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CIVIL AVIATION

FLIGHT

FRENCH INDEPENDENTS MERGE

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T was announced in Paris last week that, as the first step towards the progressive regrouping of the main French independent carriers operating between France and French North Africa, the following mergers will shortly take place:—
Cie. Air Transport and Air Algerie will jointly form
a new company which will be called Compagnie Generale de Transport Aerien Air Algerie. The two former airlines, in which Cie. Generale Transatlantique
and Cie. Fabre-Fraissinet are respectively majority shareholders, will remain in existence as "holding" companies only. The present chairman of Cie. Air Transport will become chairman and managing director
of the new airline, and he will be assisted by Colonel
Soufflet, also of Cie. Air Transport, while M. Lignel and M. Addida of Air Algerie will be, respectively, vice-chairman and deputy managing director.
In Morocco, Air Maroc and Air Atlas will merge into a new company called Cie. Air Maroc, under the chairmanship of General Corniglion-Molinier, and rhe shareholding will be divided equally between the Cherifian Government, Cie. Paquet and the Fraissinet Shipping Group, Air France, Cie. Generale Trans-atlantique and Cie. Air Transport.
In view of the financial and technical interlocking of the main groups concerned, a joint managerial committee will be set up. With the exception of Air Algerie, the companies concerned already co-operate through the medium of A.T.A.F. (an agreement between carriers of the French Union), which was established in January, 1950 as a small-scale counterpart of I.A.T.A. The objects of this association are to share traffic on a friendly basis, to deter-mine rates which are both profitable and attractive to the public, to set up enforcement machinery and to standardize operating practices. Through the A.T.A.F., it has been possible for passengers to transfer from one airline to another without difficulty, and for sales promotion to be co-ordinated. The other five companies comprising A.T.A.F. are Air France, U.A.T., T.A.I., Tunis Air and Aeromaritime. The combined fleets of the two new companies will be as follows: C.G.T.A.A.—one Breguet 761; six Bretagnes, three DC-4S and five DC-3S; Air Maroc—four Commandos, six Bretagnes, five DC-3S and two Languedocs.

PURELY HYPOTHETICAL

"I'm gonna buy a paper jet that I can call my own—
A jet that other airlines cannot steal . . ."
(With apologies to the popular song)

DETAILS of project "Paper Jet," whereby simulated regular

services between New York and San Francisco have been "operated" for the past four months, are given in a news release from United Air Lines. The two hypothetical aircraft used for these services were "designed" by the airline's engineers, and were assumed to have the following characteristics : cruising speed, 550 m.p.h. at 40,000ft; capacity for 70-80 passengers and 8,000 lb cargo; fuel load, 13,500 gall; range, 3,000 miles; rate of climb, i,500ft/min.
The advantages of the jet transport in American domestic ser-

CRYSTAL-GAZERS: Mr. J. A. Herlihy (right), Vice-president (engineering
and maintenance) of United Air Lines, displays a model airliner illus-
trating the "Paper Jet" project referred to above, while Mr. W. C.
Mentzer, general manager (engineering), looks on approvingly. The
30 per cent break-even figure (background) looks optimistic, and presumably refers to direct operating costs.

UNEE AEPEE ITALIANE, which has headquarters at Rome and has previously operated domestic and international services with DC-3s and
DC-6s, recently acquired its first Convair-liner 240, pictured above.

vice are brought out by the following comparison between an actual DC-6 service operated by United between New York and San Francisco and one of the two imaginary jet services whic have been "flying" daily since November 17th :

Service

Flight UA621
"Paper Jet"

dep. N.Y.

0800 hr
1315 hr

arr. Chicago

1020 hr
1400 hr

dep. Chicago

1050 hr
1430 hr

arr. San Francisco

1645 hr
1650 hr

Local times are given in this table; actual elapsed times for the 2,600-mile journey would be 11 hr 45 min (DC-6) and 6 hr 35 min (jet). Prevailing winds would reduce the "Paper Jet's" eastboun time to 5 hr 45 min, compared with 9 hr 45 min for the DC-6. To make the studies as reaUstic as possible, U.A.L. report, th jet flights "have been conducted with the exact planning and scheduling which go into real operations." High-altitude met. reports have been studied, alternative airfields selected and flig plans prepared. After dispatching the aircraft and plotting thei theoretical progress en route, observers decided in each ca whether holding or diversion were necessitated by weather o traffic conditions at the destination. Their studies indicated tha diversion would seldom be required, although the return servic to New York, arriving during the afternoon, was on occasions required to stand-off for periods of 10-27 min.
The preliminary findings of "Paper Jet" are summarized as follows by United Air Lines :
(1) All indications are that United's present coast-to-coast airways forming the "Main Line" route, afford excellent flying conditions for jets.
(2) Pressure-pattern flying . . . diminishes in value to jet pilots because jet flight times are less affected by winds.
(3) It is believed that both eastbound and westbound flights could b operated on a non-stop schedule, but further study of upper winds needed before this is conclusively established. Winter winds have n influenced "Paper Jet" operations to the degree anticipated. Analysis incomplete, however, on January and February—months in which th strongest winds occur.
(4) Jet flying speeds will contribute to shorter-range (and therefor more accurate) weather forecasts for flight operations.
(5) Present indications are that the change-over to jets, although n a simple matter, will be less difficult than formerly believed. It appears that jetliners can be operated in the DC-6 airport traffic pattern.
(6) Further intensive study is required on so-called "jet streams. . . They can be avoided by a slight deviation in altitude or direction. Like most American pronouncements on the subject of je transports, the U.A.L. statement tends to ignore the facts tha B.O.A.C. has been successfully operating jet transports for almo a year. The American tendency to refer to jet transports in th future tense seems likely to remain until the new aircraft are actually operating in or from the United States. However, the "Paper Jet" project is of interest in that it relates the performanc of a jet airliner to an actual domestic route, and represents a mo realistic approach to the re-equipment problem than the policy o over-emphasizing the obstacles and shrugging-off British progres as a subsidized experiment.

THE CHANNEL ACCIDENT

ON June 14th last year, while flying from Croydon to Le Mans,

Consul G-AHFT descended into the English Channel 12 miles south of Brighton; the pilot and five of the seven passenge were drowned. A pubhc inquiry into the accident was held in London last October and November, and the official report ha now been published. Printed copies will be available to the publi in a few weeks' time.

The Court found that the primary cause of the accident wa failure of the starboard engine, for reasons which could not b ascertained. The Consul, owned by Morton Air Services, Ltd.