2.36

U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS BY SECRETARY RODNEY E. SLATER ON THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN AMTRAK AND BROTHERHOOD OF MAINTENANCE OF WAY EMPLOYEES WASHINGTON, DC NOVEMBER 2, 1997

Good afternoon. I am pleased to announced that at 10 a.m. this morning, the management of Amtrak and the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees initialed an agreement covering the basic terms of a new labor agreement.

Before we share its details, let me first begin by thanking President Bill Clinton for the opportunity he has given all of us to be here and come together to announce what is truly a landmark agreement in the recent history of labor negotiations.

It was President Clinton who, less than three months ago, took action through his powers under the Railway Labor Act, averting an Amtrak shutdown and appointing a bi-partisan Emergency Board composed of three independent, highly-regarded mediators.

That board came back with recommendations that set the stage for the negotiations that have now concluded.

But only a few short weeks ago, these parties were at a standstill; and the shutdown of not only Amtrak, but numerous commuter systems throughout the nation was only days away. More than half a million daily passengers were about to be stranded without a way to their jobs, schools and homes. Remember, for a moment, that Amtrak alone serves more than 500 communities in 44 states, more than 100 of which have either no inter-city bus or air service.

We began to break the stalemate about 12 days ago. We persuaded the parties to agree to extend the deadline twice, and enabled them -- working together -- to develop an historic plan that made sure almost all commuter rail passengers wouldn't become casualties of an Amtrak shutdown. Through this all, not a single Amtrak passenger or local commuter missed a train as a result of this dispute.

And building upon the strength of those actions, the parties forged a working relationship that helped give rise to this important agreement. That, and a lot of all-night sessions all of us are happy to have behind us.

For a moment, let me discuss the agreement itself.

First, each side has compromised in their long-term interest and in the interest of the American people.

The agreement happened because the parties did what they had to do. They put their common interest

first and found a way to marry that common interest to their self-interest.

And -- in the end -- the real winners are the American people, who can depend upon a new and vigorous Amtrak.

This landmark agreement establishes a new partnership between management and labor at Amtrak for enhanced productivity, improved service and real savings, while providing a fair wage increase for workers.

For the first time, it truly puts them both on the same team in the drive to put Amtrak on a sound financial footing.

I commend the parties for achieving a comprehensive agreement consistent with the balanced budget agreement worked out by President Clinton and the Congress, and the commitment we have all made for a self-supporting Amtrak.

Again, I want to emphasize the point that the parties have achieved this in a way that does not have any additional impact on the budget, beyond the Amtrak reform legislation currently under consideration.

In fact, the agreement includes specific work rule changes and cost controls that will save about $7 million. Also, a new committee comprised of management and labor will be formed to find additional savings through productivity and work-rule changes. These savings will be shared between labor and management. Altogether, the productivity measures included in this agreement should save Amtrak in the neighborhood of $13 million over the next three years, while helping fund the wage increases.

Let me close by speaking directly to Congress.

This is Sunday, so bear with me if I preach a little. Nearly thirty years ago -- also on a Sunday -- one of our nation's leading theologians of that time spoke in the East Room of the White House. He said, "As men [and women], we alone among animal species have the power to envisage the future and to choose. We can act wisely, and we can also act foolishly."

Amtrak's management and the representatives of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees have shown just the kind of wisdom and leadership they -- and this country needed, and forged a new partnership for a stronger future.

This is what Congress should recognize, and I urge that they act quickly to reinforce the commitment that management and labor have made in the interest of Amtrak's long-term success.

Many people were involved in this effort, initially, all of Amtrak's senior management and many, many of its employees. A few of them bear special recognition.

From the Amtrak board, their names are Gov. Tom Carper, Dan Collins, Sylvia DeLeon, Roy Neel, Amy Rosen, Celeste Pinto-McLean, and Don Pease. Let me also recognize Tom Downs, the President and CEO of Amtrak.

I want to thank all of the members of the BMWE, led by their General Chairman Jed Dodd.

Also, let me recognize National Mediation Board chairman Ernie DuBester for his work.

And finally, let me thank my staff and others who've contributed to this effort: Mort Downey, Janno Lieber, Jack Basso, Jack Bennett, Dan Tangherlini, and Karen Tramontano.

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News:

U.S. Department of Transportation

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, November 5, 1997

DOT 183-97
Contact: Bill Adams
Telephone: 202-366-5580

STATEMENT BY TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY SLATER ON HOUSE LEADERSHIP'S EVALUATION OF DEPARTMENT'S STRATEGIC PLAN

With the strategic plan as our guide to the challenges of the 21st century, we are working to develop a transportation system that is international in reach, intermodal in form, intelligent in character and inclusive in nature.

For our strategic plan to be top-rated, we had to put in a first-rate effort that brought out the best and boldest thinking within the Department of Transportation and within the transportation community across the country. The credit goes to the hundreds of men and women within the department who produced the plan. But their work has only just started. The real test of the plan's vision will be as we put it to work for the nation.

President Clinton has said that transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt and steel; it's about providing opportunity for all Americans. If our strategic plan is successful in the long run, it will have addressed the needs of all Americans and expanded their opportunities beyond the horizons we accept today.

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Copies of the strategic plan are available by calling the department's public affairs office at 202-366-5580 or by visiting the department's website: http://www.dot.gov/hot/dotplan.html.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
THE CORPORATE COUNCIL ON AFRICA
NOVEMBER 5, 1997
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

It is an honor to be here with you tonight. President Clinton and I and all in his administration are deeply interested and deeply committed to bringing Africa and America close together.

And there is tremendous bipartisan support in Congress. None has worked harder, with more dedication than Congresswoman McKinney, your hostess for this gathering. We owe her a major debt for bringing us together. She is right (to take up the cause championed by the late Ron Brown): trade and investment, not aid. This is how to forge a binding and lasting American - African relationship.

For too long this partnership languished. For too long Africa and America drifted apart, despite hundreds of years of a common history. For too long America failed to engage this dynamic continent of Africa, a grouping of many, many magnificent nations.

But now, we are working to change all that. In the months and years to come, you will see many actions by President Clinton and his administration.

The Department of Transportation is one of many federal agencies represented at this conference. You will hear from many of them tomorrow. And you will see that it is a full-court press.

Clearly, the excitement level about Africa is running very high.

We held our own trade and investment roundtable last month in Washington. Some of you many have been there. We had several hundred people from government, from Congress, from the African diplomatic corp, and from the corporate world. The gathering was so popular, we had difficulty finding a conference room large enough to accommodate all the people who wanted to come.

- more -

It was extraordinary.

This is clearly a great time to talk about the blossoming partnerships between the United States and the many nations of Africa. The winds of democratic, social and commercial reform are sweeping the continent.

And our message -- President Clinton's message -- is clear and unequivocal: America wants Africa as a full partner in the cause for freedom, democracy, economic liberalization and prosperity. The marginalization of Africa is over, and over forever.

In the coming age of global competition, American businesses and workers have a golden opportunity to benefit from Africa's turn to free-market economics.

Last year, 30 African nations posted positive growth rates.

Foreign trade with Africa has doubled in just five years.

U.S. exports to Africa last year topped $6 billion. That is more than all the former Soviet republics combined. And we expect an even better performance this year.

But Africans buy just seven percent of their imports from the United States. So there is room for growth.

But trade is only half the picture. There is tremendous investment potential.

State-owned business are rapidly being sold to private investors -- some 3,000 to date. And these are not Mom and Pop operations. We are talking about ports, telephone companies, and railways.

And know this: if Americans do not compete for these investments, others will. France and the United Kingdom already are Africa's biggest commercial partners. We are number three.

Even Malaysia, in far-off Asia, sees the potential of Africa. Malaysia is buying into telephone companies across the continent.

Let me remind everyone, that American prosperity is now powered by world trade, and will be in the years ahead. Some 12 million American jobs are supported by exports -- and that number is growing rapidly.

So we must go after emerging markets, where ever they may be. And the mighty nations of Africa are fertile ground.

President Clinton is committed to making these great nations full partners with the United States and the rest of the world.

As many of you know, he will be visiting Africa next year. He recently appointed the Reverend Jesse Jackson as his special envoy to Africa.

First Lady Hillary Clinton visited earlier this year. Secretary of State Albright will be there next month.

And I plan to lead a trade and investment mission there soon.

At the Department of Transportation, we recently launched our own Africa transportation initiative. This effort will show how essential transportation is to any economy -- large or small, developed or developing. Good infrastructure is a bread and butter issue, that all too often is taken for granted.

We want our friends in Africa to know they must have good highways and ports and airports and railroads to succeed in the global economy of the 21st century.

We want them to know that transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt and steel. It is about people. It is about providing opportunity and mobility of people and ideas. It is about advancing the cause of freedom.

