

*Trans-Canada Air Lines***TRANS-CANADA AIR LINES**

EXTENSION OF ROUTE TO MEXICO CITY

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, in view of the interest previously displayed by this house in the question of Trans-Canada Air Lines service to Mexico and the difficulties of starting the service, I wish to make the following statement which is also being issued in Washington today:

Representatives of the government of Canada and the United States met on December 14 and 15, 1953, in Washington to hold informal discussions on matters of current concern in the field of civil aviation. Mr. J. R. Baldwin, chairman of the Canadian air transport board, and Mr. Oswald Ryan, chairman of the United States civil aeronautics board, were the principal spokesmen for their respective governments.

The main subjects discussed were:

1. A proposed operation by Trans-Canada Air Lines of an air service linking eastern Canada with Mexico City via Tampa, Florida, where a technical non-traffic stop would be made.

2. Pan American World Airways service between Seattle, Whitehorse and Fairbanks as well as the Colonial Airlines operation Washington-Ottawa Montreal-New York.

3. The desirability of consultation, within the next few months, for the purpose of considering amendment of the route annex of the United States-Canada air transport agreement.

It was agreed that the civil aeronautics board would issue to Trans-Canada Air Lines a six-months renewable permit for Montreal-Mexico City flights, making non-traffic stops at Tampa. In the special circumstances the civil aeronautics board also agreed that T.C.A. might, for reasons of economy, utilize the same aircraft and the same schedules for the Montreal-Tampa portion of such flights as are used for the Montreal-Tampa services operated by that carrier under the air transport agreement.

The Canadian representatives had indicated their desire that Trans-Canada be permitted to combine its Montreal-Tampa operations under the air transport agreement and Montreal-Mexico City operations, with a technical stop at Tampa, under the international air services transit agreement for a temporary period until aircraft and facilities for non-stop operations between Canada and Mexico became available. The representatives of the United States made known their desire to co-operate with Canada in helping T.C.A. resolve its operational problem, stating that in the circumstances such co-operation did

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

not imply a departure from the established policy of the United States in the field of international aviation.

The spirit of co-operation was carried into the discussion regarding the operations of United States carriers which have been under review by the Canadian authorities, and it was agreed that Pan American World Airways and Colonial Airlines should be permitted to continue their respective combined services through Canadian points, and that the air transport board would vacate the outstanding show-cause orders.

With reference to the present network of air routes between the United States and Canada, it was understood that the Canadian government will, within the next few months, bring forward proposals looking toward a review of the route schedules of the bilateral air transport agreement. That is the end of the statement.

T.C.A. will now be able to proceed with its plans for initiation of service to Mexico City by way of Tampa and will, I expect, commence operations during January. During the same discussions in Washington problems attendant upon the use of the airport at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, in connection with a proposed new T.C.A. service from Montreal through Ottawa, North Bay, Sudbury and the lakehead to Winnipeg, were also considered. There had been no disagreement on this matter but certain legal and procedural questions had arisen. These were settled satisfactorily and in a spirit of ready co-operation on both sides so that T.C.A. on this service will be able, through use of the United States field at the Soo, to provide service to the residents of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

Hon. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I feel sure that there will be general satisfaction not only in the house but throughout Canada that this problem has been resolved for a period of six months, and we would hope for a longer term, as a result of the negotiations that have taken place. There may be reasons why it is not possible to achieve that complete freedom of movement in the case of aircraft that applies to ships whereby ships of all nations move comparatively freely to the various ports of the world. However, at a time when we are seeking the extension of freedom of transport and communication, I think that every evidence of international co-operation such as this is extremely heartening. I believe that, entirely apart from the question involved in these particular problems that were under review, all Canadians will welcome this evidence of a spirit of co-operation between these two nations.