



Straight and Level



A SITUATION in which a British aircraft designer—Sir George Edwards—will have to work with a former French police chief on the most complex civil aviation project in the world is certain to give rise to grave concern.”—From *The Sun*, December 28.

I suppose that in the interests of equality, which as everyone knows is what the e in Concorde stands for, we should put Dixon of Dock Green (or, even better, Rupert Davies of *Maigret*) in charge of the British side of the programme. No, on reflection I think that a helmet and a pair of big boots for each member of the Concorde team would be a perfectly adequate gesture.

ENGLISH-FRENCH PHRASE-BOOK

● *Uncle Roger's Guide for British aircraft engineers trying to collaborate with their French colleagues and all that.*

Addressing a Policeman

Pardonnez-moi, monsieur l'agent, mais voulez-vous me diriger à la Place de la Concorde?

—La place de la quoi?

La Place de la Concorde, monsieur.

—Concorde? Concorde? Excusez-moi, mais je suis étranger ici.

● “Helicopters dropped 7,200lb of tear-gas powder into the Vietnam jungle, and troops swept in wearing gas masks, only to find no trace of any opponents. But that did not worry Major Dismore. It was an *experiment*, Major Dismore explained. . . . ‘Had the enemy been in there we could pretty well have knocked out his will to fight before we went in there.’”—From the *New Scientist*.

The strain of trying to keep Sierra Echo X-Ray out of this column has at last become too great. Most registration authorities, including the ARB, are celibate, but not so Australia's less inhibited Department of Civil Aviation. The aircraft with the appeal is a Piper Twin Comanche at Bankstown, Sydney



Wings and Water—No. 6 Short Scipio “Satyrus” (four Bristol Jupiters) of Imperial Airways at rest on the Sea of Galilee in about 1933. This picture was used to illustrate an article by one Hudson Fysh in “Flight” for November 9, 16 and 23 of that year. In it he described the air journey from Australia to London. Hudson Fysh, then managing director of Qantas, flew the Alexandria-Brindisi sector in “Satyrus”, finding it after the Ensign and the H.P.42 like “some sumptuous yacht”

It took Lieutenant Hall ninety minutes to fly the last twenty miles against the gale, and when he reached Achnasheen he had to land backwards because of the wind.

From the “Daily Mirror,” December 19, 1966

● What's gone wrong with BBC TV? Instead of asking Mary Gasring or Richard Worsted to take part in a programme on the Concorde (*Twenty-four hours*, December 28) they asked Mr Pat Burgess of BAC, who runs Concorde sales.

Seriously, it was a refreshing change. Mr Burgess was asked some pretty tough questions, and came over impressively. Which isn't easy in the fleeting moments that TV allows you for crisp replies to unrehearsed and often loaded questions.

It made me wish, as these programmes always do, that our system provided for this sort of spontaneous dialogue, but much deeper, between Parliament and the experts who are spending public money.

From the “Southern Evening Echo,” December 16, 1966

The Italian airline Alitalia has been given Government permission to order four mammoth Boeing 747 “Jumbo Jets”. It was announced last night. Three will be used for passengers and one for transport.

● Mr Cranley Onslow, Conservative MP for Woking:

“The Labour Party has always had a fundamental dislike and distrust of the aircraft industry. This was shown by the Minister of Defence in his reference to ‘overgrown and mentally retarded children.’ It was shown by the Minister's predecessor in the cynical and calculated way in which he set about dismembering the industry. With delight, he did it. He came in as the hired assassin, as the ‘Front Bench Bond,’ licensed to kill, and he did the job with such enthusiasm and skill that he earned himself the title not of 007, but 707, in recognition of his services to the American aircraft industry.”

● From *The Times* Washington correspondent's report of the Kettering school-boys' Soviet satellite-tracking exploits:

“The fact that [Mr Perry's] young pupils did all this with Army-surplus equipment and a toy globe from the local stationery shop may bring some enquiries from the Budget Bureau, or perhaps the White House.”

● From BOAC's flight operations magazine *Horizon*:

American overheard on VHF, replying to ATC query: “Well, I don't know what kind of turbulence you'd call it but we got white caps on our coffee.”

ROGER BACON