Sunday - all Editions

Airlines Head Says:

Jet Airliners 'Not Around The Corner'; Expected in '58

NEW YORK, Aug. 30 (Spl).—C. R. Smith, president of American Airlines, in a statement issued Saturday, predicted that ultimately jet power will become the principal power for air transportation but it is not "just around the corner."

The progress in design and production of more efficient jet engines during the last five years has been amazing, Smith said, but he expects it will be 1958 before there will be any jet transports in domestic operations and these will be on long transcontinental runs. Smith's statement follows:

We are often asked when the airlines will be operating jet transports. Perhaps you are asked the same question. There are, generally, two kinds of jet engines: one, with the power plant geared to a propeller, called the turbo-prop; the other, with no propeller, utilizing its power directly through thrust, usually called the true jet.

There are many views about the relative merits of the two types of power plants. Each has certain advantages. Generally the airplane equipped with the turbo-prop will operate more efficiently at low altitude, will require shorter runways for take-off and landing, but will be slower.

The true jet engine is not efficient at low altitude; its best performance is around 40,000 feet. An airplane equipped with that engine also will accelerate slowly on take-off, and long runways are required. It has no propellers to reverse, to slow down the craft after landing, and long runways are required for that purpose. The true jet has superior ability to provide high speed and transports equipped with that engine will be capable of speeds of 500-600 miles per hour.

No one can now be sure about the future of the two engines but presently it seems sensible to conclude that ultimately the short-range airplane will be equipped with the turbo-prop engine and the long-range airplane with the true jet. The major part of the development work for both engines is being done for the military services. There is now greater emphasis on the development of the true jet, due to the military requirement for high speed. It is probable that the first of the jet transports in this country will be equipped with the true jet. It is probable that an efficient turbo-prop installation will come along later.

In Service About 1958.

gine and an airplane design which will provide the operating economy necessary to produce operating profit.

5 Tons of Fuel an Hour.

The "nut" of the problem is that the true jet engine consumes a relatively enormous quantity of fuel. A jet transport of reasonable dimensions will burn about five tons of fuel an hour, 10,000 pounds. The cost of that quantity of fuel is, of course, quite high, but the greater contribution to cost is that such a high proportion of the carrying capacity of airplane must be devoted to transporting fuel, and such a low proportion is available to carry revenue-producing passengers, mail and cargo.

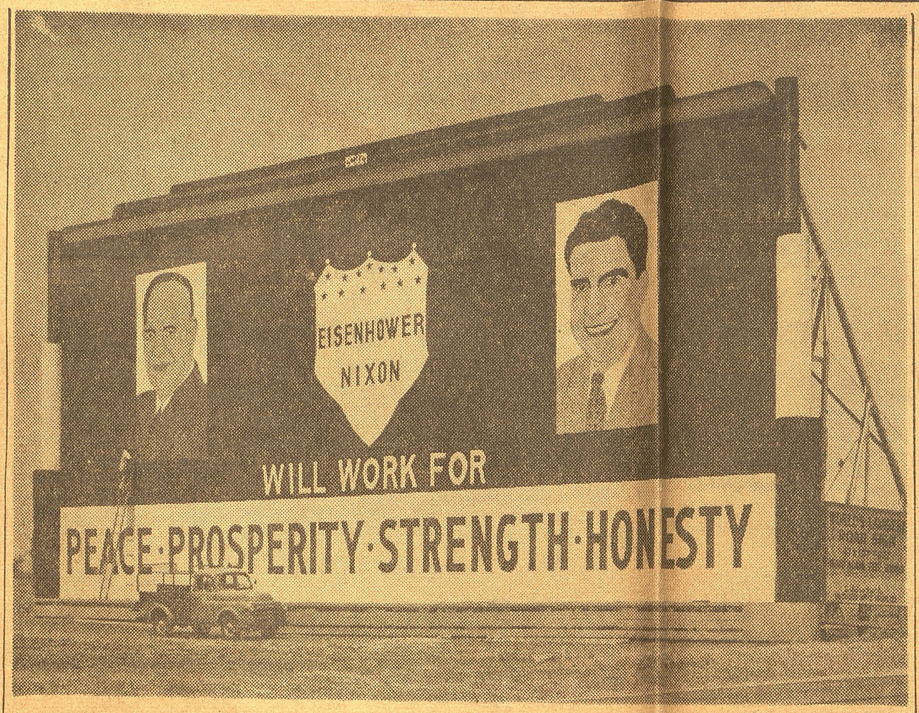
The real problem for the engineers is to produce a jet engine which will have greater fuel economy, and until that problem is solved there will be few jet transports in commercial operation. In military airplanes high speed is essential, irrespective of operating cost. But the test in civil aviation is that the airplane shall operate with profit, and if the jet airplane is to operate with profit its engines must operate with greater fuel economy.

A good index of relative economy is the fact that the Douglas DC-6B consumes 8.9 pounds of fuel per mile. The jet machine, of about the same size, in spite of its much higher speed, will require about 20.4 pounds of fuel per mile.

