

MARK ANDREWS

Subcommittee on Transportation

March 25, 1982

I leave Mark's office and go down to Dirksen 1223 to hear testimony before Mark's subcommittee. Room is like a large corporate boardroom and there are about 20 Department of Transportation officials. The 6 witnesses sat across the table from Mark and Chip.

Office of Secretary goes first and Mark asks pro forma questions about management reforms. But it's a quiet, polite conversation at this early point. Can hardly hear the witnesses.

When the 15 minute exchange is over, he says "Good to be with you"--- the same thing he says at rallies!

National Highway Admin. comes in - 7 witnesses come to the table.

Admin. says he's asking for less than last year and Andrews says "You're a shining star... All kinds of good things will rain down on you."

Guy asks for 150m for interstate transfer segments and MA says he hears that demand is 1B. He asks about this gap. Guy says budget constraint.

Then MA asks about bridge repair. What's condition of bridges? Is there enough in there. Ans. "We have a serious bridge problem " but not necessarily a safety problem.

Of the 41.4 billion that gets bandied about - what none is severe problem. Guy says "structurally deficient" bridges are 14B. Do we have 14B that are dangerous? Mark want "barn yard figure" Guy says he can't tell. But he suggests that there are 14B interstate and 19B other bridges. They go around on degree of bridge danger - what are the odds, say on Wilson bridge. "All I'm trying to do is nail down for the readers of this record what the facts are."

"How are you going to solve this dilemma?" "Are you gaining or losing ground?" "We are losing ground."

There's a good comment by Mark on how he understands bridge problem. Dirt roads can be navigated but when you come to bridge and are hauling wheat and can't get over, that's a problem.

Tells story about guy delivering paper saying to Mary "Your husband's an honest man... I've been delivering his paper for 5 years and anybody who has been in office as long as he has and has as bad a road as that has to be an honest man.

What will you do with 4¢ gas tax increase? Use it to help highways. "That money would be plowed into the programs." Mark says how biased he is in favor of roads "when you live at the end of a long road as we do in the midwest."

New federalism discussed.

They agree that small groups have added to cost of highways and Congress has responded to them. "We need some help from Congress" to cut expenses and time of highway building.

They go around on farmers taxes for use of interstate highways when they don't use the highways. "It's a nuisance that gets people pretty irate." IRS said farmers owed an excise tax higher than their 20 year old trucks were worth.

Congress gave them some money for Rural Transportation Assistance Programs. 5M.

And Mark asks what they are doing with that money. They don't seem to be doing much and his question that 'didn't we stimulate your imagination?' with our money draws on negative kind of response. Mark doesn't seem to be pushing that.