Transportation is the tie that binds.

And you will see ongoing efforts in the months ahead.

Last month, we sponsored meetings in Harare, Addis Ababa, and Abidjan to assess and discuss the future of aviation services across Africa. We had people from 25 nations attend. And you can bet we will be following up.

We are setting up a number of technical assistance programs to help nations develop their infrastructure. We will advise on transferring technology and building human capacity through education and training.

And during my trip, I want to help American business people like many of you here tonight to make the connections they need to do business in Africa.

Let me end on this.

Africa is marching proudly into a brighter future. All gathered here know it. And many who had doubts, who had lost faith, now know it.

We want to continue to march forward until the job is done. And until it is worthy of the phrase: if we can do it at this moment -- this time calls on all of us to do.

We can build a common future -- a strong future for a new partnership between Africa and America for the 21st century.

Thank you very much.

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U.S. Department of
Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Contact: Carrie Hyun
Telephone: 202-366-5565

Media Advisory

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY SLATER AND U.S. REP. McKINNEY TO DISCUSS TRADE RELATIONS WITH AFRICA

U.S. Transportation Secretary Rodney E. Slater and U.S. Rep. Cynthia McKinney (Ga.) will be available at 6:45 p.m. Nov. 5 to respond to questions about trade relations with African nations. Both are featured guests at the "Georgia Connection," a forum to foster business ties between Georgia-owned businesses and African nations.

WHO: U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater
U.S. Rep. Cynthia McKinney (Ga.)

WHAT: Trade with the nations of Africa

WHEN: 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 5, 1997

WHERE: Four Points Hotel
Dunwoody, Ga.

(A listen-only telephone line will be available for out-of-town reporters. Reporters will be hear responses but will be unable to ask questions via this phone line. Call 202-366-5565 or Khaled Elgindy at 404-377-6900 early Nov. 5 for the phone number.)

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DIVIINITY CONVOCATION 1997
NOVEMBER 6, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Thank you, Provost Garibaldi and Dean Newsome. I had the occasion to meet the Dean in April, by chance. We were both in the same conference center, about 50 miles from here.

He was working on Howard's strategic plan. We were working on the Department of Transportation's strategic plan.

And I can tell you, being so close to people of the cloth must have been an inspiration to us. Because, just yesterday, Majority Leader Dick Armey (a Republican) selected our strategic plan as the very best of any government agency.

I don't know if I should thank you, or the Lord, but someone has been good to me!

I appreciate the opportunity to come before you, in this building named after Dr. Benjamin Mays, to discuss your very thoughtful theme: "Breathing New Life! Revitalizing the Church! Forging New Alliances!

I believe the church and state can forge an alliance on behalf of the common good. I first saw President Clinton, articulate this when I was his Deputy Campaign Manager, helping him run for President in 1992.

He went to Detroit, and made two major speeches: one in Macomb County, outside of Detroit, and one right in the center of Detroit at the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, pastored by the Reverend Odell Jones.

What was striking was this: the President's message was almost exactly the same -- for two very different audiences.

The message was this: if we are going to get to where we ought to be -- out of the recession -- and doing what we should be doing -- bringing out the true meaning of our creed, holding these truths that all are created equal -- then whether our heritage is African or Polish, Italian or Jewish we need to realize we're all in this together -- as Americans.

He believes if we provide opportunity for all, and have responsibility from all, we can build a better community for all.

What the President has focused on in the past four-and-a-half years is providing opportunity -- adding to the bounty.

We are seeing the results. More than 13 million jobs have been created. Two million more African Americans have jobs today than when he took office.

The President has worked hard to open the doors of college to all who want to go -- with the biggest increase in higher education investments in 50 years. He wants every 8-year-old to read, every 12-year old to log on to the Internet, and every 18-year old ready to go to college.

Opportunity it opening up because we are seeing responsibility from all -- we are seeing, as your theme says, new alliances.

Crime is down five years in a row. Why? Because your members are working with the police to give our youth something to say yes to.

We saw the alliance come forward after the terrible church burnings, when communities came together to rebuild. Next week, at the White House, the President is holding a conference on hate crimes. He knows that as all of God's children, we must celebrate our diversity. We must define ourselves in terms of who we are, not who we don't want to be. I hope all of you can help the President continue the dialogue with sermons in your churches.

Let me say, clearly I see a new sense of responsibility with the welfare rolls -- down by 3 million people. I am so proud that at the Department of Transportation, we have hired more than 100 former welfare recipients. And let me add, some have already received promotions.

It is all well for the President and Congress to say to every able-bodied person: go to work. But to make that practical, there has to be a way to get to work.

I always say transportation is the "to" in the phrase welfare to work. But it is a "to" that is very much an obstacle today.

Only 6 percent of welfare recipients have cars. I meet with mayors all the time, and they tell me: Rodney, businesses in the suburbs are crying out for entry-level workers, but half those jobs cannot be reached by public transportation.

In big cities, you can sit on a bus for two hours, and still not get to where the jobs are.

I have always believed that transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It is about providing opportunity, giving people mobility and access. In urban, suburban, and rural America, we need to do better.

The President has asked Congress for $100 million, every year for the next six years, for new programs to help these special people. But we cannot create a government program big enough to solve this.

So, let me ask -- because I know your churches own vans and buses -- will you think about ways to help people get to work? Would you, as some churches now do, take donated cars, and refurbish them, and make them available to low-income people?

If every church, or every other church represented here started a program, we would do good. That is the kind of new alliances we need to forge.

Let me tell you another area we need to work together in -- and that is to prepare our youth for careers.

Six months ago, I pledged to the President that the Department of Transportation, and our private sector partners, would reach a million youth. Some asked me: are you sure you know what you're doing? A million is very ambitious.

I said: You have to think big to do big.

And we have done well.

We have adopted over 250 schools. This will allow us to reach over 250,000 students. We are a quarter of the way there.

I want every child to grow up dreaming about designing cars, or being a pilot, or driving a truck. I call the program the Garrett A. Morgan Technology and Transportation Futures program. He was the son of a slave. And with less education than today's middle schooler, he invented the traffic signal. And I always tell the youth, if he prevailed, they can, too.

Let me ask for your help in one other area. As part of our strategic plan at the Department of Transportation, I have made safety a top priority.

We lose 40,000 lives a year on our roadways. It is a $150 billion expense.

I have to tell you as I close, that when it comes to the use of the most important safety device in an automobile, the seat belt, that African-Americans use this safety device about half the time. About 63 percent of whites do.

My point is this is an issue of importance to our community. Harriet Tubman, from the underground railroad, never lost a passenger. I want us as a community, to work with organizations across the land to be sure -- to be sure -- that we can establish that kind of record as we go into the future.

The good of transportation cannot be enjoyed if there is the kind of possibility for mishap, or even the loss of life that currently exists. I want to work with you to address this safety issue as well.

We have many alliances to build, and I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here and to talk about them. I look forward to working with you to assure that our best days are yet ahead of us.

Thank you very much.

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2.28

U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE HONORS CONVOCATION
TROY, NEW YORK
NOVEMBER 7, 1997

President Pipes, distinguished faculty, students, alumni both here and at the satellite locations -- thank you for this honorary degree.

But let me say, most of all, it is an honor to be among those whom honor is really do -- and clearly that is all of you, who have worked so very hard for this day.

Usually when you receive an honorary title, it comes with no responsibilities. But I do have a responsibility today.

My degree is for my work in public service. I am here on a recruiting mission, to ask all of you to think about going into government work, being able to say with pride one day: I served the United States of America.

Twenty years ago, when I was about your age, trying to get into law school, I remember writing an essay on why I wanted to choose that career path.

I said I wanted to find myself as a figure in a dream developing the policies of our country. Twenty years later, as a member of the Cabinet, advising the President of the United States, having the opportunity to take responsibility for the good of the public -- mighty dreams do come true.

In the 1960s, it was an honor to be a public servant. It was John Kennedy's love for this noble endeavor that attracted my boss, President Clinton, into government service.

Two of your most distinguished alumni from the '60s era took the journey into public service, as well. Today, they are the highest ranking civil servants at the Department of Transportation.

- more -

I ask Tony Kane to stand, so you will understand what a man of dedication is all about. When he graduated in the '60s, we had half the number of highway miles we do today. As a public servant, Tony helped this country build the great Interstate through the urban areas. The highways that grew the suburbs. That brought jobs to millions. That taught us that transportation was more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It is about providing opportunity.

And I ask Barry Valentine to stand. When he graduated in the 1960s, the closest many came to an airplane was on a Sunday afternoon to watch planes land and take-off. As a public servant, he has helped build the great aviation system, that today 600 million people fly, and in a dozen years a billion will use.

And let me say this: in 15 to 20 years, we will see more changes in aviation technology than we have seen in the last 40 years. What the great Interstate did for this country in the last half of this century, aviation will do in the 21st century.

