

S aviation intelligence

PHI Potential Soars

Decision by the West German Air Force to equip its 266 Lockheed F-104G Starfighters with Position and Homing Indicator system represents a major breakthrough for Computing Devices of Canada Ltd. The PHI in this tactical navigation role is almost certain to be specified for the 200 F-104Gs with which the RCAF Air Division's Sabre squadrons are to be re-equipped, but an even bigger potential lies in sale of the equipment to other European NATO air forces. Italy, Greece and France, all of which are expecting to re-equip shortly, are excellent prospects for the PHI, which in effect appears on the verge of receiving over-all NATO endorsement. The PHI specified by the West German's is a further miniaturized, lighter weight Mk.4 version of the system compatible with the limited installation space in the F-104G. To carry out its tactical navigation role, the PHI will be used in conjunction with either an inertial or a doppler radar system establishing an integrated, independent airborne system capable of pin-point accuracy under any conditions.

Avro Saucer

Avro Aircraft's "Flying Saucer" project appears continuing apace despite disruption in the firm's other activities over the past few months. There are the usual reports and rumors of imminent first flights. An analysis of available information would indicate that long time super secret project is in effect two parallel programs, one a subsonic transport type vehicle being developed for the U. S. Army, the other a supersonic machine with applications in the interceptor or fighter field which has aroused the active interest of the United States Air Force. The subsonic Army vehicle at present appears to be in the more advanced stage of development, and there is reliable evidence that first flights will take place this year, likely in the fall.

Aid for U. S. Contract Bidders

Canadian companies bidding on U. S. contracts for items already in production in the United States can now secure government assistance in capital outlay for special tooling and some other items required to "establish production capacity." Authority for this sort of support has been given the Department of Defence Production. The idea is to give Canadian companies a reasonable opportunity to make their prices competitive in bids against companies which may have tooling and other set-up costs depleted on earlier contracts. Under the arrangement a Canadian company would probably receive a DDP commitment (say 50 per cent) against estimated tooling costs which could be taken into account in working out a bid. In the event of a successful bid, a formal contract would then be established between DDP and the firm concerned.

Production Sharing

Defence Production Minister Raymond O'Hurley had some words of encouragement on progress in Canadian-U. S. defence production sharing during consideration of his department's estimates in the Commons last month. Preliminary figures for the first six months of the year showed U. S. government procurement agencies placing prime defence contracts valued at about \$32,000,000 with Canadian firms, compared with similar expenditure of \$17,000,000 in the same period of 1958. Subcontracts placed with Canadian companies by U. S. firms number over 100, to a value of better than \$20,000,000, with prospect of follow-on orders if quality and delivery times are satisfactory. The minister expressed satisfaction with these results as a start, but cautioned against reading too much into them. There was still a long way to go and many difficulties to be overcome.

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