

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date October 21, 1953

Mr. Carter:

_____ Department

Mr. Web Maddox called just ^{11:00} I walked into the office yesterday and said you asked him to call me to send you two copies of the Thornton correspondence. I was too busy yesterday to copy it and had taken you the last two copies, to the house before I left, so this explains the delay in not mailing them yesterday.

KD

AMON G. CARTER
PRESIDENT

MARVIN LEONARD
CHAIRMAN

SID W. RICHARDSON
VICE-CHAIRMAN

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

WILL K. STRIPLING
VICE-PRESIDENT

R. F. WINDFOHR
VICE-PRESIDENT

ED G. PARKER
TREASURER

RAYMOND E. BUCK
SEC.-GENERAL COUNSEL

FORT WORTH AIR TERMINAL, INC.

SYLVANIA STATION, P. O. BOX 7348 FORT WORTH, TEXAS TELEPHONE AIRPORT 2211

January 12, 1953.

MAURY H. HUFFMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LIONEL W. BEVAN, SR.
RAYMOND E. BUCK
AMON G. CARTER
R. E. COX
JOE C. DARROW
WM. FLEMING
M. A. FULLER
J. LEE JOHNSON, JR.
J. CLYDE JONES
JOHN PORTER KING, JR.
MARVIN LEONARD
O. P. LEONARD
WEB MADDOX
J. C. MAXWELL
R. J. MAYER
OTTO W. MONNIG
ED G. PARKER
SID W. RICHARDSON
ARCH H. ROWAN
W. L. STEWART
WILL K. STRIPLING
STANLEY A. THOMPSON
R. F. WINDFOHR
ED. H. WINTON

Mr. R. L. Thornton
Chairman of the Board
Mercantile National Bank
Dallas, Texas

Dear Bob:

Almost two years ago, as I recall, during the Banker's Convention in Dallas, Mr. and Mrs. Corrigan gave a party honoring Hildegarde prior to the day of her appearance at the Adolphus. Mrs. Carter and I were unavoidably delayed and arrived at the party about the time it was almost over; however, you and Mrs. Thornton, Mr. and Mrs. Corrigan and one of the young Marcus boys, together with Hildegarde were still there. You called me aside and stated: "We want to talk to you about the Midway Airport." My reply was to the effect that we had no "Midway Airport;" it was now the Greater Fort Worth International Airport. You replied: "It makes no difference what you call it, you haven't moved it, have you?" I answered that we could have had a joint "Midway Airport", being operated advantageously and economically by both cities, had it not become involved in politics. You replied that you were not altogether in sympathy with the fight that was made at the time; that you thought it was foolish for the two cities, so close together, to be fighting and that you would like to bring a small committee to Fort Worth to discuss the matter. I stated: "We are going right ahead and build the airport on the original location agreed to by all of the airlines, the City of Fort Worth, as well as a substantial number of your citizens; however, on a little larger scale than the original plans, and as soon as the airport is completed we will be glad to talk to you or anyone who wants to use it." You replied, "Well, we could use the airport without paying anything, couldn't we?" My reply again was to the effect that we were not ready to discuss details, but when the airport was finished we would be glad to go over the entire matter with you. You replied that was a fair proposition and that you would have a small committee to discuss the matter (and enumerated the people who would be with you). You, further, asked me to let you know when we were ready. The above is merely to recall to your mind the details of the conversation we had on the subject at that time.

The airport is now in its completion stages, being more than 95% complete, and we expect to open on May 1, 1953 one of the finest, most complete, modern airports in the nation. In fact, it has been described by many aviation experts and officials as one of the finest in the world. In its present state it could accommodate comfortably around two million passengers a year, and can adequately serve all of the public of North Texas at a minimum cost to the taxpayers. It is so designed that its size can be doubled without losing any of the construction we have put into it or buying any additional land. As a matter of fact, the airport now consists of 1,776 acres.

The new expressway, or toll road, which is now being discussed and planned between Dallas and Fort Worth, will pass within two miles of the airport on the south. In addition, the chances are that within less than a year helicopter service will be established with two or three pickup points in both

Dallas and Fort Worth, enabling passengers to reach the airport in about ten minutes. The two cities are rapidly growing closer together, and it is my guess that within a few years there will be more than 2,000,000 folks in this area and one will hardly know when he leaves one city and enters the other. With the helicopter service and the new expressway, this new airport will be more accessible to downtown Dallas and Fort Worth than either Love or Meacham Fields are at the present.

Our present runways are capable of taking care of the largest aircraft flying today, and our principal runway Northwest and Southeast will be extended from 6400 feet to 8450 feet long by 200 feet wide (the present width). In addition, we have the plans to extend this runway to 12,000 feet if Jet or future transports require it. We have high intensity runway lighting, high intensity approach lights, Radar I.L.S., and all the other latest aids to navigation known to aviation today.

The airport is a city within itself; has its own water system, sanitary sewer system, telephone system, electric distribution system, gas distribution system, street department, fire and police departments, a business district or community shopping center, which is laid out immediately west of the terminal building, on which around 3300 feet of merchandise shops can be built and 7200 automobiles can be parked.

S A F E T Y

The airport is zoned for safety to eliminate future hazards for five miles around it by a joint Dallas and Tarrant County Zoning Board, enabling us to keep it one of the safest airports in the country. This is one of the reasons all the airline pilots and the traveling public are enthusiastically interested in this new airport.

