

and vertical tail surfaces interchangeable. That was tried in this country by Mr. O. E. (now Sir Oliver) Simmonds in his Spartan many years ago.

Among new types already flying, which will have obvious civil application is the Fairchild C-82, a twin-engined twin-boom type in the 50,000 lb. class. This machine is already in production, and an example was shown at the Washington National Airport during the Chicago Conference. As a heavy freight carrier after the war it should find many uses.

If we turn to this country we look in vain for such signs of preparedness. Bristols have announced a freighter based on the Bombay, but that is some way off. Handley Page have told us about the Hermes, which is still in the design stage. At the annual meeting of Airspeed Mr. A. S. Butler referred to the Airspeed machine which this firm is to build (it is the A.S.57). It will carry up to 40 passengers. Then there is the huge Bristol, which obviously will not materialise for some years, and the Avro Tudor, again a small spot on the distant horizon.

British manufacturers are not to blame. Given the necessary priority they would not be found wanting, but their hands are tied and, apparently, their lips are sealed, as Baldwin said, and for no better reason.

Truly, as Lord Brabazon told Sir Archibald Sinclair some time ago, "we are being shouldered off the face of the earth." The sad part is that Whitehall does not seem to care.

### Air to the Rescue

**F**ORTUNATELY for the Allied troops in Belgium, four days of clear, bright weather supervened over the area covering the salient and supply lines of Rundstedt's offensive during the critical period at Christmas time. The result, as we forecast last week, was a major victory for the air forces over the German ground forces. At the same time we cannot help thinking what the outcome might have been had air help been denied to the Allied armies for another week.

Rundstedt certainly made a great effort, and it may be that he has sufficient armour and supplies for another try, either in the same area or elsewhere on the battlefield. The fact remains, however, that if, for any reason whatsoever, he decides to put supply columns

### CONTENTS

The Outlook	- - - - -	1
War in the Air	- - - - -	3
Here and There	- - - - -	6
De Havilland Mosquito XVI	- - - - -	8
Boeing 377 Stratocruiser	- - - - -	10
Book Reviews	- - - - -	12
The P.F.F.	- - - - -	12, a and b
New Year Honours	- - - - -	13
Chicago Summary	- - - - -	14
Civil Aviation News	- - - - -	16
About Amphibians	- - - - -	18
From Fighter to Amphibian	- - - - -	19
Correspondence	- - - - -	20
Service Aviation	- - - - -	22

on the roads by day to advance, retreat or just to supply his static positions, our tactical air forces will do more damage and cause more losses than any opposing land force could hope to do in the same period of time.

In the favourable four days of last week over 4,000 vehicles of all sorts, both soft and armoured, were destroyed. As our Typhoons, with armour-piercing rockets, went in to attack the German tanks, the crews were seen to leave the tanks and run for cover.

Bomber Command also became, for the moment, a tactical weapon and was given the job of helping the U.S. 8th A.A.F. destroy the rail approaches to the battle area. The *Luftwaffe* put in an appearance in greater strength than for some while. On one day it managed to fly nearly a thousand sorties. It sustained losses in the ratio of over two to one suffered by the Allies and never looked like gaining air superiority, let alone air supremacy, over the battlefield. How true is Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery's dictum that air superiority at the very least is essential before a land battle can be begun with any hope of winning.

The fortunes of this present battle have swayed exactly in relation to the state of the weather and, therefore, to the amount of air power which could be deployed. It is to be hoped that our generals will learn this lesson well and will realise that a great and mighty tank attack can, in most circumstances, soon be turned into a bloody shambles by rocket-firing aircraft.



COMING OVER THE ROUND-DOWN: A Fairey Firefly, the Fleet Air Arm's latest two-seater fighter, comes in to alight. Wheels and arrestor hook are, of course, down and the Youngman flaps are in the position giving the maximum lift and drag. The orifices which appear just below the Rolls-Royce Griffon II engine exhaust stubs are the port and starboard air intakes to the carburettor.