

STATEMENT OF DAVID R. HINSON, ADMINISTRATOR-DESIGNATE OF THE
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION, CONCERNING HIS NOMINATION
TO SERVE AS FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATOR. JULY 20, 1993.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I welcome the opportunity to appear before the Committee today on my nomination to serve as Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration. I am deeply honored to have been nominated by President Clinton for this position. I appreciate very much your willingness to schedule this hearing in such a timely manner in order to consider my qualifications for this position.

During my years of experience in aviation, I have developed high respect for the job done by the FAA. Safety has always been the agency's primary mandate and highest priority. I assure you that, if I am confirmed, safety will remain the FAA's top priority.

Few areas of industry are as dynamic as the aviation industry. Throughout its history, the FAA has managed to adapt to rapid changes in order to provide the safety and operational services upon which the American traveling public depends. In recent times, the United States and the international community have experienced particularly dramatic changes that directly affect the aviation industry and, in turn, the FAA.

Over the past decade, the airline industry has gone through a protracted cycle of expansion and contraction, continuous route changes, service to new and expanded hubs, and changes in aircraft types and sizes. A new generation of state-of-the-art air transport aircraft is under development, with the need for certification by the FAA's technical experts. A new generation of navigation technology will also be coming on line.

The international aviation environment has experienced significant growth as well. Today, more than ever before, the U.S. aviation system is an integral part of a global system. Globalization in aviation has become a reality.

The end of the Cold War has brought even more change, and with it challenges and opportunities. Air routes can now be established over vast land masses that were formerly off-limits. There are new opportunities to convert downsized or closed military bases to civil aviation use to meet growing capacity needs. And manufacturers who relied heavily on the development and production of defense products must now look to the civil sector. For example, NASA and the FAA are working with manufacturers to investigate the technical and economic feasibility of a high speed civil transport aircraft.

Satellite technology for air navigation is also a reality, holding great promise for revolutionizing the world's air traffic control

systems. The potential benefits this new technology offers to the aviation community argue for the earliest feasible deployment, and call for an aggressive FAA program to help reach that objective.

The FAA has always been, and today remains, the world's foremost civil aviation authority, at the forefront of international standardization and technical improvement. The FAA's challenge is not only to adapt to the kinds of changes that are transforming the aviation environment, but to anticipate and, to the extent possible, shape the future evolution of aviation. FAA cannot afford to "play catch-up," if we are to respond to the dynamics of a changing world. It may be proper to consider "strategic alliances" between the government and the private sector in aerospace as international competition becomes more intense. Increasing cooperation with industry and the international community, improved planning, and an active research, engineering, and development program are key to managing change effectively while recognizing the realities of an austere budget climate.

If confirmed, I will work hard to provide direction and leadership for the FAA to meet the many challenges it faces. I assure you I will be a strong advocate for American aviation. I will work closely with the Congress to assure adequate resources for the FAA to do its job. The FAA's foremost mission will remain the safety of the traveling public. My earliest experiences with the FAA

impressed upon me the importance of the FAA's safety mission, when, as a young Naval aviator, I was guided safely back to base by FAA radar after losing the navigation equipment on my aircraft. Since that time, a long-standing working relationship with the agency has only enhanced my great respect for the people of the FAA and the capable way in which they meet their far-reaching safety responsibilities. I have every confidence in the agency's ability to continue to meet these responsibilities and to meet inevitable, dramatic changes.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I look forward with great anticipation to the chance to serve as FAA Administrator. If confirmed, I pledge to you my best efforts to provide the American traveling public with the safest and most efficient air transportation system possible. I also commit to working closely with you and other aviation leaders in the Congress on the many challenges that face us.

That completes my prepared statement. I would be pleased to respond to questions you may have.

AGENCY: FAA

TITLE: Remarks by David R. Hinson, Swearing In Ceremony

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Remarks by The Honorable David R. Hinson Swearing In Ceremony

August 24, 1993

Mr. Secretary, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. Mr. Secretary, it is most appropriate that I thank you for your generous comments, but it is more appropriate that I thank you and the President for your trust and confidence. I want to assure you, sir, that I approach this job and your charge with a keen sense of the responsibilities you have asked me to assume.

I'd also like to say a very special welcome to the ladies and gentlemen of the FAA who are watching by satellite. We're in a wonderful theater at the Air and Space Museum. It is tiered above, which is quite the opposite of what you would normally expect when talking to an audience. In fact it feels like Econ. 100 at a large university.

And all that's missing is the blackboard and your bluebooks, but we'll get to those later. I hope I don't disappoint anybody who's looking for all of my solutions to all of the problems that face the FAA and the aviation community because you won't hear them this morning. This is a light, joyous occasion and some of the things I'll have to say later won't be quite so light and so joyous. But I do want to share a couple of thoughts with you which I think are important. I also want to leave one particular message with all of you this morning and certainly with all of my new associates at the FAA.