Our challenge is to build that system. A transportation system that is international in reach; intermodal in form, so we bring highways, transit, rail, airports, and seaports together, as one; intelligent in character, so the concrete, asphalt, and steel, mix with science; and inclusive in service, so all can benefit.

This country needs transportation professionals -- the best and the brightest -- to come to work for government. As John Kennedy said: "For of those to whom much is given, much is required."

So, I brought one other alumni with me today -- Bill Wheeler. Please stand. Just a few years ago, he sat where you sit, as the Grand Marshall of his class.

This summer, he took his first job. I say with pride: at the Department of Transportation to help us build the transit systems of the future.

But he could use some friends.

So, let me close, by saying, thank you for the degree, and we need your talents in Washington.

Thank you.

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2.30

News:

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
AMERICAN TRAVEL SURVEY
NOVEMBER 10, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Thank you for coming this morning.

After a truly herculean effort over a span of 5 years by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, I am pleased to bring you the results of the American Travel Survey.

The results of this survey are important because they provide information of great use to transportation planners throughout this country. The results are the foundation for traffic safety analysis and the basis upon which highway construction and maintenance will be planned for the 21st century.

I commend everyone who helped with the success of this study. It is the result of a partnership. Members in the department and in the Census Bureau, people in the travel industry, and citizens who completed surveys -- all helped bring this huge undertaking to a successful conclusion. The results of their labor will benefit all of us for years to come -- it has been nearly 20 years since a survey like this was done.

The results tell us that transportation is vitally important to America. Americans are traveling more than ever. The distance we travel now -- more than 800 billion miles annually -- is more than double what Americans traveled in 1977. We also took twice as many long distance trips in 1995 -- more than 1 billion.

These results underscore the need now more than ever to continue strategic investment in transportation safety and infrastructure. To accommodate our need to travel, we must maintain a safe, efficient and environmentally sensitive transportation system.

That's why President Clinton last March urged reauthorization of the ISTEA -- the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act -- though a 175-billion-dollar National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act. The results of this survey confirm that continued investment is necessary to provide for the travel requirements of Americans.

- more -

I am hopeful that Congress will act this week to preserve authority for the Department of Transportation's critical safety functions and operations which lapsed with the end of ISTEA this past September.

Safety is our top priority here at the Department of Transportation, and Congress knows this well, also. So again, I encourage them to act over the next few days to continue this much needed funding.

The results of this survey also tell us that most long distance travel by Americans -- 80 percent of it -- is on our highways in cars, minivans, pickups and sport utility vehicles. This reaffirms the need for continued emphasis on safety. As we travel more, we increase our exposure to the risk injury in traffic crashes. About 42,000 motorists die on our roads each year, and they account for 94 percent of all transportation-related fatalities in this country. Safety is my highest priority.

In addition to being a very useful survey, it reminds us of how great and wonderful it is to be an American. In the United States, we can travel virtually anywhere, any time. Transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt and steel. It is about opportunity.

Once again, on behalf of all who benefit from the transportation system, I commend Dr. Lakshmanan and his people at the Bureau of Transportation Statistics for the tremendous effort they put forth to successfully complete this challenging and useful survey.

And now, I leave you in their good hands.

Thank you.

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U.S. Department of
Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
MID-AMERICA AIRPORT RIBBON CUTTING
NOVEMBER 8, 1997
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

This has been quite a morning -- airplane rides, bus trips, short speeches. But we have something big to celebrate -- a new airport, America's newest, which will set a course for a new century.

Let me say that what the interstate did for this century, airports will do for the 21st century. And today marks the opening of what some day will be one of Middle America's greatest airports.

And like all great things, it began as a dream, a dream of many. Dreamers like Congressman Costello, Senator Moseley-Braun, former Senator Dixon, County Board Chairman Baricevic, and so many others gathered here.

Dreams by nature are forward-looking, and clearly this airport is that.

I recently asked the top thinkers in my department to take out their crystal balls and tell me what the world will look like in 2020. That was a tall order, predicting the future.

But one thing which stood out, with certainty, was a forecast by the FAA that the demand for aviation services is headed ever higher. One billion people will fly in a dozen years; 600 million flew last year. And more and more cargo will be moved by air, across America and around the globe.

We need airports like MidAmerica. We need more capacity so our airlines, like TWA in St. Louis, can grow and our communities thrive, all while keeping the environment safe.

- more -

In 15 to 20 years, we will see more changes in aircraft design and aviation technology than we have seen in the last 40 years. And MidAmerica will be ready with your state-of-the-art control tower and long runways.

This airport was ahead of its time when it was but a glimmer in the eye of planners over a decade ago. We were near the end of the Cold War at the time. And our mighty military assets at their greatest number.

But the people here saw the future. They saw that one day Scott Air Force Base could be a shared facility, helping keep our military strong while developing the community for the economic challenges in a post-Cold War age.

Today -- under President Clinton's leadership -- we have entered what we hope will be a time of prolonged peace and prosperity. The nation's jobless rate is the lowest in 24 years.

This airport is part of the national response to the President's call to rebuild America's infrastructure. And in the years ahead, we will see the wisdom of investing in transportation and infrastructure.

You see, transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt and steel. It is about people. It is about providing opportunity, giving them the mobility to pursue life, liberty and happiness.

Today our weapons are our economic might in the new international economy. We are no longer the emerging great nation of half a century ago. We are the world's greatest power. This airport is a symbol of our strong present and our visionary future as we lead the world into the new century.

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:

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, November 7, 1997

Contacts:
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Carolee Bush, 202-366-6946

Media Advisory

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY SLATER TO ANNOUNCE RESULTS OF AMERICAN TRAVEL SURVEY; FIRST ONE IN NEARLY 20 YEARS

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater will announce the results of the 1997 American Travel Survey, the first such survey since 1977, during a briefing by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics at the U.S. Department of Transportation at 10:30 a.m. Monday, Nov. 10, 1997. The results provide information about travel patterns in the United States and show how long distance travel patterns have changed. Statistical information about travel patterns in individual states also will be available. The briefing for news media representatives will be followed by an industry briefing.

WHO: U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater
Dr. T. R. Lakshmanan, Director, Bureau of Transportation Statistics
Dr. Martha Farnsworth Riche, Director, U.S. Census Bureau
Dr. Suzanne Cook, Director, U.S. Travel Data Center

WHAT: Results of the long distance travel survey, the first since 1977.

WHEN: 10:30 a.m., Monday, Nov. 10

WHERE: Marx Media Center (Room 2201)
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C.

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2.27

U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
CHRISTENING OF SAINT LAWRENCE SEAWAY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
WORK BOAT *PERFORMANCE*
NOVEMBER 13, 1997
MASSENA, NEW YORK

It is good to be in the north country, on this special day, to launch the *Performance.*

I am told that six years ago, almost to this exact day, Secretary Skinner was here, launching another tug boat. Six years from now, who knows where I will be. But I know where my successor will be -- at the Seaway!

As a youth, I grew up not too far from the mighty Mississippi. I watched tug boats and barges go up and down, moving goods, bringing products to the Delta.

I learned to not only love the sea, but to have a respect for the men and women whose life is the sea.

Let me say -- I know what you do is hard. It can be dangerous. You work in all kinds of weather.

And we have an obligation to supply you with the best equipment. When President Clinton came into office, he promised to rebuild America's infrastructure. And we are seeing that again today.

Some of you I understand have nick-named the *Performance* the Little Tug Boat That Could.

With *Performance*, you don't have to think it could, and think it could -- it just plain can. It will turn on a dime, and provide those whose job it is to place navigation aides, the ability to do so safely and efficiently.

- more -

The Seaway staff makes up just one tenth of one percent of the entire Department of Transportation. But this mighty seaway is the link to America's heartland, where lies the economic power of this great nation.

Let me say, if we are to build a transportation system for the 21st century, it must be a system that is international in reach -- we must be able to move goods to and from Canada, the Great Lakes, and the rest of the world.

Our transportation system must be intermodal in form, where seaports, and airports, and rail, and highways -- all connect into one; it must be intelligent in character, so we make the best use of science and technology to make our system safer and more efficient, as we are doing here; and it must be inclusive in service -- so all can benefit.

So, thank you for having me, our best days are yet to come, and in 2003, the Transportation Secretary will be back.

# # # #

2.24

U.S. Department of
Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
MEETING WITH AFRICAN DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
MONTREAL, QUEBEC
NOVEMBER 13, 1997

In June, President Clinton announced a new partnership to achieve economic growth and opportunity in Africa; that same day, I made a speech before the International Aviation Club, where I said, first, that I would focus the expertise of my Department on Africa, and second, that I would work to assist ICAO in becoming more effective at setting global aviation standards.

