CIVIL AVIATION

VISIBLE EXPORT: The Vickers-Armstrongs Viscount is prominent among the new British aircraft which, says the Air League statement below, "will carry the air traffic of the future." This "Flight" cutaway drawing—originally reproduced in colour—displays practically all the features of production versions ordered by B.E.A. and several overseas operators; the only significant change will be the number of seats fitted, since most airlines favour a higher-density layout (such as that shown below).

A NON-POLITICAL CIVIL POLICY

BRITISH civil aviation has been the subject of many speeches and debates in recent months. There has been widespread agreement that the United Kingdom has a great opportunity in the growing sphere of world air transport, but the suggested methods of seizing this opportunity have, all too often, displayed political bias in one direction or the other.

The latest pronouncement on the subject, made on December 9th by Air Chief Marshal Sir Guy Garrod, chairman of the Air League of the British Empire, is refreshingly non-political in its outlook. Feeling that the views of the Air League on this vital topic deserve a wide and sympathetic hearing, we quote below a number of significant passages from Sir Guy's speech:

"The enormous further expansion of world air traffic which is clearly going to take place, coupled with the arrival of the jet and prop-jet transport aeroplane, means that the air age, about which so much has been said and written since the end of the war, is now really developing . . . , this has coincided with what it is no exaggeration to describe as a burst of inspired genius on the part of our aircraft and aero-engine designers and manufacturers. As a result, this country finds itself with a range of transport aircraft for sale which is years ahead of anything which any competitor has to offer. . . .

"Here then are our two great opportunities: one is to attain a dominating position in the world air-carryage market, and particularly in cargo; the other is to capture the world market for new types of aircraft which are to carry the air traffic of the future. . . . The future of British civil aviation should by common consent be left to the businessman, for the possession and development of civil aircraft and the financing of the Corporations and the independent operators. These departments are the raw material. . . . The affairs of civil aviation and air transport should be powerfully represented in the highest councils of the Government, First of all we need a more unified effort within the Government machine. At present four departments are involved in the production of civil aircraft, and in the financing of the Corporations and of the independent operators. These departments are the Treasury, Ministry of Supply, Ministry of Transport, and Ministry of Civil Aviation. This is not the way to get big decisions. The Ministry of Civil Aviation at present has not sufficient power . . . Either it should be taken right away from the Ministry of Transport and raised in status, with its Minister in the Cabinet, or it should be merged in the Ministry of Transport, using the status and power of that Minister.

"Finance has a special importance for our independent operators because if they are able to play their full part in the world market and as the indispensable reserve of air transport for the Services in an emergency, they must somehow be enabled to procure, on reasonable terms, and quickly, modern cargo aircraft, especially long-range equipment. They must also be given long-term assurance of the services which may be allotted to them."

48-SEATER: As this typical layout shows, there is ample room in the Viscount's fuselage for five-abreast seating; a 48-seater interior has, in fact, been chosen by Trans-Canada Air Lines, who will operate 15 of the 63 Viscounts now on order. Seats will be mounted on rails, enabling quick conversion to a tourist-class layout for as many as 54 passengers.