

## AIR COMMERCE . . .

### KEY TO NORTH-EAST PROSPERITY

A PRELIMINARY report prepared for the Yorkshire Airport Development Association by Mr A. M. Stratford, head of the Transport and Economics Department of Whitworth Gloster Aircraft Ltd, concludes that air communications both for passengers and cargo from the large industrial areas of Yorkshire and the North-East are inadequate.

The report concludes that the case for air communication in the area fully justifies a detailed analysis of the problem with the object of establishing the best overall economic solution to satisfy the needs of the area. Such a survey could form part of the national plan for developing Yorkshire and the North-East.

### WHAT WAS CRAZY?

WHAT exactly did Sir Matthew Slattery of BOAC describe as "bloody crazy" last October? When the House of Lords was giving the Air Corporations Bill a second reading recently, Viscount Massereene and Ferrard said that Sir Matthew had described as bloody crazy the fact that the corporation had to pay interest on money borrowed. Lord Shackleton interrupted to say that if statements were to be made about public servants who could not answer for themselves then the alleged statements should be checked.

Viscount Massereene and Ferrard retorted that he had read it in three newspapers. Lord Shackleton said that the Minister of Aviation had also similarly misinterpreted Sir Matthew Slattery's remarks (in a speech he made when the bill was passing through the Commons). What Sir Matthew regarded as crazy, said Lord Shackleton, was that BOAC should pay interest year after year on losses which, Sir Matthew claimed, had been forced upon it.

The record of the BOAC meeting at which Sir Matthew made his much quoted statement (*Flight International*, October 18) indicates that Lord Shackleton's version of what Sir Matthew said is correct.

Lord Shackleton alleged also that BOAC had wanted to write down the value of their DC-7Cs in 1958-59, but had been stopped doing so by the then Minister (Mr Harold Watkinson). In view of the fact that the present Minister has said that he "cannot easily accept that the depreciation in the value of the corporation's aircraft fleet has only been fully revealed this year," it looks as though the record needs putting straight. In fact Lord Shackleton said he thought Sir Matthew was owed an apology.

In a later debate Lord Chesham, for the Government, went into "exactly what it was that happened in 1958-59." Repeated reading of Lord Chesham's remarks shows that what Lord Shackleton said is not denied. Indeed, Lord Chesham said—and this has never before been published—that BOAC proposed to the then Minister the writing-off of £15m or £16m capital. Mr Watkinson, however, did not want BOAC to "show a needlessly unfavourable result," and he "invited" BOAC to review their proposals. This they did (writing off only that notorious £5m in respect of Britannia and Comet 4 development).

It would appear that the Minister of Aviation has been grossly unfair to BOAC.

### NOTHING TO HIDE

"THE CAB has approved a Capitol Airways lease of seven L.1049H aircraft from Seaboard . . . Rental rate will be \$100 per hour with Seaboard authorized to terminate the lease on 30 days' notice if rentals do not average \$10,000 a month per aircraft for the preceding three months. Capitol has an option to buy three of the aircraft and spare parts for \$2.1m, less rentals paid, plus 6 per cent interest."

The foregoing passage is typical of the open way in which the US Civil Aeronautics Board requires American airlines to account for equipment deals. Every detail of every transaction is available for inspection by the industry or the public. If left to themselves, of course, without having to account to the CAB, the parties to equipment deals would probably—as they do in this country—decline to disclose any details of the transaction. The reason would be given, as it usually is in the UK, that the matter is private and nobody else's business. When BOAC, for example, are asked to disclose the terms on which two of their Britannia 312s are being operated by British United Airways, the answer is the same as

when BEA are asked to disclose the price which Cambrian Airways paid for four BEA Viscount 701s. No information can be disclosed.

Now more than ever before perhaps is it important for the public to have more information about the prices which BOAC and BEA get for their surplus equipment, particularly when they dispose of it to independent airlines. Baffling situations will tend otherwise to keep on arising. For example, why does the chairman of BOAC describe as "bloody mad" the Government's policy to give trooping contracts to independents and not to BOAC while his corporation is selling (or leasing?) two Britannias to British United Airways expressly for the purpose of trooping?

### MEN BEHIND THE AIRPORTS

FROM December 17, 1962, the work of the Ministry of Aviation's two aerodromes divisions (aerodromes planning and aerodromes management) has been re-distributed between the existing under-secretaries who will have new designations.

Mr G. V. Hole will assume the title Under-Secretary (Aerodromes-General) and will be responsible for: (1) the policy, planning and management of the aerodromes defined under groups II, III and IV in the white paper on aerodromes and navigation services (Cmd 1457) published in August 1961; (2) the co-ordination of trading estimates and accounts for all state-owned aerodromes, and (3) policy in respect of non-state aerodromes, heliports, aerodrome technical services, and aircraft noise.

Mr V. P. Harries will assume the title Under-Secretary (Airports-London, Prestwick) and will be responsible for: (1) policy, development and management of Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and Prestwick airports, (2) development of additional international airport facilities (including a central heliport) for London, and (3) the legislative preparations for the formation of an airport authority.

### BKS RESERVATIONS IDEA

FOLLOWING the success of the "book now schedule later" idea introduced this year on BKS routes from Leeds/Bradford to the Channel Islands, the company announces its intention to provide "sell and record" facilities on all BKS services from Leeds/Bradford and Newcastle to the Channel Islands in 1963, but based on a published schedule.

"Sell and record" control charts are now being issued at weekly intervals, or at greater frequency depending on demand to provide agents with a quick reference guide. On flights shown as "open" agents may sell up to four seats without prior reference to BKS, notifying BKS in writing immediately.

To eliminate the danger of over-booking flights will be placed on "apply" at a safe level of bookings and may be restored to "open" at a later date when peak pressure is past. The sell and record facility will be withdrawn at an appropriate time before flight departure date, the interval to be decided by circumstances.

Sale-and-record charts will show the basic BKS schedule but it is proposed to operate additional flights in accordance with demand. At the present time regulations governing deposits, ticketing, time limits and so forth on domestic services are under review by the ATLB. However, subject to this review, BKS have decided to reduce the booking deposit to £1 per passenger, to be collected at the time of booking and in the event of cancellation being non-refundable. BKS are withdrawing the requirement for the deposit to be accounted for at the time of booking and in the event of cancellation a debit will be raised of ten shillings per passenger, the remaining ten to be retained by the agent to cover his expenses.

**Madair No More** The Madagascan airline Madair has changed its name to Air Madagascar.

**Mexicana Comet Offered** One of Mexicana's Comet 4Cs, now operated by Aeronaves de Mexico, is to be available for lease from April 30.

**Lufthansa's Air Shuttle**, due to be opened on April 1 between Hamburg and Frankfurt, will be at a two-hourly frequency in the mornings and evenings, and once every four hours during the day. Relief aircraft will be scheduled as necessary, tickets may be bought in flight, and baggage will be self-claimed.