

COMMERCIAL AVIATION

Pooling Air Transport : A Suggestion

JUST after the capture of Holland, a friend of ours in one of the British air transport companies said to us: "How it would help the Allies to pool the air transport of France, Britain, Belgium and Holland!"

And no doubt it would. Here we have four countries, each with its air transport activities seriously handicapped. K.L.M. is cut off from its own country and has lost some of its aircraft. Sabena is in a somewhat similar position, while France and Britain are endeavouring to keep some civil aviation going despite the requisitioning of aircraft and the complications inseparable from a state of war or "non-belligerency" over half of Europe, with the imminent prospect of the half becoming the whole.

A service to Lisbon is an obvious necessity, and K.L.M. were operating and British Overseas Airways planning one before the invasion of Holland robbed the Dutch airline of both maintenance base and aircraft. There is no need for both companies to run to Lisbon—if the Dutch do it they will go from England in any case—and it would be far more efficient for only one to be engaged on this work.

The French are the obvious ones to look after the Atlantic, south and north if possible, as Britain is unable to do anything there. There remain the other two major routes, to South Africa, and to the East and Australia. Both ourselves and the Dutch are operating on the latter, and a close linking of our services should help us both. Whether this should take the form of allotting one company to a route, or specific section of a route, or whether it should consist in making available on a mutual basis all aircraft on all routes, or whether it should be only the reciprocal exchange of maintenance facilities would be for the companies themselves to determine.

12 "Cub" Coupés for C.A.A.

COMPLETION of 12 new Cub Coupés for the Civil Aeronautics Authority was announced recently by the Piper Aircraft Corporation. With this delivery a total of 21 Coupés have been placed in service by members of the C.A.A. since August, 1939. The first group of nine was ordered for inspectors of the private flying section. The twelve recently delivered go to the air safety and inspection sections.

Another Empire Boat

CLEOPATRA, the new flying-boat just completed by Short Brothers for the British Overseas Airways' Empire route, is now on its inaugural flight to India. Of the S33 type, it is only the second of this class to be delivered since the war, the first being *Clifton*.

One of the passengers on *Cleopatra's* first flight was Sir Wilfrid Greene, the Master of the Rolls. He flew to Rome to renew his contacts with the Italian Government as chairman of the British delegation to the Anglo-Italian Joint Standing Committee. The flying-boat is commanded by Captain C. E. Madge, who joined Imperial Airways in 1936.

Air Transport in America

EASTERN AIR LINES is now operating 23 flights daily between New York and Washington, so that "every hour on the hour" has now become an actual fact for twelve hours out of the twenty-four.

T.W.A. announce the addition of another California to New York schedule, known as "The Thunderbird." Flying through all the night hours, the continent is crossed in a little over 15 hours on the eastbound flight and 16 hours on the westbound. Four intermediate stops are made. A little slower than the "Sky Chief," fastest of T.W.A.'s schedules, "The Thunderbird" makes connection with "The Grand Canyon," operating out of San Francisco. Air transport is growing up. It seems to be a somewhat sophisticated adolescent, rather conscious of its dignity, with its "Thunderbirds," "Sky Chiefs," "Mexico Flyers" and "Silver Sleepers."

But some such mutual aid seems highly desirable and would once again demonstrate that "brotherhood of the air" of whose reality, intangible though it is, we have had numerous examples in the past. The democracies must stand together, not only in arms, but in air transport, so that we may the better combat the forces of totalitarianism to which we are so diametrically opposed. Many of us in the past have ignored, or even scoffed at, proposals for the internationalisation of commercial aviation as being the "dreams of idealists." Maybe they were—so was the abolition of slavery in America the dream of an idealist, and just one solitary idealist at first, too. If ever the world stood in need of imaginative idealism coupled to reality, surely it is now, when barbarism overlooks us with beetling brows.

We cannot afford to dismiss lightly any idea which will contribute to the binding of the democracies closer together. Whether commercial aviation be finally internationalised or not, a pooling of the air transport of the democracies would be a good experiment, for we may be forced to a federated Europe after this war. If we do not achieve it for ethical reasons, we may still have to forge such an organisation for reasons of self-preservation. If we do, then air transport within its boundaries will probably be one unit under single control, and the amalgamation will be made easier by just such a step as is proposed here in regard to Air France, Sabena, British Overseas Airways and K.L.M. In any case, the pooling of the resources of four such powerful operating companies would be a most beneficial move in this time of stress, and would help to facilitate starting civil aviation after the war.

The Price of "Jane's"

IN *Flight* of April 18, it was erroneously stated that *Jane's "All the World's Aircraft"* is priced at two guineas. The price of the current volume is £2 12s. 6d.

Aeronautical Decoration

THE Lilienthal Society for Aeronautical Research in Germany recently awarded three Lilienthal Memorial Medals. Kurt Tank, for his engineering work on the Focke-Wulf Condor, was the first so decorated, and Dr. Heinrich Klein was also given one for his work on aircraft armament with the Rheinmetall-Borsig company. Dr. Friedrich Seewald was given the third for scientific work.

Scottish Services Suspended

ALL air services in Scotland have been suspended. This action on the part of the Air Ministry came suddenly last week. Intimation was made to Scottish Airways at Renfrew that all services were to cease immediately. When word came through, several aircraft were on their way to various destinations, but were allowed to complete the round trip.

This action follows just a few days after the resumption of full pre-war services and the inauguration of the Stornoway route. While no explanation is forthcoming from the Air Ministry, it would seem that their action is just part of the general preparedness of our home defence plans.

Air Mail Services

THE Postmaster-General announces that air mail correspondence can now be accepted for Cyprus. The air postage rate is 1s. 3d. per half-ounce (postcards 7d.) and the latest times of posting at the Head Post Office, King Edward Street, London, E.C.1, are noon on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The correspondence will be forwarded by the Empire air services to Egypt and thence by a once weekly air service, or by steamer, whichever offers the earlier arrival.

Air mail correspondence for Nigeria is now despatched twice instead of once a week, the latest times of posting at the Head Post Office, King Edward Street, London, E.C.1, being 7.30 a.m. on Tuesdays and noon on Fridays respectively.