

# EDITORIAL COMMENT

## May Modify Subsidy Plan

POPULARITY of the pilot training plan across the country forms a checkered pattern with variations all the way from jubilant enthusiasm to a very dim view. It is difficult to understand why the same subsidy plan which is meeting with great success in the Toronto district, for example, has met with a disappointing response in certain other parts of the country. It may be that winter imposes more restrictions in some areas than in others and that in these cases the program will blossom forth in the spring.

Presentation of the No. 1 Private Pilot's License under new regulations provided Toronto District Inspector Don Saunders with an opportunity to reveal impressive statistics covering the first two and a half months of the subsidy program. To March 15, he said, 36 of the 48 clubs and schools in the District had been approved for the scheme or were about to be approved. A total of at least 227 student permits had been issued, with 183 agreements completed. The number of students enrolled for training and eligible for the grant totals 348.

This is a remarkable showing, considering that most of the first month was occupied in setting up the machinery. Already in this one District, the potential government assistance amounts to \$80,000.

Criticism of the subsidy plan has focussed mainly on the preliminaries to actual flying, as stressed on this page in the March issue. We have discussed this subject with D.O.T. representatives in Ottawa and have been assured that certain modifications of the plan are now under review, with the prospect that they will be announced soon, perhaps before this issue appears. It seems likely that some dual flying will be permitted before completion of the student permit and before signing of the agreement. It is possible, too, that a limited amount of instruction will be authorized before final assessment of the student's medical in Ottawa.

A spokesman has answered our inquiries with the statement that the D.O.T. has the details of the plan under constant review. An attentive ear is tuned to the chorus of complaint with the intention of changing the requirements where such change is

considered in the interests of all parties concerned. This is indeed a commendable attitude. An inflexible D.O.T. could be harmful to the progress of the plan.

## Air Power Recognition

THE EXTENT to which the dominant importance of air power has made an impression on legislators in the United States is measured by the House of Representatives' recent insistence on a 70-group air force in the face of President Truman's stand for a "balanced" establishment with a 48-group air force. Evidently the wartime lessons of air power have made their impression, supplemented by such remarkable postwar achievements as the Berlin Airlift. It will be interesting to see how well our federal legislators have learned these same lessons. The debate on the 1949-50 military estimates should be revealing in this respect.

It should be obvious that, of all countries, Canada should rely primarily on air power for its defense. The realities of world politics and the necessities of our geography compel the conclusion that our first line of defense is in the air.

## Congratulations Canadair

THE ACCOMPLISHMENT of Canadair Ltd. in delivering the first of 22 Canadair Fours to BOAC 60 days ahead of the contract date and only 101 working days after signing of the order merits congratulations. This is further proof of the fact, amply demonstrated during the war, that Canadians can build aircraft efficiently and successfully. The pride of achievement which must be shared by everyone at Canadair will be supported by the knowledge that the No. 1 BOAC Canadair and its successors will serve as effective Canadian ambassadors as they ply the skyways of the world and carry passengers of many nations.

*Ronald Keith*

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