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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
TO THE WINSTON-SALEM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA
NOVEMBER 23, 1983

I have looked forward to this visit for quite some time, but I must tell you the experience even surpasses my fondest anticipation. I can think of nowhere on this earth I'd rather be on this Thanksgiving eve than in my home state of North Carolina among so many good friends -- including a number of my classmates from Duke University.

And I especially want to express my appreciation to Ed Pleasant, Charlie Webb and Warren Steen for the extra special effort you put into making this trip so meaningful for me.

Regardless of where you go or what you do, to me, the greatest comfort of this very special holiday is getting back home for a sampling of the warmth, the friendship and the caring that is so much a part of our heritage and lifestyle. So despite what another North Carolinian may have written, you can go home again -- especially when home is North Carolina.

Of course, things have changed since Eugene Gant, Thomas Wolfe's alter ego, first rode the train home to North Carolina. Our state has undergone a profound transformation. Poor transportation, which limited North Carolina's growth in the early part of this century has given way to one of the most advanced networks in the country. Concrete and asphalt ribbons -- 92,921 miles of highways and 15,425 bridges -- criss-cross the beautiful mountains and piedmont of this state, linking cities and villages and farms and feeding a collection of airports as extensive and modern as any state in the union. The roads, rail and air facilities of this state are complemented by growing urban transit systems. So for those who can't -- or won't -- go home again, at least they can't blame it on North Carolina.

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Indeed, some of the best evidence of this state's emergence as a transportation hub for the upper Southeast can be found right here in Winston-Salem. This is a region playing home to a number of major U. S. transportation companies, including three represented here today -- Piedmont Airlines, McLean Trucking Company and Pilot Freight Carriers. Tom Davis, founder of Piedmont, expressed a great deal of faith in Winston-Salem when he created a tiny organization that grew into one of the nation's most rapidly expanding airlines. Bill Howard, Piedmont president, as well as all the Piedmont people here, are helping to prove a very important point -- that an airline can respond positively to deregulation, that it can grow and prosper and provide valuable public service, while it adapts to purer rules of competition. For today, with its new "hub" at Baltimore, Piedmont is helping to relieve the pressure on Washington's own National airport and that's a service by any reckoning.

But I know that your accomplishments here in Winston-Salem don't begin and end with the big companies -- great corporate citizens though they are. I felt a great deal of pride at the American Public Transit Association meeting recently when Winston-Salem won the Transit System of the Year Award. It didn't take long to figure out how you did it; streamlining your operations to reduce operating subsidies by 22 percent while at the same time extending your services to include human service transportation and ridesharing. Attention to cost -- coupled with sensitivity to people -- is the hallmark of good transportation anywhere. And I'm proud that Winston-Salem is setting an example for the rest of us who work in the field.

The World War II industrialist, Henry Kaiser, used to say that troubles were nothing more than opportunities in work clothes. Certainly, the people of Winston-Salem have chosen to look upon whatever troubles they may confront in the transportation field as spurs to community betterment. You have shown, for example, the wisdom to survey parking problems and then the energy to do something about them. You have also displayed community spirit in pursuing an aggressive ride-sharing program, which I applaud and encourage. R.J. Reynolds has one of the largest and finest ride-sharing programs in the country and this is another source of pride for North Carolinians.

Winston-Salem stands very much in the forefront of some tremendous changes taking place in this country today. And certainly change is the order of the day in transportation. Changes that will greatly improve the quality, efficiency, reliability and safety of our transportation systems; national changes, yet changes that will bear directly on the economy of North Carolina.

We are rebuilding our highways and transit systems to assure that the high quality surface transportation system we enjoy today endures for future generations.

Our surface transportation revolution goes far beyond mere roadbuilding and bus buying. It also affords the trucking industry an opportunity to achieve tremendous productivity increases with the larger "double bottom" trucks which you are now seeing on the Interstates in North Carolina.

We have received impressive cooperation from the states and the private sector in devising the final designation of the national highway network for use by large commercial vehicles. As you know, the final comment period has closed and about 95 percent of the routes have been designated. We believe the resulting system will lead to greater trucker productivity while maintaining our number one priority which is, of course, safety.

As we focus on the future, we must deal with the issue of uniformity of truck regulations. I think it is incredible, the lengths to which truckers must go to comply with the states' patchwork quilt of different registration requirements, fuel tax payments, operating authority rules and "third structure" taxes. Right now, to register a truck legally to run in all 48 contiguous states, a trucker must file 87 applications, get 84 stickers and submit about 205 quarterly and semi-annual reports. I don't have to tell any of you here in the trucking industry that the paperwork burden is monumental. Greater uniformity would undoubtedly result in significantly lower costs for the industry and consumers and a simpler, more efficient system for everyone. In response to this obvious need, I have sent to Congress a proposal aimed at achieving more uniform state truck registration and tax procedures. The proposal establishes a working group, which will include representatives of the states, to explore -- over a 12-month period -- ways to reduce the administrative burden on the trucking industry in interstate commerce.

