

# JET TRANSPORT POLICY ?

SOMEWHAT to its surprise, the RCAF becomes this month the first air force in the world to operate jet transports. We cannot but applaud the political decision to purchase the two de Havilland Comets ostensibly for radar tracking practice but now apparently also for transport (particularly of VIPs). It is obvious that sooner or later the North Stars in Transport Command will have to be replaced. Taking on themselves what is probably undeserved credit, the politicians claim they are looking ahead to what is undoubtedly the type of air transport of the future.

WE ARE admittedly a bit rough on our politicians because many of us cannot forget that, but for political lack of foresight, the RCAF would today be flying Canadian-designed and produced jet transports. Given this same opportunity a couple of years ago to fly under RCAF colors, the Avro Canada Jetliner could have had the proving experience it needed to get its certificate of airworthiness and a good start toward commercial orders. There was no more reason to shelve the Jetliner because of the international situation than to shelve the Comet which was at about the same stage of development. Indeed military transport has an important part to play in any international emergency and there is no doubt Canada needs this type of air power. If the Jetliner program had been pursued with the same Government foresight and support it started with, and the aircraft had been modified to suit the needs of even Trans-Canada Air Lines, for which it was originally designed, it would now probably enjoy the same commercial success the Comet deservedly does. Even today, although Canada has lost several years of the jet transport lead it once had, many

airlines are still interested in a newer Jetliner made by Avro Canada.

It is certainly no military secret that a longer-ranged Jetliner is now being considered as a North Star replacement by the RCAF. Powered by four derated Sapphire turbojets, this transport if based at Winnipeg, could fly effectively any place in the Dominion nonstop and in other features as well compares favorably with the Comet. It could be used for many purposes by the RCAF and if orders were placed would be a tremendous help to the industry, now worried because it sees the end of its Korean-War inspired orders. The present Jetliner presumably could serve a useful purpose in the development of this transport instead of remaining a source of embarrassment to the Government and the company, of little practical use except for such purposes as taking publicity photographs of the rocket-firing CF-100 Mark IV.

THE senseless shelving of the Jetliner dealt a body blow to morale at Avro Canada and indeed throughout the industry with a consequent effect on military production. Many of the key employees whose brains and enthusiasm gave birth to the Jetliner have left the company and country. Because of political pressures, the company and industry in spite of its own efforts has lost much of the public prestige and respect it rightfully enjoyed when the Jetliner, like the Comet, led the world in the jet transport field.

With an election coming up shortly, this magazine suggests as the spokesman for the industry that the various political parties outline what they plan to do as regards aviation. Sponsorship of a Canadian-designed and made jet transport would be evidence of political foresightedness and long-range aviation planning.

*The Editor*