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The reality of 1975
Rash forecasters only would project any great upturns in the fortunes of the aviation industry in 1975. With each passing week of 1974 there seemed to be ever more doom and gloom as the flow, never laminar, started to break away and shake the structure to its foundations.

That such powers as Pan American and Aerospatiale should turn to their Governments for support would have seemed unthinkable a few years ago; and in the United Kingdom the point has been reached where a group as strong as Hawker Siddeley can no longer bear the burden of launching a comparatively modest transport aircraft.
The effect of inflation on future plans concerns not only those who build, sell and operate air-craft and their many ancillaries. Inflation is the universal enemy, and was before the oil-price rises. Long before the 1973 Middle East conflict, and the ensuing application of Arab oil power, the search for investment capital had forced interest rates up to levels unthinkable a decade ago. Airline operators and manufacturers set their prices to suit. The oil-price rise served only to hasten a process which was al-ready in the amber sector, especi-ally among airlines.
The new year should be a stimu-lating one for a business as inventive and resourceful as aviation. Man does not stop need-ing to travel when times are hard; in fact, at a time when inter-national interdependence is more

apparent than ever, the business-man may well have to move about more. People will still need holi-days, and there are no signs yet of distress in package-tour book-ings for 1975.
Airliners can still be filled, but regulators will need to encourage and indeed sponsor efforts to cut down excess capacity on key routes such as the North Atlantic. Aircraft with fewer than half their seats occupied never made much economic sense. Competi-tion has done well for air trans-port and its users, and will con-tinue to do so, but new disciplines are needed in new circumstances — hence the review of civil-aviation policy in the United Kingdom.

Technology will be directed increasingly towards improving the product in social terms. Bigger is almost certainly no longer better; quieter certainly is, and even in hard times quietness will sell.
In the defence field economic pressures are having their effects — not just in the predictable cut-backs but in the increasing em-phasis on reliability, productivity and efficiency. These are words which the Services in all coun-tries are having to salute as never before in peacetime. It is no coincidence that the most ad-vanced aircraft in Europe, MRCA, is three weapons for the price of one. And the Nato four who are seeking an F-104 replacement are attracted to the American ACF solution not least because it is being sold as "cheap and simple."

The days of open-ended R&D contracts are numbered, and the world cannot afford too much duplication of technology effort. The ASTP (Apollo-Soyuz Test Project) and the certification of the Anglo-French supersonic air-liner, will be the greatest inter-national technology - cooperation symbols of 1975.
The aviation industry is not grinding to a halt; rather is it changing step. If the pace in 1975 is cautious it can still be forward and upward, and with-out gloom and doom. In the year just flown the airlines bought more airliners than they did in 1973 (297 against 292) at a higher gross value and a higher gross tonnage. To paraphrase Shakespeare, there is nothing so ill that doomspeak doth not make it so.

IN THIS ISSUE

World News
Air Transport
Light Commercial
Defence
Private Flight
What's happened to hovercraft?
TURBIN E AERO
TH E WORL D
Letters

Industry Internatior
Spaceflight
Straight and Level

2
S
10
11
14
16
ENGINES OF
Directory 1-32

al

19
20
22
22a

Front cover: The Pegasus and RB.211 engines powering the RAF Harrier and PSA's TriStar are examples of front-rank technology which are likely to be still flying at the turn of the century. They introduce the international survey of turbine engines which forms the special 32-page directory following page 18