

Austin (Tex.) American

MAR 24 1943

Dallas-Fort Worth Controversy Over ^{MAR. 24} Arlington Airport Put Before Jesse Jones To Decide

WASHINGTON, March 22.—(AP)—A controversy between the neighboring Texas cities of Dallas and Fort Worth was laid before Jesse Jones of Houston Monday.

But after an all-day hearing by the secretary of commerce and federal loan administrator the dispute remained unsettled.

The issue: Should the administration building at Midway airport, under construction between the two cities, be located on the west or north side of the field.

Jones concluded he would have to study the question a while. He directed meanwhile that all work be stopped until a decision is reached.

More than a year ago the two cities, some 30 miles apart, apparently buried the hatchet after years of intense rivalry. They agreed on the Midway airport so transcontinental airliners could serve both cities with but one stop.

Protest Change

All seemed well until recently, when Dallas discovered the administration building was not be erected on the north side of the field, which Dallas considered "neutral" territory, but on the west side. That wouldn't do, from their viewpoint, for Dallas lies to the east of the field and the new building would look toward the west—and Fort Worth.

Mayor Woodall Rodgers and others from Dallas protested to Jones and Civil Aeronautics Administrator Charles I. Stanton with the result that Monday's conference was called.

A Fort Worth delegation headed by Mayor I. N. McCrary and Publisher Amon G. Carter of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram asked and obtained permission to participate in the hearing.

Called Insult

A third interested party, the City of Arlington, was represented by Mayor W. F. Altman and Councilman C. L. Beasley. Actually, Arlington is sponsor of the project, Fort Worth and Dallas having been unable to agree to an extent necessary to back the work as co-sponsors.

Rodgers vigorously condemned the western site as "a monumental insult" and "an affront" to Dallas and contended that the northern site would be fair to both cities. All Dallas wants is "fair treatment," he added.

The Dallas mayor referred scornfully to a letter from the CAA regional office at Fort Worth which said the west side had been chosen for the building after a careful study of prevailing winds in the belief that it would tend to provide greater efficiency of operation.

Appeasement Seen

Rodgers indicated that he thought the real reason for the selection was another consideration. He quoted L. C. Elliott, the regional C.A.A. director, as having told him that the building had to be put on the west side "to appease Mr. Carter."

Rodgers argued that original plans called for the structure on the north side and he recalled that a year ago the Fort Worth publisher had commented that the airport building should be exactly half way to the inch between the cities so that passengers alighting from planes could leave the airport and see a sign with arrows pointing west and east and the words "17 miles to Fort Worth—17 miles to Dallas. Take your choice."

Carter in his turn unreeled on the conference table a roll of paper 25 feet long which had been formed by pasting together Dallas newspaper clippings about the airport, some charging that the project was

"a steal" for Fort Worth, and "called them "crocodile tears."

Across the table where the publishers of two Dallas newspapers, Tom Gooch of the Times Herald and Ted Dealy of the News. The clippings were from both papers.

"What we want is a free port, a fair port, and that's the kind we're not getting," was Gooch's brief comment.

Jones said that was the kind of a speech he wanted, after listening to hours of testimony. At the end of the hearing, which broke up long after most of the offices in the Commerce building were closed, he smilingly said he had listened to the testimony with both patience and interest.

The Dallas members said they probably would confer Tuesday with officials at the civil aeronautics board to discuss the possibility of continuing use of their present municipal airport, Love field, for commercial air liners in the event that the administration building at Midway airport is erected on the west side.