At the same time, we at the Federal level recognize that motor vehicle registration and taxation are state prerogatives. In no way do I wish to encroach on state turf. Therefore, my proposed bill will not affect state authority to establish tax rates and levels.

The study group, which will confer with the trucking industry and other interested parties, will make recommendations on the best ways to achieve uniformity.

There is another change, quite literally on the horizon and that is the modernization of our air traffic control system. Today we're operating that system on 1950's technology. It's the safest system in the world. It does the job. But it has capacity and weather limitations. Our National Airspace Plan will give us the most precise landing system available today. It will essentially "weatherproof" the airways. It will double the capacity of the airspace. And, perhaps, best of all, it will reduce operational costs, both for the government and for users. We estimate the total costs of the modernization program at about \$10 billion, but it will save \$25 billion in lower operational costs by the end of this century. I know that sounds a bit like the shopper who buys two coats at 25 percent discount in order to save 50 percent but in this case, the savings are for real. One of the outstanding features of the airport modernization program is that it is paid for by users of the service through a small fee tacked onto each ticket. The user fee is an important concept in transportation services. Approximately 69 percent of the Department of Transportation budget is financed through user fees. And we feel that where costs can be allocated in a fair and equitable manner, they should be paid by users.

While we are in the air, let me tell you about an exciting new plan for the deregulation of the newest transportation industry -- space transportation.

Last May, President Reagan expressed support for the development of a private sector satellite launch capability. It is clear that the market for space transportation will soon outstrip the capacity available today. Rather than rely solely on NASA and the Department of Defense for the expendable launch vehicles -- the rockets that power satellites into orbit -- companies interested in putting payloads into space should have ready access to private sector launch services.

We don't want the progress of this growth industry -- the launching of commercial space payloads -- to be handicapped by the regulatory constraints that have restricted other transportation industries. Even now, those seeking to enter the satellite launch business have been reluctant to make substantial investments because the regulatory and approval process is so cumbersome.

We are changing that. President Reagan has designated the Department of Transportation as the lead agency responsible for commercial space applications -- the governmental focal point for the emerging new space industry. In that role we will work with other agencies to assure that this new industry is free to grow and develop unobstructed by regulatory barriers.

But to return to earth and to the business at hand, deregulation is clearly the wave of the future; burdensome regulation a relic of the past. Consumers are experiencing a new era in transportation -- an era of lower costs and greater choices. The big winner under deregulation is the traveling public.

Nor is this all of the change. One of the most remarkable changes forthcoming is that we are prepared to sell Conrail, the Northeast freight railroad that once threatened to practically derail the Federal treasury. It is now much improved -- operating in the black -- and ready to be returned to the private sector. So if anyone here is interested in owning a railroad, I am open to bids.

Some things never change and one of those is the need for safety. I have said many times, but it always bears repeating, that I have no higher mission as Secretary of Transportation than to promote safety. On this Thanksgiving eve, with so many good and wonderful thoughts in our hearts and minds, it pays to pause and remember that last year 589 persons were killed by drunk drivers during this one weekend alone. That in mind, I suggest we include in our Thanksgiving prayers the fervent hope that lives will be spared on our highways this holiday weekend.

We have focused our greatest public attention on the highways because that is where 92 percent of fatalities occur. All across America, state legislatures, local law enforcement agencies and private citizens are joining in the campaign to rid the streets and highways of drunk drivers and encourage the use of safety belts. And this enormous heart-rending national effort is beginning to pay off. Highway fatalities dropped 10 percent last year. They are running at a still lower rate this year. We would like to make a connection between the growing crackdown on drunk driving and the apparent increase in highway safety. We know that's not the whole story -- other factors undoubtedly were involved -- but a greater national awareness of the drunk driving problem and the determination to do something about it are clearly contributing to safer highways.

Of course the best defense against the drunk driver is the safety belt, which is another facet of our safety campaign. And I was proud to see that once again, a North Carolina city -- Chapel Hill -- leads the nation in safety belt use. They did it largely through a community-wide incentive program. I know that strategy works, because we tried a similar approach at the Department of Transportation and raised the level of safety belt usage 40 percentage points in a few months. I recommend it to employers everywhere.

The campaign to get drunk drivers off our highways and to increase safety belt use are both well known and essential, and deserve our continuing support. But there is another, very important initiative in the safety area. There is persuasive evidence that

infant and youth fatalities can be reduced if we parents can be convinced to buy child restraint seats and learn to use them properly. Forty states and the District of Columbia now have laws on the books requiring child restraint devices. Like a car without gas, the statutes do no good unless we are successful in educating motorists about their importance. My staff tells me almost 60 percent of those safety seats are not properly installed. Here too, we have our work cut out for us.

