AIR TRANSPORT . . .

the same principle applies here. It is the size of the American carriers' home market that results in the two-to-one balance in their favour in the overall market. This is not greatly out of line with the total populations of the two countries and, to the extent that it is out of line, might suggest that BOAC is doing rather better on this route than it should. If that is regarded as a spurious conclusion, then let it be placed in juxtaposition with those other conclusions suggested earlier. What is apparent is that the licensing of another British carrier, so that there was parity in numbers of national airlines on this route, could not be expected to increase the British share of the market from one-third to 50 per cent.

"So much for the statistical argument. It must not be overlooked that in a practical airline context, the American carriers have an important advantage stemming from the size of their country which no British carrier can match."

The report then goes on to detail the effects of the bilateral agreement which governs traffic rights between the UK and the USA.

At the introductory press conference last week Sir Giles denied that BOAC was, as has been stated, "seriously short of capacity." He said that even in the peak season the airline's load factors were only just acceptable. During the first 15 weeks of this financial year (the start of the summer period), for instance, BOAC's worldwide average load factor was 56.9 per cent—"which doesn't look like a shortage of capacity." He did not like to think what the situation would have been if the originally proposed fleet had been delivered according to plan.

Of the present financial year Sir Giles writes, in an article in the latest issue of *BOAC News,* that "we are not doing too badly . . . although recent alarums and excursions are cutting into our profits. BOAC will not make as much money as last year, but we never expected to . . . Unless there are more disturbances, we should finish this year with sufficient operating surplus for us to keep up with the somewhat optimistic financial target we were recently given by the Government for the four years to March 31, 1970" (see *Flight* for July 27, page 125). Meanwhile the Middle East situation is at present causing a loss of up to £70,000 in revenue a week because of the loss of traffic points and also, no doubt, the cost of long-distance re-routeing to avoid prohibited areas.

BOAC is, like other major airlines, going to invest money in the hotel business because the shortage of accommodation is beginning to inhibit traffic development. In Britain there will will be a shortage to the extent of about 30,000 rooms by 1970—15,000 in London alone. BOAC is planning a 1,000-room hotel to be ready by 1970 for the new Victoria air transport complex and will also be providing about 5,000 more rooms elsewhere. Sir Giles commented that he thought the hotel industry should itself be making the effort to provide this necessary accommodation.

DAN-AIR ACCIDENT REPORT

FOR reasons that have not been ascertained, the pilot of the Dan-Air Piper Apache which crashed into high ground en route from Gatwick to Lasham on September 1, 1966, had attempted to remain below cloud when such an operating technique was not practicable in the weather conditions prevailing. The aircraft was on a communications flight with two crew aboard (only the pilot had an instrument rating) and was well equipped for IFR operation yet the decision was taken to fly VFR. The inspector of accidents in his report just published* notes that radar services were standing by at Lasham to give approach guidance to the Apache, and that the last weather information passed to the pilot indicated a cloud base at Lasham of 300ft above ground with a visibility of 1.5 to 2 miles. The inspector notes that "a direct VFR flight to Lasham would have saved considerable time, and it may be that this was what the pilot had in mind. However, in the circumstances, the decision to attempt the flight below cloud was bad airmanship and the fundamental cause of the accident."

The aircraft struck trees near the top of the 644ft Loxhill a mile north of Dunsfold. Both pilots were killed but the report considers that the degree of injury received (almost entirely to the head and upper torso) "would have been considerably lessened if shoulder harnesses and protective helmets had been worn." Only lap straps were fitted to the Apache.

TRANSGLOBE TAKES OVER AIR COURIERS

THE fixed-base maintenance operators at Gatwick Airport, London, Air Couriers (Gatwick) Ltd, which have performed engineering services for a number of British and overseas airlines, have been acquired by Transglobe Airways. The entire shareholding was bought for £500,000. The company's main facilities on the south side of the airport are a four-bay hangar and a two-storey office block. Mr S. Wilson, managing director of Transglobe, told *Flight* that he had bought Air Couriers to make a base for the airline and to ensure that the maintenance facilities would be expanded to cater for the new aircraft shortly to be introduced. Mr Wilson expected that planning permission would soon be granted for the extension of the existing hangars to make them big enough to accommodate the Canadair CL-44s which Transglobe expect to start to receive next spring.

It is understood that Air Couriers will continue to undertake the same range of work as before, including general aviation aircraft maintenance. The biggest tenant is Laker Airways, who rent two hangar bays and offices in the Air Couriers block and have already announced (*Flight* for July 6, page 8) plans to start an "International Jet Centre" on an 11-acre site at Gatwick.

Mr F. W. Griffith, who founded Air Couriers at Croydon in 1938, and who has managed the company ever since, resigned at the takeover. Mr Griffith and his son, Mr R. S. Griffith, have withdrawn from the company altogether.

*Report on the Accident to Piper PA 23 Series 160, G-ATFZ, at Loxhill, Hascombe, near Godalming, Surrey, on September 1, 1966. HMSO, price 2s.

SCHREINER PULLS OUT

AS briefly recorded in issue of July 27 (page 129), the Dutch non-scheduled carrier Schreiner Airways has decided to cease operations from October 1. Operating losses already sustained and the prospects for the current year do not justify a continuation of operations, and there are insufficient prospects of profitable operations in future. Schreiner was formed in 1964 as the charter branch of Schreiner Aerocontractors, a holding company with operating branches in the Netherlands, Iran and Nigeria. The airline entered the holiday tours market with an ex-JAL DC-7C and an F.27 and very soon became the largest of the three Dutch tourist carriers; the fleet was increased to three DC-7Cs, two F.27s and a DC-3. However, it became apparent that three airlines competing in the Dutch holiday market were too many.

So negotiations were started by KLM, which urged the two non-scheduled carriers, Schreiner and Martinair, to join forces and become a non-scheduled subsidiary of the national airline. The greatest difficulty proved to be a personal one in that the managing directors of the companies, Bob Schreiner and Martin Schroder, were self-made men who had built up their airlines from almost nothing. Negotiations between the companies failed and Martinair became a KLM subsidiary, with three big shipping lines providing financial backing. Schreiner Airways had thus to go it alone and were denied services previously provided by KLM, such as catering, and coach transport. Personal controversies led Mr Schreiner to resign as managing director on January 1 this year and to sell his shares in the airline to the Van Ommeren shipping company, which became the sole shareholder.

KLM and Martinair are now facing the task of taking over the holiday commitments which Schreiner would have fulfilled in 1968 and Martinair has already announced the purchase of a second DC-9-30 and the takeover of a Lockheed Electra from KLM (see issue of July 27, page 126). Some of the 200 experienced Schreiner staff will transfer to KLM and Martinair. The three DC-7Cs will be sold and Fokker will take back the two F.27s for re-sale to other customers.