

1.6
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ANDREW H. CARD, JR.
50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROAD GANG
JUNE 25, 1992
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you, Steve Symms, for that generous introduction. Senator Symms has paid his dues as a longtime proponent of adequate highway funding and innovative legislative programs. He will be sorely missed in the leadership of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. It's an honor for me to share the 50th anniversary program with Senator Symms and with all of you.

Thanks also to **John Haifley**, (PRONOUNCED HAF-LEY) current chairman of the Road Gang, and representative of one of its founding members -- the American Automobile Association. John has done an outstanding job in making this Golden Anniversary year one of the Road Gang's most productive.

RAIL STRIKE UPDATE

Before we get into this happy occasion, let me give you an update on an issue of vital concern to all of us in transportation and to our national economy -- the rail strike.

I have talked with the President and he is very well aware of the ramifications that this strike will have on this nation's economy. He and I agree -- that it is now the responsibility of the Congress to act. They alone can solve it.

Yesterday, in my testimony to Congress I discussed how this strike or work stoppage will affect the nation -- how commuters, factory workers and farmers will all be hurt by the shut down of our essential railway system. Rail service, as you know, is a key part of the intermodal transportation network of this nation -- and a rail stoppage drags down all transportation.

Therefore, it is imperative that Congress act -- it is time to finish the round of labor negotiations that began in 1988. It is time that both railroad labor and management bring this prolonged and painful process to an end.

I will, of course, continue to undertake discussions with the leadership of Congress, representatives of both labor and management, and those affected by the outcome of this dispute.

President Bush and I remain committed to a rapid and equitable settlement -- and we all hope Congress will now step up to the plate and solve this impass so the nation can get back to work.

ROAD GANG HISTORY PARALLELS HIGHWAYS

But this is the Road Gang's day.

In 1942, before the ink was dry on the last line of the map that would become our Interstate Highway System, the Road Gang met here at the Willard Hotel.

Representatives of a handful of organizations saw the potential for linking up America with a network of highways, but I wonder if they even dreamed of the wonderful consequences.

The economic benefits and the sheer joy of mobility that Americans enjoy today as a national birthright are tremendous.

In 1956, when the Interstate Highway Bill was signed into law by President Eisenhower, probably every Road Gang member had a hand either in enacting that law or in implementing it. You have had a very real part in dramatically changing the course of our history forever. The Interstate Highway System has been described as the glue that holds America together. The Road Gang applied the glue.

There is probably more knowledge about our highways in this room than in the rest of the country combined.

I see **Frank Turner**, first Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, whose name appropriately adorns Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center in Virginia.

I see **Les Lamm**. In his 30 years in FHWA and its predecessor, the Bureau of Public Roads, he grew to middle age along with the Interstate System. He kept his mind open and embraced new ideas like Intelligent Vehicle Highway Systems, an area in which he is a national leader.

And **Dick Morgan** is here. Dick led FHWA in the 1980s "rebuilding" era and only recently joined the National Asphalt Paving Association.

And **Dean Carlson**, FHWA's current executive director, completes the cycle. Dean will lead us into the era of intermodal efficiency.

HIGHWAYS GAIN FROM INTERMODALISM

Intermodalism will require change in the way we think of transportation. It means concentrating our energies on delivering goods and people, rather than on the mode used to accomplish the job. I was recently in Atlanta at the International Intermodal Exposition, one of the best examples of intermodalism in the world. That whole conference focused on change.

But highway people don't have to fear change. Change has always served our highway system for the better and the challenge of intermodalism will benefit highways as well. The value of any mode of transportation -- highway, transit, railroad, planes, ships -- is enhanced if it is a part of a smoothly operating intermodal network.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Assistance Act -- ISTEA -- as we call it, will allow us to give priority to improved access to major ports, airports, public transportation and other intermodal transportation facilities.

WHAT ISTEA DOES

Now, let's look at ISTEA for a moment.

The twin cornerstones of change in ISTEA are the National Highway System -- 155,000 miles of principal highways -- and the Surface Transportation Program -- which allows us flexibility in addressing transportation needs. So-called "highway funds" can now be used for transit if the need arises, and vice versa; that is to say transit monies can be used for funding highway projects, based on state and local priorities.

ISTEA also increases responsibility of states and local communities. It significantly expands their transportation decision-making role makes the federal, state and local partnership even stronger.

ISTEA also allows us to focus substantially greater resources on research and technology -- especially the application of IVHS technology.

I went to Orlando, Florida recently to help launch the most comprehensive IVHS system in the country. Visitors to Disney World, Cape Canaveral and surrounding areas can rent a car with real time navigation and advisory services -- all via electronic display maps and synthesized voice messages. It's an amazing technology which, no doubt, will ease our congestion problems, improve safety and make trips more pleasant.

In addition, ISTEA provides an expanded role for private sector involvement in transportation infrastructure development. Toll roads are springing up all across America. Three in California are well known and the state is planning more. The proposed Dulles Toll Road Extension just outside Washington in Virginia is the best local example.

And, of course, the most exciting development regarding ISTEA is the potential dramatic increase in federal funds -- funds leveraging thousands of jobs and stimulating the economy. The economic benefits accruing from improved accessibility, reduced congestion, and more efficient transportation, will do as much for America today as the Interstate Highway bill did for a previous generation.

GETTING MONEY OUT OF THE PIPELINE

When President Bush signed the ISTEA legislation into law last December, he ordered the Department of Transportation to get the money into the pipeline as quickly as possible to create jobs and jump start the economy. As of yesterday federal grant obligations for highways alone were more than \$10.5 billion, or more than 65 percent of the total FY 1992 authority.

Recently the House Appropriations Subcommittee reduced the fiscal year appropriation level for highway programs in 1993 by \$2 billion below the President's request. This causes considerable concern. States and localities deserve an ongoing, even flow of predictable federal funding assistance for transportation needs. When states begin a multi-million dollar project they know it will require several years of uninterrupted work and funding. It is inefficient and costly if funding ebbs and flows.

The President's budget would continue the flow of funds and not make states vulnerable to funding shortfalls.

Growth in transportation investment is essential for improved infrastructure and job creation, and I will work to achieve the President's proposed highway program level for next year.

You may have guessed by now that I'm here to ask you to take on a new assignment.

The scorecard on ISTEA hasn't been completed yet. It's up to you in this room to help make it work. And it's up to you to think intermodally. Highways are -- and always will be -- the centerpiece of American transportation. But highways cannot do it alone. We must link up America. We must provide a seamless transportation system if our economy is to remain competitive in world markets into the 21st century. I ask your help. And I pledge you my own.

Happy Golden Anniversary. And may we all be back here 10 years from now celebrating a national economy riding high on the strength of our intermodal transportation system -- one the Road Gang helped create.

###