

Private Planes and Fuel Shortages

To the Editor:

Perhaps Dorothy Rodgers' Nov. 22 letter suggesting that private planes be grounded for the duration of the energy crisis was well intentioned, but it shows a curious willingness to shut down a means of transportation about which the writer may know very little.

(1) The facts of the matter are that much of general aviation, or private flying, is for purposeful business transportation that cannot be accomplished in a more economical and efficient way.

(2) Almost two-thirds of our flying is done in airplanes that use less fuel per mile than the average American-built car, and is conducted to towns well away from the 300 hubs served with any frequency by the airlines. By way of contrast, there are some 10,000 airports that are available to the businessman-pilot with an airplane.

(3) The total fuel consumed in 1972 by the 140,000 general-aviation planes flying amounted to less than 6/10 of 1 per cent of the gasoline used by Americans, and less than 8/10 of 1 per cent of the jet fuel.

(4) It is more than just "convenience" that has attracted so many businessmen to the advantages of flying their own airplanes. In many cases,

general aviation provides the only practical way to get from one point to another. For example, try your airline travel agent on these city pairs, each served by a fine general-aviation airport: Bradford, Penn., to Olathe, Kansas, or Sanford, Me., to Albany, Ga.

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Editor and Publisher, Flying
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