Way Off The Beam

This part of President Roosevelt's fourth reorganization plan which would place the Civil Aeronautics Authority under the Department of Commerce would do away with the bureau and abolish the Air Safety Board is a short-sighted consideration.

The effect of the proposed change would be to deliver control of commercial aviation to a Secretary of Commerce who, no matter how honorable and competent, still is a political appointee without a definite term.

Killing the independent Air Safety Board, however, is perhaps the greatest evil which would result from the plan.

We can't say that aviation's remarkable record of the past thirteen months of performing without serious injury or fatality is such that the work of the CAA or the Board is at an end. But the achievement, over this period, is certainly impressive and indicative of effective management.

The proposal would ignore this splendid record and actually revert to the former state of confusion. Under the present arrangement with the Board and Authority functioning, investigations of accidents are made by an independent factor. But when the Board was abolished it was to be made by a department of a body (which itself would be a bureau subordinate to the department of Commerce) responsible for the very safety regulations to be investigated.

Exactly what is the Civil Aeronautics Board, which created the CAA and the Board, was designed to eliminate when it was passed in 1919.

Those people who would be vitally affected by the change seem to recognize its faults.

Protests have been made by the airlines, which are regulated by the CAA; by the organized pilots who fly for the airlines; and by the American Federation of Labor.

By adopting this unpopular proposal we should probably be going back to a situation which was considered disposed of in the first place, which action is bucking the worst kind.

The Reader Speaks

April 29, 1940

To the Editor of The Tech

I should like to call your attention to the article headed "Military Science?" in the section of the April number of the "Tech Engineering News." The editor of the Tech. E. N. states that the article is a student opinion written by a "very sensitive student" who is holding the Institute-wide poll to determine undergraduate opinion on the question. This is your opportunity to let the administration know how you feel.

A New Spring Outfit

With this issue The Tech makes a change in the usual appearance of the Volume LX. The mayor of the editors of Volume LX will be published with flushed heads.

The change refers to the usage of headlines which until this point have been of each beginning evenly at the left.

There are reasons for adopting this new appearance. The first reason is, at all, it gives a gain in clarity because we can say what we mean more readily; headlines need not be written as continuous lines of text, but the varied length of line as precisely as must be done with blocked (even-lined) and inverted pyramid headlines.

Secondly, flushed heads are easier to read, give the page a peculiar trim look. Third, adoption of flush heads follows a current trend in what we believe is the best journalistic style. The better editors of the West, especially, are taking up the idea.

Last Saturday's special Open House was aptly so named, with hundreds of students and favorable comments which we received upon the appearance of this issue clinched the choice of the new naysaying style. Why should we make a change for the better which will enrich the appearance of this printed page and at the same time be material aid to the reader.