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Subseries: A: Bob Garrick File

Folder Title: 10/01/1980, New York City,
Westway Statement

Box: 434

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To: Stu Spencer, in his room ^{Jefferson}
FROM: Bob GARRICK ¹²¹²⁻⁷⁶⁵⁻⁹⁹⁹⁶
Important ^{copy to Bill}
WESTWAY STATEMENT ^{Casey at the event}
^{9/30, 7:40pm}
^{OK say}
^{30 Sept}
⁶⁰⁵
^{PM}

I am very pleased to be here in New York City again. Five years ago people said New York City was out of money, out of ideas and out of gas. Since then the City has made great strides toward solving its problems. Getting ready for this trip to New York, I sought to learn how this progress can be confirmed and accelerated. New York City Comptroller Ned Regan, and Senators Dick Lugar and Jake Garn told me that the guarantee plan that Mayor Koch is currently proposing would fix up streets in Brooklyn and bridges in Queens and would generally put New York in a better shape to share in the economic revival which I believe can be achieved through the economic program which I intend to implement next January. On their advice I was pleased to endorse the continuation without amendment of the Federal guarantees for the City of New York which the Congress had voted in 1978.

I also discovered that moving ahead with the Westway Project would mean 20,000 man years of labor for workers in New York and New Jersey at a time when Carter's economic policies have put so many people out of work in this Metropolitan area. I learned that the Westway would not only vastly improve transportation around New York, but that it would create 200,000 acres of park land, and reclaim land which could become an industrial park to be developed by the private sector of our economy. I believe the key to making New York City great again is restoring efficiency and economic sanity to its government

which I hope and believe Mayor Koch will do, and revitalizing its economy which I believe my economic policies and projects like the Westway will accomplish. The Westway may be the key to revitalizing the whole lower West Side of New York, doing what the World Trade Center, the United Nations and Lincoln Center developments have done for other parts of this City.

The money for the Westway Project is in the Transportation Trust Fund and has been already collected from the taxes paid by New York and New Jersey voters. That Transportation Trust Fund will provide 100,000 million dollars for the use of City land as soon as the project is permitted to go ahead. This will certainly help relieve New York City's fiscal situation.

As I looked into the Westway Project, I encountered a mystery. The people of New York are in favor of Westway. So is the City government, so is business, so is labor. The money is at hand without a further burden of the taxpayers. President Ford supported the project back in 1976 and he provided for the first action to move the project forward.

So, with all this support and with President Ford having actually launched it, why was the Westway project being held up? Why had nothing happened in the last four years? I heard a long song and dance about the Moynihan-Holtzman amendment, the Kosinhausner report, bridge tolls, and the clean air act.

But I also learned that this project is vital to New York City. It will put meat on the table for thousands of construction

workers. The City wants it. The state of New York wants it. Apparently the only people who don't want it are some environmental activists and Jimmy Carter's Environmental Protection Agency.

In a typical inter-agency confusion which characterizes Jimmy Carter's Washington, one agency in the Carter administration has gone far beyond its mandate and has shut down a project which the federal and state Departments of Transportation have approved. As a result the losers are the City of New York and the working people who need jobs.

And during the nearly four years while Carter administration bureaucrats have passed papers back and forth to each other, the costs of the Westway project have increased by over \$100 million.

Here was a situation where the government should balance the regulations pertaining to clean air with the benefits of rebuilding a great city and putting its people back to work. But it seems perfectly clear that Jimmy Carter's EPA has little or no interest in striking any kind of a balance. They want arbitrary environmental standards met at any price, even if it means that 10,000 or 20,000 construction workers go on the bread line.

Now where is Jimmy Carter in all this? If he was any kind of President at all, he would tell his EPA administrator to come up with a final answer on how the Westway can go ahead and to do it within thirty days, or start looking for another job.

And if the EPA Administrator replied that Congress had tied his hands through the Clean Air Act, then Jimmy Carter should have said "within a week I'll have a bill before Congress to amend the Clean Air Act, because there are construction workers up there in New York and New Jersey who can't feed their families on air."

That's Presidential leadership. But the man who dropped the ball for the people of the South Bronx dropped the ball for the Westway. That man is Jimmy Carter, and this country has had enough of his brand of leadership.

I'm for the Westway. In January I expect to appoint a new EPA Administrator. And I'm going to say to him, "Look: your job is to enforce the law and regulations. Find a way to accommodate both this project and reasonable environmental standards.

With the right kind of leadership in Washington, the Westway Project and dozens of other projects like it across this country can go forward. Millions of men and women will have to chance to go back to work and bring home decent paychecks which they can cash in honest money. It is a question of balance and good judgment, and as President of the United States I promise you I will appoint to all major offices men and women who have demonstrated that balance and good judgment.

So let's get on with the Westway. Let's get on with putting men and women back to work. Let's get on with productivity. Let's get on with producing the goods and services Americans want and need.

Let's get America working again.