

Rodney Stich
P.O. Box 766
Alamo, California 94507

1
2 PETITION FOR REOPENING THE INVESTIGATION AND HEARING
3 INTO THE PROBABLE CAUSE OF THE SAN DIEGO PACIFIC SOUTHWEST
4 AIRLINES CRASH OF SEPTEMBER 25, 1978 (REPORT NTSB-AAR-79-5)

5
6 TO: CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
7 National Transportation Safety Board
8 800 Independence Avenue, S.W.
9 Washington, D.C. 20594

10 Petitioner, RODNEY STICH, respectfully applies for a reopening of the
11 investigation and hearing into the probable cause of the PSA San Diego crash
12 of September 25, 1978, as provided by Sections 431.35, 431.36, and 431.44
13 of the Federal Aviation Act and otherwise known as Title 142 (Aeronautics
14 and Space).

15 Two primary reasons justify and require that the NTSB comply with this
16 request: ADDITIONAL MATERIAL INFORMATION and NTSB COVERUP.

17 ONE: THE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION that petitioner has, being
18 statements recorded by the petitioner from a passenger who was on the first
19 half of the two-leg ill-fated flight, from Sacramento to Los Angeles. Her de-
20 tailed statements describes the word-for-word conversations overheard by
21 passenger Helen Rhea, as PSA flight attendants discussed the crew activity
22 at a party that reportedly lasted throughout the night, until two hours prior
23 to the flight departure from Sacramento. The petitioner has accurately re-
24 corded the passenger statements that include, among other things:

25 a. Partial identification of some of the crew that attended the party, in-
26 cluding part of the working crew of flight 182 and other pilots and flight atten-
27 dants.

28 b. Location of the reported partying; a crew room at Host International

1 Hotel at the Sacramento Airport.

2 c. The purpose of the party, being to celebrate a pilot's birthday and
3 the get-together of a pilot and a flight attendant.

4 d. The length of the party, reportedly lasting until 5 am, two hours prior
5 to the scheduled departure time of flight 182 from Sacramento.

6 e. The length of time the party participants had available for rest after
7 leaving the party. Reported by the flight attendants as none, to a maximum
8 of two hours.

9 f. The physical condition of the working crew, reported by the flight
10 attendants as "hung-over."

11 g. The names and/or physical description of the PSA flight attendants
12 making the statements of crew partying; what motivated the conversations;
13 and the persons involved in the discussions.

14 h. Other details, that when juxtapositioned, shows the strong probability
15 that the conversations of the PSA flight attendants reflected a true picture
16 of the events preceding the crash of PSA flight 182.

17 The petitioner's record of the above reported events is more detailed
18 than that in the NTSB files. If the PSA flight attendants statements are cor-
19 rect, it would reflect more than anything else as to why the PSA flight crew
20 was inattentive and unresponsive to other traffic, fatigue and possibly alco-
21 hol being more responsible than any other condition for the underlying cause
22 of the PSA San Diego crash.

23 The petitioner, as a former Federal Aviation Administration air safety
24 investigator, holding by law the technical competency and legal responsibili-
25 ty for making determinations of air safety problems, state that the evidence
26 strongly reflects that at least several crew members attended a party, if not
27 all of them, as described by the PSA flight attendants. Fatigue, and possibly
28 alcohol, played a major role in the PSA San Diego crash.

1 The second reason for reopening the accident hearing/investigation, as
2 required by federal statutes, is the COVERUP BY THE NATIONAL TRANS-
3 PORTATION SAFETY BOARD of highly sensitive factual information that
4 would have serious overtones if the public became privy to the data.

5 The NTSB covered up for the alarming and revealing report given by
6 the PSA passenger, Helen Rhea. The Board kept the witness with the reveal-
7 ing factual information away from the crash hearing, despite the major sig-
8 nificance of her testimony to the underlying cause of the crash. Her testimony
9 would expose a major air safety problem--that of crew partying and drink-
10 ing. The Board followed up this apparent coverup by still others.

