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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

29-S-71

EXCERPTS OF REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY U.S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE TO THE COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF CALIFORNIA, SHERATON PALACE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, FRIDAY, MAY 21, 1971, 12:05 P.M.

Let me say first that it is indeed an honor to be here. The Commonwealth Club of California has an outstanding reputation -- an international reputation -- as a meaningful forum for discussion of the issues that face civilized society.

When I first took on this job some of the "whiz kids" in our research section were giving me a briefing and casually mentioned that transportation capacity in the United States will be called upon to double in the next twenty years.

I sent them back to check their figures. They came back and said, "Mr. Secretary -- we were wrong. It's more like 18 1/2 years."

So you see, the challenge of keeping this nation on the move is a massive one. Think of it. Twice the transportation capacity.

Now obviously that doesn't mean twice as many cars and trucks, planes and trains. It doesn't mean twice as many miles of pavement, twice as many parking lots.

What it means is that we simply must get more "bang" for our transportation buck. It means we must better utilize the facilities already in place. It means we must check and double check every additional inch of planned new construction.

It means that in our thoroughly-urbanized society where there is no longer a frontier we must take special precautions that transportation "improvements" do not ride roughshod over the other vital aspects of civilized society.

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Mark my words, we know full well that airports can have harmful effects upon the environment. That's the basic reason why we called a halt to construction of a magnificent new-generation International Jetport scheduled for construction in the Florida Everglades.

We know that highways -- while providing the basic backbone of our transportation network -- cannot be allowed to wipe out historic or especially scenic areas. That's why we put the clamp on an expressway through the Vieux Carre in New Orleans and on a freeway in New Hampshire that would have run right under the nose of the legendary "Old Man of the Mountain". Environmental considerations crop up in everything we do -- including airport site selection, emissions from internal combustion engines, control of ocean pollution on our shipping lanes, and even protection for moose who -- in wintertime -- like to consider the main line of the Alaska Railroad their own private right-of-way.

How, then, do we provide for this doubling of transportation capacity while coping with the social challenges of what Harvard Business School's Transportation Professor Paul Cherington calls the "transportation counter-revolution"? How do we satisfy the economic and growth needs of an increasingly affluent mobile society while still working -- as we truly must work -- to preserve and enhance the quality of life in this enlightened age?

Let me quote Professor Cherington at greater length. He says, "In the old days, highway planning was a relatively simple matter. A traffic count was made; a 20-year forecast was run out; and a road was cut through in as straight a line as possible. Since the road almost inevitably attracted more traffic, it was presently widened." Dr. Cherington goes on to point out that "so simplistic a process is no longer acceptable. Now there must first be extensive land-use studies, studies of alternative means of transport and alternative routes. The communities must be consulted. When the alignment is finally determined those in the path of the road must be relocated. The road made much safer. It may have to be run in a depressed right-of-way or in a tunnel, with ventilating systems to carry away the fumes." "In short," he concludes, "the process is far more complicated, time consuming and costly. But it is necessary to meet the demands of the transportation counter-revolution."

The creation of the Department of Transportation, and its establishment four years ago, has been one of the first steps taken in this Nation as we work to meet the exalating demands and the associated social constraints.

First of all, we have aimed for higher visibility of the problem. We have driven home the fact that none of the necessities and amenities of life -- urban and rural -- are worth a hoot and a holler in this day and age without the unifying thread of a transportation system. A balanced system, offering alternatives and backups. And it is important to note the difference between what one might call a transportation "network" and the "system" we are striving for. A "network" may have highways here, railroad tracks over here, and airports in between. But the various modes aren't really connected and integrated. A "system", on the other hand, ties the modes together, enables us to utilize the best of each. It provides "interfaces" rather than dead-ends.



There is another aspect to our planning for a National Transportation "System" -- co-ordinated in theory by Government and carried out in actual fact by private enterprise. And that is utilization of advanced technology to solve our mobility problems. Whether it is an economical and workable "people mover" (such as we hope to demonstrate in Morgantown, West Virginia) or a quiet short takeoff-and-landing airplane that can effectively serve close-in airports, there is a vast array of on-the shelf-technology that is available for tapping.

Just this morning I sped across San Francisco Bay on one of the Coast Guard's experimental air cushion boats -- a type of craft that may well have an application in high speed ferry service in cities such as this one, or in Seattle, Miami, New Orleans or New York. Yesterday afternoon I did something a lot of people here in the Bay Area have been waiting to do -- I rode a BART Train over in Oakland. And believe me, that's going to be a transit system that will be the envy of the world. The people of the Bay Area are to be solidly congratulated -- again and again -- for their willingness to pay so much of the cost, making the commitment long before substantial Federal funding for such projects became available.

