

## B.E.A. Out of the Red

**B**RITISH EUROPEAN AIRWAYS' persistent efforts to reduce costs and increase traffic have been finally rewarded by the achievement of a net annual profit, for the first time in the airline's eight-and-a-half years of operation. The profit figure for the financial year 1954-55—announced in London last week—is £52,000. This remains after paying all costs and finance charges, including £654,000 interest on capital and providing over £1,500,000 for amortization and depreciation.

The Corporation had originally budgeted for a loss of about £1m during the year. An intensive sales drive, coupled with the passenger-attractiveness of Viscounts and Elizabethans, however, had resulted in a £¼m increase in revenue, while strict economies had resulted in the expenditure budget being beaten by £¼m. This latter fact was stated by Mr. Peter Masefield, chief executive, to be the basic reason for the profit, the gross value of which (i.e., before meeting finance charges) was approximately £¼m.

During the year ended March 31st, 1955, B.E.A. carried more than 54 per cent of all traffic leaving the United Kingdom for European destinations. Compared with the previous year's results, the traffic carried by the Corporation increased by 19 per cent, for an increase in cost of only four per cent. Revenue earnings increased by 17 per cent and, while the revenue load-factor moved up one point to 65 per cent, the break-even load factor was significantly reduced from 70 to just under 65 per cent. Provisional figures in more detail are given in the table below.

	1954-55	1953-54	Percentage Variation
Total revenue ... ..	£17,205,000	£14,773,000	+17
Total expenditure ... ..	£17,153,000	£16,547,000	+ 4
Net profit ... ..	£52,000	(£1,774,000 loss)	
Capacity ton-miles offered ...	98,331,000	83,593,000	+18
Load ton-miles sold ... ..	63,647,000	53,595,000	+19
Revenue load-factor (per cent)	64.8	64.1	+ 1
Passengers carried ... ..	1,874,000	1,657,000	+13
Passenger miles flown ... ..	577,078,000	480,065,000	+20
Passenger load-factor (per cent) ... ..	68.5	66.3	+ 2
Freight ton-miles sold ... ..	5,728,000	5,557,000	+ 3
Mail ton-miles sold ... ..	2,919,000	2,601,000	+12

On the occasion of the announcement of the Corporation's profit, Lord Douglas, the chairman, disclosed that he had had discussions with Sir Brian Robertson (Chairman of the British Transport Commission) concerning a possible spur railway line between Feltham and London Airport Central, and a proposition to this effect had been put to the Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation.

Referring to future fleet plans, and in particular to the concept of a DC-3/D.H. 89 replacement, Mr. Masefield said that B.E.A. were engaged in studies of the proposed requirements for such an aircraft. A specification to manufacturers would follow. No existing aircraft satisfied the Corporation's requirements, the chief executive stated, and "We are definitely not interested in another piston-engined type." Power for the proposed aircraft, Mr. Masefield suggested, would preferably come from four small turboprops (such as the Artouste) or possibly two Darts; the machine should have about 26 seats; and B.E.A. would require some 12 such aircraft in about 1961. Low fuel-cost and increased safety were the main reasons for favouring turbine engines.

## O. P. Jones Steps Down

**A**FTER nearly 40 years of flying, 33 of which have been with B.O.A.C. and its predecessors, Capt. O. P. Jones, C.V.O., O.B.E., F.R.G.S., A.F.R.Ae.S., has decided to retire from active piloting of the Corporation's aircraft; he is 56 years of age, and is their most senior pilot. The Corporation will not, however, be deprived of his experience, for he is to continue in their service "as lecturer, guide, philosopher and friend."



Capt. O. P. Jones.

"O.P." served in the Royal Engineers, R.F.C. and R.A.F. between 1916 and 1919, learning to fly in 1917. After the war he joined F. J. V. Holmes (now of Tiltman Langley, Ltd.) in a joy-riding venture known as Berkshire Aviation Tours, which between 1920 and 1922 carried 12,000 passengers. After that he joined the Instone Air Line, since when he has been continuously engaged as an airline captain on European, international and empire routes. His career can be summed up by saying that



**ROYAL INSPECTION:** Another of the numerous visits to scientific and commercial establishments paid by the Duke of Edinburgh during recent weeks was to the Fernhurst Research Station of Plant Protection Ltd. (an I.C.I. subsidiary) at Haslemere, Surrey. Here he watched a demonstration of orchard-spraying by an Auster.

he has flown 21,600 hours on 100 types of aircraft and made more than 6,000 crossings of the English Channel and 300 of the Atlantic. He has carried something like 140,000 passengers, and among them have been many distinguished personages. He made some of the earliest royal flights when he flew the then Prince of Wales between Paris and London in 1926 and 1929, and in 1951 he took Queen Elizabeth (then Princess Elizabeth) and the Duke of Edinburgh to Canada.

At a London meeting of the B.O.A.C. Board last week, Sir Miles Thomas, the chairman, presented Capt. Jones with an illuminated certificate recording the Board's "deep appreciation of this long and faithful duty in their service."

## U.S.A.F.'s "Open Day"

**T**OMORROW, Saturday, May 21st, is United States Armed Forces Day, and a number of U.S.A.F. bases in various parts of the British Isles will be open to the public. The period of admission is, we understand, approximately 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and admission will be free, as will car parking. The exhibits on view will, in general, illustrate the everyday work of each station, and at a number of airfields visitors will have the opportunity of seeing the aircraft based there.

Airfields open will be as follows: *Bentwaters*, nr. Ipswich, Suffolk; *Brize Norton*, nr. Witney, Oxon; *East Kirby*, nr. Skegness, Lincs; *Fairford*, nr. Cirencester, Glos; *Lakenheath*, nr. Thetford, Norfolk; *Manston*, nr. Ramsgate; *Molesworth*, Huntingdon; *Prestwick*, Ayrshire; *Sculthorpe*, nr. Fakenham, Norfolk; *Shepherd's Grove*, nr. Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk; *Sturgate*, Lincs; *Upper Heyford*, between Oxford and Banbury; and *Wethersfield*, nr. Braintree, Essex.

In addition, there are a number of U.S.A.F. bases at which administrative, technical and other work takes place but at few of which, if any, are aircraft likely to be seen. These are as follows: *Burderop Park*, Wilts; *Bushey Hall*, Herts; *Bushy Park*, Middx; *Blyton*, Lincs; *Denham*, Bucks; *Greenham Common*, Berks; *Langham Camp*, Norfolk; *West Drayton*, Middx; *Wimpole Park*, Cambridge.

## Women Pilots Get Together

**A**T the request of a number of women pilots, the Women's Engineering Society—who administer the Amy Johnson Memorial Fund—have decided to form an organization under the title of the British Women Pilots' Association. Aims and objects, in brief, are to promote the training and employment of women in aviation; to promote schemes to assist women to gain licences; to give advice on training and employment; to provide opportunities for women to meet and exchange aviation knowledge of mutual interest; to express the collective opinion of members; and to promote interest in, and further the cause of, aviation in general.

Two grades of membership are proposed: full membership, open to women pilots who hold or have held at least a private pilot's licence or "C" certificate in gliding, and other feminine aircrew holding the appropriate licence. Associate membership is