

Mr. DEVINE. On page 2 you mentioned the fact about the "ridiculous noise abatement procedures" at Washington National, and you speak in the past tense. You say, "Not only was it operationally unfeasible, but additionally provided more noise for the persons in the immediate vicinity," with which I would agree.

Have they changed the procedures out of Washington National? Don't you still, when you are flying northbound, have to fly up the Potomac?

Mr. BRUNELLE. Yes, we do; but the procedures change seasonally at Washington National.

Mr. DEVINE. You mean when the windows are closed?

Mr. BRUNELLE. No; I am being somewhat facetious. Every time someone decides they have nothing better to do, they change the procedures at National. We have had I don't know how many changes since the so-called noise abatement procedures went into effect at National, some of them minor and some of them considerable changes.

Mr. DEVINE. Are these adopted by the FAA?

Mr. BRUNELLE. Yes. It is a federally operated airport.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Would you yield on this particular point?

I want to follow it, too. Let me press something here. You mentioned its "snake track course." Are you saying now that you go up or down, depending on whether you are landing or taking off, along the general direction of the Potomac, but do not follow its exact course?

Mr. BRUNELLE. Yes; I am saying we have to; yes.

Mr. KUYKENDALL. You still follow the snake track?

Mr. BRUNELLE. Yes; and this in itself is one of the problems with the procedures. The river is quite narrow as we proceed westbound, and it requires quite a bit of attention to stay over this narrow river when we have cockpit duties right after takeoff and are looking for traffic.

Mr. DEVINE. At Washington you are limiting it to 727's and DC-9's. We are not talking about four-engine jets.

Mr. BRUNELLE. Yes.

Mr. DEVINE. I think the most important thing in your testimony appears on page 3, in which you say, "No further compromise with safety can be tolerated in the public interest."

I certainly agree with you. Do you feel that you have reached the maximum of noise abatement or suppressors, or whatever it is, to hold down noise, that if you go a step further, that it will indeed endanger the lives of passengers and people on the ground?

Mr. BRUNELLE. Well, I think there are two questions there. I think there will be more technological advance in suppressing. It might not be in that type of design.

Mr. DEVINE. It might not necessarily be a safety hazard?

Mr. BRUNELLE. No. The suppressors, even though they do absorb power thrust, as long as there is enough available we are happy with suppression if that is the way the engine designers would like to go.

Now, no further compromise with safety: Safety is a rather nebulous thing in many areas. It is neither black nor white. There are many gray areas. We cannot say that the next procedure will be unsafe and that we have the last safe procedure now.

It could very well be that we are approaching the unsafe in some areas now. We don't think we are. Of course, we as airline pilots