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Dirt Broken In Rain for ⁹⁰ Plane Plant

Pilot Training Base To Be Recommended Near New Factory, Crowd Is Informed

BY FELIX R. McKNIGHT,
Staff Correspondent of The News.

FORT WORTH, Texas, April 18.

—Rain-splashed dignitaries of Army, Navy and civil life dug a silver spade into muddied pasture land on the fringe of Lake Worth Friday in ground-breaking ceremonies for a \$10,000,000 bomber assembly plant. Construction will start Saturday.

Overcast skies spilled a down-pour just as Publisher Amon G. Carter of Fort Worth, master of ceremonies, started the dedication, but several hundred of the faithful stayed to the end.

Only a few minutes before actual ground-breaking, Brig. Gen. G. C. Brant, commander of the Gulf Coast Air Training Center, aroused the huddled crowd with the statement that a recommendation for an Air Corps pilot training base near the huge plant would be forwarded to Washington.

Westbrook Wisecracks.

One by one the dignitaries stepped from the rain-washed platform into the pasture and took a turn at turning a spade of earth.

When Col. Lawrence Westbrook of Washington, assistant WPA Administrator, took the silver spade, he grinned:

"I'm the WPA man—do I just lean on the shovel?"

Prefacing his remarks by saying that he was representing Major Gen. H. H. Arnold, chief of the Air Corps, General Brant quipped:

"Only a few nights ago General Arnold arrived in London and made a radio address. The next evening the Nazis came over and gave London the worst raid of the war. I trust there will be no such reprisals after my speech.

"At the outset of the war Poland stood in front of France, France stood in front of Great Britain and Great Britain stood in front of the United States. Now, who is back of us? It's high time we Americans learn that we must stand on our own two feet.

Digging Hitler's Grave.

"We are learning. We have embarked on a truly American proposition of building our own planes and training our own pilots.

"This plant is a great thing. We're digging Hitler's grave here."

Col. George E. Lovell of Washington, representing the War Department, said the plant's location was ideal, adding it was far

enough from the border to be in no immediate danger even in the event of invasion, had tremendous field space and enjoyed good year-round weather.

T. E. Braniff of Oklahoma City, president of Braniff Airlines, said too many Americans were concerned over what is going to happen to defense projects after the threat of war has passed.

No Peace Letdown Seen.

"Those of us in this business know they will still be there, and in heavy production, after the war. It is gratifying to know the government is seeking out sites in this section of the country."

Telegrams from government and civil leaders were read by Publisher Carter, including one from J. H. Kindelberger, president of North American Aviation, Inc., pledging complete co-operation.

The \$10,000,000 Consolidated plant will be 4,000 feet long, 320 feet wide, located in the middle of a 1,400-acre tract deep in a grove of trees near the Lake Worth water front.

Temperatures Controlled.

Like the North American plant at Grand Prairie, it will be constructed without windows, for blackout purposes, and will be camouflaged during daylight hours to melt into the surrounding landscape. Temperatures of 15 degrees less than the outside temperature in summer and between 65 and 70 degrees in the winter will be controlled by air conditioning.

Lighting will be of high intensity and the building acoustics will be delicately treated. Contractors said it would be by far the largest building ever erected with all such refinements.

It will be equivalent in height to a five-story building.