

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the President's Meeting With Foreign Minister David Levi of Israel

December 17, 1991

The President met today for approximately 20 minutes in the Oval Office with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi. Their discussion centered mainly on the United Nations General Assembly's revocation of the "Zionism is racism" determination and on the Middle East peace process. The

President expressed his satisfaction with the repeal, calling it a responsible action on the part of the U.N. The President emphasized the importance of not allowing procedural concerns to dominate the peace talks and of seizing this historic opportunity for peace.

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the President's Meeting With Prime Minister Anan Panyarachun of Thailand

December 17, 1991

The President met with Thai Prime Minister Anan Panyarachun in the Oval Office and then hosted a working lunch. They discussed bilateral trade issues, developments in the fight against narcotics trafficking, and key regional issues including implementation of the Cambodia settlement agreement and Burma. The President stated his expectation that U.S. concerns on patents would

be addressed. Discussions also centered on democracy and human rights and steps toward elections next March in Thailand. The President reiterated the U.S. commitment to regional security. The President described his forthcoming visit to Asia and heard the Prime Minister's views on developments in the region.

Remarks on Signing the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 in Euless, Texas

December 18, 1991

Thank you all very, very much. Arnold, thank you. You did just great. Thank you all. Please be seated, and thank you so much. Angela Dominguez, over here, thank you so much for being with us. And Dr. Friend, thank you, sir, for your remarks, especially the kind reference to my dad. I know how deeply he believed in one of Eisenhower's greatest legacies, that Interstate Highway System.

To Acting Secretary of Transportation Busey and, of course, I would like to single out my new Chief of Staff, Sam Skinner, who deserves great credit for what we're about to sign here today. He's with us.

Let me single out the Members of Congress, the ones sitting on the dais here. This bill required some very heavy lifting. And I'm particularly grateful to all those Members that are here today, but let me just particularly welcome Senator Moynihan; Senator Reid; Senator Lloyd Bentsen, our own Senator from Texas; Congressman Bud Shuster; Chairman Roe from the House side who did such a superb job on this; Norm Mineta, another Member of Congress; and then my old friend and colleague Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt from Arkansas.

But there are many more Members here

today. And the point I want to make is this wasn't a Republican effort, a Democrat effort, a liberal or conservative. It was bipartisan, and it was all-American. And I think it's going to be a great thing for this country.

I also want to salute Steve Bartlett, a former Member of Congress who has long been interested in this, the new Mayor of Dallas. We have other leaders here from Fort Worth as well. I'm told that Charlotte Mays, the newly elected city councilwoman from Dallas, came over with us. But in any event, we have a great turnout of local and State officials which I think bodes well or speaks well of the kind of legislation we have.

We also have with us the Federal Highway Administrator, Tom Larson; Urban Mass Transit Administrator Brian Clymer; the Federal Railroad Administrator, Gil Carmichael. Arnold Oliver is the executive director of the Texas DOT. James Morris, chairman of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, is here, and that's important. Other representatives of MADD are with us here today.

Honored guests and fellow Texans and fellow Americans, welcome to all of you, particularly those working in this construction project.

That great observer of democracy, de Tocqueville, once called America "a land of wonders in which everything is in constant motion and every change seems an improvement." Well, today we celebrate an improvement that can keep America in motion: The most important transportation bill, as Dr. Friend said, since President Eisenhower started the Interstate System 35 years ago.

This bill will launch the post-interstate era of America's surface transportation system. It will enable us to build and repair roads, fix bridges, and improve mass transit; keeps Americans on the move, and help the economy in the process. But really, it is summed up by three words: jobs, jobs, jobs. And that's the priority.

Yes, these are tough times, and yes, there are layoffs. And many families are having a rough go of it. And the American people want action. And action is what they'll get. And I want every American to know that

getting the economy back on track is my number one priority, and I expect I speak for the Members of Congress here from both sides of the aisle. It is their number one priority as well.

Today we're taking action: \$11 billion pumped into the economy, supporting 600,000 jobs. Tomorrow I'll meet with the trade mission that I'm leading to Japan to help open the giant markets there to more American exports. And that means the same three words: jobs and jobs and jobs.

We Americans are inspired by the idea that tomorrow can be better than today. And shortly I will sign a bill that puts that idea into action. Its full name is the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. And that's shorthand for progress: Progress for our infrastructure, for the economy, and I'm proud to stand here and say this bill is progress for working Americans all across this great country.

