



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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NEWS

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5-DOT-72

REMARKS BY U.S. UNDER SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JAMES M. BEGGS
BEFORE THE SPECIALTY EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL
MEETING, DISNEYLAND HOTEL, ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA, JANUARY 26, 1972

SEMA represents a very sizable section of the automotive after-market. And it's a great pleasure for me to be with you this evening -- especially in view of your "Man of the Year" selection. Doug Toms is both a good friend and an outstanding colleague. He's a dedicated and innovative Administrator. And we're very proud to have him on our staff. I might add that he's the first traffic safety administrator we've ever had who races in the Baja 1000. Of course, he's also the only traffic safety administrator we've ever had.

I notice that you billed my talk as "The Administration Speaks." That's a pretty large assignment. But I would like to spend a few minutes this evening discussing our highway safety programs -- and the efforts of this Administration to restore economic vitality to this nation.

Let's start with the automobile. I recently saw an interesting television ad on Ford's new small car, the Pinto. This ad showed the Pinto, in a split-screen setup, running right alongside of Henry Ford's old Model A. The ad, of course, compared the two versions favorably in terms of styling, performance, reliability and size. And I couldn't help but think how our attitudes have changed in the last 50 years or so about the automobile -- and why.

That Model A and its predecessor the Model T, were the answer to the American dream. No more smelly horses with their unsightly waste products. No more hay and oats. No more shivering rides in open carriages. The

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automobile promised unlimited mobility for everyone. In fact, that venerable magazine, Scientific American, printed an article around the turn of the Century predicting that the auto, which did not have the speed limitations and odorous by-products of the horse-drawn carriage, would provide the ultimate answer to the problems of pollution and congestion. So it's ironic that today, unlimited mobility has become a limiting factor in our attitudes toward the auto. Congestion, air pollution and noise have turned many people off to the family car -- so much that the Ford advertisement chose as its slogan: "Lets make driving a good thing again."

Unfortunately, good driving isn't defined quite the way it used to be. When there were only 100 million Americans and only 50 million registered vehicles, driving quality and safety depended primarily upon one's ability to stay out of the mudholes.

Today over 200 million people, in more than 110 million registered vehicles, travel more than one trillion miles annually. And they do it four abreast on super highways at 70 miles per hour -- or perhaps on city streets at six miles per hour. In either case, driving quality and safety is determined by a whole new set of criteria: congestion, highway construction, vehicle performance, air pollution, roadside distractions, alcohol, and a host of other factors.

The highway-traffic safety programs of the Department of Transportation are designed to come to grips with all of these very complex problems. And I guarantee you that in our Department, no person, no program, no agency is out to get the automobile. Our quest is for a balanced national transportation system that serves the needs of all Americans -- and that includes everyone who wants to own and drive a car.

This does not diminish, of course, our concern for automotive safety. Preliminary estimates now put the 1971 highway death rate at 55,200. That's an increase of 400 over 1970.

I might add that highway accidents cause one-half of all deaths among youths between the ages of 15 and 25. Its the largest national killer of young adults.

We cannot tolerate this senseless loss of American lives. And although the death rate per 100 million miles traveled dropped from 4.9 to 4.7, the lowest in history, we cannot be satisfied. We have lost more lives on highways in each of the last five years than we lost in the entire Vietnam war. The one tragedy is no less than the other.

So we are attacking this problem from every angle -- the vehicle, the driver, and the highway. It is a comprehensive approach that involves every citizen, every driver, every auto manufacturer, and every member of the Specialty Equipment Manufacturers Association.

All of you are aware of our vehicle safety standards, so I won't dwell extensively on them. But I do want to emphasize that right from the beginning we decided these standards should be in terms of performance only. And we believe they should take into account the technical and economic capabilities of the industry. We're not regulators. We're not automotive dictators. We're not the engineering and manufacturing experts. You are. And we need your help and support.

I'm very optimistic about the degree of vehicle safety that can be built into an automobile. And I'm confident in the industry's own ability to develop that high degree of safety. But the safety that is built into an automobile at the time of its manufacture must be maintained throughout its life.

