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SI R ANTHON Y RETIRE S

MANAGEMENT stability is one of the chief features of Sir Anthony Milward's seven-year chairmanship of BEA, which ended with his retirement last week. As he is fond of pointing out, the men who have wielded political control of our two airline corporations since the war have come and gone with surprising frequency. As he said recently: "Our success has been due, to no small extent, to the con-tinuity of management control over the past 23 years. Con-trast our two chairmen and three chief executives over this period with the numerous ministers, parliamentary secre-taries and civil servants who have come and gone over this period, and one can appreciate the 'extra-commercial' diffi-culties which nationalised industries have to face." The continuity of management at BEA is something of a record for a nationalised industry, and compares well with that of large private-enterprise companies.
Sir Anthony took over the chairmanship from the late Lord Douglas of Kirtleside in 1964. He joined BEA after the war on leaving the Royal Navy, in which he had served as a pilot. He was the airline's controller of operations until 1955, when he became chief executive, a post which he held until he was appointed chairman.
During Sir Anthony's 15 years at the top of BEA, the number of passengers carried annually by the airline rose from 2J

4 million to almost 8'a million—more than any
carrier outside the USA and USSR.

STANSTE D WRI T

A TEST case on disturbance arising from airport traffic is likely to result from the issue of a writ against the British Airports Authority last week by a.group of residents in the vicinity of Stansted Airport. They are members of the North-west Essex and East Hertfordshire Preservation Association. The writ seeks a High Court injunction to prevent night Hying at Stansted Airport (between 2300hr and OTOOhr), and to restrain the use of the airport for train-ing flights. The writ alleges that BAA has allowed the air-port to become a source of nuisance to residents because of the smell, noise and soot. The legal action is probably the first in Britain against an airport operating authority alleging nuisance arising from aircraft operations, although there have been similar actions in the USA and France. If successful, it could have wide repercussions, not only in the matter of the siting of the third London airport, but at existing airports in Britain. The report of the Roskill Com-mission on the third London airport, to be published shortly, contains a recommendation that compensation should be paid to those who will be affected by noise above a certain level resulting from the establishment of the new airport.
If the action comes to trial, the court will be giving detailed consideration to the following passages from the Civil Aviation Act, 1949, dealing with trespass and nuisance, on which the BAA is likely to rely: —

40.—(1) No action shall lie in respect of trespass or in respect of nuisance, by reason only of the flight of an aircraft over any property at a height above the ground, which, haviny

The new sea/air cargo service from Britain to Central Africa is now being operated by the Seabird division of Transmeridian, the first services having been to Lusaka. Cargo is shipped to Accra and then air-freighted in TML CL-44s to save time and wastage at rates only slightly higher than those of surface transport, and 30 per cent below the cheapest air charter rates, according to the airline. Kinshasa, Entebbe, Nairobi, Mombasa, Oar es Salaam and Subumbashi are the other destinations to be served

regard to wind, weather and all the circumstances of the case is reasonable, or the ordinary incidents of such flight so long as the provisions of Part II and this Part of this Act and any Order in Council or order made under Part II or this Part of tins Act are duly complied with. I Part II relates to the regu-lation of civil aviation.!

"41.— (1) An Older in Council under section eight of this Act may provide for regulating the conditions under which noise and vibration may be caused by aircraft on aerodromes and may provide that subsection (2) of this section shall apply to any aerodrome as respects which provision as to noise and vibration caused by aircraft is so made.

"(2) No action shall lie in respect of nuisance by reason only of the noise and vibration caused by aircraft on an aero-drome to winch this subsection applies by virtue of an Order in Council under section eight of this Act, as long as the pro-visions of any such Order in Council are duly complied with.
It will be noted that section 41 appears to apply only to aircraft on the ground, while section 40 makes no specific mention of noise, although it limits action for trespass or nuisance. The case is interesting in 1hat the 1949 Act was framed before aircraft noise became a serious problem.

MERGE R STIL L POSSIBLE?

TECHNICAL co-operation between Swissair and Austrian Airlines (AUA) is likely to begin on April 1 next year, according to reports. AUA has decided to re-equip with DC-9s in identical configuration to those of Swissair in order to facilitate the co-operation (such a re-equipment policy was in fact made a condition of the deal by Swiss-air). Whether the venture will go further than the tech-nical side, and embrace marketing arrangements and route concessions, is still unclear. But Swissair spokesmen have told I'Liijht that a full merger is out of the question, the airline's board having no mandate to enter merger negotiations,
According to a Financial Times correspondent in Vienna, the Austrian Transport Minister has said that co-operation between the two airlines should be as far reach-ing as possible, since on its own AUA "would hardly be able to meet its obligations as a national airline." The affairs of AUA have been much subjected to political con-siderations in recent years, and its commercial perform-ance has been disappointing. The Minister's remarks in-dicate that the Austrian Government is more keen than the Swiss on a full merger, and may still be hoping to bring one about.