



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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COMMENTS BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION CLAUDE S. BRINEGAR AT THE TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY CONFERENCE ON INFLATION, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, SEPTEMBER 20, 1974

Good morning.

On behalf of my co-hosts from the Congress, I would like to formally welcome all of you to this meeting of 80 key people representing all aspects of the transportation sector. This session is one of nearly a dozen specialized meetings being held around the Nation prior to the Conference on Inflation to be held in Washington on September 27 and 28. President Ford has asked me to bring you his greetings and his personal thanks for your participation.

Our objective today is to find out what you think can and should be done about the Nation's terrible problem of inflation. We want to know how inflation is affecting you, and what you would do to lick it. Please let me assure you that my colleagues from Congress and I are here to listen and learn, not to lecture. As President Ford said at the first session in Washington on September 5:

"The President cannot lick inflation. The Congress cannot lick inflation. Business, labor, agriculture and other segments of America cannot lick inflation. Separately we can only make it worse, but together we can beat it to its knees."

Today, we want your suggestions -- your positive and practical suggestions -- for beating inflation "to its knees."

I ask that your initial comments be structured along the lines of the two main categories that were outlined in the attachment to the President's letter of invitation: first, comments about the overall economy and the level of Federal expenditures; and, second, comments about various specific issues in the transportation sector.

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I also ask that you do what you can to avoid rhetoric and obvious self-interest in your statements. Let's speak to the issues directly, broadly, and fairly. Let's concentrate on realistic advice that the President and the Congress can put to good use. While there are no single answers, there clearly have to be some answers. We are here today to try to sort them out and to see to what extent we agree or disagree on what should be done in the difficult days ahead.

From the discussions that take place at today's session we will organize a 45-minute summary that will be presented at the full Conference in late September. I expect to ask 4 or 5 of today's participants to help me with that presentation. All of you are, of course, invited to the Washington Conference.

Today's session is organized as follows:

1. The balance of the morning will be devoted to what I hope will be 5-minute prepared statements from the various constituent groups that are represented here today.
2. At lunch we will break up into 8 small groups (to which you have each already been assigned) composed of cross-sections of all the constituents and chaired by one of my co-hosts from Congress. These luncheon groups will spend their time debating the morning statements and other related ideas, and then report back to the full group, starting at 2:15 p.m. In these reports I will ask for a statement both from each group's chairman and also from a "summarizer" selected by the chairman.
3. At the conclusion of these statements we will then open the session for discussion. At about 6 p.m. a couple of us will attempt a summary.

This distinguished group's key role in making the Nation's transportation system function is well known. I now ask that you put your talents to work to help us solve the Nation's Number One problem -- inflation.

And now, let's go to work.

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