This is not to say that original equipment must be maintained. Doug Toms tells me, in fact, that aftermarket equipment is often of a higher quality than the original. Your contributions toward producing high quality equipment can actually increase safety performance. And I urge you to view this task with an eye toward surpassing the minimums imposed by Federal standards. I urge you to undertake a self-policing -- a self-testing -- that will insure the continued high quality of your equipment.

I realize that the automotive industry has taken considerable flack relative to the environment and urban congestion. And the fact that automobiles emit nearly half of our nation's air pollution cannot be denied. But it can be faced. And I know that SEMA has done that. I know that you also recognize the need for noise pollution control.

As the auto industry proceeds to meet the new emission control standards established under the Clean Air Act of 1970, I urge you to pursue the same standards in your equipment. By working together -- government and industry -- I know that we can solve this problem. There is a lot of work to be done in auto safety and auto emission control. But we must be optimistic. I think President Nixon touched on this subject very appropriately in his State of the Union Message. He said:

"Let us reject the narrow visions of those who would tell us that we are evil because we are not yet perfect, that we are corrupt because we are not yet pure, that all the sweat and toil and sacrifice that have gone into the building of America were for naught because the building is not yet done."

Clearly, perfection of the automobile is not yet done. But we are not giving up. And we are not giving up on the driver either -- although our driver programs are sometimes obscured by our more controversial standard setting activities.

We now have state and community highway safety programs underway in all 50 states. We supported this effort with nearly \$237 million in the five years from FY 1967 through FY 1971. In FY 1972 these programs received \$67.1 million and \$76.7 million has been requested for FY 1973.

We've developed 16 program standards for the states to follow. And we're getting results. These are action programs -- in such areas as vehicle inspection, driver education, emergency medical services, driver licensing, and others. They touch every phase of the drivers experience. And perhaps that's their greatest benefit -- creating an awareness of driving safety.

We preached, shouted, pleaded, screamed and hollered safety for years. It never worked before. It won't work now. We must make safety a part of the total driving experience.

Certainly, that's one of the primary aims of our alcoholic countermeasures program. We now have 35 Alcoholic Safety Action Projects (ASAP's) underway in the United States and Puerto Rico. Getting the drunk driver off the highway is our top priority safety program. And we're committing nearly \$82 million to this effort in the next three or four years.

Of the 54,800 highway deaths in 1970, more than half were alcohol related. Our ASAP programs are designed to identify and deal with drinker-drivers before they are killed -- or before they kill others. It is a fact that alcohol is involved in 50 to 60 percent of highway fatalities, causing at least 30,000 deaths and 800,000 crashes every year.

It is a fact that problem drinkers, not social drinkers, cause at least two-thirds of these deaths.

It is a fact that the seven percent of drivers who cause 50 percent of the deaths can be identified, can be apprehended, and can be controlled.

That's the idea that must be sold -- the understanding that must be universal. Its part of the American social pattern to drive after drinking. That pattern must be reversed. And we're doing it in a number of ways.

In Charlotte, North Carolina, the liquor stores are giving each customer a breath-testing kit that will tell him when he's too drunk to drive.

Ann Arbor, Michigan, gives a person caught for drunken driving the option of going to jail or agreeing to take one anti-alcohol pill every day -- then even one drink makes him sick.

In Seattle, Washington, an ASAP worker meets with Judges and attorneys to give pre-sentencing recommendations -- recommendations that could lead a convicted drunk driver out of jail and into an appropriate rehabilitation program.

In every ASAP city, we are working to increase the conviction rate of drunk drivers. And through enlightened sentences by judges, we can steer these people into appropriate driver education and rehabilitation programs.

We must be successful with these alcoholic countermeasures, with the vehicle safety standards, and with the state and community programs. The price of failure is too great. We cannot compromise on safety.

Before closing, I want to say a few words about the Nixon Administration and this nation's economic prospects in 1972. SEMA is an aggressive organization whose members have rooted their companies in the finest American free enterprise traditions. You are the real leaders of this nation -- the men and women who have shown by example just what our economic system is all about. And it is your strength and cooperation that has made the President's emergency economic controls work.

