

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Reform in Air Regulations

IT IS about time we made some kind remarks about the Dept. of Transport. Since the end of the war, we have used this space to lament the shortcomings of Air Regulations. But while deploring the necessity of the two-hour check-out on lightplane types or denouncing the rules for aircraft radio licenses, we have never cast aspersions on the personnel of the D.O.T., and for good reason. From personal observation we know the overwhelming majority of the Air Services people to be sincere and conscientious individuals serving the best interests of aviation as they see them.

In reflecting the exasperation of many pilots and operators with creaking and cumbersome regulations, we have realized that the wheels of officialdom grind slowly, often despite efforts to speed up the machinery of change.

The rules of the civil service prevent civil aviation officials from presenting the full story of their efforts and frustrate their natural impulse to reply to criticisms. As details of the pilot subsidy program become known and as the new rules for the Private Flying License are announced (page 23), however, the vast amount of behind-the-scenes effort on the part of D.O.T. personnel becomes apparent.

The new Private license should be welcome as a progressive measure eliminating some of the more bothersome features of the earlier version. As from the first of the year, it will no longer be necessary to log two hours' solo and have each type of aircraft endorsed on the private license. All conventional aircraft up to 4,000 lb. gross weight go on the license automatically, subject to a solo flight on a new type before carrying passengers. (The DH Beaver is 4,500 lb. loaded.) Another good feature is the inclusion of dual with solo time in the pretest total. This gives proper emphasis to the value of dual instruction, a consideration hitherto neglected in the regulations. The provision for instrument flying ratings for the private license also represents a welcome reform. (Instrument ratings were restricted to holders of the transport license.)

Altogether, the new Private Flying License should help to set a new standard for nonprofessional flying in Canada.

The Uses of Uniformity

THE inclusion of all 4,000-lb.-and-under aircraft on the new private flying license places a responsibility on the pilot to pay particular attention to his cockpit checks. There are just enough differences from one lightplane type to the next to catch the careless pilot off base. Take fuel cocks for example. For some mysterious reason, there seems to be a conspiracy of diversity among the manufacturers of light planes. While using a similar type of selector, some use one end as

the pointer, some use the other. As a result, a pilot unfamiliar with the aircraft has to study the situation and in some cases make enquiries before being certain that he has made the correct setting. There is a corresponding diversity in the design and operation of trim tabs. It would be a great thing if the designers of all the various wheels, cranks and gadgets for adjusting the elevator trim were to hold a conference to select THE standard trim tab. Great are the uses of uniformity.

The Notorious Jet Leak

THE hue and cry concerning the leak of certain information about the Avro twin jet fighter into Nov. 8 issue of Aviation Week was spectacular while it lasted. Daily newspapers had the RCAF and the RCMP chasing across the headlines in search of culprits. It was suggested that penalties amounting to \$2,000 fine and seven years behind bars awaited the guilty. In view of all this, it was not surprising that no one stood forth to claim credit for authorship of the story. Charles Cain, the English writer who had toured the Avro plant on behalf of Aviation Week and who was named author by one of the magazine's editors, said it wasn't so.

The jet leak will soon be forgotten as newspaper readers find new sensations. However, before the event passes into oblivion, there are two pertinent observations we should like to make. The first is the rather obvious one that if our military secrets are going to be preserved, the lip-buttoning process will have to go right down the line. All personnel dealing with secret projects will have to be drilled in the virtue of silence.

If it is true, as suggested, that heavy penalties up to seven years in jail might attend the "receiving" and, presumably, the publishing of secret information, this situation calls for some official interpretation. Who decides what is secret? How is the "hands off" ruling conveyed to the press? Who is the censor to whom a publication can apply for an official ruling?

Let us hope that with greater preparedness effort and more "secret" activities, the situation will not revert to the impasse which prevailed early in the war. Before press relations and censorship machinery were set up, almost any petty bureaucrat in a uniform could constitute himself a censor. The press of Canada demonstrated its loyalty in the operation of voluntary censorship in the latter war years. There should be no problem now, given clear thinking and common sense.

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