I want to certainly echo the Secretary's remarks that civil aviation is at one of those frequent points when converging forces precipitate change, ready or not. And we have a number of converging forces. Consider, if you will, the President's Airline Commission and its recommendations, the Vice President's outstanding initiative on reinventing government and their recommendations relative to the FAA and how we manage our business. We also have the on-going air traffic control modernization program, the excellent and accelerating introduction of new technology into the aviation community at a rate which is going to make it very difficult for us to stay even. GPS comes to mind.

The globalization of aviation. Globalization is a very, very serious force that will play an increasing role in the policies we need to develop. And finally, of course, the will and the wishes of Congress -- very, very important. All of these are agents of change, all of these are forces acting to cause us to react, and there are many others. All of these issues require attention if we are to assure President Clinton that America will

retain its role as the world's leader in aviation. And, let me just add, parenthetically, I think it's a great credit to the President that he's willing to get involved personally in the commercial activities of some of our leading companies, and I expect him to continue that effort. I think he's setting an excellent example.

However, with all of these winds of change and all of the urgency to make things happen, I want to leave you with a word of caution this morning. As we enter these exciting times that hold much promise, we should remember that the foundation upon which our success has been built is safety. Safety is the bedrock of the success of the Federal Aviation Administration. The reputation of the FAA for world leadership in civil aviation rests in part upon the outstanding and continuing improvement in flying safety achieved since World War II. Working with the many disciplines that make up our airline industry, the FAA has established a solid foundation of technical expertise that will ensure success. The same is true, of course, for all of the other disciplines in aviation -- general aviation, experimental aviation, and to the degree that we're involved at FAA, space.

Now, I do want to share a couple of statistics with you this morning because I think they underscore the point I want to make. We are inheriting an aviation system with respect to air carriers that has almost zero defects. We have not stopped having accidents but we have almost stopped having accidents. Let me tell you how much progress my predecessors made and why it's very important as we articulate a new strategy that we're really careful. 1961 was the most unsafe year for air carriers. If we had have experienced or would have experienced the same accident rate last year, 1992, that we experienced in 1961, the airline industry in the United States would have experienced 245 accidents, two out of every three days. We had 19. We only had one that had fatalities. Most of those 19 were not really accidents in the true sense of bending an airplane; they were incidental things like spilling scalding coffee and things of that circumstance. True accidents, of course, but not catastrophic of the type we really work hard to avoid.

Thirty-two years of constant improvement in air safety. Those statistics mean something. They are statistics we cannot ignore and should not ignore. If we do ignore them, we ignore them at our own peril. It is important for everyone to understand that when a person takes the helm of an agency like the FAA and you realize what progress has been made in the most important responsibility that you have, that the changes to follow must be done carefully, deliberately, cautiously, and with great discipline. We can't do otherwise.

Secretary Pena and I believe we can and should manage change. We believe we can successfully position the FAA for the 21st Century. Our challenge is to always sharply define and always remember our fundamental objective. That's really the gist of my remarks to you this morning, but I couldn't close without saying one thing. It's no secret to many of you who have come some way to hear me speak this morning and others that in the past my political leanings may have been more Republican than

Democrat, but -- but -- the point I'm coming to, Mr Secretary is this - I have told my Republican friends that it's okay because I'm a spy.

And I have told my Democratic friends it's okay because I'm changing parties, so -- I do want to tell you though, that Secretary Pena was steadfast in his desire to have me work with him in this venture. It was his steadfastness and willingness to be disciplined -- I should say that's a polite word for really tough -- in his effort to have me join him and his Transportation team. I want you to know, Mr. Secretary, that I know how difficult that was for you and how hard you had to work to ensure that I would be here today making this speech, and I want to thank you.

And I want to thank all of my friends. Let's have some coffee. I'll look forward to seeing you all outside. Thank you very, very much, and to all of my teammates at the FAA, I'm looking forward to meeting you all personally as time goes by and I'll have something more substantive to say about what's going on in aviation at some near term function when the Secretary and I have had a chance to decide what we want to say together. Thank you very, very much.

8-24-93 - Remarks by Adm. Hinson

MR. SECRETARY, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

MR. SECRETARY IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT I THANK YOU FOR THOSE GENEROUS COMMENTS. BUT IT IS MORE APPROPRIATE THAT I THANK YOU AND PRESIDENT CLINTON FOR YOUR CONFIDENCE AND TRUST. AND I WANT TO ASSURE YOU, SIR, THAT I APPROACH THIS TASK AND YOUR CHARGE WITH A KEEN SENSE OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES YOU HAVE ASKED ME TO ASSUME.

