

[From the Los Angeles Times, Feb. 12, 1968]

FEDERAL JET NOISE CONTROL NEEDED

The only things louder than the roar of jet aircraft are the screams of property owners and airport operators calling for quieter engines and noise controls. So far their pleas have fallen on deaf ears.

The Airport Operators Council Intl., which represents an estimated 86% of the domestic airline business, has broken a nine-year association with the industrywide National Aircraft Noise Abatement Council. They charge that airlines and aircraft manufacturers are not effectively seeking solutions to the problem, which, operators insist, requires immediate federal standards and controls.

We agree it is now time for such action.

Congress recognizes the national nature of the problem and is considering the creation of maximum noise levels to be federally enforced. Research by the government and private aircraft manufacturers is also under way to develop quieter engines.

In the meantime harassed homeowners, such as those around the Los Angeles International Airport, are waging anti-noise campaigns and filing lawsuits against airports and officials who do not have the power to effectively act to control noise.

The problem is not a local one. This area of "noise pollution" ranks with the air and water pollution problems now plaguing metropolitan areas across the country.

It is conceded that there will always be aircraft noise. The challenge is to reduce it to a livable level.

There are several ways to approach the problem. These include noise suppression devices on today's engines, quieter new engines, revised flying operations and restricted land use and condemnation. Cost, safety and engineering problems are involved in all of them.

In the next 10 years more than 1,000 new aircraft, including jumbo jets, will be needed to meet the mounting passenger and air cargo demands. That adds up to a lot of noise.

Standards to control the noise are needed now. To be effective they must be nationwide, realistic and give the airlines and manufacturers sufficient time to meet the new rules. Research must also be stepped up on the quieter new engines.

As technology improves, regulations may be modified and stricter standards adopted. But the first step must be taken now to curtail the environmental pollution that now plagues our airports—and the crowded communities around them.

(Whereupon, at 11:05 a.m., the subcommittee adjourned.)

