

4.

Thus nations have been, and will be, unwilling to agree to a substantial limitation and reduction of national air armaments without an assurance of effective international control over civil aviation.

In view of these considerations it is clearly essential that every effort be made to ensure that international air transport after the war is organized on some principle sounder than the pre-war principle of the "closed sky". If we go back to the pre-war situation we shall knowingly be embarking on a course which will lead to international animosities, and high national subsidies, which will retard the development of air transport and will put obstacles, which may well be impassable, in the way of effective disarmament. We shall be deliberately increasing the possibilities of the outbreak of another world war.

5. These arguments against reverting to the pre-war system are based on the general world interest. Arguments for internationalization can also be based on direct United Kingdom interests. The Barlow committee stated, for example, that a reversion to the pre-war system when this war ends would mean that the United Kingdom would inevitably have to operate under very severe handicaps - in particular the necessity of attempting to compete with the United States in the provision of services on a lavish and world-wide scale - and the United Kingdom would be compelled heavily to subsidize its own services in the interests of national prestige. Lord Finlay, referring particularly to Pan-American Airways, puts the argument bluntly.

"It is easy to see that in unscrupulous hands aviation could become a very powerful weapon whereby a particular Government, either openly or under cover of Big Business, could successfully conduct a policy of peaceful penetration in those regions of the world where the local governments are too weak, too poor, or too inefficient to supply for themselves the air services which the stronger nation would be only too ready to provide. In fact it may be argued that, as far as civil aviation is concerned, the choice before the world lies between Americanisation and internationalization. If this is correct, it is difficult to doubt that it is under the latter system that British interests will best be served."

(underlining added)

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