

Mr. THOMPSON. Approximately half of the personnel, then, are in the Federal Aviation Administration?

Secretary BOYD. Yes, sir; just under half.

Mr. THOMPSON. Do you have any idea how many aircraft are in the air at any one time, average, in the United States?

Secretary BOYD. No, sir; I am sure General McKee or Mr. Dave Thomas, the Deputy Administrator, can provide those figures. I think you will find there are rather large differences depending on the time of day and the day of the week.

Mr. THOMPSON. I recognize the fact that, of course, in daytime there would probably be more than nighttime and depending on the weather, and so forth, but, Mr. Thomas, or General McKee, do you have any idea of what an average figure would be if you were to take the flight hours and divide them into the number of hours per day?

Mr. THOMAS. There are no precise figures available because we do not have flight plans on all the airplanes, but taking fuel consumed and other factors we have, there are roughly 200,000 flights per day. Most of these are during the daylight hours. They are not evenly distributed during the day so one would assume there are probably 20,000 airplanes in the air at one time under peak conditions.

Mr. THOMPSON. Approximately how many of the 20,000 would you say are general-aviation aircraft and how many would be commercial-airline aircraft?

Mr. THOMAS. Most of them would be general aviation. The size of the commercial airline fleet is less than 3,000 at the moment. In fact, it is about 2,600. The general aviation fleet is over 100,000, so most of them would be general aviation and most of them would not be on flight plans.

Mr. THOMPSON. Has any significant progress been made in attempting to utilize computers in programing the flights, particularly of commercial aircraft from one city to another, to have a preprogram flight in order that when an aircraft is to depart, say, from New York City, and is scheduled to arrive in O'Hare or Los Angeles or wherever it may be at a predetermined time, to have that flight controlled all the way and have it coordinated with flights coming in, for example, from Chicago—flights coming from New York to Chicago, St. Louis to Chicago, Dallas to Chicago. Is any development research underway whereby you would have all of this organized through a computer to preprogram the flights and fit them together?

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Thompson, we have about a \$400 million computer program underway now which uses the largest and most modern computers available. It is just coming into being. The first is being installed at Jacksonville. They will go into our air-route traffic control centers. However, as extensive and comprehensive as that program is, it does not now contemplate the prescheduling and guaranteed arrival time. It will handle the aircraft completely throughout their flight, but it will accept them on a randomized basis at each major airport and then sort them into a regularized flow of traffic for the runway, but it does not now contemplate prescheduled and guaranteed arrival times, as I believe you suggest.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, Mr. Thomas, as we get into the area of supersonic aircraft which, of course, we all recognize is a number of years off, is it not going to be almost essential that the aircraft have a clearance to land about the same time it receives its clearance to take off,