

frequencies, and if there is any requirement to read back, it would be more urgent in those locations than any other locations. It is normally a better thing to read back, because then there is some assurance that the pilot and the controller have the same ideas in mind.

Mr. BROYHILL. I might ask one other question. Your agency, the FAA are both in the Department of Transportation. Your agency has the responsibility for investigating air accidents. Is your agency independent of the FAA, or do you have, are you under the FAA control, or what is the exact status?

Mr. O'CONNELL. Well, we are very pointedly made independent by virtue of the statute under which we operate. We inherited the Civil Aeronautics Board function of investigating aircraft accidents, but in the Transportation Act which created the National Transportation Safety Board, there is specific provision requiring that we exercise our responsibility and duties independent of the Secretary of Transportation, or any of the administrators, so that we are directed to operate independent of General McKee and of the Department as a whole, in our responsibilities of investigating accidents.

That is a continuation of the longstanding separation that existed between CAB and FAA in the same area.

Mr. BROYHILL. You also have authority to investigate the near-misses which we have been talking about today?

Mr. O'CONNELL. Yes, yes; we do.

Mr. BROYHILL. I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. General McKee, I want to follow just for a moment the line of questioning of Mr. Devine, in the matter of holding extensive public hearings. In my very short tenure on this committee, it seems that in the witnesses from the various technical, and I believe three or four gentlemen have described your function as primarily technical, it seems to me that the function of the committee, among many other things, has been largely one of, should I say, translation from technical into more layman's terms.

I find that many times, the supposed superficial misunderstanding between you and one of us is only a matter of the difference between your technical terminology and our layman's terminology.

I know this discourse between you and Mr. Springer a few moments ago, pretty well brought this out.

Would you not think, if for no other reason except to bring this whole problem out into the public into the language which we as Congressmen speak, which obviously, has to be the language of the general public, if for no other reason, don't you think that would be advantageous?

General McKEE. I am not sure whether it would or not. Lots of times, in these things, a lot of misconceptions and misunderstandings occur, but we have nothing to hide, and before any hearing that this committee wants to hold, we will sit up here and tell you the truth the best we know it, as long as you want to hear it.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. I realize this, but I know that—I am not even going to ask you the question, I will make the statement—you are not impervious to public opinion. I know that.

General McKEE. Oh, no, no.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. And I was just suggesting an idea. I know that the few times I have heard you testify, there are cases where the public