We need to continue to do better in both areas. Today I want to engage in a dialogue about our commitment to the nations of Africa.

It is a commitment that moved forward last month, in Harare, Addis Ababa, and Abidjan when our aviation experts had a long over due dialogue -- with 25 African nations represented. I will visit Africa in January, and I know President Clinton looks forward to his trip to Africa.

Let me say what is important is that we improve air services. Aviation is vital to the ability of nations to trade, to invest, to develop, to prosper, and to be an active part of the growing global economy. Several U.S. communities recently summed up the importance of aviation for me very aptly: "You can't trade, if you can't get there."

Our vision is very simple: we want to get there and we want you to get here. Aviation must be the tie that binds. But it cannot happen until the safety of the air transportation system in certain parts of Africa is improved. We want to work with you, your governments, and with ICAO and the ICAO regional offices in supporting this effort.

Let me discuss what we can do. The U.S. is prepared to expand service opportunities for U.S. and African airlines.

- more -

In the past, the development of our aviation markets has not been a commercial priority of our air carriers. That will change as our economic and cultural ties increase. Aviation policies must change too, and they must make ready an environment that will encourage airlines to respond to and to stimulate market growth.

Interest in developing services to Africa by U.S. airlines and their alliance partners is already accelerating. To mention just a few, last summer Kenya approved a second U.S. code share; this month, South Africa approved two; and just last week, Uganda approved a first. Other code-sharing services -- including with African airlines -- are bound to follow. Interest in additional direct operations is also growing by African airlines.

Some of this may take time -- and I do not want to imply that by snapping our regulatory fingers new services will pour in. But we should be creating an economic environment for our airlines to experiment, to establish a presence, to develop the potential of the future market that we know will be there. It is prime time to take the first steps.

First, the open skies regime is gaining acceptance around the globe by countries in all stages of economic development. Several African countries have expressed an interest. We are prepared to explore open-skies agreements with those governments that are ready to do so and have sufficient infrastructure in place.

Second, where necessary, we are prepared to take a limited approach to the introduction of competitive services to encourage a start to improvements in U.S.-Africa air services. We are pragmatic and recognize that markets and airline services may need some time to strengthen. Export markets strengthen when competitive cargo lift is available; investors put serious money where serious efforts are made to provide reliable transport and communications infrastructures; and tourists go to destinations that are convenient and cost effective.

Third, even without the benefit of a framework aviation agreement with the United States, we will consider applications for services by African airlines on the basis of comity and reciprocity. We hope that you will do the same.

Fourth, the FAA is prepared to offer technical assistance on a reimbursable basis to bring air navigation and airport security standards to the level of international norms. I know that FAA officials have begun to confer with your

authorities and stand ready to advise on a course of action to improve overflight and security standards.

They also have training programs available in Oklahoma City, and they can design training courses specifically for your countries or region. I have directed my staff to see how we can be even more proactive, working with you, to advance aviation safety and security.

Let me point out: we have seen success. Ghana quickly made necessary resource and training commitments after an FAA review, which resulted in implementation of air service from Accra to New York in July of last year.

Though there are many things we can do, there is one thing, unfortunately, we cannot do. The U.S. is not in a position to fund much of the technical assistance that is required to address safety and security needs. We believe, however, that funds may be found from other sources.

Aviation services generate significant revenues in the form of cost based user charges and overflight fees. These revenues are traditionally used by nations for the maintenance and improvement of the infrastructure required to support air transport, including technical training.

We strongly urge you to devote a portion of these revenues to the creation of sound safety, security and overflight systems.

I appreciate that financing of major infrastructure projects can be complicated and requires large, up-front investments. I would like to see a greater investment interest in transportation projects.

Last month the U.S. aviation delegation visited with the African Development Bank in Abidjan. I am prepared to explore further with the African Development Bank, and other similar sources, the possibility of funding projects in the aviation area.

But to make such an exploration meaningful, your governments themselves must make aviation infrastructure a priority when seeking funds from the ADB.

Let me be very clear, President Clinton and I have safety as our number one priority. Yesterday, I met with the Director General of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) as well as the Director of Government Affairs for IATA-Africa. We discussed that aviation safety and security are key threshold concerns in many African countries. Today, I have had and will have similar

discussions with the President of ICAO's Council and the Secretary General of ICAO. I need you and your governments to join me, creating an environment to foster trade and investment on the continent.

Our task of improving air services between the United States and the nations of Africa is an essential component to realizing the benefits of expanded trade between our continents; the means to move goods and people efficiently and safely must back up our desires to open our markets. I repeat, you can't trade if you can't get there and we want to work together to get there. We want aviation to be the tie that binds.

Thank you.

# # # #

2.23

U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE HIGHWAY
AND TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS
NOVEMBER 17, 1997
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

Let me begin by welcoming a group of students -- some 35 of them and their teachers -- from several area high schools. They are a part of my new Garrett A. Morgan Technology and Transportation Futures Program.

And tomorrow, we'll have two dozen civil engineering students from area colleges attending.

You know, we will have a shortage of skilled workers in the years to come if we do not start attracting more young people to our industry. So I urge all of you to talk with these students.

And know this: they could be the AASHTO leaders of tomorrow.

Ten months ago when I became Transportation Secretary, I set three goals. I wanted to find new ways to improve safety. I wanted to make sure that we continued record-level investment in America's infrastructure. And I wanted common sense solutions to problems. I am proud to say we have made progress on all three.

I will change the order of these goals this morning, because I know as a former highway commissioner what you want most to hear about: infrastructure investment.

Many of you were tuned in to Washington's newest drama this fall: the fight to renew federal highway and transit programs. Well, the good news is that drama ended last week. The bad news is we will have to do it all over again early next year.

- more -

I had hoped to stand today, celebrating a six-year ISTEA reauthorization. Instead, we got a six-month extension. I know this is disappointing, but let me say, don't believe all those negative headlines.

Why? Because we actually made a lot of progress.

First, our short-term needs were met. The stopgap bill keeps all programs up and running. It keeps the money flowing to the states so you can keep doing what you are doing.

Second, it addressed President Clinton's priorities, which were set out in our original proposal last spring, including flexibility, local decision making, and innovative financing.

And third, Majority Leader Lott, of Mississippi, pledged that ISTEA would be at the top of the agenda when Congress reconvenes in January. So I hope we will be able to work out a final package in the spring.

More importantly, there is every indication what will emerge is a bill that gives every state what it wants and needs: more money.

President Clinton has made good on his promise to rebuild American infrastructure.

In case you missed this headline, the fiscal 1998 transportation appropriation totaled $30 billion -- a 12 percent hike. And for highways: a 13 percent gain to nearly $22 billion.

In a year in which the country decided to balance the budget, that is truly remarkable. And it shows the premium that American people are wisely putting on transportation.

So it is time to end this war between the states -- donor versus donee, brother against brother -- and declare victory for all, for to all go the benefits of peace.

As we stand at the start a new century, we must think about the future. We must think about where we are going and where we want to be.

We are at a unique moment for our industry. Virtually every law governing transportation is up for renewal before Congress -- ISTEA, FAA financing, and

ocean shipping. At the same time, key private industries -- the railroads and shipping lines -- are restructuring. All this while demand for transportation, by people and for freight, is rising at phenomenal rates.

So we must look ahead. We must see through the fog of time and decide how best to navigate the road ahead.

I believe our future is an integrated system that is international in reach, intermodal in form, intelligent in character, and inclusive in nature.

Every time you build a highway or interchange you have to think globally. You have to ask: how will this affect the local, and global economy?

In the last four years, about 30 percent of our growth has come from selling American products overseas. And this won't change. So we need a strong national transportation system that will give our businesses the edge they need to compete and win anywhere in the world.

We need border corridors. And national corridors like Interstate 69 that stretch from Mexico to Canada, connecting us with our neighbors.

Our system must also be intermodal. And this will come only when railroads and airports, and highways and ports are all connected together as one.

We are seeing that approach here in Salt Lake City. Later today, I will join Mayor Corradini to break ground on the city's Gateway Project. They will save $20 million by coordinating rail and highway improvements along I-15 into the city. And they will finish the project in time for the Winter Olympics in 2002 because of a new design-build kind of contract.

Our transportation system must also be intelligent. We will have cars that "talk" to roadways and roads that communicate with people. We need traffic management systems like the one built for the Atlantic Olympics that reduce congestion and improve efficiency. We must combine as one, the science, concrete and steel.

And transportation in America must be inclusive, benefitting all citizens. Whether you live in the South or the North, drive a car or ride the bus, deliver goods or take vacations, all must be served.

This is the blueprint we must follow if America is to succeed in the 21st century.

Now, my next goal: safety. How do we go about saving more lives and preventing injuries in transportation accidents?

In 10 years, Americans will drive 24 percent more miles on our highways than today. This is good for prosperity, but it means a greater risk of more accidents.

