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New Bern's Simmons -Nott Airport is one of 10,000 in the United States available to general - aviation aircraft. Of these 10,000 only 2,140 have at least one paved and lighted runway, and only 789 service commercial airlines.

Of the 789, 22 major air centers across the country handle 68 percent of all passenger flights originating in the United States. By 1965 the 22 were serving 70 million passengers annually, and no less an authority than the FAA estimates that 370 million will be depending on the aforementioned 22 centers by 1980. That's a gain from 1965 of 433 percent.

There were 2,272 commercial passenger aircraft soaring over the nation last year, and this is expected to increase to 2,875 by 1972. As for private planes, there were 104,000, and four years from now the total is apt to be 144,000 an increase of 38 percent.

Commercial airlines, and the public, are concerned about the presence of numerous private planes in the skies around busy airports. It has been suggested in some quarters that they should be curbed.

Naturally, citizens who fly planes of their own take a dim view of this reasoning, arguing that the air above us, like our public highways, belongs to everybody.

Under the Federal Airport Act of 1946, no airport that has received federal funds can close its runways to any aircraft, regardless of size or classification. The only exceptions are student pilots. They are not allowed to come into a major airport.

Faced with losing additional transatlantic flights because of overcrowded conditions, New York City's three major airports got help from the Port of New York Authority. Peak-hour landing fees were increased from \$5 to \$25, and it was obvious the move was aimed at small private planes.

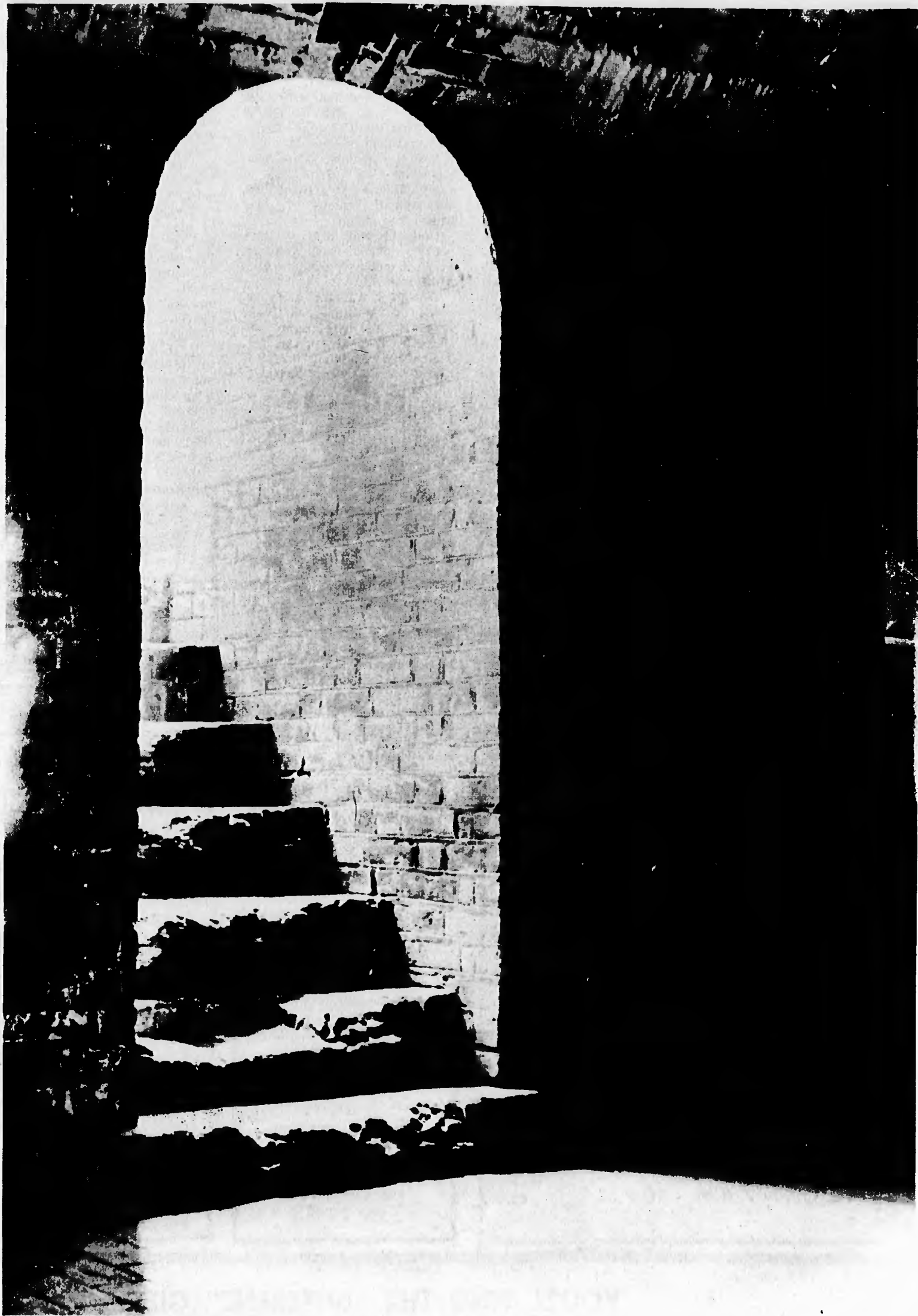
La Guardia has the biggest problem. During its peak hours, 62 percent of the traffic is created by the arrival and departure of light, non-commercial aircraft. Newark is plagued by 52 percent, and Kennedy International 31 percent.

With more and more planes, commercial and private, a foregone conclusion, the only cure is additional airports. They cost plenty, and financial assistance from the Federal government isn't always easy to line up.

Existing airports, like Simmons-Nott here, must have runways capable of serving large jet planes, or become outmoded. Airports yet to be constructed involve a staggering outlay of money.

Regional airports, such as the one suggested between New Bern and Jacksonville seem logical, although Jacksonville gave the idea the kiss of death by insisting on having it located in Onslow rather than Jones county.

Kinston, optimistic over prospects for its airport's success, preferred to go it alone, rather than team up with neighboring towns and establish a single airport of sufficient size to meet tomorrow's jet liner require-



ONLY MEMORIES—War clouds hang heavy far across the sea, but historic Fort Macon, on our nearby Carolina coast, is a place of peace. Silenced forever are the guns of Yankee attackers and Rebel defenders. Sunshine, illuminating this doorway, is a comforting reminder that God's blessings from above outlive the bitterness of strife, and an assurance that this year, as in all years before, winter's chill must inevitably yield to the warming touch of early spring.

Man's ills, in large measure, are of his own creation; and as Easter approaches, the teachings of One whose Sermon On The Mount embodied more wisdom than all the international treaties ever written echo down through the ages. Will the day ever come, when mortals at long last can say in world brotherhood, and as earnestly as did Jesus of Nazareth, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."