

**Introduction of**  
**SIR MICHAEL BISHOP**  
**Chairman, British Midland Airways**

by

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Sir Michael Bishop is one of those remarkable executives for whom no amount of work or responsibility is ever too much. You know, of course, that he is the Chairman of British Midland Airways, one of the most successful airlines in Europe. He is also Chairman of British Regional Airlines. He is Deputy Chairman of Airtours plc, one of the world's leading tour operators. He is a non-executive director of Williams Holdings plc, a worldwide manufacturer and supplier of security equipment.

He is also an honorary companion of the Royal Aeronautical Society, fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing, fellow of the Chartered Institute of Transport, Freeman of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators, Vice President of the Royal Television Society, and an honorary member of the Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain. He has been both Deputy Chairman and Chairman of Channel 4 Television. He was awarded the CBE in 1986 and knighted in 1991.

Michael Bishop was born in Bowdon, Cheshire. After leaving school, he entered the family business, building specialized commercial vehicles. After a relatively brief exposure to the world of specialized commercial vehicles, he decided to make a career in civil aviation.

He began his airline career at Manchester Airport in 1963 by setting up an aircraft handling business for a locally based airline. When the airline was taken over in 1964 by British Midland Airways, he joined the new owner. As you have figured out, he never left.

He was appointed General Manager in 1969, was made a director a year later, became Managing Director in 1972, and was appointed Chairman in 1978.

British Midland will almost certainly be the next British carrier to fly to the U.S. -- that is, if British and American aviation negotiators can ever find a way, as they say, to "get to yes." You will recognize British Midland's airplanes, I'm sure, by the Union Jack conspicuously displayed on the fuselage. With BA's inauguration

of beds in first class, and Virgin Atlantic's announcement of double beds, I can only imagine what announcement Sir Michael will have for us today.

British Midland applied last month for permission to fly to the U.S. U.S. airlines promptly reminded DOT that Bermuda II doesn't have room for a third British airline.

Which brings me to the subject of Gilbert & Sullivan. Another pursuit of Sir Michael's -- the one that people say he is the most passionate about -- is his chairmanship of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Trust, a company that presents the operas of Gilbert & Sullivan. Now you might think that a man who runs one of the most important airlines in Europe, but who is also devoted to Gilbert & Sullivan, is a man of many parts -- a Renaissance type. In fact, it all seems quite logical to me. Light opera, after all, isn't a bad metaphor for what usually goes on in the international airline business. I know, for example, that *Iolanthe* was written 96 years before the Airline Deregulation Act was passed. But still, it isn't very difficult to imagine Paul Gretch coming into an industry briefing just before the next round of David Marchick's negotiations with the U.K. and singing, as the Lord Chancellor did --

The Law is the true embodiment  
Of everything that's excellent.  
It has no kind of fault or flaw,  
And I, my Lords, embody the Law.

Ladies and gentlemen, please give a warm Washington welcome to Sir Michael Bishop.

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