

is the white paper's conclusion (para. 31) that BOAC's sales efforts have been "well directed." In fact, of course, BOAC's traffic growth in recent times has been less than the international average.

Mr Corbett's inquiry could not have established anything that should not have been known already even to the most transitory politicians and civil servants. The Minister was putting his job out to commission and wasting time. The only possible merit in calling for a further investigation of this scale and expense was to establish an independent corroboration of the facts. It may well have been an impartial report; but it is not seen to have been so, and therefore its one possible merit is not proven.

The superficiality of the white paper is at times breathtaking. In para. 7 it is said that a profit was made in the period 1952-56. As subsequent events showed, these profits, if proper depreciation had been allowed, were losses. Again, there is repeated reference to "restrictive practices" by foreign governments (paras. 9, 38, 47). Certainly there has been increased protectionism, but where have BOAC's rights been curtailed or refused in recent years? BOAC's widespread pooling agreements have caused foreign restrictiveness to diminish, not to increase. The big VC10 issues are ignored, and there is no reference to BOAC's estimates, given to the Minister 18 months ago and presumably also shown to Mr Corbett, of the £8m-£14m excess annual operating cost of the

new fleet (*Flight International*, May 9, leading article). The arguments presented for and against a BOAC-BEA merger (which is "on balance" rejected) make no reference to the advantages of combined sales; seem to suggest that there is merit in sheer airline size; and ignore the possibility of common fleet procurement (which, had it existed in the past, could never have resulted in the production of both the Vanguard and the Britannia).

Superficiality reaches a crescendo in para. 51, under the heading Conclusions: "If the national interest should appear, whether to the Corporation or to the Government, to require some departure from commercial practice, this should only be done with the agreement or at the instance of the Minister of Aviation." What statement of new policy is this? It is exactly the mixture as before. It is worse than superficial: it evades the fundamental issue, which everyone has been talking about for years, namely that the Minister should bear responsibility, clearly and publicly stated, for losses that result from enforced departures from commercial practice.

Footnote Asked at a news conference whether he would now clear up his contested allegation last year that BOAC had been concealing the true state of their books, Mr Amery said: "I stand by what I said. This is a complicated issue. I shall be explaining the problem to Parliament on December 2." [*Leading article in this issue.*]

SHUTTLING TO SUCCESS

FOUR records unparalleled in airline operation are claimed by Eastern Air Lines for their no-reservations, walk-on and pay-on-board Air Shuttle services. On November 8 they carried an "all-time high" of 14,308 passengers in a single day between the four cities served, surpassing the previous best of 13,439 and using a fleet of 39 Super Constellations and DC-7Bs in 190 flights.

From the inception of the Air Shuttle on April 30, 1961, "an on-time departure record without precedent or parallel in the industry" is claimed—96.4 per cent of all scheduled flights have left the gate exactly on the minute advertised.

In the 30 months of operation more than 4m passengers have been carried, more than 2m of these having used the services in the first nine months of 1963.

Air Shuttle services now operate every hour in both directions over the routes La Guardia - Boston and La Guardia - Washington, from 0700hr to midnight; every hour in both directions between Newark and Boston from 0730 to 2230hr; every other hour in both directions between Newark and Washington from 0730 to 2130hr and six times daily in both directions between Boston and Washington.

BRITISH EAGLE AND STARWAYS

LAST summer we referred in these pages to a battle between Cambrian and Eagle for a £½m-£¾m take-over of the Liverpool independent Starways (*Flight International*, July 18, page 83). Although no actual take-over has been announced it appears that Eagle have emerged the victors and that the absorption of Mr Wilson's Starways into Mr Bamberg's British Eagle is now under way. The wording of the official announcement by British Eagle on November 19 was evidently careful, saying only that the two airlines had "reached an agreement to provide for an analysis of their positions in such a way as to produce a better integrated pattern."

According to Mr Bamberg, Starways will continue as a separate company but obviously the intention is closely to integrate the two route patterns under British Eagle's overall direction. Liverpool is the hub of busy and fast-growing air services to London, Glasgow and Edinburgh and across the Irish Sea; and control of Liverpool, and perhaps particularly of the London - Liverpool service, will strengthen British Eagle's efforts to establish itself as a major UK domestic operator in competition with BEA and the corporation's associate Cambrian Airways (who were recently licensed to operate London - Liverpool). The agreement will, it is said, "be of great benefit to the Liverpool community and will provide a sound basis for future air development from Liverpool."

The British Eagle statement refers to "further emphasis" on holiday flights to the Continent and to Cornwall. The agreement, which comes into force on December 31, will not, say British Eagle, "cause any major changes in personnel."

TWA's SST Repeat Order TWA have deposited \$400,000 with the FAA as down payment on a further four American supersonic airliners. This follows their deposit of \$600,000 last month on six of these aircraft.

PAA's 5,300-mile Jet Haul PAA will inaugurate on December 5 non-stop Boeing 707-320B services between New York and Buenos Aires covering the distance of 5,300 statute miles in 10hr 15min. The service is one of the world's longest scheduled flights.

BEA's Sunniest Summer During the seven summer months April-October BEA made a profit of £7½m after interest on capital. Lord Douglas, giving this news of BEA's "most golden summer," anticipates a "substantial profit for the 1963-64 year."

Last BEA Viscount 701 Sold The last two of BEA's 23 Viscount 701s have been bought by Channel Airways, increasing the independent's fleet to seven. Viscount 701 sales, all said to be at a profit, are for the record: VASP, ten; Cambrian, five; LAV, one; Channel Airways, seven.

JAL and China Following Japan's refusal to accept PIA flights to Tokyo via Canton and Shanghai, which have been countered by unofficial Pakistani threats to review the bilateral agreement with Japan, come reports that there have recently been Japanese missions to China to discuss the possibility of traffic rights.

TCA DC-8 Salvage The Royal School of Military Engineering were called in to help move the TCA DC-8 which made a crash landing after taking off from London Heathrow on November 6. The aircraft has been towed back to the airport on caterpillar track bogies over a specially laid metal road, and is now in a hangar for a repair survey.

Caledonian's New Capital The amount paid by The Donaldson Line for its 25 per cent share in Caledonian Airways (see last week's issue) is reported to be £32,000. The airline has now been granted its applications to operate holiday flights from Gatwick next year. About 22 flights each weekend are involved; according to Mr John de la Haye, Caledonian's chairman, this represents about £750,000 worth of business to the airline.

PAA-TWA Route Rationalization The CAB's Bureau of Economic Regulation has recommended, following the recent hearings into the Transatlantic Route Renewal Case, that US air services across the Atlantic be "re-aligned" on a basis of area competition. Under this arrangement PAA would serve London and Frankfurt exclusively and also Amsterdam, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Glasgow and Keflavik. TWA would serve Paris, Rome, Lisbon, Madrid, Milan, Zurich, Geneva and Athens.