

The terminal, first, is already going to be the southern end of our American version of the Japanese Tokyo-Tokaido high speed rail line, and will link the Visitor Center and the business district of Washington with Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. Studies indicate that within the current technology, rail transportation can compete with air transportation from conventional airports if the origin and destination are not over 250 to 300 miles apart. Where competition exists among products, our economy seems to give the nod more to promotional efforts than to absolute scientific proof of product superiority. It seems likely that the Visitor Center will contribute substantially to the acceptance of the Northeast Corridor rail project by making the terminus attractive, by providing services, and by easing the problems of transportation after arrival.

Second, the Visitor Center will have a subway station. This should encourage many visitors to leave their cars at their hotels, motels, or relatives in the suburbs, or to use the fringe parking lots and minimize the need for parking and street congestion around the Capitol and Mall area. The availability of the subway should link them easily to the Zoo and to Arlington Cemetery. Someday the lines will undoubtedly be extended to National Airport and Dulles, thereby making the Visitor Center and Union Station a desirable airline terminal. Rapid service can also be provided from Union Station to Friendship Airport, reinforcing the importance of the Visitor Center.

Third, the Visitor Center could be connected to the airports by helicopter, though the effective provision of subway and rapid rail service might reduce the need for helicopter service, since the rail mode is not subject to disastrous slowdowns at exactly rush hour when the major demand exists to get to and from the airports. Any reduction in the need for helicopter service would be viewed with favor by the residents of the area. The very noisy experience with the experimental service between the site for the Third Congressional Library Building and the three airports led many residents to hope that these vehicles would fly closer to the halls of the legislature and the offices of business than to them.

A fourth mode of transportation is the highway bus. Currently the bus stations are in a very inconvenient location, difficult for the most frequent users to reach, because they are easily accessible only by taxi. Other than current contractual commitments, there appears to be no compelling reason why that location, like the adjacent location of the airlines terminal at 12th and K Streets, N.W., would be preferable to the Visitor Center-Union Station site. With some million of square feet of air rights space available over the tracks (an area comparable to the entire Judiciary Square-Pension Building site) and with potential highway connections to the 4th Street Freeway and along the tracks to New York Avenue, there is an obvious potential for a major bus transportation terminal associated with the parking facility, similar to the New York Port Authority terminal, but superior in location and accessibility to the other transportation modes and to the places of interest.

We are conscious that nothing gets done unless there is some tangible profit above the general benefit to the community and the nation. Doing good is not enough. There may even be some current commitments and vested interests which would make the transfer of the facilities difficult. We would hope that the Commission would exert its influence and the executive powers of the city to effect the transfer; however, there may be other inducements.

We suggest that the founders of the Visitor Center and the owners actively pursue the notion of an international trade fair center to exploit the air rights over the track area and above the parking and bus facilities. This can be done in a most profitable manner, both to the owners and the nation.

We note that American industry has no central location to display its wares to the thousands of industrialists and government officials who come to Washington to negotiate with the World Bank, the Agency for International Development, etc. A well designed, permanent industrial exhibition is a logical facility to locate in this most accessible of spots, a stone's throw from the Congress. Here it could also serve as an inspiration and educational institution to the youth of America who are touring their Nation's Capital. Mr. Schwengel's interest in immersing the youth in the history of our country could be supported by a preview of the future. It is suggested that American manufacturing industry would pay well for such a prestigious show room.

We hope that the Commission, which has functioned so effectively thus far, will be able to complete its negotiations successfully, and will be able to achieve the potential of this most exciting project, a transportation and visitor center which can literally be an American showcase to the world. Many of us are tired