

From the desk of Rodney Stich

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May 20, 2008

News Desk

Wall Street Journal

200 Liberty St

New York, NY 10281

Attn: Andy Pasztor/Christopher Conkey

Ref: Articles on FAA problems

To Mr. Pasztor and Mr. Conkey:

The Wall Street Journal has had some very good articles on aviation matters, and lately, on internal FAA problems. If you were courageous enough, and wanted to make available to your readers a far more serious culture in the FAA—with ripple effects in airline disasters—I suggest you take a look at a web site that I have had for many years. The purpose of that site is to circumvent either the lack of knowledge or deliberate cover-ups by people who should make this information available to the public. That Internet site is www.unfriendlyskies.com.

Very briefly, as an FAA air carrier operations inspector, given the assignment many years ago to correct the conditions responsible for the worst series of airline disasters in the nation's history, I discovered and documented a culture, that still exists, that enabled to occur a number of specific airline disasters. That culture is far worse than what you have been addressing in your articles.

I was so outraged by what I discovered, and the standard cover-up that appears to be a national trait, and by the endless series of preventable airline disasters, that I did what had never been done before. These actions included, for instance, (a) as an FAA inspector, using the law in such a manner that I acted similar to an independent prosecutor conducting a court-like trial; (b) appeared as a government agent before a federal grand jury in Denver charging criminal misconduct associated with certain specific airline disasters, several of which occurred in my immediate area of federal safety responsibility; (c) published books seeking to circumvent the cover-ups; (d) appearing on hundreds of radio and television shows seeking to inform the people; (e) filing federal actions under the federal crimes reporting statute, Title 18 U.S.C. § 4, attempting to force people and groups to meet their responsibilities.

No other known whistleblower (I hate that term!) has had so many airline disasters directly associated with his documented charges. Your stories associate FAA problems with safety matters; my information goes further; it shows the crashes and deaths associated with the problems.

Today, airline disasters are far less frequent. But this greater safety had come about by measures that circumvented the basic problems inherent in the FAA. And these basic problems are what you briefly identified in your May 20, 2008, article. And these basic, deeply entrenched problems, have periodic deadly ripple effects in preventable aviation disasters. This situation will continue until certain people or groups give it sufficient publicity to force changes.

Very briefly, before ending this letter, I was a Navy Patrol Plane Commander in World War II, an international airline captain for many years, an FAA air safety inspector, and then active in aviation safety matters which included appearing on over 3,000 radio and TV shows since 1978, and writing a number of books. The books that best describes the aviation safety problems in the FAA are *Unfriendly Skies: 20th & 21st Centuries*, and also, *Blowback, 9/11, and Cover-Ups*.

Everyone who knew of these charges, and did nothing, share blame for the continued problems and human tragedies. This is as true today, as it was in the past.

Today, at 85, I no longer expect to find anyone with sufficient courage and integrity to make this relationship known to the people.

Sincerely,

Rodney Stich