

Editorial

STILL A ONE WAY STREET

The news of the USAF decision to cancel its T-36 contract with Canadair Limited, is disquieting, to say the least. Since the Canadian government has let it be known that it will probably soon let additional contracts to soften the blow of the T-36 cancellation, the damage to corporate and worker pocketbooks will probably not be as great as the \$100,000,000 at which the USAF contract was valued.

However, there are broader implications to this business than the simple fact that a substantial order has vaporized.

An American View: In 1951, in the July 9 issue of our U.S. contemporary, American Aviation, Editor Wayne Parrish commented on the subject of reciprocal trade in these words: "Canada is buying about \$900,000,000 worth of war material, including airplanes, engines, and parts, from the U.S. over a period of three years. At the moment the total orders placed by the U.S. in Canada are about one-fifteenth of that . . . high defence officials will have to find some means of spreading the production work now that it has been agreed that we are to spread the work of defending the hemisphere. . . . Standardization and reciprocation must be more than mere words. A one-way street on procurement simply won't work economically."

At present, the only large direct U.S. defence orders still in effect with Canadian firms are for T-6 (Harvard) and T-34A trainers, held by Canadian Car & Foundry; L-20 Beavers, held by de Havilland; and for a quantity of twin-mount naval guns, held by Sorel Industries Limited. Other substantial orders for parts are held by Canadian Pratt & Whitney, Alcan, and Sperry of Canada. A rough calculation shows that these total something less than \$85,000,000. With the exception of the T-34A contract, all the orders were either in the process of being filled or were pending when Mr. Parrish wrote his comments.

Last year Canada imported aviation products worth more than \$163,000,000 from the U.S. In comparison, the traffic the other way was a mere trickle. This year the trend is in the same direction; during the first three months of 1953 U.S. aviation exports to Canada were worth \$33,273,762. Canadian exports to the U.S. in the same period were valued at \$4,068,321.

To the Fore: These remarks should not be regarded as mere sour grapes. The USAF is quite within its rights to cancel any contracts it desires . . . and to be quite frank, we never could take seriously the requirement the T-36 was designed to fill. Our point at this time is only that the T-36 cancellation has brought sharply to the fore once again a situation which has long existed.

We're tired of hearing U.S. leaders speak grandly of such things as "trade, not aid", "free trade", and "mutual defence", when they apparently haven't the foggiest idea of what these expressions mean. Someday our neighbor to the south is going to realize that constant repetition of that tired old speech about 3,000-miles-of-undefended-border is no longer enough to keep naïve Canadians happy. We'd like a little more genuine reciprocity.

OLD FACE, NEW JOB

The appointment of Air Marshal W. A. Curtis to the vice-chairmanship of the board of directors of A. V. Roe Canada Limited is a happy one in our opinion. Air Marshal Curtis took time out recently to hold a press conference and thus forestall any speculation that there had been any suggestion before his retirement that he join Avro Canada when his term of service as Chief of the Air Staff was completed. While this thought had not previously occurred to us, we feel it is typical of the man to bring the matter right out into the open and discuss it candidly. We found his sincerity most convincing. A/M Curtis brings to Avro Canada some quite unique talents . . . ones that are possessed by few, if any, other men in this, or any country. Though not a career officer in the RCAF, he attained its highest post, and held this post longer than any other officer has done before. What's more, his term of command was through a most difficult transition period. At the same time, he has been a highly successful business man, prior to the war having been president of his own insurance firm. Obviously A/M Curtis's wide experience as an administrator, together with his intimate knowledge of business practices and military requirements are assets that are rare indeed.