



U.S. Department of
Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 8, 1997

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MEDIA ADVISORY

The Secretary's Task Force on Assistance to Families Involved in Aviation Disasters will hold public hearings in Washington, D.C. on July 9 and 10.

The hearings will be held in room 2230 at the U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, D.C. All sessions are open to the public.

July 9

9:30 a.m. The first session will be opened by Task Force co-chairs Transportation Secretary Rodney E. Slater and National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Jim Hall and will include testimony from public witnesses regarding family notification and other issues.

1:00 p.m. Representatives of the national news media will address how families of victims are treated by the national news media. Invited panelists include Don Phillips, *Washington Post* and Bob Orr, CBS. A discussion by the Task Force will follow, including presentations by Task Force members Carl Stern, Professor of Media and Public Affairs at the George Washington University and Joe Lychner, a family member representing the families of victims of TWA 800.

July 10

9:30 a.m. Notification of Family Members by Airlines

1:00 p.m. Other issues, including the return of personal effects by airlines to the families of victims of aviation disasters.

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Credentialed media interested in attending the hearing should use the visitor's entrance at the southwest corner of the building. Please be prepared to show press credentials for admittance.

Questions concerning the scope of the Task Force meeting should be directed to Steve R. Okun, Executive Director of the Task Force, at (202) 366-0140.

Secretary Slater announced formation of the Task Force on March 5, 1997. Its purpose is to make recommendations on improving assistance to families of passenger who are involved in commercial aviation accidents and to examine issues raised by the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security. The Task Force was mandated by the Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996. The Secretary of Transportation will submit the recommendations of the Task Force to Congress by October 9, 1997.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
SECRETARY'S TASK FORCE ON ASSISTANCE TO
FAMILIES OF AVIATION DISASTERS
JULY 9, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Last month I was in Florida, meeting with Lifesavers. These are people from organizations like Mothers Against Drunk Driving, who suddenly face deaths in their families because loved ones are killed in car accidents. The goodness of America is that people like that can come together after terrible tragedies to see a problem and to say we will solve it -- together. They have done so much for America.

I see that here. We are here to improve the treatment of families of passengers involved in aircraft accidents. To those of you who have been involved in accidents, I know you would do anything in this world not to be here. But the goodness is that out of your tragedy, you are here, helping make things better for someone else, and I thank you.

Let me also say, to those of you involved with the TWA 800 tragedy, and especially Task Force Members Joe Lychner and Frank Carven, I know that July 17th will be a very difficult day for you. So, I thank you for being here.

And I thank those public servants and those from the private sector, who are giving so generously of your time, and whose guidance I appreciate.

I believe you lead by following. So, I want your ideas -- all of them. I want the ideas of those who will testify. I understand at the last meeting you had a very productive discussion, and I hope to listen and learn. And by October 9th, I must then submit to Congress a report containing recommendations developed by the Task Force.

Let me briefly outline the agenda.

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This morning, we will have testimony -- from the public -- on any issue related to the scope of our charter.

This afternoon, we will have a discussion with regards to the news media, and several members of the media will be engaged in this. I want to make two points about this.

First, the public has a right to know, and clearly the public wants to know. Last year, as painful as they were, the TWA 800 and the ValuJet crashes were two of the top 10 news stories, according to the Associated Press.

Chairman Hall and the NTSB have the lead when it comes to the investigation. They are the ones who must control news conferences and the flow of information. But at the same time reporters are asking us a lot of questions. And under my watch, we in the Department of Transportation -- the FAA and others here at DOT -- will be supportive and open.

Second, while the public has the right to know, those who are affected have the right to privacy, and we want to work to protect that right as well.

Now, at the meeting tomorrow, we will hear about the rather thorny issues relating to the notification of family members; and review some of the issues from the first meeting, including the non-availability to the public of the cockpit voice recording.

I know today and tomorrow will be rather difficult for many of you. These are hard emotional issues.

But let me say again: I want good to come out of them. I want to make headway. I want you to leave here tomorrow, and I want you to leave here after the recommendations are agreed on and the report is made, knowing that we did something good for people. We made a difference.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
WASHINGTON DULLES PRESS CONFERENCE
JULY 15, 1997
DULLES, VIRGINIA

Last July, in the wake of the TWA 800 and ValuJet crashes, the President asked the Vice President to take charge of a commission to review aviation safety, security, and the pace of modernization of the air traffic control system.

Last September, the Vice President presented the President an action plan. And President Clinton said at that time that "whenever this plan says, the commission recommends, you can understand it to mean, the President will."

This afternoon, Mr. Vice President, I am pleased to present you a status report on the action plan. What the Commission recommended, and what the President said we will do, we are aggressively doing.

