

be hoped that in approaching the problems of post-war reconstruction, as some of them are now doing, they will take a much wider view of professional activities and responsibilities than in the past. It is not merely that past neglect of the work of the International Labour Organization in the professional field must be remedied; there must also be a much clearer and more realistic view of the functions of professional associations than has characterized them in the past. They have a distinctive technical contribution to offer, which has sometimes been as readily thwarted by political proclivities as it has been by the innate conservatism of all professional associations. The meeting of the governing body of the International Labour Organization and the forthcoming conference give a direct challenge to professional workers for the creative thinking which must precede both the re-shaping of the Organization itself and the effective functioning of technical and scientific workers in a democratic system which will adequately serve the changing needs of the post-war world.

CONTROL OF CIVIL AVIATION

International Air Transport

By Brig.-Gen. Sir Osborne Mance, assisted by J. E. Wheeler. (International Transport and Communications.) (Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs.) Pp. x+118. (London, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1943.) 7s. 6d. net.

UPON agreements among the nations of the world on the future development and organization of civil and military aviation may depend the very existence of civilized progress and freedom as we know them. Upon agreements among the nations of the world, by which they yield up some part of their national sovereignty to an international controlling body, may well depend a world organizing for peace. The failure to arrive at such agreements, the demand by each nation that its national sovereignty must be kept intact in the air, on the sea, and on the land, will ultimately lead to another world war, far more disastrous in its effects than the present one—one from which, indeed, the world may not recover for many generations.

These are strong statements to make, but a little reflection will lead to the conclusion that there is some justification for them; and very little knowledge of the past and possible future developments of air transport will convince those who acquire that knowledge that there is a very serious justification for the statements.

"International Air Transport" is an important book, for it supplies in a condensed, authoritative, logical and readable form just that information which all those who have not studied deeply the implications of air transport should have in their possession before they attempt to form public opinion, or worse still, take part in the laying down of air legislation. In its twelve chapters, the book contains the most concise, and documented, summary of the development of civil aviation, its failures and successes and its political repercussions, which has yet appeared.

The difficulty of arriving at a solution of international air traffic and control is nothing like so great technically as it is politically. In the past, civil

aviation has been used as an instrument of policy, often closely linked with military aviation, and civil air lines have been used to give military pilots intimate experience of routes over which they have to fly in war. To quote from the book:

"Perhaps the most striking and extensive use of aviation for economic, political and military penetration was made by Germany in Latin America. Partly through the direct action of the Lufthansa, partly through numerous highly subsidized companies under Lufthansa control thinly veiled by national façades, partly through the grant of extensive long-term equipment loans to these virtual subsidiaries, and to other local companies when in need of financial assistance, German control of aviation extended to nearly every South American country. A large proportion of the technical and flying personnel were either Germans or Germans who had been nationalized in a South American country for expediency's sake. . . . An attempt was made to secure a contract from the Ecuadorean Government to operate a service to the Galapagos Islands which could have no possible commercial justification, but the Islands happen to lie in a highly strategic position just off the Pacific entrance to the Panama Canal . . . since the outbreak of war, German air activities in America have been largely eliminated by expropriation and other measures".

Now it could quite easily have been argued that this South American development on the part of Germany was purely the altruistic one of commercial expansion, and it may be a difficult argument to combat.

In the past, two methods have been suggested to control civil aviation with the view of abolishing also the chances of air warfare. One has been by international regulation and supervision of the manufacture and export of aircraft, and the other international organization of air transport. Attempts to carry out both these methods have failed; largely because it was believed that there was not enough difference between military and civil aircraft, and that any nation allowed to construct the latter could easily adopt them for the former. This reason is far less strong to-day than it was. Any present-day civil aircraft would make a poor military aeroplane for fighting and bombing purposes. But the danger still remains that civil transport machines, of the many varieties which will be developed, could be used for the transport of troops, munitions and guns.

It is becoming increasingly clear that only by some world-wide authority, overriding that of any particular nation, and provided with the necessary power to enforce its decisions, can the menace from the air be prevented; that is, the formation of an international air police force which would supervise the observance of civil air regulations and decisions regarding aircraft construction. As the authors point out, this police force would be quite different from whatever international military force may be created for protection against aggression.

The world stands at the cross-roads of aviation, and upon which road the nations decide to take may well depend the future of the world. It is to be hoped that the United Nations have already prepared the basis for an international co-operation and control which will prevent any nation becoming aggressively active at the terrible speed which aviation will enable it to be.

This is a book which should be widely read.

J. L. PRITCHARD.