

20, FEBRUARY 1968.

TELEX NO. 90.

COMEUR BRU-

ELK
BIO

STEPHEN FREIDBERG, PORTE PAROLE

THIS IS ALL WE CAN COMPILE AS OF NOW ON THE NEW SECRETARY OF COMMERCE:

CYRUS ROWLETT SMITH, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF AMERICAN AIRLINES, WAS NOMINATED BY PRESIDENT JOHNSON ON FEBRUARY 16 TO SUCCEED SECRETARY OF COMMERCE ALEXANDER B. TROWBRIDGE, WHO IS RETIRING FEBRUARY 29.

SMITH IS A 68-YEAR-OLD NATIVE-BORN TEXAN. HE BECAME AN ACCOUNTANT FOLLOWING GRADUATION FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, WHERE HE MAJORED IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.

HE WAS AN ASSISTANT TREASURER OF TEXAS-LOUISIANA POWER CO. WHEN HE FIRST JOINED THE AIR INDUSTRY AT THE AGE OF 29, JOINING A SMALL PIONEER MAIL AIRLINE COMPANY, TEXAS AIR TRANSPORT, INC. THIS COMPANY LATER MERGED INTO A PREDECESSOR COMPANY OF AMERICAN AIRLINES. HE WAS INSTALLED AS PRESIDENT OF AMERICAN AIRLINES IN 1934 WHEN THAT AIRLINE WAS FORMED.

FOR THREE YEARS IN WORLD WAR II HE SERVED AS DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND, RISING TO THE ARANK OF MAJOR GERERNERAL HE WSAS CREDITED WITH PLAYING A MAJOR ROLE IN BUILDING THE ARMY'S WORLDWIDE AIR TRANSPORT SYSTEM.

SMITH BECAME SCCHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF AMERICAN AIRLINES IN 1964, RETAINING AT THE SAME TIME HIS POSITION AS CHIEF EXECTIVE FROM WHICH HE RETIRED ONLY LAST MONTH. HE IS ALSO AM MEMBER OF THE PRESTIGIOUS BUSINESS COUNCIL, WHICH ONCE SERVED AS AN ADVISORY ARM TO THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT BEFORE IT BECAME EMBROILED IN CONTRO- VERSY WITH FORMER SECRETARY LUTHER HODGES.

SMITH WAS CHARACTERIZED BY TEHE WASHINGTON POST AS "A RUGGED INDIVIDUALIST OF THE OLD SCHOOL AND A LONG TIME FRIEND OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON, AND ALSO AN INTIMATE FRIEND OF FORMER PRESIDENT EISENHOWER". FORTUNE MAGAZINE WROTE IN 1961 THAT SMITH WAS "TALL, BLUNT, FIDGETY AND CAPABLE OF PROFANE WRATH" IN DESCRIBING HIS BATTLE WITH UNITED AIRLINES FOR THE NO. 1 SPOT AMONG DOMESTIC AIR CARRIERS.

SMITH WAS MARRIED IN 1934 AND WAS LATER DIVORCED. HIS SON IS AN ATTORNEY.

REGARDS,

BAYER.