

conflicts with the final system to which we will certainly be drawn by logic, by economic and by war efficiency, and, in fact, by everything except existing vested interests—namely, a combined general Imperial War Staff for the three Services, actuating and operating under single control. Air power may prove itself—many people declare it has proved itself—a substitute for other more expensive forms of man power or sea power. But it is obvious that any question of such difficulty as substituting one set of developments for another, or increasing air power at the expense of existing forms of naval or military effort, for instance, can only be dealt with upon the advice and through the agency of a combined general staff who feel impartial as to the method or instrument employed, so long as they are best and the right ones for the country to use. Therefore, I find myself in strong personal sympathy with the remarks made by Major Glyn in regard to the creation of such a joint staff. I hope that the discussions which are now taking place between the professional heads of the three Services, the First Sea Lord, the Chief of the General Staff, and the Chief of the Air Force, may be productive of real advance in this most urgent and important matter.

Here a word as to the position of the professional head of the fighting Services. I consider that in practice the control of the fighting Services is best exercised through the close co-operation of a Cabinet Minister and the professional head, who should be the principal soldier, the principal sailor, and the principal airman of the day in the fighting Service. As long as that arrangement works well everything works well, and when it breaks down the personality should be changed either in one direction or in another. This close co-operation involves almost daily intercourse between the Minister and the professional heads. It is not possible for a Parliamentary Under-Secretary to be the intermediary. It is not possible for the Under-Secretary to be the channel of all communications passing between the professional head of the Service and the Minister responsible. It has never been so at the War Office or at the Admiralty. The First Lord must deal with the First Sea Lord; the Secretary of State for War must deal with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff; and, similarly, whoever holds the seals of the Air Ministry must deal with the chief of the Air Staff. It is the chief of the Air Staff who is the one to insist on his right of direct access to the Minister responsible, for otherwise everything would have to be taken once to the Under-Secretary and then again to the Minister who had to decide.

The view I take is this: that the initiative in Service matters must in the main come, and as a general rule comes, from the professional head. He plans, he outlines, he proposes. The Minister examines, criticises, suggests, discusses with his Board or Council, and finally approves. That is the right way. It really is the only way to carry out a military policy. It is not possible for the initiative in such matters to come from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, and it would not be fair to the professional head of the Department, nor would it be wise, nor would it work in practice. Just as I think that the initiative should, in the main, come, in the case of air policy, from the chief of the Air Service, in the case of the Army from the Chief of the General Staff, and in the case of the Navy from the First Sea Lord, so in the three Services together I hope that the initiative for joint action will come from the three heads sitting together, and that as a result of those conferences which are taking place proposals will emerge which will lead to the creation of that joint Imperial Defence Staff, which at the present time is so indispensable from every point of view.

Sir D. MacLean: The Secretary for War has taken great credit to himself and to his Department that this is the only one of the three great Services which has effected a reduction, and he has told us, with great frankness, that the real reduction is to £60,000,000. What will an anxious public, think when with a shock it comes to know that the Air Force was to be maintained during the current year at an expenditure of £66,000,000, and to what extent will it be satisfied when this splendid campaign of economy has reduced the total to £60,000,000?

Mr. Churchill: I meant to give the figures in my speech. Let us take £15,000,000 as representing a normal year. The difference between that and the present expenditure is £39,000,000. Liquidating war contracts and equipment, apart from the Ministry of Munitions, accounts for £12,000,000; liquidating works, £3,000,000; decrease in maintaining war force above the normal amount accounted for £4,000,000; war gratuities accounted for £5,000,000; the pay of abnormal numbers above what will be maintained next year, due to the military situation, accounts for £12,000,000; minor miscellaneous items account for £3,000,000. That gives a total of £39,000,000, all accountable to pure and definite war charges and war necessities, and not in any way attributable to mismanagement.

Replying to Captain Benn, Mr. Churchill said: The final wind up of the Women's Royal Air Force was much more rapid than was at one time contemplated. There was what was, perhaps, a pardonable reluctance to scrap and disband a force which had rendered such admirable service, and it led to the view being formed that they would be continued rather longer than was

the case. Certain articles of clothing were issued and purchased which, had it been known that they were not to continue, would undoubtedly have been dispensed with. But on the whole the more rapid demobilisation which has taken place has overtaken that expenditure and has provided economy of a different character which on the balance leads to a position of advantage.

