

Mr. FRIEDEL. I think we might disagree on that. Only last week—General McKEE. I agree. I would like to see a lot more people go into Dulles or Friendship.

Mr. FRIEDEL. I would, too. But last week I went to New York and the plane was loaded and stayed on station about 15 minutes. Then we went out to the runway and we were there for another 25 minutes. Six planes took off and we were behind them. Then six or seven more came in. I think it is congested.

General McKEE. But you can't always blame this, Mr. Friedel, on Washington National. Very frequently planes stand on the ramp at Washington National not because they can't get off of Washington National. It is because they can't get into La Guardia.

There is no use in having a plane take off and go up to New York and sit in a stack for an hour. That is a very expensive operation and people don't like it. If you are going to waste time, you might as well waste it on the ground, rather than boring holes up there.

Mr. FRIEDEL. I came through the same experience last Friday coming back. We had to stay on the ground for a while because of the congestion at Washington National Airport.

General McKEE. I think the problem of congestion, a major problem throughout the United States, will only be resolved when we are able in this country to provide better airports than we now have, airports with more runways, with more ramp space, with more taxiways for commercial operations, as well as general aviation airports to relieve this congestion that we have at the major complexes.

I think we also have to recognize and realize that the airport is a part of the air traffic control system, just like radar, communications, and all the rest of it. We can't divorce the airport from this problem. I think in the whole air traffic control system, the major bottleneck is the airport.

Mr. FRIEDEL. I understand the Asheville tower did not have radar.

General McKEE. It did not.

Mr. FRIEDEL. Can you tell us why?

General McKEE. On that subject, and I am glad you raised it, we have in this country about 527 airports that have some form of commercial operations, a lot of them only one, two, or three operations a day, and a lot of which have mostly general aviation operations.

We had to put up, which we did, and we reevaluate it every year, a criteria on which an airport will qualify for radar. That criteria is a minimum of 100,000 itinerant operations, plus 20,000 instrument operations a year.

You say "Why that criteria? Why isn't it more? Or why isn't it less?"

Well, it is a matter of judgment, and it is the judgment of the best people we have in the air traffic control system, that with operations less than this our present system can reasonably handle the traffic.

You say at Asheville this didn't happen, but I don't know, and I can't say, whether or not at this point in time a radar at Asheville would have prevented this accident. I don't know. But I think this committee should recognize and realize, right or wrong, that we could put radar, we could put instrument landing systems, we could put runway approach lights on all of these airports now being served by commercial operations, if we are willing to step up the expenditure, the