Already we lose 42,000 people a year in highway crashes, a tragically high number. This is a public health problem that we must keep pounding at every day and in every way. So I commend AASHTO in crafting a Strategic Highway Safety Plan, which looks at the problems of today and tomorrow. It is the kind of common-sense roadmap we can use to develop effective public programs to combat fatalities.

Your input is especially helpful. The state and local governments you represent are in the best position to put safety programs into effect. And by looking to reduce crashes involving trains and vehicles, you've made it intermodal. This is very good, because in today's world I believe all transportation issues must be approached this way.

And Washington has a responsibility to lead. So early next year I plan to announce new Department of Transportation goals for reducing the number of highway-related deaths.

As many of you know, the FHWA and NHTSA have worked on a federal strategic safety plan. And they have been coordinating their efforts with the Federal Railroad Administration. Many DOT people are here, and I thank them for their efforts.

Tomorrow, in Washington, I will announce new rules on air bags. Air bags are like medicines that save lives, but can have dangerous side effects. We have saved 2,600 lives, but at the expense of almost 100 children and short adults. Tomorrow, we will give some Americans new choices. I hope I can count on you to help educate the public on the ultimate solution: buckling up and putting children in the back.

Let me also say President Clinton is backing the push for tougher drunk-driving laws, which would require states to reduce the legal blood alcohol limit to .08 percent (from .10 percent). This one law alone would save many lives. He is ready to sign it.

Finally, my last goal, common-sense government. I have been immersed in talks to save Amtrak from bankruptcy. They ended successfully last week when Congress passed an overhaul bill that the President will sign. As you may know, a dark cloud has hung over Amtrak's future. This legislation, along with a labor settlement we negotiated, clears the picture.

I will spare you the blow-by-blow report. But let me say, the package is very sensible. It is future-oriented and reform-minded. It gives Amtrak the resources to become independent. And, most of all, it is a model for common-sense.

Let me end on this. I have said many times that transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt and steel. It is truly about people and providing them the opportunity to be successful, responsible individuals.

As I approach the end of my first year as Transportation Secretary, I must say it has been a great time to be in President Clinton's cabinet.

We have had many successes. You may have heard the President announce over the weekend that violent crime rates are the lowest in a quarter century. The jobless rate, at 4.7 percent, hasn't been this low in two dozen years. Inflation is low and economic growth is strong and steady. And despite the showdown with Iraq's Saddam Hussein, the world is at peace.

So stay with us, because I believe our best days are yet to come.

# # # #

2.24

News:

U.S. Department of Transportation

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
GATEWAY RAIL-BREAKING PROJECT
NOVEMBER 17, 1997
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

I have been to my share of ground breakings, but this is my first rail track pulling ceremony. So it is a double delight to be here today.

I know how important this project is for you and the people of Salt Lake City as you prepare for the 2002 Winter Olympics. You have a very big job ahead of you. And I am impressed at how you are handling the challenge.

You have already begun work on a light rail transit system to move those hundreds of thousands of visitors who will come. I know this because my former boss, Federico Peña, now the Energy Secretary, told me all about it after he delivered the federal check for the system two years ago.

And while I am sorry I do not have a check for you today -- maybe next time -- I can tell you this: the Clinton Administration is totally behind you. We want you to succeed.

We want all of America to succeed, which is why we are investing record-levels in transportation in communities across the nation.

The games will be a great boost for the western states, just as Atlanta's Olympics were for the South. And indeed, with the world watching on television, the entire nation will be a showcase. I also think it will be great, because we will show the world what America is all about as we begin a new century.

But the best thing about all you are doing is what it will mean for all the people who live around here -- long after the games have ended.

This Gateway Project we are beginning today will make the drive into Salt Lake City easier and more pleasant. It will make travel seamless between different

- more -

modes of transportation, train and bus and car, and maybe one day, commuter rail. It will provide development opportunities for area businesses.

It will make this city of the West even greater.

But what this project is really about is people. Transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt and steel. It is about providing opportunity for people. It is about giving them the mobility to better themselves and pursue their dreams.

That is what this project means. Opportunity for all, and to all the chance to be successful, responsible individuals.

Thank you very much.

# # # #

RS -- Moving Kids Safely -- 11/18/97
draft 2 --24 minutes (by Ilene)

LIGHTS DOWN

SLIDE 1

Thank you, Dr. Martinez, and thanks to all of you for joining us, as we learn how we can do better for America's youth.

As many of you know, this morning, I announced major new rules with regards to air bags. With this many safety advocates in one room, I want to spend some time lobbying you for your help -- as we have been lobbied for many months now on this issue.

But let me first honor those, to whom honor is do.

First, Cheryl Neverman, of NHTSA, could you please stand. You deserve a big round of applause for helping organize this.

Let me also acknowledge Kay Chopard -- who did an extraordinary job with this conference, as well. Kay is not with us today, because she recently donated a kidney to her brother, and we wish them the very, very best.

These awards were established by my predecessor, Secretary Peña, to honor outstanding community programs.

We received nearly 100 applications. And all are winners, in my eyes. But the judges had the difficult task of narrowing the field, so let's begin.

SLIDE 2

Our first award is for child transportation safety, addressing those under the age of 16.

SLIDE 3

Kids and Transportation, founded in 1994, by the Greater Portland Council of Governments, creates a forum for children and teachers to learn about safe walking, biking, and busing behavior.

SLIDE 4

Many young people had been putting themselves at risk by darting into roadways, crossing between parked cars, riding bikes on the wrong side of the road and without helmets, and confusing school bus rules with those for city buses.

By involving many groups, from the schools to the police, from hospitals to recreation departments, Kids and Transportation

SLIDE 5

developed bike safety videos and brochures; implemented a teacher safety course; and developed a safety resource guide.

SLIDE 6

They also conducted outdoor seminars; and mapped out how children could best get to school.

SLIDE 7

They visited schools to train teachers and students about proper helmet use; and organized bulk helmet orders at elementary schools.

SLIDE 8

In the first two years, they organized 185 student presentations in 14 cities and towns, and 77 safety seminars for teachers.

Accepting the award is David Willauer, of the Greater Portland Council of Governments.

SLIDE 9

Our next award recognizes a community partnership that addresses identified or potential safety problems.

SLIDE 10

Marion County, is home to Indianapolis, the 12th largest city in America, with more than half a million drivers.

SLIDE 11

The Marion Country Traffic Safety Partnership was formed in 1994, to reduce the number of deaths and injuries on Marion County roads.

Through increased enforcement and education campaigns, the partnership promotes responsible driving behaviors by encouraging people to use seat belts and obey traffic laws.

Significant strides have been made.

SLIDE 12

Law enforcement officers and the mascot, "Buckle Up Bug", visit elementary schools to encourage buckling up.

Police regularly conduct sobriety checkpoints; and patrols monitor bad intersections.

SLIDE 13

Trailers, placed on county roads, digitally display a driver's speed, reminding all to stay within the limit.

SLIDE 14

They also produced a television public service announcement featuring David Letterman's mother Dorothy. Indiana's most famous mom tells other moms what to do with children in a car.

SLIDE 15

The bottom line is: last year, Marion County saw a remarkable 13 percent decrease in automobile crashes -- the largest decrease in 10 years -- and a 9 percent decrease in alcohol-related incidents.

Accepting the award are Ann Reed, Teresa Lather, and Terri Crooks, of the Marion County Traffic Safety Partnership.

SLIDE 16

The final award recognizes a program that has shown innovation in moving toward a comprehensive injury prevention approach, involves a broad array of partners, and focuses on reducing injuries and costs.

SLIDE 17

Charleston County was identified by the South Carolina Department of Public Safety as the biggest problem area in the state for bike crashes, costing $44 million over a five-year period.

In addition, seat belt usage for youngsters was at a record low. From 1989-1993, more than 600 of South Carolina's children died on highways, and more than 60 of them from Charleston County communities.

SLIDE 18

Community Health Partners, with its 500 volunteers, set out to improve the situation in Charleston and two other counties.

SLIDE 19

First, they developed "Romp and Roll," a family play-day. Adults and children learned how to prevent pedestrian and bike injuries by participating in fun activities conducted by fitness clubs, girl scout troops, police departments, area hospitals, schools, and bike stores.

SLIDE 20

450 bike helmets and thousands of reflectors were given away -- free.

Second, as part of a "Precious Cargo Program," they also distributed 400 child safety seats -- free. They wanted to make sure that costs never stopped a child from traveling safely.

SLIDE 21

What makes them able to do that, is the outstanding collaboration.

Community Health Partners and the Allstate Foundation provide the funds ... Trident Area Safe Kids Coalition buys the seats at a big discount ... Cummins Engine stores them ... and the Department of Health and Environmental Control distributes them and provides education for the parents.