This act will pump \$11 billion into the economy immediately, supporting more than 600,000 jobs in fiscal 1992; in Texas alone, more than 41,000 jobs. Many of those workers will develop sites like these, demonstrating the combination of transportation planning, high tech, and teamwork that America needs to prevail in the world marketplace.

Today's event confirms that America will prevail. As a result of this bill, on this site alone it means 150 jobs and \$31 million in spending. And the benefits won't stop at this site. Not far from here, over in Plano, Texas, a company called Luminator Mark Four makes products for mass transit systems. I understand that Luminator hopes to use funds provided by this act to expand its work force by 35 percent. That would be another 150 jobs, jobs right here in our State of Texas.

Across America, the transportation act will help companies put people back to work. And it's in addition to the Government programs I've ordered speeded up, putting a \$9.7 billion extra into the economy during the first two quarters of the fiscal year.

And this bill also means investment in America's economic future, for an efficient transportation system is absolutely essential

for a productive and efficient economy. Give Americans the tools to compete, and I'm confident that we can outthink, outperform, outproduce anybody, anywhere.

Our bill gives the private sector new incentives to support our road system. For instance, this land has been donated by local business, and I'm especially proud that Congress accepted our proposal to help private firms build and operate new private toll roads. Private toll roads can pay their way, creating higher State and local revenues, better services, more investment, and once again, more jobs.

Here's another part of the bill I like: It authorizes a new incentive program to improve occupant safety and to prevent drunk driving. Especially in the holiday season, it just breaks my heart to see needless tragedy on our Nation's roads. It's time we got the drunk drivers off the roads once and for all. And I know the people of MADD, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, agree with that. And on behalf of a grateful Nation, this is a good time to thank them for what they're doing for everybody all across this country.

As much as anything, by improving our transportation system, today's signing will help America compete in the global marketplace. When we move America, America moves the world.

And it doesn't require genius to know that in an international marketplace, a nation moves no more rapidly than its infrastructure permits. And yet, too often goods are held up or workers are late to their jobs because our surface transportation system simply isn't up to the job. I'm glad to say this bill is going to start changing that.

Each year, 8 billion hours, it's estimated, are wasted in traffic delays. This act, in combination with State and local efforts, will help curb congestion through projects that link highways like SH 360 and mass transit like the light rail and high-speed systems between Dallas/Fort Worth, and the DFW Airport. We have to help the employee who's stuck in traffic so that he or she can get to work and help the economy. And the place to start that one is right here; the time to begin, right now.

All of us know the state of some of our highways. And I'm reminded of them when I read the Isaiah verse of the admonition

that "The crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain." I'm not sure Isaiah had that in mind, thinking about the shape of our Interstate System. But nevertheless, this transportation act will smooth out and streamline our Nation's highways. And it will enhance our transportation efficiency by investing in our 155,000-mile National Highway System.

I'm pleased that the increased funding will improve road conditions, ease traffic congestion, and reduce delays for the trucking industry, thus letting them move those consumer goods more quickly and at lower cost, and reducing our dependence on foreign oil. The new National System will represent only 4 percent of all public roads but will carry 75 percent of intercity truck traffic and 40 percent of all travel. This system will increase access to American products and services and then, ultimately, prosperity. And that's good for Dallas, good for Texas, good for Fort Worth, good for Tarrant County, good for Dallas, good for America. And I'm proud, very proud, that the bill will make that happen.

Transportation is an \$800-billion-a-year business. And as the world trade grows larger and as our planet, because of communications, becomes smaller, an efficient transportation system will become even more important than it is today.

So, I want to congratulate Secretary Skinner. I want to single out and congratulate all of the congressional leaders who got the job done on this legislation. And to the rest of you here, our many partners in this process, my appreciation for the tireless effort, the long hours, and determination that all of you invested in supporting this forward-looking legislation.

I also want to thank the State highway and transportation administrators, indeed, every American. You knew that transportation can help keep America "a land of wonders," and you made your voices heard.

The future of American transportation begins today. And so when we look back years from now to this landmark day for America's transportation, we'll be able to say, "Mission defined. Mission accomplished."

So to all of you, may God bless you at this

very special time of year. And now let me sign this bill so we can get some projects under way and get people back to work.

And thank you for being with us, all of you.

Note: The President spoke at 10:07 a.m. at a construction site on State Highway 360. In

his remarks, he referred to Arnold W. Oliver, executive director of the Texas Department of Transportation; Angela Dominguez of the Austin Bridge Construction Co.; and Dr. Theodore W. Friend III, president of the Eisenhower Exchange Fellowships, Inc. H.R. 2950, approved December 18, was assigned Public Law No. 102-240.

