

# From the desk of Captain Rodney Stich

P.O. Box 5, Alamo, CA 94507; phone: 925-944-1930; FAX 925-295-1203

Author of numerous books on government intrigue

International Society of Air Safety Investigators: Assn. of Former Intelligence Officers

E-mail: stich@defraudingamerica.com    www.rodneystich.com    www.unfriendlyskies.com

February 1, 2010

Randy Babbitt, Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20591      Fax: 1-202-267-5047

Ref: Former FAA inspector, airline captain, with a suggestion on major internal problems.

To Mr. Babbitt:

This letter provides you with an insider's view of serious problems in a small but influential segment of the FAA. My unusual background provides invaluable information on understanding problem areas that played a major role in a series of preventable airline crashes of the past. Let me explain. I am a former Navy Patrol Plane Commander from World War II, an international airline captain flying for several airlines after the end of World War II, and then an FAA air carrier operations inspector during the times when airline crashes often occurred every few months. My initial duties were with the Los Angeles office, working with such airlines as Western, American, and Northwest, all of which had a good training and competency check program.

I joined the FAA while Pete Quesada was still the head of the FAA, and as he ordered certain standards in airline crew training, something that was urgently needed at certain airlines—such as United Airlines. During that time there were a series of major airline disasters involved United Airlines aircraft, including a DC-8 that plunged into the Brooklyn area of New York City. Within the FAA it was recognized that there were serious problems at United Airlines, made possible by a culture of cover-ups by FAA district and regional managers, and involving FAA headquarters.

In an effort to correct the problems at United Airlines—without addressing the FAA culture that made the problems possible—I was asked to transfer to Denver and correct the problems that were resulting in what at that time was the worst series of airline disasters in the nation's history. It didn't take me long to discover the culture and misconduct that was already known by other inspectors.

Having years of Navy and airline experience behind me, I was still shocked by the corruption that I discovered and reported at United Airlines. I discovered and reported in writing in government documents hardcore corruption, falsified government-required documents on important safety requirements, that played enabling roles in a series of fatal airline crashes. Every effort to address these problems was blocked by FAA management, including at the Los Angeles regional offices and in Washington headquarters.

Being so close to the arrogance, corruption, crashes and deaths, motivated me to do something that had never occurred in the history of the FAA and which has been sequestered to this day. I used the law in such a manner that I acted similar to an independent prosecutor. I forced hearings upon the FAA during which I acted similar to an independent prosecutor conducting several weeks of court-like hearings before an administrator law judge (William G. Jennings), calling witnesses and introducing documents.

Among the documents I produced were documents showing United Airlines was falsifying its

recurrent training/competency training flights, and not performing the required maneuvers. That report was prepared by a group of inspectors that traveled from Denver to the San Francisco maintenance base to positively document what they suspected. That discovery occurred shortly before a series of major crew-error crashes occurred, including one that was the world's worst at that time, the DC-8 crash into New York City. FAA management kept the lid on that information, and then followed that cover-up with continued protection of the misconduct at United Airlines and retaliation of any FAA inspector that reported or attempted to correct the deadly practices.

When I arrived on scene shortly afterwards, the same problems existed. I reported them, and the only reaction was retaliation against me, just as my predecessor experienced. I reported that United Airlines was falsifying its emergency evacuation training, indicating it was being accomplished every year, as legally required, but only done every three years. And this is only the start of the wrongful acts that continued the practices responsible for more crashes and more deaths. Evidence of what I discovered can be found in, for instance, the following:

- The 4500-page court reporter's transcript of the hearings during which I acted similar to an independent prosecutor. I have that transcript.
- A declaration sent by me, over my signature and that of the head of the FAA Sky Marshall Program, John Graziano, to the FAA administrator. Graziano was so outraged by what I had discovered that he urged me to write a declaration, which he cosigned with me. The administrator continued the cover-up, just as did the FAA administrator law judge who was on the administrator's staff.
- The web site, [www.unfriendlyskies.com](http://www.unfriendlyskies.com).
- A not-for-profit book that I wrote, which is now in the fourth edition, called, *Unfriendly Skies: 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries*. That book shows the continuation of the prior culture in the FAA that made possible the conditions that enabled four groups of terrorists to so easily hijack four airliners on September 11, 2001.
- Another web site enlarges on the [unfriendlyskies.com](http://www.unfriendlyskies.com), by documenting the role of other people and groups that covered up for the deep-seated problems in the FAA; and then addresses other areas of misconduct that addressed another area involved in facilitating the 9/11 hijackings. Again, the culture of cover-ups insures that the status quo continues, as I have shown during the past 40 years. This deep-seated culture will probably keep you from functioning as you would otherwise be capable of doing.

Major airline crashes are few fewer today than in that 20 or 30 year period when I was close to the occurrences. But the reduced frequency of crashes has not been due to any changes in the FAA's culture. That culture is still there, and I hear periodically from people in the FAA to that effect. The absence of known preventative measures on 9/11 was due to the age-old culture in the FAA. And 3,000 people dies because of it.

After I exposed those problems during the FAA administrative law hearings, the FAA covered up, and made life difficult for me. That caused me to leave the FAA, combined with my refusal to be part of the corrupt and even criminal activities that to this day have never been addressed.

After I left the FAA, the problems continued, along with a series of even worst airline disasters. As a private citizen, but heavily involved in aviation safety matters, I attempted to circumvent the universal cover-up by publishing the first edition of *Unfriendly Skies* in 1978, and started appearing as guest on hundreds of radio and TV shows, describing the relationship between misconduct within the FAA and specific airline disasters.

From there, the corruption worsened in other areas of government, that had a more criminal aspect than what existed in the FAA. I won't get into that with this letter, but if you were interested, you would get further information at [www.defraudingamerica.com](http://www.defraudingamerica.com), and also in the book, *Unfriendly Skies: 20<sup>th</sup> &*

21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The FAA today imposes huge fines on airlines responsible for minor technical errors, while doing nothing about the hardcore culture in the divisions most responsible for aviation safety.

It is a federal crime for anyone who has knowledge of a federal crime and does not report it. But in this case, the documented involvement of key people in the U.S. Department of Justice makes that requirement meaningless.

If you wish a copy of the Unfriendly Skies book, let me know and I will have a copy sent to you. It is required reading for anyone with a responsibility over aviation safety. That information cannot be found anywhere else.

Sincerely,

Rodney Stich