

in propaganda and in the newspapers of the setting up of great organizations which rather indicate that a competitive situation is contemplated. I am not worrying about it; that rests with the government and parliament in the carrying out of their policy.

Hon. Mr. HOWE: Of course, there can be no competitive situation unless parliament revises the Trans-Canada Act. The Trans-Canada Act protects these lines against competing services. I do not think parliament will ever be disposed to modify it. I do not see why they should. This franchise is owned by the people of Canada. While they might abrogate the Act to let private enterprise in, I do not think they will.

Mr. SISSONS: Does Trans-Canada plan to extend the service to Alaska?

Hon. Mr. HOWE: That is the programme, yes.

Mr. SYMINGTON: Trans-Canada plans to extend its service to Alaska, being an international service, with a foreign government, and being a port, a gateway, to an airway across the world. In my judgment, Canada occupies a very important position in the future of the air world. It is on the great circle. It is the shortest way. It has stable weather. It must inevitably take part, in my judgment, in both trans-Pacific and trans-Atlantic air services by agreement with foreign countries. These air lines in foreign countries, with the exception of the United States, are all government air lines. The government is, of course, very much interested in the position of Canada in transportation in the air, over the ocean or any other place; and a competitive situation in Canada would, to my mind, be perfectly fatal to that policy.

Now, the general intentions of Trans-Canada are these—as we know them at the moment, and subject always to the government and parliament—that whatever part Canada takes in these services will be performed by some arm of Trans-Canada; because we have built up an organization on a service which I think I can say with pardonable pride does not obtain any other place. We have built it up from the ground. We have shown that it could be done. I don't think there is an air line any place that could have 18 planes fly 7,000,000 miles, and fly them safely. It is unheard of, so far as I know, any place else.

Mr. HARRIS: You have had your exceptions.

Mr. SYMINGTON: That is a comparative term. We have had one exception, quite true. But it is considered a safe flying line. It is a line which was built up on the principle of safety. It was built up first and foremost on an excellent ground service. That is what is necessary to any air line, the ground service counts first and foremost. Second, is the training of your pilots; because, the human element always enters into it; but the correct training of your pilots, plus your ground work are the first essentials to the safe operation of an air line. After that, of course, you must use eternal vigilance to keep everybody up to the mark; you have to be very close to the situation; and you have to pray. That is what air line operation amounts to.

But the moment adequate equipment, in the shape of four-engined machines, becomes available Trans-Canada Air Lines will change its present route from Winnipeg and fly from Winnipeg to Port Arthur and Fort William, the Sault, and Toronto. The east line will branch off, instead of going North Bay-Toronto, and it will go straight across; the Toronto line will connect up with Montreal, and go to New York; because that is the shortest and the best populated route. But until the four-engined machine comes in it is not safe to fly over the Great Lakes. But it is coming, just as sure as we are here, the minute the war is over. There will be, as I say, a great deal of international traffic; and, of course, it is for parliament to say what is going to be done about it. But at the moment connecting lines are being watched closely by Trans-Canada Air Lines for the purpose of eliminating competition in a service which essentially cannot stand competition, because the cost per cubic foot of carriage does not permit it; it is too expensive a service.