On the Technical and Warlike Stores Vote, Mr. Churchill, replying to Capt. Benn, said so far as the mechanical transport of the Air Force is concerned, I have not yet finally reached a conclusion as to what extent we can pool with the Army. I am certain we can pool reserves with the Army; so far as the ordinary pool of cars is concerned we can pool reserves. Of course, the mechanical transport repair department at Shrewsbury, which is under the control of the R.A.F., we hope will be wound up and handed over to Slough, which, although it has been very frequently abused in this House and out of it by ignorant persons, is increasingly establishing itself as a paying asset in the State and is vindicating in a most conclusive manner the wisdom and foresight of those concerned in its initiation. As far as civil aviation is concerned, I have the figures here. I said the total was £329,000, and these are the principal items: Meteorology, £25,000; pay (salaries), £39,000; air routes, Cairo to the Cape, £50,000; Karachi to Australia, £40,000; purchase of land, etc., £50,000; minor new works, £25,000.

Maj.-Gen. Sir Newton Moore: Is there any provision for a route beyond Karachi? Is there any provision for acquiring land at either of the stations that would be required between there and Australia?

Mr. Churchill: Oh, yes. This present flight to Australia has been done along a route which the Civil Aviation Department of the Air Ministry has been prospecting and developing. Only one machine has so far got through, but the trail has been blazed, not only as far as Karachi, but right away through to Australia. Of course, I think the best part of the route will be the Cairo, Bagdad, Karachi route, and there anyhow you will have large air establishments for fighting or strategic purposes, and it ought to be possible on a first-class route, with aerodromes and so forth, for large commercial craft to make their way. The Cape to Cairo route, on which £50,000 has been spent, is now practically complete. The present state of the scheme is this, that we want an incentive from South Africa as great as was offered by Australia to induce the civil aviation interests in this country to compete in the Cairo to the Cape flight, and I do think the great millionaires of the Rand might well make an offer of a prize equal to that which was given by the Government of Australia, and so offer an incentive to use this route. The route will be kept up by the different local Governments through which it passes. That is our policy, to negotiate with them to take over these landing grounds, keep them clear of the bush, and guard the stores of petrol and other commodities which are placed there, so that what has been done once will not fade away into the jungle altogether.

In the debate on the Report Stage on December 15, Mr. Churchill, replying to question, said that broadly speaking they were going to provide means by which men may enter the ranks of the Air Force, and may rise to be flying officers, but they will, he thought, in the future as in the past, relegate the conduct of the flying machines in the main to commissioned officers. Dealing with the question of new uniforms, Mr. Churchill said it involved no additional expense, because they made the strictest rule that every officer had to wear out his old clothing before adopting the new pattern.

On the question of the helicopter, he said there was no doubt that if civil aviation was to achieve really wide development, it must be through the agency of some quite different kind of aeroplane to that used at present. If this invention were successful it would give us a machine, which, if the engines stopped, would descend like a parachute without anyone being hurt. Investigation showed that it was by no means impossible, scientifically and theoretically, that the helicopter machine would not only rise and descend perpendicularly, but also progress laterally at great speed, although the last claim was not made by the inventor, Mr. Brennan. As long as there was any hope of a favourable result being arrived at he would see that the experiments were continued.

With regard to Lord Rosebery's farm at Sumhouse Mr. Churchill said the matter was not now at a stage in which it could be benefited by a discussion in the House, and he proposed to let matters take their course. The £50,000 for the London-India route was for the preparation of the aerodromes and accommodation at Cairo, Bagdad and Karachi. These were all places where we have our garrisons of air force for military purposes, because they expected to hold the Middle East theatre largely through the instrumentality of the air. It would be convenient to allow mail and civil flying over the route as the stations have to be there anyway.

Mr. E. Kelly urged the great necessity for having two main aerodromes in Ireland, one in the south-west and the other in the north-west, in view of the establishment of trans-Atlantic flying.

# THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

London Gazette, December 12

The following officers have been granted short service commissions in the ranks stated, with effect from Dec. 12. They will retain their seniority in the substantive rank last held by them prior to the grant of the short service commission.