As the President said in his nationally televised address last week, "Our goal is full employment in peacetime -- and we intend to meet that goal."

Economists generally agree that the rate of business recovery will increase significantly this year. The magazine U.S. News & World Report predicts a real growth of 5.7 percent, after deducting for inflation. Secretary Stans says the Commerce Department believes real growth in Gross National Product could exceed 6-1/2 percent, which would be the largest percentage gain since 1955. He also believes there is a fighting chance to balance the export and import accounts and come out even on trade this year.

Employment should be up substantially, with an estimated 2.1 million new jobs being created.

Industrial products, consumer spending, retail sales and personal income are all rising. New home-building starts this past year reached the highest level ever. Interest rates are down and so is the rate of inflation.

These are not accidents. Business is getting better because there is a better climate for business. For the first time in years the automobile buyer doesn't have to add on the excise tax. The Revenue Act of 1971, which

President Nixon signed on December 10, removes the 7 percent auto excise tax. It also authorizes a 7 percent tax credit for businessmen to purchase new equipment and machinery.

These are the kinds of positive action we are taking to stimulate the American economy.

We are heading into 1972 with significant optimism -- tempered by the knowledge that some economic controls are still necessary -- but sustained by steadily improving economic indicators.

In the field of transportation we are especially confident. And much of that confidence comes from your steadfast support and understanding. We look forward to working with you in facing our mutual transportation challenges.

Thank you.

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12-DOT-72

REMARKS BY U.S. UNDER SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JAMES M. BEGGS, BEFORE THE NATIONAL SECRETARIES ASSOCIATION, TOUCHDOWN CLUB, WASHINGTON, D.C. MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1972

Good evening. I am grateful for this opportunity to speak to the Capitol Chapter of the National Secretaries Association. I understand that today's presentation is NSA's program of the year and you have as your 1972 theme, "The Romance of Transportation." It is unlikely that I would have a more appropriate audience nor a more apt theme for a Valentine's Day address.

Undoubtedly, the theme itself conjurs up sights and sounds of the past...the crack of the wagon-master's whip...the slap of river boat's paddle wheel...the distant wail of the steam whistle...the low-lying trail of white smoke following the speeding train...all visions of a romantic past.

But all the romance of transportation is not in the past...the world-roving jets...the Caribbean cruise...the lazy houseboat vacation on a peaceful back waterway...the automobile trip to a favorite resort are all part of today's romance of transportation. Even the man-in-the-moon has become the men on the moon! All part of man's never-ending search for mobility. And let me quickly reassure you, I'm using "man" only in the generic sense, because women have been and will continue to be a significant factor in the Nation-wide development and use of transportation.

Probably woman's first incursion into the operating world of transportation, was her traditional place on the back pedals of a bicycle built for two. From this position women moved quickly forward...not merely to the front seat, but to a truly major role in influencing trends in transportation. Trains were to become more comfortable...dining and sleeping facilities were added. Automobiles were enclosed, and styling became important...upholstery became fancier and dozens of convenience accessories soon became standard equipment. Some called it "the woman's touch," but it was considerably

more than that...it was the direct influence of the vast number of women who had truly become transportation users in their own right. For the first time, they were determining the shape of things to come in the transportation world.

It was inevitable that women would not long be satisfied to be mere users of transportation...nor should they be. Today women are among the developers of transportation practices and policies both within the government and in private enterprise. In keeping with the Nixon Administration policy to attract qualified women to government, Secretary John Volpe, myself and the modal administrators within the Department of Transportation have set forth an action plan to significantly increase the number of career women in key, policy-making positions.

When I say that an "action plan has been set forth," I, and the Department of Transportation are not talking in the nebulous terms of floating pieces of paper that never seem to come into actual being. I'm speaking of "action" plans that have been and are continuing to be implemented. For instance, our Director of Consumer Affairs is a woman...there are several woman members of both the National Transportation Safety and Contract Appeals Boards...the Deputy Director of Community Relations for the Office of the Secretary and the Manager of Headquarter Operations for the Federal Aviation Agency are both women...and so it goes, on and on. All high-level, policy-making positions. True, the list isn't endless, but it is substantial...and we have found the results are impressive.

