

This could be an airline guy's idea of a joke, but at a recent news conference in London, Ryanair CEO Mike O'Leary said he's considering putting pay toilets on his commercial aircraft. If he isn't kidding, this could make flying, already becoming more painful every day, an even worse ordeal.

One British newspaper reports that O'Leary "is touting the idea of putting a coin slot on the toilet door as a means of raising 'discretionary revenue.' Hmm. Wouldn't that better be described as "excrecinary revenue"?



O'Leary mentioned that to use the toilet in the air could cost about one pound, or about \$1.40 in U.S. money. We can clearly remember the toilets in hotels and train stations of a decade or so ago that charged a dime. It also brings to mind the old scatological poem that begins with, "Here I sit, broken-hearted" Think of the cost of just one flight for elderly people who must make frequent "pit stops" in the air.

Actually, pay toilets are still flourishing around the world. When we were in Rome recently, and visited the Coleseum, the toilets were pay-as-you-go. Also, in Paddington Station in London, it was the same. My spouse didn't have English coins, and only the kindness of a British stranger saved the day.

One newswriter, also possibly joking, said if Ryanair put in pay toilets to make money, it could have a backlash effect of losing money for the airline. He said people would stop buying expensive drinks in flight so that they wouldn't have to use the toilets. To misquote a phrase written by Sir Walter Scott, "Oh what a tangled web we weave, when first we charge to relieve!"