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EDITORIALS

AERONAUTICAL DEVELOPMENTS*

From time to time there has been public criticism of the manner in which this Administration is dealing with civil aeronautics, and particularly of the Administration's treatment of the scheduled air lines. Herewith are some facts and figures of an impartial nature prepared by the Bureau of Air Commerce, Department of Commerce, which show the progress of the industry during the past two years.

The scheduled operators are now in the midst of a campaign of record breaking. In the first six months of 1935 the scheduled air lines (domestic and foreign extensions) flew 28,729,128 miles, carried 377,339 passengers on air journeys totaling 162,858,746 passenger miles, and transported 2,221,013 pounds of express. The passenger, passenger miles, which are after all a measure of revenue, and express totals were new records. The total number of passengers carried in six months, from January to June of this year, was more than double the number for the entire year 1929, and *60 per cent above 1933*, the year prior to the air mail cancellations. The average trip per passenger on the domestic lines is now 436 miles compared to 327 miles in 1933.

New safety records, following more rigid air line regulations and inspection, were set up in the first six months of 1935. The 40,714,686 passenger miles flown per passenger fatality in the first half of 1935 exceeded everything in this category for past periods. Passenger fatalities in scheduled flying during the first half of the year were four in number. In miles flown per accident of any kind is found another of the all-time safety records. Miles flown per accident in the first half of this year were 990,660, about 200,000 miles per accident better than the best previous period.

Miscellaneous flying operators—flying schools, fixed base operators conducting charter, taxi and sight-seeing services, and private

*From an address delivered at the Annual Banquet of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the National Association of State Aviation Officials, at Detroit, Michigan, September 28, 1935.

In his address, Mr. Vidal also discussed trends in the manufacturing, air-line and private flying phases of the industry, as well as recent developments in both the industry and the Bureau of Air Commerce. He detailed the miscellaneous activities of the Bureau in behalf of aeronautical advancement. He said in conclusion that sooner or later with the expected growth in private intrastate flying that the burden of regulating this phase of the industry should be decentralized to the states. He added that the Bureau of Air Commerce looked forward to closer cooperation with the National Association of State Aviation Officials.

flyers—are estimated to have flown 40,000,000 miles and carried 650,000 passengers in the first six months of 1935, exceeding the total for the January-June periods of every year since 1931. Approximately 2,500 commercial operators were engaged in miscellaneous services during the period, using some 4,000 airplanes. The various estimates indicate an expansion of about 10 to 15 per cent in the activities of miscellaneous commercial operators in the first half of 1935 as compared with the first half of 1934, and *about 20 per cent improvement over 1933.*

A very good indication as to the interest of the general public in private flying may be found in records of student licenses. There were 19,251 in force on July 1, 1935, *as compared with 7,606 in 1933*, an increase of almost 300 per cent. Not since 1929 have there been so many holders of student licenses.

Aircraft production began an upswing in 1934 when 374 civil craft were sold during the first six months. In the period January-June, 1935, the total produced was 517, greater than for the first half of any year since 1931, and *70 per cent greater than 1933.*

It has been claimed that the Department of Commerce has made it difficult for the airlines' progress because of more rigid regulations, and the publicizing of causes of accidents, yet both safety and revenue figures are far better than ever before. It has also been claimed that the Department of Commerce, in its campaign for a safer, less expensive airplane for the private owner has harmed the sale of small aircraft, yet the substantial manufacturers of private planes cannot even keep pace with their orders.

EUGENE VIDAL,
Director of Air Commerce.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE AEROPLANE AND OTHER MEANS OF TRANSPORT*

The airplane occupies today an important place in the field of traffic. Hence the necessity of creating a close collaboration between it and the other means of transport. It seems to me desirable to draw your attention very particularly to this fact, for it is my opinion that this collaboration is essential if industry and commerce are to profit to the full by the great advantages which the airplane is in a position to offer them. It is the task of the airplane to link together the chief economic and cultural centres of the

*Address before the Air Transport Group Meeting of the International Chamber of Commerce, Monday, June 24, 1935. Translation furnished through the courtesy of the International Chamber of Commerce.

world by a rapid transport service so planned as to supplement the service provided by land transport. In order to accomplish this task effectively, it is indispensable that the airplane collaborate closely with the other means of transport, which are constantly being improved from the standpoint both of technique and organization, and that it profit by the experience acquired in this field over a period of nearly a century. Even if most of the important cities are already served by airplane, the problem cannot be regarded as solved so long as industry and commerce in the small towns remain isolated. It is for this reason that the Deutsche Lufthansa, for example, has signed a contract with the administration of the German railways concerning the transportation of goods. You will allow me to speak mainly of the work accomplished by the Deutsche Lufthansa, in view of the fact that I am more familiar with it than with the efforts which have been put forth in this sense by the other air transport companies of Europe.

Air and Rail:

Under the terms of the agreement made in 1928 between the Deutsche Lufthansa and the German Railways, offices for the reception of air *freight* have been opened in all the railway stations of Germany. The railway takes care of the transport of this freight to the nearest airport, or from the terminal airport to the domicile of the consignee. By this means the field of operations of air traffic is considerably enlarged, for in addition to the 50 German airports, every locality which possesses a railway station is indirectly linked up with the air transport system. Similar agreements have been signed in several other European countries, but the great value of this air-rail service will not be fully felt until it is organized on a uniform basis in all the countries of Europe.

There likewise exists in Germany a similar agreement for the transport of *passengers*. When, for technical reasons, a passenger is obliged to interrupt his voyage by air, the pilot or the airport chief certifies the fact on a special form. On presentation of this certificate at the nearest railway station, the passenger receives, without extra charge, a first-class ticket for the destination indicated on his air ticket. This practice has been adopted in other European countries also, but unfortunately there is as yet no international convention on this subject.

