

February 28, 1965
1860 Applewood Drive
Denver 15, Colorado
237-3286

Senator A. S. Monroney
United State Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Monroney:

Your reply of February 24th has been received with heartwarming and reassuring effects. Conditions within the Federal Aviation Agency, especially as it pertains to the Air Carrier Branch, requires a thorough, impartial investigation to obtain the desired level of safety activity.

Inspectors are often unable to properly do their job functions pertaining to safety in Air Carrier Operations, due to certain FAA management being primarily interested in a state of tranquility, accommodating various pressure or pressure groups. The philosophy and attitudes of many within the agency, especially certain management personnel, are wrong. Primary interest of these individuals is not safety, but a desire for an atmosphere of tranquility. Taking required action disturbs this tranquility. This is a deplorable condition in an organization such as ours that absolutely requires correction actions when such is indicated. For a dynamic agency, which the FAA is not, such corrective actions must always be uppermost.

Many FAA management personnel can understand two things: SPUR boards on the wall with their colorful flags and violations. The intangible nature of aviation safety and actions to insure such a condition is beyond their abilities.

If the intent of the writer of FAA Washington guidelines were followed in spirit and actions, actual accident conditions would be entirely changed for the better. The Federal Aviation Agency is overflowing with double-talk by management, resulting in a never-never fairyland. Highly trained and experienced safety inspectors are often unable to properly do their job functions. When they try, the inspectors are subject to numerous repercussions from FAA management.

Let me give you a brief example of the actual conditions, based upon my experiences. First, I am one of the most highly experienced air carrier pilots and inspectors within the Federal Aviation Agency. This experience is valuable to the agency if allowed to be used. The government has paid close to \$100,000 or more for my jet training over the past two years. I had tried to use my experiences and training to correct a known and seriously deficient air carrier program at United Airlines. Despite the fact this air carrier had numerous fatal accidents, some of catastrophic proportions, and many near-accidents, despite the fact the safety shortcomings were known throughout the FAA, my acts, as tactful and considerate as possible, met with severe FAA management hindrance and harassment actions. Even the air carrier told me the previous DC-8 inspector was transferred by their actions and I too could be transferred at their request.

This and many other statements illustrate the lack of dignity and respect industry has for the FAA.

By following common sense logic and FAA Washington directives, I was subject to FAA management actions, such as threatened removal from the DC-8 program; given undesirable fitness reports; denied promotion; received letter of warning; AWOL letter for known and reported sickness; letter questioning my fitness for duty when I reported serious safety problems a United Airlines; and cancellation of the highly desirable jet training due on March 1st.

All of this is known to the other inspectors and by the airlines. I was actually suspended from the program and threatened with being fired by the same management official that stated my written reports of safety shortcomings would look bad should an office inspector be made and the conditions not corrected.

These inspections are often made in association with an airline accident investigation. The total damaging effect is great and by no means restricted to this inspector. The basic foundation for the Federal Aviation Agent reason for existence is being destroyed.

There is absolutely no reason why a highly experienced, conscientious inspector, in a known weak program that has produced major catastrophic accidents or near accidents, should be so shabbily treated for trying to correct the deadly problems. Management has even threatened this inspector would be hurt, along with his family, if my actions did not change.

You have to know all the facts, realize my ethical and professional position in the office, and my accomplishments in the field of safety as acknowledged by industry and certain FAA personnel to understand the brutal aspects of these management actions. The damage is to the extent that we are not able to properly function according to the intent of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958. The viciousness and extent of the FAA management actions makes it more difficult recently to follow the wording and intent of safety directives. However, we are becoming very proficient in doubletalk and can "snow" anyone in this area, unless the person knows the actual facts.

One of the weakest and most dangerous areas in the Federal Aviation Agency is the attitude of management which prevents inspectors from pursuing their required airline safety job assignments. This and other conditions existing within the agency must be changed. At this time, there are safety deficiencies existing with full knowledge of FAA management. As with other accidents, we will take action when a fatality occurs. Sometimes, even then, FAA management will not act. Corrective action requires massive changes in FAA management personnel and attitudes prevailing with the FAA agency. Civil Service rules and the doubletalk being what it is, such changes probably would not come except for possible local token actions. If the agency can do so, I will be the one replaced.

We must have FAA management personnel with sufficient aviation background, backbone, integrity, and honesty. We must eliminate the fer within the agency which is preventing inspectors from following their aviation safety job requirements. Those within the agency looking for a soft cushion and an 8 to 4 job must be clearly told their responsibilities to the aviation community and the

public. This will not be easily accomplished. It will never be accomplished if cover-up by double-talking management personnel prevail.

An example of the conditions existing within the agency for a long period of time will describe the basic problems within the agency. It clearly illustrates the type of FAA management activities and attitudes tolerated and its possible association with major air carrier accidents. We have here a certain FAA management individual that has been associated with certain air carriers for over a decade. He was responsible for the safety standards of these carriers during this period. These same air carrier under his area of safety responsibility had experienced major aircraft accidents including catastrophic disasters. These accidents were of an operational nature that could have been corrected with proper safety activities. This same management individual has take actions against inspectors who were trying to correct the very same safety shortcomings that resulted in fatal and catastrophic accidents. His actions cold not have been unknown to Washington agency personnel. Failure to correct this conduct must be placed at high management levels.

This is not the only example of FAA inability or refusal to meet the stringent requirements of their responsible position. The agency "club" must realize it has responsibilities to the public and the aviation industry that far overshadows the desired state of tranquility. The problem is deep-rooted and exists throughout the agency. Fear and frustration is common throughout the agency. What else can be expected under these conditions other than resulting airline disasters! Major surgery is needed to correct the conditions existing. But who has the courage, knowledge, and integrity to do it.

At this stage I am not concerned with the FAA realizing that I am requesting an investigation of the agency. Numerous employees and even industry crewmembers are thanking me for the courage to attempt correction of these conditions. Myself and my family have already been hurt by the conditions existing herein, and not more can be done to harm us. For that reasons, if you believe it warranted, may I offer a suggestion that my presence be requested in your office for further discussions of these conditions.

I believe it would be proper to request that I be given administrative leave to discuss this with you in Washington. The trip to Washington would be in the line of duty since my job function includes conducting enroute checks on DC-8 jets which go to Washington. This can be done at any time, either during the week or on weekends. In the event that I have not given you sufficient information to arouse your interest by this letter, and the two enclosures, I would be glad to be more specific, either in writing or by a trip to Washington. The lives of many people depend upon proper corrective actions here.

Please remember that many conditions involved in this Federal Aviation Agency complaint are of an intangible nature. Doubletalk can easily confuse the issues and certain personnel are experts in this field. You must have thoroughly informed information from an impartial source. Should I be of any help to you, either in this issue or any other in the future, please remember that my experiences as command pilot with the Navy, U.S. and foreign airlines, are available to you. My main interest is what can I do to be of service to the aviation

community. Much remains to be done; it is a fertile field. I would welcome any chance to contribute my part to it.

At this time I must thank you for your answer to my previous letter. I can tell that the write of it was a man of integrity, honesty and willingness to correct any wrong brought to his attention. Regardless of your actions in respect to these serious and deadly problems, I am proud to have known you and to have discussed these conditions with you. I frankly feel that our national survival depends on more people of your character controlling out destinies. Many thanks for your cooperation and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Rodney F. Stich

RFS/s