

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 1954

Los Angeles, Calif.

Airlines Strike Is Unjustified Tie-up

America's future in peace or war is written in the skies!

For this reason the regulations of our airlines must remain in the hands of the government and not a union.

There is no justification for the 20-day-old strike against American Airlines by the Air Line Pilots Association. The real loser in this unwarranted tie-up—as usual—is the public and the thousands of stockholders who invested their savings in the stock of the struck company.

Nothing must be permitted to stand in the way of aviation progress so long as safety practices for passengers and fair working conditions for those in the industry are maintained.

In our opinion, the current situation is well stated by C. R. Smith, the courageous president of American Airlines.

"The issue is whether nonstop transcontinental schedules can be continued or the union can deprive the traveling public of this needed service.

"It is the standard that the pilots will not be scheduled to fly more than eight hours a day. But in order to operate the nonstop flights from New York to Los Angeles, where the prevailing winds are from the west, it is necessary to schedule the crew 35 minutes more than eight hours a day, on each of the five trips it will make during a month.

"The flight crew in this service consists of two pilots and a flight engineer. The crew is on duty 10 days of the month; off duty 20 days of the month.

"It is not unreasonable, in our opinion, to schedule pilots in this nonstop service to fly an extra 35 minutes, five times a month, on the domestic airlines, when pilot members of the same union have been flying, and are flying today, similar nonstop flights in overseas service, with limits up to 12 hours.

"Does it make sense that pilots should

be scheduled to fly as much as 12 hours across the ocean, where landing places and navigational aids are scarce, but cannot be scheduled to fly eight hours and 35 minutes, five times a month, across the United States, where airports and navigational aids are abundant?"

This move by one small, misdirected group of pilots is sheer featherbedding. Railroads have struggled for years against excesses of this nature. Certainly there should be no featherbedding in the clouds.

Pilots such as the ones on strike receive \$18,000 to \$20,000 yearly in salary, have generous expense accounts when away from their home base, enjoy a wide variety of social benefits and still work only 10 days a month. It cannot be argued that their employment, rates of pay or working conditions are unjust.

In the event of a strike affecting one of our basic transportation mediums, there should be much more cause than anything advanced thus far by the Air Line Pilots Association.

The present strike is a costly business to the company, its shareholders and more than 16,000 employees now being dismissed, to say nothing of the great inconvenience caused to the traveling public. Certainly the pilots owe their passengers services and considerations as well as obligations to other segments of the industry.

The Civil Aeronautics Board after hearings has ruled that "continued application of the eight-hour rule with respect to the transcontinental nonstop is not necessary in the interests of safety."

The Air Line Pilots Association has refused to abide by the decision of the CAB. Further, the strike is a violation of legal agreements still binding on the pilots and the company.

We trust that the strike is brought to a speedy end. Meanwhile, men with the foresight, fairness and determination of C. R. Smith should be sustained by his shareholders, the aviation industry and the public.

VIRGIL PINKLEY,
Aug. 18, 1954.