

For those who are familiar with the objectives of certain special interest groups in Washington, it appears that the regulation was modified to improve the economic position of the air carriers.

It is my sincere hope that the testimony you have heard in the past seven months on aviation safety has revealed at least some of the basic problems. We need money to do the job of evolving a sound ATC system. More important, we need to *understand* the *real* germane questions. These questions can only be answered by those people intimately familiar with the system.

We must guard against the inaction or bureaucratic inertia. We must move not like C. P. Snow's analogy of the mating of elephants where: "... things are conceived at a very high level; there is lots of smoke and dust; and nothing creative comes out for a very long time. . . ."

Thank you.

Mr. GALIPAULT. I am not here representing any particular interest group. I am here acting as a pilot, speaking as a pilot, and as a researcher who has looked at many problems in aviation safety and who has done research germane to the things that we are talking about. I would like to allude to some of these problems that exist today and let them be focal points for you to consider in your evaluation of aviation safety.

I might start by talking just a little bit about the accident phenomenon. Accidents have been defined in many ways by many different people. But there are two things which must be present for an accident to occur. There must be an unsafe situation and someone has to commit an unsafe act.

The accident researcher and the accident investigator usually do not have real understanding of the magnitude of the unsafe conditions or the magnitude of the unsafe acts. Accident investigators can only look at the results of accidents. They can see some preliminary information such as flight data recordings, voice recordings, and other pertinent information. But when it comes down to the final analysis, it is extremely difficult to reconstruct the unsafe conditions and the unsafe acts that have occurred to produce a catastrophe.

We have numerous unsafe conditions in our airspace today, gentlemen—we have many.

Two weeks ago I was flying over a radio navigation facility at an assigned instrument altitude and I reported a near miss. The controller working my flight plan asked me how close the aircraft was. I think I satisfied him pretty adequately. I said, "I heard him go by." This is an unsafe situation.

A salient characteristic of our air traffic system is the converging of aircraft on discrete points. You talk to the British and they are petrified to fly in our airspace because of the way we manage to congregate all at one single point. This is an example of an unsafe condition. We live with this unsafe condition; we accept it, because we feel that the odds of our meeting another aircraft in the air are pretty low, and yet there are many, many near misses each day.

It is not good and we all know it.

Unsafe acts are committed all the time. I can cite many and the record books reveal many more. I think we, as pilots, have a reputation much like fishermen. We tend to exaggerate sometimes the things that occur in the air but we all know we make mistakes—we are human.

It is the proper combination of these two situations that produce accidents. Until we take a very serious look at aviation safety we are