

Mr. WATSON. As I recall your reading some of the flight recordings, at one time was it not indicated that these planes were identified as being 3 to 4 miles apart?

Mr. ALLEN. No, sir, I don't recall that there was any distance given in the transcripts that I read.

Mr. WATSON. Well, we will not pursue that. I am sure your investigation has not been completed.

I am sure all of you have read the book by Capt. Vernon W. Lowell. I don't know the gentleman, but he makes some rather serious and grave statements. He deals with this matter of midair collisions. He states, and I wonder if any of you gentlemen will verify it, that the statistics on near collisions are shocking.

There are approximately 500 traffic-controlled near-misses in the United States annually that reach the record books, and he would conclude that many are never reported.

Is that factual, according to your record, Mr. Thomas?

Mr. THOMAS. Yes, sir; there are between 400 and 600 a year reported. We investigate those. How many that occur and are not reported, obviously, we don't know. This is out of about 250,000 flights a day.

Mr. WATSON. Yes; but over 500 reported is a rather grave matter, isn't it?

Mr. THOMAS. Yes, sir.

Mr. WATSON. He states further that when you have a midair collision there are seldom any survivors. That would be your experience, wouldn't it?

Mr. THOMAS. Yes, sir.

Mr. WATSON. I wonder what, specifically, your agency has done in trying to reduce this. This gentleman states further, and I do applaud him for not only criticizing but making some suggestions, on page 85, that, "There is in existence now an electronic collision warning device," and he recommends that all aircraft, large and small, be equipped with that.

Would you comment on that statement?

General McKEE. I have already commented at length on the status of the collision avoidance system, Congressman.

Mr. WATSON. Perhaps I was reading this book and didn't hear you. I did hear some discussion about anticollision. I know the pilot would have to avoid the collision. I am thinking about a warning device.

General McKEE. I made a complete statement on that, sir. I have a piece of paper that I didn't use in talking to it, but I would be happy to give it to you. It would give you the exact status of where that stands.

Mr. WATSON. I would be happy to read it. Is there or is there not such a thing as an electronic collision warning device in existence today?

General McKEE. There is not. It is only in the research and development area. There is not one in production nor is there one that has been proved out.

Mr. WATSON. To your satisfaction or to whose satisfaction?