

It would appear that low-flying jets on take-off and landing are the most obvious sources of the disturbance, and, with the rapidly increasing volume of jet traffic, we can expect that the problem, if not squarely confronted by sound legislation, will grow more acute, and then intractable.

For those of us from the New York City metropolitan area, serviced by two major facilities, Kennedy and LaGuardia Airports, no one needs to underscore the unhappy implications of airplane noise for the general welfare of our constituents. From personal experience, and from mail coming into my office, I can fully appreciate the dimensions of this nuisance to the residents of my own district.

But, as we all know, the problem of low-flying planes, and, for that matter, of sonic boom, is hardly limited to New York City; it is nationwide in scope; it threatens the quality of our national life; it interferes with work and with leisure, with prayer and with contemplation, with what Shakespeare styled "the sessions of sweet silent thought." It quite literally disrupts the domestic tranquility of every affected household. How grimly ironic it is that we should be able to travel the airways in relative peace and serenity, only to land at a destination made unbearably noisy by the plane which brought us there.

Small wonder then, that President Johnson, with his characteristic concern for human problems, has consistently pressed for legislation in this keenly troublesome area. One of the landmarks bearing witness to the administration's interest was the President's appointment on October 29, 1965, of a White House Task Force on Aircraft Noise Abatement. Thanks to the activities of this group, the Department of Transportation and NASA have been working together to develop "quieter" aircraft and plans for noise abatement geared to the limitations of existing aircraft and airport facilities. These plans have included some rather ingenious changes in orthodox landing patterns. In the same spirit, President Johnson, in his message to the Congress, of March 8, 1968, urged us "to take prompt action on legislation to strengthen the authority of the Secretary of Transportation to deal with aircraft noise." The President advised us that:

We need greater capacity to deal with the rapidly growing noise problem created by our expanding air transportation system.

The bill before you, H.R. 3400, introduced by your distinguished chairman, Harley Staggers of West Virginia, would take a first crucial step in that direction, inasmuch as it empowers the Secretary of Transportation to prescribe and amend standards for the measurement of aircraft noise and sonic boom, and to prescribe and amend such rules and regulations as he may find necessary to provide for the control and abatement of aircraft noise and sonic boom. This bill would put "teeth" into the regulations promulgated by the Secretary, since he would be further empowered to apply those regulations to the issuance, amendment, modification, suspension, or revocation of any certificate granted an air carrier. Subsection (b) of section 611 wisely preserves to the certificate holder his right to notice and appeal from the Secretary's order to cover those situations in which safety in air commerce and the public interest do not warrant the affirmation of his order. Under the circumstances I have outlined, we have little choice but to support such