



Another Czechoslovakian Zlin, but an entirely new trainer in the modern style with side-by-side seating and tricycle undercarriage—but doubtless a fine aerobatic performer, in contrast to most Western designs of similar appearance. It is the two-seat Zlin 42, powered by a 160 h.p. Walter Minor driving a fixed-pitch propeller. Below left, test pilot Vlastimil Berg straps himself in for a test flight

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General-aviation Growth in the United States can be gauged from statistics recently given by the Federal Aviation Administration for 1966. In that boom year all records were broken, the total number of active general-aviation aircraft reaching six figures with a total of 104,706 (10 per cent up on 1965). Proportionately, miles and hours flown increased even more—by 30 per cent and 26 per cent respectively to 3.3 billion hours and 21 million miles.

Business flying continued to be the most active segment of general aviation, accounting for 33 per cent of the hours (7.1 million) and 46 per cent of the miles (1.5 billion). Instruction was the second busiest, with 27 per cent and 19 per cent, followed by personal flying (22 per cent and 18 per cent). Commercial general aviation (air taxi, charter, agriculture and so forth) accounted for 17 per cent and 16 per cent.

New Aero Commanders Coming In a recent speech to the Greater Miami Aviation Association, Mr George T. Humphrey, president of the Aero Commander Division of North American Rockwell, announced preliminary details of an entirely new range of light aircraft which the company expects to have in full production at its new Homestead factory in Florida within

two years. The special group engineering the range is aiming for a significant saving in the time from design to production roll-out. The first model will be a four/six-seat single-engined aircraft with a retractable undercarriage. There will be stretch potential for a twin-engined version and pressurised versions of each. In both cases the specification calls for a cruising speed in excess of 200 m.p.h., a 60 m.p.h. approach speed, 1,600lb useful load, and a range of up to 1,400 miles.

Islanders at Stapleford In November the Herts and Essex Aero Club, based at Stapleford Airfield, near Romford, Essex, took a major step forward in its planned long-term expansion when it acquired a Britten-Norman Islander for air taxi and general charter work. A second Islander is expected next month, and the club sees itself well placed to serve London in the rapidly expanding field of third-level air transport.

Training, too, has progressed steadily—from a seven-yearly average up to 1964 of 3,200hr a year to nearly 9,000hr by 1967. During 1967, 96 student pilots made their first solos, 98 PPLs were issued, and 103 people passed the instrument rating flight test. Training is on Cherokees and Aircoupes, but the club plans to introduce the Beagle Pup this year.

Work is beginning on the new Beagle factory at Shoreham-by-Sea, Sussex, to house Pup production ("Flight" December 28, page 1056). When the full 60,000 sq ft extension is complete, its layout will be as shown here

