



FLIGHT



The
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ENGINEER
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AIRSHIPS.**

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DIARY OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Club Secretaries and others desirous of announcing the dates of important fixtures are invited to send particulars for inclusion in the following list:

- Jan. 10 ... Meeting of the Bureau of the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale in Paris
- Jan. 20 ... Lecture, "The Cost of Air-Ton-Miles, Compared with other Forms of Transport," by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, before R.Ae.S.

EDITORIAL COMMENT



WE have before us as we write an interesting document, a part of which is devoted to a discussion of the future policy to be pursued in relation to civil aviation and its encouragement. We propose to make a fairly lengthy excerpt from this document, in order to point once more a moral we have often emphasised. On this subject of civil aviation, with particular reference to its bearing on defence, it is laid down that: "In time of war aviation will probably be the first arm of offence and defence to come into action. For this there must be an established industry and a trained and active air service. Aerial supremacy at the outset of hostilities would be a tremendous

military advantage. Ultimate victory would unquestionably incline to the side that could establish and maintain supremacy in the air. Huge expenditure of money in time of danger and frantic efforts to train personnel and to develop hastily an aircraft industry from almost nothing will not do. There must be wise preparedness; there must be in healthy existence at least a nucleus of an industry capable of adequate expansion; there must exist civil and commercial aeronautical activities in all parts of the country, which would be the main support of the industry in time of peace. In pure self-defence the Government must encourage the development of commercial aviation. The alternative proposition is the creation and maintenance of a powerful standing military air service, relatively self-reliant in time of war. We cannot, however, afford the expense which such a policy would entail, and there would be no advantage in time of peace from such expenditure comparable in any way to the advantages to be gained from the support of civil aviation. We should maintain an active air service in time of peace, which should possess inherent strength, and be something more than a mere nucleus for expansion in time of war. In the final analysis, however, we must depend upon civil aviation to furnish a military reserve force. . . . The problem is to place our aircraft industry in a healthy condition, and to do this we must enter without delay upon a sane, sound policy for the development of civil aviation. The relative cost of fostering an organised plan to develop commercial aviation would be much less than the waste that would inevitably result from unprepared entry into war. Aside from military considerations, the fostering of commercial aviation would in time yield adequate return in itself in the form of promoting and strengthening our means of transportation, advancing the progress of civilisation and increasing the national wealth."

This, we know, reads like a quotation from our own editorial columns, but it is simply an extract from the sixth annual report of the United States National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics. It is significant to know that the views set forth have received the endorsement of the Secretaries of War, the Navy and Commerce, and also of the President himself. To comment upon them would be almost superfluous, but we cannot refrain from remarking upon the strikingly similar opinions which are held