

T O D A Y ' S D E C I S I O N S

PART ONE

PORT JUSTIFICATION

One. Does Miami need her own deepwater port ?

Objectives Sought: A healthy, stabilized overall economy -

- 1) Supporting and being supported by a large and substantially employable permanent population, with near-average American urban age-group distribution;
- 2) Supplemented by a sizeable retired and transient population representing the area's greatest single business - all-year-round tourism;
- 3) Bulwarked by aggressive capitalization on the area's asset of locale which provides unique Sun, water, and climatic attractions for better living, working, and "pleasure craft roving";
- 4) Made possible by modern transportation and distribution facilities adaptable to present and future passenger and cargo handling requirements of Greater Miami and the Four-County Glade-Trade Area of subtropical Florida; and thus
- 5) Providing, in addition, suitable positioning for trade flow "in" and trade flow "out" between Miami and trader nations everywhere - and particularly those of the Americas.

Decision: If mature Miami can accept these reasonable objectives as her own, the answer to the question posed clearly is - Yes.

Nevertheless, there has been much said and written on the subject of whether Miami wants to bother with her port and her marine destiny, or whether, instead, she should not be content with Sun, water and tourists, and leave trade, commerce, and marine expansion, with their attendant "shoes and ships and sealing wax," to other communities, such as Port Everglades.

If Miami seeks to build other communities and let her own passenger and commerce heartland wither, the way to achieve it quickly is to let any of her transportation facilities be moved out of her own zone of travel and trade utilization. And this, clearly, would be folly of the first order.

Yes, Miami does need her own deepwater port.

Analysis: A large permanent population must have the sustenance that is created by trade and business activity upon which to depend for continuing jobs. Ports are economic gateways and, as such, create prosperity for the communities they serve in relation to their proximity to the place where the goods they handle are utilized.

An industry as demanding as tourism, and the pleasure boat servicing and supply business that is, in good part, its satellite, must be served well if it is to be kept large and continuing. And certainly, a location so well endowed for trade must be provided with the means to process that business, and commerce generally.

Aside from pipeline distribution, there are four types of carriers. Water - the oldest and cheapest means of transportation. Rail - pioneer distributor of general and bulk cargo, and the traditional way to the interior, after inland waterways. Highway - the fast-freight way to handle broken lots of cargo. Air - the newest and fastest, with great challenge ahead for all but bulk cargo. To dispense with the means to utilize fully any of these carriers, or to transfer the center of their activities to other communities, invites an economic slow-down, if not strangulation.

In reality, Miami has no choice. There is no equivalent for a water port. No land highway takes the place of deepwater ports or navigable waterways. Rail and truck carrier rates to and from Miami are kept reasonable only by the competition of water rates. Certain bulk cargoes would crowd pleasure cars completely off many of our highways, if they had to be transported long distances by truck. Miami would not only cut herself off from the current trend toward domestic shipping revival, and the trade sources of Europe, but she would also cut herself off in a most vital way from the Caribbean area which is only now beginning a tremendous economic, political, and cultural Golden Age. Quite apart from the foregoing considerations, it is frivolous to suppose that national defense planning would concur in port suicide at a vital coastal point.

No city, least of all Miami, can turn its back on commerce or fail to utilize and capitalize on its natural resources and endowments of locale. Among the best-known warnings against a trade-inertia attitude is the Biblical story according to St. Matthew in which the man who buried his talent in the earth instead of using it was "cast into outer darkness" where there was "weeping and gnashing of teeth." History is silent on the fate of the man who left his talent on the beach and let the tide wash it away! Miami has narrowly escaped doing that very thing.

Background: Where civilized men move into a natural paradise, the paradise must change. They bring with them their more complicated needs, the urgencies of trade and the complexities of communal living, of shelter, safety, food and recreation.

The City of Miami has grown from a subtropical sea and jungle paradise into a magnificent city, with the speed almost of a dream, in terms of normal city growth. By many criteria, Miami is a highly successful human community.

But all success must be paid for, and phenomenal success bears a correspondingly high price tag. Some of the bills which face Miami must be paid now. The days of grace have run out.

Note: Amplification of this statement is found in Appendix A. Because the relationship of the Port of Miami to the City of Miami is so essential a part of understanding the key problems posed and answered by this report, all readers, save the few who wish to know only the answers, should read the Section titled "The Port That Miami Forgot."

MoW