Remarks to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials in Dallas, Texas December 18, 1991

Ray, thank you very much for that introduction. It's nice to see the former AASHTO Presidents Hal Rives and Kermit Justice; AASHTO Vice President Wayne Muri; Frank Francois, the director. And I really must acknowledge somebody that's very special to this occasion, and to thank the new Chief of Staff in the White House, but the Secretary of Transportation just gone out of office, Sam Skinner, who is with me here someplace. Over here: Sam. I know that everyone realizes what he's had to do with all of this. Acting Secretary of Transportation Busey is with us, the admiral. And out in the audience, of course, I want to single out our good friends from the Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

It is great to see so many familiar faces here, including many, as Ray mentioned, who were with us in Washington this summer. I can't help but remember Yogi Berra's great words, you've all heard it, "Déjà vu all over again." Here we are.

I also want to single out the Members of the Congress that are with us today because, as I said out at the site, this isn't a Republican bill or a Democrat bill, or a liberal or conservative; it is an American achievement. And the Members of Congress that are with us today deserve special credit from the American people for their leadership, for their stick-to-it-iveness in getting this legislation passed. So I salute them, the ones I see over here, and I'm sure there may be others scattered through the audience.

Yogi Berra, he always had a way with

words, as I told you. But since you and I met in the Rose Garden last June a lot of things really have happened, the most important for you, the first stirrings of a real revolution in transportation.

Earlier today, as I mentioned, not far from here, I signed the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. We've got to get a better name for this thing—[laughter]—but that's a law that will bring our transportation policy into the 21st century and will let us build, literally, a road to the future.

This law culminates more than 2 years of hard work by our administration, and it illustrates my strategy for getting things done: First, define a mission and accomplish it. Early on, we defined our mission: To lay the foundation for the most significant revolution in American transportation history. We understood from day one that America can't move ahead in the international marketplace any more rapidly than its infrastructure will allow. Ideas fly around the globe at the speed of light because the infrastructure can handle the traffic. We need that kind of competitiveness in surface transportation. After all, mobility is the lifeblood of the modern economy.

Second point: Don't define your missions in isolation. We pursued this law because it moves us closer to our three top domestic priorities: jobs, jobs, and jobs.

Our national transportation policy begins with a big dose of common sense. It acknowledges that you don't get anywhere in a traffic jam. A worker can't do much for

the economy, the family, or for the community by sitting on a highway listening to the radio. A vital piece of equipment trapped on a truck, trapped in traffic, won't do much for the factory that needs it. And a loved one rushing for an airport can't rejoin the family if the backups on the expressway or the mass transit system put everything in gridlock.

You have to move to improve. And let's face it, we're not moving as fast as we should.

Last week, we had a distinguished visitor at the White House, Jay Leno. [Laughter] And he did a little comedy performance there with Marlin Fitzwater in the press room, and then he was over at the National Press Club. And I know that the press does a good enough job with political comedy on its own, but nevertheless. At any rate, he was making fun of a proposal to put microwave ovens in cars. That's right, microwave ovens so drivers can feed themselves while they wait. [Laughter] I think we better dedicate ourselves, as everybody here has, to a microwave-free future for our highways. [Laughter]

The reason's simple. Every hour wasted on overburdened transportation systems costs us a piece of our future. Congestion, congestion caused more than 8 billion hours of delay on our roads. And that's the amount of time 4 million workers spend on the job each year.

In other words, Americans nationwide waste more time each year in traffic delays than workers spend on the job at all our auto companies, all our electronic companies, all our textile companies, all our lumber companies, and all our furniture manufacturers combined. And people wonder why the AASHTO members get so worked up about the importance of their work.

The waiting exacts other costs, too. You're familiar with them: \$34 billion in wasted fuel expenses in our 39 largest metropolitan areas. And the point is simple: We cannot afford, or put it this way, we can't afford not to invest in transportation. No matter how much people might want to ignore the rest of the world, we must make a choice: Take the lead, or let others pass us by.

Well, I prefer to lead, and I demanded a

national transportation strategy that builds a foundation for the future. And I wanted a transportation law that would address road and bridge needs around the country; a law that would complete important mass transit projects; a law that would encourage innovation in every aspect of our transportation network, from road construction to high-tech rail systems.

This law accomplishes that mission. It will establish a 155,000-mile National Highway System. Roads that will comprise only 4 percent of our total public road mileage, but that will carry 75 percent of our intercity truck traffic and 40 percent of our highway traffic. That is efficiency.