In the area of transportation practices, again, women have made significant inroads. Perhaps most noticeably in careers previously occupied by men...air traffic control specialists, engineers, electronic maintenance technicians and aviation safety investigators...to mention only a few.

In the more conventional areas of female employment, the Department hires more than 2500 secretaries with annual earnings ranging from GS-5's at \$7300 to GS-12's earning as much as \$20,000. Nor do the possibilities end there. Department of Transportation secretaries are continually participating in numerous training programs and government-financed extension courses at schools and universities in order to up-grade their skills and broaden the scope of their career potential. It is not unusual, therefore, to see Department secretaries moving into entirely new career fields on the management and supervisory levels.

But don't think for a minute that all these career fields are restricted by geographical limitations. They're not. Aside from the fact that there are more than 125 locations within the United States, the operations of the Department are world-wide. So in our sense, transportation can mean travel. Travel to more than forty locations throughout the world...from Taiwan to Tehran and from Tokyo to Tegucigalpa.

Nor are Department of Transportation career opportunities limited in their spheres of influence. Land, sea or air are all fully represented, because the Department has brought under a single administrative roof transportation functions formerly spread throughout more than 30 offices of the Federal Government.

For those who want to stay on dry land, the Department has four administrations concerned with surface transportation. The Federal Railroad Administration oversees the entire rail transportation field, with particular emphasis on railroad safety, the development of high-speed ground transportation, and the operation of the Federally-owned Alaska Railroad.

The Federal Highway Administration is undertaking the continuing construction of more than forty thousand miles of a National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. It is also cooperating with States and local communities on improving secondary roads and major urban streets.

The Urban Mass Transportation Administration is, in a sense, the real "people movers" of the Department. Its job is to facilitate the development and implementation of the various transportation networks in urban areas...to bring mobility to the inner cities.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is charged with fulfilling the most comprehensive traffic safety program in history. Mainly, in an all out effort to reduce the appalling fifty-five thousand plus highway death toll each year.

For the perhaps more venturesome who like to feel the tang of salt-spray on their face...or at least like to think about it, (and I'm sure your Certified Professional Secretary International President, Angeline Krout can verify this) the U.S. Coast Guard affords the opportunity. It's their job to promote safety at and on the inland waterways. It also serves as the Nation's maritime law enforcement agency.

The government-owned Saint Lawrence Seaway Corporation, operating jointly with the Canadians, the canal and lock system of the St. Lawrence Seaway is also for the sea-minded.

For those who find both land and sea mundane...for those who really want to fly, figuratively, of course, there's the Federal Aviation Administration. It's up to them to keep the airways safe, keep the airports operating and to develop a sound civil aviation program for the entire Nation.

Of course, there are always going to be those who aren't satisfied with a lot of land, or a lot of sea, or even a lot of air...the

National Transportation Safety Board is an independant government agency receiving administrative support from the Department of Transportation, but reporting directly to the Congress. Its responsibility is reducing accidents, determining the cause of accidents and promoting safety in all modes of transportation.

So you see, the Department of Transportation is doing everything possible to improve all means of transportation for all of the people. In his State of the Union Address, President Nixon said: "Historically, our transportation systems have provided the cutting edge for our development. Now, to keep our Country from falling behind the times, we must keep well ahead of events in our transportation planning." Then he added, "A quality which has always been a key to progress is our special bent for technology, our singular ability to harness the discoveries of science in the service of man." And, in conclusion, "Above all, we must not lose our capacity to dream, to see, amid the realities of today, the possibilities for tomorrow. And then...if we believe in our dreams...we must also wake up and work for them." This kind of thinking is the maispring of romance in our technological age. The challange itself, is part of the romance of transportation. There's not much more the Department can do to enhance it, but we do have a wide spectrum of career opportunities for women that can help perpetuate the romance of transportation.

Thank you.