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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE BEFORE THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF AIRPORT EXECUTIVES IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, MAY 12, 1970

I hope you will consider me today as one of your colleagues. As you know, one of the fringe benefits of being Secretary of Transportation is the privilege of operating two major airports. I guess I don't have to tell you fellows how much fun that is. Let me just put it this way .. right now I have the best brains in our Department figuring out a way that will get me out of the business ... I appreciate that every business has days when everything goes wrong -- but not every day of the week.

I have been looking forward to this meeting. I wanted to be with you last year but I had a slight nasal infection and the doctor said no travelling in a pressurized cabin. My intention last year was to ask your help on some proposed legislation. My purpose today is to thank all of you for a very successful job. The Airport and Airways Development Act of 1970 sailed through the House by a vote of 337 to 6. In the Senate we won by 77-0. A victory of these dimensions means a lot of people went to work -- both outside of Washington -- as well as those in the Capital city -- I want to thank all those people right now.

I am certain that not all of you are happy with every provision of the bill. I've been in public life almost twenty years now and I can tell you no piece of legislation is ever perfect for everybody. Taken as a whole, however, this Airport and Airways Development Act is just about the most significant piece of aviation legislation ever passed by the Congress. It will provide us with funds to eliminate the shortages that have hindered the growth of aviation. It will provide us with the tools to help aviation grow and prosper. We have achieved through this legislation a major victory.

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No one knows better than you members of AAE that we have one heck of a lot of catching up to do in aviation. And we are catching up.

For the first time in aviation history, the system will be financed from a trust fund derived in part from user charges. This means, obviously, that revenues to enlarge the system will increase commensurate with demand. The past decade saw demands far exceeding the resources. Now, those days are over.

The second underlying assumption also derives from the fact that the users of the system are paying for it. Their right to speak out and participate in its development consequently, is now clear and unmistakable. All members of the aviation industry will be called on to submit their views and share in the decision-making process.

And we shall be seeking your help. Our plan will be good only to the extent that industry participates in the annual revisions and changes we make. We shall sponsor each year an annual planning review conference in which we will be soliciting your observations and suggestions.

The passage of the new legislation means that we in government can now accelerate our work. For the past three years, our Federal Aviation Administration has been drawing up a tremendous master plan to develop and build during the next ten years a true national aviation system. This plan has been developed in cooperation with all elements of the aviation industry. The end product of all this work is a large book -- the National Aviation System Plan -- Ten Year Plan 1971-1980. This book details everything we shall be needing in the next ten years to bring our airports and airways to levels sufficient to meet our growing aviation demands.

And I want to add right here that I find this National Aviation System Plan a most impressive document. It represents a monumental job of the most imaginative and most exact planning. It lists in detail the number and types of personnel we shall have to employ and when we shall need them. It lists in detail every nav-aid we shall need, every facility, in sum, every piece of equipment -- and how much it costs -- right down to the last dollar. This plan -- in its magnitude and completeness of detail -- is a masterpiece.

As far as airports are concerned, the plan follows the general precepts of the past. Only those airports considered necessary to meet the needs of civil aeronautics will be eligible for federal-aid. There are approximately 9500 civil airports in the country today. Of these 3,168 are included in the National Airport System. We shall need, in addition, 809 new airports in the next ten years. By 1980, allowing for conversions and abandonments, the National Airport System will consist of 3,950 airports.

We estimated the total cost of this development of the National Airport System over the next 10 years would come to a total of \$5 billion. And I am happy to report that the Congress is providing sufficient funds -- \$2 1/2 billion as the Federal share. Here's how it will start out.

Under the terms of the bill, we shall be obligating during the coming fiscal year \$280 million in Federal assistance (which is a big jump I might note, over last year's \$34 million.) In the following fiscal year -- ending June 30, 1972, we shall be obligating \$560 million and in the following fiscal year ending in June 1973 -- \$840 million.

While many of the precepts of the Federal-aid airports plan are being continued, the new legislation includes a number of changes. The new act represents, in effect, a whole new ball game. Consequently, I urge you airport officials who are contemplating applying for grants to study the new provisions.

Under the new measure, our Federal Aviation Administration will be certificating air carrier airports. We are beginning work on minimum safety standards now. And I want to assure you right here that we shall be meeting with you in developing these standards. You are the pros in the business. You are working with the problems every day. You know what's needed. We shall be in close contact with you.

