

Dallas Studied as Base For Pioneer Air Lines

Dallas became a candidate for the future home of Pioneer Air Lines, Inc., Tuesday as the air line was threatened with eviction from its present headquarters in Houston.

Robert J. Smith, president of the company, told The News that Dallas was a definite possibility if the air line must move. And Wallace Savage, head of the City Council Aviation Committee, said the council would be "most interested" in getting Pioneer to make its home here if such a move could be worked out.

Pioneer carries a pay roll of \$1,250,000 and makes purchases amounting to about three-quarters of a million dollars annually.

Pioneer's troubles in Houston began Monday when the air line was requested by the State Armory Board to vacate its facilities at Houston Municipal Airport by May 31. The board said that Houston's 63d Fighter Wing wanted to move in from Ellington Field, which is to be turned into a navigation school for the regular Air Force.

The Air National Guard has a 99-year lease on Pioneer's present location, and the air line has been occupying the site on a month-to-month sublease basis. The city cancelled the lease Monday on request of the armory board.

"To move by May 31 would be a minor miracle," Smith commented. He said he would do everything possible to avoid a costly move, and had scheduled conferences with Houston city officials to try and work something out. He suggested that the move might be averted by consolidation of some of the other air line facilities at Houston's airport.

If Pioneer should move to Dallas, Love Field would need some new construction, said George Coker, city aviation director. He explained that only one hangar, presently leased by the city to the Air Reserve, might possibly become available to Pioneer.

"But Braniff has first call on that one, and anyway, I don't think the reserve has any intention of giving it up," Coker said. "Naturally, we'd like to have Pioneer here, though."

Asked if lack of hangar space would be a deterrent to moving here, Smith said, "Not necessarily. We have to think of a lot more things than just hangar space. We have to think of getting homes for 304 employees and their families, and we have to consider availability of supplies."

He said his air line would make a complete survey of facilities in various cities it serves, including Bryan, Waco, San Angelo, Lubbock, Amarillo and Fort Worth.

He said his air line was not considering the Fort Worth International Airport (Midway).

"I don't know what their building status is now, but I very much doubt that they would be ready for a new air line by May 31."

THANK BUSHY BRAINS