

THE NATIONAL AIR COUNCIL

280 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

MURRAY HILL 6-3950

December 28, 1948

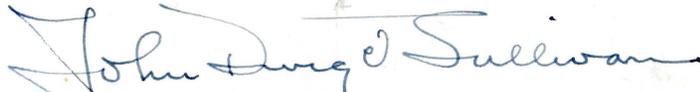
Mr. Amon G. Carter, President
Carter Publications
400 West 7th Street
Fort Worth, Texas

Dear Mr. Carter:

We are sending you herewith a memorandum which was submitted at a recent meeting of the Board of Managers and Board of Governors of the Council. As its title implies, it is intended to summarize the situation now existing although the reports of the President's Air Policy Commission and the Joint Congressional Aviation Policy Board were published almost a year ago.

If you would like additional copies of this memorandum and if you will let us know we shall be pleased to send them to you.

Yours very truly,



John Dwight Sullivan
Executive Vice President

JDS:B
Enc.

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A MEMORANDUM
DEALING WITH THE ACTION
TAKEN ON RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE PRESIDENT'S
AIR POLICY COMMISSION
AND THE
CONGRESSIONAL
AVIATION POLICY BOARD

THE NATIONAL AIR COUNCIL

280 Madison Avenue
NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

A MEMORANDUM

dealing with the action taken on recommendations of

THE PRESIDENT'S AIR POLICY COMMISSION

and the

CONGRESSIONAL AVIATION POLICY BOARD

THE President's Air Policy Commission, whose Chairman was Thomas K. Finletter, released its report on January 13, 1948. The report was in five sections entitled respectively, Air Power and the National Security, The Aircraft Manufacturing Industry, Aeronautical Research and Development, Civil Aviation, and Government Organization.

The Congressional Aviation Policy Board, whose Chairman was Senator Brewster and whose Vice-Chairman was Representative Hinshaw, submitted its report on March 1, 1948. It contained five sections entitled respectively, Combat Aviation, Air Transport, Aircraft Manufacturing, Research and Development, and Government Organization.

The Finletter report was submitted to the President but not to the Congress. However, the testimony which the Commission took was available to the Congressional Board and was used in part as a basis for their recommendations.

The recommendations of the two bodies were in many respects similar. The principal difference is that the Congressional group urged major increases in both Air Force and Navy air strength, while the Presidential body called for added strength in the Air Force alone.

The Presidential Commission recommended an increase in the Air Force to be started at once and to be completed by the end of the year 1952. It called for a 70-group organization to be equipped and ready for service by January 1, 1950, and recommended that the uniformed personnel of the Air Force be brought up to the 401,000 figure planned by the Air Force. The Commission found the Navy Air Arm as presently constituted to be adequate, but it recommended additional funds for the procurement of new aircraft to re-

place World War II aircraft which had become obsolescent.

The Congressional Board recommended specifically a 70-group program for the Air Force of 20,541 aircraft, plus the Navy program of 14,500, a total of 35,041 aircraft.

Both groups stated in their reports that they had attempted to learn the requirements of the Navy and the Air Force in connection with a unified plan of action, but that no such plan had been agreed upon or presented to them.

As a result of the Congressional Board's 92 recommendations 23 bills were introduced in the Congress, of which only the following were enacted into law:

PUBLIC LAW 647—"To encourage the development of an international air transport system adapted to the needs of the foreign commerce of the United States." This law is known as the "International Aviation Facilities Act." It authorizes the Administrator of Civil Aeronautics and the Chief of the Weather Bureau, after consultation with the Air Coordinating Committee and subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, to acquire, establish and construct airway property in foreign territory. Section 8 of the law authorizes any Department of the National Military Establishment to transfer when considered consistent with the needs of national defense, to the Administrator without charge, airport property and airway property, exclusive of meteorological facilities, installed or in the possession of such department in territory (including Alaska) outside the continental limits of the United States, which such department has found to be no longer required exclusively for military purposes.

PUBLIC LAW 692—Amends the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938, as amended "To make further provision for the recording of title to, interests in and encumbrances upon certain aircraft, and for other purposes." This is the so-called Spare Parts Bill.

PUBLIC LAW 656—Limits the liability of certain persons not in possession of aircraft.

PUBLIC LAW 657—Provides for thunderstorm investigation by the Weather Bureau.

PUBLIC LAW 819—Establishes rates for Air Parcel Post.

