

General McKEE. Mr. Rogers, I would like to answer that question. It is not a question of the FAA giving priority to radar or to the SST. The FAA just happens to be the manager of the SST program. The SST program is an administration program.

Mr. ROGERS. I realize that. Radar programs are administration, too.

General McKEE. I am not in a position to say let's cancel the SST program to get more radars.

Mr. ROGERS. As I understand it, the idea originated in Germany some years ago.

General McKEE. I think the idea of an SST started long before the FAA got into it. It started in NASA. I do know that General Quesada was interested in it.

Mr. ROGERS. Let me ask you this question, because I don't have too much time. From my understanding of the testimony so far, it seems that this small plane was about 12 miles off. There were cloudy conditions. Wouldn't radar help a pilot in that condition?

As I understand, Atlanta had told him to come over to Asheville. Wouldn't radar help them identify where those planes were and they could give a warning to the pilots? Isn't that the purpose of the radar?

General McKEE. Radar obviously has two purposes. That is the reason that it is concentrated in the high-density areas. Radar greatly speeds up traffic, control of traffic. It also serves another purpose of identifying where an aircraft is and giving a warning.

With regard to the Asheville problem, as the chairman pointed out I am in a position now, as the Administrator of the FAA where I cannot appropriately comment on what could or might have happened or what radar would or might have done.

Mr. ROGERS. I understand that. You don't have the facts. We are not asking you. You don't make a determination of that. I am saying assuming.

General McKEE. As a general matter, with money no object, as I pointed out, obviously there are many areas in the country that from our point of view, and the responsibility we have, sure, we would like to have radar. But there is a question of priority in the budget, looking at the overall national programs.

Mr. ROGERS. But you have none requested in the budget this year.

General McKEE. There is none before the Congress.

Mr. THOMAS. There are no new ones. We have funds for the operation this year for six new radars going in as well as 10 towers. But they were all in last year's budget. As far as new radars are concerned, there are none in the budget.

Mr. ROGERS. May I conclude by saying this, that I realize the anti-collision device is some years away, as I believe you said. I understand that from many experts. But it seems to me in areas where we can now do something, such as radar and control towers, this is the problem we ought to attack. We know something can be done.

I would hope that the Budget people and your own people would review your criteria and certainly your request for additional radar and control towers.

General McKEE. I would like to say here, Mr. Rogers, that looking at the fantastic growth in aviation, both air carrier and general aviation, I would agree that this question must be reexamined hard and cold in the light of the overall situation in the country.