



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE BEFORE THE OKLAHOMA CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AERONAUTICAL CENTER, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1969, 12:00 NOON

I feel very much at home in Oklahoma City. It is an aviation city -- and the home of this great FAA Aeronautical Center, of course. The Department of Transportation is a major part of your community, and we are delighted with the fine relationship that has existed over the years.

We in the Department of Transportation have had the benefit of a unique lease arrangement with the Oklahoma City airport trust, and Oklahoma city businessmen have, I hope benefitted from the more than \$50 million in payrolls and funds spent here each year by our Federal Aviation Administration. We are proud of the fact that our Department has the second largest payroll here in this key aviation industry city.

But our transportation connections with Oklahoma are not confined to aviation alone. Our Federal Highway Administration has provided a total of \$476 million in Federal funds to assist you in building both your interstate highways and in building and improving your primary and secondary road systems. And our Urban Mass Transportation Administration has provided over \$600,000 in assisting the Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority in purchasing buses for your transit program.

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Your city, consequently, is no stranger to our Department.

These direct ties between our Department of Transportation and your city will, I hope, be only the beginning.

This Administration has made recommendations to the Congress that call for new commitments by the Federal government, and offer hopeful avenues of progress for the future.

Among these recommendations is one of particular importance to the Department of Transportation: the Airport/Airways Bill.

Our airport/airways proposal commits this country to the most extensive improvement of aviation facilities in history.

This bill foresees a 10-year program of expanding and improving the Nation's airports and airways with funds derived in part from new user charges. These user charges -- on airline tickets, air freight waybills, and on general aviation fuel -- will produce more than \$9 billion over the next 10 years.

From these new revenues, \$2.5 billion will go into grants for airports. These grants, matched by local communities, means at least \$5 billion to airports in the Seventies. The balance of the funds will be used toward the \$12 billion that will be needed in the next decade to operate, maintain and expand the Nation's airways.

The need for this legislation is evident in the fantastic figures that tell of today's aviation growth. A growth, incidentally, which has a direct bearing on the future of this aviation-oriented city.

Our air carriers add 40,000 new passengers every day.

Our general aviation aircraft fleet is expanding its flying hours by 4,000 hours a day.

The services provided to aviation by FAA, moreover, don't come cheap. You men and women here today know the size of this Aeronautical Center. But that is only a supporting system. Throughout the Nation, our FAA air traffic control system includes more than 4,000 field installations. These include, at the top, the 400-man en route air traffic control centers with complete radar coverage. At the bottom of the list are simple, unmanned radio beacons.

And we have been increasing the number of people in this system all the time. Ten years ago we had a total of 12,000 people in our centers, towers and flight service stations. Today we have 24,000. To meet the expanding needs of the industry, we shall have to increase these air traffic personnel to 43,000.

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On the maintenance side, we now have 6,500 electronic technicians. Ten years from now, we shall need a total of 11,000.

I cite these figures to give you a sense of the heavy costs incurred by our government in operating the airways system on which aviation depends. Broken down in terms of individual flights, these costs figures are even more surprising.

We have determined that the cost to the government of one average IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) which means the plane is always under FAA air traffic control -- the cost of just one of these flights from Boston to New York -- 185 miles -- is about \$54. Even a non-instrument flight which involves the use only of one of flight service stations and a tower has a cost that must be borne by the taxpayers. One of these flights from say Tulsa to Wichita -- only 130 miles -- costs the government about \$12.

It is a policy of this Administration that those who derive direct and special benefits should pay for these benefits.

It was on the basis of these factors that the President proposed the establishment of a series of user charges in order to insure aviation's expansion.

I am happy to report this legislation is being well received in Congress and I am optimistic that it will be enacted into law. Its passage will mean that aviation will have more resources than it ever had before. Passage of this legislation will bring about a new era in aviation progress; a new era that will be directly reflected here in Oklahoma City.

I do not need to emphasize the importance of aviation growth to the prosperity and development of Oklahoma City. But this future of aviation has a wider application.

Any failure of aviation to grow will result in a definite slowing down of the whole economy. Let there be no doubt about that. And this is my major concern today. I want to see business grow and prosper. I want to see your business grow and prosper. I want to see larger payrolls. I want to see our economy expand. My interest is in the future. John Galsworthy once said, "If you do not think about the future, you cannot have one." I know from experience the truth of those words.

We must begin thinking about that future now. We must start moving toward it now. And let us, you and I, move out toward that future together for we have common goals.

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