

Progress in Several Fields of Air Safety Said Dangerously Lacking

Washington - UPI - A leading aviation research organization warns bluntly that progress in several fields of air safety is lagging dangerously. The Guggenheim Aviation Safety Center at Cornell University (N.Y.) listed the fields as:

- More reliable altimeters.
- Collision avoidance.
- Crash fire protection.
- Occupant protection.
- Weather forecasting.
- Approach and runway lighting.
- Sea rescue apparatus.
- Human factors.

The center's report on 1960 air safety research projects blamed Congress for much of the lack of progress because of failure to appropriate sufficient money.

Item by item, the report included these research deficiencies and recommendations for correcting them:

Altimetry
"A continued effort and a strong one should be made to improve altimetry to the point where accuracy is unquestioned."

Collision Avoidance
"...presumably dim outlook for the successful development of an anti-collision device or warning indicator. The center hopes the FAA (Federal Aviation Agency) will continue its interest and adequate financial support for research and development of such a device. While it may not be of great value in highly congested areas, the device will be vitally important in uncontrolled airspace and perhaps even on controlled airways..."

"The catastrophic consequences of even one collision cannot be neglected. The center hopes that the industry will not wait for the perfect device, but accept one that may be even partly successful. For example, since only eight per cent of all collisions occur head-on, why wait for a system to eliminate the head-on collision if another can be more immediately available which will alleviate the other 92 per cent collision potential?"

Crash Fire Protection
"A theoretical system for preventing fire on impact has been in existence since 1954 yet "there has been little progress in developing the hardware to apply these principles to aircraft operation. The need is urgent. There also appears to be a serious lapse in fire prevention research (such as) crash-resistant fuel tanks, fire-resistant compounds, etc."

Occupant Protection
Sixty per cent of airplane accidents occur away from airports where assistance from rescue personnel is delayed or unavailable. Research is needed on stronger seats, belts, doors, exits, floors and cabin structure.

Weather Forecasting
"It is hard to conceive of a single area... which would be of more immediate benefit to aviation... the FAA, military and weather bureau have combined on several excellent programs... but Congress has delayed its approval of financial support. There appears to be a need not only for more accurate area weather but also on the local weather variations that occur in very small areas, such as drifting fogs over the ends of runways."

Approach and Runway Lights
"Budgetary limitations have prevented the FAA from installing well-known and recognized aids to facilitate the landing of aircraft, especially in marginal weather. Examples of these are high intensity approach lights, dual ILS (instrument landing system), narrow-gauge and center-line runway lights. The need for these devices has been known for many years, yet at the time of this report only 23 airports are fully equipped. Since some 40 per cent of fatal accidents occur during the approach to a landing, the need for such aids is obvious."

"Vastly improved radio rescue beacons have been developed and are used by some airlines. Yet the obsolete 'Gibson girl' (a portable radio transmitter carried in life rafts) still is required although many consider it to be more of a hazard than a safeguard in the event of a ditching at sea."

Aviation Pioneer Starts New Career With Electronics

Rancho Santa Fe, Calif. - UPI - La Motte T. Cochu made a hit of sorts in the early days of the airplane when he crashed a plane on a power line. He's been creating his own brand of fireworks ever since as an airlines pioneer and a builder of planes.



LA MOTTE T. COCHU
A Long Career

Cochu, in his mid-60s, looks back on a long career during which he headed two airlines and bossed two of the nation's largest aircraft manufacturing companies. And he looks forward to a new career as head of an electronics firm.

Cochu got his first taste of flying when he was a student at Princeton university from which he graduated in 1917.

"Flying was just a sport in those days," he recalled in a UPI interview. "I used to sneak off from Princeton to Lawrenceville to take flying lessons. First pop out of the box my instructor and I hit a high tension wire. We blacked out Lawrenceville. I hadn't been up a half minute when the engine coughed a few times and we sat on the wire. We were scratched up a bit but not seriously hurt."

