

STATEMENT OF SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION BROCK ADAMS BEFORE  
THE HOUSE MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES COMMITTEE, SUB-  
COMMITTEE ON MERCHANT MARINE, CONCERNING THE OFFICE OF  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION FOR MARINE TRANS-  
PORTATION, MARCH 15, 1979

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I have been asked to testify here today on why the Department of Transportation recently created a Assistant Secretary for Marine Transportation and what our plans are regarding the functions and responsibilities of this new office.

When Congress created DOT, they declared that it was in the national interest to develop "national transportation policies and programs conducive to the provision of fast, safe, efficient, and convenient transportation at the lowest cost consistent therewith and with other national objectives, including the efficient utilization and conservation of the Nation's resources." DOT has made significant progress toward this goal in the airline industry through regulatory reform and recently has launched a similar effort with respect to the trucking and rail industries. We also are able to deal with related highway and mass transit problems. While maritime programs were excluded from the Department of Transportation when it was established, I believe DOT now needs to have a greater

understanding of the issues and problems facing the water transportation industries, both domestic and foreign, and related intermodal and interface issues. This understanding is necessary, I believe, to increase Departmental awareness and consideration of the interrelationship between the marine, surface and air modes.

We will continue to function within the guidelines prescribed by the Congress in Section 7(a) of the Department of Transportation Act when the Department was established in 1966. While I am fully aware of the Section 7(a) limitations, I determined that we needed to establish a maritime focal point within the Department so that the Secretary could be properly advised on maritime matters and so that there would be a contact point for the many maritime interests who have indicated a wish to be heard within the Department. I hope the office will act as the catalyst within the Department for the development of an optimal integrated national transportation system by providing a voice for the maritime industries and those affected by these industries in our decision making process.

Through the creation of an Office of the Assistant Secretary for Marine Transportation in DOT, we will be better prepared to participate in the resolution of national transportation issues in the public interest. By

"public interest" I mean the interest of the United States in assuring the development and maintenance of an efficient integrated transportation system, which, to the greatest extent possible, makes optimal use of all modes for the movement of domestic and foreign commerce and passengers, and which is responsive to the needs of the shipper and traveler alike, within the framework of the objective of Congress when creating the Department of Transportation. DOT is keenly aware that we cannot deal with the railroad question or the feeder functions of the motor carriers without explicitly considering the water mode and its health. Without a voice for the water transportation industries and their users within DOT, no such transportation system can be achieved.

Today the Department of Transportation finds itself in a rather unique position with respect to maritime policy for this nation. Our constituencies concerning marine transportation are the total national transportation system, the users of that system, and the general public. I believe this new office will be able to approach the Department's maritime policy concerns with a fresh and unbiased perspective and offer balanced and workable maritime programs.

The Assistant Secretary for Marine Transportation will be my principal staff advisor concerning marine transportation policy, both domestic and international, within DOT assigned responsibilities. His organization will include the Office of Ports, the Office of Domestic Marine Transportation, and the Office of International Marine Transportation.

The Office of Ports provides a focal point for policy matters relating to intermodal transfer and water-land connectivity in the Nation's transportation system including economic, environmental, and safety considerations. In addition, this Office develops policies for the location, ownership, construction, and operation of deepwater ports, and oversees the implementation of the provisions of the Deepwater Port Act of 1974.

The Office of Domestic Marine Transportation coordinates Departmental marine transportation policy regarding the inland waterways, Great Lakes shipping, and domestic coastal and intercoastal shipping. Presently, of course, this office is greatly involved in several domestic waterway studies, including those required by the Waterway Revenue Act, P.L. 95-502. The office is carefully coordinating with all interested parties the development of a plan of study for the User Charge Impact Studies called for in

Section 205 of this Act. The plan of study will be completed in April or May of this year. The Office of Domestic Marine Transportation also acts as a liaison for our participation on the Upper Mississippi River Basin Commission and for the formulation of its Comprehensive Master Plan required by Section 101 of P.L. 95-502.

The Office of International Marine Transportation provides the focus for DOT involvement in international maritime policy matters including deep sea and St. Lawrence Seaway shipping. Presently, this office primarily is concerned with developing DOT inputs into the Administration's international shipping policy and preparing innovative proposals for improving the competitive capability of the U.S. Merchant Marine so that they might carry a fair share of U.S. foreign commerce. We regard the development of this input as a continuing responsibility of this Department.

The establishment of an Assistant Secretary for Marine Transportation at DOT is not designed to duplicate the responsibilities or activities of the Maritime Administration, the Federal Maritime Commission, or any other Federal agency involved in marine transportation. The new office permits the voice of the marine mode to be heard within DOT. The effect will be that when other modal and multi-

modal matters affecting marine transportation, domestic or international, are analyzed and discussed within the Department, the marine system will receive the consideration it should. This new office also provides a focal point for input into the DOT decision making process for the industry, for shippers, and for the affected public. Without such an office, the Department has not been and will not be as responsive as it should be to the needs of the marine transportation industry, its users, and to those who consume the goods so transported. The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Marine Transportation fills a critical void within the Department of Transportation. It does not seek to duplicate the effort of other maritime agencies, but this office also provides them a single entry point on marine matters affecting or affected by the national transportation system. We hope to coordinate with these agencies, not replace or supercede them. We would also use this office to coordinate DOT's input to Federal inter-agency maritime policy making efforts where DOT's input is requested and desired.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss this new office with you and the members of this Subcommittee. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.