

THE AIRBORNE SERVICES

Comets to Fly

AFHQ has announced that a decision has been made to have modifications carried out on its Comet 1A jet transports, to permit their return to full operational service. The aircraft are being flown to the de Havilland factory at Broughton, near Chester, in the United Kingdom, for the modification work, which will take about a year to complete.

Both Comets are being flown from Downsview, Toronto, to the United Kingdom by de Havilland crews, headed by John Cunningham, de Havilland test pilot. The first Comet, following test flights out of Downsview, left for the United Kingdom on May 25, and the second will follow in July. The modifications to the RCAF's Comets will be similar to those now being incorporated in the RAF's Comet 2's.

When returned to service with the RCAF they will provide facilities for transport, as well as a suitable means of exercising the Canadian defence system against high-speed aircraft simulating enemy bomber attacks, according to AFHQ.

Bid Rejected

A recent Ottawa news report says that the Department of National Defence has rejected the RCN's proposal to operate two aircraft carriers. The Bonaventure, now nearing completion at Belfast, Northern Ireland, is sched-

uled for commissioning in the RCN in October. After the Bonaventure joins the fleet, the Magnificent, on loan from the Royal Navy since 1948, will be returned.

The Navy's argument for the retention of the Magnificent, according to the report, was that more recruits could be trained at one time in the carrier than either of the two training cruisers, the Quebec and the Ontario. However, the Defence Department feels the cost of operating the Magnificent as well as the Bonaventure would outweigh the advantages, especially at a time when NATO countries are trying to cut defence costs by concentrating on top priority items. It is understood that the RN has no present use for the Magnificent and it would be just as happy if Canada kept her in service.

Heliport Frigates

An experiment to test the feasibility of operating helicopters from escort vessels of the frigate class will be carried out by the RCN this summer.

Approval has been given, according to naval authorities, for the installation of a helicopter platform on the frigate, HMCS Buckingham, based at Halifax. Work on the installation is expected to be completed in July and trials with helicopter landings and take-offs will begin immediately thereafter. The tests will be tried in various sea and weather conditions.

Officials say the frigate is the smallest type ship to be considered for helicopter operations in naval history. So far, helicopter operations have been limited to ships no smaller than the ice-breaker HMCS Labrador with a gross tonnage of 5,400 tons. Frigates come at weights of around 1,500 tons. If the experiments prove the idea feasible, authorities claim that the helicopter could become the most efficient submarine hunter of all time as it will no longer be limited to operation from land or off large ships.

SAC in Canada

The USAF Strategic Air Command has a bomber base in Canada, at Goose Bay, Labrador, according to a press report from Ottawa. At the present, the base is being used by the USAF refueling tankers which take off to meet the B-47 globe-circling bombers of SAC. It is also used as a stop-over point for the bombers on specific operations.

The report points out that the ability of the B-47 bombers to use Goose Bay is a help to the RCAF's Air Defence Command. RCAF CF-100 fighters constantly make practice interceptions on the B-47 aircraft.

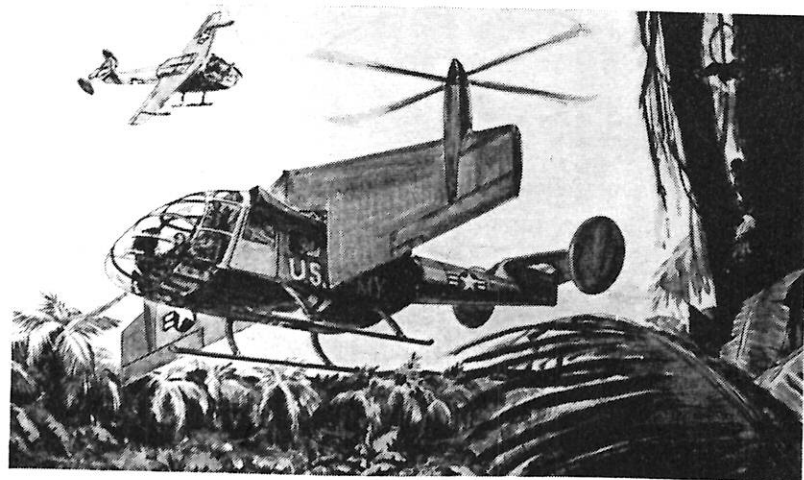
F-104 Interest

An RCAF official has confirmed the possibility that the RCAF is looking into the F-104 Starfighter, the USAF's 1,500 mph fighter, as a possible replacement for the F-86 Sabres now in service. However, it is a common procedure, he said, to investigate the operational characteristics of most new aircraft. If the RCAF should decide that the F-104 is the aircraft to complement the CF-100, the report suggests that Canadair will be the prime contractor for the Canadian version.

