SOUTH AFRICA’S MAIN AIRPORT

The final opening ceremony of Johannesburg’s new airport at Kempton Park, just off the fringe of the Golden Rand, will be performed by the Minister of Transport, Mr. Paul Sauer, on Sunday, October 4th. Work on the airport—which came into full operational use on September 1st—began six years ago when it was officially named by Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery in commemoration of General Jan Christian Smuts. Ornamental gates bearing Smuts’ name were then unveiled.

By far the most ambitious airport in the African continent, the Jan Smuts airport, situated on a huge flat watershed in the veld, and will cost some £6,200,000 when the administrative and technical buildings are completed. Because of the altitude (6,000ft), the runways are exceptionally long. The main runway, running north/south, is 10,500ft and the two others intersecting it are 8,250ft, all with a uniform width of 200ft, and with overshoot strips.

These international airlines are already using the airport: B.O.A.C., Air France, K.L.M., P.A.W.A., C.A.A., Qantas, El Al, S.A.S. and Delta (Portuguese). Another French airline, U.A.T. is expected to extend its Paris-Brazzaville route to Johannesburg, using Comets. The proving flight has been provisionally fixed for mid-October.

About 1,000 men are employed in the extensive workshops at the airport, where modern repair facilities have been installed. The technical area comprises approximately 9,700ft of tarmac, 8,250ft, all with a uniform width of 200ft, and with overshoot strips. The accentuate the short-haul nature of B.E.A.’s traffic.

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