

Canada's CF-100 Interceptor Described as 'Waddling Cow'

By Ted Douglas

The cloak of secrecy and the guise of security regulation are wonderful tools for shrouding the truth. Case in point is the Canadian aircraft industry, and its "jet age" accomplishments.

The ballyhoo boys of this new industry have pumped out some fine superlatives to describe the R.C.A.F. fighters, the Canadian Sabre and the CF-100 all-weather interceptor.

There have been no reservations. The CF-100, for example, is claimed to be the "best all-weather interceptor." The Canadian Sabre has been called "superior" to its American progenitors.

Half a grain of horse sense would indicate that this is just not so—and cannot be so.

There is an interesting comparison of Canada, son between the U.S. Planes Canadian CF-100, and the American Scorpion F-89-C and F-89-D. Both were designed for the same purpose (all-weather interception), both carry a pilot and observer, both are well-equipped with radar searching devices.

The CF-100 weighs in at 40 tons, carries two Canadian Orenda jet engines, and slung under the fuselage is a gun pod which mounts eight 50 calibre machine guns. A limited number of later models mount some rocket projectiles in wing-tip pods.

The American Scorpion weighs 20 tons—exactly half the bulk of her Canadian cousin. The Scorpion carries a two-man crew and twin jet engines.

Armament of the Heavier Scorpion makes the U.S. the CF-100 look like a flit gun. One model, the F-89-C, mounts six 20 mm cannon, and 16 rockets, of five-inch calibre.

The North American defence model—and there are some in Oscoda, Mich.—bristle with 105 "Mighty Mouse" rocket projectiles in wing pods, these missiles of 2.75 mm calibre.

The American aircraft obviously slings far more lead and sting when it must.

It is a minor tribute to the Orenda jet engine that speeds of the CF-100 and the Scorpion are about in the same class, sub-sonic, in the 600 m.p.h. range.

However, turning 20 tons at 600 m.p.h. is quite a different story from changing the direction of 40 tons at the same speed.

Every law in the book shouts that the Scorpion, because of this weight factor, has to be far more manageable in a scrap. Yet, we are told, the CF-100 is the best there is.

It is quickly apparent that the CF-100, when viewed in the world jet picture, is a waddling cow in a stable of thoroughbreds.

There is also no justification for the statement that the Canadian Sabre fighter is superior to the American Sabre. If it was,

the U.S. Air Force would be full of them.

The best authority this writer knows on that subject is Maj. Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager, top test pilot of the U.S. Air Force. He was first to break the sound-barrier.

According to Chuck Yeager, increases of power make no difference to the performance of sub-sonic and super-sonic aircraft. The design of the wings must be changed to alter characteristics.

Yeager test-flew the Canadian Sabre for the U.S. Air Force. His analysis was simply that there was less vibration in the Orenda-powered Canadian model—and no change in performance.

Canadians have been paying a multi-million-dollar price for Canadian-made jet fighters.

It is surprising that the value received has not been a stronger issue in the House of Commons.

The Canadian aircraft industry has tried to sell both the Canadian Sabre and the CF-100 to other Allied countries. But other countries are not buying — and there obviously is a reason.

The only aircraft this country has produced for the foreign market successfully are bush-type freight machines. Planes like the DeHavilland Beaver and Otter, and the old Norseman have been outstanding successes—and you will find them doing yeoman duty with the U.S. Air Force.

There is one other classic blunder which has been allowed to fade from the Canadian aviation scene—the much-vaunted Jetliner.

This aircraft made some fine speed records from New York to Toronto, but now it gathers dust, an almost forgotten memory.

Ask any airline executive about the Jetliner. The reply likely will be that no more impractical aircraft was ever conceived. Straight-jets make poor short-hop airliners.

A bundle of government money has taken wing in those projects.