14 FLIGHT International,
4 January 1962

OKI's TS-II Iskra two-seat trainer is the first Polish jet aircraft of indigenous design

Progress in Poland
B y JERZ Y B. CYN K

F

OLLOWING the upheavals in the Communist world after
the death of Stalin, reassessments of political and economic factors governing Polish industrial policy brought about a significant change in the character of Poland's aircraft industry. Departing from a warlike manufacture of Russian fighters in the early fifties, the industry embarked upon a sensible production programme tailored to the country's requirements, combined with a modest but carefully considered plan for development of domestic designs. Export was one of the principal aims. After a difficult and somewhat confused transition phase in 1955-60 the industry started in 1961 a new five-year programme which now provides it with badly needed confidence in the future.
To understand current developments properly a quick glance at the progress in the post-war years is necessary, particularly as the picture is not peculiar to Poland but is to some degree character-istic of most Soviet-dominated countries in Europe.
The first post-war decade was a period of frustrated efforts and big disappointments. Despite immense difficulties a number of design offices were established immediately after the war and several prototypes, mainly of rudimentary low-powered trainers and tour-ers, were evolved; but no engines and no suitable production facilities were available, so these aircraft could not be manufactured in quantity. At the time when rebuilt factories were ready to start work on a larger scale and designers began to think in terms of advanced all-metal constructions, national design activities were progressively curtailed. By the spring of 1951 all design offices were dissolved and all indigenous projects abandoned, the only home-evolved aircraft to survive the purge being the LWD Junak, then already in production for the Polish Air Force. The industry was completely readjusted to the needs of the Soviet war machine and provided with very large and thoroughly modern aircraft manufac-turing plants, which offered production facilities far in excess of contemporary or likely future Polish needs. Deliveries of the MiG-15 jet fighters from Polish factories commenced early in 1953, and these aircraft were later superseded on assembly lines by MiG-17s, the designation of the Polish-built MiGs being LiM. After the death of Stalin military orders were drastically cut; and vast plants soon fell idle, as no suitable home-designed aircraft were immediately available to follow the fighters into production. