

14. *Revenue*.—With the data available, and taking into consideration the natural conservatism of the general public towards the adoption of new methods of transport, the Committee consider that it is impracticable to frame any trustworthy estimates of the revenue to be earned by the existing fleet, and the minimum organization for which estimates have been given in the foregoing paragraphs. With the exception of L71, the existing fleet consists of ships which are not economical for commercial purposes, and it is obvious that the revenue ultimately to be derived from the complete service must be governed by the suitability of the ships in use. If, however, with the existing fleet, Marseilles were to be used as a refuelling base, so as to obviate the necessity for carrying fuel-supplies for the full journey to Egypt R36 and R37 would be able to carry, as a maximum load, thirty passengers and a cargo of 2 tons weight; and in the latter part of the inaugural period, at any rate, a definite revenue from such carriage may be expected. The same consideration as to refuelling facilities governs the estimate of revenue to be derived from flights from Egypt to India. It would be necessary, in order to obviate a large reduction in revenue, at least as regards the R36 and R37, to provide for refuelling facilities at an intermediate point. In order that the fullest information may be available for the Imperial Conference upon this point, the carrying-capacity of individual airships is set out below.

CARRYING-CAPACITY OF INDIVIDUAL AIRSHIPS.

Ship.	Route.	Maximum Load.
R36 and R37 (2,100,000 c. ft.)	England to Marseilles and Marseilles to Egypt	30 passengers and 2 tons mails or freight.
R36 and R37	England to Egypt	No useful load.
L71 (2,400,000 c. ft.) ..	England to Marseilles and Marseilles to Egypt	40 passengers and 7 tons mails or freight.
L71	England to Egypt and Egypt to Karachi	35 passengers and 2 tons mails or freight.
New airship (4,000,000 c. ft.)	England to Egypt and Egypt to Karachi	50 passengers and 13 tons mails or freight.

15. *Aeroplane Services*.—With regard to their second term of reference—namely, services by means of aeroplanes—the Committee consider that it is impracticable at present to present estimates of value. The policy on which the Air Staff are working is to try and establish an air line of communications as far as possible touching British points throughout the world, on the principle of linking up with direct air communication the centre of each group of air-stations with the next group. The Committee are of opinion accordingly that due consideration should be given in the selection of Imperial air routes to the service aspects, including defence, and to the assistance which the service could afford to civil transport services. They welcome the proposal to open up sections of the Cairo to Karachi route as necessary, and consider that civil aviation should be invited to operate these as soon as possible, and that the Government of India should be informed of the present position of the route as a whole. The Committee feel it necessary to state that, beyond the general statements given above, it has not been possible in the time available to consider and report upon the possible future developments of heavier-than-air transport.

16. In concluding the first part of their report the Committee feel it necessary to draw attention to the fact that the date at present resolved upon for the closing-down of the Airship Service is 1st August. In submitting the above alternative estimates for its continuance, the Committee are presenting figures which must, in the absence of an immediate decision to continue for at least the period of one year in accordance with the first estimate above set out, be regarded as affording no data for the cost which would be involved if it were subsequently decided to re-establish Imperial communications by airship.

PART II.—DEVELOPMENT BY PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

17. In respect of development of Imperial communications by airship by private enterprise, the Committee have to report that, in response to the Government offer communicated to the Press on 31st May, proposals for carrying on an