through the speed of air travel. We have conquered space. We have become next door neighbors to the peoples of foreign lands through satellite communications. We have conquered most of the traditional illnesses of mankind. We have almost doubled human life expectancy.

We are eliminating illiteracy; we shall overcome poverty and hunger. We have done much. Yet the obstacles we surmounted in securing these benefits are nothing compared to the task of changing the minds and hearts of men.

But I believe that we can with our native American talent -- our energy -- our creativity -- reach just about any goal we seek. I have seen us do it many times. And we shall do it again. There is one requisite, however, one necessary ingredient -- we must all be convinced of the need.

Let me just say this: the end result of human collision and friction is explosion.

And so collision and friction must end. We must do our part in the Department of Transportation.

Steps have been taken already. They may be, perhaps, small steps -- but they are firm steps. And they are steps in the right direction.

I am aware, of course, that the FAA has two new top men -- both blacks -- in key positions. One is a GS 16, and the other is a GS 17.

I am aware too that the Highway Administration has added one black and is processing papers on two more -- again, all in so-called supergrade slots.

And the Railroad Administration too, will soon be hiring a systems analyst in a GS 16 category.

So you see, it can be done. And what these three Administrations have done has been accomplished in about 5 weeks.

I expect more from them. I expect more from all of you.

There are many tools available. Government laws are helpful. But we have been passing civil rights legislation for years, and we have not moved ahead fast enough. Funds, too, are necessary. But money alone won't do the job.

We need above all else the determination of people in decision-making positions. Leadership must lead, and this is where you come in. The best and most immediate contribution you can make as government officials is to give these members of our minority groups an opportunity to secure a respectable job and earn a good salary.

I can stress my own sense of the importance of this task in a few words. I am very much impressed by the talented and imaginative people we have in the Department. I shall be watching for the skill in which you carry out your responsibilities on the job -- in short, by your professional skill. But I shall be more impressed by your competence in managing this most difficult of all tasks -- this managing and executing of our insistence of full civil rights.

For my part, I have no doubt we shall succeed. You are doers and producers -- men of action. You shall give D-O-T's equal opportunity programs direction and momentum. We shall know better and happier times.

This Department's last equal opportunity conference was held some six months ago. I am anxious now to hear what progress has been made since that time.

#####



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE
BEFORE THE FIRST NATIONAL AVIATION SYSTEM PLANNING REVISION CONFERENCE
L'ENFANT PLAZA, WASHINGTON, D.C., APRIL 23, 1969

(In the event Secretary Volpe cannot attend, these remarks will be delivered
by Under Secretary James M. Beggs)

I want to welcome you to the Department of Transportation -- and to
L'Enfant Plaza. Unfortunately, the Department doesn't own L'Enfant Plaza.
But General Quesada -- our first FAA Administrator does. It looks like
Jack Shaffer has a very bright future.

I want to congratulate you leaders of the aviation industry and the people
at our Federal Aviation Administration for arranging this conference. It represents
sound government-industry cooperation at its best. I was, in fact, so impressed
with the plans for this meeting that when I first heard of them, I asked that the
date be postponed to permit all the members of our new Transportation team to
participate. I wanted them to be part of this meeting. I think all parties
will benefit. I might mention our new Transportation team is very much aviation
minded. My number one assistant -- Jim Beggs -- is from the National Aeronautics
and Space Administration; Paul Cherington heads our policy staff and Secor Browne
is in charge of our research and development. And Jack Shaffer you all know.

- more -

I also want to mention Ben Darden who heads our new FAA Office of Aviation Policy and Plans. Ben just came to us from New York where he was a member of Mayor Lindsay's staff charged with formulating air transportation policies. Before that he was on the City's Planning Commission. He's young -- 32 -- a veteran FAA air traffic controller and a lawyer. And we think that's a good combination of experience.

My advice to you can be stated directly -- think big! There is no other way!

The prime assignment President Nixon handed me when I became a member of his Cabinet was to prepare a long-range plan for meeting the Nation's growing transportation needs. The first projections of our Nation's future growth are beginning to come in. They are absolutely astonishing! Certainly, you in aviation are familiar with the expansion in your own industry. But we look to tremendous growth in every mode of transportation.

One of the main reasons for this growth is of course, population increases. Twenty-four hours from now -- at 9:45 tomorrow morning, America's population will be some six thousand souls greater than it is right now. But transportation demand is increasing faster than the population and one of the consequences is that there will be seven thousand more airline passengers tomorrow than there are today. Another -- and this is not your problem but it is certainly one of mine -- tomorrow there will be ten thousand more vehicles on our Nation's highways than there are today. But in the face of this, I still submit that our future is bright indeed; so let me suggest as a theme for this meeting a section of the famous quotation of James Burnham that one airline publicized a few years back, I quote: "Make no small little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood." Again, gentlemen -- think big. There is no other way!

I would also urge that you leaders of the aviation community use your time here together to discuss informally among yourselves another matter -- a matter that is the natural consequence of your deliberations here.

I have during the past month had the opportunity -- along with my fellow members of the Cabinet -- to work on the national budget. We have been looking deep into the government's cash drawer. I know what is in there now. I know what expenses we have coming up. I know what income we can expect. And I tell you frankly, gentlemen, the government, under the existing arrangements, cannot provide the facilities needed to support the predicted growth of your industry. Additional funds are needed, and they are simply not going to come wholly from the Federal Government. The money must come from those who derive special benefit from these new airport/airways facilities.