OBESITY IS DANGEROUS IN FLYERS.

(*Harold W. Ellingson. Flying Safety*, 12:22, *Apr.* 1956).

Fatty tissue is notoriously capable of dissolving nitrogen from the blood, and it is likely to release the nitrogen at high altitude in the wrong way. At best, gas released at altitude can cause bends. At worst, at high altitudes, and especially in case of sudden decompression, the freed bubbles of gas can push little particles of fat into the blood stream, where they can be carried to the heart or the brain and cause death.

Two cases of death following explosive decompression at 30,000 feet have been reported recently. Both of these individuals were obese. They were riding in Air Force jets as passengers for special, emergency reasons, without clearance from a flight surgeon. Both went into shock when the aircraft lost their pressurization at altitude. They were unconscious when the aircraft returned to the ground and both died within a few hours after being removed to hospitals. Though these individuals were passengers, the same hazards exist for pilots and other crew-members who allow their weight to creep upward.