

aviation intelligence

Hopes for the Caribou

"Procurement funds for the U. S. Army's newest aircraft, the 26,000 lb. de Havilland Caribou, will be sought in the fiscal 1961 budget. The Army, obviously pleased with preliminary trials of the 32-passenger plane, seeks to expand considerably the initial order of five Caribou. On the basis of its global requirements, the Army seemingly would require at least 50 Caribou in the next two fiscal years" — (Quote from the U. S. official Army Navy Air Force Journal).

Gyroplane Ready For Flight

Engineers of Avian Industries Ltd., Georgetown, Ont., were preparing their 2/180 Gyroplane for its first flight at the end of last month. The two-seat fibre glass bubble fuselage aircraft is the product of an ex-Avro Aircraft team, and is designed to take off and land vertically. A three-blade rotor is driven by compressed air jets at the tips for take-off, and autorotates during flight. The 180 hp Lycoming engine drives a pusher propeller for forward flight. The first prototype will have the addition of a mechanical ground drive for the rotor, to expedite certification of the aircraft, and this aircraft will be known as the Avian 2/180B. Attempts to interest the Canadian Army and the Department of National Defence in the project have so far proved fruitless. Target price for the aircraft, with quantity production, is \$10,000.

Early F-104s Deactivated

Early models of the Lockheed F-104, which first joined the U. S. air defence system less than two years ago, are to be called in during 1960. Reports indicate that four air defence units comprising 116 planes, with an original price tag of about \$174 million, are involved. Various reasons are given for their premature inactivation, the most feasible being that this will save the budget trimmers \$4 million a year in operating costs. But it is also said that the early F-104's are not compatible with the SAGE system as they do not have a data link computer, being designed not as all-weather interceptors, but as fast reaction tactical air superiority fighters. It is further suggested that the planes were used only in a complementary role, until additional century series all-weather interceptors were available. Lockheed is developing a later version of the F-104 to incorporate the necessary equipment for SAGE system operation.

Wheeler's Niagara Hopes

Wheeler Airlines Ltd., Montreal, proposes a minimum of two flights daily into Niagara District Airport from Malton if its current plan meets with the approval of the Air Transport Board. Twin-engined Beechcraft will be employed. Co-operating with the airline, the Niagara District Airport Commission is encouraging extension of the service to Toronto Island, Buffalo and Oshawa airports.

Dual Role Engine Studied

Method by which an aircraft engine could be changed during supersonic flight from a conventional turbine jet to a ram-jet, is being studied by Rolls-Royce and Bristol-Siddeley Engines. Basis of the conception is that the blades of the turbine are made to alter their pitch to the extent of "feathering," so as to offer the minimum air resistance. After being used as a normal turbine for conventional take-off and initial climb, the engine would convert to a ramjet for flight at three times the speed of sound, or more.

Cargo Aircraft Potential

Prediction of Al Cleveland, chief advanced design engineer of Lockheed Aircraft Corp's Georgia Division, for future air cargo growth raises the billion air ton miles figure recorded for 1958 to about 40 billion ton miles by 1975. This would require up to 1,000 all-cargo commercial aircraft, Cleveland said.

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