11 It failed to subpoena to the accident hearing the maids who cleaned the
12 rooms occupied by the PSA crew of flight 182, and who probably would have
13 verified that evidence in the rooms indicated that the reported partying did
14 in fact occur. The Board is sufficiently sophisticated in investigative require-
15 ments to know the importance of the above testimony at the accident hearing.

16 Further revealing the flagrant coverup by the NTSB was the manner in
17 which the "investigation" into the reported crew partying/drinking was car-
18 ried out. After receiving the report from the PSA passenger that was virtually
19 forced upon the NTSB by the passenger's attorney friend, the Board knew that
20 any investigation into the crew partying would be associated with powerful
21 coverup activities by vested interest groups, and especially PSA Airlines
22 and its pilot association. Well-trained and experienced investigators, famil-
23 iar with such covert activities, would be needed to further substantiate the
24 reports of crew partying.

25 As if to cover up for this serious partying problem, the NTSB sent a
26 "non-investigative" trio to the Host International Hotel at Sacramento, to
27 "investigate" the reported crew partying. This trio consisted of two physi-
28 cians that were not qualified or trained in this form of investigation, and a

1 pilot employee--believe it or not--of PSA Airlines. The PSA pilot would,
2 naturally, be under great pressure not to "find" any evidence of crew party-
3 ing.

4 PSA Airlines, apparently informed of the trio's departure for the Host
5 International Hotel at the Sacramento Airport, quickly sent two representa-
6 tives to contact the hotel manager and the maids who cleaned the rooms.
7 Their findings were apparently sufficiently serious to PSA's interests to
8 where the hotel manager subsequently refused to allow the NTSB trio access
9 to the maids. This obstruction with the official investigation into the most
10 probable underlying cause of the crash gave further significance to the re-
11 ported statements of the PSA passenger and of the now-deceased PSA flight
12 attendants, that crew partying occurred in one of the hotel's rooms.

13 Further suspicion was raised that the NTSB did not want the issue of
14 possible crew partying exposed, as it refused to issue a subpoena forcing
15 the maids to present testimony as to the condition of the crew rooms, insofar
16 as evidence of partying and drinking existed.

17 At this stage the NTSB had the following data indicating the strong prob-
18 ability of crew partying several hours prior to the PSA San Diego crash:

19 a. Precise word-for-word statements of the working PSA flight atten-
20 dants on PSA flight 182, as overheard by passenger Helen Rhea.

21 b. High ethanol alcohol content in some of the crew's bodies.

22 c. The suspicious and revealing refusal of the hotel, apparently in con-
23 certed actions with PSA Airlines, to allow the federal government to complete
24 its investigation into the possible underlying cause of the PSA crash. This
25 was the refusal by the hotel manager to allow statements to be obtained from
26 the maids who cleaned the rooms of flight 182 crewmembers. This refusal
27 and the NTSB's refusal to act as legally required, to subpoena the maids
28 for their testimony, was irresponsible and cast further suspicion upon the

1 National Transportation Safety Board.

2 The Board has recognized in its writings the common problem known to
3 flight crewmembers, of crew partying by a small but significant number of
4 crewmembers at crew layover points. In a recent safety recommendation
5 addressed to the FAA, the Board made reference to the airline and numerous
6 air taxi accidents believed associated with alcohol or drug impairment. Ob-
7 viously the Board knew the serious consequences associated with the state-
8 ments of passenger Helen Rhea and the reported partying statements of the
9 PSA flight attendants.

10 The NTSB's COVERUP of the reported crew partying is reflected by:

11 a. Contrary to normal investigative practices, the virtual sequestering
12 by the NTSB of the PSA passenger statements that were the nature of a "smok-
13 ing gun," and its failure to have this important witness testify at the accident
14 hearing.

15 b. Sending incompetent and biased "investigators" to investigate the
16 possibility of crew partying at the Host International Hotel, knowing their in-
17 adequate qualifications, experience and biased interests precluded giving
18 any creditability to their activities.

