

# FLIGHT

and  
AIRCRAFT ENGINEER

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## The Outlook

### The Impossible Achieved

WITH the lifting to-day of the Berlin blockade, air transport will have added a glorious chapter to the history of flying. When the Russians stopped all rail, road and barge traffic from the Western Zones nearly a year ago, the Western Powers were faced by the seemingly impossible task of providing some two million people in Berlin with food, coal and all manner of essential supplies.

When "Operation Plainfare" was begun, few believed it would be possible to transport by air sufficient supplies to keep the Berliners alive, let alone to give them a tolerable level of existence. But gradually the Air Lift got into its stride, and steadily the scale of operations increased until it reached its peak last Easter. The U.S. Air Force, the R.A.F. and civil operators attacked the problem with determination, and they succeeded in a way which has caused open admiration the world over and, one suspects, secret admiration (and certainly surprise) in the Soviet camp.

Never in the history of flying has there been a comparable example of splendid organization; not even during the war. The intensity of traffic became such that split-second timing had to be applied, and the flight crews as well as the controllers have earned the very highest praise. It will be a long time before ordinary civil air transport can hope to emulate the example set by the Air Lift. The same strict discipline will have to be imposed, and the same uniformity of procedure will have to be applied before that can come about.

The lifting of the blockade will not mean the instant cessation of the Air Lift. The Western Powers will want to make certain that sufficient stocks are accumulated to guard against unforeseen hold-ups in subsequent negotiations. There are many thorny problems ahead, but as General Sir Brian Robertson said, the way may not be

clear, but at least it is open. And for that we can thank the Air Lift. In the phrase of the Royal Air Force: "Good show, chaps."

### Model Aeronautics

FROM the earliest days of flying, models have played an important part in the development of aviation.

The Wright brothers made innumerable tests on small models in a wind tunnel. Gustave Eiffel built his laboratory and tested models for many of the early experimenters, but there were even larger numbers who could not afford Eiffel's fees, and who had to be content with testing home-made models in free flight. Several who have since achieved fame began as models enthusiasts, among them being "A. V." (Now Sir Alliot) Verdon-Roe.

We have often felt that insufficient credit has been given to the early model experimenters, who did good work and who were instrumental in first getting many young men interested in flying. Not a few of our present chief designers started by making and flying models, and thus one can trace back the parentage of modern British aircraft to such pioneers as E. W. Twining and T. W. K. Clarke, to mention but two. And there was W. Cochran, who was the first to make use of corrugation for stiffening thin sheet metal. It would be a fine gesture if some form of recognition could be given to these pioneers, several of whom are, we believe, still living.

Model flying is a sport which now attracts thousands of youngsters, and many not so young. Some very advanced work is being done, and one type of flying which has become popular during recent years is that known as control-line flying. In its simplest and crudest form, this comprises merely a "solid" model aircraft, driven by a small engine and constrained by a cord from the near wing-tip to fly in circles. Other cords lead