

CF: Office of Civilian Defence

Mrs Bonsted:

This belongs in the
President's files. It was
tucked away over here
with some other things.

Lois Bruley

OFFICE OF CIVILIAN DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

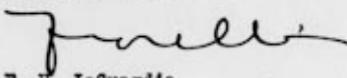
July 3, 1941

Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt
The White House
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. President:

I think a terrible mistake is being made in
calling for Douglas planes now in commercial use. The
attached memorandum is impressive and the arguments, I
believe, unanswerable. May I discuss this with you?

Sincerely yours,


F. H. LaGuardia

x422

Enclosure.

x249
x249 official

CF
*Office of Civilian
Defense*
10/22/48

Bot 6

MEMORANDUM FOR

HARRY HOPKINS

Could you, in due course, talk with the Mayor about this?

As I see it, and without getting involved in definite plane types, I think we have a right in this emergency to lay down a program for the air lines somewhat as follows, and, at the same time, appeal to the traveling public to cooperate with this program:

1. As I understand it, there have been about 500 air line transport planes in operation in the United States. I suggest that the total number be cut to about 300.

2. The reduction should be made, of course, not by eliminating any routes but by a curtailment of service on routes which have a fairly large number of planes operating over the same route several times a day, such, for example, as the New York-Washington route, the New York-Chicago route, etc.

3. Allocate to the air lines enough planes to replace those becoming obsolete during this year or the coming year so that they cannot complain about having to use obsolete material.

4. As that portion of the traveling public which now uses planes, but who could equally well take a train, to do the latter and thus prevent congestion on the air lines.

F. D. R.

Letter from Hon. F. H. LaGuardia, 7/8/41 President stating he thinks we are making mistake in calling for Douglas planes no commercial use. Encloses memorandum prepared relative to the subject of continued dem airplanes owned by present air lines for service, as compared to available Lockheed bombing planes now available and ready for dual purposes. Encloses 3 memos in

MEMO TO THE MAYOR:

I am submitting some facts relative to the subject of continued demands for airplanes owned by present air lines for European service, as compared to available Lockheed Hudson bombing planes now available and ready to convert for dual purposes.

I am quoting from comment made by Mr. Wayne Parrish, Editor of American Aviation, wherein he says:

"With Lockheed going top speed on Hudsons, and with conversion to transports only a relatively minor matter, it seems to me that this is another example where brains are not being used during the emergency. Lockheeds would be far more useful to the British than DC-3's, and there are Hudsons scattered all over this country and Canada. The tragic thing is that even the first batch of 18 planes taken from the air lines is just now beginning to move over the water after all this time."

We know there are over 100 Lockheed Hudson bombers subject to conversion now staked out on the airports of this country awaiting transportation to England, and we understand that the production of Lockheed Hudsons is approximately 110 planes per month. You can see that such conversion would provide more than adequate transport planes without sacrificing the return conversion for military purposes, and without making it necessary to withdraw airplanes from scheduled air lines. Planes drawn from the air lines must be flown to the factory and converted with additional gasoline tanks which cost considerably more than the conversion to transport from the Lockheed Hudson bombers.

AIRCRAFT FOR AIR TRANSPORTATION

The domestic air lines own and operate only 358 transport airplanes.

The domestic air lines have already given up to the British, the Army and the Navy a total of 96 transport airplanes.

The airplanes already given up by the air lines represent more than 25% of the present air line fleet.

At the same time that the air lines are being asked to give up additional airplanes, the industry is being asked to meet the greatest demands for air transport service in the history of the industry.

A very large proportion of total air line travel, and the use of air mail and air express, is directly devoted to the national defense program.

The air lines flew 108,000,000 airplane miles in 1940. To satisfy the reasonable needs for air transportation in connection with the national defense program, the air lines should fly 135,000,000 airplane miles in 1941. That they will do if airplanes are available.

Additional airplanes cannot be given up without taking off existing services. As an example, American Airlines has been asked to give two additional airplanes to the British on July 1. That it will do, but in order to do it, American will have to take off, on the same date, two existing services between Chicago, Buffalo, Albany and Boston.

The air lines are, today, endeavoring to meet the greatest requirement in the history of air transportation and the peak season of the year has not yet arrived.

The air lines need MORE AIRPLANES, and not a fewer number.

AIRPLANES ALREADY GIVEN UP BY THE AIR LINES

1. To the British Empire, sold and delivered through
The British Purchasing Commission and others, from
January 1, 1940 to March 22, 1941 - - - - - 43

2. 1941 air line deliveries released by the air lines,
through the Priorities Board, to the U. S. Army and
Navy - - - - - 57

3. Airplanes delivered by the air lines to the British
under the Lend-Lease Act, Request No. 1 @ @ - - - - 10

4. Airplanes delivered by the air lines to the British
under the Lend-Lease Act, Request No. 2 - - - - - 6

Total 96

Additions:

In addition to the airplanes which have been delivered, as listed above, Request No. 3 has now come through, asking the air lines to give up 12 airplanes on July 1 and 12 more on August 1.

In addition to the 96 airplanes which have been given up by the air lines, as listed above, the air lines have agreed to release to the U. S. Army a total of 68 Douglas DC4, 40 passenger, airplanes, on order for the air lines and scheduled to be delivered during the latter part of 1941 and during 1942.

x4193
x B.F. Lend Lease

BASIC MISCONCEPTIONS

Three basic misconceptions are beclouding an intelligent consideration of the question of maintaining adequate air line service:

1. The necessity, in the interest of adequate national defense, to maintain methods of expedited transportation and communication is underestimated.
2. Too many people, some of them in government circles, believe that the air lines have thousands of airplanes and that the air lines can always "spare" a few. They do not realize that the entire industry has only 358 airplanes.
3. Many people in Washington, in talking about airplanes for the air lines, have said:

"Why do you need 25 trips a day from New York to Boston, 35 from New York to Chicago and more than 40 from New York to Washington?"

They forget that New York, Washington and Chicago are "gateways" for transportation and that a great deal of traffic, other than local traffic, flows through those "gateways".

The air line service between those cities, on all air lines, is:

NEW ENGLAND TERRITORY:

Daily through trips from New York to Boston, non-stop 12

Daily trips between New York and Boston established for the purpose of serving other cities in the New England area: Hartford, New Haven, Providence, Springfield, Westfield and Holyoke

13

Total

25

This is not a "Boston-New York" service, it is a New England system of air transportation, serving an area of great industrial importance.

NEW YORK-CHICAGO TERRITORY:

Non-stop flights between New York and Chicago which are not a part of a transcontinental operation	5
Non-stop flights between New York and Chicago which are a part of the transcontinental operation between New York and California and the West	5
Local flights between New York and Chicago serving Albany, Rochester, Syracuse, Buffalo, Detroit and South Bend	8
Local flights between New York and Chicago serving Philadelphia, Allentown, Youngstown, Akron and Cleveland	9
Local flights between New York and Chicago serving Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Reading, Pittsburgh and Columbus	<u>8</u>
Total	35

This is not a "New York-Chicago" operation, it is an air transport operation for all of the territory between New York and Chicago, the most populous section of our country.

NEW YORK-WASHINGTON TERRITORY:

Local, non-stop, flights between New York and Washington	16
Non-stop flights between New York and Washington which are a part of <u>through</u> flights from New York to Florida, Tennessee, Texas and California	16
Local flights to serve Newark, Baltimore and Philadelphia	6
Local flights to Newark, Baltimore and Philadelphia which are a part of through flights to Florida, California, etc.	<u>10</u>
Total	48