

was purchased by the Ministry of Aviation for approach-equipment overhaul.

Of the air transport operators, Eagle have moved both their maintenance and operations base to London Airport as befits the long-haul nature of their operations. Dan-Air were to start operations from Gatwick on Wednesday, after establishing an office there over the weekend, but will continue to use their Lasham organization for maintenance and their Bristol office is of course unaffected by the move. Falcon are also now operating from Gatwick, but for maintenance fly to Hurn; they reckon it is cheaper to position from the South Coast than to erect a new hangar at Gatwick.

Two other new Gatwick operators are Pegasus and Orion. The latter are to operate there for this season only (maintenance will be undertaken at London Airport or Hurn) and in September they are to move to their new home at Coventry, where construction of the runway will be complete in mid-August.

Pegasus Airlines now also have offices at Gatwick, where they have transferred their operations during the past few days. Like Orion, last week they were still undecided about maintenance; the work is contracted out and details were still under negotiation.

New telephone numbers for ex-Blackbushe operators are: Airwork Services, Christchurch 2732; Morton Engineering, Livingstone 8855; Eagle, Skyport 3611; Falcon, Northbourne 671; Pegasus, Orion and Dan-Air, Livingstone 8811. Orion's extensions are 6418-20.

AER LINGUS AND BEA

A REPORT in these columns recently stated that BEA's £95,200 shareholding in Aer Lingus is to be bought by the Irish Government. Aer Lingus were quick to point out that this is not in fact the case, and there are no plans for such a transaction to take place. Neither, they further state, is there any provision in the 1959-60 budgets of the Irish Government for any such commitment.

It seems that *Flight* was misled by an item in the Irish Budget providing for repayment of an earlier transaction between BEA and Aer Lingus which is due by March 1961. But this has nothing to do with the existing BEA shareholding in Aer Lingus.

BOAC POOL REVELATION

SUCH is the secrecy that surrounds the pool agreements made by BOAC and BEA with foreign operators, and recently with UK independents, that even the smallest crumb of information is hungrily seized by information-starved observers of the scene. But the remarkable piece of news given by Lord Casey, the first Australian life peer, during the third reading of the Civil Aviation (Licensing) Bill in the Lords on May 26 was much more than a crumb. Lord Casey was, incidentally, making his maiden speech.

What Lord Casey said was that a section of the BOAC/Air-India/Qantas tripartite pool agreement "contains a stipulation by Air-India and by Qantas to the effect that they will regard the agreement between them as valid only so long as BOAC remains the only United Kingdom airline authorized by the United Kingdom Government to operate in or out of the United Kingdom by the main routes covered by the agreement."

BOAC have, it seems, done a deal with the Australians and Indians which excludes the British independents from operating scheduled services over a major part of the world air transport map.

It is little wonder that the corporations' pool agreements are closely guarded secrets if this is the kind of arrangement that is made, completely without public accountability, with the airlines of other countries. What other restrictive practices are written in to the 20-odd other secret pool agreements that BOAC and BEA have with foreign and Commonwealth airlines?

The new Air Transport Licensing Board has in fact been presented with a *fait accompli* in the matter of pooling agreements, the practitioners of which cartels are protected under Section 2(2)(e) of the new Act. [Under US law, an American operator who entered into a pool agreement would quickly find himself in court.] But even if the board has the power to call for details of pool agreements—a power which it may have under the Act (see *Flight*, May 13, page 662, col 2)—it will be unable to license any operator but BOAC for scheduled services on the eastern routes. Qantas and Air-India will not permit it.

TO SORT OUT THE CARIBBEAN

THE prospect of independence for the West Indies Federation next year has led to the appointment of a commission of inquiry on the future of air transport in the territories concerned. The commission has been appointed by the Federal Government, but it is understood that the Colonial Office is contributing to the cost.

In the chair will be Sir Frederick Tymms, a former UK repre-

sentative on the ICAO Council. Members of the commission will be: Dr Keith Bradfield, assistant director-general of civil aviation, Australia; Stephen Wheatcroft, economic adviser to BEA; C. S. Sundaram, an aviation economist with ICAO in Montreal; AVM C. McC. Vincent, chairman, Trinidad and Tobago Air Transport Licensing Authority; and Abe Issa, chairman of the Jamaica Tourist Board.

The commission's terms of reference are extremely comprehensive:—

"To examine and make recommendations on the whole question of civil aviation in the West Indies, British Guiana, and British Honduras and, having regard *inter alia* to the experience of British West Indian Airways and to its financial structure, to advise upon the regulation, organization and other conditions which will best achieve the development of air services for the area and which will ensure that:—

- (i) all territories of the Federation are linked by efficient, adequate and regular air services, both regionally and extra-regionally;
 - (ii) these services are, as far as possible, self-supporting;
 - (iii) there is, if possible, a steady and progressive lowering of fares so as to encourage the people of the region to become really air-minded.
- "To include in their consideration and, where appropriate, to advise on the following particular points:—
- (i) the review of the route network into and out of the Caribbean;
 - (ii) the scope of the economic operation by a West Indian airline of extra-regional services, including services to North, Central and South America and Canada, having regard to the traffic rights position under bilateral arrangements;
 - (iii) airline competition and pooling arrangements to safeguard local national interests;
 - (iv) the scope for coach services and other economy-class services into and through the federation to popularize air travel, and the scope for air freight services;
 - (v) the fare-structure for intra-Caribbean services;
 - (vi) in the context of Federation, the administrative arrangements for the regulation of civil aviation in the area;
 - (vii) the financial implications involved in government support for, or participation in, a national air carrier."

THE AMAZING CURTISS-WRIGHT

ON the drawing board at Curtiss-Wright is a 400 m.p.h., six-seater VTOL project. Scale models which are under construction have four propeller power eggs which rotate through 90° for VTOL and transitional flight and are supported on narrow-chord pairs of wings. The Curtiss-Wright design uses Wankle rotating-combustion engines (which are being developed by the firm under licence) and a new type of lifting propeller devised and being developed by the US concern. Three glass fibre and steel blades are used and full scale examples of these are already on flight test. Curtiss-Wright claim for their aircraft project that the majority of lift is obtained through the propellers, and that transition from vertical and horizontal flight or to hover can thus be easily completed at any time. With power off the aircraft is designed to land conventionally with the windmilling propellers providing lift. It will have a range of 900 miles, will be equipped with cabin pressurization for cruise at up to 16,000ft and will have "landing radar"—yet another new (but unspecified) device being developed by Curtiss-Wright.

Another division of Curtiss-Wright, that at Utica, which was responsible for the Air-Car ground cushion vehicle, is "currently



From *New York International* comes this shot, from 100ft up, of Eastern Air Lines' newly completed terminal. On all the airline's DC-8s is the hoarding "Fly Eastern Golden Falcon Jet"