



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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THE CANADIAN TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

An address by Mr. Lionel Chevrier,  
Minister of Transport,  
before the Montreal Rotary Club,  
on September 12, 1950.

With the permission of your Chairman I have chosen to make some observations on the transportation situation.

Canada is a country of vast distances, comparatively small population, and diverse physical and geographical characteristics. I do not believe it to be an exaggeration to say that no other single factor is of greater importance to our national economy and well-being than transportation, and indeed I do not think it is too much to say that the history of transportation is the history of Canada.

The subject covers such a wide scope that I propose to review it under three separate heads - aviation, water transportation and railways.

Aviation is young in terms of our civilization but it has had and continues to experience, a rapid growth which has raised it to the position of a well-established transportation industry in Canada. Over the course of the coming generation I believe we will see added to its present qualitative importance, a quantitative growth which will make it an even more integral part of our economy. This development is taking place with relatively little assistance from the government, thanks to the initiative and efficiency of Trans-Canada Airlines and our private operators of air services.

The role played by aviation during the recent railway strike substantiates the claims which I have made. Without the existence of commercial air services, long-haul passenger and mail movement, and high priority cargo movement, would have broken down with disastrous results for the economy. The major air companies, however, met the challenge with great success. Further, on both coasts where water shipping was also affected, smaller private operators rose to the occasion in magnificent fashion and their resourcefulness and ingenuity enabled them to take care of not only passengers and mail, but all sorts of cargo over the emergency period.

The growth of commercial aviation in Canada can best be described by comparing the revenues of less than \$17 millions received from all domestic air services in 1945, with the revenues of almost \$40 millions in 1949, an increase of roughly 125 per cent in five years.