

January 29, 1944.

Major General Harold L. George,
Commander, Air Transport Command,
Washington, D. C.

Dear General:

At the time you were in Fort Worth I discussed with you and General Craig the matter of priorities for the Directors of the American Airlines, which naturally would apply to all other airlines. Recently at a meeting in New York, Mr. A. W. Kemp, President of the American Airlines, gave me a copy of a letter from Colonel R. W. Ireland, Assistant Chief of Staff, Priorities and Traffic, Air Transport Command in which Colonel Ireland has indicated his sympathetic feelings on the matter and at the same time in sum and substance turns the request down and indicates a long process through which we could make request for transportation, copy of which I enclose herewith.

In the third paragraph of Colonel Ireland's letter he states as follows: "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."

This may be the broad way in which to view the matter, however I feel that there should be some

distinction between the directors of airlines who are performing a tremendously important service for the Government and practically without compensation or profit. This unusual extra amount of business makes it necessary for the American management to keep on its toes and in close contact with operations, hence a Directors' meeting each month. In my case, I have been a director in the American Airlines since the Aviation Corporation was organized in 1928. I have a substantial investment in the property and I am interested in keeping in close contact with its operations and activities, and so I make a regular monthly trip to New York to attend the meetings, which would be somewhat difficult to do if I had to make the trip on the train, as it takes about 45 or 50 hours including a reasonable allowance for lateness, which we can make in 8 or 9 hours by plane.

No one is more appreciative of the great job that the Air Transport Command is doing or has any greater sympathy with the problems confronting you, at the same time I feel it should not be inconsistent to permit the American Directors to have a priority on essential trips. Our next meeting will be held on the customary third Wednesday, February 16.

I realize Colonel Ireland is familiar with these conditions as his experience in the United has no doubt brought him in close contact with similar problems. Meanwhile, I wonder if you would be willing to review the bidding, so to speak, and see if it would not be possible to issue me a priority on these regular trips.

Thanking you for your consideration in the matter and with the hope that Colonel Ireland will not feel in any way that I am trying to go around his ruling, and with best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

ACC.SB