PILOT TRAINING and the COMMONS DEBATE

**AN** assurance that the whole question of pilot recruitment to civil aviation—a subject thoroughly aired by recent *Flight* articles—had received no further supplies, especially of young pilots, for any civilian operators. Nobody would deny that civil training was necessary and would be continued. The cost would be for the pupil himself, his parents, the people who did the training, the operators, and the Government. Everybody seemed to think that the Government should be the fairy godmother in this respect. That was not a very good idea, because it was too dearly held by the Government to be borne by the poor taxpayer. The pupil and his parents would feel that they had nothing to lose if the Government stood all the cost, and it was to be expected that the trainers would not consider their costs quite so carefully. The operator would have no further supplies, especially of young pilots, for any civilian operators.

During the debate, certain charges were made by Mr. Frank Bieswijk (Lab., Uxbridge) which were the subject of assurances by Mr. Alan Lennox-Boyd, Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation. These dealt with the position of the Corporations in relation to courting, contract traffic, cabotage rates, and freight services. In each case Mr. Lennox-Boyd insisted that there had been no change in the Government’s policy as originally enunciated, and *Flight’s* Parliamentary correspondent was left with the impression that time and experience—rather than highly complicated arguments involving shades of emphasis and interpretation—will more effectively determine the proof of the pudding.

No exception could be taken, however, to the Minister’s statement that, despite the Comet accident and other setbacks, it had been a year of great progress in the civil aviation field as a whole. In the last year the traffic of the Corporations grew by 170 million miles and of the private companies by 32 million miles, and it was his belief that there was room in this expanding market for all of them.

An effective case was made out by G/C. C. A. B. Wilcock (Lab., Derby North) for an extension of freight services within the United Kingdom and within Europe. There were over 80 municipalities in this country—boroughs or towns of over 100,000 inhabitants—each of which must have an airfield allowing freight and passenger traffic. It was not the airfields themselves but the mileage of roads and trunk lines which were needed. He did not think that any work which could be done by the Hermes would make any significant difference to the problem.

**B.E.A. Executives Defended**

An attack on the Board of B.E.A. by S/L. A. E. Cooper (Con., Ilford South) was refuted by members of both parties. After congratulating Sir Miles Thomas, President of B.O.A.C., on his speech, Mr. Herbert Morrison, winding up for the Opposition, endorsed this view most strongly. Perhaps S/L. Cooper’s comments on B.E.A. were not intended to be taken very seriously, for he concluded his speech with the statement that both Corporations did a wonderful job and were a great credit to this country.

An excellent speech came from W/C. P. B. Lucas, D.S.O., D.F.C. (Con., Brentford and Chiswick), who saw a danger at this stage of their becoming slaves to the demands of the aero-mongers. In his opinion the aircraft was not the only answer to air transport. It would be a great pity if the Government’s policy was to be narrowed down to aeroplanes only. He was not surprised that in the United Kingdom and within Europe. There were over 80