
Strange Strike Of The Airplane Pilots

There is more than one bizarre aspect to that strike of the American Airline pilots against the company. In the first place, no wage claims are involved. To the ordinary union worker that will seem less strange than it might when he learns that the pilots now make from \$12,000 to \$18,000 a year, depending on the equipment they operate.

But if no wage claims are involved, what is at stake? The pilots say the airline sometimes makes them fly more than eight hours at a time. This, they say, is too much and endangers safety. The airline counters with the claim that its flight schedules have been approved by the Federal aviation authorities.

Efforts by the National Mediation Board to settle the matter have just been resumed. The board has the power to recommend that the President set up a fact-finding panel. But this is only where a controversy substantially affects an essential national transport service. Apparently the board does not feel that the American Airline strike as yet meets these conditions. There are parallel air and surface services still available.

On the other hand, American is a major factor in air transport, and the strike is bringing hardship to non-pilot employes who are being laid off wholesale. A settlement at the earliest possible time would bring an end to a disturbing struggle.