In the case of officers now gazetted Flying Officer or Observer Officer from Pilot Officer or Prob. Flight Officer, seniority will date from the date of Gazette:—

**Flight Lieutenants.**—G. H. Hopper, M.C., D.F.C. (A.); C. T. Lally, M.C., A.F.C. (A.), C. E. M. Pickthorn, M.C. (A.), E. M. Pollard (A.), F. J. Powell, M.C. (A.), R. S. Smith (K.B.).

**Flying Officers.**—G. H. Allison (A.), M. Ballard (A.), G. C. Bladon (A.), M. Burbidge (A.), R. Clelland (T.), J. Cottle, D.F.C. (A.), F. H. Davies, M.C. (A.), N. L. Desoer (A.), L. C. Dodkins (A.), C. A. Elliott (T.), E. T. H. Ellis (A.), W. V. N. Grant (A.), B. R. Harris (A.), L. N. Hollinghurst, D.F.C. (A.), J. S. Hughes (A. and S.), S. Jones, D.F.C. (A.), H. R. Junor, D.F.C. (A.), E. G. Keeping (A.), J. L. Kirby (A.), I. E. McIntyre, A.F.C. (A. and S.), H. W. McKenna, D.C.M. (T.), G. Martyn (A.), A. Miller (A.), J. L. Montgomery (A.), F. A. Norton (A. and S.), G. S. Oddie (A.), R. M. Rankin (A.), N. M. S. Russell (A.), A. W. Saunders, D.F.C. (A.), W. J. Seward (A.), O. E. Sharpe (A.), B. E. S. Smith (A.), R. de L. Stedman (A.), C. F. Toogood (A.), F. R. Wynne (A.).

**Observer Officers.**—H. A. Cooper, M.C., A. J. Cox, R. S. Greenslade, E. Major Greenwood, W. G. Hanton, P. Hardy, M.C., R. McK. Jamison, D.F.C., C. H. F. Nesbit, G. L. Nicholson, J. W. Nicholson, D.F.C., A. E. Reynolds, A. D. Sinclair, G. R. Terry, A. F. Wynne.

**Flying Officers (from Pilot Officers).**—E. A. C. Britton (A.), H. A. Dinnage (T.), F. R. Eason (A.), D. D. MacA. Eastwood (A.), E. N. Fenton (A.), H. W. Gill (A. and S.), D. E. Hall (A. and S.), E. N. Hewitt (T.), C. E. Howley (A.), D. G. R. Lord (A.), J. A. McDonald (T.), J. W. F. Merer (A.), W. Parkinson (T.), W. E. Purdin (A. and S.), B. H. C. Russell (A.).

**Observer Officers (from Pilot Officers).**—H. Alexander, L. W. Beck, C. G. Boothroyd, D.F.C., F. W. Brown, R. A. Brunton, M.C., A. H. Darnbrough, J. Davison, L. J. Hoare, W. McGowan, B. J. Malyan, D. H. Murray, R. T. Rich, H. Taylor, M.C., A. L. Willcox.

**Flying Officer (from Probationary Flight Officer—late R.N.A.S.).**—D. C. Duncan (A.).

The notifications appearing in the London Gazettes of the dates indicated below, appointing the following officers to short service commns., are cancelled:—Flying Officer G. A. F. Gibson (T.) (substituted for notification in the Gazette of Nov. 28); Sept. 12. Flying Officer E. A. M. Waterton (A.); Oct. 24. Flying Officer B. Turner (A.P., T.); Nov. 11. Flight Lieut. G. M. Boumphrey (A.); Nov. 28.

The rank of Observer Officer G. S. L. Hayward, M.C., is as now described, not Flying Officer (A.), as stated in the Gazette of Oct. 24.

ROYAL AIR FORCE

Flight-Lieut. K. H. Riversdale-Elliott (A.) is granted a permanent commn. in the rank stated, with effect from Aug. 1.

The following temp. appointments are made:—**Staff Officer, 2nd Class.**—(T.) Sqdn.-Leader H. Stanley-Adams, D.S.C. Dec. 4.

**Staff Officer, 3rd Class.**—(T.) Flying Officer O. W. de Putron; Nov. 11