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THE WORK OF THE COPELAND COMMITTEE

HAROLD E. HARTNEY*

You have requested me to say a word about the work of the Copeland Committee. Much water has gone over the dam since last year at your meeting. I feel that aviation itself has progressed by leaps and bounds since then. Manufacturers are working twenty-four hours a day, and airline operators are going ahead beyond the wildest dreams ever expressed by any one of us. When one realizes that on one airline alone with scheduled operation of 1,600,000 miles, 99.9% were completed in the first six months of this year, it is a remarkable feat. I would like to see what other medium of transportation can anywhere approach it when all factors are taken into consideration. Another airline has expanded its express business alone over 100% in the same six months. This business is mounting up, and since our last meeting it has been wonderful to see the progress which has been made.

The Copeland Committee, if it has accomplished nothing else, has done a big job in educating senators and congressmen, as your President has just given us credit for having done. I feel that five members of the Senate will return next year with a united front for safer, better aviation; and these five will constitute a well-informed wedge when the Congress gets down to actual legislation. I believe that aviation has not had a more powerful friend than the chairman of the committee, Senator Copeland, a man who has understanding to the nth degree, and one who is giving his almost undivided attention to aviation.

As for the work of the committee, I believe that I am not violating any confidence when I state that we succeeded in getting action on the last day that Congress met on only two of the twenty chapters reported. Personally, I think we were fortunate to get those two through, although I regret that they were the two that might be termed destructive chapters in the whole report.

I am frank to say that we found the work of the Federal Aviation Commission well done, but I think our committee has a better chance of getting its findings crystallized into law than has

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any layman commission. There are five leading senators on the committee, and they should be able to get somewhere.

I cannot proceed without expressing gratitude on behalf of the committee for cooperation given us by members of your Association. I cannot name a man from your worthwhile organization who hasn't cooperated with the committee. I want to say that many members, from your president, Mr. Sheriff, and particularly Mr. Fagg, right down to the many aviation officials, have been the ones who did most of the foot-slogging apart from that done by the chairman himself.

It is important to keep government officials and laymen alike up-to-date on the subject of aeronautics. The day before yesterday one of the wildest dreams of General Mitchell came true—the dropping of military men on the other side of the enemy line in maneuvers—turning the flank in the third dimension by dropping 4,000 men with machine guns and landing 2,000 airplanes on the other side of the line! What a challenge to civilization! A departure from age-old military tactics—the desire of all strategists—turning the flank but now accomplished in the third dimension by aviation. This may well revolutionize military plans to such an extent that all present war plans can be thrown away, and we will start over again, possibly setting up a better, more humane and less costly defense for our people. If that is true think of what is ahead. Think of the responsibility which rests on the shoulders of the federal government and on you state aviation officials.

But the momentous problem of aviation cannot be attacked without enlisting every possible source of help. That is why I think the National Aeronautic Association has such a responsibility and such an opportunity. It is the one organization, representing as it does different nation-wide interests and factions ever ready and willing to extend a helping hand and give an encouraging word to the layman and to the Congress, which can accomplish and do things. That organization must be built up; it is the one which can speak without prejudice but with weight and influence as no other can, being composed as it is of unbiased patriotic citizens who are impressed with the importance of aviation in this country.

The units throughout the country in state aviation whom you represent here should not only carry on the routine of inspection and regulation, but assist the federal government in another great duty through the Bureau of Air Commerce charged with the responsibility of fostering aviation. You should crusade for it and all that it means to the tax-payers and citizens.
I hope that the information on state laws prepared by Mr. Fagg for the committee and published as Aeronautics Bulletin No. 18 will be sent into those states where there are no aviation commissions at the present time, so that we can get something of stabilized control in every state for the mutual benefit of this country and the individual states themselves.

As to what we intend to do in the future in the Senate Safety Committee, that is difficult to say. We are going to have more hearings. There are some witnesses who will go even further than have those on record to date; and it will all be constructive criticism.

This is the message I have, and I can only congratulate you on the good work done during the last year, and on the interest you are obtaining. When you visited Washington last January, we were all assured there would be recognition of your most important organization. I know that Senator Copeland hopes that promise was kept. There might be one or two other words I could say about this subject. We must lift our eyes higher when looking at the horizon of money. This aviation business is expensive. If you are going to travel from New York to Los Angeles over night, it is going to cost money. I know that too much money might breed inefficiency in development, but I believe we can rely on the private initiative in the United States if there is just a little more money as an incentive for production, research and experimentation. You have a very sympathetic Congress in Washington. It will go along with you very far provided you are logical and sound in your presentation of demands. I hesitate to suggest that you ask for twice what you have before, but I would suggest that your demands be much higher than ever before—especially with your state authorities. American aeronautics needs it; safety demands it.