

U. S. Department of Transportation

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION BROCK ADAMS,
TO THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL/MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT, BELGRADE, YUGOSLAVIA,
MAY 31, 1979.

It is an honor not only to address this distinguished gathering,
but also a privilege to call you both my colleagues and my friends.

This conference has brought together 23 ministers of transport who
know the mistakes of the past, who are dealing with the pressures of
the present, and who still have a vision for the future.

Because of that alone, this conference will be a success.

But more must be done.

As we now seek solutions to problems which are common to us all,
I hope that my efforts may assist each member nation in making progress
towards its individual goals.

Our problems, our interests, and our concerns, though they may be
varied in degree and experience, are real.

Indeed, we share much.

And today, I am proposing that we share more -- much more.

In so many ways, the challenges which we face together in transportation
stem from a common problem -- one that is fundamental to our mutual survival
-- energy availability.

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While the member nations of this conference have already heeded the call for reduced dependence on oil and oil imports, we in the United States can and must do more.

President Carter's new national energy policy is lean -- it balances fuel conservation with energy availability.

The gasoline lines that developed during the past 60 days in the United States may have accomplished what political persuasion thus far has failed to do -- force an awareness of energy's true costs and availability, reduce motorist consumption and encourage a shift to more fuel-efficient forms of transportation.

We are making a concerted effort to develop attractive and accessible alternatives to the automobile in many of our cities. Public transportation is a primary solution to the problems of congestion and excessive fuel consumption.

We have invested more than \$5 billion in the last two and half years to help our cities build and restore public transit systems. We are now beginning to see some significant success stories in public transportation in the United States.

Yet the fact remains that even as we encourage greater use of public transit as a partial solution to our energy problem, if just 10 or 15 percent of the people shift from their cars to mass transit, most of our current public transit systems would be overwhelmed and unable to move these people.

We are committed to correcting that situation.

Because our nation spans a continent, with the distances between many of our cities far greater than here in Europe, we have developed a greater reliance on the automobile.

Thus, in the U.S. we never have had the equal of Europe's rail system, or as well developed or extensively used transit systems.

We have much to learn from your example in this regard.

Despite our past energy gluttony, the automobile will continue to be the form of preferred personal mobility in the United States for many years to come. And, to a large extent, we see this same situation developing in Europe and throughout the world.

Thus, any meaningful program to conserve the world's limited energy resources must include significant changes in personal mobility itself.

Last December, I visited Detroit to challenge America's auto makers to do no less than re-invent the car -- to apply their proven ability and expertise to the development of cars that are cleaner, safer and much more energy-efficient.

In February I convened an international technical conference in Boston to define research directions which would lead to the advances in automotive technology which are critical to meeting our future transportation needs.

Less than two weeks ago, President Carter and I met with the chief executives of the American auto manufacturers in a White House conference at which we reached agreement on the principles of a cooperative industry-government program of basic research directed at automotive technology. This program is designed to stimulate more talent directed at basic research in the total automotive system.

This effort will involve our university, industrial and federal research centers -- bringing the Nation's top scientific and engineering talent to bear on the fundamental disciplines related to the automobile.

This basic research effort which was developed at the Boston conference and agreed to by the auto manufacturers at the White House, is expected to produce a pool of talent and information to aid automotive engineers in developing new automotive design, especially those related to the social concerns of fuel economy, emissions and safety. It would also be the source of new ideas and innovations, not only for the United States but the world community.

At this point let me depart from my prepared text to present to the chairman of this international forum a copy of this proposed research program and ask that it may be made part of the official proceedings. Mr. Chairman, I would like to announce at this time that the government of the U.S. will share this blueprint for advanced automotive research by making it available to each of your member governments.

While it is impossible to forecast how much progress in automotive fuel economy any of our nations may make alone, if we can share our resources and the fruits of that effort -- we will have succeeded in solving the number one problem in transportation. We will have guaranteed the mobility of our people into the 21st century.

Basic research programs of this kind have been the technological backbone on which the advances of the world's most dynamic technologies have been based.

This program will lay the technological base for a truly different car by the end of this century -- one with new structures, materials and sources of power.

President Carter has asked me over the next several months to develop a detailed proposal for the conduct, timing and scope of this automotive basic research program.

Our primary goal in this research effort is quite clear. It is to produce a car that uses substantially less fuel or uses a fuel that is not derived primarily from scarce petroleum resources.

In other words, a car of the future -- the product of coordinated research supported by each of our governments; conducted by those who are most expert at it, and those who have much to contribute -- the auto manufacturers.

Today I formally extend to the member nations of this conference an invitation to join us in this effort -- to expand this initiative beyond the boundaries of any one nation to a truly global undertaking.

I am proposing internationally shared research in automotive technology.

We have undertaken this type of coordinated and combined international effort before in the design and development of cars that are safer.

The International Experimental Safety Vehicle Program began in 1971 with memoranda of agreement signed by seven nations. In the course of the past eight years, tremendous advances have been made in the technology of motor vehicle safety -- advances toward which all nations contributed, and from which each nation has benefited.

When the technologies developed through this cooperative effort are applied universally, we will count the number of lives saved in the tens of thousands annually.

By any standard, the cooperative effort toward the development of cars that are structurally safer ranks as one of the most successful of all modern international initiatives.

I suggest we can do no less in our efforts to develop the car of the future -- a technically superior, socially responsible, fuel-efficient automobile that represents a new generation of automotive technology, based on collective research and international commitment.

I believe we are already well on the way to the development of what some have called "the global car."

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Indeed, the differences in preference for types of cars are evaporating to a considerable extent by the energy situation worldwide. The demand in the United States for cars that are smaller, more economical and fuel-efficient is overwhelming. This demand is not likely to diminish.

In Europe and Japan, these cars have always been the preference -- and you have been the leaders in the development of energy-saving technology and automotive economy.

We have traveled different roads, based on differing needs. But we have come to the same crossroads, and the road ahead is a common road.

We can travel it alone, or we become partners in the pursuit of a common goal.

I prefer -- and I suggest to you today -- that we pool our collective resources in a unified effort to preserve our limited resources.

Where agreements already exist for international technological cooperation, let us expand them to include basic research into all facets of automotive technology.

Where such enabling agreements do not exist, let us take the steps necessary to establish them.

I pledge to make myself available for the negotiations necessary to achieve this end.

I am committed to this effort, and I ask for your commitment.

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