

Editorial

TRAGIC LOSS

It was with sincere regret that we learned of the tragic loss of Canadian Pacific Air Lines' first Comet. Undoubtedly the loss of life of such highly skilled personnel is the most deplorable aspect of this accident. But the loss of the aircraft, in this particular instance especially, is of far greater significance than is usually the case. It provides CPA with a major set-back in its plans at a most unfortunate time. However, this virile young organization has shown itself to be capable of overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and in the past has overcome other major set-backs. We are certain that the air line has not been losing any time in making plans to close up the gap and though a delay is now inevitable in the start of jet service across the Pacific, it will still be with us in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, our sympathies go out to the families of the men concerned, as well as to their employers, de Havilland, Smiths Instruments, and CPA.

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

During February, Defence Production Minister C. D. Howe reviewed the aircraft and engine programs at Avro Canada. Most of what he said is dealt with elsewhere in this issue, but he had additional comment on the comparisons that are frequently made between the F-86 program and the CF-100 program. Because we think these remarks are of considerable interest and quite enlightening, they are reproduced below.

Comparison: In considering the A. V. Roe program, comparisons are often made with the F-86 program at Canadair. In making such comparisons, however, there are several factors that must be kept in mind.

1. The CF-100 is one of the biggest and heaviest fighter aircraft being produced today. It weighs approximately 17 tons. That is heavier than the 21-passenger DC-3 transport, and about two and one half times as heavy as a standard fighter such as the Sabre. If comparisons are to be made, this additional weight and the increased complexity must be kept in mind.

2. A. V. Roe has designed, developed, and is now producing both the airframe and the engine. It is true that the development costs have been heavy, but it must be remembered that in manufacturing a plane developed in another country, as we are doing at Canadair, we are faced with heavy license fees that are in reality a payment which we are making to support the development staff of an aircraft company in another country.

3. We were able to give Canadair a sufficiently large order to permit them to set up an economic production line, which they have done with great efficiency, and which will enable Canada to fill its NATO commitments in the time allotted. On the other hand, the CF-100 will be the basis of our home defence and we are most concerned that it does not become obsolescent too rapidly. Consequently, it has been our policy not to load the Air Force with the earlier marks of the CF-100, and to place a minimum order for the Mark 3 in order to await the Mark 4. We will place a heavier order for this airplane, thus permitting more efficient production at A. V. Roe.

Speculation: There has been some recent speculation concerning fighters of advanced design. This is a subject on which I can say very little without compromising military security. I can assure the honorable members, however, that we are constantly studying new concepts and new designs. In doing so, we are anxious to examine designs which are available to us from other countries. *However, we have what I consider a good design and development organization at A. V. Roe and, naturally, we will not overlook their talents.*