Of the 44 recommendations directed at my Department, we are working on all of them.

We have hired 375 new safety inspectors. We have bought 54 explosive detection systems, and many are being installed at airports around the country. We plan to purchase more than 480 devices that can detect traces of explosives. And we've expanded the use of bomb sniffing dogs.

The Commission's bottom line on airspace modernization was get it done faster; and with new technology, we will.

We may not yet know what happened on flight 800, but things today are different. We have beefed up security and safety. We have changed forever the way families are treated after an aviation disaster. We're making meaningful changes, and I want the American people to know, we will keep making more, as safety is my number one priority.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES ANNUAL MEETING
JULY 15, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

There are but 77 days left, before ISTEA expires. So, today I want to bring you up-to-date on where the President and Congress stand on what is one of the most important pieces of legislation before the Congress.

I had a lengthy session with Senate Democrats last week; and I have had talks with many Senate Republicans. They are still working on building a consensus. They are still struggling with many issues -- and they are hard. I know, for when we developed our proposal, we struggled with the same issues: funding levels, what programs to include, and how to structure things. The Senators asked me to be involved in bridging the gaps, in finding compromises, and I committed to take that role.

On the House side, I am pleased to announce I will be meeting with Chairman Shuster this afternoon. He is very determined to get the highest level of funding possible. President Clinton has been able to achieve record investments in highways and transit -- in partnership with the Congress. I know the House has made some progress in drafting a bill, and I am eager to see it, so we can move forward, on a bi-partisan basis.

I want to move forward. Think about this. Right now, on the table, is legislation to determine how much we will invest in highways, transit, and safety in the 21st century. And there is legislation on re-authorizing Amtrak. It is unprecedented in transportation history as to the magnitude of decisions, and the kind of money that Congress must vote, up or down.

The stakes are too high to put this one off. The current programs expire in just 77 days. As we discovered in 1991, when the legislation lapsed before ISTEA was enacted, the consequences of delay are quickly felt at the county level.

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No new funding could delay your transit projects and increase their costs. Uncertainty could cause the loss of an entire construction season for highways, especially in the north, where the season is short.

You have enough to worry about. The last thing you need in your planning process is uncertainty because Washington can't figure out by September 30th how much money you'll have, or how the programs will be structured.

So this afternoon I plan to let Chairman Shuster know that I spoke with you, and 2,000 county leaders are eager to have a bill enacted by the end of September.

And I want it to be a good bill. When the President announced our proposal back in March, what we call, the NEXTEA, we knew the lawmakers would make changes. I've never seen a proposal sent up that they didn't change.

But what I want to see move forward is legislation that maintains the principles of the President's plan, and the principles -- really -- of the original ISTEA. This is not a time to retreat, to reduce the role of local governments, to fragment, or to somehow weaken what we have.

What we have is good. Those who know best have told me -- - people who live with it everyday in every way. Since I was sworn in as Secretary, five months ago today, I haven't lived inside the beltway. I have lived outside the beltway -- visiting 50 counties, half the states, listening and learning your concerns.

The President wants to invest \$175 billion in the next six years in highways and transit systems. That is an 11 percent increase. And 49 out of 50 states will get more money. That will support almost a million jobs.

And in key areas the investments will be more: 30 percent more in core highways; and 25 percent more in safety programs, so more counties can get aggressive against aggressive drivers.

And more states can join Betty Lou Ward's North Carolina and pass primary seat belt laws that would increase seat belt use and save thousands of lives. I say that not only because North Carolina has one of the highest belt use rates in the country, but because last year a car struck Betty Lou, and she is here today because she wore a seat belt.

The President is calling for 17 percent more in new transit construction. Last month, I was with Dave Cox in Sacramento County, providing \$111 million to build six miles of new track. Bob Janiszewski of Hudson County in New Jersey was at the White House, talking about the transit system to be built there. Not since Woodrow Wilson was President have we seen this much new construction, and President Clinton wants to expand on that.

The President wants 30 percent more for environmental programs; he wants to increase our investments in ITS -- the kind of systems helping Randy Johnson's Hennepin County in Minnesota; he wants to see significant increases in scenic byways and bikeways -- projects that may not be a lot of money, but bring lots of enjoyment and tourism to counties.

There are some who want to strike some of these programs and say just give the money to the states and let them decide if they want to invest in the environment or pouring concrete.

But Doug Bovin of Delta County, in upper Michigan -- he can tell you how his Governor tried to take away money from county roads, and we were there to make sure county money was protected.