Let me say, the group hopes to repeat this annually.

SLIDE 22

Accepting the award are Christi Sanford of Community Health Partners, Amy Ethridge of the Trident Area Safe Kids Coalition, and Sharon Klein of the College of Charleston.

SLIDE 23

It is my privilege to also celebrate those programs that received honorable mentions.

SLIDE 24

In the Child Transportation Category are:

Capital Region Safe Kids of Schenectady, New York.

Riley Hospital for Children, of Indianapolis,

SLIDE 25

And the JFK Health World Train Safety Education Program of Barrington, Illinois.

SLIDE 26

In the category of "Transportation Safety" receiving honorable mentions are:

Operational Cool of Springfield, Illinois.

And the What-com Company Traffic Safety Team, of Bellingham, Washington.

(Please join me in giving all of them a round of applause)

SLIDE 27

LIGHTS UP

I liked to talk with you for a few more minutes.

What is beneficial about bringing all of you, together, is that we can show the good that is happening across America. And hopefully you can replicate some of these ideas into your communities.

President Clinton clearly has done that on crime. You may have heard the President announce over the weekend that violent crime rates are the lowest in a quarter century. Why did it happen? Because community groups across the land are working with the police to give our youth something to say yes to.

You are doing the same here. There are many children in America who will not be injured, or hospitalized -- because of what you are doing.

I want to ask for your help one more time -- this time, on air bags.

Thirteen years ago, Secretary Dole announced the rule that has led to 67 million vehicles being equipped with air bags. Much good has come -- 2,600 lives have been saved.

But air bags have also cost the lives of almost 100 children and small adults. We do not save lives, at the expense of America's children.

When I came into office, I said safety would be our top priority. Determining what to do with air bags has been the most difficult safety issue I have faced so far. Air bags are like medicines that save lives, but can have dangerous side effects.

This year, we heard from every side, in every way. And after weighing everyone's interests, we have made a judgement in the public interest.

This morning, I announced that consumers can purchase an on-off switch to turn off air bags, if they fit into one of four at-risk categories.

They are: one, those with certain medical conditions; two, those who must sit within 10 inches of the steering wheel; three, those who cannot avoid placing rear-facing infant seats in the front; and four, families or carpoolers who drive many kids and a child must sit in the front.

To obtain a switch, consumers must read an informational brochure, so they understand the risks. They then can submit an application.

We have made a very difficult judgement. Now it is the public's turn to make theirs. I want their decision to be easier to make than ours.

So, we must educate consumers on this rule. They will ask questions to everyone you can imagine.

When they are getting their driver's license, when they are talking to their doctor, when they see a law enforcement officer, when they are at PTA meetings, when they are at the car dealer -- they will be asking: should we be getting a switch?

Today, we have information packages for you to take back home; and we have NHTSA people here to help you educate your communities.

Every time you talk to someone, I want you to ask them to forget about air bags for a minute.

Because, in a large measure, we would not be here today, if all children under 12 sat in the back, properly buckled, in the right sized seat, put in right.

We need children to know not to sit in the front, that it's cool to sit in the back. If we cannot get to the parents, we need to get to the youth.

But in the end, it is adults who are responsible. Today, one in three Americans still don't get it. They don't buckle up. When cars crash, air bags provide full protection only if seat belts are buckled.

So every time you put together a program to explain air bags, you will remind them to buckle up and put the kid in the back -- won't you?

Let me end by saying that the children whose lives you have saved may not know you. They may not know you ever helped them. But they owe a great deal to you.

So do I. And so does America.

Thank you very much.

# # # #

U.S. Department of
Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, November 17, 1997

Contact: Rae Tyson
Telephone: 202-366-9550

Media Advisory

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY RODNEY E. SLATER TO MAKE MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING AIR BAGS

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater and NHTSA Administrator Ricardo Martinez, M.D., will make a major announcement regarding the Department of Transportation's continuing comprehensive effort to preserve the benefits of air bags and minimize their risks.

WHO: U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater
Ricardo Martinez, M.D., Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

WHAT: Major announcement regarding the continuing comprehensive effort to preserve the benefits of air bags and minimize their risks.

WHEN: 10 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 18, 1997

WHERE: Marx Media Center (Room 2201) (Credentialed media only)
U.S. Department of Transportation,
400 Seventh St. S.W.
Washington, D.C.

Representatives of organizations other than news media may view proceedings in Room 2230. All visitors should use the southwest entrance to the department.

* A video news release on the major announcement will be available via satellite on Tuesday, Nov. 18, 1997. Feeds will be available at the following times and coordinates:

12:30-1 p.m., EST
C BAND: Galaxy 9
Transponder 1
(Downlink frequency 3720 (V))
Audio 6.2/6.8

3:30-3:45 p.m., EST (refeed)
C BAND: Galaxy 6
Transponder 11
(Downlink frequency 3920 (H))
Audio 6.2/6.8

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
SLSDC SIGNING CEREMONY FOR
GARRETT A . MORGAN-TECH PREP PROGRAM
MASSENA, NEW YORK
NOVEMBER 13, 1997

Good afternoon, to all the Jefferson students ... parents ... and teachers.

I am sorry I did not bring my daughter. She is four, and would love this playground. I want to thank the parents for raising the money to pay for it, and the Seaway employees, who provided the labor -- and built the place.

Let me talk to the students first.

Your school is named after Thomas Jefferson. Who knows who he is?

Who knows who the President is today?

Who knows what I do?

Who wants to be a pilot? And a car designer? Drive a bus? Work on the Seaway?

Now, let me talk to the teachers and parents. I am here, because we need future transportation workers. Since President Clinton has been in office, we have added 700,000 transportation jobs.

And when I talk to presidents of big transportation companies, like Boeing, they tell me we need better-trained workers, with high-tech skills.

Today, when you go to college, we find lots of talented kids in pre-law. We find many in pre-med. I want to start a pre-transportation curriculum.

But I don't want to wait until they are in college. It is too late then.

I need them to start when they are in elementary, dreaming about being a pilot. I want them to understand all of the skills they need to make that happen ... and then when they get into middle and high school, we want to help them along.

Six months ago, in Philadelphia, President Clinton announced my goal. To reach a million students, and teach them about careers in transportation.

We have reached about 250,000 so far -- and I am glad, with the help of the St. Lawrence Seaway employees, to be reaching more today.

I call the program the Garrett A. Morgan Technology and Transportation Futures Program.

Does anyone know who Garrett Morgan was?

I want to end by telling you how you can become a Garrett Morgan.

Good, better, best.

# # # #

2.25

News:

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
AIR BAG PRESS CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 18, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

When I came into this office, I said safety would be our top priority. Determining what to do with air bags has been the most difficult safety issue I have faced so far. Air bags are like medicines that save lives, but can have dangerous side effects.

Thirteen years ago, Secretary Dole announced the rule that has led to 67 million vehicles being equipped with air bags. It was a tough decision then. The issue had been debated for 15 long years. And much good has come -- 2,600 lives have been saved. But in her announcement, she warned that highway deaths cannot be solved by "the stroke of a pen or the wizardry of technology."

Clearly, we have learned that. For air bags have also cost the lives of 87 children and adults.

Like the first air bag debate, we did not hurry this decision. It is too complicated and too important for us to have gotten it wrong.

We took a common sense approach. We learned new information. We heard from every side. We weighed all their interests. And we have made a judgment in the public interest.

Today, I am announcing consumers who fit into four at-risk categories can purchase a switch to turn on and off air bags as the need arises.

These consumers are: one, those with certain medical conditions; two, those who must sit within 10 inches of the steering wheel; three, those who cannot avoid placing rear-facing infant seats in the front; and four, families or carpoolers who drive many children and must place a child in the front seat.

- more -

To obtain a switch, consumers must read an informational brochure, so they understand the risks. They then can submit an easy-to-follow application that we will respond to expeditiously.

We have made a very difficult decision. Now it is the public's turn to make theirs. I want their decision to be easier to make than ours.

So we will begin an educational campaign that will include brochures, a hotline, and a page on the Internet. This afternoon, at a Moving Kids Safely Conference, I will ask several hundred safety leaders, from communities across the country, to help us.

We have many partners here who have offered to help. And let me ask our friends from the Fourth Estate, if you would use your powers to help inform, too.

Finally, let's forget about air bags for a minute. In a large measure, we would not be here today, if all children under 12 sat in the back, properly buckled, in the right sized seat, put in right.

We need children to know not to sit in the front, that it's cool to sit in the back. If we cannot get to the parents, we need to get to the youth.

But in the end, it is adults who are responsible. Today, one in three Americans still don't get it. They don't buckle up. When cars crash, air bags provide full protection only if seat belts are buckled. So, today is but one of many steps we must take.

Thank you very much.

