

were based on a harbour in Ceylon; but lately they have moved up to Akyab and other liberated harbours. One of their most spectacular feats was to alight on an inland lake and carry away some 500 sick and wounded from the Wingate Chindits; thus permitting that force to push on to join hands with the forces of General Stilwell.

Considering the continued usefulness of the Sunderlands after nearly six years of warfare, it is appropriate that the Society of British Aircraft Constructors should have just elected Mr. Arthur Gouge, the designer of the type, as its new president.

### Atlantic Competition

SO Pan American Airways have lost their fight for a monopoly. In that fact there is food for thought.

Three American airlines, Pan American, American Export Airlines, and T.W.A., are to operate air services across the North Atlantic. B.O.A.C. is to be entrusted, if the White Paper is "implemented" by the Government after the General Election, not only with the Commonwealth routes but with the North Atlantic route to Canada and the United States. One wonders whether even a General Critchley is equal to the task of fighting opposition from three separate and very energetic American companies, especially when it is remembered that the Americans will have available usable aircraft types almost at once, whereas we must wait for the Tudor I, not to mention the huge Bristol Brabazon I, before we can consider ourselves really equipped for the route. True, a start can be made with converted flying boats, but no matter how good they may be, they cannot equal specialised types designed expressly for the particular route. And as for converted bombers, while they might be used as mail carriers, they cannot be adapted to give any acceptable degree of passenger accommodation.

B.O.A.C. will certainly have the incentive of the keenest competition from America, but our good friends on the other side will have the advantage that each of

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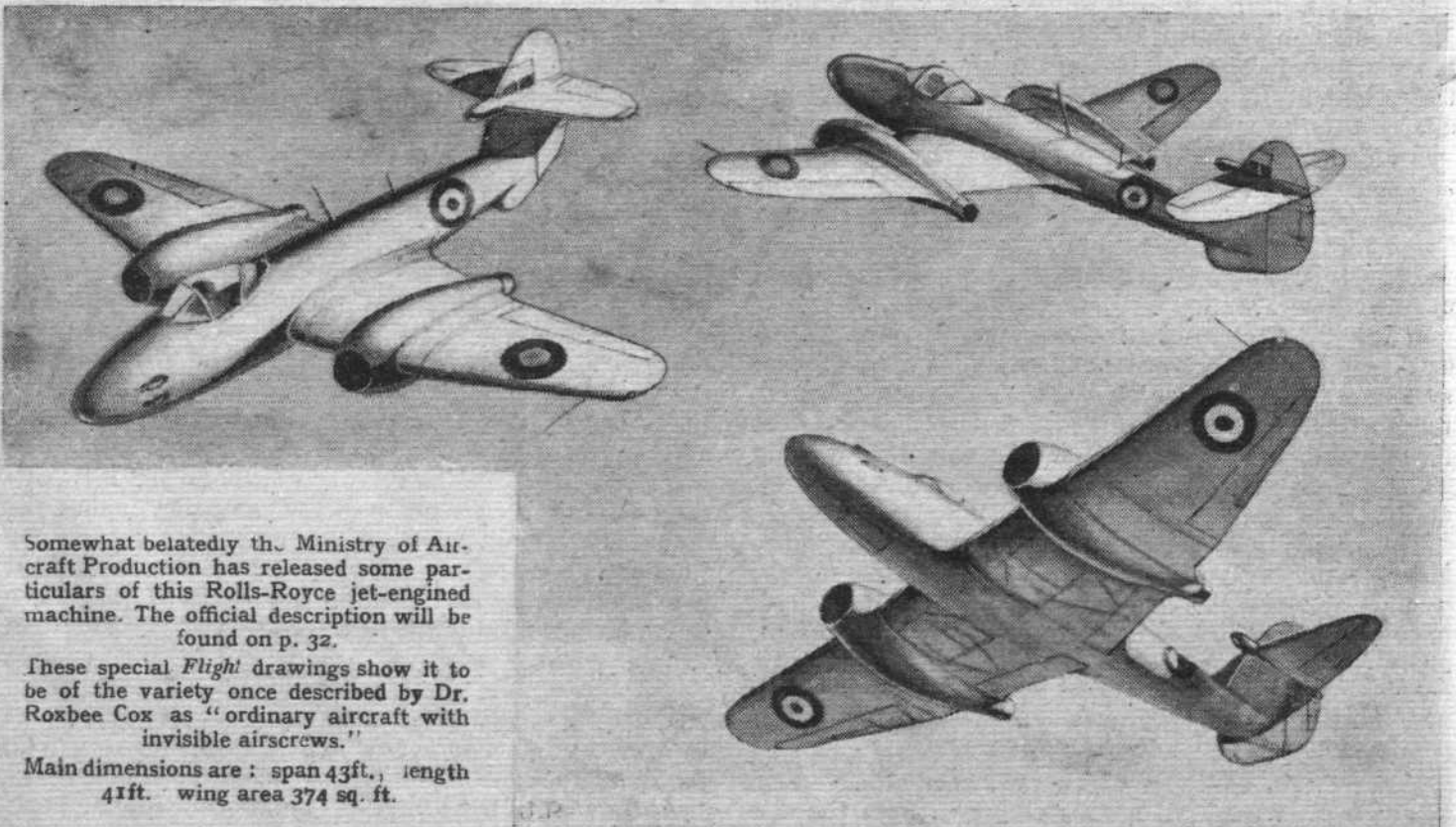
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their three companies will be in competition with two of their own and one of ours. It is probable that different methods and different aircraft types will be employed by the three American companies, and so the United States will be in a position to discover much more quickly the type of service which attracts the greater volume of traffic.

On this side of the Atlantic we shall have a single corporation which will be preoccupied with routes to South Africa, Canada, India and Australia, and to which the route to the U.S.A. is but a "side line," whereas it ought to be the main concern of the company that operates it.

It is to be expected that France, and possibly Spain and Portugal, will in time wish to operate services to North America, so there we shall meet still more competition. Altogether the situation promises considerable scratching of heads in the Victoria district of London. The fight is on, or will be very soon. It will be interesting and instructive to watch the results.

## THE GLOSTER METEOR JET FIGHTER



Somewhat belatedly the Ministry of Aircraft Production has released some particulars of this Rolls-Royce jet-engined machine. The official description will be found on p. 32.

These special *Flight* drawings show it to be of the variety once described by Dr. Roxbee Cox as "ordinary aircraft with invisible airscrews."

Main dimensions are: span 43ft., length 41ft. wing area 374 sq. ft.