

Our organization, composed of more than 23,000 airline flight deck crew members, has been deeply involved in aircraft noise abatement during the past 20 years. Unfortunately, we have frequently been the recipient of complaints, the mark of politically motivated groups and the target of poorly informed regulators.

The airplane, like other modes of transportation, is inherently a source of noise. In addition, it is usually heard while overhead, which lends something of a fear element to human beings on the ground who have to listen to the noise. Nevertheless, those of us who live closely with air transportation are aware of the importance which is today attached to aviation as the world continues to progress through advances in communication and the need for material and cultural exchanges. Future generations will likely be better adjusted to aircraft noise. Only four generations ago, our forefathers resisted the steam locomotive, and a bit later the automobile, as an unnecessary noise adjunct to the transportation system.

Aviation is not in and of itself inherently dangerous, but like the sea, it is terribly unforgiving of mistakes, and for this reason we, the pilots, will continue to resist the application of operational noise abatement techniques which inhibit the safety margins we find to be necessary.

We do not have to go very far to find a concrete example. Washington National Airport is no doubt the most convenient downtown airport of any major capital in the world, yet the ridiculous noise abatement procedures which were adopted for use at Washington National—such as following the narrow Potomac River in its snake track course northwestward—not only was it operationally unfeasible, but additionally provided more noise for the persons living in the immediate vicinity of the river.

You gentlemen have already heard the Honorable Alan Boyd, Secretary of Transportation, enunciate the view that there never would be a quiet airplane. We endorse that statement. We have also noted the tremendous growth and requirements for scheduled air transportation, and I am cognizant of the fact that we must provide some acceptable compromise to fulfill air transportation requirements and yet not be unduly noisy.

While we are of the opinion that the Federal Aviation Administration was granted by the Congress in its wisdom the necessary authority to place a maximum noise emanation requirement on aircraft prior to granting an operational certificate for said aircraft, we are also cognizant of the position put before the gentlemen of the Congress by the Administrator. The adoption of a noise maximum for airworthiness certificates, however, is not in and of itself the total answer.

We are aware that land use adjacent to airports is likely to be the most successful area of compromise and deplore our constant observations of new home construction in airport vicinities. We assume that many of the new constructions are under Federal grant-type mortgages and this is an area where Health, Education, and Welfare, the Department of Transportation, Veterans Administration, and those other Government bureaus having fiscal responsibilities need to organize their efforts in a single direction.

Up to the present time, since the advent of the heavier four-engine transports following World War II, operational techniques by pilots