

The great wealth of these areas, thanks to the achievements of the aircraft industry and to the courage and ingenuity of hundreds of bush pilots between the two wars, is now being exploited for the good of the nation. Our northern cities have become the communication centres from which these resources beyond the rail and highway are discovered and tapped. Every northern miner, fisherman, prospector, businessman or government servant is acutely conscious of his dependence on the airplane for his livelihood and for his contact with the outside world.

But it is not only along north-south lines that aviation is serving Canada. Our country is spread out for thousands of miles in an east-west direction as well, and in those thousands of miles are large island-like tracts of sparsely-settled territory between the populated areas. The advent of the aircraft has reduced those open spaces almost into insignificance and has contributed greatly to the development of that sense of territorial as well as national unity without which the term "Canadian" would be meaningless. The fact that a resident of the city of Montreal can now receive by airmail, the day after it was written a letter posted in Vancouver reduces the 3,000 miles between them and convincingly brings home the fact that both cities do really form part of one nation.

It is the realization of this most significant contribution of the aircraft industry to our national development and to our national unity assisted by the participation of thousands of young Canadians in two wars and the experience of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan that have made Canadians an air-minded people. That is why I believe that the decision to place the permanent headquarters of the International Air Transport Association here in Montreal was a logical one, and I hope, a decision that will not be regretted.

I need not tell you that the IATA has assisted and advised governments in drafting those regulations to control the airways of the world which can only be made effective by the joint action of sovereign powers. But speaking for Canada, I do want to state how grateful we are to have had that assistance. It is no exaggeration to say that the world airways would not be operated in the safe and efficient manner in which they are operated were it not for the work of this Association. You cannot be too warmly commended for the complex problems you have solved. The fact that, in so short a space of time, you have surmounted international barriers of currency, language, technical differences and business procedure in order to promote, in the words of your charter, "safe, regular and economical transport for the benefit of the peoples of the world..." offers proof that men of good will from many nations with greatly different political and economic conditions can work together for the good of all.

Your Association, composed of representatives from 120 nations and representing 95 per cent of the world's scheduled air traffic has done more than provide the world with efficient international air transport service. Even though complete unanimity is required at some of your special conferences before resolutions can be adopted, you have been able to reach agreement, a record envied by those of us who have to deal with international politics. And in reaching these agreements you have furthered the interests of the industry and above all the interests of the international public which you serve.