

Air Canada also made news recently with the introduction of the "Daily News". What exactly is this?

In essence, it is a 25-minute, bilingual news and sports video, produced by the English and French networks of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Six days a week, after the recording of the mid-day news package, video cassettes leave our Toronto hub for system-wide distribution to all video-equipped aircraft, making Air Canada the only North American carrier offering news on both short and long haul flights.

The Asia-Pacific region is reported to be the fastest growing destination for civil aviation. What are Air Canada's plans in this regard?

The November 1993 introduction of service to New Delhi as an extension of Vancouver-London was prompted by an unprecedented economic boom in India. This routing enabled us to provide the large ethnic Indian community in British Columbia with direct access to their native country. Moreover, this extra flying was made possible by redeploying the existing Boeing 747 fleet without reducing capacity on other routes.

In addition, through our alliance with Korean Air, which marks our debut as an operator of scheduled transpacific services, we now have access to South Korea which is Canada's fifth largest trading partner and a maturing "Asian Dragon" economy.

And elsewhere in the world?

Houston was added to our network because it is a Continental Airlines hub and a major gateway to North America, strategically positioned to benefit from North Ameri-



can Free Trade. Calgary-Chicago service has also been restored and the former Winnipeg-Chicago weekend service has been converted into a twice-daily operation to help build connecting traffic with United Airlines.

You mention Continental Airlines with which Air Canada formed a major alliance in 1993. Do such alliances represent the successful future of civil aviation?

Unquestionably, as far as Air Canada is concerned. The evolution of our alliance structure has been predicated on the need to achieve greater critical mass and network scope by offering passenger and cargo customers the convenience of one-stop shopping for travel or shipping to almost anywhere on the globe.

In 1993, for example, our significant alliances with Continental Airlines, Air France and Korean Air expanded a powerful lineup that already included United, Cathay Pacific, and on a route-specific basis, Swissair and 11 other foreign carriers.

Today, with two strong partners in the United States and multiple partners in Europe, the Middle East and Asia, our network now comprises over 500 destinations, served by a new internal reservation system launched in early 1994.

Will the opening up of new Pacific destinations necessitate fleet expansion?

Certainly. In fact we have ordered six A340-300s for delivery beginning in late 1996 as a replacement for older Boeing 747s. These are long-distance champions with a range of over 12,300 kilometres, more than sufficient to fly non-stop from Toronto to Seoul or Osaka. Moreover, they are significantly quieter and more fuel-efficient than the aircraft they will replace.

It would appear that there is indeed a "New Air Canada".

Absolutely. But it is more than a mere slogan. It is a reality. ➔