The President wants flexibility. He wants transportation decisions to be made at the local level, not in Washington, but we can't just turn transportation funding into block grants and expect to have the same strong interconnected system we have today.

The President also has proposed a \$600-million program to help with the transportation needs of former welfare recipients.

Only 6 percent of welfare recipients have cars. In counties across the country, businesses in the suburbs are screaming for entry-level workers, but the jobs can't be reached by public transportation. And this isn't just an urban or suburban problem. Twenty percent of welfare recipients live in rural America.

Transportation is the "to" in the phrase welfare to work, but it is a "to" that is very much an obstacle today, that must be solved.

Just the other day, I received a proposal from Alameda County in California. They have thousands of able-bodied people who need to get off welfare. At the same time, they need more construction workers to build billions of dollars worth of projects in San Francisco and Oakland. So, they want to provide skills to these welfare recipients, so that they can get jobs and obtain employment.

I hope every county in America thinks anew and acts anew in this area. Welfare as we know it has ended, but there is a large pool of talented and capable people, who have not worked before, but who need to and want to.

Today, we are at a crossroads and we have to continue to find an edge as we Americans compete to win on an international stage.

I met recently with Alex Pinelas, the Mayor of Dade County, Florida. Dade County is an excellent illustration of the vital role transportation plays in sustaining the competitiveness of a regional economy, vitally dependent on international trade. Trade in this hemisphere grew last year by 16 percent -- and Dade County is America's gateway to Latin and South America.

So, not only does Dade County manage a regional transit system, it manages the Miami International Airport, whose operations rank sixth in the world; and it is planning billions of dollars in improvements to connect the airport to its world-class cruise port.

You see that all over this country. You see that in Detroit -- our fifth busiest airport, owned and operated by Wayne County; an airport that brings in millions of visitors. Last year, President Clinton committed \$150 million, that clinched a deal between Wayne County Executive Wayne McNamara and Northwest Airlines. Now they are proceeding to invest \$1.6 billion in their international terminal that will create 20,000 jobs. Today, you can fly direct from Detroit to Beijing, and the plane is filled, because China is the largest market in the world.

The point I'm making is I know the important role counties play in transportation. You are the ones building more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. You are providing opportunities so all Americans can have mobility, can lead better lives. And this legislative proposal before Congress is not just about money, it's not even about transportation facilities. It is about the foundation for economic growth. It is to speak as much about the next 60 years, as it is the next six.

So, let me end by asking those of you in the grassroots to be involved; to work with me, as I work in a bi-partisan way with Congress, to pass this legislation in the next 77 days. For our best days are yet ahead of us.

Thank you very much.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
NAACP 88TH CONVENTION
ARMED SERVICES AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AWARDS BANQUET
JULY 16, 1997
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

The President looks forward to coming tomorrow and delivering his first major address before an audience of color since he launched his effort to improve race relations.

At its first meeting on Monday in Washington, the President's advisory board on race decided to focus on two issues linked to equal opportunity -- education and economics. I know both are at the top of your agenda this year and they have been at the center since your founding in 1909. The President will have more to say about that tomorrow.

Secretary Widnall spoke of the 50th anniversary of the Air Force. Well, this is the 20th anniversary of "Roots." Mr. Haley, as all of you know, was a Coastie.

To celebrate, we will be naming a Coast Guard cutter "The Alex Haley." 230 years after Mr. Haley's ancestors came to America, chained to a slave ship, the Alex Haley will sail the seas for America. America is doing right.

And I am pleased to announce that since the President unveiled his new African initiative, on Monday, I will be the first member of the Cabinet to head to Africa. Along with a group of prominent African-American leaders, we will attend a summit in Zimbabwe to discuss trade, investment, and social policies.

Some time back, I visited the family home of Mr. Haley in Henning, Tennessee. I read the great epitaph carved on his gravestone just to the side of the porch, where he first heard the stories. The epitaph: Find the Good and Praise It.

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I thank the NAACP for finding the good in today's Coast Guard -- Admiral Robert Kramek -- and allowing me to praise him.

Under his leadership, the men and women of the Coast Guard, save 5,000 lives a year and \$4 billion in property. Today we have safer ships and cleaner oceans. And under his leadership, our Coasties fight a war every day in every way to keep drugs from entering this country.

Let me say, in his tenure, he has put excellence and equal opportunity center stage. He has done it with a caring heart, and because of the goodness of his own self.

The Coast Guard had been behind, in many ways, in creating an environment that looks like America. Admiral Kramek is changing that. He is providing an environment that will allow everyone to reach his or her full potential. He is working affirmatively to make the Coast Guard an employer of choice, a visionary and vigilant member of our DOT family.

