

If I read his question correctly, at least that is the way I answered it.

Mr. DEVINE. When we talk about congestion, say at Washington National, I know we have planes stacked, considering weather and other things of that nature, but the congestion is also in the terminal building, the airline ticket counter, at the baggage area and ramp. As president of ALPA and as a pilot, do you consider Washington National Airport an area of high danger?

Mr. RUBY. That is a hard question to answer with a true sense of balance, because there was a period of time in which the traffic congestion on the ground was worse than it was in the air. By the same token, the Washington National Airport by size alone limits the type airplane that can operate into and out of this airport. Now the real answer to this question goes beyond any specific airport in this respect. There is a day coming, and it is certainly here in a few places now, where someone is going to have to limit the number of operations per hour that any particular airport can accommodate.

Mr. DEVINE. This is your system plan, to federalize rather than "States rights"?

Mr. RUBY. That is right.

Mr. DEVINE. Let me put it this way. Would you consider the safety situation in Washington National more critical or less critical than that, say, at John F. Kennedy, O'Hare, Los Angeles, or Atlanta?

Mr. RUBY. I think one of these pilots flying in and out of this airport can come closer to answering that on a current basis than I can.

Does anyone of you gentlemen operate in and out of this airport? I know there is one that lives here.

STATEMENT OF DAVID JONES, UNITED AIR LINES PILOT

Mr. JONES. I will be glad to make comment. My name is Dave Jones. I am a United pilot based here at Washington, fly 727's out of Washington National.

My comment on the airport, to answer your question, would be that the airport is somewhat unique in its traffic pattern, because we do have the proximity problem of the city of Washington and the Government buildings, and the restrictions that are imposed thereon, and that this imposes an operational problem with certain weather conditions.

As far as the overall safety of the airport, I have no doubt in my mind that it meets the minimum safety requirements as prescribed by FAA and the air carriers.

Mr. FRIEDEL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DEVINE. Yes.

Mr. FRIEDEL. How does it compare with Friendship Airport and Dulles?

Mr. JONES. That is an easy comparison. I think Dulles is undoubtedly one of the finest airports in the country, operationwise and facilities, and so forth.

Mr. FRIEDEL. What about Friendship?

Mr. JONES. I enjoy flying out of Friendship and from a professional standpoint it is a very fine operational airport.

Mr. DEVINE. As a pilot I know you fly into O'Hare and also JFK.