Donald Pais's address centered on the fundamental theme of change; the ability of a business to anticipate and adapt to change determines its success. The motor carrier industry is the lifeline to our nation and must be proactive, not reactionary, in responding to changing demographics and economies, which, in turn, elicit different customer requirements and needs. According to Pais, this means a paradigm shift for the motor carrier industry in the form of "step-function" improvements, which—because they represent big changes—are difficult to implement because of the comfortable limitations that old paradigms provide. Major paradigm shifts require establishing new boundaries and new behaviors for operating within them.

It is easy for companies and human beings to get "trapped within their own paradigms," Pais noted. Examples can be seen in the inability of NCR (National Cash Register) to anticipate electronic cash register technology or the delay of Sony to see the potential of laser disk technology for consumer music.

Just as the automobile industry shifted from thinking "quality is expensive" to "increased quality will reduce costs and reduce waste," the needed paradigm shift for the motor carrier industry will involve a change from "reducing total time in transit is expensive" to "reducing total time in transit reduces cost," said Pais. To effect this paradigm, two factors must be considered: speed and idle time. Speed can be improved by better use of technology, but this alone will not produce significant change. The factors affecting idle time must also be examined, such as limits on a drivers' hours, double handling, wait time, and so on. All are potential inefficiencies that can be improved. Changing manufacturers' needs will require smaller lot sizes and more frequent deliveries. In sum, Pais thinks that transportation should be seen as just one element of a total manufacturing process supported by synchronous material flow.

For the transportation industry, the talking points to remember when making step-function changes include the following:

- A manufacturing lot size of one,
- Material continually moving,
- Value added at every step, and
- Manufacturing's dependence on transportation to move even the smallest lot with the highest frequency and speed possible.