19 c. Refusing to act as expected of investigators when the hotel refused
20 to allow the maids who cleaned the rooms of the ill-fated PSA crew to be
21 interviewed to determine evidence of partying/drinking, the Board covered
22 up for what would probably have been substantiation of the PSA flight atten-
23 dants' statements.

24 The petitioner, having been a former FAA air safety investigator with
25 close ties to NTSB activities, recognizes this coverup as one more in a long
26 series perpetrated by the National Transportation Safety Board, of which the
27 petitioner has evidence.

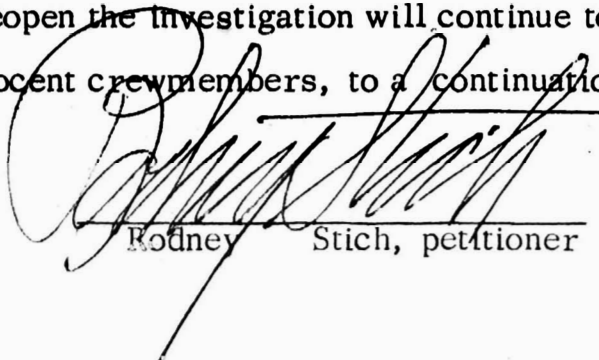
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If the NTSB did participate in a coverup of the reported partying involving the crew in the PSA San Diego crash, and the petitioner is convinced the NTSB did cover up, the members of the NTSB Board would be guilty of criminal acts. It would be a party to the continued endangering of the traveling public to a significant problem that has already played a part in numerous airline and commuter plane crashes.

An Affidavit of Facts is attached to this petition.

The petitioner demands that the National Transportation Safety Board reopens this hearing and conducts, with the help of unbiased outside investigators, a meaningful investigation into the reported partying and drinking. The Board's refusal to reopen the investigation will continue to expose the traveling public, and innocent crewmembers, to a continuation of the serious problem.



Rodney Stich, petitioner

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF CALIFORNIA }
COUNTY OF CONTRA COSTA } SS:

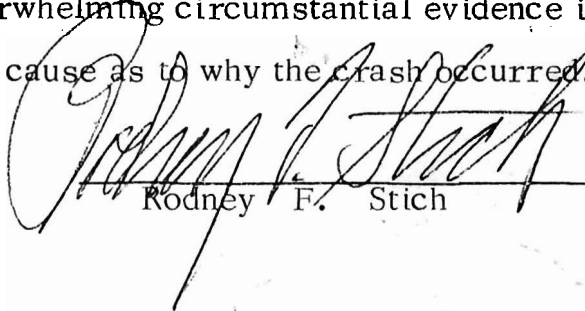
I, RODNEY F. STICH, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

That I am a resident of 27 Cherry Hills Court, Alamo, California. That I was given specific and detailed statements by Helen Rhea, a passenger on board the ill-fated Pacific Southwest Airlines flight 182 from Sacramento, California to Los Angeles, California, the flight that subsequently crashed at San Diego on September 25, 1978. These statements described in great detail the conversations made in her presence by working PSA flight attendants as they discussed the particulars of a party reportedly taking place in one of the crew rooms at the Host International Hotel at the Sacramento Airport.

I have in my possession the exact words used by this passenger, which describes the purpose of the party; the brand of liquor consumed; the crewmember participants; the time the party ended, being 5 a. m. ; that "the crew was hung-over" on the flight departing Sacramento; that some of the crewmembers didn't have any sleep and some only one or two hours; and other revealing information.

The information given to me by Helen Rhea is more specific and detailed than the written report given to the NTSB, and constitutes new information. As a former government FAA air safety investigator, it would be my conclusion that the data I have is sufficiently specific and detailed, with adequate cross-checks, that a prudent person/investigator would reach the conclusion that partying did in fact exist, within hours of the ill-fated flight. If the overwhelming circumstantial evidence is correct, it would help explain the underlying cause as to why the crash occurred.

Subscribed and sworn to before me on
this 13th day of September, 1980.


Rodney F. Stich



