

lack of clarity in regard to the functions and responsibilities of the several departments of State, branches of the Air Department, and other authorities concerned can be removed without taking a step which is not justified by the present relative importance of civil aviation.

Relationship with Royal New Zealand Air Force

3. It has been suggested that the interests of the development and administration of civil aviation have suffered by its association in the Government structure with the Royal New Zealand Air Force and its subservience to the Air Department, which in some quarters has been regarded as primarily concerned with the Air Force. We have seen references to the Air Secretary as the head of the Air Force, a misconception which we believe to have some bearing on the civil aviation problem. We are satisfied that civil aviation has not in any way suffered from its association with the Royal New Zealand Air Force, either in the form of interference or subordination of its interests—this in spite of the fact that the present Chief of the Air Staff, who has contributed so greatly to the formulation of sound principles and the establishment of the present organisation of civil aviation in New Zealand, might have been led by his personal interest to exercise an undue measure of control over civil aviation activities. On the contrary, we believe that civil aviation in New Zealand has received invaluable help in its development from the Royal New Zealand Air Force, not least in the building-up of civil aviation organisations to serve both Air Force and civil requirements, wherever such joint organisation was practicable. Such extensive and valuable assistance by the Air Force, which is both desirable and necessary, could equally have been achieved, and we believe would have been achieved, even if civil aviation had been the responsibility of a department of State other than the Air Department and of a Minister other than the Minister of Defence. Nevertheless, it is important to make clear our view that the present association of civil aviation with the Department responsible for the Air Force has not been detrimental to civil aviation.

Ministry of Transport

4. We understand that recommendations have in the past been made that a Ministry of Transport should be established and that it should embrace all forms of transport—namely, rail, road, sea, and air. If and when it should be decided to establish such a Department (Ministry), it would be logical that civil aviation should become the responsibility of that department and of the Minister of Transport, but the advantages of co-ordination of different forms of transport which might be expected to ensue might conceivably be counteracted by the suppression of one form of transport in the interests of others ; this could arise if the department