

Air Lines and Canadian Pacific Air Lines.

New Rights in the U. K.

On the North Atlantic, Trans-Canada has been given new rights in the United Kingdom for traffic from Ireland, and the Azores. It has been given rights in Brussels by the Belgian Government, adding another possible continental stop to the one we had already been granted at Amsterdam in the Netherlands, looking to the future when Trans-Canada Air Lines may go on to Europe. On the Caribbean route we have obtained rights from the United States for a traffic stop at Tampa - St. Petersburg, Florida, and additional points of call at British territories in the Caribbean, notably Barbados, Antigua and British Guiana. In the trans-border field we have also obtained for Trans-Canada the right to operate from Montreal to New York, by far the most heavily travelled air route between Canada and the United States.

In the Pacific, new agreements provide that on its South Pacific run Canadian Pacific Air Lines may also make traffic calls at Honolulu and at Fiji. On the North Pacific route it has been given traffic rights at Hong Kong. The Canadian Pacific Air Lines service to Australasia is now in operation, and I expect that by virtue of the rights obtained at Hong Kong the Canadian Pacific Air Lines service to the Orient through Alaska will be in operation before the end of the month.

There also remains the difficulty of persuading the public to travel by air. A certain amount of fear will have to be overcome, a fear that has been accentuated by accidents which have taken place on foreign airlines, and by domestic criticism of the North Star in spite of the unusually fine record of that plane and of Trans-Canada Air Lines with regard to safety. The safety record of the scheduled airlines is not yet quite as low as that of bus lines and railways but has over recent years come progressively closer to it until a very small gap remains - not enough to make any significant difference to the traveller; in fact, for the period 1941-47, inclusive, the record of United States scheduled airlines with regard to air fatality was better than that in passenger cars and taxis, the average death rate being 2.25 per 100 million miles travelled by air and 2.8 per 100 million miles travelled by bus and taxi. Trans-Canada Air Lines' record is even better in Canada.

Time does not permit me to deal with the position of domestic airlines.

The second scope of transportation activity I wish to review is one which I think is the backbone of Canada's economy, and that is rail transportation. The railways have been serving us so long - for more than a century - and are so much a part of our daily lives, that we are prone to treat them almost as we do the weather. If the weather is good we are pleased; if it is bad, we complain. I suggest to you that you should not treat the railways as a simple force of nature. They are a human institution. They have a job to do, and I think we owe them some commendation for the way they are doing it, some appreciation of their place in our economy and some understanding of their problems. Let us take a few moments to size them up.

Canada has more railway mileage per capita than any other nation, and makes more use of railways, per capita, than any other country. We operate over 40,000 miles of main track, and I need not tell you how complete the coverage of the ten provinces is. The use of the railways has risen steadily through each decade, from 1,200 ton miles per capita in 1900 to 4,700 today. We still have plenty of work for our railways to do, and it would be a poor Canadian who would look forward to a drying up of our resources and a drastic diminishment of our industrial production, instead of to a continued expansion. Furthermore, it must not be lost sight of that in Canada the railways are more than simply carriers. In addition to trains, steamships, car ferries and airlines, they operate widespread telegraph systems, great chains of hotels and many other services. There are over 180,000 employees, and in 1948 total wages paid by the railways of Canada amounted to approximately