

AMERICAN AIRLINES INC.

100 East 42nd Street New York 17, New York Murray Hill 5-3900

January 21, 1944

To the Directors:

The following has been received from Colonel R. W. Ireland, Assistant Chief of Staff, Priorities and Traffic, Air Transport Command, dealing with priorities for directors:

"This will confirm our recent telephone conversation with respect to the establishment of priority for Directors of American Airlines, Inc. en route to attend meetings of American's Board of Directors.

"This matter has been very carefully analyzed with respect to the U. S. civil airline industry as a whole, as well as from the standpoint of American Airlines, Inc., and although it is recognized there may be many instances when the establishment of priority is justified, it is not felt that any blanket ruling can be made which would automatically authorize priority for each Director to all meetings.

"Currently effective War Department regulations and policies require that each request for priority for air transportation be individually evaluated with respect to its urgency to the war effort and the possibility of completing the mission in question via surface transportation. We are aware of the vitally important service being rendered by the airlines in the prosecution of the war, as well as the fact that frequently the war effort activities of airline Directors are such that on occasions they can attend Directors' meetings only if transportation by air is available. This situation, however, is not unique with respect to airline Directors as there are thousands of corporations engaged in the war effort, the activity of many hundreds being confined exclusively to the production of war materials or the provision of services indispensable to the war effort.

"In addition to being inconsistent with currently effective priority regulations, I am sure you will agree that it would be discriminatory to extend such blanket authorization to Directors of airlines and not to the thousands of other corporation Directors whose positions and requirements would, in many cases, be similar.

"Due to the many combinations of circumstances which are possible, it would be most difficult to attempt to outline the conditions under which a priority could or could not be granted. However, in general when a Director of an airline is unable, because of other war effort activities, to leave his point of origin sufficiently early to enable him to use surface transportation in attending Directors' meetings, and when the agenda of the meeting in question includes matters or urgent importance to the prosecution of the war effort, it would appear that the requirements of existing regulations would be met and that favorable consideration of a request for priority could be given. The specific class of priority assigned approved requests would depend entirely on the degree of urgency in each particular case.

"It may be considered desirable for each airline to handle requests for priority covering air transportation required by its Directors in attending meetings of the Board. If this is the case, it is suggested that each airline could channel such requests through the Air Transport Association, which organization maintains a Liason Office in this Headquarters. You may be assured that the position of the airlines and the Directors thereof is understood and appreciated and that careful and sympathetic evaluation of such requests will be given promptly."

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(Signed) A. N. Kemp