

belief is that lights offer our best promise, despite the fact that in bright sunlight, they are very difficult to see.

Mr. KORNEGAY. What about the strobe light? I think you referred to it by a different name.

Mr. THOMAS. Yes, sir; the strobe light or condenser discharge is very effective. Some of the airlines have them on, and if you see them, they attract your attention.

Mr. KORNEGAY. Would they be visible much longer than the rotating beacon would be?

Mr. THOMAS. Yes, sir. We are going to try some light aircraft with those and see if they work. The problem with those, even the condenser discharge, high power lights, is that they are not visible in strong sunlight. We are also looking at reflective devices, thinking we can get some reflection from the sun. This ground has been ploughed over; we are going to plough it again, because we may have left some stone unturned.

Mr. KORNEGAY. That is all, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Ottinger.

Mr. OTTINGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I must say, General McKee, that I am not as sanguine as some of my colleagues about the way the agency has exercised its responsibilities in the area of air safety. I really think you have been derelict in your duty in terms of actively pursuing the reasonable things that might be done to improve air safety.

For one thing, while you are not an independent agency—

General McKEE. I am not an independent agency, Mr. Ottinger.

Mr. OTTINGER. Right.

General McKEE. I am a part of the Department of Transportation.

Mr. OTTINGER. You are a part of the Department of Transportation, but still you are the only technical agency in the Government that is responsible for air safety.

General McKEE. That is correct.

Mr. OTTINGER. And it seems to me that your responsibility is to define the needs for improvements in air safety, whether or not you can get Bureau of the Budget approval for them. You are the one agency of the Government to which we in Congress and to which the public can look for a definition of what is reasonably needed.

If you need more radar, if you need more control towers, if you need more landing lights, if you need more airports, whatever it may be, you should come here and ask for them. It is your duty to do so. It is really no answer to say, "Well, the Bureau of the Budget would not approve an additional request for funds."

The same thing when it comes to authority. You say that with respect to separating general aircraft from commercial aircraft, you don't have the authority. It seems to me it is your responsibility to ask for the authority, if you need it, and I think we would consider it very seriously, if you did. You made this remark specifically with respect to moving general aircraft from National Airport to perhaps Anacostia, or some other area.

It seems to me that is your definite responsibility, to set out for this committee and for the public what is needed to improve air safety. We look to you, as the expert, for this information. You, as the experts,