aviation intelligence

Ab-initio Jet for RCAF

Re-equipment of RCAF NATO squadrons with Canadair-built Lockheed F-104Gs has rekindled hopes that the government may be in the market for an ab-initio jet trainer. Reasoning is that with this new evidence of a continuing requirement pilots Training Command should be able to make a good argument for adoption of the proven more efficient, more economical all-through jet program. RCAF has done extensive evaluation on the current crop of ab-initio jets. Best bets appear to be UK Hunting's Jet Provost on which de Havilland of Canada is sales representative, or the Canadair designed CL-41 on which first flights are scheduled for this fall under power of the newly developed Pratt & Whitney JT-12 engine.

Production Sharing Questioned

A U. S. publication, Space Age News, describes American legislators as irked by what it terms "Canadian U. S. Contract Raid" under proposals for defence production sharing. The American publication, which evidently missed out on earlier public announcements by officials in both Washington and Ottawa regarding the pending agreements, reports in its August issue that U. S. Congressmen are seriously concerned over "a super-hush Pentagon-State Department attempt to ease import duties and security restrictions" against Canadian electronic and aircraft firms bidding for U. S. defence business. The article quotes a California Senator and Representative to bear out its legislators irked claim. On careful reading, however, neither politician comes out really irked. The Senator would "vigorously protest any preferential treatment which they (Canada) might receive over American firms." (No preferential treatment is contemplated, just equal opportunity.) The Representative assures his "continued efforts to prevent any political influence being used to reduce California's just share of defence contracts." (A worthy stand. Canada's industry could wish for nothing more.)

Transport Agreement

Transport Minister George Hees last month announced an agreement between his Department and the U. S. Department of Defence to provide for substantially increased use of Canadian commercial air services in movement of cargo and civil personnel in Canada on behalf of the U. S. military. As a matter of general practice, American Armed Forces will now use Canadian air services whenever they meet military transportation requirements effectively and economically. In return, where U. S. military operations become dependent on Canadian air services for supply and transport these services will not be withdrawn in the event of emergency without U. S. consent. The agreement with the U. S. may be the forerunner of a similar move with respect to transport requirements of the Canadian military. The Wheatcroft Report on Canada's air transport industry recommended the government give serious consideration to having all government agencies as a matter of policy make use of commercial carriers wherever possible.

DC-8 in Montreal

Montrealers got their first look at TCA's choice for launching its pure jet operations with a visit to Dorval last month by a Douglas DC-8 transport. Toronto residents may have their first peek next month at Malton. The airline is scheduled to take delivery of its first of six Rolls-Royce Conway by-pass powered DC-8s late this year, should be able to begin operational service early in the New Year.