

Plane Crash Survivor Suggests Better Emergency Equipment

SEATTLE (AP) — A feminine pursuer who survived the ditching of a Pan American World Airways plane off the Oregon coast March 26 asked at a federal hearing on the mishap Wednesday: "Why, why wasn't there something to throw to survivors from the life rafts?"

The question was raised by Natalie R. Parker, as she made a series of suggestions for improvements in emergency equipment.

She testified before a Civil Aeronautics Board panel in the second day of its inquiry into details of the ditching of the Hawaii-bound Stratocruiser. Four out of 23 persons aboard lost their lives in the accident, which occurred after the big plane's No. 3 engine started vibrating violently and then fell from the wing.

LIFE LINES

Suggestions of Miss Parker, as a result of the harrowing experience at sea, included: Life lines near the emergency exits, lines on life rafts which can be tossed to persons in the water to keep them from drifting away; stowing of life jackets under seats instead of behind them; protective webbing to prevent galley equipment from flying about the plane in case of an emergency landing; a corrugated floor in life rafts, instead of smooth rubber, as an aid to footing.

"I never doubted that we would reach the raft," the pursuer told the hearing board, "and I felt there was a strong hand helping us."

Joseph Adams, vice chairman of the CAB, commended the pursuer for "calmness and efficiency" in the emergency.

Stewardess Elizabeth M. Thompson testified that her seat was torn loose when the plane struck the water and she does not recall how she got into the life raft, but she said others told her later that she had helped pull some of the passengers out of the water.

ONE WHO PERISHED

She told how one of the passengers, David E. Darrow of Auburn, Wash., kept crying: "I can't make it; I can't make it." he was one of the four who perished.

The hearing is expected to continue into Thursday.

Seven of the 32 scheduled witnesses told their stories as the hearing got under way Tuesday.

Capt. Herman S. Joslyn, pilot of the ill-fated craft, described for the panel the anxious minutes preceding the crash-landing at sea and told of desperate efforts by the crew to keep the plane airborne.

Joslyn and M. P. Kerwick, the second officer, agreed the first hint of trouble was a sudden and "severe" vibration shortly after the plane left the Oregon coast

and was out to sea on the flight to Hawaii.

The ship was on automatic pilot and Joslyn grabbed the controls just before No. 3 engine dropped off the wing. The pilot said the crew had no time to lighten the load by dumping gasoline and was unable to bring the three remaining engines to full power because "a circuit breaker had popped."

FELL STEADILY

Joslyn said the plane fell steadily as the ditching was "smoother than I expected."

Two passengers, Mr. and Mrs. Claude Hollister of Portland, Ore., also told of the ditching.

Mrs. Hollister testified: "First I heard an explosion and then a crackling sound, and then this tremendous blue explosion. The engine seemed to fall down under the wing. The engine was in flames, like a ball of fire, as it fell."

Hollister, an aviation advisor for the Indonesia government, praised the plane crew but was critical of equipment on his life raft.

Kerwick said for a time the three life rafts on which passengers and crew were evacuated were threatened with being punctured by metal from the shattered plane. When the rafts floated free of the debris, he said, they drifted away from several persons in the water.

British Tax Cuts • Pole Arrested • Aid Conservatives

LONDON (AP) — The welcome tax cuts in the new British budget were widely regarded Wednesday as strongly enhancing the Conservative government's victory prospects in the May 26 national election.

Newspaper and parliamentary comment on Tuesday's budget message by Chancellor of the Exchequer R. A. Butler mainly followed party lines.

The opposition labor party was quick to denounce it as a "rich man's budget," giving tax relief to the wealthy. The Laborite critics did not mention that exemptions were increased all along the line and some 2,400,000 people in lower income brackets will cease to pay altogether.

To Edit Yearbook • Pole Arrested •

BERLIN (AP) — East German authorities say they have arrested a Pole whom they claim was hired by U.S. intelligence agents to force a Polish jet fighter pilot to defect with his plane to West Berlin.

ART WARNING

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Plus XII warned sternly Wednesday against forms of art which "deform the design of the creator" or "excite the more vulgar passions."

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