How British Do It.

The British are able to advertise that they operate jet transports, although in limited number. The British have done a good job of pioneering in the jet field, and their work will be beneficial to all. But the British airlines, all regional monopolies, are owned entirely by the British government. Their urge to be self-supporting is not so direct as our own. In the United States the airlines are privately owned and the operating companies must be self-supporting.

I am sure that the United States manufacturers can and will build jet transports superior to those available in England. I believe that the United States is now ahead of the British in jet engine development. But neither the American nor the British will be able to sell the airlines a quantity of jet transports until they reasonably prove they can be operated with profit and that, in my opinion, can no now be done. I believe that the estimate for



—Felder Photo, Austin.

KING SIZE POLITICS—There won't be many pictures of General Eisenhower and Senator Nixon any bigger than these proclaiming the Republican presidential nominees just south of Round Rock. The "world's largest road sign" carries pictures 12 by 24 feet.

mate of cost we can not operate jet transports and break even at present fare levels. There are a limited number of people who would be willing to pay higher fares, to go 600 miles an hour rather than 300 miles an hour. But there are not enough of them to make a business of it.

If we need to raise the price of air transportation to "break even" on the cost of operating a jet transport we would lose most of the "average" customers, and if we lose that group we lose the ability to produce, and sell, large quantities of air transportation.

It all gets down to this: There will be reasonable opportunity for the jet machine when it can operate as economically per passenger mile, or per ton mile, as the present type of airplane. There will be great opportunity for it when its relatively high speed can provide a substantial reduction in operating cost, per passenger mile and per ton mile. As each new airplane type has been faster than its predecessor we have expected operating economies from the increased speed and we have always had them. That is the principal reason we can sell air transportation in 1952 with so little increase in price over 1940, in spite of higher costs for all purchases. But, as yet, the jet machine demands a higher unit operating cost, not a lower one. There will be widespread demand for the jet transport hour of total life operation may be 10 to 20 times present cost for reciprocating engines, dependent on how long the jet engine will last in operation. And we do not know that yet.

Cost of Jet Development.

The engineering cost for the development of a new jet transport is estimated at $25,000,000 to $30,000,000 and nearly all of that will need to be expended before a single production model is available. The production models may cost $2,000,000 to $4,000,000 each, dependent on size and quantity produced.

In "manufacturing" terms, it is difficult to justify an additional, large capital investment to secure a production machine which will have a higher production cost per unit than the older machine. Until the new machine can show a substantial operating economy there is little economic reason for its purchase.

Jet power is a modern development with great promise for the future. It is safe to predict that jet power will ultimately become the pricipal form of power for air transportation. Progress in the design and production of more efficient jet machines during the last five years has been amazing. I have no doubt that trend will continue. Jet power seems to be a "cinch" for the future but it is not "just around the corner."

'World's Largest' Billboard Urges Eisenhower Support

Staff Special.

ROUND ROCK, Aug. 30.—People who are tired of Texas superlatives won't like this, but:

"The World's Largest Road Sign" is now on duty in the Eisenhower presidential campaign.

Louis Henna, Round Rock philanthropist and business leader, has put 12 by 24-foot pictures of General Eisenhower and his running mate, Senator Nixon, on the huge sign on Highway 81.

Henna is one of those "independent" voters who said he was "tired of things" in Washington and thought he'd do something about it.

The signboard was put up by Henna several years ago to advertise an automobile agency he owns. It measures 47 by 107 feet, contains 16,610 board feet of lumber. That's enough for a pretty good-sized house.

Henna said lots of folks stopped to take pictures of the automobile agency sign because of its size. He hopes they'll do the same with the Eisenhower-Nixon pictures.

McMurry Gets Board Approval On Teacher Plan

ABILENE, Aug. 30 (AP).—McMurry College has been notified that its teacher training program for the 1952-1953 school term has been approved by the State Board of Education.

Dr. Harold G. Cooke, president, received notification from Commissioner of Education J. W. Edgar on Aug. 27. The approval came after inspection last week of facilities which the college added to meet the criteria of the Texas education agency.

Dr. Frank Hubert, director of professional standards for the agency, made the inspection and recommended to the board that approval be granted.

McMurry expanded its library, employed Dr. Joseph Roemer, specialist in elementary education and provided a more extensive teacher training agency.

Script Writer Well Paid

HOLLYWOOD, Aug. 30 (CTS). Helen Deutsch, who gets one of the biggest writing salaries in town, is up for an increase since her script on "Lilli."

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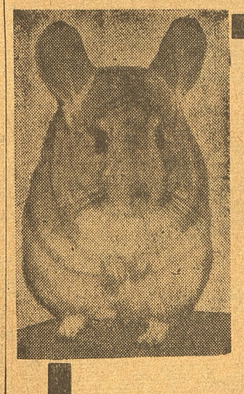

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jet transports in domestic operation, principally on the long transcontinental runs, about 1958. There may be a limited number flying before that time, on an experimental basis.

