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## SENTINEL-NEWS EDITORIALS

### Airline Facilities

Southwest Airways has petitioned the Civil Aeronautics board for permission to discontinue their stops at the Watsonville airport.

The proposal has already been protested by the Watsonville city council and the county board of supervisors.

The airport, which serves Santa Cruz, now has two Southwest flights a day, a morning flight southbound and an afternoon flight northbound. The flights serve as a major air mail facility for the Santa Cruz post office.

Originally Santa Cruz was scheduled to be on the regular Southwest Airways feeder line service, then when the city was without an airport large enough for the Southwest planes, Santa Cruz was joined with Watsonville for the stop at the Watsonville airport in the Roache district near Watsonville.

Passenger service for the Santa Cruz-Watsonville stop has been poor and with fairly good reason. There was a king-sized charge for transportation between Santa Cruz and the airport to start with, then United began through flights to Los Angeles from Salinas and competition at the San Francisco airport provided even faster air connections.

Some persons also preferred to use Southwest via the San Jose airport because of better time schedules. There was also the uncertain possibility of the Watsonville airport being fogged in.

The air mail service is something else again.

Little air freight is shipped out at Watsonville at the present time due to the uncertainty of weather and whether the plane was going to make a stop there. Since flights have been curtailed most air freight service goes either to Salinas, San Jose or direct to the San Francisco airport.

Santa Cruz would have much better air mail connections if the postal authorities would authorize direct truck connections with the San Jose airport, but to date, the federal office has maintained that such a service would be too costly.

At the present time much p.m. air mail is sent to San Jose via the highway post office.

The past records of passenger service here indicate that the Watsonville airport is of little use to Santa Cruzans. However, it is better to have some sort of service available than none at all.

We must admit that our usage would hardly warrant a protest to the CAB over the plan to eliminate the Southwest Airways stop at Watsonville, but we can't help but feel that unless other superior arrangements can be established, that the service at the Watsonville airport should be continued.

Meanwhile we should do everything possible to provide a way to improve air mail service to and from Santa Cruz, using whatever facilities that may be available.