# THE AIRBORNE SERVICES

## Replacement for Sabre 6?

Longstanding rumors to the effect that the RCAF is casting about for a suitable replacement for the Sabre 6 now in use by No. 1 Air Division in Europe, have been revived by the fact that a team of RCAF officers has recently been visiting the U.S. on what appears to be a shopping tour.

Aircraft reported seen by the close-mouthed group included: Lockheed F-104; Grumman F11F-1F; Northrop N-156; and Republic F-105. It is said that the last-mentioned Thunderchief is favorably regarded in RCAF circles. If the Canadian Government were to choose one of these aircraft, it seems almost certain that the aircraft would be built under licence at Canadair Ltd.

Some months ago the grapevine had it that the Air Force had narrowed the selection down to either the F11F-1F or the F-104 Starfighter. Same rumor had it that the F11F-1F powered by a Rolls-Royce Avon was best bet; later mongers claimed that the Avon had given way to the General Electric J-79-7.

## 105 C & R Flight Disbands

As of January 1, a well-known organization, 105 Communications & Rescue Flight, at Station Namao, Edmonton, ceased to exist. The disbanding of the unit took place at the same time as the demise of Tactical Air Command.

The unit, operating Dakota, Otter and Expeditor aircraft, is well-known in the Canadian west for its many search and rescue operations in Alberta, northern B.C., the Yukon and western portion of the Northwest Territories. Responsibility for these areas will be taken over by similar units at Winnipeg and Vancouver.

105 C & R Flight has maintained a detachment at Whitehorse, but whether this is to be dispensed with or taken over by the Vancouver Flight, is unknown at time of writing. Much credit has been earned by 105 Flight in carrying out many hazardous mercy flights when flying conditions were so poor that civilian aircraft were grounded. Typical of its activities was a search which began in September for a missing Beaver aircraft in the Peace River country. The RCAF logged over 800 hours in the search, continuing its hunt long after civilian planes had been withdrawn.

## RCAF to Get Firestreak?

It has been reported that the RCAF is reconsidering the use of de Havilland Firestreak missiles as a replacement for the Sparrow II. Following the very successful testing, a couple of years ago, of Firestreaks with Avon Sabres of the Royal Australian Air Force at the Woomera Range, it was rumored that the RCAF might use the British-built missile to arm their elderly Sabre 6's now in use with No. 1 Air Division. The need to update the Canadian Sabres has renewed interest in the proposal.

## RCAF's NATO Commitment

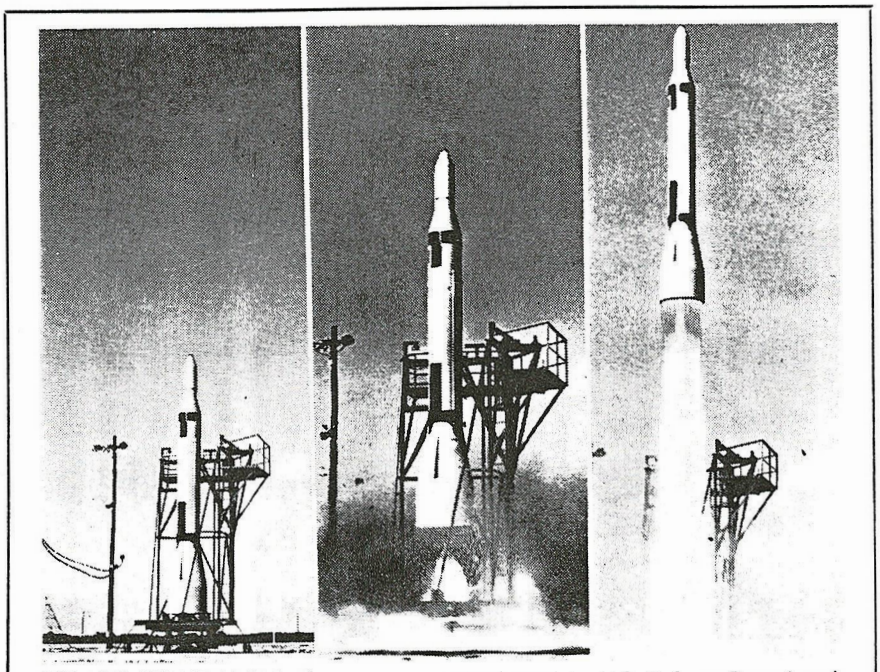
At the NATO Council of Ministers meeting held last month in Paris, Defence Minister George Pearkes was asked about re-equipping the Air Division now operating with Sabre and CF-100 aircraft. Mr. Pearkes said that certainly Canada's Air Division would have to be re-equipped within the next five years. (Other expert opinion has it that the time will not be longer than three or four years).

It is expected that an announcement will be made shortly from Ottawa that the Sabre 6's and CF-100's now operating in Europe will be modified to carry air-to-air guided missiles. Most likely candidates seem to be the Hughes Falcon or the de Havilland Firestreak. The move is a stop-gap measure aimed at prolonging the operational life of these two fighters which have been eclipsed in the past year or so by higher-performance Century Series aircraft.

## New Starfighter Records

Just to show that they weren't fooling, a USAF F-104 recently set seven new time-to-climb records. The records were made during an Air Defence Command exercise designed to evaluate maximum interceptor climb capability.

Timed by the National Aeronautics Association, the new records are as follows, (old records in parenthesis): 3,000 meters, or 9,842 feet, 41.85 sec. (44.39 sec.); 6,000 meters, or 19,685 feet, 58.41 sec. (1 min. 6.13 sec.); 9,000 meters, 1 min. 21.14 sec. (1 min. 29 sec.); 12,000 meters, 1 min. 39.9 sec. (1 min. 52 sec.); 15,000 meters, 49,212 feet, 2 min. 11.1 sec. (2 min. 36 sec.); 20,000 meters, 65,616 feet, 3 min. 42.99 sec.; and 25,000 meters, 82,020 feet in 4 min. 26.03 seconds. No previous re-



POLARIS TEST VEHICLE: This sequence, just released by U.S. Defense Department, was taken with automatic camera mounted close to launch site. First frame shows Polaris missile a split second before launch; centre, missile has begun its flight; third frame shows it on its way in a limited object test. Polaris is scheduled to see service with U.S.N. nuclear subs in 1960.