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ADVANCE

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(Editors: The following release is a summary of remarks prepared for delivery by Miss Jacqueline Cochran, Director of Women Pilots for the Army Air Forces, before the National Aviation Conference in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, at the evening session, 8 pm (GWT) 16 November 1944.)

Commercial aviation must have the woman's touch if it is to achieve its rosy, postwar goals, the National Aviation Conference in Oklahoma City was told tonight (November 16) by Miss Jacqueline Cochran of Washington, D. C., Director of Women Pilots for the Army Air Forces.

She said:

"If the airline companies, the aviation schools, and the plane manufacturers wish to broaden their customer lists, they had better stop talking about flying being a man's game. The woman's angle has been overlooked or discounted to the great disadvantage of our aviation industry."

The Women's Airforce Service Pilot (WASP) program of the Army Air Forces has proved, Miss Cochran said, that the millions of American women can be induced to work and to think along the lines of aerial highways, flying, and air travel just as much as the men; and that, as American women already greatly outnumber men, control a high percentage of the nation's wealth, and are inveterate travelers by all transportation means except air, they are the major hope for expanded aviation activity.

In elaborating this theme, she said, in part:

"The WASP program has proved not only the interest of women in aviation (more than 30,000 young women having applied for WASP training without any recruiting program being conducted), but has also proved the capability of women as fliers. The program proved that women can pass physical examinations and undergo the rigors of a cadet training course as well as their brothers. The course given WASP trainees at Avenger Field, Sweetwater, Texas, was as hard and as tough as that given male cadets and yet the elimination rate at Avenger Field during the entire program was somewhat lower percentagewise than that for male cadets.

"The program has also shown that as high a percentage of women as men can be trained to be skilled fliers. Women have flown all types of combat aircraft and can do any aerial flying that men can do, except where unusual muscular strength or size is required. WASP have put in as long hours,

regularly, as the men pilots, not only in ferrying and in target towing but in night flying and in formation work.

"I have not the slightest doubt but that these WASPs could have gone, if that were necessary, into combat work, fearlessly and effectively, just as Russian women have done.

"There are 600,000 more women in the United States over the age of 21 than there are men. This means that if women are to fly, either as pilots in ships owned or rented by them, or as passengers in a transport, to the same degree that men do the same things, more air line tickets would be sold to women than to men, more private ships would be sold to women than to men, and more women would take flying courses. Think what that means to our industry which can not afford to pick up where it left off in 1939.

"According to the best available statistics, women control 80 per cent of the nation's buying. The women of America are heirs to nearly 80 per cent of all estates left by men and to two-thirds of estates left by women. Sixty percent of all automobiles are purchased by women, 65 per cent of all railroad passenger traffic is by women, and two-thirds of all bus passengers are women. American women really travel. Now, for the reverse. My best information indicates that just prior to the war, when air travel was open equally to men and women, women made up only 20 to 25 per cent of total passengers.

"Women have no more fear than men in any respect and perhaps less in relation to flying. What has kept women out of the air? One reason is that men have shouted a great deal about aviation being a man's field. Perhaps women have believed those shouts. Since last Spring --- when the WASP program was before Congress -- a great many persons have mentioned their surprise that the airlines and plane manufacturers and the aviation schools did not support the question of women fliers. Even from the cold, self-interest viewpoint of commercial aviation, every WASP in training and at work was a public relations agent and salesman for the plane manufacturers, the aviation schools, and the air transport system. Nothing could be more effective in selling flying to women than to see women flying in the war effort.

"Another reason why women prefer surface transportation is that they give more time to their dress and toilet than do men. More attention must be given by airlines to the niceties of travel.

"If private aviation after the war wishes to increase flying by women, either as pilots or passengers, it must improve everything dealing with navigation to assure almost 100 per cent completion of trips. A woman definitely fears being left halfway to her destination with only a small handbag. Money spent on elimination of blind landings, on visual ground markers, on television in cabin or cockpit, will pay dividends.

"As over half the prospective customers wear skirts and think and act in many ways different from men, it would pay for transport companies and



small plane manufacturers to cater more to the woman's angle by having women who know both aviation and the woman's angle in their organization. Women could sell aviation, flying and transportation to women generally. In the WASPs, who will not be employed by the Army Air Forces after December 20, 1944, there are over a thousand women who have been taught to fly well and who love the air. Many have had past experience as executives, others could be trained and would exert a powerful appeal on the nation's women -- who as a group love travel, have most of the money, but haven't flown plane or traveled in planes."

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