

THE AIRBORNE SERVICES

RCAF Comet Damaged

The cabin fuselage of an RCAF Comet transport was recently punctured in flight when a dinghy contained in the port wing blew out, causing the covering panel to strike the fuselage.

The aircraft, being flown by 412 Squadron, was flying about 15 miles southeast of Ottawa at the time of the incident. The puncture was caused by the dinghy stowage panel striking the fuselage, resulting in a pressure leak. The Comet descended from its altitude of 41,000 feet and landed without further incident.

RCAF officials confirmed that there is no similarity between this incident and the previous Comet accidents which resulted in the aircraft being grounded. The fact that there were no serious results from the puncturing of the fuselage was cited as evidence of the strength which has been built into the aircraft by the recent modifications.

Phase-Out

The last French NATO student to pass through the Flying Training School at RCAF Station Moose Jaw, was included in the graduating class of

February 14. Succeeding courses going through are now comprised entirely of Canadian flight cadets.

There have been no official pronouncements from RCAF quarters on the eventual fate of the Moose Jaw training school. Up until the present time, student pilots from the NATO countries of Turkey, Denmark, The Netherlands, France, Italy and the U.K., have formed the bulk of the classes going through the FTS system.

NORAD Gets Dew Line

North American Air Defence Command (NORAD), with headquarters at Colorado Springs, on Feb. 15 assumed operational control of the continent's first line of defence, the 3,000 mile Arctic Distant Early Warning Line. The Dew Line has been tested and has been operational for several months under the control of the USAF's Alaskan Air Command and the 64th Air Division in Newfoundland.

Operation and maintenance of the Dew Line is performed for the USAF by the International Telephone & Telegraph Corporations' service division, the Federal Electric Corp. Some 870 Americans, Canadians and Eskimos,

98% of them civilians, man the isolated Dew Line stations.

The line is designed to meet the threat of the manned long-range bomber. However, supplemental appropriations are being sought this fiscal year by the USAF to start construction of a ballistic missile early warning system. This would involve radar installations capable of detecting ballistic missiles 3,000 miles away.

Avengers Retired

The RCN is getting rid of its World War II Avenger aircraft. Last month 22 of the venerable "Turkeys" were turned over to the Crown Assets Disposal Corporation for sale. Originally acquired from the U.S. seven years after the war at a price of \$100,000 each, they were converted for anti-submarine work by Fairey Aviation Co. of Canada Ltd. In that role they were used aboard HMCS Magnificent when that aircraft carrier was on loan from the British government.

Replacing the Avengers are the de Havilland Canada-built, Grumman-designed CS2F-1 twin-engined Tracker aircraft. At the present time, two naval squadrons are equipped with the type.

Vautours For Israel

According to an American news source, the Israeli government is to receive an undisclosed number of twin-jet Vautour bombers from France. Although the French Air Force had originally ordered several hundred of the Vautours (which come in three versions: ground attack, bomber, and all-weather fighter) budgetary considerations reduced the order to 150. So far only 35 have been delivered to the French Air Force.

Built by Sud-Aviation, the Vautour S.O. 4050 is powered by two Snecma Atar jet engines rated at 7,700 lbs. thrust each.

No H-Bombs Allowed

Defence Minister George Pearkes has stated that reports of USAF interceptor fighters flying over Canadian territory with nuclear weapons are incorrect. He added that current agreements between the Canadian and U.S. governments provide for the integrated operational control of all air defence forces in the two countries.

Under normal peacetime conditions, nuclear weapons are not flown on training or active air defence flights for the purpose of identification of un-



AMPHIBIAN HELICOPTER: Vertol Aircraft Corp., has combined fuselage sealing with newly designed flotation gear to make an amphibian helicopter. Above: Watertight fuselage and three rubberized fabric floats permit the Vertol 44 to land on water in an emergency. Below, left: Landing at 30 knots, 'copter feels like a flying boat. Below, right: Pilot takes off from water just as he would from heliport.

known aircraft. They are however, loaded on some USAF alert aircraft ready for use if need be.

Said Mr. Pearkes: "Only in situations of immediate danger and grave emergency would air defence aircraft armed with nuclear weapons fly over Canadian territory under present Canada-U.S. agreements."

The minister also stated that bomber aircraft of the B-47 and B-52 type have carried out training flights over Canadian territory with nuclear weapons aboard on certain occasion. "However, these flights take place only with the prior and express permission of the Canadian government in each case."

Auxiliary Transports

The RCAF's two auxiliary light bomber squadrons will begin conversion to transport duties in April. The two squadrons, based at Edmonton (No. 418) and Saskatoon (No. 406) and operating with Mitchell B-25 bombers, will be the fourth and fifth in the RCAF reserve to switch to the new role, which will involve emergency and rescue work in connection with civil defence. They will be equipped with twin-engine Expeditors and single-engine Otter aircraft.

The other three auxiliary squadrons already operating with the new type of aircraft are Calgary, (No. 403) Winnipeg (No. 402) and Hamilton (No. 424).

Although Defence Minister George Pearkes said last December that all 11 RCAF auxiliary squadrons will eventually be converted to transport service, the six remaining fighter squadrons which are flying Sabre 5's out of Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal, remain in the day fighter role at least until next year.

Postings & Careers

Wing Commander James M. Stroud, DFC, CD, has been appointed commanding officer of RCAF Station Rockcliffe, Ont. He succeeds Wing Commander Francis H. Watkins, DFC, who assumes duties at AFHQ.

Born and educated in Hamilton, W/C Stroud joined the RCAF in January 1940, was trained as a pilot and later flew with No. 147 Bomber Reconnaissance Sqdn., based at Tofino, B.C. He was transferred overseas in 1944, and assigned to No. 99 Sqn., a unit engaged in operational flying in India and Burma. Since the war he has served in administrative and staff positions both in the U.K. and in Canada.

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