

Editorial

PUBLIC EDUCATION—

At the recent annual meeting of the AITA the suggestion was made that perhaps the Association was remiss in not conducting some sort of an education campaign to make the public more aware of the importance and stature of the Aircraft Industry. It was quashed. Once again the Association has shown that it does not recognize the value of public relations. In view of the situation in which the Industry now finds itself, may we suggest that this is a very short sighted outlook. Does the Industry not realize that if the public had been kept better informed, Mr. Diefenbaker would not be able to get to first base in selling his colossal bill of goods? Does the Industry not realize that though it depends almost wholly on Government orders, it has no grass-roots support from the Government's master . . . the lowly voter? And why is this? Simply because the voter cannot be expected to support something about which he knows nothing. Mr. Citizen does not know that the Aircraft Industry is as vital a part of the defence complex as the services themselves, or of the significant place it occupies in the nation's economy. He does not know or care about these things because the AITA is turning its back on what we think should be one of its primary functions.

WHAT THE AIR MARSHAL SAID WAS . . .

On returning from a recent press visit to NORAD headquarters at Colorado Springs, Colo., we were somewhat surprised to read some of the comment on the news reports of what had purportedly been said during this visit, particularly by Air Marshal C. R. Slemon, on the subject of the Arrow.

Before continuing, we would like to state unequivocally that A/M Slemon did not stick his nose into the Canadian Government's business. He did not tell, suggest, recommend, or in any way indicate that the Canadian Government had to buy the CF-105, or that NORAD considered it indispensable.

The points he made were:

- That NORAD considered the manned interceptor a requirement for as far ahead as it was possible to see.
- That an item by item comparison of the Arrow with other types of aircraft available within the same period, designed for a similar purpose, showed that the Arrow would be the highest performing interceptor available until the advent of the North American F-108.

Not Personal: During all of A/M Slemon's remarks, he pointedly used the pronoun "we", referring to NORAD. General Earle Partridge, commander of NORAD, was present during the time A/M Slemon was making his comments.

Going through our notes, we find these remarks among the many credited to A/M Slemon:

"Our responsibility is to formulate plans and requirements. We must advise on what NORAD requires to carry out its job. We try to state our requirements in broad terms. We give the facts and state the requirements and the respective elements in the respective countries decide on how these will be met."

A/M Slemon explained that there were really two threats: one of these is the threat that comes from outside the earth's atmosphere (i.e., the ICBM); the other is the threat that comes through the earth's atmosphere, this being primarily the manned bomber.

About manned bombers, A/M Slemon had these remarks: "For as long as the potential [aggressor] possesses manned bombers in sufficient numbers, this poses a threat we cannot afford to ignore. [The manned bomber threat] by itself can be decisive if it is used against us."

Interceptors Required: Turning to the CF-105 question, A/M Slemon said: "We are not being evasive, but we scrupulously avoid . . . suggesting types of aircraft. For as long as we can see we must have manned interceptors and missiles to meet the manned bomber threat.

"What sort of manned interceptor? Particularly in the fringe areas . . . experience shows the long range interceptor with two men on board can best do the job. Why two men? Two men can best cope with the long range navigation, interception problems, ECM operations . . . What aircraft come near this? The F-106 is a first class all-weather interceptor. The majority [built] will be single seaters, single engine." Pointing out that it was very difficult to make direct comparison as the peak performance of an interceptor depended on the role for which it was designed, A/M Slemon then went on to say that the 105, "generally speaking, will have an edge in speed, altitude, range and maneuverability over the single seat F-106, and an even greater edge over the two seater version."

That's what the Air Marshal said.