

Supply—National Defence

inexpensive, easy to maintain, dual-engined and therefore very safe, and has a supersonic dash capability which gives it a self-protection within its own flight environment. A reasonable production-sharing arrangement is also available in respect of this aeroplane because of the large numbers of the basic aeroplane being produced for use in a number of countries around the world. The payload of the CF-5 is not a matter of concern; it can carry 3,000 pounds of bombs, and experience in Viet Nam has proved that with the high number of sorties a tremendous weight of stores can be delivered on target.

● (9:00 p.m.)

The range of the CF-5 is adequate for the kind of task we have in mind for it. In so far as ferry range is concerned, trans-oceanic ferrying is quite practical with aerial refuelling. The allegation that the C-130 is not capable of refuelling the CF-5 is, I am informed, entirely false. A version of the C-130B was developed by the United States forces as an aerial refuelling aircraft and is in service with the United States marine corps today. The refuelling equipment carried in this aircraft can readily be installed or removed as required so that when the aircraft is not being used as a tanker it may revert to its primary role of transport aircraft. Preliminary flight evaluation of the CF-5 against the C-130 aircraft has demonstrated the feasibility of employing this aircraft for the Canadian forces as an aerial filling station. The R.C.A.F. is procuring in-flight refuelling equipment for the CF-5 similar to that installed on the United States aircraft that were flown trans-Pacific to Viet Nam.

Incidentally, the United States Air Force has offered to make a reciprocal arrangement with us similar to that which we have for the air transport fleet, whereby they would refuel our planes being deployed in various parts of the world and we would make our capability available to them in our area.

Another criticism that has been made of the CF-5 is the ground roll, that is the length of runway required for take-off with a full load. Unfortunately, and this seems often to be the case, the figures which have been used publicly are those for the basic F-5A's. The Canadian CF-5, with its more powerful engine, will require 20 per cent less runway for take-off. The length of runway required for the Canadian CF-5 with a full load is less than is required for the CF-104 in use by our air division in Europe, and also less than the

[Mr. Hellyer.]

DC-8 under similar loading conditions. This is not really a very good comparison, however.

Mr. Churchill: Well, give us the figures now on the runways that would be required.

Mr. Hellyer: I will be pleased to do that before a committee where you can get all the details of the standards, etc. It has often been suggested that one should not try to compare apples and oranges, but in this case comparing the CF-5 with the DC-8 is like comparing an apple with a pumpkin.

Another allegation has been the suggestion that the CF-5 requires a particularly level runway when carrying a bomb load. I am advised that this, too, is patently false. Although the CF-5 would normally be employed on conventional runways, flight trials have demonstrated that this aircraft is capable of being operated off sod fields and that the armament selected for the Canadian forces provided ample clearance between the lowest bomb and the field surface when operating under these conditions. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, experience with the F-5 in Viet Nam indicated that the Canadian CF-5 will be absolutely first class in the ground support role.

An interim report of the so-called Skoshi Tiger tests of the F-5A in Viet Nam has been received. While no final conclusions have been drawn as to its over-all combat effectiveness a considerable number of sorties have now been flown, beginning with the first day of delivery in Viet Nam. The experience so far enables the following observations to be made:

1. A high sortie rate per aircraft per day has been achieved.
2. An extremely low maintenance rate expressed in terms of man hours per flight hour has also been achieved.
3. Despite an initial problem of ingestion of foreign objects in the air inlet duct they have not had a complete engine failure in flight. I might say parenthetically that the cause of this damage was primarily the ammunition provided, and other aircraft using the same ammunition had similar problems.
4. The F-5A has performed to all model specifications.
5. It is proven to have outstanding accuracy in stability as an ordnance delivery vehicle.
6. Pilots report that they like its simplicity of operation and control responsiveness in all conditions of flight and that it is exceptionally easy to fly during a refuelling hook-up.