

July 17, 1943.

Honorable Jesse Jones,  
The Secretary of Commerce,  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Jesse:

Your letter of June 7th has been covered up in an accumulation of unanswered mail on my desk for which I trust you will accept my apology.

I note your comments that it would seem to you that additional land might be acquired on the west side of the present airport to provide space for the Administration Buildings and an entrance to the airport facing the road from Fort Worth to Dallas; that you further think that both Fort Worth and Dallas should become sponsors of the Midway Airport; that you are thinking of the service generally, and not of any rivalry between the two cities.

I have read the copy of Administrator Stanton's letter of May 14th to Mr. Holden about the Midway Airport. Mr. Stanton states that if Dallas proceeds in accordance with the clippings, which Mr. Holden enclosed in his letter, that it will probably develop an airport much more conveniently located with respect to the business and residential areas of Dallas than is the Arlington site and, that, no doubt, it would then demand that all air carrier schedules stop at the new airport; that on the basis of the comparative volume of air traffic it would be difficult to see how such could be denied, except possibly on some schedules which operate at times unfavorable to the local people and, therefore, are little patronized. He further stated that if that reasoning held, that would mean continuance of the double stopping and attendant loss of time.

It would indicate from Mr. Stanton's letter that he may be inclined to look on Dallas' claims in this matter with favor. In fact, Mr. Stanton indicated to both Mr. Holden, of the Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. Bothwell, our City Manager, that Fort Worth had put a "fast one" over Dallas. In fact, I called and had

about an hours visit with Mr. Stanton on this same subject and explained to him the fact that Fort Worth had not put a "fast one" over Dallas, reviewed the bidding of the entire transaction and told him that all Fort Worth had ever asked was a perfectly square deal - an equal distance between the two cities - and suggesting that it was not customary to build airports merely on present business conditions. On the contrary, that they were built with the idea of handling traffic in keeping with the future growth and development. While Dallas is larger than Fort Worth, this condition might adjust itself in time.

I appreciate the friendly motives which prompt your suggestion that the Midway Airport be extended somewhat to the west to include additional area and the Administration Building be located facing north on Highway 183 at what is the presently existing northwest corner.

Such an arrangement would no doubt satisfy the only requirement which has ever been made by Fort Worth, namely that the Administration Building be half way between Fort Worth and Dallas over the existing highways which would normally and logically be used by a sensible traveling public. Whether the airlines shall provide the additional land necessary and be required to conduct an operation on the airport which is less efficient but more expensive and more hazardous on account of the extra taxiing, incident to locating the terminal at one end of the airport rather than at the axis of the runways, are decisions that I leave to the responsibility of others.

It would cost someone a great deal of money to redesign and reconstruct the present airport improvements, which include runways, taxi-strips and ramps designed for a terminal building on the west side, and there would be delay and interruption in the use of the airport; but, again, that decision is not for me and if any arrangement is made which leaves the Terminal Building as close to the hotel district in Fort Worth as in Dallas my own responsibilities will be served as I never, at any time, demanded that the building be located on the west side. We did make a strong plea to Colonel

Clay on a site west of the present location for the purpose of giving Fort Worth an even break and Mr. Elliott, Representative of the C. A. A., worked out with the airlines and presented the present layout which was acceptable to Fort Worth, thoroughly understood and agreed to by both Braniff and the American. Mayor Rodgers and his committee were thoroughly familiar with all of these circumstances and conditions and the matter rested for a year -- in fact up until such time as Mayor Rodgers decided to run for re-election as Mayor of Dallas, at which time the Dallas News popped out with an interview from the Mayor which in no way was based on facts. To be brutally frank, 90% of the statements in this interview were inaccurate.

The map, which I enclose herewith, shows the shortest distance from the Texas Hotel in Fort Worth to the Administration Building on the west side of the present Midway Airport to be 18.1 miles. It also shows the road, Highway 183, north of the airport, including the cutoff west of the present Love Field to be 18.1 miles from the Administration Building to the Baker Hotel in Dallas. Then, again, from the Baker Hotel in Dallas by the road they are now using through Irving to the same location, the Administration Building on the Midway Airport, is 18.1 miles. While, if they used the road from Irving west bordering on the South by the Airport and up to the Administration Building, it is 17.7 miles or one-half mile nearer Dallas. These measurements may not be important for the future due to the fact that the chances are we will be using helicopters -- hopping off from either the Baker Hotel in Dallas or the Texas Hotel in Fort Worth and dropping down in front of the Administration Building at the Midway Airport. On this basis, the airline distance between the Baker Hotel in Dallas and the Administration Building at the Midway Airport is 15.7 miles, while the airline distance between the Texas Hotel in Fort Worth and the Administration Building is 17 miles -- thus giving Dallas 1.3 miles advantage on the airline basis. To my way of thinking, all of the road distances will be obliterated and this will be the method the passengers will use in the matter of traveling from the hotels to the Administration Building at the Midway Airport.

Frankly, Jesse, many substantial business people in Dallas realize that neither the Mayor nor the Dallas News had any justification for stirring up all of this rumpus. Of course, they have only heard one side of the story. With all due respect to our esteemed friends, the publishers of the Dallas News, for whom I have great respect, they have not given both sides of the story. There is nothing unfair or inconsistent in the present layout. If there is any advantage, it is in Dallas' favor. The thing that really burned the Mayor up was the fact that he considered it presumptuous on the part of Fort Worth for having the temerity to refuse to accept Dallas' yardstick for a fifty-fifty deal, which has heretofore always been one horse and one rabbit.

I realize you are tremendously busy and I regret the necessity of burdening you with a lengthy communication of this kind. If you still feel that someone should acquire additional land on the west side of the present layout at Midway Airport, we, in Fort Worth, will be glad to discuss the matter with you or Mr. Stanton any time at your convenience. As a matter of fact, the airlines (Braniff and American) own 141 acres of land west of the present site; however, before any radical changes are made we hope to have the privilege, as stated above, of reviewing the entire matter again.

As I understand, the airport has been officially turned over by the C. A. A. to the City of Arlington and while Dallas has a perfect right to build as many airports as it likes, (as a matter of fact, Fort Worth is working on a project at this time for a larger airport in anticipation of future development and activity of post war aviation), at the same time from a practical standpoint of the larger planes, which will no doubt operate with one stop from coast to coast, the Midway Airport would facilitate the operations both from the standpoint of the public as well as the airlines. The Midway Airport will be practical for instrument landings and with good roads, the helicopters (eliminating distance) and both cities growing in time the airport will no doubt be as close to both cities as our present airports.

In conclusion, please bear in mind, again, if I may be permitted to say so, Fort Worth has not

and has no intention of trying to put anything over Dallas. On the other hand, we should not be expected to sit idly by and permit them to bullyrag our citizens into accepting their views and versions of what they consider a fair deal. They have just had their way so long they cannot stand to have anybody disagree with them. Regardless of the competitive feature of both cities, Fort Worth is trying to cooperate on a perfectly fair and equal basis.

Thank you very much for your interest in the matter.

Awaiting your further communication,  
I remain

Sincerely,

AGC.KD