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A letter from the PUBLISHER

Henry Luce III

IN its issue of July 4, 1927, TIME saluted Giuseppe Mario Bellanca on its cover and told of a fabulous airplane he had designed that would transport twelve passengers nonstop between New York and Chicago in the incredibly short space of 7½ hours. The story reported that Bellanca, in Tennyson's words, "saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails . . ." The years since have seen Bellanca's vision come true beyond measure, and at each step along the way TIME has told of the men and machines that turned the dreams into reality.

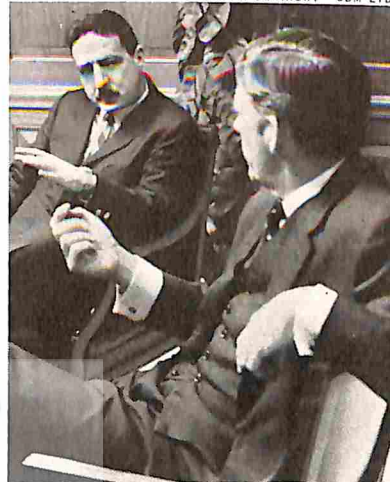
Our first Man of the Year (Jan. 2, 1928), Charles Lindbergh, has been followed by more than 60 aviation covers, including Pan American's Juan Trippe when he was planning transatlantic service in 1933, Designer Donald Douglas as he brought out the first DC-4 in 1938, Lockheed's Robert Gross's long-range Constellation in 1946 and Boeing's William Allen, whose spectacularly successful 707, introduced in 1954, ushered in the commercial jet age.

This week's cover story on today's Pan American president—Najeeb Halaby—tells of both the promise and problems awaiting the airlines as they introduce a whole new generation of passenger aircraft: the jumbo jets. The name sounds like a contradiction in terms. Yet the 747, Boeing's newest and biggest offspring, does combine elephantine size with greater speed, comfort and safety than any plane before it. Several of the many TIME staffers who worked on the cover can testify to that.

Associate Editor Clell Bryant, who wrote the story, learned to fly in 1955 in an Aeronca Champion. Flying in a 747 is very different, says Clell, after sampling a flight from Kennedy Airport to Bangor, Me., and back. "It does feel strange at first when what seems like a room actually takes off." Much of the reporting was done by Wash-

ington Correspondent Jerry Hannifin and San Francisco Correspondent Gisela Bolte, both of whom had their experiences in the mammoth jet. Jerry, a pilot since 1949, has been reporting aviation for TIME for 14 years and has logged hours in just about everything that flies; he was aboard the 747 on its first flight from Seattle to New York. Gisela is a relative aviation fledgling—but she earned her observer's

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BRYANT WITH HALABY

wings in a hurry. One morning at Boeing Field in Seattle, she was the only passenger aboard a stripped and instrumented 747 as test pilots put the big bird through its paces. For 4½ hours, Gisela watched in wonder while the pilots climbed and dived, executed touch-and-go takeoffs, practiced missed-approach procedures, blind landings, and emergency landings with two dead engines—both on the same wing. "I came away awed by the 747," she says. "It's simply incredible that anyone can fly such a mammoth airplane with such apparent ease. Even after all those ups and downs I felt better in my stomach than I do after most flights."

The Cover: Design executed with colored ink by George Giusti.

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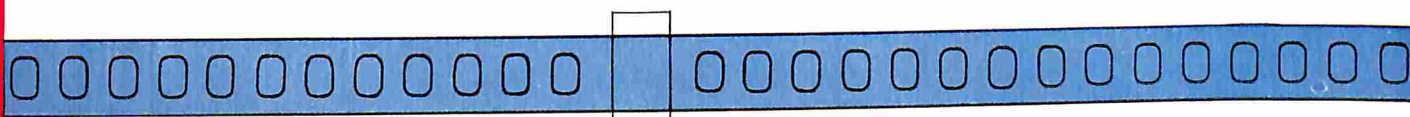
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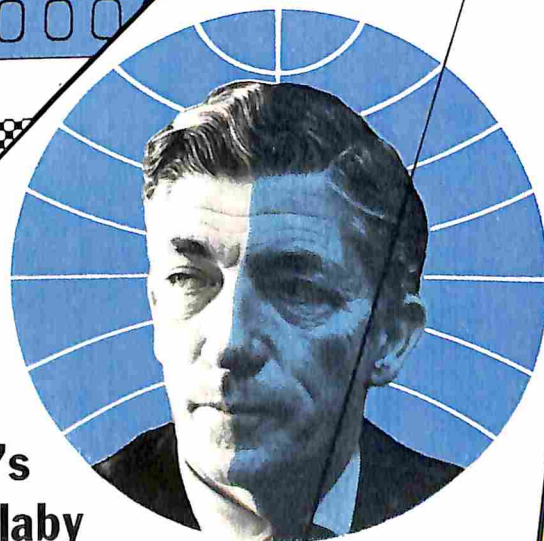
JANUARY 19, 1970

The Superjets Take Off

TIME



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