Our law accomplishes that mission. It will establish a 155,000-mile National Highway System. Roads that will comprise, as I say, 4 percent. This law also encourages States to build the roads they need, not the roads that some faraway central planner thinks that they ought to have. And that's just plain common sense.

The Highway System created by Dwight Eisenhower in '56, 1956, revolutionized American life forever. It spawned suburbs, cultivated more than 200 new centers of commerce and culture, edge cities, as they're called in the new book. Where bare fields stood 30 years ago, American enterprise now thrives, with office space and shopping centers, entertainment areas; regions that function as workplaces by day and then recreational hubs by night.

Our new transportation law will pump new life into these newest cities and support their further evolution. It will enhance great centers like this Dallas/Fort Worth area, where roads and rails have paved the way to more than 500,000 new jobs in the past decade alone.

This law encourages local governments to invest in innovations such as privately built toll roads. Construction on such a road will begin soon just outside of Washington, and that's just a beginning. Wall Street, they've begun to develop a brand-new market for financing privately built and operated infrastructure. Investors know a winner when they see it.

These roads will pay for themselves and, in addition, they can support other projects.

Operators of the Dulles Toll Road will pay taxes, which can leverage even more transportation financing. In short, private projects get the most bang for the buck and give us a better shot at meeting our vast transportation needs. And that is innovation. And that is good government.

Consider other items, if you will, in our new transportation law:

It authorizes funds for an incentive program to prevent drunk driving and improve occupant safety, two very worthy goals, especially during the holiday season. And it provides \$38 billion to improve our new National Highway System.

It sets aside \$24 billion to fund a variety of highway and transit projects.

It simplifies the means by which truckers register their vehicles: Liability insurance, Interstate Commerce Commission operation authority, and mileage for State fuel tax payments. In so doing, it could save trucking companies \$1 billion this year.

Our law will help States meet their environmental responsibilities without stopping the wheels of progress. Our law will encourage exploration into new transportation technologies such as these high-speed rail systems.

And last, but certainly not least, our law will create good American jobs today and good American jobs tomorrow. And it will build a foundation for creating more good American jobs in the future.

The funding in the law will support more than 600,000 jobs in this fiscal year. But that's just the start. Private projects funded with this money will generate even more work for Americans. And as I've said all along, a good transportation network will support jobs that wouldn't exist otherwise. And that's the biggest benefit of this new law. It sets in motion projects that will give America the ability to move forward as never before.

I've instructed the Department of Transportation to get the money moving now. We will make available the vast majority of State money from the Highway Trust Fund. And we'll accelerate the release of \$300 million for mass transit projects. I encourage you to do your part in making sure this money gets to its destination swiftly, gets used wisely, and helps Americans build the

foundations for the next American century. And moreover, I'd like to challenge you all to look past the old ways of doing business and dare to innovate, to create new means of moving America forward.

Earlier today, out at that construction site not far from here, I stood there, and I thought of the incredible vigor of this region, all fueled by transportation infrastructure. A new kind of exploration and vigor assails the senses, the hustle and the bustle, the tornado of activity. And today I saw a domestic vision in sweat and toil, concrete and steel, not some abstract proposal but a program that will produce real results now.

This law—and you all know this—this law will not solve all our transportation challenges. It's not going to fill every pothole, build every road we require, mend every bridge, create all the new technologies we want to see. Let's face it, it would take billions and billions more to take care of every need. But this law puts us on the move. It commits real resources now. And it encourages the kind of innovation that we will need in the future.

This law will make a huge difference for all of us. It will help young fathers rush their wives to a delivery room. It will enable buses to ferry children safely and swiftly to school. It will help just-in-time manufacturers receive the parts they need when they need them. It will keep America where it belongs, in the passing lane.

Every American understands transportation's importance. Just think about the way we talk. When we talk about progress, we talk about getting things moving. When we talk about roads and rails, we call them arteries. Well, enough talk. Today, we act. We start improving our roads and bridges and railways, our equal opportunity escorts to the future. And so when we look back years from now to this landmark day for America's transportation, we'll be able to say: "Mission defined. Mission accomplished."

Thank you. And may God bless you in your work, and may God bless our great country, especially at this time of year. Thank you all very, very much.

Note: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. at

the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to A. Ray Chamberlain and Fran-

cis B. Francois, president and executive director of AASHTO.

Statement on Signing the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991

December 18, 1991

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 2950, the "Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991." This law provides a new structure for our Federal surface transportation programs—highway, highway safety, and transit—and authorizes funds for those programs for the next 6 years.