I want to mention one last point. Admiral Kramek invited me to give the Commencement address at the Coast Guard Academy in May. I told the graduates about my mighty dream: to reach out to a million kids; to mentor them; to have a conversation with them; to recruit them for jobs in the Coast Guard, or to be pilots, or to build highways. I call it the Garrett A. Morgan Transportation and Technology Futures Program.

The Department of Defense has the same goal: to reach a million kids. Now, we're a little smaller than our friends at the Pentagon, but with that same big goal, because, well, Admiral Kramek said we can. After I told him we can!

President Kennedy once said: "devoting your life to the service of our country is the greatest contribution that any man could make." It is my honor to present a man who has made that greatest of contributions -- Admiral Robert Kramek.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
TWA FLIGHT 800 MEMORIAL SERVICE
LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK
JULY 17, 1997

As we all know from Ecclesiastes, to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens.

A time to weep, and a time to laugh;

A time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to rend, and a time to sew;

A time to keep silence, and a time to speak.

You, who are here today, joined in sorrow by what took place know well what it is to weep, to mourn, and to keep silence.

And now it is time to speak.

For us to speak of the courage and compassion you have shown. Every one in this world knows of your sorrows, but, they know, too, of how you pulled together as a family.

Of how total strangers formed a community to pray together ... to love together ... to share faith, when faith was hard to find ... to work together to rebuild lives.

And I speak for the nation when I say to you, in your anguish, you have lifted all of us. You showed us your strength, and I for one am stronger because of you, and I know all Americans are. The President asked me to read this letter:

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION WORKSHOP
JULY 19, 1997
RENO, NEVADA

Let me say, first, that both the President and Vice President are looking forward to visiting next week. And I know my colleagues in the Cabinet -- Secretaries Glickman and Babbitt, and Administrator Browner -- all have visited, and their teams are working hard. We are coming together, bringing the best minds in from across the government, to share ideas, because the President believes everyone owns a piece of the solution.

I know there are seven jurisdictions that border the lake, two states, a whole lot of transit systems, dozens of major hotels, casinos, and ski resorts and all have their own transportation systems. That tells me there are a lot of opinions in this room, which is good. But at the end of the day, we need to build a consensus, and a partnership, if we're going to build what everyone wants, and that is a better lake.

Since I became Secretary five months ago, I have wanted to get out of Washington as often as I can. I have visited half the states, 50 cities, and I always go to listen and learn. I hope to do a lot of that today.

What I am finding is that around the country, many people believe, as I believe, that transportation is more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It is about people -- our mobility, our choices, our lifestyles, our safety, our environment, that is so important to this area. And it's about providing economic opportunities so people can benefit from the tourism, and get jobs, and climb the ladder of economic prosperity as well.

Tomorrow, I will be heading to Africa, to talk about building roads in newly emerging democracies. In the Middle East, after Jordan and Israel signed a peace accord, the first thing they did was to build a new road to open the border. After peace came to war-torn Bosnia, one of the first projects was to reopen a bridge to Croatia, so they could reach the markets of Europe.

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No matter where you live in the world -- no matter if you live in urban, suburban, or rural America -- transportation is the tie that binds.

President Clinton understands the importance of transportation. Under his leadership, and with the support of your Senators, he has invested more in our infrastructure than at any time in history.

The President submitted to the Congress a proposal to invest \$175 billion in the next six years in building and rebuilding highways and transit systems. More money would be available for 49 out of 50 states, including Nevada and California. In fact, of the \$175 billion, \$15.5 billion would be for investments here in these two states.

Other proposals have been offered as well. So far the debate in Congress has been about how much money every state gets. And while that is important, we can't allow to get lost in the debate the importance of the values embodied in the programs.

The President's proposal carries forward, where some don't, a close link to communities, allowing decisions to be made at the local level, not in Washington. That is what at the end of the day will support efforts like this.

In some proposals, the environment does not make out well. The President has asked for 30 percent more in environmental programs that would improve air quality and alleviate congestion. In fact, when the President announced the proposal, he said: "this is one of the most important pieces of environmental legislation that will be considered by the Congress in the next two years."

We're asking for 35 percent more to build bike paths; to undertake projects that protect the beauty of America. These may be small projects, but they are a huge part of the enjoyment of citizens of this state.

We're asking for 30 percent more in core highways; and 17 percent more for new transit construction. We must find environmentally clean alternatives to moving people.

We know at Lake Tahoe, because of the environment and the great respect for the land, we will not be building any major new highways. But there are a number of other solutions -- transit, technology that allows us to better use the existing network, bike and pedestrian paths.