Another measure applied a few years ago on the air line Marseilles-Casablanca clearly demonstrated the necessity and the utility of an intimate collaboration between the airplane and land

transport. In case of forced landing, the pilot and his passengers would try to reach a railway and would signal to the train conductor to stop. This method is perhaps slightly primitive; at any rate it allowed the passengers to continue their interrupted journey by railway. This too was a sort of air-rail convention for passengers! I believe also that the public is still ignorant of the friendly collaboration which exists between the air services and the administrations of the railway stations. If for example, an airplane is a few minutes late, so that the passengers would miss their connection, the railway administration is notified by the air company, and even express trains are held for as long as five minutes. The same is true in the contrary case: the airplane delays its departure for a few minutes, in case passengers are expected by a certain train which is a little late.

These measures no longer have the same importance as a few years ago, since the safety and regularity of air service are now scarcely inferior to those of other forms of transport. I mention them only in order to show you the various possibilities involved in collaboration between the airplane and the various forms of land transport.

To insure good connections between the airplane and the railway, the air time-tables must correspond to some degree to the railway time-tables. The problem is fairly complicated, but it is very important, for the preparation of the air time-table depends in a large measure on rail communications for passenger, mail and freight traffic. A proof of the utility of this collaboration is furnished, for example, by the fact that the German Railway was able to cancel an express train on the Berlin-Königsberg line because the Deutsche Lufthansa had decided to create a night air service between these two cities. There is also a correspondence between the hours of departure of the ultra-rapid airplanes and of the ultra-rapid train on the Berlin-Hamburg line.

In my opinion, there are still many possibilities to be worked out in the field of collaboration between the airplane and the railway, especially in regard to combined air-rail journeys. The creation of air-rail tickets, permitting the utilization of a combined service, seems to me highly desirable.

Air and Sea:

The air services have also established collaboration with the maritime shipping companies. The first efforts of the Deutsche Lufthansa in this direction date from 1927. An airplane of the

model *Junkers F. 13*, mounted on floats, was installed aboard the steamship *Lützow*, belonging to the Norddeutscher Lloyd. During the ship's voyage in the Mediterranean, the airplane offered air excursions to the passengers. These tests constituted the practical preliminary work in preparation for the Lufthansa's transatlantic postal service. In 1930, the mail for South America was carried for the first time by airplane to Las Palmas. There it was delivered to the steamship of the *Hamburg-Südamerikanische Dampfschiffahrts-Gesellschaft*, which carried it to Fernando Noronha, where the airplanes of the Syndicato Condor, Ltda., were already waiting to carry it to Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires.

In the course of the same year, the Lufthansa began to collaborate with the dirigible *Graf Zeppelin*. This dirigible left Friedrichshafen on May 18th, 1930, for Pernambuco via Seville. The airplane of the Lufthansa left Berlin on May 19th. It overtook the dirigible at Seville and delivered to it the mail for South America. The *Graf Zeppelin* in turn delivered it at Pernambuco to the airplane of the Syndicato Condor, Ltda., which carried it to its final destination. This collaboration between the airplanes of the Lufthansa and the dirigible *Graf Zeppelin* has been improved from year to year, and you are familiar with the importance which it now possesses for our South American service.

As to the traffic between North America and Europe, the Lufthansa maintains special services from Bremen and corresponding to the arrival of the great steamships. Thus voyagers coming from North America find it possible to continue their voyage by air without delay to all the important cities of Germany. Steamship passengers can reserve their places by radiogram.

In this connection, I must also mention the excellent collaboration which exists between airplane and steamship in regard to the rapid transport of mail and freight on the line Europe-North America. The liners *Bremen* and *Europa* have been provided with catapults, which will launch airplanes when the ship is still from 1000 to 1200 kilometers distant from the European or American coast. The time gained by this method is nearly 48 hours.

In addition, the Lufthansa maintains a service between Berlin and Cherbourg. Its airplanes overtake at Cherbourg the ships leaving for America and deliver mail to them. Similarly, they await at Cherbourg the boats returning from America, take aboard the mail and carry it to Germany.

Now that we have seen the utility of collaboration between the airplane and the other means of transport, it seems to me neces-

sary to consider also the following point: How can we set up, between air and maritime transport, a close collaboration similar to that which already exists between the airplane and the railway? Allow me to give you a few examples on this subject:

(a) There are, between North Africa and certain Southern European countries, both steamship and air lines. The passengers voyaging by these lines ought to be free to choose between these two means of transport, in each direction.

(b) Express freight is carried by steamship from Europe to North America. A method should be found for sending this freight by air to its destination, as soon as the ship has docked.

The necessity of collaboration is felt especially in time of danger. May I remind you of the winter of 1929, during which maritime traffic was interrupted along our coasts for several weeks. The Deutsche Lufthansa had then to assume the task of finding and supplying with provisions twelve freighters and two passenger ships which were held up by ice in the Baltic. Certain islands in the North Sea, completely cut off by the suppression of maritime traffic, were supplied with food and medicine by the aeroplanes of the Lufthansa. And each winter this special service has been necessary. Again, the Lufthansa has made arrangements so that, when there is danger of a flood, airplanes may be ready immediately to bring aid.

If I have allowed myself to cite these few examples of collaboration between the airplane and other means of transport, it is because I am very well aware that similar cases could be mentioned for other countries. It is precisely for that reason that an organization is necessary which will accord the airplane its place among the other means of transport.

MARTIN WRONSKY.

Director, Deutsche Lufthansa.