“Return of the Airship”

A Speech By

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**Title:** Return of the Airship

**General Purpose:** To persuade.

**Specific Purpose:** By the end of my speech, the audience will be persuaded that bringing airships back to the skies is worth it, learning about the many benefits this would have.

**Thesis statement:** While the zeppelins of the past may have earned themselves a bad reputation, several modern-day companies are changing the game by creating a new generation of airships, safer, more reliable, and more environmentally friendly than ever before.

**Introduction**

1. **Attention Getter:** Good morning, my name is Mark Kardash and I am an undergraduate student at University of Maryland Global Campus. Are you tired of having to sit in uncomfortable airplane seats? Listening to the chatter of co-passengers, unable to properly sleep or relax? I think it’s quite a common problem.
2. **Introduction of Topic:** Today, I will inform you about the benefits of bringing airships, once thought unsafe and obsolete, back into our skies.
3. **Credibility and Relevance:** I will support my point by referencing credible sources on the topics of aeronautics and engineering.

*Transition: Research, testing, and advances in aeronautics have made airships much safer, more feasible, and more advanced than ever before, paving the way to a new era of air transportation.*

**Body**

1. So how would resurrecting the airship benefit humanity?
2. One of the things shown by research is that this mode of transportation is a major ally in humanity’s fight against global warming. According to Linnea Ahlgren of Simply Flying, an airship produces between 80 and 90% fewer emissions than conventional aircraft.
3. Despite being lighter-than-air, it also has significant space for cargo, which prompted the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to recommend that cargo firms use dirigibles to lessen their environmental impact.
4. Large airships can make passenger flights much more comfortable, having enough space for beds, lounges and other amenities.
5. An airship uses helium to stay airborne, while a plane uses jet fuel.
6. An airship can stay in the air without constantly moving forward, a feat impossible for a traditional airliner.
7. An airship can stay in the air longer than a conventional plane.
8. Current Efforts in the Airship Industry: But the return of airships is far from a mere optimistic proposal, as several large-scale projects with this purpose are already underway.
9. The British company Hybrid Air Vehicles, Limited (HAV), has developed and constructed the Airlander 10, a helium-filled hybrid airship.
   * The Airlander 10 could become emissions-free by 2030.
   * In 2022, HAV received their first commercial order, from airline Air Nostrum, for 10 of their vehicles.
   * The following year, the order was doubled.
   * They are expected to enter commercial service in 2027, each carrying 100 passengers.
10. Another company, a startup called LTA Research, plans to use their Pathfinder 1 airship to revolutionize cargo transport.

* Their goal is to optimize delivery of cargo and emergency supplies to countries that don’t have enough ground infrastructure. This could have a significant impact on world economy, as well as international relations.
* The Pathfinder 1 is also powered by helium, and contains many innovative elements, such as electric motors, various sensors, and fly-by-wire controls.
* Since helium is a non-flammable gas, it greatly reduces the chances of a Hindenburg-like accident.
* The Pathfinder 1 is currently undergoing testing, with its creator, Google co-founder Sergey Brin, looking to expand its use to passenger flights in the future.

1. Yet another aeronautics firm, the French company Flying Whales, is working on a 200 meter, or 656-foot-long, cargo airship with a crew of at least two people, and a cargo capacity of 60 tons.

* The vessel will be powered by 14 helium-filled cells, and use sustainable aviation fuel through a hybrid-electric propulsion system
* Flying Whales says its airship could not only simplify cargo delivery to isolated regions, but also help carry emergency supplies and disaster relief aid to places inaccessible by other means.
* On top of this, the emissions it produces will be less than 10% of those produced by helicopters usually used for such deliveries, while local nature and wildlife will remain undisturbed.

1. Hydrogen vs Helium: Although using helium to provide lift may seem like a flawless idea, the gas is significantly more expensive than hydrogen, which is why the latter is still used in some airships.
2. John-Paul Clarke, Professor of Aerospace Engineering at the University of Texas at Austin, says hydrogen is a much more affordable alternative to helium, and produced in much greener ways.
3. Regarding fears of an explosion, Clarke says humanity has learned to handle hydrogen much more carefully, and it is used in many modes of transportation today, such as cars, planes, and trucks.
4. What does the future hold? While zeppelins in their traditional form can never return, and airship travel won’t be as widespread as in the 1930s, modern, next generation airships certainly have a place in today’s world, being able to serve multiple purposes.
5. Mike Durham, Chief Technical Officer for HAV, says that although airships are not ideal for long-distance flights, they are a great option for shorter, such as regional, journeys.
6. Due to their positive environmental impact, and the need for a general slow-down in the pace of human travel, Durham believes airships will play an important role in society.

**Conclusion**

1. **Transition to Conclusion and Summary of Importance:** In conclusion, the facts presented earlier are the reasons for giving airships a second chance, thus taking better care of our planet, of ourselves, and revolutionizing the way we travel.
2. **Review of Main Points:**
3. Bringing back the airship is beneficial to the environment.
4. A return of airships would optimize cargo transport.
5. Air travel would be made more comfortable.
6. Concrete steps are being made towards making this dream a reality.
7. **Closing Statement:** Decades of research and testing have proved airships to be a much cleaner and feasible alternative to the traditional airliner. With mostly helium being used to provide lift, much safer techniques of handling hydrogen, and several next generation airships already on order, we are on the brink of a true revolution in the aviation industry.

References

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