At least three aircraft manufacturers, Lockheed, Douglas and Boeing, are studying the specifications for a jet transport. The engineers of the airlines are working closely with them. American Airlines, Inc., has been studying the problem for about three years and has acquired considerable experience. Together, the airline engineers and the aircraft manufacturers are endeavoring to discover the most appropriate size, speed and other characteristics for a commercial aircraft. It must, of course, operate with safety and it must have characteristics of operating economy which will permit it to operate with profit, with reasonable load factors.

Most of the work to date consists of engineering studies and drawings, although some work has been done on wind tunnel testing of miniature models. No manufacturer in the United States is now prepared to offer a model for sale and, to the best of my knowledge, no airline has present intentions of placing an order for jet transports.

DC-7 Due January 1954.

There will be an interim development before the jet transport. Douglas is building a new airplane, the DC-7, around specifications prepared by American Airlines, Inc. Delivery should begin about September of 1953. American Airlines, Inc., has 25 of the DC-7s on order and expects to begin their operation on Jan. 1, 1954. The DC-7 will cost $1,600,000 each, compared with $1,100,000 for the DC-6B and around $700,000 for the original DC-6.

The DC-7 will be longer and, therefore, larger than the DC-6B and about 50 miles an hour faster. It should cruise at 360 miles per hour. In addition it will have greater fuel capacity and longer nonstop range. It will be capable of going coast-to-coast, nonstop, in about eight hours.

Lockheed will also have a faster model of the Constellation. Both models, Douglas and Lockheed, gain their greater speed through greater engine horsepower; more powerful, more efficient reciprocating engines.

The new models, the Douglas DC-7 and the Constellation, will probably be the last of the large transport aircraft with reciprocating engines. After them will come the jets. But for many years after the introduction of the jets the majority of the flights will continue to be operated with the conventional type of aircraft, for the reciprocating engine airplane is relatively efficient for short and middle distances.

There are no inherent mysteries about jet airplanes. Several have been built, and reasonably efficient ones, and it would be easy enough to begin building a better one without delay. The basic problem is that no one has yet been able to build a jet transport which will operate with profit. And it may take several years to perfect an engine which will be economical to operate. Then, too, the airplane must be a productive machine, until the trend is reversed.

The jet engine is not yet as reliable as the reciprocating engine. It will need to be overhauled more often and its total operating life will be shorter. Its initial capital cost may be five to 10 times the cost of the reciprocating engine. It cost per

should be met if our present rate of progress continues. There may, or may not, be jet transports in the overseas field, for competitive reasons, earlier than in the domestic field. But in either field they would now meet the test of profitable operation with great difficulty.

A word about the nature of the business of air transportation. We are in the "manufacturing" business. We manufacture air transportation. The airplane is our productive machine. We must manufacture in relatively great quantity, otherwise our production cost will be higher than the potential sales price. And we must be able to sell a high proportion of the product manufactured, each day. There is no way to carry an "inventory" of air transportation after it is manufactured. Unsold capacity is a dead loss immediately the airplane takes off. Something like a theater; when the curtain goes up the unsold seats represent a loss for the day.

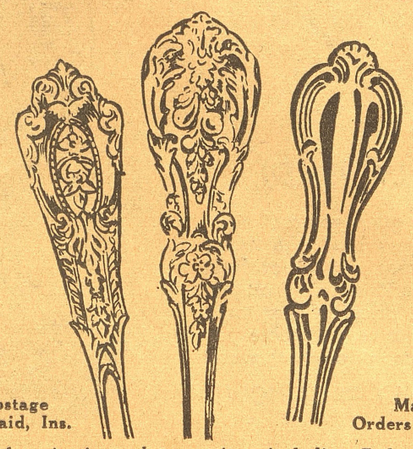
Prices Must Be Competitive.

To sell our product its price must be competitive with other forms of transportation. Fares must be low enough to encourage an increasing number of people each year to travel by air. The effort to broaden the market must be a continuing one. That is a basic reason we have clung tenaciously to low fare levels. Present average fares are about 7 per cent above 1940 although some are substantially below that level. As a result of these low fares we have been able to double our business since 1948. Our policy is to operate with high volume and low profit margin rather than low volume with high profit margin.

On the basis of present esti-

2 Soldiers Sentenced

HAVANA, Cuba, Aug. 30 (AP). A military court announced Saturday two soldiers arrested in connection with an alleged plot to kill ex-President Ramon Grau San Martin have been sentenced to four years, two months imprisonment each.



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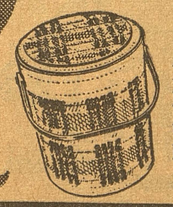

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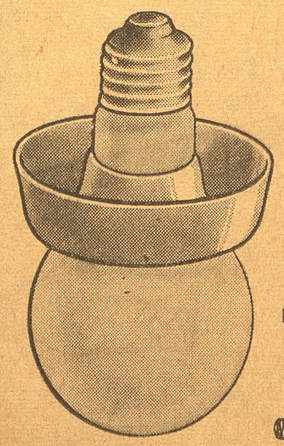

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