Direct Approach
Cochu learned to take the direct approach to problems when he became president of American Airways, the predecessor to American Airlines. "We have four divisions," he said, "and they weren't working well together. I had an idea. I issued some really crazy instructions to the division managers. Two of them went along with me and the two others told me, in effect, 'I was a crazy so-and-so. I fired the two 'yes men' and kept the two others and the company began to operate properly.'"

One of the division managers who told off Cochu was C. R. Smith, now president of American Airlines. Cochu was later president of Trans World Airways which evolved out of the old Transcontinental Air Transport (TAT). He then became president of Convair and board chairman and general manager of Northrop Aircraft, Inc.

Jack Northrop, founder of the company which bears his name, was way ahead of his time in aircraft design, according to Cochu. "He's responsible for most of the advances in design today," said Cochu, "wing flaps, the delta wing and many others."

Built Northrop
Cochu began from scratch with the Northrop organization and when he left it had been built up to the point where there were 18,000 employees.

He has a seemingly endless supply of stories about his experiences and fondly recalls his direct approach solution to many problems.

There was the early day problem of lost passenger baggage for instance. "I solved that one," said Cochu. "I called a meeting of all station managers at Albuquerque. They arrived the night before and I called the first meeting for 7:30 in the morning. Get 'em out early, you know. They showed up - but most of them needed shaves and wore dirty shirts. I'd seen to it that their baggage was missing. We had a lot more efficiency in keeping track of baggage after that." At Convair, he pulled the

same sort of a stunt. They were having an inordinate amount of trouble with wiring in planes, the push buttons to summon stewardesses and that sort of thing.

Cochu had an electrical panel set up in a room and called in a group of men who worked on the panels. He pushed a button and smoke poured from the panel. Everyone ran out of the room.

"I had the fire department standing by," Cochu chuckled. "When these people came back into the room after the smoke cleared, I said to them, 'How would you like to have that happen while you were in a plane? We didn't have very much trouble after that.'"

Decided to Retire
About four years ago, Cochu decided to retire to his home high on a hill in Rancho Santa Fe, about 25 miles north of San Diego.

"There are too many aircraft companies," he growled by way of explanation. "There's not enough business for one of them."

"I fooled around," he said, "as president of the Community Chest and that sort of thing. Then a banker friend of mine got me interested in this electronics plant in San Diego. I put a little money into it. First thing I knew I was back in business."

As board chairman of Cochu Electronics, Inc., he still maintains his direct approach.

"I got my people together a while back and asked them why we were in business," he said. "Some of them said to produce closed circuit television systems, computers and all that. After they finished, I told them, 'No, you're all wrong. The only reason we're in business is to make money. These things are just a way to make money.' This is something you've got to emphasize with your engineers. A design engineer never designs anything that he doesn't believe couldn't be done a little better. They don't realize that time is money. You've got to call a halt some place."

Cochu, who has been at the controls of almost every type of plane made, has not lost his interest in aviation despite his current preoccupation with electronics and government contracts in connection with missile systems such as the Titan and the the Polaris.

He was asked what was the latest plane he had flown. "A 707," he replied brightly, "but I think that's the last plane I'll ever fly."

Not Enough Jurors In Multnomah Court

Portland - UPI - For 38 years Multnomah county has had the wrong number of jurors in District Court cases.

At least that's the impression reached after a legislator made a query and judges and clerks checked lawbooks. The county, like the rest of the state, has been seating six jurors in District Court.

Rep. George Hoomissen (D-Portland) was researching a bill which would permit conviction in criminal cases by vote of five out of six District Court jurors.

He said statutes indicated that juries in Multnomah County District Courts must be twice as large as those in

other counties. He wrote to District Judge Richard J. Burke who concluded Van Hoomissen was right. He said others checked it and concurred.

Pensioner, 98, Credits 'Luck' for Longevity

Chicago - UPI - A 98-year-old pensioner who retired in 1928 after 34 years with U.S. Steel said Wednesday he couldn't explain his longevity. "I really don't know," Henry Edwin Bach said. "I enjoy living. I've smoked for 80 years and I still take an occasional cigar. I guess I'm lucky."