The Terminal Building is one of the finest to be found anywhere. It contains 242,000 square feet of fireproof, air-conditioned space; has 208 linear feet of airlines ticket counter; a huge lobby 180 feet long by 60 feet wide, with a 31 foot ceiling; includes restaurant capacity to feed more than one thousand people at a time; gift, Western and various other shops. The Claim Baggage Counter is 100 feet long, to which electric trucks can stop with inbound baggage. Seven escalators have been installed for the convenience of the passengers from the ramp level to the lobby floor. And, there is a 200 car storage garage under the ramp on the west side.

This lay-out will enable seventeen DC6 airplanes, or aircraft of a similar size, parking positions to load and unload simultaneously, without conflict. This capacity can be expanded to accommodate thirty-two when and if required, with ground for this future expansion reserved for that purpose. You can imagine the convenience of being able to load and unload with safety from 17 to 32 DC6s simultaneously without confusion.

The Administration Building is completely air-conditioned, which will enable it to furnish air-conditioning service from the equipment in the basement to parked airplanes, eliminating the air-conditioning trucks from the passenger area.

We are completing one of the nation's finest underground gas distribution systems, pumping gasoline direct from the storage area to the airplane, thereby eliminating the large, cumbersome gasoline trucks from the passenger area. The storage capacity will be 300,000 gallons at present. This can be enlarged to any capacity desired.

The new airport is designated by the Telephone Company as "Airport, Texas." You can pick up a telephone anywhere in the United States and ask for "Airport, Texas" and reach the new airport direct and quickly.

This is a very brief description of the airport which has many conveniences for the public not enumerated herein. Just as a matter of information, enclosed is a clipping from Sunday's Star-Telegram giving a somewhat detailed story, including cuts of the airport improvements.

Now, in reply to your previous statement, "Well, we (Dallas) could use the airport without paying anything, couldn't we?" - made at the time we discussed the matter in Dallas, the answer is "yes." On the other hand, it has naturally occurred to us that you might want to own an interest and have equal opportunity regarding its management, which would probably have to be worked out by some kind of a joint port authority or other suitable arrangements made which would be perfectly fair and equitable to both cities.

There has been expended on the airport more than eleven and one-half million dollars in which the taxpayers of Fort Worth have a little over four million dollars invested, and the Terminal Association has in the neighborhood of a million dollars, not including the land of 1,776 acres, which cost from \$100.00 to \$400.00 an acre. This same land, if bought today, would cost anywhere from \$500.00 to \$2,500.00 per acre; and, to duplicate the same airport now on the same ground would cost the taxpayers approximately double the present amount.

Bob, I am passing this information along to you in keeping with your request some two years ago, and with my promise that we would be glad to discuss with you or anybody the matter of using the new airport as soon as it was finished.

Incidentally, there have been volumes printed about the airport for the past ten years. (As a matter of fact, I have 17 volumes, including every newspaper story and a complete consecutive history of the entire project, from its inception). We, in Fort Worth, have not become involved or attempted to answer the many accusations made against both cities using this modern, new airport. Frankly, we felt that the airport could not be built or operated through the newspapers and we have maintained our silence in that respect. Therefore, I think there are many thousands of taxpayers in both cities who do not really know the true facts, or who have stopped to analyze the advantages of the joint airport as against the disadvantages.

I feel quite sure that if the taxpayers of Fort Worth and Dallas should take the time to inspect the new airport they would readily comprehend and appreciate the advantages offered for both communities on a practical and economic basis. I only wish it were possible for all of them to make a personal inspection. They are cordially invited and will be welcome.

So far, the Civil Aeronautics Authority has not been able to match all of the money the Fort Worth Taxpayers have advanced. The airport appropriations for the C.A.A. have been cut from almost \$100,000,000 to about \$25,000,000 a year. The chances are that this will be the last large airport in which they will be able to participate, other than to a minor extent, for a long time.

MERCANTILE NATIONAL BANK

Dallas, Texas
January 14, 1953.

Mr. Amon G. Carter
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Fort Worth, Texas

Dear Amon:

I have your letter of the 12th and have noted its contents with a lot of interest and, to the best of my recollection, you quote substantially our conversation of some two years ago, which I would call a running conversation because we were both attending the reception for Hildegarde.

You folks have built a great airport, but at this moment I frankly do not know what can be done, if anything, with reference to the substance of the conversation we had two years ago. As you know, there is a campaign on here now for a new bond issue to expand and improve Love Field. Of course, I hope it will carry for I agree with you that within some five to ten years there will be approximately 2,000,000 people in Tarrant and Dallas Counties. My own thinking is that we will need your new airport; we will need the expanded Love Field Airport; we will need Meacham Field at Fort Worth, and we will need Red Bird Airport here in Dallas. That will make two great airports and two supplemental airports, I would call them for lack of a better term. The matter has been involved in politics to some extent from time to time, however, I have always had a feeling that time, experience, highway development and increased population would bring the correct answer, and it still may take time. I am sure you are correct when you say that if an identical airport were built today, the land and construction costs, added into a total, would be much greater than what Midway has cost your people.

As above stated, at this moment I do not know that anything can be done, but I really have not had time to assimilate any thinking in my mind or to discuss the matter with the gentlemen to whom you sent copies of the letter. You are going to Washington on the 17th, I believe, will be back on the 21st, and our people vote here on the 27th. It may be that matters will so change themselves that there may be something that can be discussed that will be equitable and progressive for both cities.

In the meantime, I hope you and Mrs. Carter will have a fine trip to Washington and all will be well for the next four years.

With cordial good wishes, I am

Very sincerely,

/s/ R. L. THORNTON

R. L. Thornton

RLT:epl