



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY U.S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE AT THE O'HARE TOWER DEDICATION, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, TUESDAY, MAY 18, 1971, 10:00 A.M.

I can't think of any observance more fitting for National Transportation Week. Here we are dedicating the most modern and the most advanced air traffic control tower in the world and it is located at the busiest airport in the world. Also -- and this is something I've known for quite a while -- it will be operated by the best air traffic controllers in the world.

This new tower is indicative of aviation's tremendous future. We have built this facility to meet today's needs, certainly. It is needed to handle O'Hare's 2,000 operations a day. That's an incredible figure just by itself. But look ahead. Look ahead just a few years and the figures predicted for aviation's growth become almost breathtaking. The scheduled airlines throughout the country are now carrying more than 173 million passengers a year. Despite present level-offs, we expect them to pick up momentum and during the next decade increase at an average rate of about 10 percent a year. Ten years from now, we expect the airlines to be carrying more than half a billion passengers. O'Hare International is going to be a very busy place. We look for a 33 percent increase in operations by 1982 -- above the 800,000 mark.

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Transportation: Filling the Needs of a Growing America...

This new tower is first in another respect. It houses the first type of a new automated control system. This "Arts-Three" System centers around a UNIVAC Computer. This computer collects and assembles data from several sources -- and arranges this data in a display on the controller's scope showing their various aircraft, their identity, their altitude, ground speed and control symbols.

This new equipment will make for more efficient use of both airspace and the airport. It will facilitate the flow of traffic and thus reduce congestion and delays.

The Government-Industry team which perfected this system deserves congratulations. Its members have done well.

I want to point out that while one of our agencies -- the Federal Aviation Administration -- has been building this tower -- working to provide for the pilot and his aircraft, another of our agencies is concerned with the O'Hare passenger. Our Urban Mass Transportation Administration, working in partnership with the City of Chicago is helping to finance a study which will determine O'Hare's future mass transit needs.

It is imperative to note, however, that all the improvements we are making and will make here at O'Hare are not going to be sufficient. You and I both know we are going to need another airport here in the Chicago area. The planners at our Federal Aviation Administration anticipate that 10 years from now, O'Hare will have to accommodate 38 million passengers a year. But that is impossible and hence the need for a new field. There is much work to be done in every mode of transportation if we are going to be ready for the future -- if we are -- as we must -- expand and grow.

It is this larger challenge of "filling the needs of a growing America" that should concern us during National Transportation Week. And I think the dimensions of this problem have best been set by President Nixon in his Proclamation setting aside this week for transportation. "We are now" -- the President said -- "entering a new era in transportation -- an era in which our national mobility will demand the continued conquest of time and space -- yet our National conscience will no longer permit irreparable damage to our land, our environment, or the social fabric of our communities ... it is in this light that transportation faces its challenge of the future.

"To meet this challenge" -- the President continues -- "we will need a truly balanced transportation system -- a system that provides our citizens with the ability to choose the most efficient means of transportation at the least possible cost to themselves ... and to the environment. I ask for the help of all citizens in achieving this goal."

I think these thoughts of President Nixon give us our marching orders for the future.

I am aware our dedication ceremonies here today revolve around the tower of tomorrow that we must concern ourselves with future challenges. At the same time, however, I think we are also justified in glancing backwards for a moment -- glancing backwards with some sense of satisfaction.

Our airlines had a great accident free year last year in their scheduled operations. There is **praise enough** in this for everybody. And I suggest no little credit for this accomplishment must go to our air traffic controllers. These men deserve the thanks of all who travel by air. Each carrier flight can involve the services of ten to twenty-five different controllers. So much rests on their competence and judgment. And yet they are most unknown -- working as they do in towers and centers removed from the glamour and excitement of airports and aircraft. So let me -- as one air traveler -- use this occasion to say -- thanks very much for the wonderful service you have given and shown me. I am most appreciative.

And now let me thank you for inviting me out here. I congratulate everybody who had a part in building this new tower and putting together the wonder Arts-Three System. All this represents a great advance for aviation, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Department of Transportation, and the air travelers of the nation.

Thank you.

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