

In view of the obvious need for improved public transit systems and the inadequacy of currently available systems, I would strongly recommend that the Federal Government provide funds to support research and development of new and novel public transit systems that give the promise of transportation service more competitive with the private car. That a change in policy on the part of the Federal Government is needed is borne out by the fact that the Federal Government is now supporting research and development of, as HHFA puts it, tried and proven public transit systems. Such a policy actually militates against the development of public transit systems that, on a functional basis, can compete with the automobile in providing transportation services in our cities.

Yours truly,

GLENN G. C. OLSON,
President, Minneapolis City Council.

Mr. REUSS. Dr. Romualdi and Dr. Stelson, I want to congratulate you both on your most excellent contribution.

It has always seemed to me ironic that this country, which is doing such a marvelous job of systems analysis in putting a man on the moon by 1970, at the cost of some \$25 or \$30 billion, and more recently at a cost of some billions of dollars, trying to evolve a supersonic transport plane which would take you to Paris in 3 hours, rather than in 6½ hours—it always seemed to me ironic that we spend that kind of money to achieve those objectives at a time when I believe it is true that on research and development into wholly new means of mass transportation in our cities, we are spending zero, or substantially zero, is that not correct?

Dr. STELSON. That is correct.

Mr. REUSS. I have plagued various members of the Government from time to time on this point. And the answer they gave me to our present do-nothing attitude—an attitude incidentally which I believe, within the next few weeks, will be changed, and I think we are going to get a proposal through—when I asked them about our present do-nothing attitude, they said, “Well the moon shot, that is a different matter; there is no private capability of reaching the moon. It takes governmental coordination and action. But, after all, we do have transportation systems in our cities, and therefore we do not see any spearheading role for the Federal Government.”

I try not to be unfair in my statements, but take it as it is, would you comment on that argument, whether you think it is valid or not?

Dr. ROMUALDI. I believe that the viewpoint that we have expressed in the formal statement here in answer to questions subsequently, constitute a very enthusiastic endorsement of your point of view, I believe, and a lack of endorsement from the alternate point of view that you mentioned.

We have a very good—I am sorry—we have a very sad record of the fact that this will not be spearheaded by any group other than the Federal Government at this point. The record completely points the other way. I do not believe that this will ever be a combination approach, other than a piecemeal effort from time to time by the private sector of our economy.

Mr. REUSS. I would like to have you gentlemen put your minds on the ways and means of carrying out such a Government spearheaded research and development program. Let us suppose that Congress passes an amendment something like the one you are testifying on today, to have the Department of Housing and Urban Development