# # # #

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
MEMORIAL DEDICATION TO WILLIAM MITCHELL
MASSENA, NEW YORK
NOVEMBER 13, 1997

To Peggy ... Eve ... Jennifer ... and William -- it is an honor for me to be here, to honor your husband and father, to whom honor is due.

Although much time has passed since that awful day in October 1983, it is still difficult for you, I know. But we hope this memorial helps -- we hope it helps you remember his life, and the service he made to our country.

Two days ago, on Veteran's Day, I was with President Clinton at Arlington National Cemetery. And the President said that our veterans are ordinary Americans, but there is nothing ordinary about their patriotism.

Your father was a veteran. He was a proud Native American. He was a man who loved his family, dearly -- all ordinary things. But there was nothing ordinary about his duty.

His life on the Seaway was not easy. No one's is. He toiled in harm's way every day. But whether in the hot sun in August or 30 below in the winter, he led the life as described in Isaiah: "Blessed are you that sow beside all waters ... and the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."

His work was in the great ideal of a free society -- where Americans and people far beyond our shores bring shiploads of goods to trade. And every day, in every way, he made sure the goods moved freely, benefitting millions of people who used the goods, and the tens of thousands who produced them.

I never had the honor to meet Billy Mitchell. But today, I have met several of the St. Lawrence Seaway people. From meeting them, I get the feeling that what would impress your father and your husband is that a decade after his death, the men and women of the St. Lawrence Seaway carry on -- continuing the hard work, knowing that what they do is risky, but they do it so that our nation is the true land of opportunity.

As this nation salutes Billy Mitchell, let us remember that: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his namesake."

Thank you.

# # # #

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND AWARDS
NOVEMBER 11, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Stalisha Gilmore is a wonderful young lady. You can see it in her eyes. You can hear it in her voice. You can see it in the way she carries herself.

Despite hardships and personal tragedies that befell her at an all too tender age, Stalisha is one determined young lady.

I only met her tonight, but I can tell you she is a voice for young people who have gone through what she has. And even more, she is a powerful voice and a strong role model, to youth in trouble, whom she helps in her volunteer work at a teen crisis center.

A student at Dunbar Senior High School here in the District, one day she hopes to help even more people by becoming a medical doctor.

But Stalisha did not get here the easy way. Let's hear her story.

# # # #

2.21

U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AWARDS CEREMONY
NOVEMBER 19, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Good afternoon to all of our honorees, and their families, and guests. Let me say, it is an honor to be among those to whom honor is due.

On my first day as Secretary, I asked those on the stage -- the senior team -- to help me find the good of the DOT family, and praise it. We clearly have found the good. Twenty-nine years ago, when Secretary Boyd held the very first ceremony, he honored 14 people. Today we honor more than 100. Interestingly, we have about the same number of employees today, as we did then. I don't know if we are doing better work, or if we are better at finding the good -- but something is working!

In the last 10 months, as Secretary of Transportation, I have traveled the world. I have visited more than half the states. I have given more than 200 speeches. I have reached out to every group imaginable -- but nothing is more pleasant than today.

For I owe all of you a very big thank you for making these first 10 months so successful. I would not be able to serve the President and the American people as I do, were it not for all of you. I want you to know, I appreciate that.

When I came into office I said I had three goals:

First, I wanted to continue President Clinton's promise to rebuild America's infrastructure. Next year, the transportation appropriation totals $30 billion -- a 12 percent hike. In a year in which the country decided to balance the budget, that is truly remarkable. It shows the premium the American people put on transportation. And let me say, next year, we will get the long-term highway and transit bill passed.

My other two goals were to improve safety and to bring a common sense approach to government. I cannot deliver that -- only you can. What strikes me is

how many of you are here for bringing common sense to government -- for making the DOT work better and cost less. As you listen to the citations, you will hear of people re-inventing and re-designing and re-organizing. When you turn 30 as the DOT did this year, you re-make yourself. You go on a diet. You get yourself in shape, and clearly you have done that.

I want you to be proud of our heritage, the valor of the Coast Guard, the technical skills that we have built across the board, the professionalism of the staff. But as we start a new decade for the DOT, we must think about the future -- about where we are going and where we want to be.

I ask you to help me build our own traditions. To help me build a Department that understands that transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. That it is about people and providing them opportunity.

To help me build a DOT, where we forget about organizational charts, and we build one team, where staff from all areas come together to work on projects. I believe our future is an integrated transportation system that is international in reach, intermodal in form, intelligent in character, and inclusive in nature. But we cannot get there, if the DOT is not a more integrated organization itself.

This is going to be a decade of great change in America, a decade of change for our transportation industries, and I hope you help me change the DOT, too.

Now it is my pleasure to announce that the recipient of the Gold Medal Award is the team of individuals, from across the DOT, who came together and helped me prepare our strategic plan. To show you how good their work was Dick Armey, the Majority Leader in Congress, said that of all the strategic plans submitted to Congress, by every government agency, the DOT's was the very best. It is one thing if I brag about us. But if a Republican does, you know we're doing something right!

I want to announce today that before the end of the year, we will roll out the strategic plan for all employees. We are honoring the team that created it; but the real value of the plan is only if the 100,000 DOT family members buy into it and make it come to life. So, I hope next year to pass out awards to those who are implementing the plan -- and I hope they will be many.

On behalf of the strategic planning team, will Dani Brzezinska and George McDonald please step forward to receive the Gold Medal Award and will all the members of the team please stand.

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2.20

U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
LAUNCHING OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND
THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO WORK PILOT
NOVEMBER 20, 1997
SUITLAND, MARYLAND

We wouldn't be here today if it were not for the hard work of so many gathered. Kitty Higgins, President Clinton's Deputy Labor Secretary, whose department helped us design this program. And Stephanie Powers at the Labor Department who did much of the heavy lifting. Judith Sheehan with Prince George's County school system, who was the driving force behind the program.

And to PG County school system Superintendent, Jerome Clark, who has shown great leadership, congratulations on being named Maryland's Superintendent of the Year. We are fortunate to have such a leader at the helm.

Clearly, with such honors come responsibilities.

So, Mr. Superintendent, I am giving you a new job. I want you to find a student who can come to work with me for a day, and learn what my job is like. Of course, after a few hours of government meetings, you might find a career in math or science a whole lot more interesting!

Well, I am delighted to be here to sign this agreement to create our first school-to-work transportation program. It will set the pace for the nation. I hope to see many more programs like it.

As many of you know, it is part of my new Garrett A. Morgan Technology and Transportation Futures Program.

Six months ago, in Philadelphia, President Clinton announced the program at his public service summit. He was joined by all the former U.S. presidents and Mrs. Reagan.

And the President pledged to work to reach millions of young people by the year 2000. He pledged to mentor them, to coach them, to tutor them so they

- more -

would be ready for the careers of the 21st century. Careers that will require a good education with marketable skills. Careers that will require a level of math and science training like never before.

I pledged to reach a million youth through our program. And the Department of Defense pledged to reach a million, too.

I am delighted to announce, that this new program with PG County schools, puts us over the quarter million mark. We are well on the way to reaching those million youths.

I am especially excited about what we are doing here. For the first time, we are bringing together transportation employers and educators under one roof.

And let me just say to the young people with us today, a career in transportation is a career worth pursuing. In the last five years, some 700,000 new workers were hired. And the average pay per hour is over $24, compared to $4 you make baby-sitting.

We are giving students an excellent opportunity to get exposure to the work world.

We have many Department of Transportation volunteers who have pledged to do many interesting things.

Volunteers at the Federal Aviation Administration, for example, are planning a tour of National Airport's new control tower. I was there when it opened, and it is quite something to see.

People in our Federal Transit Administration are working on trips to see the inner workings of Washington's Metro system. And our Maritime Administration is planning visits to ships in Baltimore Harbor.

So, in closing, I believe this new program has a very bright future. We are blessed by having so many good partners pitching in, from private industry, from education, and from so many across local and national government.

And remember this: we all have one thing in mind -- providing opportunity for our youth so they can grow up to be responsible, caring individuals.

And it is this which gives me great confidence, that our best days are yet to come.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, November 20, 1997

Contact: Carrie Hyun
Telephone: 202-366-5565

Media Advisory

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY SLATER UNVEILS NEW WEB SITE FOR TRANSPORTATION DOCKET INFORMATION

In keeping with Vice President Gore's commitment to re-invent government, U.S. Transportation Secretary Rodney E. Slater at 11 a.m., Friday, Nov. 21, 1996, will unveil the federal government's first Internet web site that contains rulemaking and other legal documents, thus providing broader access by the public for comment on regulatory issues. Secretary Slater and Deputy Transportation Secretary Moritmer L. Downey will demonstrate how to use the new system.

WHO: U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater
U.S. Deputy Secretary of Transportation Mortimer L. Downey

WHAT: Transportation's new World Wide Web site making rulemaking and other documents more available to the public.