I WOULD LIKE TO SAY A SPECIAL HELLO TO THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE FAA WHO ARE WATCHING THIS OCCASION ON VIDEO. I FEEL PRIVILEGED AND HONORED TO BE IN YOUR COMPANY.

ONE ADDITIONAL SPECIAL HELLO IS IN ORDER. SOME OF THE TWELVE AND DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMEN WHO PRECEDED ME AS ADMINISTRATOR ARE HERE TODAY. I WOULD ASK THEM TO STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED.

THIS IS A BRIEF CEREMONY AND YOU WILL BE RELIEVED TO HEAR THAT I WILL NOT MAKE A SPEECH. BUT I WOULD OFFER A COMMENT OR TWO.

I WOULD CERTAINLY ECHO SECRETARY PEÑA'S REMARKS THAT CIVIL AVIATION IS AT ONE OF THOSE FREQUENT POINTS IN HISTORY WHEN CONVERGING FORCES PRECIPITATE CHANGE, READY OR NOT.

AND WE HAVE A NUMBER OF CONVERGING FORCES -

- THE PRESIDENT'S AIRLINE COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

- THE VICE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE ON REINVENTING GOVERNMENT
- THE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL MODERNIZATION PROGRAM
- ACCELERATION IN THE APPLICATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO ALL FACETS OF AVIATION
- THE WILL AND WISHES OF CONGRESS
- GLOBALIZATION OF CIVIL AVIATION.

AND THERE ARE MANY OTHERS.

ALL OF THOSE ISSUES REQUIRE ATTENTION IF WE ARE TO ASSURE PRESIDENT CLINTON THAT AMERICA WILL RETAIN ITS ROLE AS THE WORLD'S LEADER IN AVIATION.

BUT A WORD OF CAUTION.

AS WE ENTER THESE EXCITING TIMES THAT HOLD MUCH PROMISE, WE SHOULD REMEMBER THE FOUNDATION UPON WHICH OUR SUCCESS HAS BEEN BUILT. WE MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT OUR FIRST JOB IS SAFETY.

THE REPUTATION OF THE FAA FOR WORLD LEADERSHIP IN CIVIL AVIATION RESTS, IN PART, UPON THE OUTSTANDING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN FLYING SAFETY ACHIEVED SINCE WWII. WORKING WITH THE MANY

DISCIPLINES THAT MAKE UP OUR AIRLINE INDUSTRY, THE FAA HAS ESTABLISHED A SOLID FOUNDATION OF TECHNICAL EXPERTISE THAT WILL ENSURE SUCCESS.

HOW DO WE KNOW THIS? CONSIDER THESE STATISTICS:

SINCE NTSB BEGAN PUBLISHING ACCIDENT STATISTICS, THE HIGHEST ACCIDENT RATE FOR U.S. AIR CARRIERS ~~THE MOST TRAGIC YEAR WAS~~ ^{IN} 1961. IF U.S. AIR CARRIERS HAD EXPERIENCED THE SAME ACCIDENT RATE LAST YEAR THAT THEY DID IN 1961, WE WOULD HAVE HAD 245 ACCIDENTS - AN ACCIDENT 2 OUT OF EVERY 3 DAYS!

IN 1992 TOTAL ACCIDENTS ^{ONE FATAL ACCIDENT INVOLVING PASSENGERS.} BUT WE ONLY HAD 19 AND ONLY ~~FOUR OF THOSE CAUSED PASSENGER INJURY~~ (AS A RESULT OF THE ACCIDENT). ✓

OUR OBJECTIVE OF COURSE, IS ZERO ~~DEFECTS~~ ^{ACCIDENTS}. BUT IN 32 YEARS WE HAVE MADE DEMONSTRABLE, MEASURABLE, AND PERMANENT PROGRESS.

IT IS ^{THIS} ~~THE~~ IMPROVEMENT IN SAFETY AND THE RELATIVELY EXCELLENT SAFETY ENVIRONMENT WE ENJOY TODAY THAT WE NEED TO REMEMBER AS WE BEGIN TO ADDRESS THE FORCES OF CHANGE. INDEED, IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO IGNORE HISTORY.

SECRETARY PEÑA AND I BELIEVE WE CAN AND SHOULD MANAGE CHANGE. WE BELIEVE WE CAN SUCCESSFULLY POSITION THE FAA TO MEET THE 21ST CENTURY.

8/23 3:15

Daw. d - from

Darleen Freeman Rochelle

OUR CHALLENGE IS TO ALWAYS SHARPLY DEFINE AND ALWAYS REMEMBER OUR
FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE - FLIGHT SAFETY.

THANK YOU.