

(1) *Administradores*
Palabras pronunciadas por el Subsecretario de Estado, Dr. Arturo Morales Carrión, ante la Undécima Conferencia Anual del Consejo de ~~Directores~~ de Aeropuertos, el 13 de mayo de 1958.

Mr. President, Members of the Board of Directors, distinguished delegates and guests:

I am sincerely delighted to welcome you today to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. It is always a pleasant occasion when Puerto Rico is enabled to entertain so many friends, both old and new. This occasion has particular significance in that, on this Eleventh Annual Conference of the Airport Operators Council, we have the distinct honor to be hosts on the first occasion of the Council to hold its convention beyond the confines of the con-

2) tinal limits of the United States. Also, we are highly pleased because of the fact that we have been selected as the first convention site in which the Council has included international members and, on behalf of the Commonwealth and of the Council, we particularly welcome those delegates and observers who have come from the continent of Europe, from the islands between Europe and America, and from the continent of South America to join in this deliberation which marks the first meeting of this Council to be international in flavor.

You are assembled in a country that is definitely air-minded and whose dramatic economic and social development is closely linked with the

3) growth of air transportation. Our insularity has been overcome by this ~~sort~~ of swift, modern means of communication to a degree that our friends from the mainland would hardly realize. In the United States an airport may compete with overland ~~air~~ rail traffic, with overland truck traffic, with overland bus traffic, with overland private traffic by means of the automobile, and with coastwise sea traffic more in respect to cargo movement. *In P.R., sea traffic is the only competing form of transportation between various points.*

What this means to the people of Puerto Rico can be measured against a background of cold statistics. Here we have one of the world's most densely populated regions, with 650 inhabitants per ~~square~~ square mile, for a total population of about 2 1/4 million people within the confines of an island which

2) is nearly 3500 square miles in surface. The 2 1/4 million inhabitants of Puerto Rico produce ~~already~~ already over a billion dollars in goods and services yearly. They buy yearly from the United States \$600 millions worth of American goods and ~~have established~~ they have established one of the most flourishing industrial centers to the south of the United States. The increase in our living standards, which have ^{put} put Puerto Rico practically at the head of ~~the~~ most of the Latin American countries, would not have been possible had it not been for the advantages of the air age.

We have built many ^{air} bridges with the ~~main~~ mainland over which flow a two-way traffic of people and goods which add up to the dynamic expansion of our society. When we inaugurated our new airport three years

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ago, we thought ~~of~~ it would be sufficient for our needs during the next twenty years. We have found that it has grown small for our present demands. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1958, we will be handling more than one million passengers through this airport, although three years ago we handled only a few more than one half million. Our cargo traffic will be increased almost 70% above what it was just three years ago. As a people, we are, ~~therefor~~ therefore, irrevocably committed to the air age.

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1. So far, I have indicated the significance of air transportation to Puerto Rico, as measured in statistics. Other aspects, not so easily measured:
 - a. Has greatly increased bonds of knowledge and affection between people of Puerto Rico and the United States. Contributed to understanding of relationship.

2. Relationship:
Self-governing Commonwealth, etc. *free trade - movement of persons*

3. Contribution of Puerto Rico to better inter-American understanding and relations with under-developed areas.
 - a. Role of Technical Assistance Programs and Cultural Exchange.
 - b. U.S. Congress; Administration; U.S. press.