

# OPINIONS INVITED!

AN EDITORIAL

When in 1937 — primarily through the efforts of the late Richard C. duPont — this magazine was founded, it had a vision. The fact is: Soaring has always been much more than a sport to its enthusiasts and practitioners. It is also a kind of cause.

The opening pages of Vol. 1, No. 1, of SOARING, published in January, 1937, in Wilmington, Delaware, carried a direct, clear-thinking editorial, very likely written by "Dick" duPont,<sup>†</sup> and certainly reflecting his views.

The words of that editorial have become *more*, not less, apt with the passage of time. "Airmindedness," said the writer, "must be injected into the public, and if this is to be of any practical value, it must be concentrated on youth . . . It has been observed that as soon as the youth has taken up the sport of gliding and soaring, his interest in aviation rarely dies, and from that time on he is a complete convert to aviation. . ."

Consider the logic of the situation as 1953 dawns on the U. S.: (1) To continue to advance in the world, America must stay ahead in the air. (2) To stay ahead in the air, America must count on its youth. (3) But — American youth today is, in a larger sense, *out of aviation* (priced out of powered flying).

Now, the plain and simple fact is that gliding and soaring are the ideal, economical way to introduce boys, and also girls, from the ages of, say, 14 to 19 years, to the world of flight; to aviation in all its aspects, whether the designing and building of aircraft, or the flying of them. The reasons have been sufficiently rehearsed, and are entirely sound.

Here is the question: How can a great national gliding and soaring movement for youth be best brought about?

*Your opinion is invited.* What do you think is the best and most practical way to launch the great, much-needed gliding and soaring youth air program over the country? Should funds be sought from the American aviation industry, and industry generally? From the government? How should such funds be best used?

*Your thinking is wanted.*

Address your views and suggestions to: "OPINIONS INVITED," Soaring Society of America, Box 71, Elmira, New York.

<sup>†</sup>Subsequently President of Soaring Society of America. Died Sept. 11, 1943, in line of duty with Army glider program.

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