

## AIR TRANSPORT . . .

industry has found it necessary to reach this conclusion—surely because none of these nations has found it necessary for so long to treat its private operators as an underprivileged class.

Much has been written of the baleful influence of politics on British air transport and yet the paradox is this: up to the 1964 election there was really no such thing as a Conservative or a Labour air transport policy. The Tories did not believe in competition of the American or Australian kind, and Labour did not appear to believe very much in mass air travel; the attitudes of both parties tended to polarise around an unimaginative protectionism for the Corporations. And although the Tories have pledged themselves to more competition when they return to power, the present Government, as Mr Mallaillieu's recent BIATA after-dinner speech showed, appears to be utterly barren of ideas on how to stimulate air transport growth by more intelligent regulation.

Typically, yet another committee has been set up; and, typically, the original time-scale it was to have met has already

been extended by a whole year or so, although—untypically—its membership is more professional and its terms of reference not so cramped as might have been feared. But, meanwhile, we continue to drift in a lackadaisical monopolism begotten of a basic lack of political interest in air transport, and it is our peculiar misfortune that the British regulatory machinery has never been energised by the fire of a fervently held political faith. The CAB could never have grown to be so strong or so effective without the deeply held American faith in free enterprise and competition behind it, while in Australia the controversial formation of TAA by the Chifley Labour Government after the war—contested in the courts by the private enterprise Australian carriers—meant that air transport was, from then on, a lively issue in Australian politics; like an additive that gives a fuel that extra kick, politics has improved the whole competitive performance of Australian air transport, whereas in Britain its effects have been just the opposite. "Dialogue" is not just a vogue word of modern political commentary; it is badly needed in British air transport regulation, and only a strengthened licensing authority can supply it. At the moment, we drift towards monopoly, not because any political party necessarily believes in it, but because it is the easiest and the laziest way out.

### "DISASTROUS" DEVALUATION

THE effect of devaluation on holiday traffic to points abroad could be "disastrous," according to BEA's chairman, Sir Anthony Milward, writing in the latest edition of the *BEA Magazine*. Although, in general terms and in other ways, devaluation could be to the airline's advantage during the next few months, this advantage would diminish as the increase in costs made a greater impact. The holiday traffic effects could be seriously disadvantageous "because we are having to charge higher fares for a holiday which must needs be shortened owing to the further diminution of the value of the £50 travel allowance."

On a somewhat more optimistic note Sir Anthony continued: "There will, however, be great possibilities for us to exploit the European market for holidays to Britain—a campaign which, almost alone, we have been fostering over the past two years. Passenger traffic follows trade and it is interesting to see that, of the European countries which have not devalued, the share of United Kingdom imports is quite considerable: from West Germany, 5.1 per cent; Netherlands, 4.9 per cent; Sweden, 3.6 per cent; France, 3.6 per cent; and Italy 2.8 per cent.

"It follows that, to improve our national trade balance, we must aim at increasing sales overseas, particularly in the countries mentioned. Naturally a tightening of our belts at

home will affect our holiday carryings to continental resorts, but we must not neglect the increased business traffic which will inevitably result from the greater export drive. Judging by our extremely good first-class results we really do seem now to be popular with the business traveller."

**Management Award** Dr G. van der Wal, president of KLM, has been given the 1968 Wallace Clark Award for outstanding merit in the field of scientific management. The award is given annually by the Council for International Progress in Management.

**Top IATA Changes** Three new appointments have been made in IATA in connection with the consolidation of offices agreed at the annual general meeting (see *Flight* for December 14, page 982). Mr H. Don Reynolds, previously traffic director, is now assistant director general, traffic, and Dr R. R. Shaw, previously technical director, is assistant director general, technical. Dr Julian G. Thomka Gazdik, while retaining his position as general counsel and head of the legal department, now is an assistant director general.

The first Boeing 707-320C for British Eagle seen on the apron at the manufacturer's commercial aircraft division, Renton, Washington, before delivery to the airline on December 22. As recorded on page 7, Eagle have bought two of Qantas' 707-120Bs; the first is being delivered this week.