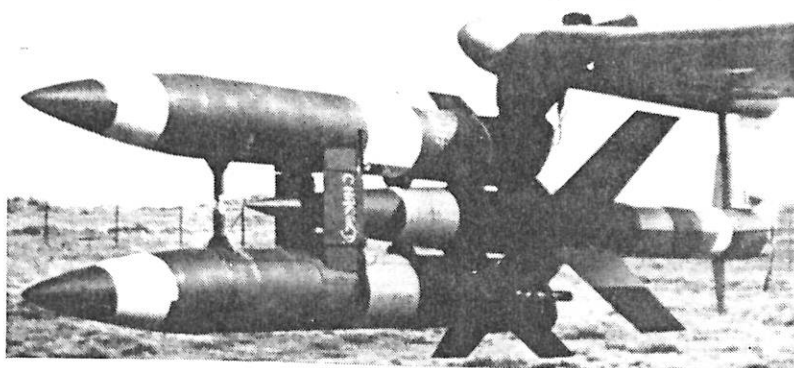
One Out of Four

According to the daily press Canada is falling behind in RCAF commitments to the NATO. News stories say that the Canadian Government promised NATO last year that by the end of 1956 it would have four CF-100 jet fighter squadrons in Europe and it is now known that only one CF-100 squadron will reach the RCAF No. 1 Air Division by the end of the year.

The press quoted senior officials as saying that the chief reason is that,



TILT WING: Artist's drawing depicts turbine-powered VTOL research aircraft which Vertol Aircraft Corp. is designing and developing under contract to the U.S. Army and the USN. A single turboprop engine will be geared to two rotorprops mounted on the wing tips. The wing will tilt into the positions shown; the lower for vertical take-off and landing, the upper for normal flight.



FEARSOME FIREFLASH: Shown is the Fairey Fireflash air-to-air guided missile, said to be the first such British weapon to destroy a drone aircraft. The Fireflash, a beam-riding type of missile, is in production for the RAF. In the photo it is mounted on the wingtip of a Meteor. The Fireflash proper is to be seen between the two massive rocket motors which project ahead of the finely-shaped nose of the missile itself. The motors, it is understood, are blown clear when expended.

though the RCAF now can obtain all the aircraft it wants with relative ease, it has been unable to get as many aircrew as it would like. If four squadrons were moved to Europe at once, this aircrew shortage would make it difficult to fill the gap left in the ranks of the home defence squadrons within a reasonable period of time.

Actually, if Canada made any firm commitment to have all the promised CF-100 squadrons overseas by the end of this year, it was made in private. The only public statements on the subject were made by Defence Minister Ralph Campney who told Commons in January of 1955 that by the end of 1956 Canada "hoped" to re-equip four of the 12 RCAF squadrons overseas with CF-100's.

It would appear by the comment made in Commons by the Minister on

May 16, 1956, that only one squadron will receive the CF-100 aircraft this year. In reply to a query from MP John B. Hamilton, Mr. Campney said: "We have 12 squadrons in Europe equipped with Sabre jets. We propose to equip four of those squadrons with CF-100's instead. It is not a question of more or fewer squadrons; it is a question of change of equipment."

According to the NATO agreement Canada is to maintain 12 squadrons in Europe, a task that has been fulfilled since 1953.

Jets Dangerous?

A special class for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in British Columbia has been given a course in the procedures for rescue operations in the event of the crash of armed jet aircraft.

Using first line jet aircraft, including a USAF Scorpion, a CF-100, and a T-33, RCAF technical personnel at Sea Island demonstrated how even a crashed jet can pack a dose of sudden death. Pushing the wrong lever or button can kill both rescuers and crew members trapped inside, the instructors said. Two of the danger points highlighted were the seat ejection lever, which could detonate the explosive charge connected to the mechanism, and the firing button, which could discharge the aircraft's rockets and cannon with disastrous results.

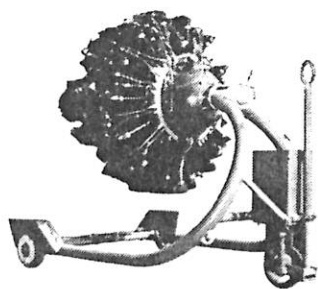
The police officers, representing detachments from all parts of British Columbia, were given the special instruction under the direction of Squadron Leader George Sheahan, officer commanding No. 121 Communications & Rescue Squadron, to enable them to lead rescue operations wherever a jet might crash. The program will eventually cover all RCMP officers in B.C.

Spring Airlift

The RCAF's 435 Squadron, Namao, Alberta, has reported the successful completion of another annual operation with the airlifting of some 1,250,000 pounds of supplies from Resolute Bay to weather stations at Sacks Harbor, Mould Bay, Isachsen, Eureka and Alert.

Using four C-119's, the squadron flew a 24-hour-a-day schedule to move the 600 tons of food, fuel oil drums, lumber for buildings, helium cylinders for weather balloons, and other supplies left at Resolute by ship during the

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An R-1380 Engine being rolled into "In-Flight" position.

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