

PARAPHRASE TELEGRAM

To the United Kingdom High Commissioners in the
Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand.

(Sent 10 p.m., 17th March, 1939.)

Reference my immediately preceding telegram.

Objections seen to adoption of proposals of His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia for sectionalisation of the Trans-Pacific Air route are as follows:-

(a) The main objection is that proposals do not accord with policy of open door and complete reciprocity in Pacific which we should like to see established. Our plan would be the operation right across the Pacific of United States and British Commonwealth services in close co-operation, with reciprocal landing rights in New Zealand and American Continent respectively, open rights at intermediate stopping places, common use of ground organisation and mutual consultation regarding time tables and frequency. Australian proposals abandon above principles and sectionalise operations.

Other objections seen to scheme are

(b) it abandons the idea of a direct British Commonwealth air link between Canada and Australia and New Zealand.

(c) It restricts general development of Imperial communications and prevents completion of trunk route round the world.

(d) The bargain is completely one-sided. On the one hand reciprocal rights which we are entitled to claim in United States territory are surrendered and on other

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hand rights in Christmas and other British Islands North of Equator are accorded without compensating advantages. We already possess suitable intermediate airports in South Pacific rights in which could properly be exchanged for reciprocal rights in United States islands, particularly Hawaii.

We are therefore opposed to adoption of Australian scheme which involves these disadvantages and to acceptance of position that United States air service would alone provide important part of link between Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

It may be argued that Australian proposals are intended only as short term policy pending conclusion of later arrangement for full through service on basis of reciprocity.

It seems to us however that a subsequent development on the lines we desire would be prejudiced rather than facilitated by proposed sectionalisation. Moreover, as regards actual operation of route British flying boats which will fly North Atlantic this summer have range necessary for Trans-Pacific service and there is no reason why development of latter service by British Commonwealth interests should be regarded as remote contingency.

Please put the above mentioned considerations to Commonwealth Government emphasising fact that an excellent opportunity of discussing the matter further would appear to be provided by forthcoming Conference.

Addressed High Commissioner, Canberra No.53. Repeated
High Commissioner Wellington No.12.