

From

Austin (Tex.) Statesman

Date APR 18 1941

Southwestern Industry Gets Shot in Arm as Fort Worth Bomber Plant Is Started

FORT WORTH, April 18—(UP)—Ground-breaking for a \$10,000,000 Consolidated Aircraft bomber assembly plant here Friday brought Uncle Sam's defense program and the long-dreamed industrialization of the Southwest one step nearer reality.

A score of prominent army and navy officials were here to scoop up a shovel of dirt at the 1,400-acre site near beautiful Lake Worth.

Here in this cow town where close to 200,000 have tuned their living to the easy-going manner of the cattle country, the ceremonies harken to a new era that most expect to transform the rural metropolis into a top-flight southwestern industrial center.

Shot in Arm

The initial shot in the arm from Consolidated will bring a payroll of more than \$1,000,000 monthly to more than 15,000 employes at the peak of productivity. The factory will manufacture four-motor bombers of the B-24 type from parts prefabricated at large industrial plants in the East and northern Midwest.

Ceremonies at the plant follow close on an announcement of a new army air training school expected to be built near the bomber plant. Brig. Gen. G. C. Brant, commander of the gulf coast air corps training center, Randolph field, one of the speakers here, made the recommendations to the war department in Washington Thursday.

Second in South

Consolidated's plant here starts construction in a few weeks before another plant awarded to Tulsa and follows the completion of the first large airplane factory in the Southwest — the North American plant near Dallas.

Other speakers included Col. William B. Wright, commander of the Meridian, Miss., air base, who will represent several high-ranking army officials; Capt. Alva D. Barnhard, commandant of the Corpus Christi naval air station; Lieut. Commdr. Clifford H. Duerfeldt, also of Corpus Christi; Col. George E. Lovell, Fort Sam Houston; Col. Lawrence Westbrook, assistant WPA commissioner; Col. S. O. Scott, Dallas; Albert S. Low, vice president and chief engineer of Austin company contractors.

Amon Carter, Fort Worth publisher, will preside at the ceremonies. Austin company offered to lend the group a steam shovel for the ground breaking—"so you could really get some dirt"—but the novel idea was vetoed in favor of a gilded hand-spade which may be kept as a memento of the occasion.