Day before yesterday, I rode a special new vehicle -- powered by a Linear Induction Motor -- out in the Colorado Desert at our Department's new High Speed Ground Test Site. The Linear Induction Motor -- which produces almost no noise or pollution-- will, we hope, be the motive power for tracked air cushion vehicles that will run along guideways between cities at speeds of up to 300 miles-an-hour. So yes, technology is destined to play a major role in transportation.

It must. Because, getting back to the 20-year forecast, we are always reminded that better transportation efficiency comes from:

- (1) Reaching higher speeds with vehicles now in existence,
- (2) Getting more people into each of those vehicles, and
- (3) Operating all of those vehicles within a more efficient spatial relationship.

To put it another way, we will double our transport capacity only if we can move people and goods at high speeds in large numbers in what the layman would call a "bumper to bumper" configuration. Needless to say, we must do this with full consideration for safety.

Let me give you an example. On Tuesday morning, I dedicated the new control tower at O'Hare Field in Chicago, the world's busiest airport. This tower's facilities include the new Arts-Three Radar System -- one on which the screen not only shown "blips" where the airplanes are, but also flashes -- in print on the screen right next to each blip -- the plane's identification, its altitude, its direction and speed. Armed with this information, the air traffic controllers will be able to better utilize the air space surrounding O'Hare.



They'll know how fast each plane is going, how high it is, and who it is. They'll be able to let those blips come a little closer together and still be providing maximum safety for air travelers. The new Arts-Three System going into O'Hare -- and subsequently into 26 other locations across the Nation -- is just an indication of what we are up to.

As we look to that point two decades down the road (or 18 1/2 years, as I said) we recognize that the immediate future is destined to be a time of great change in the character, composition and complexion of transportation in America.

In proclaiming this as National Transportation Week, President Nixon has said: "We are entering an era in which our national mobility will demand the continued conquest of space and time, yet our national conscience will no longer permit irreparable damage to our land, our environment, or the social fabric of our communities.

"To meet the challenge of the future," the President goes on, "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."

These words from the President give us our marching orders for the future.

He has called for the upgrading of every mode of transportation. More important, he emphasizes a balanced system, assuring adequate, agreeable transportation for all the people under all circumstances.

Yet as desirable as all this might be -- and regardless of how fervently I speak, or you listen -- success in improving transportation will be neither instant nor cheap.

Nevertheless, the major fiscal foundations necessary to a policy of transportation progressiveness are already in place. 1970 was a landmark year in transportation legislation. We went out and got ourselves some tools.

There were four major transportation improvement bills proposed by the President and passed by the Congress that provide for aggressive programs in aviation, public transit, highways and railroads. Each of the measures stresses the importance of long-term planning and the application of resources commensurate with demand. Together they provide the tools and the resources needed to cope with the problems of today, and to meet the transportation needs of the Nation in the years ahead.



I refer to the Airport-Airways Act, the Urban Mass Transportation Act, The Federal Aid Highway Act of 1970, and the Rail Passenger Service Act.

With these tools, we will be able to upgrade our airports and the airway system, we will be able to assist cities and towns with public transportation, we will bring the magnificent interstate highway system close to completion -- while coping with the problems of safety and beautification -- and we have rescued rail passenger service from what surely would have been total oblivion.

The Fiscal Year 1972 Department of Transportation budget -- now pending before the Appropriations Committee, carries forward the purposes of the legislation. Understandably, the budget request of \$8.4 billion is larger than ever before. But it includes more than ever before. I might note that one not-insignificant item is \$600 million for research and development. We fully intend to meet the challenge of the future.

We are committed to nothing short of a drastic overhaul of the modes and means of transportation. We have to be. We intend to change travel habits in the inner city, and between suburb and city. Indeed, Bill Ruckleshaus who heads up the new Environmental Protection Agency, claims we will soon have to forbid private autos from the center city as we continue to increasingly fill city air with poisonous exhausts. We must act.

AMTRAK -- small at the start, and starting with slender resources -- will put rail passenger service back on the track -- if the public responds.

We are clearing the congestion of the airways. We are reconciling transportation's demands with the fixed demands of the environment. And -- most importantly -- travel, especially highway travel -- must become eminently safer.

The overall process is under way. We have our fingers on the technology, we have the basic financial tools, and we have the national resolve necessary.

All of us expect more of our society than did our Grandfathers and their Fathers before them. Our standards of performance are high. Our recognition of our natural world's weaknesses is greater. We can look at both our ambitions and our limitations with a measured glance.

We know the challenge of the future, and we are determined to meet it. We shall need the support of all America.

We shall need an understanding and a determination that we can do whatever we want, and that we also know what to do.

The slogan for National Transportation Week this year is: "Transportation... Filling the Needs of a Growing America." We cannot stop the growth. We will not stop it. The need must be filled, and it is a job we can do.

I trust all Americans -- urban residents, rural residents -- those in suburbia as well -- will help us grasp the challenge and reach our goals.

Thank you.