We have to look at more innovative projects, of how to integrate the strengths of these various transportation modes into a total system.

We have to find more innovative ways of financing projects. Let me say, you just can't throw money at a problem. You have to come together, and pool the investments, and make the most out of what you have.

So, I hope we can build a consensus regarding our priorities to improve access to the lake, and to improve the Lake Tahoe environment.

I hope we can step outside the box, to find ways for all the stakeholders to merge activities and share resources.

When I leave here today, I want all of us to feel good about what we will tell the President and Vice President.

I worked for the President in Arkansas, on the Highway Commission, when he was Governor, and I can tell you how strongly he believes in what you're doing; how strongly he believes that these decisions should be made, and shared, by all of you.

And so I ask, let's find a way, to, as the President says build an America, where there is opportunity for all, and responsibility from all.

Thank you very much.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
U. S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
THE FOURTH AFRICAN-AFRICAN AMERICAN SUMMIT
JULY 25, 1997
HARARE, ZIMBABWE

Thank you very much. It is a great honor to be here, representing the United States on behalf of President Clinton.

President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, to you, thank you for hosting this important summit. And to President Masire, of Botswana, and Reverend Sullivan, thank you for organizing and convening these meetings. I can tell you that President Clinton is looking forward to his visit to Africa, as he works to strengthen America's deepening partnership with Africa.

Let me acknowledge a few of the many good people, who have joined me -- my very able co-head of the delegation, the Reverend Jesse Jackson; Coretta Scott King and Dr. Dorothy Height; there are a host of agencies represented -- State, Agriculture, Commerce, Energy, and Transportation.

There are so many people who have worked hard to bring forth the vision of greater ties between Africa and America -- starting with the Vice President and his work on the U.S.-South Africa Binational Commission; the First Lady; Secretary of State Albright; U.N. Ambassador Bill Richardson; the late, great Ron Brown; and members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Clearly, we are living in a time of tremendous hope for the people of Africa. It is a continent full of wonderful opportunities and stubborn problems. The world knows about the problems -- that is what we see on the evening news. And we all have a responsibility to continue to work for peace and stability in Africa. It is, indeed, a challenge, but one which we must undertake in an aggressive manner.

But let me say, we also have a responsibility to praise the good, to seek it out and celebrate the successes. We must encourage and facilitate the winds of democratic and commercial reform that are sweeping Africa, giving the people here new rights, new hopes, and new opportunities.

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We must find ways to secure these gains. And we must find ways to enhance them, to build on them so the many nations of Africa can be prepared to participate fully in the global economy of the 21st century.

Economic and democratic progress is breaking out across sub-Saharan Africa. Just a half dozen years ago, as you know so well, there were only 5 African democracies -- just 5. Today there are 23 freely and fairly elected governments.

And many are joining the global march to free markets by reforming their economies, allowing open trade and investment, privatizing state-run businesses, and stabilizing their currencies.

The results have been dramatic. Last year, 30 African nations posted positive growth rates. The average growth rate in sub-Saharan Africa has more than tripled to 4 percent since 1990. Here in Zimbabwe, the growth rate is 8 percent. And foreign trade with African nations has doubled, in just five years.

Helping ensure that these efforts pay off is deeply in the interests of the United States.

A vibrant Africa, with strong political and economic ties to the global community, is a continent of greater stability, expanding markets, and stronger partners. A region of nations with which America can be partners to, so we can work for peace and against tyranny, fight disease, protect the environment, and make our economies grow and provide for our people. That is good for Africa and good for America.

Every day the world grows a little smaller and a little closer. And we must stand ready to work together on these challenges and opportunities. No longer are they just "your" problem or "my" problem. They're "our" problems because we are rapidly becoming a global society, a world without borders.

President Clinton has worked for several years to make America more active on the continent of Africa than in the past.

We held the first White House Conference on Africa. To underscore America's commitment, the President dispatched former Secretary of State Christopher to the region last fall. He asked the First Lady and their daughter to visit Africa last spring, to highlight Africa's renewal, and to show Americans the stake they have in the future of this great continent.

The results of these efforts are paying off. A few weeks ago, I was with President Clinton as were some of you when he announced his legislative initiative to expand our trade and investment programs for African nations.

What encouraged me most was the level of bipartisan support from the U.S. Congress, and backing from the business community, for the plan. Top Republicans and Democrats and private leaders all came out to stand with the President in announcing the initiative.

This initiative builds on Africa's recent successes by providing incentives for sound economic and social policies.

It offers great opportunities to countries that liberalize their economies, break down barriers to trade, and open their markets with greater access to America's markets. It would increase private investment in Africa by creating loan guarantees through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and \$650 million in funds for infrastructure and equity investments. It gives support to governments that are raising up their people, by improving education and health care, by developing fair and open judicial systems, and by increasing accountability of public officials.