I found an interesting situation when I arrived at the Department. Two of our agencies were at a stand-off. Our aviation and highway agencies had separate standards for the use of child safety seats. We were able to bring highways and aviation together to propose a common standard. That's right -- even Washington's arsenal of bureaucracy can learn to shoot straight. I know -- because I've had plenty of target practice already.

As I have traveled in recent days, I've been impressed with the enthusiasm for our new regulation involving high-mounted stop lamps in the vicinity of the rear window. According to our studies, once all passenger cars are equipped with this small additional stop lamp -- only 4½ square inches -- we will prevent about 900,000 accidents, 40,000 injuries and \$434 million in property damage annually. All of this can be achieved at a cost of only \$4 to \$7 per car. This rule will take effect September 1, 1985.

We are also going forward with efforts to improve the National Driver Register so that states can more easily share licensing information about problem drivers, including commercial drivers. I have appointed a national driver register advisory committee to help formulate a new system that will best meet state and police needs. We will soon be offering overnight processing of data inquiries and, eventually, a system providing such information in a matter of minutes. This is bound to be an improvement over the current two-week turnaround now available.

Simultaneously, we are moving to improve motorcycle safety through better rider education and licensing programs and the encouragement of helmet use. Motorcycle crashes today account for 10 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities. And eighty percent of all motor cycle accidents result in injury or death. We have found that including a skills test, along with the knowledge test in licensing motorcycle operators, reduces those numbers considerably. The same can be said for rider education programs. And helmets have clearly been shown to reduce fatal head injuries from motorcycle accidents by 66 percent.

And these are only a few of the safety initiatives which complement the drunk driving and safety belt campaigns.

For all the challenges that face us -- in the areas of safety, in the debate between urban and rural transportation, in the discussions to sort out appropriate roles for the Federal, state and local governments -- we still have a lot going for us. Despite all the issues yet to be resolved, America still offers the greatest opportunities and the greatest rewards. So on this Thanksgiving we have a great deal to be thankful for -- personally, as North Carolinians and as citizens of this great nation.

I'm thankful for a national economy that is fast on the mend. We have chalked up 12 monthly increases in the nation's primary economic indicators, a 9.7 percent growth in the GNP for the second quarter of this year, followed by further growth well above 7 percent in the third quarter, and the lowest inflation rate in 20 years. We've created 2 1/2 million new jobs since the end of 1982. Nationally, civilian unemployment -- though still too high -- is down to 8.8 percent, while the number of Americans with jobs stands

at a record high of nearly 102 million. Personal income increased 1.2 percent last month, the largest gain since August 1981.

But forget all the numbers for a moment. Think of the people behind the headlines, and say a Thanksgiving prayer for one group in particular. Like so many Americans, I watched as the medical students rescued from Grenada were greeted at the White House by President Reagan. Those bright young people were so glad to be home, snatched from an anarchy by other Americans wearing a proud uniform, most of them little older than the students they were saving. Over and over the medical students told us how proud they were of America and how thankful they were to be citizens of this great nation.

Millions of others around the world aren't as fortunate. A year ago about this time Bob and I visited Russia for the U.S.-U.S.S.R. trade conference. During the course of our travels, we talked with some Soviet citizens, members of the Pentecostal faith, who had been living in the basement of the American Embassy for five years. These people, members of the same family in Siberia -- the Vashchenkos -- had taken refuge there after repeatedly being denied requests to leave the country for religious reasons. They were afraid to leave the embassy, to return home or even to walk the streets of their own city. And yet there was no fear in their souls. They were, I found, a people of great faith who had been trying for more than 20 years to emigrate to a land where they could freely practice their religious beliefs.

Several months later, I read that they had -- thankfully, at long last -- gained exit visas to Israel.

But I thought, as I went to the airport that gray Moscow day to return home, that we often fail to appreciate the freedom we enjoy here in America. When we drove up to the airplane on the runway at the Moscow Airport, with the "United States of America" emblazoned on its side, I just thanked God for our country and her ideals, and her faith which has sustained both for over two hundred stormy years.

I often think of that experience at this time of year and it brings to mind the pilgrims at the first Thanksgiving. They had crossed an unfriendly ocean in a tiny vessel the Coast Guard probably wouldn't even let out of the harbor today. They withstood weather, fought the wilderness and coaxed a few ears of corn out of that rocky Massachusetts earth. And they considered themselves so fortunate, their song of Thanksgiving repeated over and over: "Sing Praises To His Name, He Forgets Not His Own."

Thank you, and God bless you all.