H.R. 2950 is landmark legislation. It will carry the Nation into the post-Interstate era and help provide the transportation infrastructure for improved economic productivity and enhanced international competitiveness. In the short term, this bill means jobs for working Americans. It provides more than \$11 billion that can be used this fiscal year to build highway projects. During the coming year, those funds will provide jobs for over 600,000 Americans. The law will continue to support jobs in the highway and transit construction industries over the next 6 years.

When we submitted to the Congress our proposal for reauthorization of Federal surface transportation programs earlier this year, all those involved with the Nation's surface transportation system recognized that it was time to redesign these programs. The Interstate System—the largest public works project in history—is very near completion, and this law provides the final funds to finish it. The Interstate System has fundamentally changed transportation in America. It has become easier and cheaper to move goods, and virtually all Americans benefit from the speed and efficiency with which they can move from place to place on our interstate highways. But our focus must now shift from major highway construction to better maintenance, management, and use of our existing highway and transit facilities.

A key element of our proposal was the

National Highway System. Ours was not a call for a major new construction program, but rather for identification of those key highways throughout the country that are the arteries for interstate and interregional travel or roads that link those routes to major ports, airports, and other critical transportation facilities. It was a call for dedication of sufficient funds to the National Highway System to ensure that projected traffic increases on those highways can be accommodated without deterioration in their physical condition or ability to move traffic. This new law establishes the National Highway System and provides the funds necessary to keep it performing efficiently.

Another major element of our proposal was to provide State and local officials unprecedented flexibility. We proposed to give those officials the discretion to use a major portion of their Federal surface transportation funds on the improvements that would best meet local needs, whether highway projects or public transit projects. State and local officials have played an ever more important role in project monitoring as the Federal programs have matured. The day has clearly come for the Federal Government to step back and let its partners play the lead role, as this law provides.

We all also recognized the need for a larger role for the private sector in helping to meet surface transportation needs. This legislation establishes that new private sector role. It is historic because of the changes it makes to encourage privatization of our transportation infrastructure. It removes a number of Federal barriers to private sector involvement. It lifts the current general prohibition against financing highway improvements with a combination of Federal funds and private investment to be repaid with toll revenue. Federal funds will

be available to help entrepreneurs who, under contract with appropriate public authorities, are willing to build or improve roads that motorists want and are willing to pay to use. The Act will leverage more dollars into the transportation infrastructure and create even more jobs.

The new law extends the current Federal highway traffic safety program, which has proven to be so successful: the fatality rate on our Nation's highways was lower in 1990 than in any year since records have been kept. In addition to extending our current efforts, the law establishes new incentive grant programs to encourage the States to fight drunk driving and promote the safety of vehicle occupants.

Title VII of the bill is intended to resolve the current inability of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority to pursue its program of long-term improvements at National and Dulles Airports. The Supreme Court declared a congressional oversight mechanism in the 1986 legislation creating the Airports Authority to be a violation of the separation of powers principles of the Constitution. During congressional consideration of amendments intended to cure the defects found by the Supreme Court, the Administration expressed the view that the new Board of Review created by Title VII would violate the Appointments Clause of the Constitution. We adhere to this view, noting that the matter will now be resolved in court. I strongly support the shift of these former Federal facilities to regional control,

and my Administration stands ready to assist in developing legislative amendments that will not be subject to constitutional challenge.

This new law gives us the means to improve our surface transportation system in the years to come, but it also promotes research into what surely will be revolutionary changes in the next century. Intelligent vehicle-highway systems, magnetically levitated high-speed ground transportation systems, and a new transit research partnership with State and local governments are given new impetus in this law. Further, this law provides new tools to ensure that transportation improvements address the Nation's environmental needs. For example, it provides funds for wetlands mitigation banks and for transportation projects that will improve our air quality.

Any legislation this comprehensive and involving this much change is sure to raise serious policy issues about which reasonable people will disagree, and this new law has been no exception. I commend the major sponsors of this legislation, however, for staying the course, striking compromises among the many conflicting views over the shape of these new programs, and producing this much-needed bill.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
December 18, 1991.

Note: H.R. 2950, approved December 18, was assigned Public Law No. 102-240.

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the Resignation of Frederick D. McClure as Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs

December 19, 1991

President Bush today accepted with regret the resignation of Frederick D. McClure, 37, who has served as Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs since the beginning of the administration. Fred is resigning to become a director and member of the management committee of First

Southwest Co. in Dallas, TX. First Southwest is a diversified investment banking firm. His resignation is effective February 1, 1992.

"Fred McClure has served with dedication and creativity," President Bush said when accepting his resignation. "Fred has