

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT
TO MEMBERS
THE NATIONAL AIR COUNCIL
(Formerly The Air Power League)

Given at the Annual Meeting
October 20, 1947

In my opinion, the major accomplishment of The National Air Council during the past year was effecting the affiliation of the National Aeronautic Association, Air Transport Association, and Aircraft Industries Association with the Council. Representatives of these three influential air organizations are now represented on the Boards of Managers and Governors of the Council.

The need for a coordinating organization to provide a means of cooperation and a method of avoiding duplication of effort among the various influential aviation groups in this country has been evident for some time. The Air Power League was the obvious organization to act as coordinator - in fact, it was one of the original aims of the League to effect such affiliations.

The change in name from The Air Power League to The National Air Council was unanimously approved by the Executive Board of Managers to explain readily the widened scope of work resulting from these affiliations. All members of The Air Power League are automatically members of The National Air Council.

We feel strongly that the affiliation of these groups is a great stride forward. Already comprised of individual leaders in aviation, industry and the professions, the Council now comprises representative aviation organizations and anticipates the affiliation of still other leading aeronautical groups.

The primary aim of the Council remains the same as that of the League. We shall strive to keep the American public aware of the necessity of assuring national security through preeminence in the air, both as a defense measure and an economic factor. It is our conviction that military strength and the maintenance of progressive aviation research and healthy air manufacturing and air transport industries will achieve this end.

While you are already familiar with most of the activities of the Council, I should like to report briefly on our activities during the past year.

LECTURE SERIES

A project initiated last winter is a lecture program sponsored by the Council in collaboration with the Library of Congress. C. R. Smith gave the initial lecture at the Library in Washington, January 21, 1947. This most enlightening address on air transportation and national defense was reproduced and widely distributed to all League members, aviation magazine editors and publishers, aviation writers, as well as to names incorporated in the Library mailing lists.

The series calls for six to ten lectures by eminent authorities on various phases of aviation. Circumstances which I shall describe later prevented the scheduling of more than one lecture to date, but plans are in the making for future addresses to be given at the Library of Congress. It is believed that this is one of the most promising projects yet undertaken by the Council.

PUBLICATIONS

"Peace Through Air Power", a most significant book discussing the nation's air preparedness problems and dramatizing the ineffectual state of our military air resources, was published by the Council last fall and was given the widest possible distribution to aviation writers, radio commentators, the press, colleges, libraries, local Chambers of Commerce and many other sources of public information. It is still constantly in demand and has received very favorable comment.

FELLOWSHIPS

The first of the series of four volumes dealing with the history of the air war in World War II, sponsored by us in collaboration with Harper & Brothers, was published last month. This first book, "Devilbirds", an authentic account of the Marine air arm in wartime, was written by John A. DeChant. The other three histories are in the process of publication and will be released in 1948. The Council contributed \$10,000 in writing fellowships to the authors compiling these histories.

FORUM

The first aviation forum sponsored by the Council was held in connection with the National Aircraft Show in Cleveland November 18, 1946. A highly successful undertaking, the forum was held in two sessions - an afternoon and a dinner meeting - with recognized aviation authorities discussing aviation education and industrial preparedness. The subject matter of these discussions was printed in booklet form and widely distributed at the show in Cleveland, by the speakers themselves, to all League members and aviation press editors and columnists, veterans' organizations, educational organizations and libraries. The sponsorship of similar sessions in the coming year is under consideration.

MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

The undertaking of a new and intensive membership campaign was postponed pending final arrangements for the affiliation of ATA, AIA and NAA. Notices of renewal of memberships have likewise been held up, pending the time when members could be advised fully of the reorganization of the Council and could be given an outline of policies and programs. One of the significant advantages to be gained by the coordination of these organizations is the elimination of duplicate requests for funds. A concentrated drive for

funds will be made as plans can be fully developed. If your annual membership has expired, you may expect a request for its renewal at an early date.

FINANCIAL STATUS

Accompanying this report is a copy of The National Air Council's balance sheet as of September 30, 1947. It will be observed from this statement that the Council presently has a balance of funds available of \$156,068.36.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

While the Council's informative program has been too varied and detailed for full review here, certain of its activities are worthy of notice. The most important publications, perhaps, were "Peace Through Air Power", "Devilbirds" and the texts of lectures given at the aviation forum at Cleveland and at the Library of Congress.

In addition, numerous official government documents, and miscellaneous aviation surveys and publications have been distributed. We have likewise placed material on air power with influential newspaper syndicates and magazines and with individual writers and commentators. The Council contributed to the success of Air Force Day this year by donating funds to the Air Force Association for celebrations held in New York City and in Newark, N.J.

One of the most successful projects adopted this year was the initiation of a motion picture service. The Council has in its library thirty films dealing with various phases of aviation which are on constant loan to approximately one hundred aviation clubs throughout the country. These films, donated to the League by our members, by various industrial companies, and by the War Department (one was produced by the Council) are supplied without cost to college flying clubs, to high schools, aeronautical schools, Air Power Clubs, summer camps, veterans' groups, Rotary Clubs and the like.

We have also arranged for the appearance of several prominent air authorities on national radio broadcasts and at public functions. One of the functions of the Council is to supply authoritative speakers upon request. All members desiring films or speakers for groups with which they are associated are invited to call upon the Council at any time.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND EDUCATION

The scholarship project of the League, conducted under the direction of Charles F. Kettering, has been reported upon to you by means of

special memoranda. The exploratory steps in the Kettering survey to determine trained personnel requirements for the aircraft industry and the ability of educational institutions to fulfill those requirements have now been completed. A further report on this subject will be sent to you in the near future.

COUNCIL MAGAZINE

Ever since the organization of the former Air Power League, a need has existed for a periodical to promote the Council's purposes. The matter has been considered in all its phases, as have certain proposals made to the Council from time to time to finance magazines already in existence. While the need for such an instrument is still evident, the project has been deferred until sufficient funds are procured to publish the most authoritative over-all aviation magazine in the country and until plans can be worked out to avoid conflict with the many air periodicals now available.

UNIFICATION

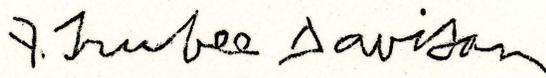
You will recall that in 1946 \$50,000 of Council funds was appropriated for public education on behalf of a single department of national defense with co-equality for air. A broad educational campaign was subsequently launched by this organization, the details of which have been previously reported upon to you. It was, therefore, with gratification that we observed the formation of the first independent Air Force in the history of this country.

Now that the reorganization of the former Air Power League has been effected, its name changed, and the constitution and by-laws amended accordingly, and with the affiliation of the National Aeronautic Association, Aircraft Industries Association, and Air Transport Association, we look forward confidently to making a contribution to American aviation to an extent not contemplated before. The newly-elected executive vice president, John Dwight Sullivan, in conjunction with the members of the Executive Board of Managers and Board of National and Representative Governors, is examining possibilities for a future aggressive program, national in scope and far-reaching in effect. He will report his

findings at the Managers' meeting immediately following this members' meeting this afternoon.

Now, as never before, is manifest the urgent need for the work of The National Air Council. We must redouble our efforts, explain our influence, and develop positive means of influencing public thought. To achieve these ends, we must increase our funds and our membership. I pledge my cooperation to these vital undertakings, and I know I may count on yours.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "F. Trubee Davison".

F. TRUBEE DAVISON
PRESIDENT