

## S. S. A. Executive News

### WASHINGTON

#### A Report by Pete Bonotaux

In March I made a visit to Washington to find out how gliding and soaring could be aided by various branches of the Government. Although this effort was personal and self-appointed, it was fully approved by the S.S.A. It is to the Society as a whole that I make this report and I hope that my suggestions, which I believe are sound and unselfish, will be acted upon in the interest of all the present and future supporters of the motorless flight movement.

Lewin Barringer had asked me to see if any provisions had been made in the proposed regulations and readjustment of the radio band spectrum that deals with all radio work in aircraft. My dealings on this matter were with Mr. E. L. White, who is of the Federal Communications Commission. Mr. White was unable to see how the present issuance of radio operator's license for radio-telephone broadcasting in gliding and private sport flying could be simplified at present. The great difficulty lies in the fact that the radio spectrum is already so overcrowded with many far more important radio communications, such as commercial airlines, marine commerce, police, Army, Navy, Coast Guard and amateurs, that the technical knowledge needed for one successfully and unobstructedly to operate within such confined areas is still considerable. The unreliability of improper sets in amateur broadcasting too often jams or interferes with far more important communications. Due to the vital need of radio in aircraft commerce and the peculiar and often uncontrollable characteristics of radio, it is a dangerous instrument unless operated by one who knows pretty much what he is doing and can prove the same under reasonable tests now in effect.

Mr. White advised that the radio sets constructed by amateurs that are to be used for radio telephone or tranceiver work in gliders and ground instruction to gliders should be carefully made and of recognized quality parts in order that results obtained from these sets will be accurate and dependable for operation in only that band for which they were designed. Also, if a manufactured set of a specific range is purchased, the manufacturer should be made to furnish with the sale of the radio set a bonded guarantee on the performance of the set and that it will under all conditions have tolerances of not more than .02%. This precaution will protect the owner and operator against trouble that he may unknowingly cause himself in using unreliable equipment.

Mr. White gave me a complete report on the proposals set forth in a recent conference held in Washington of all the leading manufacturers and operators of aircraft radio and the Federal Communications Commission, which will, after a hearing of complaints and minor changes on April 11th, be adopted as the new regulations of the F.C.C. for radio in all aircraft.

Page three of this report concerns us most and I believe that if these pro-

posed regulations will be difficult for the average glider club or school to comply with, the S.S.A. should send some spokesman to this hearing on April 11th to express changes that will enable us to comply better with the regulations. This particular section of the proposed regulations is to allow the Airways Control Board or airport officials immediately to inform all aircraft and particularly student aircraft of any approaching military or commercial aircraft, and to give any emergency warnings in the shortest possible time.

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Mr. Jack Sommers, of the Inspection Department of the Bureau of Air Commerce, gave me an informal report of work that has been done in his department to get airplane tow permits for gliders, particularly on Franklins and Haller Hawks. The great difficulty in securing permits for these gliders has been the lack of sufficient data on the stress analysis or the total lack of one which the department can check. I asked why these gliders, which had been successfully towed many times by airplanes previous to recent regulations without any difficulty or structural failure, could not have the same privilege now, providing that they were licensed and approved as airworthy in all other respects. He replied that on this very same basis permission for airplane tow permits had been sought. The real question of airworthiness comes up under the prolonged periods of stress imposed on the glider and that, without accurate and complete stress analysis of the gliders in question, it is difficult to pass judgment. It is known that greater loads are imposed on a glider while in winch or auto tow than while being airplane towed. For this reason, it is hoped that permits will be issued for airplane towing of these gliders by inspectors at contests so that airplane tows can be made under mild conditions and for specific lengths of time. This would enable a pilot to get to sufficient altitude for thermal soaring but not permit long cross-country tows, where prolonged periods of stress would be encountered.

Newer types of higher performance gliders gradually put the question of airplane tow of older single place utilities in the background, because the designers and manufacturers of modern gliders have accepted the need of two-place gliders and the practical and unquestionable need of airplane towing permits and, therefore, have built the ships to meet these requirements.

I am certain that the right men in the Bureau of Air Commerce have made an honest effort to get a glider inspection department established, and I am also certain that such a department will be created in the near future. The friendly spirit and willingness to help, which I found in all the men in this department to whom I spoke about our problems, is really remarkable, in view of the fact that a larger staff is needed to handle the work, and they are swamped with far more pressing problems which have arisen

because of the increased production in the aviation industry in the last two years.

Mr. Richard C. Gazley, Chief of the Safety and Planning Division, Bureau of Air Commerce, said that he believed we had a most worthy cause and suggested that the S.S.A. present to him a complete formal request as to what his division can do for gliding and promised that it would be given the most careful consideration.

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Senator Josh Lee, democrat of Oklahoma, was keenly interested in our entire movement. He immediately saw in it great possibilities for American youth, commercial aviation, and a marvelous source of a potential air corps reserve. Senator Lee in his own words, said, "I really believe that you've got something there". Also, "You can go back to your group and tell them that you have a friend down here (in the Senate) willing and ready to help you." We discussed the possibility of the S.S.A., or gliding as a whole, being given direct aid by being included in certain youth betterment bills now being introduced in Congress. His opinion was that our proposition, though worthy and sound, would not particularly fit into those bills and that it would be best to introduce a separate bill, asking for a direct Government subsidy for the glider movement.

#### Summary

Every person of Government authority to whom I spoke was most encouraging and willing to help in any way they could to adopt and carry out any reasonable, sound, and not too expensive program that would further gliding and soaring in this country. Everyone feels that American youth, commercial and military aviation and the country as a whole has a great deal to gain for a very minor investment.

I have a very definite program in mind that will fill this timely need and be, I am sure, accepted by the departments of the Government who will be concerned, and one that will also be acceptable to every glider organization in the country.

Before any definite action is taken, I intend to discuss the plan with the officers of the S.S.A.



#### AIR TRAILS

We are sure that many of our members are reading Alexis Dawydoff's Gliding and Soaring section in *Air Trails*. We congratulate Alex on the excellence of his editing of this department, which is improving every month. A new series of brief biographical sketches of Silver C Pilots is now going on. In the April issue, the subject is Art Schultz. Appropriately, this issue also contains an interesting technical article on Art's ABC Sailplane. To top off the soaring pilot's interest, there is also an absorbing tale by Chet Decker entitled "A Soaring Pilot Dozes".