

SOUTHERN AIR TRANSPORT, INC.

GENERAL OFFICES LOVE FIELD

DALLAS
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October 12, 1930.

Mr. Amon G. Carter,
Fort Worth, Texas.

Dear Mr. Carter: Fort Worth airport

Any opinion I might have formed concerning the airport at Fort Worth or any other airport is an opinion which is the result of many lengthy and serious conferences with the men in our operations department, the pilots who fly the lines, and with men expert in airport construction. Safe airports is the first requirement of our business and constitutes the backbone of the aerial transportation industry. We are slow to condemn any airport for we know that when a group of citizens vote long term obligations, purchase land and improve it, that they have the right to believe that their money has been wisely expended and that the airport which is the result of their expenditures is safe and adequate for the aerial transportation needs of their city.

At the time the Fort Worth municipal airport was planned and built it may have been adequate for the needs of the city at that time. Since that time aircraft flown in all sections of the country have changed this change in most cases being to much larger ships.

Our opinion of the Fort Worth airport can be expressed in a very few words: We believe that the airport as presently constituted is entirely inadequate for the daytime landing of aircraft which we are at present flying and is absolutely dangerous for night landings of the same type of aircraft. We further believe that due to the nature of the land which surrounds the present airport that if Fort Worth desires to really have a first class and adequate airport that it would be cheaper in the long run and more sensible to start from the bottom up and get a new site for the proposed field. We do not desire and will not enter into any arguments as to why we think that the present field is inadequate; if information is desired on why it is inadequate the Department of Commerce will gladly send you a man to tell you in detail why. All that we can say is that we have the obligation of operating the ships of the American Airways, Inc. safely and without endangering the lives of passengers or pilots or the property of the company, and we will not land after darkness on the Fort Worth airport with a tri-motored or other large ship. Further, in our opinion, the cost of improving the present airport to such a size and condition that we could with a clear conscience land our large ships thereon both day and night, would be prohibitive.



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Now, with reference as to what we would recommend in the purchase of land for a new field. First, your city attorney can cite you a recent Ohio case which held that an aircraft must have an altitude of 500 feet before it crossed the confines of the airport in taking off and in landing it must also maintain a minimum altitude of five hundred feet before it crossed the boundaries of the airport. This may seem foolish but it is the law at present in the state of Ohio and it will have a very great effect on decisions in other states when a similar question comes up. If this is the law it means that we must have airports from three to four times the size of our present fields.

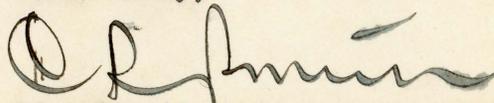
It may be for the operation of certain type of aircraft that a field of 150 acres would be adequate. This field would be adequate only while the approaches to the field were clear of houses and other structures, telephone and telegraph lines, and other hazards. As aviation becomes more stabilized the property around airports is going to be built up and the only way to prevent the erection of hazards around a field is to own the land on which the hazards might be erected.

Two years ago a tri-motored airplane was a curiosity in the South, today it is commonplace. The tri-motored planes has made the Fort Worth municipal airport inadequate due to its limited area. The next airport constructed by the city of Fort Worth should be large enough that the increasing size of airplanes and the development of the industry will not shortly make this airport inadequate.

You could purchase any number of acres anywhere for use as an airport. The day that the airport is designated and before any work is undertaken on the construction thereon the price of the adjoining land goes up and the price trend is higher each year. Sufficient land must be purchased in the beginning or in the future when you want to expand your airport you are going to buy high priced land, move houses and other structures which might have been erected thereon in the interim and generally go to a lot of useless expense which could have been avoided by foresight and judgement.

We would recommend that if it is possible to acquire in one block five hundred acres of land which is suitable for an airport site that this much land be acquired. Advancement in airplanes construction is every day requiring larger fields and we believe that while land can be acquired at a reasonable figures that this much land should be purchased by Fort Worth.

Yours truly,


Vice-President-General Manager

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