

Houston, Texas, August 23, 1934.

Mr. Amon G. Carter,

Fort Worth, Texas.

Dear Sir:

I am addressing you as a member of the Texas Centennial Committee and in behalf of the Houston Committee.

We began late in July a canvass of the public sentiment of this City to find out if our people would be willing to substantially back a bid for the location of the Centennial here. We have determined by a very effective canvass which has required several weeks that the property owners and taxpayers of the City are willing to assume an obligation in that behalf. The expression of the sentiment was two to one in favor of doing so.

We received your plans and specifications for bidders about the time we began our work and realized then that we would have to take up with you some modifications, but determined to first ascertain if our people were interested in having the Centennial here, for if not, we would not be concerned about revamping the plans.

When we come to examine the specifications in detail we find that it will be next to impossible for us to submit an intelligent bid by the first of September for several reasons, among them -

1. Any money to be spent by this or any other Texas city must be spent under limitations fixed by city charters which are substantially the same in all the large cities in Texas. These limitations require that the spending of the money shall be under the direction of the City Council. The specifications we have indicate that your Centennial Committee expects to take over this

#2.

money and spend it under its direction. There would have to be modifications of this plan so that we could work together so as to preserve the necessary authority of the City Council which will be indispensable as to any money appropriated by the City.

2. The plan which you promulgated at your recent meeting indicates an expenditure in excess of \$10,000,000.00. We called this to the attention of our people and told them that if Houston put up a sum of money they could count on the State government and Federal government making contributions. Any contribution that Houston makes would be conditioned upon the fulfillment of these promises. This is to be a State Centennial and unless the State government makes a substantial appropriation for it, it will not be a State Centennial; and unless the State government makes a substantial appropriation the Federal government will make none. In that event it will be merely a local affair to be financed out of money appropriated by the particular municipality. If this is to be its character we do not want it and our people would not assume the burden that we have asked them to shoulder. It would seem absolutely necessary that the matter of the State's appropriation be threshed out before any city is required to put up a sum of money. It has been suggested that this is not the meaning of the recent Centennial Act that the city must put up its money and get the location if it can and trust to good fortune that the State and Federal governments will make like appropriations. This, we think, is impossible and if the Act means this it should be modified.

3. There is another reason why the matter should be delayed. It is now obvious that the difficulties and details of financing may consume many months. Unless the session of the Legislature that is to convene on the 27th can be induced to make the State's appropriation so that your Committee and the city getting the location may know what to depend upon, it will be absolutely impossible to get a credible celebration ready by the early part of 1936. If the matter goes over until the regular session and the State's appropriation is delayed for many months it will be too late to finish these vast plans in time for the early part of 1936. To have a half-way celebration that

#3

would be incomplete would make Texas a laughing stock.

We are sending a copy of this letter to our friends in Dallas who are interested as we are. It is absolutely essential that there be no ill feeling between our cities in the procedure leading to the location of the site that would alienate one section against the other for the city which gets the location will greatly need the aid of all other cities and the State at large. We are therefore going to ask our friends in Dallas and elsewhere to join us in postponing these matters until these questions can be more thoroughly threshed out. We do not want the matter determined upon the incomplete and haphazard bid which we would be compelled to file by September 1st, if indeed we can file one at all.

We are sending this in advance of your next meeting so that the matter may be considered. We hope to have the Committee with us here prior to September 1st.

Yours very truly,

33

C. R. Wharton

RECEIVED
AUG 24 1934