



AIR TRANSPORT

Dallas - Fort Worth

"Flight" examines the world's largest airport which opens next week in Texas. It has almost twice the land area of the proposed off-shore London airport at Maplin, but an ultimate passenger-handling capacity of less than half as much.

FEW AIRPORTS can have been opened in the style planned for the inauguration of the new one at Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas. The two principal guests will be the President of the United States and the West's first supersonic airliner—Concorde—represented by the 02 pre-production aircraft.

To be opened on September 22, the new airport is designed to expand to cater for the distant future, and it can be no accident of planning that completion date has been set for the year 2001.

Mr T. M. Sullivan, executive director of Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, presented the case for its unique terminal layout at the *Airports for the '80s* conference in London during April. Its prime attribute is that the passenger need never walk more than some hundreds of feet to his aircraft from the appropriate car park (maximum 600ft, minimum 120ft). The walking distance from the terminal entrance to departing aircraft is only about half the length of a 747 cabin. These and other aspects of the airport were also discussed recently in the US Government magazine *Insight*, published in Britain.

In true Texas style the size of the new airport complex is staggering. It covers 27 sq miles, more than the area of Manhattan Island, and eventually its capacity will exceed that of New York's three main airports combined—Kennedy International, La Guardia and Newark.

The \$700 million initial development is the first phase of what is claimed to be the first fully planned "airport community" in the world. Unlike most other airports, which have simply spread out as air traffic has grown, Dallas-Fort Worth is designed for orderly expansion. After opening next week it will be developed over the next 27 years in three stages.

By 1975 it will be able to handle 275 jet take-offs and

landings an hour; in 1985 it will have additional runways and passenger facilities added; and in 2001 it is planned for completion.

Even in its present stage of development the airport, which lies between Dallas and Fort Worth, will serve both communities and the entire north Texas area. Later the planners see it as an international gateway, helping to link the area it serves with Europe and Asia by handling non-stop services. No country will be more than 14hr flying time from the airport, which is just a 20min drive from the centre of Dallas or Fort Worth, and most major cities in the United States will be no more than 3hr away.

Although the airport now has only four terminals and three runways, it is expected to handle more than 8 million passengers in the first year. By 1980 this number is expected to grow to 15 million. Dallas and Fort Worth already share one airport—Love Field—but it will reach saturation point by 1975. So the planners of the new airport had to take into account short-range needs as well as those of the traveller of the next century.

By then it is possible that the airport will be handling more than 50 million passengers a year through the 13 terminals—making it about half the ultimate potential size of the proposed third London airport at Maplin in terms of passengers handled. Land area used will be very nearly double that for the Maplin airport site, excluding the seaport.

More than 220 747s could be parked at the airport at any one time and two fully automated cargo centres will each be able to accommodate more than 200 aircraft. The airport will be able to handle more freight than any seaport in the world, it is claimed. There will also be facilities for short take-off and landing aircraft.

To allow for this sort of orderly development, the airport took years to plan. This planning drew on the operating experience of the airport facilities of many years ago.

Heading, four terminals in line astride a highway characterise the present layout of the new Dallas-Fort Worth airport. More terminals will be added along the road as required. The outer circumferential areas within the terminal areas are car parks; the airside in the foreground still had contractors' vehicles parked on it when this photograph was taken. The four terminals have 66 aircraft gates; ultimately 13 terminals will have 230 gates. In its first year of operation each of the four terminals will handle nearly 40 per cent of the number of passengers passing through London Gatwick last year