

and St. Andrews Airways Ltd. is based 25 miles outside Winnipeg. St. Andrews Airways Ltd. applied to the CTC for permission to operate out of Winnipeg International Airport and was turned down. This is an inconvenience to the people who fly into Island Lake and St. Theresa Point. This is approximately 300 miles, and then of course they have to pay additional costs to get out to the St. Andrews airstrip. This poses problems for the aircraft company as it means they cannot be competitive with other companies that operate out of the Winnipeg International Airport. After the application was refused by the CTC, St. Andrews Airways Ltd. received a cease and desist order which limited them to operating out of St. Andrews.

The ironic thing is that the St. Andrews airport is of limited size, and St. Andrews Airways Ltd. is using aircraft that are the maximum allowable size for operating in that area. I feel that heavy duty aircraft are not safe to operate there with loads of passengers. The company has given excellent service to the people of Island Lake over the years, and it should be remembered that these people have no other means of transportation. I cannot see the rationale behind refusing St. Andrews Airways Ltd. permission to fly out of Winnipeg International Airport. There seems to be a move afoot to eliminate all the small operators in northern and central Manitoba and to give the business to one big company.

Taylor Airways have four aircraft that operate entirely out of Gods Lake Narrows. They employ local people, and money is spent in the community. This is the kind of operation we should have in the north, and we are not satisfied with only the larger companies operating our transport system.

Air Canada is a good example of a large company running at a deficit. I can see the same thing happening if we turn all the business over to other larger companies. We should keep some of the small operators who provide excellent service to the community.

Cross Lake Airways operates out of Wabowden, Manitoba, and provides excellent service to Cross Lake and Norway House. These little airways that operate in the north do not fight with each other; each has its own base of operation and they all provide good service, so I think we should leave them alone. They are subject to the same regulations as anyone else; their aircraft have to be up to standard and they have to meet the regulations. I am sure a larger company would have difficulty meeting their standard of service. The fact that an aircraft is sitting in the community day and night, and is there in the event of a serious accident, means that the people do not have to call out on the two-way radio to Winnipeg for an aircraft. In a lot of cases an aircraft might not arrive from Winnipeg until the next morning, but when there is one in the community an emergency is taken care of immediately. The bush pilots know the terrain and how to operate under conditions peculiar to the north.

Aero Trades operates out of Oxford House with a small aircraft, and Calm Air Ltd. operates out of Lynn Lake and Thompson into other small communities. I do not think it is

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sensible to replace these small operators with a larger air carrier.

Judging by the regulations imposed by the Department of Transport over the last few years, it would almost seem as if the department is jealous of the fact that in 1966 Manitoba built airstrips in remote communities that were not serviced by other means. A good example of the strict regulations imposed by the department is found at the Oxford House airstrip. Five others were closed, but Oxford House was left. The departmental engineers went up there for 24 hours and then issued a report saying that the airstrip was not suitable for particular types of aircraft. Mr. Speaker, I am interested in safety, but we must realize that all airstrips in the north cannot be equipped with radar. When we talk about IFR in the north we joke that it means "I follow the railway" or "I follow the river" because the isolated communities just do not have the modern IFR systems.

After 1967 the Oxford House airstrip was hampered by regulations. Apparently only one type of aircraft could operate there. The province of Manitoba was responsible for doing the work on the airstrip required by the report from the Department of Transport—the building had to be moved, the airstrip lengthened and widened, a certain type of aggregate put on it, and many other things that could not be done in one year because the heavy equipment required was not available.

There were two years when the community could not be served on a regular basis by a certain classification of air carrier. Then out of the blue, some four months ago, the Oxford House airstrip received a clean bill of health from the inspectors. It may be that the inspectors had changed and finally there was somebody who could relate to the north and the development taking place there. Now the community is serviced with a regular schedule. There are three flights a week into the community and the people do not have to charter a plane every time they want to leave.

● (1620)

Why should the community of Oxford House have gone without regular air service for two years? The buildings were not first moved in accordance with the stipulation of the inspector visiting the area, and to my recollection the airstrip was not extended. A bit of gravel was put on it, which would be helpful on a wet day. But most airstrips in that part of the country are frozen solid seven months out of 12, and some are located in regions of permafrost. This community suffered two years because it was said its airstrip did not meet Department of Transport standards. Then, out of the clear blue sky, the community got a clean bill of health and was told its airstrip was adequate for bigger aircraft.

We must watch air transport developments in the north closely. We do not want large operators shoving our smaller operators aside and taking all their business, for we need small operators in many remote communities which can only be serviced adequately by small operators operating a few small aircraft. People want to be reassured they can fly their sick children to hospital. Many small communities are served by