

Mr. SYMINGTON: Well, generally so, yes. But of course, if you have to carry mail as is required under the particular circumstances in this case—

Mr. JACKMAN: Your costs have gone up. The point is that your costs have gone up at a faster percentage than your revenue?

Mr. SYMINGTON: Yes. That is because we have provided capacity, gasoline and everything else for the carriage of a 61 per cent increase in mail and have not got anything for it, so that the capacity has been non-remunerative capacity.

Mr. JACKMAN: If this were a private company, would you agree to the terms embodied in the present post office contract?

Mr. SYMINGTON: Only if it were a non-profit company.

Mr. JACKMAN: Yes. It is an unreasonable type of contract, is it?

Mr. SYMINGTON: It just depends on how you put it. The benefits of the contract go to the government who own the line, that is all. It does not make any difference to us. It cannot make any difference. We do not get anything anyway.

Mr. JACKMAN: I appreciate that. But for the purpose of comparison, so that the taxpayers will know whether or not you are succeeding or slipping back, it might be well if you would show a net increase in surplus or a decrease, rather than have it go through another channel, though eventually to the same source, namely the government.

Mr. SYMINGTON: It may be so. But there is not any question, Mr. Jackman, as far as I can see, that this line has produced more results this year for the money spent than it ever has.

Hon. Mr. HANSON: Just what do you mean by that?

Mr. SYMINGTON: I mean, it has given more service, has been better operated than it ever has been.

Mr. JACKMAN: That is a general statement; and we cannot quarrel with it, I do not suppose.

Mr. SYMINGTON: There are many obvious things that show it. For instance, we have run 1,300,000 more miles of mileage and our gasoline bill is not up anything like that. We are operating more efficiently, even with older planes. If you operate your machinery the way we have had to do, because we have not been able to get new planes, it means a great deal of maintenance. If you operate under the rules of running an air line, after so many hours in the air you give it what is called "check No. 4", and after so many more hours you give it check No. 5, check No. 6 and check No. 7, which means taking a plane completely apart and putting it together again. If you are running your machinery to capacity the way we are, you have to have these checks so much more frequently that it takes a great deal of maintenance to do that.

Mr. JACKMAN: Oh, yes.

Mr. SYMINGTON: So that your maintenance costs naturally are up. At the same time when you are operating your equipment to the extent that we are, and the plane is either full of people, full of mail or full of express, of course you are getting a better result—it must be so—in the ultimate value of the service you render for that amount of money.

Mr. JACKMAN: Have you any figures showing the percentage of use to capacity of the flights?

Mr. SYMINGTON: Yes, we have. It is one of those things which is comparatively relative. It is 83 per cent. That, of course, arises because you do not carry 100 per cent from Vancouver to St. John's, Newfoundland, because you are dropping off and taking on.

Hon. Mr. HANSON: It would appear to be a fair average.