



BALTIMORE BASEBALL CLUB, INC.

MEMORIAL STADIUM
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21218

JEROLD C. HOFFBERGER
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

August 18, 1969

Address reply to
325 N. CALVERT STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202

Mr. Joseph E. Cronin, President
The American League of
Professional Baseball Clubs
520 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Dear Joe,

Several times during our meetings in Seattle people connected with the Pilots mentioned in private conversation the problems concerning the proposed Stadium. Max Soriano told me that he took a dim view of the possibility of the Stadium being built because of

- a) the high cost-it now being estimated that the cost will exceed the \$40,000,000 previously raised by bond issue.
- b) A citizens committee has been pressing recently to put the matter of the Stadium location on referendum. Supposedly this group is merely attempting to block the construction of the Stadium in the selected area. Practically according to knowledgeable Seattle citizens, the effect of a vote barring the use of the site near the old World's Fair site would be to so cloud the issue that a Stadium would not in fact, be built.

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- c) The City of Seattle legal authorities have further complicated the matter by insisting that the concessions in any new Stadium be subject to competitive bidding. The Pilots now have a long-term contract with Sportservice and this contract "follows the club."

In the August 13 Seattle morning paper a lead editorial expressed concern that the new Stadium could possibly be "nudged" into oblivion if the referendum to deny use of the selected site is approved at the polls.

Max Soriano also stated that there were indications the city was not maintaining its obligation under the arrangements made when the franchise was granted. Building costs are going up about 1% per month in the Eastern part of the country. While the Northwest might not have the shortage of labor and the problems we are experiencing in the East, building cost increases are going up all over the country. Any substantial delay in getting construction underway would exacerbate the entire matter of costs.

While the Seattle franchise was not granted on a "provisional basis," the American League did make known to the Seattle financial interests and representatives of the city of Seattle that certain improvements would be required in the present ball park and that a new Stadium must be started within a "reasonable" period of time if the ball club is to remain in Seattle.

With the situation as it now stands, I suggest that the American League develop a posture relative to the Seattle problem designed to assist the Soriano's and Mr. Daley in bringing about a solution and, at the same time, maintaining the position of the American League and its stated desire to play first-class baseball in modern and comfortable facilities.

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Mr. Joseph E. Cronin

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In order that my viewpoint is made known to all concerned a copy of this letter is being sent to each American League Club and to the Commissioner.

May I have your thoughts on this subject.

Sincerely,

Jerry -

cc: Messrs. B. Kuhn, F. Cashen, M. Soriano and all American League Club Owners

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