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Dedication at Billings Airport

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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AIRPORT DEDICATION

*Draft of
outline*

I. Greeting

Name local individuals. Military planes secured for
air fair.

II. Progress of Aviation

Jet age. Need for expansion of airports and buildings.

A. Billings is "Hub" of Air Traffic -- Timely

III. Air Service Approved in Recent Year

Billings to Williston route.

IV. Additional Service

Re: Hi Line

A. Calgary

V. Northwest Aviation Conference

Monday - Tuesday: Representatives of NW and Canada.

Election of new President -- will be Mr. Lowe (?) of
Billings.

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reminded of the economic value of air commerce to an area. Your faith, your determination, and your hard work in making this dedication possible today is testimony to your awareness of the importance of air transportation.

You are most certainly to be congratulated on this tremendous achievement! You have every reason to be proud of your success in developing and constructing this magnificent facility. For my part, I share your justifiable pride in this good work!

It strikes me that your achievement is particularly timely for the gigantic strides in aviation, which we are now witnessing, promise much to a land-locked city such as Billings. It has been said that through air transportation the inland city is freed from accidents of geography that have throughout history accorded special privilege to the coastal cities. It is perhaps no less true that air transportation frees to a considerable extent a city from the man-made, but scarcely less rigid, limitations of the railroad right-of-way. By means of air transportation each city enjoys an equal opportunity in our Nation's economic growth.

Why do I place such heavy emphasis on the value of air transportation in promoting economic growth? I do so not only because of the very great advantages in a city, and its trade area, which accrues from rapid access of passenger traffic, though these advantages are,

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indeed, significant. The almost explosive growth in the air passenger market in the past quarter-century has been truly dramatic -- and, its details too familiar to you to warrant repetition today. I want to place emphasis, then, on what I perceive to be an equally revolutionary growth in the next quarter-century -- the air cargo market.

Until very recently the air cargo market was thought of by businessmen largely as an emergency measure to be utilized only in special circumstances requiring speed and in those cases where the customer was willing to pay the extra costs. Now we are witnessing a growing trend to utilize air freight as "normal" way of doing business. Businessmen are finding that air cargo gives them a greater flexibility in their distribution systems resulting in a lower per unit costs of sales. Air cargo in many business situations can greatly diminish or even eliminate the need for expensive and rigid systems of regional warehouses. It simplifies the distribution of pipeline. Air freight makes it possible to conduct wide-spread operations with a small inventory. It allows the businessman to do a greater volume of business with the same or even less capital.

Our U.S. Defense Department is playing a leading role in proving out the economic value of air cargo supply. They are utilizing air freight to tie together a network of domestic bases.

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And they are currently conducting an experiment in Europe called "Modern Army Supply System," or "MASS", which is an attempt to provide our forces in Europe with essential supplies with minimum stocks. It is expected that the support items in the Seventh Army depots can be reduced from some four hundred thousand to about fifty thousand. Savings in waste through spoilage and a reduction in technical obsolescence are expected to more than pay additional costs of air transportation and result in real savings.

If my crystal ball is accurate we are even now entering the "break-through" period in the air cargo market although it may not become fully apparent until jet transportations have taken over the long haul traffic market. Certainly it will not become a large-scale economic factor until air freight rates are drastically lowered. The ever-increasing economic efficiency and size of planes gives a real hope that air cargo will be progressively cheaper. For example, the Boeing 707 passenger plane has a cargo capacity -- fully loaded with passengers -- approximately the same as the entire capacity of the old DC-4!

If I am right that revolutionary developments are near in the air cargo market it has great significance for Billings. It means that Billings will have an equal opportunity in its future

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economic development. Through equal access to what has been called "the ocean of the air" Billings' competitive position in the future industrial race is enhanced. This is why I commend your foresight in designing the Billings airport. This is why I am convinced that the Billings airport is destined to play a starring role in Billings' economic future.

