

## LETTERS . . .

hence viewed with suspicion. Also, they look as though they might fall off.

**Automatic throttle control** put me off the Trident.

**Landings** Do they teach pilots this part of flying an aeroplane these days? I note they usually seem reluctant to come out and face the passengers afterwards.

**Odd noises**, presumably from various electrical items, pumps, etc, coupled with cabin buzzers and indiscriminate use of the "fasten seat belts" sign without telling you why—all slightly upsetting.

As a last point: I think every captain (and co-pilot) should be seen by his passengers taking leave of his family before departure, and the passengers would then be able to decide whether to stay on the aircraft or catch another one.

*Stockport, Cheshire*

J. N. PERRYER

**PS:** My favourite: the Britannia.

**Should Politicians be Gagged?**

SIR,—If Mr Tiplady (Letters, December 7) expects to be taken seriously, he is presumably saying that no one who happens to be a prospective Parliamentary candidate should be allowed to express his views on aviation. I cannot, believe, Sir, that either you or your readers would accept this very odd doctrine.

We all of us have interests outside aviation. One of mine happens to be journalism, and I have written, to date, some hundreds of articles and letters for the Press. I do not know what Mr Tiplady's hobbies are, but I have not the slightest desire to interfere with them. May I suggest he accords me, and "budding politicians" of all three parties, the same freedom of action? He can, after all, write in your columns to disagree with us.

*Bath, Somerset*

HOWARD FRY

(Captain, BOAC, *retd*)

**Avro 504: Information Wanted**

SIR,—I have been given, for the RAF museum, an excellent model (1ft wing span) of Avro 504 No 637, complete with rotary 80 h.p. Gnome engine, etc. It was presented by the widow of an officer (Lt H. le M. Brock) who served in No 5 Sqn, RFC, in 1914, and is thought to have been made by his mechanic and to have represented the aircraft which he flew.

Lt Brock was in my flight ("C," 5 Sqn), which was equipped primarily with Henri Farmans, and I have no recollection of him flying anything but Henri Farmans.

I have noted, however, that Putnam's book on Avros records that No 637 was in 5 Sqn in France, and as I wrecked Avro 665 in October 1914 in France, it is evident that No 637 was of 1914 vintage.

I would be grateful if you could find space to ask anyone who can remember No 637 to inform me as to who was the pilot and who made the model. I would also like to know whether the cowling at that time was black.

*Little Round Hill,  
Brook, nr Lyndhurst,  
Hants*

G. I. CARMICHAEL,  
Gp Capt, RAF (*Retd*)

**Easy Solution?**

SIR,—I am sick of the way the British airframe industry has been handled by successive governments and the parlous state in which it has been left year after year. The present Government so far hasn't done it any good, but there is still time to change that.

What we need is a body of determined men to put the industry back on its feet. (I am still at school and am unable to do anything more than make suggestions, having fervently to wait for some positive action to right this state of affairs.)

One solution would be to bring the control of the industry under an independent board (comprising experts and representatives from the companies concerned). Experienced planning and effective inter-company

co-operation would result. If an income of £800 million a year was forthcoming from the Government, this, coupled with the increased private shareholding, would provide a viable working capital. The board could be associated with one man in the Government, who would keep tabs on the situation and also keep the Cabinet and Parliament in close co-operation with the industry. Hundreds of civil servants could be dispensed with. Fixed-price contracts would then be introduced and this would solve yet another sore problem.

I would suggest the BAC Two-Eleven, VG, "Flying Pig," HS.136, VTOL Harrier follow-up, VTOL airliner and BAC 201 as initial new projects. The Government must be prepared to invest money, but with experienced planning and market research this could yield fivefold. I don't believe the industry is on the run-down. £200 million profit could be turned into £1,200 million profit. European co-operation is useful (perhaps inevitable) but *not* until we've got our own house in order.

I believe that a large national airframe industry is not only feasible but would be highly beneficial, and the sceptics who disagree have to be proved wrong. Next spring, when the Government claim to be investing in private industry and encouraging the export boom, then it is time for every loyal aircraft man in the country to get down to work and find a means of putting the industry back on its feet.

*Cambridge*

S. ROWLAND

**Airport Management Qualifications**

SIR,—Your editorial footnote to my letter (November 9) on this subject, by missing the point and listing the names of officers who, to my knowledge, are not airport managers, shows quite clearly how right I was. Incidentally, I was not referring to officers who left the Service (as I did) immediately after the war, as civil aviation was then in a state of change, and we were all in the same boat. Since then things have become more sophisticated, and there's more to it than one Jack-of-all-trades with an Aldis lamp.

The advertisements for airport management appointments specify such requirements as (1) Experience in planning, development, management and maintenance of airports; (2) a broad knowledge of current aviation procedures and developments, especially as they affect airport operations; (3) operational knowledge of ATC procedures, telecommunications, aircraft weight and performance regulations, apron handling, ramp services, airfield regulations, snow-clearance techniques, requirements of fire services, airport noise problems, and an understanding of the responsibilities of the Board of Trade.

Now, let's not kid ourselves—RAF officers have not got this type of background.

My view remains the same, particularly in regard to airports operated by local authorities. Experience appears to be wanted less and less, and there is certainly the attitude (as I said) that running a successful airport is "a piece of cake." Ratepayers' and other people's money will go on being wasted by authorities who appoint managers who have to learn the ropes—or, what is just as bad, authorities who appoint too many assistants to do the real work.

*Easteigh, Hants*

D. COOPER

**Going up in Smoke**

SIR,—A prize of increased passenger revenue would, I am sure, go to the first airline to make an improvement in service which would cost practically nothing—namely, the allocation of a portion of the aircraft to non-smokers. We are all familiar with the cloud of smoke which arises as soon as the "no smoking" notice is extinguished and which plagues the non-smoker for the rest of the flight. I can only conclude that the only reason that this has not yet been done (to my knowledge) is that most airline executives smoke!

*Norwich*

JAMES CRAMPTON,

Director, Travel Centre (Norwich) Ltd