

# Predict and provide

The endless cycle of predict and provide must end before growth in transportation makes living conditions unacceptable. Unfettered road development kills public transport and adds to noise. More runways lead to further use of aircraft, pandering to untenable increases in air passenger numbers which, in the UK alone, are expected to grow from 180 million a year in 2000 to 500 million in 2030, with no clear concept of what happens after that. But there is no doubt that the increases will bring additional disturbance from noise, with intrusions into previously tranquil areas. A study on behalf of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)<sup>1</sup> has estimated that, in the UK by 2030, over 600,000 people will be seriously bothered by, or subject to unacceptable levels, of aircraft noise. This is more than twice the present number, and will be caused by development of new airports in addition to expansion of existing ones.

Other countries are facing similar changes, with severe noise problems for smaller, densely populated ones.

It is the duty of a Government to provide for the needs of its citizens, without which society will deteriorate from within. But is it the duty of the

Government to permit developments which damage the lives of numbers of its people?

In the past, the state of the car industry was taken as an indication of a country's economic health. Today, growth in aircraft use is a new indicator, since this is measure of both business and tourism development. However, tourism is a two way process. Some countries, such as the northern ones, less attractive for sun-seekers, are net financial losers, which has been the position of the UK for more than 15 years.

There are indications that cars are to be restricted by charging for road use. The London Congestion Charge has been very successful, reducing hold-ups and taking more than £500,000 a day, the profit from which should go towards improving public transport. But there is no sign of equivalent restrictions for aircraft...yet.

Whilst a Government must provide for the needs of its citizens, it is permissible for those needs to be managed. This must be a step in the control of aircraft growth, so reducing noise for those who live near airports and holding back the overflights which will bring disturbance to wide swathes of the country.

<sup>1</sup> Flying to Distraction. CPRE, June 2003

## noise notes

### Law or Muddle?

Florida's constitution requires that government make "adequate provision" for the "abatement of excessive and unnecessary noise" in order to protect citizen's quality of life. However, there are also several state laws which lay strict guidelines on what noise can be regulated. For example, construction noise and the sound of new automobiles cannot be restricted, though certain regulations can be put on air and water vessels. At county level there are animal control noise ordinances that may be strengthened and there are noise restrictions mandated by state law around all airports in the county. Otherwise its perfect.