

# CANADA HOLDS KEY POSITION IN AIR FUTURE

## Col. George Drew Urges Canadians to Prepare for Postwar Progress

Canadians were urged yesterday to prepare for Canada's future in commercial aviation. Lt.-Col. George A. Drew, Opposition Leader in the Ontario Legislature, told members of the Canadian Importers and Traders' Association that because of geographical and physical reasons "Canada can and will emerge as the central source of air commerce for the whole British Empire."

In an impressive review of past and future flying, he pointed out that with present developments in aerodynamics, motors and flying skill, Canadian cities were strategically located to provide 48-hour-or-less transportation by air to such cities as Moscow, Chungking, Melbourne and other world centres.

"Of great concern to Canadians is the fact that 90 per cent of the world's population is north of the equator, and Canada is at the crossroads of the great air routes of the world," he said. He pointed out that both in Britain and the United States airline concerns were already planning for the postwar period, and declared Canada should do so at once.

### Set Freight Pace.

Before the war, he maintained, Canada was the greatest freight-carrying nation in the world so far as airlines were concerned, with mines in Quebec, Manitoba, Ontario, British Columbia and other districts creating a high-pay demand for heavy commercial aircraft which could not be equalled anywhere else.

Pioneer bush pilots had "learned what air could do to overcome distance under trying conditions faced by few fliers even in transatlantic flights," he said, and this experience stood them in good stead when the war broke out. Many now occupied key positions in not only commercial air lines, but also in the transatlantic services, Col. Drew declared.

Canadians "have a great heritage of flying under adverse conditions which has now paid high dividends in opening up the North and in the Air Training Plan in Canada, which is now the backbone of the bombing raids on Germany," he said. "By the time this war is over, it will be a safe, easy flight from Montreal, Toronto or Winnipeg to Moscow, Bombay or Chungking."

After the war, future peace must depend to a great extent on aerial supremacy, he went on, pointing out that "any commercial machine may be used for bombing."

There must be co-operation in air development between the United States and Britain, along with China and Russia, but Britain and the United States must lead the way since they were providing machines and reserves of skilled air personnel which "will be translated into terms of world girdling commercial air routes after the war is over," he said.

### Time To Plan.

"It is important to know whether many of these routes are going to be British air routes or not," he said. "If they are going to be, we'd better start talking about it now and planning for it. One of the tragedies after the last war was the failure to utilize the British air force because of the absence of planning. Twenty thousand airplanes were dissipated and skilled personnel scattered. When this war ends, this magnificent personnel will not be scattered if plans are made whereby they are absorbed into commercial flying. Our men are capable of going anywhere now."

Lt.-Col. Drew spoke at a luncheon meeting of the association at the Royal York. Before the luncheon, A. E. Herridge was elected president of the association with A. O. Thorne secretary-treasurer. Members of the executive elected are: J. C. Adams, E. C. Burgess, W. D. Bates, M. H. Centner, F. E. Hertha, J. C. W. Irwin, T. Oakley, F. J. Redmond, H. A. Gilbert, G. E. Smith, E. H. Storms, E. B. Paget and W. B. Weir.