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## Session One - Dedication of the Symposium to the Memory of John Cobb Cooper

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# SESSION ONE

## DEDICATION OF THE SYMPOSIUM TO THE MEMORY OF JOHN COBB COOPER

BY SIR WILLIAM HILDRED

It is a sad thing to have to say goodbye to a good friend but as one gets older, this happens more often. John Cooper was a good friend to the legal side of international air transport, to all who fought for it and worked in it; and it was my good fortune to be very close to him for a quarter of a century. I first met him in England when he came to see me as Head of the Department of Civil Aviation. Affixing me with his bright eyes, he asked me a simple question, then a difficult question, and then a knock-out.

His death on 22 July 1967, at the age of nearly 80, takes away one of the great post-war pioneers in Air Law, and more than that one of the creators of the post-war international air transport structure, both by his work at the Chicago Conference of 1944 and in the preparations for the post-war creation of the International Air Transport Association.

He was a 1909 Princeton graduate, he practised law in Jacksonville, Florida, until 1934, when he gave up his private law practice and became Vice President of Pan American, a position he held until 1945. In 1944, he played a leading part in the Chicago Conference which led to the formation of ICAO and also to the formation of IATA. For a time he chaired the embryo Executive Committee and when IATA was established, he became Legal Adviser to the Executive Committee and the Director General. He held this post until his retirement at the Annual General Meeting at Bogota in 1964.

He was also involved in the creation of the International Institute of Air Law, now the Institute of Air and Space Law at McGill; and for some years was its Director, coming to Montreal in term time from Princeton where he lived, and where he was for five years an elected member of the Institute for Advanced Studies. I remember lunching with him there. We went to the quick lunch counter in a queue of remarkable men. In front was Einstein with his long black overcoat and his flowing white locks; then Professor Cooper with his tray, then Professor Arnold Toynbee with his tray and then me with my tray. Throughout the period he contributed frequently to American and international publications including *Foreign Affairs*, *Yale Law Journal*, *Journal of Air Law and Commerce*; and his book, "The Right To Fly" written twenty years ago is a source of reference on air and space law. He was awarded the LL.M. by McGill in 1952 and was appointed Professor Emeritus of McGill in 1958.

The last time I visited him in Princeton was at the funeral of his life long friend, his wife Martha. John and Martha were so close to the Execu-

tive Committee of IATA that it was almost impossible to think of them apart, or to think of one without the other. When we got back from her funeral, it was typical of John to come to me and say, "Give me something to do; give me something to do." As it happened I was only too ready to comply because of his knowledge of the procedure of the Enforcement Commissions of IATA. The IATA Commissioner had been taken ill and I had a commission all planned and ready to go. John had previously been a Commissioner and knew the form. He leapt into the breach to give his mind a tough assignment and to help a friend, and he did the job with his accustomed energy and penetration.

He made a most moving speech on his retirement. The older he became the more he looked ahead; he spoke about the transport of mail and cargo by rocket and suggested that in twenty years or so, IATA might well be discussing interplanetary transport activities. His activities in space law occupied an increasing measure of his thoughts and writings in the last few years of his life. For light relief, he made his own radiograms and could, and did, listen in on any wave length first with the news. He was a member of the Magic Circle and could be, in his dignified way, very entertaining at parties. He was a clear and erudite lecturer, good with young people, good with old people. He had good friends all over the world and he will be long remembered as a good American, a good citizen, and a good friend. I think it would be appropriate that this meeting, this symposium, should be dedicated to the memory of John Cobb Cooper. This I now formally do. Thank you Mr. Chairman.