WHEN: 11 a.m., Friday, Nov. 21

WHERE: Marx Media Center (Room 2201)*
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C.

* News media representatives and others attending the event should use the southwest entrance.

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
ELECTRONIC DOCKETS EVENT
WASHINGTON, D.C.
NOVEMBER 21, 1997

(Introduction to be made by Mr. Downey)

Since taking office 10 months ago, I've often said that transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It's about people, and about providing them with opportunity.

That's what this new electronic dockets system does. It gives people the opportunity to learn about the issues which matter to them and to their families, and helps them to make their voices heard.

A lot of the decision-making here in Washington happens through the rules and regulations which the federal government issues -- such as the air bag on-off switch I announced in this very room on Tuesday.

The public record on these issues is maintained in the form of dockets that you've just seen, and DOT's dockets include everything from pending regulations, to legal documents, to letters from interest groups.

Until now, anyone wanting to see this material had to come to Washington to one of nine DOT agency offices, each of which maintained its own docket, and wade through massive paper files to find the information they needed.

The initiative we're announcing today consolidates those nine dockets into one centralized, fully-automated facility. And it gives people access to the dockets through the Internet -- at no charge -- 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from their home, or school, or office, or public library.

Any American will be able to gain access to government information at the same time as the highest-paid Washington lobbyist.

That's going to empower more people to become better informed and to participate more fully in their government's decision-making.

Computerizing our dockets also is going to make government more efficient and more cost-effective, reducing the number of staff people and the storage space we need. That will save taxpayers more than a half-million dollars annually at DOT alone.

Next year this new program's features are going to be further expanded, so that people will be able to submit comments to our dockets via the Internet, making it even easier for them to make their voices heard.

This initiative is a direct result of the National Performance Review that President Clinton and Vice President Gore began four years ago.

Today, we've demonstrated how that effort is genuinely improving both government operations and service to the American people. That's truly what reinventing government is all about.

I'm proud that the Vice President thought so and awarded the electronic dockets system creative team a Hammer Award -- and I'm proud of the staff here who made it possible.

I want to congratulate Nancy McFadden and the team from her office -- especially Charlotte Boeck, the team leader -- the Transportation Administrative Services Center -- and the chief counsels of the DOT agencies who are with us today.

We also had a little help from some people outside of government. Although we're unveiling the dockets management system today, it's been going through online "beta testing" since July -- testing by some of the people who will actually be using it.

These users provided much valuable feedback that helped to improve our final product.

One of them was my distinguished predecessor as Secretary of Transportation, Jim Burnley. Mr. Secretary, I'd like to thank you for the advice you gave us on this system, and invite you to say a few words...

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2.16

News:

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL RIGHTS PRESS CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 24, 1997
WASHINGTON,D.C.

Next Monday -- December first -- let me announce I will be following your example. In Miami, Florida I'll be co-hosting the first regional race forum for business executives. The White House is sponsoring a series of these forums across the nation.

We believe there is no more powerful force for change than teaming up with our great corporations to tackle this very difficult issue.

As all of you know, President Clinton is deeply committed to finding ways to heal the racial divides that separate us. He has challenged all of us to dig down inside and cast away our prejudices. And to find and pursue new ways to overcome racial discord and prevent it from prevailing.

Today Hawaii is the only state in which no racial group is in a majority. But within 40 years, there will be no majority in the entire United States.

So we must act now. Hate speech is one of the toughest problems we face. On one hand we must protect the First Amendment right of free speech. But on the other, hate speech must not go unchallenged: it is hurtful and divisive and it cannot be tolerated in modern times.

We talked about it at great length two weeks ago at the White House Conference on Hate Crimes. Attorney General Janet Reno noted it was a major problem on the Internet. And I said we must not surrender to these purveyors of hate. And I suggested a national campaign to set up web-sites to carry a message of hope and harmony for all races, for all Americans.

- more -

We may not be able to sweep hate speech off the information superhighway, but we can blow it away by finding the good and praising it.

So I am delighted to see this effort today. Clearly it is a model of what we need to build a better, stronger, united America.

I believe today we are witnessing a turning point in the civil rights movement. We are teaming the muscle of high-tech wizardry with the business community and the civil rights movement. And that is a winning team.

So to America I say: log on to the internet and punch up *www. civilrights .org* and let's blow away the hate and bring in the good.

Thank you very much.

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2.16

News:

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
BUCKLE UP AMERICA EVENT
NOVEMBER 25, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Thanksgiving is a wonderful American tradition. It is a time when family and friends gather to share in their blessings. It is a time of warmth and a time of optimism.

And it is the time of year when Americans travel most.

And that is why we're here today. We want Americans to make it home safely.

We are standing in the middle of this road to show you -- in a very dramatic way -- how many Americans will die this Thanksgiving on our nation's highways.

Each will die because of one tragic mistake: failure to wear a seat belt.

One hundred and twenty-four people will die in traffic accidents this four-day, Thanksgiving holiday because they were not buckled up, and hundreds more will be seriously injured.

All of us have heard these statistics many times before.

But today, I want to show you the faces behind the numbers.

Look at their faces. These 124 people standing behind me represent the fathers and mothers, the sisters and brothers, the sons and daughters who will lose their lives this holiday weekend.

And their untimely deaths could have been prevented if only they had buckled up. Their families wouldn't be grieving and the community suffering, if only they had buckled up.

- more -

Unfortunately, too many Americans don't get it. In fact, one in three don't buckle up.

It is the simplest and easiest decision in the world. Buckle the seat belt when you get into the vehicle. It's simple.

The Air Bag Safety Campaign has given you a new report called *We All Pay*. It starkly summarizes the financial costs.

Americans pay over $14 billion a year in injury-related costs to cover people who do not wear seat belts. We pay through higher taxes, higher auto insurance premiums and higher health care costs.

And 70 percent of those costs are paid by people not involved in car crashes.

Clearly, this is everybody's problem, not just those who don't buckle up. This is what our *Buckle Up America Campaign* is all about.

We want a fundamental shift in how people think. We want people to think of this as a community problem, a civic responsibility for all.

We want people involved. Tell your children, tell a friend, tell a relative, tell a stranger to buckle up.

We need community action and public education. And we need stronger seat belt laws, and enforcement of those laws.

So America, let's get it right: Buckle Up!

This Thanksgiving, and every day, all it takes to save a life -- maybe your life, or that of your child -- is this simple click.

So, Buckle Up America!

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2.17

News:

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590
http://www.dot.gov/briefing.htm

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND
THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
NOVEMBER 25, 1997
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Let me say to our hosts, the National Gallery of Art, thank you for sharing with me, and our country, the Thomas Moran paintings. Clearly they are as inspiring today, as they were when they inspired Congress to create the first national park.

This is what America the beautiful is all about.

What is interesting for me as Transportation Secretary, is that if you look at all 100 paintings, you will find at least a few that are more than landscapes. In one, you will see the first road into Yellowstone, with tourists on horseback; and in another, you will see tracks in the foreground and a train in the background.

For Thomas Moran knew the great ordeal it was to get to the parks. He knew that if it were not for transportation, the beauty of America could not be enjoyed by all.

Let me say for almost 75 years, the Federal Highway Administration has enjoyed a good partnership with the National Park Service.

We have created parks in the form of roads. We have built more than 8,000 miles of roads within the parks, always laying low, providing access, but nothing to diminish the beauty.

When we first allowed cars into a park, there was great concern; now the greatest concern is to find a place to park them all. But I say to you, it is the ease with which people can get to the parks that have made them so popular.

- more -

We want to keep them popular. We may not be able to handle too many more cars, but we can handle more people.

For transportation is about more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It is about people, and providing them opportunity to enjoy America.

So, President Clinton asked us to work together, in even greater ways, to improve public transportation in the parks. I am pleased to announce today that Secretary Babbitt and I will be signing an agreement that will bring our two Departments closer together.

We will be developing policies. We will be providing greater technical assistance beyond roads, to transit, and other modes of transportation. We will be exchanging personnel. We will be conducting demonstration projects.

We need to do this. Every so often you need to revitalize partnerships, even the ones that work, because the times change.

Clearly the times have changed for our national parks. In the 19th century, Thomas Moran would not have imagined that bear sightings at Yellowstone would cause mile long traffic jams.

It is time to build a transportation system for the 21st century. We need a system where people can spend their time sighting bears, not looking for a parking spot. And Secretary Babbitt today will announce a transportation system that does just that in Grand Canyon; and I can tell you they have wonderful plans for Zion and Yosemite as well.

Let me conclude by saying that the problems we face on the roads in the parks are similar, in many ways, to the problems we face with congestion in our cities. All of America's transportation system will benefit from the lessons we learn here.

Thank you very much.

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