* * *

H.R. 6628—Provides for the development of lighter-than-air ships for commercial use by the United

States Maritime Commission. *This bill was passed by the Congress, but was killed by pocket veto.*

In addition to the foregoing, Public Law 547 approved May 21, 1948, (the Supplemental National Defense Appropriation Act of 1948) authorized contractual authority of \$2,295,100,000 for the Department of the Air Force of which \$1,023,000,000 was included in the regular fiscal year 1949 estimates. These funds were made available two months early in order to permit the immediate placing of contracts. The bill further provided funds for aviation procurement by the Department of the Navy.

The remaining bills introduced to implement the recommendations of the Congressional Board died with the adjournment of Congress.

The Board has pointed out that the measures which became law are, for the most part, minor in importance as compared with the bills which did not become law.

Among them are the following:

S.J. 205—To establish a Joint Congressional Committee on Aviation Policy. This bill followed one of the specific recommendations of the Congressional Board. It went to the Rules Committee, where no action was taken.

S. 2447—The so-called 5-Year Plan Bill, which would require the Secretary of Defense to submit to the Congress on or before January 15 of each year a report which should state in detail the estimated procurement requirements of the National Military Establishment and each department or agency thereof for aeronautical research, development and production for the succeeding period of 5 years.

S. 2448—The so-called Omnibus Bill, to provide for Government reorganization and the establishment by law of an Air Coordinating Committee to include representatives of the State, Air Force, Navy, Commerce and Post Office Departments, Civil Aeronautics Board, Director of Air Safety and the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics.

S. 2449—To provide for the regulation of interstate air contract carriers by air (which had been recommended by both the Presidential Commission and the Congressional Board.) There were hearings on this bill and the companion bill in the House, but the bill was not enacted into law.

S. 2453—To provide for the avoidance of multiple taxation of air commerce. This bill followed recommendation No. 39 of the Congressional Board and was designed to correct a condition brought to attention in the case of Northwest Airlines against the State of Minnesota, in which it was held that the State might tax the entire fleet of the airline.

S. 2458—To extend the carriage of first-class mail by air.

S. 2760—To authorize the Secretary of the Air Force to establish land-based air warning and control installations for the national security.

S. 2761—To authorize the establishment of a joint long-range proving ground for guided missiles.

S. 2762—To authorize the establishment of an air engineering development center.

The Organic Air Act providing for a 70-group Air Force, which was introduced as H.R. 6247 (the companion bill was S. 2792) and which passed the House was tabled by the Senate Armed Services Committee. Section 7 of that bill provides that any monies appropriated to carry out the purposes of Sections 4, 5 and 6 of the Act should remain available for obligation during the fiscal year for which it was appropriated and for the four succeeding fiscal years thereafter. This latter provision following generally the recommendations of both the Board and the commission, is of greatest importance to the Air Force and to the Navy Air Arm in planning procurement and to the aircraft industry in stabilizing production.

More than 50 of the Board's 92 recommendations did not require legislation and fell under the Executive Department's jurisdiction for action.

Since the authorization for the Board's existence has expired, there is no organization established to follow up the action taken by the departments on the Board's recommendations.

Among the requirements to carry out some of the principal recommendations of the Finletter Commission and the Congressional Board are the following:

1. Legislation which will define the composition and authorize an increase in the personnel of the Air Force, provide for research and development, and for a long-term procurement program of 5,200 aircraft annually.

2. Legislation providing for the establishment and maintenance of aircraft warning and control systems for the United States and Alaska. This is the bill popularly known as the "Radar Bill".

3. Legislation which would provide proving grounds of sufficient range to test, for experiment, and to train personnel in the use of long-range guided missiles.

4. Legislation authorizing the construction of research facilities for experimentation and development in aeronautical science and related activities. A bill—S. 2762—was introduced in the Senate this last session and was popularly called the "Air Engineering Development Center Bill".

5. Legislation authorizing the Secretary of the Air Force to develop new prototype cargo and transport aircraft primarily for commercial use but suitable for military use in the event of an emergency. Actually, this bill—S. 2644 and H.R. 6501—was introduced as a result of the findings of the Congressional Air Policy Committee as a part of the long-range program of the Air Force. It has been estimated that a subsidy of twenty-five million dollars would be required to produce a prototype four-engine jet cargo aircraft.

In a public address made by the Secretary of the Air Force on September 25, 1948, he said in part as follows:

"... we are now on the way back—29 groups in being last year, 55 as of today, 66 to be organized at the end of this year; and 70 to be organized next year, although we will not have a completely modern, combat-effective 70-group Air Force before 1952."

But the foregoing schedule cannot be carried out unless some of the proposed legislation referred to in this memorandum is enacted into law.

Dated: December 20, 1948