AUSTRIA'S CHOICE – Christa Linder, Austria's choice to capture the Miss Universe title at Miami Beach, Fla., poses in the native costume she will wear on stage. (UPI)

Third Level Service Proposed To Expand Modern Air Travel

By ROBERT J. SERLING
UPI Aviation Editor

Washington –(UPI)– A major revolution looms on the horizon for America's air transportation system.

Technically, it is known as the proposal for "third level" air service. In effect, it would establish another class of scheduled airlines in addition to the two existing systems – the major trunk carriers and the local service airlines.

Is there a need for a third category? Proponents of third level service argue this way:

– Air service is contracting instead of expanding in this air age. The big airlines are concentrating more and more on long-haul traffic. The local service carriers are becoming regional rather than local in nature, dropping service to cities which cannot meet the Civil Aeronautics board's "use it or lose it" policy. This calls for a community to average five passengers daily to qualify for scheduled air service.

– There are 106 communities which are barely meeting the standard. Providing service to these cities is costing the federal government $8 million annually in subsidies paid the local service airlines.

Half-Cost

– Third level airlines, using small, twin-engine planes carrying six to eight passengers, could serve these same cities at half the operating cost of the local service carriers' smallest plane, the DC3. Thus, even though federal subsidies would be required for the third level, the overall cost would be half what the government is now paying.

In brief, this is the crux of the third level idea. The objections are these:

– The handful of third level applicants who have asked the CAB for experimental operating certificates thus far all seek to fly into cities which have no air service, as well as the marginal "use it or lose it" communities. This might mean a higher subsidy bill, not a lower one, and Congress is giving every indication of balking at adding a penny to the $74 million being paid this year to local service airlines.

It is the CAB's policy not to pay federal subsidies to provide air service to cities which do not support it. Subsidizing third level airlines literally would destroy the "use it or lose it" standard.

The CAB has held hearings on one third level application – that of Hi-Plains Airways, which proposes to use 10 Aero Commanders, carrying six passengers each, in scheduled flights to 46 cities in Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska and the Dakotas.

The Aero Commander firm itself went to the trouble of petitioning the board to hold a full-scale investigation of the need for third level service. It was the first time in CAB history that a manufacturer went before the board in an economic case.

Aero Commander was not being entirely altruistic. It frankly sees a lucrative market for its planes in third level service. General Manager Thomas J. Harris estimates that 25 third level airlines would need about 10 planes each, just to serve the 106 communities now barely meeting the CAB's minimum traffic requirements.

Air System Growth

But Harris also argued eloquently that the third level plan is the only way to keep the nation's air transportation system growing instead of shrinking. And he does not believe it would add to the federal subsidy bill. The head of the Bethany, Okla., aircraft firm says one of his planes could fly third level schedules at half the cost of operating a DC3. In addition, he said, third level service would be a no-frills deal – no meals, no stewardesses, self-baggage handling, and the simplest ticketing and reservations procedures.

One problem would be the attitude of both the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) and the Air Line Pilots association (ALPA). Current third level plans call for only one pilot per aircraft, for addition of a co-pilot would add considerable operating expense.

Yet present FAA regulations require two pilots for scheduled trips conducted under instrument flight rules (IFR). Third level proponents feel a single pilot would be perfectly safe operating IFR if he had automatic pilot equipment and they may ask the FAA to waive their two-pilot requirement at least for a trial period.

Union May Resist

The same waiver may be asked of ALPA, although the pilots' union is likely to resist any such request on economic as well as safety grounds. Third level airlines would provide ALPA with a huge supply of new members as well as jobs for unemployed pilots.

Who would operate the third service airlines? There are more than 500 individual "air taxi" operators, 158 of them belonging to the National Air Taxi Conference. Some air taxi companies are profitable and are run almost like small airlines themselves.

The largest, for example, is the air taxi company of Red Bank, N.J., which operates 11 small aircraft seven days a week 24 hours a day; employs 10 fulltime pilots, grosses almost $500,000 annually, and last year carried nearly 19,000 passengers on more than 10,000 trips. A firm like this could step into scheduled third level service with no sweat.