President Clinton's strategy, which I might add was presented to our partners from the other leading industrialized nations at the recent summit in Denver, will help more African nations achieve greater self-reliance and full integration into the global economy. And it will attract U.S. investment to Africa, and spur growth in the United States as well.

The potential of a sub-Saharan market is immense. Some 700 million people live here. Today, the United States supplies just 7 percent of Africa's imports. But already we export more to Africa than the former Soviet Union. And those exports support 100,000 American jobs.

As Transportation Secretary, I, for one, plan to work closely with U.S. transportation companies, helping them learn more about Africa's emerging markets, and encouraging them to be active players in developing those markets. I believe there will be expanding opportunities for our products and services in aviation, road construction, public transit, maritime, and railroads.

I can tell you today that the U.S. Department of Transportation already is working with commercial officers in American embassies across Africa to identify and assess transportation-related opportunities.

Building reliable transportation systems is often the first step nations take

when long periods of strife end, and democratic-minded leaders assume power. In the Middle East, after Jordan and Israel signed a peace accord after years of conflict, what is the first thing they did? They built a new road to open the border between their two countries.

After peace came to war-torn Bosnia, one of the first projects to be completed was reopening a bridge across the mighty Sava River to Croatia. Without that bridge, Bosnia was cut off from the markets of Europe, and its people trapped and isolated.

Transportation is the tie that binds. And we will be as supportive as we can. President Clinton understands this, which is why he pledged hundreds of millions of dollars in loan guarantees for African infrastructure investment.

President Clinton is also asking U.S. agencies to increase technical assistance, so that Africa, like our partners in other regions of the world, can take full advantage of expanding trade and investment.

Let me explain. At my department, through the Federal Highway Administration, we recently set up a technology exchange center in South Africa; other centers are planned for Tanzania and Mozambique. These will help local officials select technologies that meet their specific needs, helping them avoid costly mistakes that we or others have made when building or maintaining their roads. And we're looking to do more in other areas.

I want to make one more point. A highway is more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. A market-opening aviation agreement is more than words on a page. A new train is more than adding rail capacity. They all are about providing opportunity, freedom, and community for people.

As Africa moves forward on projects, I think it is important to know the key role that infrastructure development can play to improving a country's economy and a continent's economic standing.

In the 1950s, when the United States started building the interstate -- the network of roads that tie American communities together -- the highway network's contribution to our annual productivity growth rate was 31 percent. So just think what a new road can mean to bringing prosperity to Africa.

Africa is a giant continent of many communities. Just as Europe is learning to work as a union of nations -- by creating a common market and linking their

transportation networks and working to create a common currency -- so, too, must Africa.

A united Africa is far stronger than a divided Africa. Such organizations as the South African Development Community and the Economic Community of West African States -- ECOWAS -- are welcome signs of neighbors pulling together for the common good. We hope to see these regional reform efforts extended to East and West Africa.

Let me close on a personal note. I would like to say we are building on the dreams of someone who is not with us today, my friend, the late Ron Brown, who wanted so much to help Africa succeed. His son, Michael, who was recognized last night, is a reminder that Secretary Brown's spirit is with us at this summit.

Secretary Brown spoke so eloquently at the Dakar summit two years ago, delivering the message that America will not concede Africa's markets to competitors.

He said Africa was one of the 10 greatest emerging markets in the world. And he worked tirelessly, as we must, to broaden and strengthen our economic and political ties with Africa.

It is imperative that we strengthen these links, for as President Clinton put it so well: a prosperous, democratic America, needs a prosperous, democratic Africa. We have a common heritage that binds us to a common future.

But the future is built by people, people like you and me, and ordinary citizens. I pledge to help build our future, and urge everyone here today to redouble your efforts to help build a new partnership between Africa and America for the 21st century.

Thank you very much, and God Bless Africa ... God Bless America.

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U.S. Department of
Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
NATIONAL AIRPORT DEDICATION
JULY 27, 1997
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

This has been quite a morning -- parades, marching bands, short speeches. But we have something big to celebrate -- a new airport which will set a course for a new century.

Let me say that what highways did for this century, airports will do for the next century. And today marks the opening of one of the world's great airports -- and clearly its most convenient.

You can go right from your metro stop or parking space to your airplane seat. No more shuttle bus. No more 15-mile trek from the metro. It's what the architect calls "a single gentle walk." It's what I call seamless travel.

I read in the paper that an Alexandria man took Metro to the open house last week and said something no one who took that ride has ever said before. He said, "It's convenient."