I also want to note that this matter of certification represents no change in basic philosophy. We're not trying to take over the airport business. This provision was inserted by the Congress solely in the interest of safety. The present arrangement of Federal aid to airports owned and operated by local authorities is the best system from every point of view.

I would also call your attention to the provision for planning grants. This is also an aviation "first". The bill sets aside \$75 million with disbursements not to exceed \$15 million in any year. These grants will be made on a two-thirds Federal and one-third local basis. They will be available, first, to planning agencies to design airport systems. That is, they will be given to state and large metropolitan agencies to determine what airports will be needed and where.

These planning grants will also be available to public agencies to design airport master plans. This is most important. It insures that land-use planners will now incorporate airports into their overall city plans. The airport will be an integral part of the metropolitan plan.

The importance of the airport is obvious to you and to me. But -- as you know -- not to a lot of people. The jet engine -- and the increasing prosperity of our people -- have made the airplane a vehicle of mass transportation. Aviation is now one of the largest intercity passenger modes, and to the transportation minded, the airborne segment is only part of the trip. Ground transportation facilities must be incorporated into all airport master plans.

Detailed and thoughtful planning is also needed to provide for the flow of the future huge crowds of passengers that will pass through your airports. The 747's are here. The other large capacity jets are on their way. And the L-500, I remind you can load and unload 150 tons of cargo. That 150 tons could be 120 automobiles. As fantastic as all this sounds, this is the story of the future and it must play a part in any long range future aviation planning.

And provision must be made, too, for the SST.

There is a strange theory abroad today -- a sort of species of "ostrich logic" -- to the effect that if the United States builds no supersonic transport, there will be no such aircraft in existence. I remind these people -- and I am speaking to those outside aviation -- that there are two different SST prototypes now flying. I would remind these same people, also, that BAC 111's and Caravelles are very much a part of our transportation picture. We do buy foreign-made aircraft. And lest anyone doubt Russian intentions, the Soviet aircraft industry is now selling in Western Europe an interesting new three engine jet -- the YAK-40 -- a short haul passenger jet designed to fulfill the functions of the famed DC-3.

This 34 passenger jet has a cruising speed of 350 miles per hour and a range of 900 miles. Its price --? About \$770 thousand! One third the price of a small airliner made in the West! And don't let the old cliché of Soviet aviation fool you. The Italian firm that is acting as agent for the new plane promises, "customers can count on spare-parts delivery within 24-hours." The Soviets are moving into the aircraft industry -- and their SST is flying.

So -- it is my position, and it is the President's decision -- that we must build the American SST if we are to maintain American pre-eminence in the skies.

Gentlemen, I for one am not about to let the U.S. aviation industry start down the drain.

I have been talking about the future of aviation in this country, and -- sure -- I've been pretty enthusiastic. And we should be. Don't think for one minute that just because we're on the verge of having the Airport/Airways Bill signed into law that we can just sit back and reap the benefits. Nothing could be more wrong. This bill is a beginning -- a starting signal for building a true aviation system. And you men here today are going to play the key role.

A good aviation manager wears many hats. One of his functions, however, is now taking on increased significance. Most of you are the leading representatives of the aviation industry in your communities. You are, among your neighbors, the first one they call if a plane flies too low or makes too much noise. This puts you on the spot. Your job as an airport executive, isn't made any easier by midnight phone calls.

I assure you that we in the Department of Transportation are determined that the nuisance factors of aircraft will be reduced. Smoke emissions will be minimized and noise will be lessened. We have already had good success in noise reduction with the 747. We have also had good success in getting the airlines to retrofit jet engines in order to cut back exhaust emissions. And I am sure we shall see further advances in the future. But I do not minimize our problems. In this connection I must report that the new legislation places strong obligations on me to insure that no Federally-assisted projects will be undertaken without full consideration of their impact on the environment. It would seem to me, then, that you and I are middlemen -- that you and I, as representatives of Federal and local governments -- have an obligation to demand from all parties concerned, solutions to these problems. Our task, then -- your's and mine -- is to work in the coming decade to get all parties joined together -- working to make the airport a better neighbor, and also find better neighborhoods for new airports. It will be no easy job, but for my part, I thrive on tough assignments. And from my knowledge of the breed of cat who goes into your business, I suspect you are pretty much the same way. I have then, great confidence that we can get the job done. It will take time and energy and funds -- but now we have all those. And our problem -- compared to the challenges aviation has overcome in the past -- is not great. So I say, then, it's time to go to work.

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