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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Speaking in Washington today to the delegates to the 66th annual convention of the NAACP, Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr., stated his intention to increase minority employment in DOT by 3,400 positions during the coming year.

Stating that the present level of minority employment in the department for which he assumed leadership in March is now 11.5 percent, Secretary Coleman said, "I believe that by accelerating progress in hiring we can generate a momentum that will carry us to our interim goal of 20 percent and beyond."

DOT projects approximately 7,300 vacancies during fiscal year 1976, the Secretary said. "That means, that allowing for a turnover rate that runs about 11 percent, we will need to hire 3,400 minorities to meet my objective," he said.

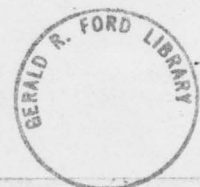
"I don't consider that we've achieved a state of equal employment opportunity merely by placing minorities and women in jobs at the lower end of the salary scale," Secretary Coleman said. "We will not have achieved equal opportunity until we can run through the entire grade spectrum and find minorities and women represented at levels commensurate with their members in the general work force."

"That is my definition of equal employment opportunity," Secretary Coleman said.

The Federal Government has an obligation to help minorities attain the training, education and recognition needed to reach positions of higher responsibility, the Secretary said.

As an example of successfully carrying out that responsibility he cited the Federal Aviation Administration's training program for air traffic controllers and electronic specialists. In the four years the program has been in existence more than 1,100 students have completed the apprentice program -- 74.4 percent of them minorities, Secretary Coleman said.

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"Beyond these technical opportunities, of course, we need to elevate more qualified, responsible members of the black community into policy-making positions," the Secretary said. "In saying this I want to make it clear that I am not talking about quotas, but equality. I want to see the day come when race will be eliminated as a practical job barrier as well as a legal one."

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