In fact, it's so convenient 1,500 more people will ride Metro to National Airport every day. So, one of out every five plane passengers, now will be a train passenger, too.

That is what this terminal is all about -- customer convenience. Directions are easy to follow. There are curbside phones. You can fax, FedEx and e-mail. It is an integrated infrastructure for the new information age.

When National Airport was built on mud flats in the big bend of the Potomac River in 1941, the nation was going into a war and coming out of a Depression. After Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated the new airport, newspaper headlines called it the "biggest boondoggle ever perpetrated upon the American taxpaying public."

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Well, we ended the Depression, we won the war, and National Airport has made back its investment many times over.

Today -- under President Clinton's leadership -- we have entered what we hope will be a time of prolonged peace and prosperity. This airport is part of the national response to the President's call to rebuild America's infrastructure. And in the 56 years since National opened, we have seen the economic wisdom of investing in transportation and infrastructure.

FDR faced the huge task of building an armed force to fight the war. Today our weapons are our economic might in the new international economy. Washington is no longer the small capital of an emerging great nation, but the capital of the world's greatest nation. This airport is a symbol of our strong present and our visionary future.

The writer Anne Morrow Lindbergh once said, "There are no signposts in the sky to show a man has passed that way before. There are no channels marked. The flier breaks each second into new uncharted seas."

This airport will help us chart those seas.

So, with my powers as Transportation Secretary, I declare the airport officially open for business.

Thank you.

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News:

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Washington, D.C. 20590

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
HAITIAN-AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
JULY 29, 1997
PORT-AU PRINCE, HAITI

Thank you very much.

First let me thank HAMCHAM president Bob Tippenhauer and the Haitian American Business Development Council for inviting me today. It's a great honor to be here, representing the United States on behalf of President Clinton.

As all of you know, President Clinton is deeply committed to Haiti. He has taken the lead in a multi-nation support effort that has helped restore democracy in Haiti and stabilize her economy.

Our commitment comes easily. Americans and Haitians share a common past, stretching back to the earliest days of the American republic, and Haiti's successful bid for independence some 190 years ago. Such a long history binds our citizens together, both now and in the future.

Clearly, we are living in a time of tremendous hope for the Haitian people. Democracy has returned to Haiti after years of autocratic rule.

The economy is recovering from several years of severe decline. Inflation is coming down. Growth this year could again hit 2 percent. And considerable international support -- some \$2 billion -- has been mobilized.

President Preval, to his credit, is pursuing a reform program that eventually will put Haiti's economy on a more solid footing, and provide justice and freedom to citizens, all of which are expected of a democratic system of government.

And all this is giving the Haitian people an opportunity to overcome the harsh political and economic legacy of decades gone by.

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Still, as you are well aware, Haiti faces many serious problems. High unemployment, pervasive poverty, poor health care, a fledgling private sector, and a dilapidated infrastructure.

But let me say, despite these problems, which we must and will address, we also have a responsibility to praise the good -- to seek it out and celebrate the successes. We must encourage the winds of democratic and commercial reform that will give the people here new rights, new hopes, and new opportunities.

We must find ways to secure these gains. And we must find ways to enhance them, to build on them so that Haiti can take its rightful place in the global community of the 21st century.

Today, I believe the most important thing Haiti can do to help herself, is to adopt free-market policies that foster growth, and create new jobs, and encourage trade and private investment. I don't think anyone in this audience would disagree. Economic reform is a must for Haiti.

Reforms will give the Haitian people the tools they need to pull themselves up and to succeed.

And make no mistake, there is a big payoff.

Look at Africa. I was there last week, leading the U.S. delegation to a summit of African and African-American leaders and business executives. Clearly, you could see Africa's economic and democratic progress, after years of strife.

And let me say, you wouldn't believe the level of enthusiasm and optimism there was for Africa's future. Top executives from scores of U.S. companies were there, including CEOs from several of America's best and biggest corporations -- all of them looking for new business opportunities.

Why? Because Africa is on the move. Just a half dozen years ago there were only 5 African democracies. Today there are 23. Many are joining the global march to free markets. Most are posting positive growth rates. Some nations are growing three times faster than the 4 percent average for the region. And foreign trade has doubled.

All this means increasing prosperity for the people of Africa: new jobs, rising wages, better education, improved health care.

And all this, and more, can be Haiti's, too, if Haiti stays on the path of reform.

President Preval, whom I met with yesterday, has demonstrated a commitment to moving Haiti forward. He is doing right by efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, to build a credible police force and judiciary, develop the private sector, and improve public infrastructure.

