

25 February 1974

Editor
Star Free Press
567 East Santa Clara
Ventura, CA 93001

Dear Sir:

Because of your wide circulation in Oxnard, I believe your publication of this explanatory letter would be a service to the residents there. It should clarify the confusion resulting from conflicting statements relative to shortening the Oxnard airport runway.

Shortening the eastern end of the runway by 2300 feet increases the safety of Oxnard residents in three important ways: (1) aircraft landing at the presently used slope will be higher over the city and high school area, (2) fewer planes will fly east of Ventura Road on their down wind leg to permit faster planes to land first, and those which do will not fly as far over the city, and (3) the dangerous addition of fast jets to the present slower traffic will be prevented. Since 50% of all aircraft accidents occur during the landing phase, keeping planes higher over the city, and having less overflying the city while landing, is a well recognized safety measure. That is one of the reasons why the proposal was made in the first place - to increase safety.

But is the Oxnard residents' safety gained at the expense of the pilots' safety? Understandably, the pilots want every foot of runway they can get on the theory that you can't get too much of a good thing. Who, then, can be trusted to say how much is enough? The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which establishes requirements and

regulations for aircraft airworthiness, structural integrity, mechanics and maintenance, pilots and flying, is internationally recognized as the authority on flight safety. Their Advisory Circular, 150/5300-4 Utility Airports, states that the 3,600 foot General Utility runway "accommodates substantially all general aviation needs for airplanes 12,-500 pounds or less maximum gross weight." If anyone, including local FAA Tower Chief Gene Schmidt who addressed the Council, has any evidence that the above FAA advisory condones, permits or encourages unsafe airports, I challenge him, no implore him to persuade FAA to correct this dangerous publication.

Councilman Kato asked a pertinent question, "Could a jet in trouble land on the shortened runway?" The attempt should not be made there but at Point Mugu where there is an 11,000 foot runway, arresting gear, crash trucks and medical personnel.

Therefore, the shortened runway will increase the safety of Oxnard residents while fulfilling FAA "safe and efficient" requirements for substantially all aircraft now based there and also Golden West's de Havilland "Twin Otters."



Lewis B. Simon
Member Aviation Advisory Committee
1801 Joanne Way
Oxnard, CA 93030