



## Smithsonian Institution

*Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives*

### New York Airways Collection - United States Senate, March 8-11, 1965

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The future growth and the short-haul nature of the bulk of intercity transportation demand on the part of the nation as a whole should be considered in relation to national population growth patterns. Our society is becoming increasingly urbanized and the pattern of land use which is associated with the growth of our urban population is creating large regional complexes where "urban sprawl" is joining together in strip form cities and metropolitan areas. This type of urban growth is characterized by various names, "megapolis" being one of the most common. Although it will be many years before the pattern is complete, the outlines of such growth can be seen clearly in California in the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas, along the Eastern Seaboard between Washington and Boston and in metropolitan areas bordering the Great Lakes.

The Los Angeles and San Francisco areas eventually will be merged by growth patterns but are now individual areas with continuing high population growth rates. The four-county area of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino has a population in excess of 7 million persons, increasing at a rate of 18,000 per month. Only 16 [underlined]states[/underlined] have a larger population. By the end of this decade it appears that the area will extend from Santa Barbara on the north to San Diego on the south, a distance in excess of 200 miles, and from the Pacific Ocean on the west, over the mountains, to the Coachella Valley south and east of Palm Springs, a distance in excess of 150 miles.

The Northern California megalopolis must be considered, at least in the future, to run from the populated area of Marin County, as far north of San Francisco as San Rafael, south as far as Monterey, and from the Pacific Ocean on the west to Sacramento, the capital of the State, about a hundred miles east of San Francisco.

Unlike the major cities which form the core of the expanding megalopolis in other regions, Los Angeles is a city which has grown up within the era of the automobile and the airplane. Its transportation network, which relies on the automobile and consists primarily of urban streets and freeways, reflects this fact. Los Angeles alone has more automobiles than 34 states have people; there are 3,800,000 in Los Angeles County alone; the four counties now comprising greater Los Angeles encompass 300 cities and/or communities covering an area of 5,000 square miles (larger than the State of Connecticut). There is little and in some cases no public transportation between the Los Angeles International Airport and surrounding communities; and urban and intercity mass transportation within Greater Los Angeles is inconvenient or impossible to use between and among 300 cities and communities. As a result the average Los Angeles commuter now spends over an hour and 30 minutes driving to and from work.

Apart from the distance and surface congestion to contend with there are geographic obstacles to good ground transportation such as rivers, hills and mountains up to an elevation of 5,000 feet. When you extend north, west and south from the four-county area these geographic barriers expand in both scope and intensity.

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The traffic congestion problems of the type and severity experienced in Los Angeles are not unknown to other major US cities and they serve to illustrate the type of problems which may be encountered in the emerging super-metropolitan areas where land-use patterns will increasingly pull population away from public transportation networks. The nature of these land-use patterns and the reasons for their development lie in national patterns of population growth which result in a continuing shift from rural to urban areas. They are mentioned here inasmuch as they will have implications for intercity travel as well. The greatest distinction between urban transportation and intercity transportation may become blurred in the future as the fringe areas of large metropolitan cities are joined together by the urban-sprawl type of land use. This pattern of urban development also has profound implications for expedited airport transportation as much of this urban growth will take place in locations far removed from major airports.

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