But he can't do it alone. He needs support from all quarters, especially business people like yourselves. Reform can be painful. It can have its ups and downs. It requires sacrifice and sweat. But reform is a long term investment, and the payoff is a better quality of life.

One of President Preval's most important plans is to privatize big state-owned enterprises, including airports and sea ports. By taking the "parastatals" private, federal expenses will be trimmed and efficiency improved.

As Transportation Secretary, I can tell you infrastructure development is key to economic prosperity. Without adequate roads, ports, and airports, the cost of doing business is greatly increased and growth prospects limited.

In the 1950s, when the United States started building our interstate highway system -- the network of roads that ties American communities together -- the highway network's contribution to our annual productivity growth rate was 31 percent.

So just think what a new or improved road can mean to bringing prosperity to Haiti.

My mission here is to make good on a promise by President Clinton of helping Haiti re-build its transportation infrastructure.

We must first assess Haiti's needs. So, I'm here to learn and listen. In addition to my meetings with President Preval, I'll be visiting with airport, seaport, transportation, and public works officials, and members of the newly formed Haitian Coast Guard. I want to understand the situation, and report back to President Clinton what else we can do to help support Haiti's economic development strategy.

Later, perhaps as early as this fall, I plan to send a team of technical experts from my department to Haiti. They will work side-by-side with Haitian experts to do a top-to-bottom evaluation of Haiti's roads, seaports, airports, the whole

package. They will make recommendations. And they will work with Haitian officials to formulate a comprehensive action plan to make necessary improvements.

We also will look for foreign aid funding sources to finance the improvements, including help from the international financial institutions and from other governments.

These new efforts build on what we're already doing. For example, our Federal Aviation Administration has been working closely with Haitian officials on aviation safety and security problems. We'll be dispatching an FAA consultant to assist Haitian authorities.

Let me close on this. The road to a better future is now in the hands of the Haitian people, and their government.

To maintain the gains achieved since democracy was restored in 1994, Haiti must press ahead. Tough decisions must be made by the Parliament. Economic reform must continue. And the people must remain committed to building a democratic society that offers political participation and economic opportunity.

The United States stands ready to support Haiti's march to democracy. But only the people of Haiti are the masters of their destiny.

Thank you very much. And now I'd like to hear from you how we can help Haiti build a prosperous future.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
U. S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
HAITIAN COAST GUARD FACILITY PRESS CONFERENCE
JULY 29, 1997
PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI

I would like to thank President Preval, Minister Dorcean and Minister Deryce for their hospitality. Our discussions yesterday and today were informative and productive.

First let me say the United States is committed to helping Haiti. President Clinton has been a leader in fostering democracy in Haiti, and in nurturing conditions for a market-based, prosperous economy.

Today, Haiti lacks the economic engines that power a sound economy. To prosper, the people of Haiti need the jobs that come with public and private investment, as well as international trade. That is what our visit was all about: working to provide opportunities for Haitians.

President Preval has proposed economic reforms for Haiti that would provide a solid basis for economic growth. We support those reforms, and especially agree that Haiti must privatize state-owned enterprises, including the airports and seaports.

As Secretary of Transportation, I know that good transportation systems attract trade. They are key to prosperity. World commerce will come to Haiti when goods and people can move about safely, efficiently, and at reasonable prices.

Before this can happen, Haiti needs roads -- good roads that link cities and towns, airports and seaports. Haiti needs airports that are safe, secure, and efficient. And it needs secure and efficient seaports.

- more -

So today, I am announcing that before the year ends, the United States will send a team of technical experts to Haiti to assess Haiti's transportation needs.

They will evaluate Haiti's roads, seaports and airports. They will look at how well these facilities interconnect, and work together. And they will work with local officials in developing a master plan for developing and improving Haiti's transportation infrastructure.

We also will send an expert in airport security to look closely at Port-au-Prince Airport and help it meet international standards.

Finally, the U.S. Coast Guard will continue working with our Canadian partners in developing and training a Haitian Coast Guard. The new Haitian Coast Guard is already playing a major role in improving the security and stability of Haiti's ports.

Four times in its short life, the Haitian Coast Guard has stopped drug shipments, arresting 22 suspects and seizing more than 3,700 pounds of cocaine and nearly 10,000 pounds of marijuana. These are significant victories in the war against drugs.

Let me say, in closing, that as our two days of listening and learning come to an end, I believe Haiti will keep striding forward. Haiti will continue to need assistance. But in the final analysis, the fate of Haiti is in the hands of her people. Reform will not be easy, but it is in the best interests of the Haitian people. To the people of Haiti: We wish you well and offer you our helping hand.

Thank you.

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