



AMERICAN AIRLINES SYSTEM

CABLE ADDRESS AMAIR

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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

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What American is Doing to Increase and Improve Service in the Very Near Future

One of the great pleasures of being in the air line business is the opportunity of being of service to you. The average air line passenger is alert, interested, courteous and tolerant. He expects good service and is willing to say a good word when it is provided. At the same time, he is patient if the service is not up to his expectations -- provided he believes that there is good reason why it is not possible at the time to do better. In other words, if he believes that you are sincerely endeavoring to provide a good service, he is willing to give credit for difficulties over which you have no control and he is willing to give you reasonable time to overcome those difficulties.

During the past four years, a great many undertakings have been made most difficult by reason of conflicting requirements of the War. Some people, perhaps, have used these requirements as a feather bed upon which to lay their troubles. Not only have they not rendered good service; they have not done as well as they might have done, even taking the difficulties into consideration.

It is my belief that the air lines have, during all of the war, kept uppermost a sincere desire to do their best; to accomplish a high standard of service in spite of difficulties. We know that the result has left much to be desired, but whatever success we have had in our efforts has been most immensely aided by the fine spirit of cooperation and tolerance exhibited by the air line passengers as a group.

Air lines, like other businesses, had many difficulties during the war. Many of the planes which we had at the beginning of the war were turned over to the Army, so that the increased demand for air transportation had to be supplied with substantially fewer airplanes. Also, much of the fine work done by the Air Transport Command, Naval Air Transport Service and Troop Carrier Command was accomplished by experienced people from the air lines of the United States. From American, for instance, more than

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2,000 out of a total pre-war personnel of less than 7,500 went to the various branches of the military service.

Many of them were our key people. In addition, we were engaged under contract with the Army and Navy in conducting training schools and in overseas aircraft operation. We are proud of these services, and it is of record that they contributed to winning the war.

But now the war is over. Airplanes are again becoming available, and our people are coming back from military service. So why, a lot of people ask, is it still so difficult to get a seat on an airline? A very reasonable question, and an endeavor to answer it is the purpose of this letter to you.

On the subject of airplanes: American has so far received 30 four-engine airplanes, acquired from the Army. But these airplanes are military versions: their parachute racks for Air Commando operation, their heavy-utility floors for carrying munitions and supplies, their metal benches and seats are not appropriate for air passenger service.

Thus, all of these fine planes must be modified before they are suitable for air line operation. Not only must the military equipment come out and the new passenger accommodations be installed, but the entire airplane must be completely overhauled in order to be certificated for air line use. All-in-all, this process takes from two to three months per Flagship. In spite of delays in securing materials, the work is now well under way, and soon these airplanes will be rolling off the production line.

The thirty planes now being modified are the first of fifty which American is acquiring for Springtime service. Some of them will make possible additional service by the end of January. More will come along in February, and you will find substantial increases in the amount of air line service each month thereafter. This will be true not only on American Airlines System but also on other air lines. The attached photograph shows some of the new American Flagships coming along the production line at Republic Aviation Corporation's Long Island plant, where they are being readied for service this coming Spring.

Meanwhile, there are other phases of our service which need improvement. We are aware, for instance, that we must make it easier for you to make a reservation, easier to check your baggage, easier to pick up your ticket, and possible generally to travel with American with a pleasant absence of delay.

It is, as I am sure you know, much more difficult to provide good service in any business when the demand greatly exceeds the available facilities. In our business, shortage of seats has two adverse affects: First is the obvious one -- that many who want seats cannot get them.

Secondly -- as people try-try-again, and as we call those on our waiting lists who can be accommodated -- the number of phone calls mounts, and our reservations facilities become clogged. For example, we now average as many as eighteen calls made or received for each passenger carried. When seats are plentiful, one or two calls do the job. Our goal is to have enough service to enable you to get a reservation the first time you call.

The year 1946 will show some very tangible results in these respects. Already the first transcontinental private telephone line ever established has been engineered by the Bell System for American and recently put into service. Other improvements -- aimed especially at relieving congestion at ticket counters -- are waiting only for the delivery of necessary equipment.

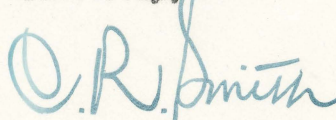
Air transportation performs no purpose when you cannot use it, and so we are working also on improvements in dependability. New aids to navigation will soon be available. With them, we will not only maintain the high standards of safety but at the same time make American service even less subject than it has been to cancellation of flights.

In the latter part of 1946, new improved DC-6 airplanes will join the Flagship Fleet. This is the new Douglas four-engine type which will cruise at 300 miles per hour. American has ordered fifty of these DC-6's. For 1947, we have entered orders also for one hundred new type, twin-engine airplanes, costing \$18,000,000, faster and more comfortable than any before, designed for the local services on the American System.

More airplanes, better airplanes, more service, better service, all with courtesy and dependability; that is the goal of American. The months of January and February will be trying ones, with many more requests for transportation than we can take care of; many more telephone calls than time will permit us to attend to with the care that we would like. All of that we regret, but we know about the difficulties and we are doing something about them.

For your continued patronage, courtesy, patience and understanding for the past four years, our sincerest thanks. We will endeavor to repay your patience and your faith in our ability by doing in 1946 the great job that you expect of the air lines of the United States.

Sincerely,



Chairman of the Board