

# EDITORIAL

## Laurels for 1957

Once again it is the fading time of year when it is appropriate to take a final backward glance at the previous 12 tumultuous months before facing the tasks of tomorrow.

The year 1957 has been a roller coaster of financial, emotional and technical peaks and valleys for aviation. It was a year in which the smug dream of indefinite U.S. superiority in technical weapons development was finally shattered by the Soviet ICBM and the Sputniks. It was a year in which the patterns of the past began to crumble and the outline of the future began to form. Aviation's next year will be filled with the struggle over the issues, domestic and international as well as military and commercial, spawned in 1957.

This year is one in which the list of culprits who should be assessed for blame would undoubtedly be more appropriate and run much longer than our annual apportionment of laurels for achievement. But it is achievement we wish to emphasize, and here are the people and organizations who made major contributions in 1957:

- **McDonnell Aircraft Corp.**, Pratt & Whitney Aircraft and USAF Major Adrian Drew for combining to bring the world speed record back to the U.S. with the F-101A and its 1,207 mph. performance at Edwards AFB.
- **Douglas Aircraft Corp.**'s missile division at Culver City, Calif., for bringing the Thor intermediate range ballistic missile literally from paper to production as a complete weapon system in 1957.
- **Neil McElroy** for taking over the Department of Defense when it was committed to a policy of expenditure slicing, production stretchouts, indifference to basic research and complacency about the Soviet challenge and courageously reversing most of these trends, proving himself a man of vision, courage and decision.
- **Dr. James Harold Doolittle** for his ceaseless, untiring and often unsung efforts to fight for his country's needs in research and development of new weapons and for creation of the airpower in being required for adequate national defense.
- **Bell Helicopter Corp.**, Vertol Aircraft Corp. and the Sikorsky Division of United Aircraft Corp. for bringing to the flight test stage gas turbine powered helicopters and opening the era of that machine's greatest utility.
- **Ryan Aeronautical Co.** for proving in flight with its X-13 Vertiplane the feasibility of jet powered vertical rising and landing aircraft and opening another door on the future.
- **Vice President Richard Nixon and Sen. Styles Bridges**, distinguished Republicans, for the courage to face squarely the issues posed by the Soviet challenge in science and new weapons and turning the cry for necessary action in this country into a bi-partisan effort.
- **United Air Lines** for its improvement in passenger service and drive toward the top of the domestic airline heap.
- **Congressman John Moss** for his tenacious and intelligent fight against the perpetrators of secrecy in government and policies that deny the American public the right to know how its government is executing its mandates.
- **Lockheed Aircraft Corp.** for getting its Electra turbo-prop transport prototype into the air several weeks ahead of schedule and flying its Jetstar executive transport.
- **Carter Burgess** for his determined drive to get Trans World Air Lines back into a profitable and competitive spot both domestically and internationally.
- **Sen. Lyndon Johnson** and his committee counsel, Edward Weisl, for their vigorous, scrupulously fair and exceedingly informative conduct of the Senate investigation into the U.S. position in military airpower and new weapons development.
- **Boeing Airplane Co.** for rolling out and flying its first production line version of the 707 jet transport.
- **Maj. Gen. Arno H. Luehmann** for injecting new vigor and direction into a badly sagging Air Force public information program.
- **Convair Division of General Dynamics Corp.** for the flight test program that made its Fort Worth Division's B-58 Hustler the first bomber in the world to surpass Mach 2.
- **AC Spark Plug Division of General Motors Corp.** for its development of the Thor IRBM inertial guidance system successfully demonstrated by flight test at Cape Canaveral, Fla.
- **Eastern and Western Airlines** for opening nonstop service to Mexico by U.S. flag carriers.
- **Gen. Thomas Power**, new chief of Strategic Air Command, for moving vigorously to augment SAC's manned aircraft striking force with missiles such as the Bell Rascal, Northrop Snark and preparing to train ballistic missile groups.
- **Edward P. Curtis** for his excellent blueprint for solving the knotty civil aviation problems posed by the jet age and the final report of his group while he served as special aviation facilities planning adviser to President Eisenhower.
- **Civil Aeronautics Board** for slicing through the Gordian knot that has previously defeated all attempts to really solve the increasingly acute airspace problem. CAB's assumption of its legal responsibility for airspace allocation was the first step toward a genuine solution of this problem.
- **USAF's Air Research and Development Command** for its scientific foresight in pushing research aimed at laying a foundation for a U.S. space program and for its courage in sticking to this goal despite active discouragement by the Department of Defense.

—Robert Hotz