



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CIVIL AVIATION IN CANADA

An address by the Hon. George C. Marler, Minister of Transport, to the Canadian Shorthorn, the Canadian Aberdeen-Angus and the Canadian Hereford Associations, London, Ontario, February 19, 1957.

...Civil aviation for commercial purposes began shortly after the First World War. After the initial enthusiasm for exhibition flights and pleasure flying had subsided, aviation settled down to serious pursuits.

It was not long before it was discovered that aircraft were exceedingly useful for the protection of our forests and for aerial surveys, and as early as 1920 aircraft were being widely used for these purposes. A short time after, in the autumn of 1921, the discovery of oil in the Mackenzie River basin led to the first attempt to establish air transportation on a large scale in the Far North. Later on, in 1924, Laurentide Air Services inaugurated the first air transport service for passengers and goods to meet the needs resulting from the expansion of the mining industry in north-western Quebec.

Starting from these humble beginnings, commercial aviation expanded rapidly, though this expansion was more spectacular in the north than in the more settled parts of our country. This is easily explained. In most cases transport by alternative means was difficult, costly and slow over the long distances to be covered, whereas transport by air was facilitated, and indeed stimulated, by the very geography of the north. The lakes, with which our north country is dotted, afforded ideal landing places for aircraft equipped with floats in summer and skis in winter, and for this very reason flying in the north expanded rapidly and rendered an increasingly valuable and economic service.

The situation was very different in the older and more settled parts of Canada, where the conventional means of transportation were well established and in some places even over-developed. To these parts of our country, the only advantage which air transport could offer - a saving of time - necessitated the organization of a network of ground installations costing substantial sums. For these reasons, the development of