

A Year of Achievement

This is the fading time of year to take a last backward look over the preceding twelve months and briefly savor their achievements before plunging on into the tasks and problems of the new year.

The year 1956 has been a very good year in aviation. Prosperity has fattened every segment of the industry. Technology has pushed us as far forward in this single year as it did over a five year span in the pre-jet era.

But, as always, this aura of past achievement will soon give way to the thorny economic, technical and political problems facing aviation in 1957 and beyond. We will become immersed in these soon enough. Before we do, it seems appropriate to call a roll of achievement for 1956, paying brief tribute to some of the men, machines and organizations that made the year so notable.

We Salute:

Gen. Nathan F. Twining, USAF Chief of Staff, for his candor and persistence in testimony on what the Fiscal 1957 defense budget really would do to the Air Force, the problems of Fiscal 1958 and his excellent, detailed reporting on what he and his mission learned about Soviet airpower during their visit to Russia.

James Pyle and the late **Charles Lowen** for the blast of fresh air they blew into the musty atmosphere of the Civil Aeronautics Administration and the courage and skill they displayed in tackling the twin problems of apathetic bureaucracy and the growing crisis in air traffic control. Nomination of Mr. Pyle to succeed Mr. Lowen as CAA Administrator, after the latter's untimely death, indicates a firm vote of confidence by the Eisenhower Administration in this approach to a vital and vexing problem that should hearten all segments of aviation now enmeshed in the traffic control snarl.

William Allen, president of Boeing Airplane Co. for his forthright, extemporaneous speech before the congressional subcommittee investigating aircraft industry profits. Mr. Allen's exposition before the Hebert committee opened congressional eyes to the genuine status of the aircraft industry in a capitalistic economy. The rest of the industry and its trade associations have been inexcusably laggard in picking up Mr. Allen's theme and spreading it to the taxpaying public, legislators and the military.

Convair's San Diego Division for a remarkable production record that enabled USAF to put the supersonic F-102A all-weather interceptor into service with the Air Defense Command and its Fort Worth Division for putting the XB-58, first supersonic medium bomber, into the air for successful flight testing within a few weeks of a contract date specified years ago.

Trevor Gardner for his long battle to achieve a sound research and development program for USAF and his

courage in speaking out publicly, regardless of personal sacrifice, when the research and development policies of the Defense Department endangered the future security of the nation.

The scheduled airlines for carrying a record total of 45.8 million passengers with a higher percentage of schedule completion than ever before.

The large irregular carriers for their perfect safety record in 1956.

National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics for its development of new hypersonic research tools and techniques that led to the blunt nose cone design for the intercontinental ballistic missile.

Lockheed, Grumman and North American for flying the first fighter aircraft capable of hitting Mach 2 in level flight—the F-104A, the F11F-1F, and the F-107.

General Electric for its J79 turbojet that has given the new crop of USAF and Navy fighters and the XB-58 bomber new capabilities in speed and altitude performance.

Lt. Gen. Thomas Power, Chief of the Air Research and Development Command, for his initiative and persistence in forging better working channels between military requirements and industry development potentials and the untiring effort of his command to seek new ways toward reducing the development cycle for aerial weapons systems.

Bell Aircraft Corp. and pilots of the USAF Flight Test Center at Edwards AFB, Calif., for the X-2 research aircraft program that pushed the range of piloted flight to a speed of 2,100 mph. and an altitude of 126,000 ft.

Boeing, Douglas and Convair for putting this country into the lead in the international turbojet-powered transport market with substantial sales of long and medium-range commercial jet transports.

Senators Stuart Symington and Henry Jackson for their persistent effort to place before the public an accurate record of the military airpower picture.

Congressman John Moss for his success in stripping some of the hypocrisy, stupidity and deceit from government policies on withholding official information from the public.

Civil Aeronautics Board's voting majority of Chairman James R. Durfee, Vice Chairman Joseph Adams and Member G. Joseph Minetti for carrying on the precedent established by former chairman Ross Rizley, Adams and Josh Lee in their decisions in favor of more competition in the airline business and better service for the travelling public.

—Robert Hotz