Not all air taxi operators have made up their minds whether to support the third level plan. Many frankly think they are better off as they are, without acquiring the headaches of scheduled service.

Nor have the local service airlines taken any policy stand, with the exception of Mohawk, which openly favors third level service. They have no objections to third level carriers taking over their unprofitable points, but they are afraid additional subsidies might influence congress to chop away at their own subsidies.

HOSPITAL VISITOR – Concerned over the condition of her ailing husband, Lady Churchill arrives at Middlesex Hospital in London for a visit. Doctors said Churchill, 87, is suffering from a thrombosis in his broken left leg. (UPI)

OUTPOST SURROUNDED—Chinese Communist troops surrounded a remote Indian outpost in Northern Ledakh, raising fears of a clash in the disputed border area. The Indian government said about 400 "Chinese intruders" were preparing for a "hostile attack" on the outpost, located in the Galwan River Valley of Kashmir, bordering Tibet. Another disputed border area between India and Red China is in the North East Frontier Agency region. (UPI)

Katanga Troops Seal Off Elisabethville

Elisabethville, Katanga–(UPI) The United Nations sealed off Elisabethville with troops and armored vehicles today in response to a big "independence" military parade staged by Katanga President Moise Tshombe Wednesday.

The United Nations accused Tshombe of breaking his word not to build up his forces in the Katanga capital.

DEFIED BANDIT

Chicago – (UPI) – It was a case of words speaking louder than actions at Mrs. Gladys Burton's Southside currency exchange Wednesday. When a man walked in with a brown bag under his arm and handed her a note saying the bag contained explosives which would be detonated if she failed to hand over the money, Mrs. Burton said, "You're nuts." The bandit fled.

Technology Attracts Women To New Field

New York–(UPI)–In one of the newest and fastest growing professions, medical technology, almost 90 per cent of members are women.

The National Commission for Careers in Medical Technology, making this report, said approved schools of medical technology in the nation now total 757. Scholastic requirements generally are three years of college plus 12 consecutive months in one of the approved schools.

Court Records

MEDFORD MUNICIPAL COURT

Bob Oldrem Bishop, no stop when emerging from private property onto public street, $15.

Bertha Maye McNew, failure to yield right of way to vehicle on the right, $25, suspended.

C. Erwin Trumbly Jr., violation of basic rule, $10.

James Heim Owen, disobeyed amber light, $10.

Esther Mae Sybrant, disobeyed stop sign, $10.

Robert Stanley Stoohr, disobeyed traffic signal, $10.

Adrian Leroy Pittsley, violation of basic rule, $25.

Hugh R. Leslie, disobeyed traffic signal, $10.

Daniel Douglas Wood, wrong way on one-way street, $10.

Professional Arson Shows Steady Rise

New York–(UPI)–Arson to collect insurance is increasing and many professional firebugs are involved, according to Insurance Information institute.

Before 1955, the institute said, nearly all incendiary fires were started by juveniles, vandals or mentally disturbed persons. But in the past three years, the activities of the professional arsonist have increased steadily.

Soblen Criticism Beaten in Israel

Jerusalem, Isreal – (UPD – Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion's coalition government Wednesday night defeated motions accusing it of mishandling the case of Soviet spy Robert Soblen and buckling under to American pressure.

Three opposition motions sponsored by the Liberals, the Leftist Mapam Party, the Communists and the Religious Agudat Israel Party, were defeated by 53 votes to 28. There were 15 abstentions.

Camps Available For Vacationing Children

Copenhagen–(UPI)–The Danes are providing camps and nurseries for the children of Americans who wish to tour Europe this summer.

For as little as $3 a day, American children will be accommodated at a camp 40 minutes from Copenhagen or another 70 miles away. Small children can be cared for in nursery schools in the capital under a "Park your children in Copenhagen" program.

FIELDING 'EM

Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.–(UPI)–Eleven instrument capsules, launched into orbit on Discoverer satellites, have been recovered in the area of the Pacific Ocean called "the ball park." Seven were snagged in mid air by plane-carried snares and the others were picked up in the ocean.

$$$