

## CIVIL AVIATION . . .

initially, but the total of personnel employed at the base is expected to reach 400. The airline has recently been engaged on Korean airlift operations.

Philippine Air Lines, who operate a network of some 20,647 miles between San Francisco and London, *via* Manila and the Middle East, were called on to arrange a record total of 140 extra sections and charter flights during 1950. Of these, 122 were routed to Hong Kong, Tokyo, Guam and other Far East destinations. By introducing DC-6s on the route between Manila and Tokyo, P.A.L. have reduced elapsed time for this service by over 3½ hr; the present schedule is 11½ hr.

The fact that most British Dakota owners have disposed of their aircraft at the favourable prices offered by foreign purchasers has resulted in a fairly sharp rise in charter rates for both passengers and freight. One interesting fixture recently made is that of a "bare-hull time-charter" of a DC-3 to B.E.A. for a one-month period of crew training. A number of DC-3s are now carrying full cargoes of lettuces between Amsterdam and London. American

buyers are still offering to purchase any type of American-built aircraft, including Beechcraft 18s, DC-3s, DC-4s and Constellations.

South African reports indicate that, having apparently recovered from their early teething troubles, B.O.A.C.'s Hermes are now running with as much regularity as any other type employed on the London-Johannesburg route. The original faults are said to have emanated from the need for a piston modification in the engines; this has now been carried out, and in February the Hermes, running a thrice-weekly schedule, were delayed in only three occasions by mechanical faults.

With effect from April 8th and 9th respectively, *de luxe* all-sleeper flights are being added to T.W.A.'s routes from London and Paris to New York. This will be the only all-sleeper service provided on the Atlantic route; the aircraft to be used are "Ambassador" Constellations, each fitted with 18 berths, some of which may be reserved for double occupancy. An extra charge of £3 10s. is made for the additional facilities provided on the flights and the charge for a sleeping berth is approximately £9. Scheduled time for the non-stop journey is 11½ hr for aircraft travelling in the eastbound direction.

## CLUB AND GLIDING NEWS

THE Plymouth and District Aero Club, which operates from Roborough aerodrome at Crownhill, near Plymouth, held a dinner and ball to celebrate its 21st birthday on Wednesday, March 7th; the venue was the Continental Hotel, Plymouth. The club was honoured by the presence of A. V.-M. G. R. C. Spencer, C.B.E., as the guest of honour, and the event was extremely well supported by a large number of members accompanied by their friends.

Although recent flying activities have been hampered by bad weather, over 80 hours was recorded in February and, apparently, March is proving an even better month. The first group of A.T.C. cadets began their training during the latter part of 1950 and—despite serious delays caused by bad weather—have now almost completed their course of training. The club is hoping to train a considerably larger number of these very enthusiastic pupils this year.

IN last week's issue we published some facts from the British Gliding Association's annual report, which was read by the chairman, Mr. Philip Wills, C.B.E., at the general meeting held at Londonderry House on March 17th. The full report, which has subsequently become available, reveals considerably more of the Association's extensive work than is conveyed by the operational results published in last week's summary.

For example, during the past year, the Association's technical committee has been engaged in the operation of the new airworthiness scheme. It has initiated the appointment of an "Examiner of Approved Inspectors," who will ensure, by visiting B.G.A. instructors, that the standards of glider airworthiness are

maintained at a high level. The technical committee is also currently engaged on evolving a procedure for the issue of Cs. of A. for privately designed and built gliders. To date 85 certificates have been issued and 33 individuals and 11 firms have received B.G.A. approval.

The instructor's panel is another section of B.G.A. which has been particularly busy during the year. Twelve "B.1", 21 "B.2" and two "A" categories have been granted. Seven civilian clubs are reported to have instructors possessing categories, while nine active civilian clubs have not. The Association is hoping to run a five-day instructors' course later this year, tentative dates being April 16-20th and the place Lulsgate or Redhill. Interested clubs are invited to contact the B.G.A.

The research committee busied itself with trying to determine which of numerous projects submitted merited the investment of money standing to the credit of the Association research account. It was finally decided to recommend the award of an annual prize, to be given to the individual or organization which is adjudged to have made the greatest technical contribution to British gliding. Details are now being worked out. The research group reports, incidentally, that V.H.F. radio sets should shortly be available for sailplane owners.

Another interesting sidelight on the work of this group is the compilation of the report on the value of *g* which is sustained by a glider in normal club flying. It was found that, although in normal flight these forces were low, during acrobatics forces of 4.9 *g* at 100 m.p.h. to -0.8 *g* at 75 m.p.h. were recorded. The minus result was the only one which was slightly outside the "flight envelope" permitted for aircraft in the semi-acrobatic category.

During his report to the meeting the B.G.A.'s chairman spoke of the valuable support which the Association continues to receive from the Kemsley Flying Trust. Fifteen clubs have now been granted loans, totalling £15,030, of which £2,395 has been repaid. The trustees have also agreed to finance the scheme for an Examiner of Approved Inspectors, referred to previously. Perhaps the most notable instance of the Trust's generosity, however, has been the joint contribution, with the Ministry of Supply, of some £8,500 for the design and construction of three prototype high-performance two-seat sailplanes. The chosen design was that submitted by Mr. Hugh Kendall, the Handley Page test pilot, and the construction work has been entrusted to F. G. Miles, Ltd. To supervise the progress and development of this design the Association has appointed a high-performance two-seater progress committee, part of whose work will be to control the progress payments made from time to time to the manufacturers.

The B.G.A. has, incidentally, offered to act in the capacity of host at the next International Gliding Contests. France, Spain and the Argentine have made similar offers. The facilities which each country can make available will now be considered by the World Gliding Commission and a final selection is expected to be made at the next meeting of that organization early in July. Failing this, it is understood, selection will be made by a postal ballot among the 34 countries represented on the W.G.C. Normally held every two years, international gliding contests since the war, have taken place in Switzerland (1948) and Sweden (1950). If Britain's offer is accepted it is probable that the contests will be held at the Derbyshire and Lancashire Gliding Club site at Camphill, near Great Hucklow, the scene of last year's National Contests.



COMING OF AGE: Among those present at the recent dinner and ball—as mentioned on this page—to commemorate the 21st birthday of the Plymouth and District Aero Club were (left to right), Sir Arthur Holleley (chairman), W/C. R. J. B. Pearce, O.B.E., A.F.C. (manager), and Mr. Patrick FitzGerald (social secretary) who are seen with A.V.-M. G. R. C. Spencer, C.B.E., who was the club's guest of honour for the evening.