

TALKING POINTS FOR
SECRETARY ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
PORTLAND BUSINESS LEADERS
PORTLAND, OREGON
JUNE 1, 1983

You will be introduced by Senator Mark Hatfield

INTRODUCTION

* Thank you, Mark, for that generous introduction.

* I'm pleased indeed to be here for my first visit to the Pacific Northwest since becoming Secretary of Transportation.

* This is also the first occasion that Bob and I have had to travel together in some time. We are together on most things, but our schedules often send us in opposite directions.

-- Day I was sworn in he was leaving for Kansas.

-- Recently we hadn't seen each other in five days. I ran into him at a reception in Washington; we shook hands.

* So in addition to your part in bringing us together, Bob and I appreciate this opportunity to be in your beautiful city -- and I welcome this time to compare notes on your transportation concerns here in Portland and our programs and policies at the national level.

* When you come into a department as large and diverse as Transportation (nine operating administrations, 102,000 people, a \$27 billion budget), you get caught up in specific issues and immediate problems. But during National Transportation Week I had occasion to focus on our transportation program as a whole and I was struck by the magnitude and the long-range significance of the changes that have occurred in the last few years and the changes that are being implemented right now. I'm not sure there has been another time in transportation history when the collective impact of change has

been so great or so promising. Let me just touch on a few of those developments in the time I have with you.

AVIATION

* We are in the beginning stages of a modernization program that will double the nation's airspace capacity, greatly reduce operational costs and improve the overall safety of air travel.

* It will cost billions of dollars, but will be paid for by user fees and will save an estimated \$25 billion through the end of the century.

* The President requested \$1 billion in his FY '84 budget to begin work on this highly automated system.

* We are also increasing Federal grant assistance for airport improvements. (The \$700 million requested for 1984, when combined with the \$750 million for the current fiscal year, exceeds the two-year authorization contained in the Airport/Airway Act.)

-- We are very aware of, and support, your need for a public airport in Clackamas County.

-- The FAA has assisted the Port of Portland in planning for the Mulino Airport (\$167,000 in Federal funds for a site study) and we are prepared to provide further financial assistance when the local use-level issues have been resolved.*

* The County supports plans for the airport but has proposed a basing "lid" of 179 aircraft. The Port (and the FAA) favor a potential level of 350 aircraft based at the airport.

* Recovery from the illegal air traffic controllers strike is now nearly complete. By the end of this year only four of the 22 airports will still have some restrictions.

- Portland was not affected by capacity controls.
- Tower strength is now nearly back to pre-strike levels.
- Controllers are working a normal 40-hour week.

HIGHWAYS

A second area where we find ourselves in the midst of major change is our highway program.

* The Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 (the nickel-a-gallon gas tax increase) provides the revenues needed to rehabilitate our highways and bridges and preserve the quality and safety of our nation's roads.

- The fuel increase tax went into effect April 1, but with assured revenues we have been able to accelerate highway work -- and initiate projects that had been held up for lack of funds.
- We awarded \$2.9 billion to the states in the first quarter alone and will fund more than \$12 billion for bridges and highways over the full year -- highest levels in history.
- Oregon will get \$132½ million this fiscal year -- a 36 percent increase over your 1982 Federal highway apportionment.

* The nickel gas tax legislation also set new heavy truck use taxes to bring their contributions to the Trust Fund more in line with the costs they create. (The heaviest trucks will still pay less than 75 percent of their fair share when the tax is fully implemented in 1989.)

PUBLIC TRANSIT

- * A third area of significant change is transit.
- * The law designates one cent of the nickel tax increase for public transit -- the first dedicated source of Federal funding for transit purposes. (About \$1.1 billion this year.)
- * This new funding gives us about 44 percent more for transit capital assistance in FY 1984 -- first, for urban rail modernization and bus-related programs; secondly, to assist cities that already have been promised Federal aid; and -- third -- to fund new rail starts where they are clearly cost-effective and have strong community support.
 - In this connection, I think your city certainly deserves all the acclaim you have received for your vision with respect to public transit.
 - Your Tri-Met system not only serves the entire Portland metropolitan area, you have made public transit an integral part of this city's urban development.
 - Your Transit Mall has been highly successful.
 - And you have begun construction on the Banfield project which will not only provide 15 miles of light rail service but improve the Banfield freeway as well.

