

EDITORIAL

by ROBERT M. STANLEY

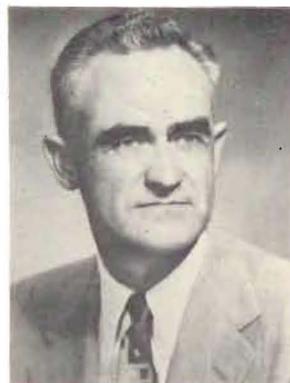
We of the Soaring Society of America can justly be proud of the exemplary performance of our outstanding American team, which demonstrated in France this summer the superior skill and soaring technique required to win World Championships. Even our distress occasioned by Bill Ivans' injury only partially dims our sense of high elation over the remarkable performance turned in by our team.

In these United States, we are wont to bewail our lack of subsidy, of the lack in appreciation of government officialdom toward the soaring movement. We cite the policies of other countries in which gliding and soaring is fostered as part of their civil aviation programs. We decry our own government's lack of enlightenment. In a nation in which wheat, butter, potatoes, and pigs are propped up by subsidy, we yearn for a small trickle from the public purse to enrich our own favored cause.

Yet, without any form of subsidy, or even official encouragement, we have achieved by our own energies and national resources a greater measure of progress than any other nation to date can boast. The Schweizer Brothers in a free enterprise economy have produced a line of commercially marketable sailplanes without peer in the entire world. Thermal soaring was born in this country over a score of years ago. Wave soaring to altitudes above 40,000 feet is the product of superior pilotage, meteorological knowledge, soaring equipment, and the restless ambition of our own American pilots. They have flown higher, farther, faster, and with greater regularity than those of any other nation on earth, subsidized or otherwise. We have the space, we have the geography, we have the equipment, and we have the ability to maintain leadership.

Perhaps one of the reasons for our present position of eminence is the fact that we are unfettered by bureaucratic meddling. We are individually and collectively free agents. Except for rudimentary federal safety regulations, we are free to design, build, and fly whatever and whenever we please. We are, within the framework of our individual funds, masters of our own destinies. We can, in short, be individualists. That is a precious heritage. And it pays off.

Some of us profess grave concern over the future of soaring in America. Because we can't foresee the future, we imagine it to be strewn with



Robert M. Stanley, President of Stanley Aviation Corporation, graduated B.S. Aeronautical Engineering from California Institute of Technology in 1935 and immediately joined the U. S. Navy. For most of the next four years he was an aviator based aboard an aircraft carrier of the Pacific Fleet.

While studying at California Institute of Technology, Mr. Stanley also worked in the Experimental Department of Douglas Aircraft Corporation, and upon his return to civil life in 1939 he joined United Aircraft Corporation as Design Engineer. For the next eight years he served Bell Aircraft Corporation as Chief Pilot, Director of Flight Research, Chief Engineer and Vice-President-Engineering. During this time Mr Stanley directed such missile projects as Rascal, Shrike, Meteor, Kingfisher; Aeroplane projects USAF X-1, X-2, USN L-39; and Helicopters Model 47, XH-15, and the 8-place XH-12.

In 1948 Mr. Stanley founded the Aviation Corporation which bears his name.

Mr. Stanley is a Fellow of the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences and a member of Tau Beta Pi. He has many inventions to his credit including the F-4 Mach-Airspeed Meter, Rate-type Automatic Pilot for Pilotless Aircraft, Reversible Controllable Propeller and the Automatic Safety Belt. In addition he designed the first U. S. V-tail glider.

He is a Past Director and continued enthusiastic supporter of the Soaring Society of America, Inc. and from 1939 to 1946 held the U. S. National Sailplane Altitude Record and 2-place Distance Record.

hazards and peopled by hobgoblins. We feed our fears on the imponderables. But by the past can the future best be predicted. Our past is creditable. Our present is gratifying. Our future cannot be bleak so long as this country can continue to produce such championship blends as Paul McCready, soaring's man of the year for 1956.

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