

Speech by: Robert Morgan
Attorney General

To: Fayetteville Traffic Club

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ON CONSUMER PROTECTION

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It is certainly a pleasure for me to come to Fayetteville and meet with you today. I'm supposed to be on vacation this week but certainly I know of nothing which I could enjoy doing more than being with you tonight.

As many of you know, my home is in the neighboring County of Harnett and, therefore, I have had a particularly good vantage point from which to view the progress being made in Cumberland County. This County is growing by leaps and bounds, certainly much more rapidly than at any other period of its history, and in my opinion, the people of Cumberland County owe much to those of you here tonight and the industries you represent.

It is not too long ago that Fort Bragg, in addition to agricultural enterprises, was the primary transport shipper and receiver. That time has passed and now we see an increasing number of major industries moving large quantities of goods from and through the Fayetteville-Cumberland County area.

We are told that truck and auto traffic has doubled in seven years over Interstate 95 from the Cumberland County line to Kenly in Johnston County. Since 75% of all freight today moves by truck, this relatively new North-South artery

has given the trucking industry in the area a major boost. As you can see, the highways surrounding Fayetteville have progressed a great deal since the wooden plank roads of the 1850's.

The River Terminal barge traffic from Wilmington to Fayetteville continues to be as vital as ever, bringing tremendous amounts of in-bound nitrogen fertilizer solution and chemicals and taking back to the coast outbound wood pulp. Needless to say, the agricultural interests throughout the State depend upon your services and wood pulp producers have come to look upon you as a vital element of their operations.

Our railroads have made a concerted effort during the past years to improve freight services, not only in North Carolina but throughout the United States. By offering good services, they have become extremely competitive and, of course, competition is good for any industry.

We also know that speed in shipping certain kinds of freight has become extremely important to many industries. They cannot afford to let machines sit idle while parts needed to put them running again make their way to them by way of truck or rail. Materials for production often must be obtained on short notice. In these instances, and in others, rapid air transportation must be close at hand.

You are fortunate here in Fayetteville that the new Jet Port has opened at Grannis Field providing the area with speedy and efficient air service.

With so many diverse means of moving goods, it certainly should not come as a surprise to any one that large industries such as Black and Decker and Kelly-Springfield decided to locate major installations in the Fayetteville area.

I know that before these industries decided to locate here, they took a close look at the carriers they could call upon to provide this vital service for them. You know what they found.

They found a highly efficient and competitive system of carriers vieing for the trade in Cumberland County. They found carriers skilled in the details of their businesses and capable of proving carrier services equal to those available in any other part of the Nation.

But this would not be true if you, the members of the industry, had not made a concerted effort over the years to maintain and improve the quality of your industry and make sure that your employees received the training and incentive necessary to insure top-flight operations.

I have been impressed for a long time with the North Carolina Truck Driving School which was established at North Carolina State University in 1949. Not only has the School provided excellent professional training for employees of carriers but publicity coming from this School has showed the people of our State how interested your industry is in providing quality service to its customers.

I would encourage you to continue to look at ways to develop specialized training programs for your employees as I know you are doing now. Certainly you have an excellent organization to work through in the Carolina's Chapter of the American Society of Traffic and Transport whose expressed purpose is to establish standards of knowledge, technical training, experience and to encourage the attainment of high standards of education and technical training.

Through your efforts to provide better and better service and attain higher goals of professionalism, you are demonstrating that you are responsible members of the business community and that you are concerned about your customers --- the consumers of your services. I congratulate you for this concern.

You know we in the Attorney General's office are also concerned about the consumer and we have made a primary

concern of our office the protection of the consumer in North Carolina. We have had an opportunity to work with many representatives from your industry, and I want to thank you for the cooperation you have given us as we have launched this new program in an effort to be of service to all North Carolinians, including yourselves, for after all, we all fall within the category of consumers.

I want to spend the rest of the time allocated to me on your program to discuss a few of the things we are doing in our Consumer Division.