*RAILROADS

- * Your city has been an important rail center since the first rail line was completed to Portland one hundred years ago.

* Federal rail reforms carried out over the past several years -- including financial assistance for rehabilitation, feeder line assistance programs, and most importantly, the increased flexibility made possible by economic deregulation -- have made the nation's rail industry healthier and more competitive.

* On the passenger side, we have reversed the runaway trend toward ever-larger Amtrak deficits and Federal subsidies to cover them. Federal funding for Amtrak has been reduced from nearly \$900 million in 1981, to \$735 million in 1982, and \$700 million in this fiscal year, while preserving Amtrak's national rail system and actually improving the quality of service.

* We have also brought Conrail from a red ink operation that consumed millions in Federal subsidies each year to a profit-making railroad. My objective now is to sell it to the private sector -- intact if possible -- and for the best return possible on the government's investment.

MARITIME AND PORTS

* Still another transportation area that I consider very important, and one in which we need to take concerted and aggressive action, is maritime affairs.

* Your city is well-named -- not only is this one of our West Coast's major ports, it ranks 18th nationally: which isn't bad for a city 100 miles from the sea.

* We are pursuing maritime reform legislation which will strengthen our merchant marine, make U.S. flag carriers more competitive and put them on an equal footing with carriers from other nations and assist relations with our trading partners.

- * We are also concerned about an effective, equitable program of ports development, to assure that we have the facilities needed to support U.S. export trade.

SAFETY

- * Perhaps the most important change of all is the one occurring not just in one form of transportation, but across all the modes. I'm talking about safety.

- * One of the most gratifying developments of recent times has been the decline in highway fatalities (down by more than 10 percent last year).

- We believe this is due, at least in part, to the growing crackdown on drunk drivers.
- Aroused citizens launched a protest against drunk drivers that has led to tougher laws, stricter enforcement and stronger judicial measures.
- You only have to be reminded of a few cases -- like the little boy waiting for the ice cream truck who was struck down by a drunk driver; or the young girl on the bicycle path -- to realize that we can't rest until we get every last drunk driver off our highways.
- Here in Oregon you have made drunk driving one of your state's priority programs. Some 30 bills have been introduced in the current legislature to deal with drunk driving. In addition, you have had some of the most effective media and citizen action programs anywhere in the country.
- All of these efforts are producing results. Last year's traffic fatality record (519 traffic deaths) was the lowest in 20 years.
- I also want to commend you for your "Use a Little Restraint" campaign last year, which was clearly very effective and led to the child seat safety law that goes into effect next January. You join a growing number of states

that are adopting laws to protect young children against death and injury on the highway.

* We are also engaged in a nationwide campaign to increase adult safety belts usage. Every one percent increase in the number of occupants who wear their belts will save about 200 lives and prevent 3,000 injuries.

* Considering the distances we travel and the number of trips taken everyday throughout America, our transportation systems -- air, rail, water and highway -- are remarkably safe. But we can always improve on our safety records, and I consider that as Secretary of Transportation I have no higher obligation and no greater responsibility.

CONCLUSION

* Along with safer systems, we also want our transportation of the future to be more efficient, more economical and more responsive to our needs as shippers, travelers and consumers. And we want cities like Portland, where transportation has been central to your commercial development and economic growth, to benefit from Federal policies and programs.

* Change -- we are told -- has become a constant in our society. Change certainly has been the hallmark of this city -- from being the first metropolitan area, nearly a hundred years ago, to light your streets by electricity; the first to adopt a regional government; and one of the first to design a mall around public transit.

* So I expect Portland to be even more a pacesetter in the future as we continue the American transportation revolution.

* Thank you.

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