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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

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EXCERPTS OF REMARKS BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE ON
OPENING OF NEW PORT OF INDIANA, PORTAGE, INDIANA, FRIDAY, JULY 17, 1970

I am very much impressed by this new Port of Indiana -- Burns Waterway Harbor. This represents planning at its best. With the construction of these facilities, you have carved out a good share of future business.

I congratulate all of you -- you, Governor Whitcomb and the members of your staff -- the Indiana Port Commission, local authorities here in Porter County, and everyone connected with this great achievement. You have done well; and I am happy that the Federal government has played such a significant role as well.

The Port of Indiana is truly a national asset.

I can best emphasize the significance and value of this new Port of Indiana by citing three trends -- three concurrent changes on the national scene.

The first is the sheer growth in our population and our economy. The facts on our population are immediate and staggering. By this time tomorrow, we shall have 6,000 additional fellow American citizens than we do right now.

And our more than two hundred million Americans are busy. In the next five years, economists predict, the average value of new products and services produced in the United States will increase each day -- each day, mind you, by nearly \$200 million.

This is not just the total day's production. This will be the amount of daily increase. This will be new business.

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But this increase in population and production is not uniform for there is another change. The word is urbanization.

Population experts foresee three giant urban areas -- one on the East Coast from Portland, Maine to Richmond, Virginia. Another on the West Coast from San Francisco to San Diego. And the third -- right here where we are, the south shores of the Lakes -- from Cleveland to Milwaukee. This busy, productive area of yours will become even busier in the future.

The third factor is the ever increasing demand for transportation. The facts are overwhelming. We are adding more than 12,000 vehicles to our highways every day. Domestic airlines will triple their passenger miles in 10 years. (They doubled in the last 4 years.)

Truck tonnage will increase by 50% in the coming decade. Our railroads are carrying 15 million additional ton miles every day, despite their rapidly-multiplying problems. And waterborne commerce, especially in the Great Lakes, is forecast to expand in concert with other modes of transportation. In fact, St. Lawrence Seaway tonnage so far this year is almost 30% over the same period in 1969.

One dramatic fact summarizes this transportation increase ... to meet future demands, we shall -- in the next 18 years -- have to double our total transportation capacity. We shall have to provide in these 18 years as much transportation capacity as was provided in the first 200 years of our Nation's history.

It is this exciting future, then, that forms the backdrop against which we must examine this new Port of Indiana. And against this backdrop, one fact emerges. This new Port will be much needed and it will be needed, moreover, to fulfill the needs of the people of Indiana. Your state is already an active user of the Seaway. You are a major exporter of soybeans and grain. The steel making complexes here are among the busiest and best in the world.

This new Port will now enable you to make another contribution in the form of general cargo. But general cargo is a shipping term -- a term for products -- and products made by Indiana workmen. This means jobs. There is no question that this new Port of Indiana will result in the creation of many thousands of new jobs in this state. In fact, Indiana University's "Hartley Report" of 11 years ago estimated that what with the harbor and the resulting industrial development about 60,000 new jobs would be created. And in a growing, moving nation, jobs are vital to success. That is the true meaning of our ceremony here today.

Let me note, however, that success will not be automatic. The key to this new facility -- and indeed, to all of the development of these Great Lakes as a natural but underutilized transportation right of way -- is imaginative, creative thinking. And the word I emphasize is imaginative.

We must begin to think of these Great Lakes waterways and the St. Lawrence Seaway as partners with other modes -- not competitors -- in a truly intermodal transportation system. The fact is that in the decade of the 70's, the problem will not be how to beat the competition. The question, rather, will be how can we work together with the other modes to jointly meet the great challenges. And the answer will lie in the availability of these "interface" facilities -- like your new Port of Indiana -- which bring the shipping, railroad and highway transportation modes together.

We in the Department of Transportation -- administering as we do the American side of the St. Lawrence Seaway -- are determined to develop promote this great waterway. We are looking to introducing more modern systems, increasing the length of the Seaway season, encouraging more American flag service, and creating a better understanding of the potential of the Seaway.

We are also determined to minimize any barriers that may be inhibiting Seaway growth. I am happy to announce that we are now beginning a new study of inland rail rates to determine their effect on Seaway utilization. There has been much discussion of this problem. We want the facts. We shall get them. We shall make them public.

I am also privileged to tell you that this Administration is well aware of the financial problems which face the St. Lawrence Seaway and we have them under very careful study.

Because of the delicacy of this problem, I'm not going to do into any details. I would emphasize, however, my complete confidence that traffic on our Seaway will grow. And you here today -- by the opening of this New Port of Indiana -- are demonstrating this same confidence. You are contributing to the future -- and that future will be bright and prosperous.

But I emphasize that we in Washington cannot by ourselves promote this Seaway. We need your help -- for this is, in fact your Seaway. The jobs it helps to create will be Indiana jobs. The port revenues will be Indiana revenues. So I ask all of you here today to ask yourselves, "What can I do to help promote the Seaway?" And then go to work!

I know if we have you people of Indiana working with us, we are on our way forward to big things.

And so today, I am happy to welcome the State of Indiana and its new Port to our Seaway system. I am confident, moreover, our partnership will be long and productive -- for all parties.

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