

## Police College Demonstration

It has long been considered that the use of helicopters by the Police would do much to extend "the long arm of the law," and with this in view a series of lectures on the use of helicopters in police work, followed by helicopter demonstrations, has been given by members of our Council to the National Police College at Ryton-on-Dunsmore, near Coventry

The students who attend the courses at the Police College are Police officers from the rank of Sergeant to Superintendent, who have been selected for promotion, and come not only from the United Kingdom but from all parts of the British Empire

On May 15th, 1953, after a lecture by MR NORMAN HILL it was decided to explore the potentialities of the helicopter as an aid to police work In



this instance the interception of a stolen car was to be the exercise, testing communications, control and co-operation between the helicopter and ground police organisations

A motor car theft was simulated and a patrol car gave chase For the purpose of the exercise the patrol car was supposed to overturn while cornering, the location and direction of travel of the stolen vehicle was therefore a known fact No other police car was available and the helicopter was called from other Traffic control duties some 25 miles distant from the scene of the crime

Reports from various alerted Police were relayed to the helicopter by radio First message was received by the helicopter at 2 p m notifying it of the theft and direction of travel of the stolen vehicle, ten minutes later it received a report that the car had been seen travelling through a certain town, two minutes later—although the car had then turned off into country

roads—the helicopter Observers spotted the car from the description given (there were no special markings) and was able to remain in station wherever the car went. By direct radio contact with Police cars sent into the area the helicopter was able to arrange an interception and two patrol cars finally converged on the stolen vehicle forcing it to a standstill and capturing the occupants.

Only thirty minutes elapsed between the reporting of the stolen vehicle and its capture, and the Police stated that the direction and disposition of police cars was greatly helped by the helicopter's reports. Patrol cars were consequently directed with maximum effectiveness and were not required to enter the search.

The Police Officers who formed the crew of the supposedly stolen car reported afterwards that the psychological effect of being trailed by helicopter was most demoralising as it could not be shaken off.

Students at the Police College were able to follow the radio conversations and plotted the car movements on a projected road map. The helicopter loaned for the exercise was a Bristol Sycamore on loan from The Bristol Aeroplane Co. and it was piloted by Mr. PETER WILSON.

That the Police College and the Warwickshire County Police were sufficiently interested in the possibilities of helicopters to undertake the comparatively elaborate organisation of this kind should be of considerable encouragement to all those who have the future of helicopters at heart, and the resulting success which attended the exercise, the speed with which the operation was carried out, and the time saved in apprehending criminals should augur well for the ultimate utilisation of helicopters by the Police Forces of Great Britain and the British Empire.

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## An Open Exchange of Letters

Between

C. M. BELINN (*President of Los Angeles Airways*)

and

PETER G. MASEFIELD (*Chief Executive of B.E.A.*)

March 1953

My dear Mr. MASEFIELD

I have read with a great deal of interest your recent lecture before the Helicopter Association of Great Britain, and believe me, my entire staff is presently studying it page by page and word by word. I am sure that their opinions will be as enthusiastic as mine.

Generally, my impression of most of the experting done about helicopters is that it has not been down to earth, and in most instances the reasons have been quite obvious. To state it frankly, the experts have either reflected fixed-wing thinking or a complete lack of understanding. Your departure is indeed refreshing.

*Association of Gt. Britain*

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