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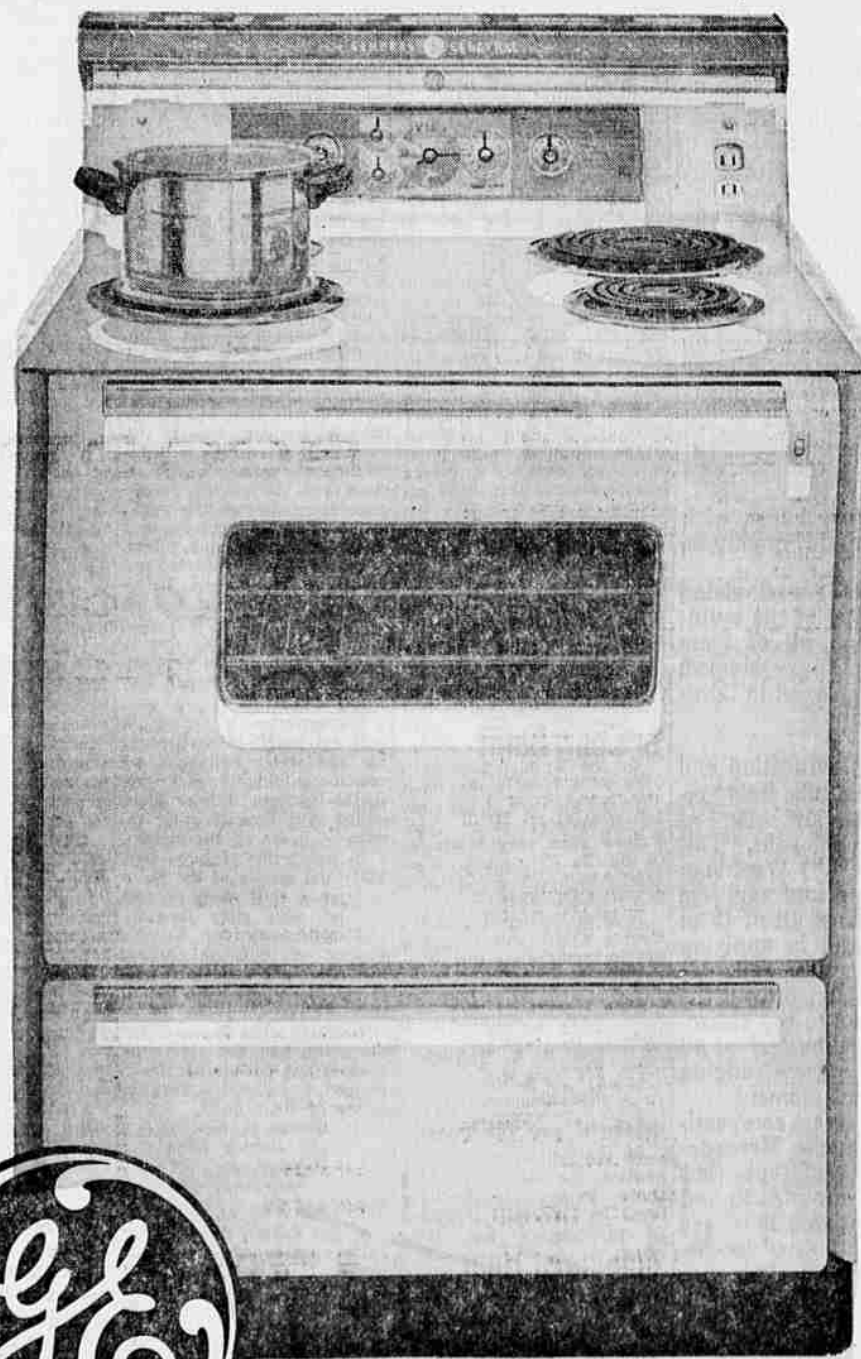
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