Of course, the potential air cargo advantages are not the only aviation aspects of interest to this area of our State, and I am happy to report that your Congressional Delegation is making a vigorous effort to advance in Washington what we consider to be Montana's legitimate air commerce interests. It has been less than six years since we were successful in securing the approval of air service from Billings to Willston, and on October 13th I will represent our Congressional Delegation before the Civil Aeronautics Board in a case involving local service for Montana. We shall make a strong, and I hope, convincing, argument for greater local service within our State. Service which I hope will link up our Hi-Line with the existing air transportation network. A sound and comprehensive web of air communications will, I'm sure, be a powerful assist to our needed economic development.

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I should like to mention just one other area of aviation which is of deep concern to Montana, and that is the matter of direct air service to Calgary, Alberta in Canada. We are all aware of the community of interest between the Calgary area and our State of Montana. And we all know of the awkward circumstances which make it possible to get to Calgary only thru Lethbridge with its inadequate connections or by doubling back from Edmonton, also unsatisfactory. I have, therefore, taken the occasion to write to the Secretary of State and to the Civil Aeronautics Board asking that they explore all means to resolve this issue. I have asked specifically that they separate-out this single issue of Calgary service from the broad and complex air navigation issues between our two countries so that we may have a speedy resolution of the matter. It seemed to me that the mutuality of interests between our two countries insofar as they relate to this area should enable us to find a solution to the Calgary issue without awaiting a determination of the entire range of U.S.-Canada air problems.

I have noted with much interest that Billings will be the center for the annual meeting of the International Northwest Aviation Conference and that Billings will be honored by having one of its own people selected as the new President. This new facility prepares Billings for an expanding economic role and is a demonstration of your faith in the future of our State. Through your efforts you have done much to assure Billings of its rightful place in America's future civil aviation growth. It is with a great deal of pride, therefore, that I commend you for a job well done.



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SUGGESTED REMARKS FOR DEDICATION OF NEW
AIRPORT BUILDING AT BILLING

Prepared at the Request of the
Honorable Michael Mansfield

By

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Analyst in Transportation and Communications
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October 1, 1958

SUGGESTED REMARKS FOR DEDICATION OF NEW AIRPORT BUILDING AT BILLING

I am happy to have the honor and privilege of participating in the dedication of this important added asset to Billings— the new airport terminal. We are all aware of the very important contribution to our community which the airport has made and will continue to make and the addition of this beautiful new building will increase the value of the airport through its contribution to greater efficiency of service.

A city with a modern airport such as this is recognized as a progressive city. The addition of this new facility is another sign of the progressive spirit of the community. Billings citizens enjoy access to the newest and fastest form of transportation as well as to facilities for private flying.

The value of an up-to-date airport in time of emergency may be of great significance in the future. Air transport has often played a very vital role in restoring communications and providing relief when disasters have paralyzed surface transportation. Even under normal conditions, special charter flights to transport urgently needed medical supplies or for other errands of mercy are often made. Your airport has a day-in day-out emergency value to the citizens of the area who have air transportation available in time of personal or family emergencies.

An integral part of every airport is its weather observation station. Weather reporting and forecasting are necessary for safe and efficient flying, but the services benefit the entire community. Weather reporting and forecasting are an incidental airport service to a community but

they have such important economic benefits that often the savings made in being prepared for weather changes can be greater than the entire cost of the airport installation.

The airport is often school, training field and playground for the private flyers. Billings people are especially aware of the benefits of air transportation because of the great distances to be traversed in this part of the United States. Business men make use of the charter service as well as the regular freight and passenger service, and in addition use private planes in their regular business activities. Our airports serve a far greater number of private than airline flights and the fleet of private planes in the United States is far larger than the commercial fleet.

The usefulness of any airport is increased by adequate service facilities. Terminal buildings are one of the important buildings in the operation of the airport as well as an addition to the community.

I congratulate the city of Billings upon completion of this very modern, efficient, and beautiful new airport terminal building and join with you in your pride of accomplishment. Thank you for allowing me a share in celebrating this significant addition to your community.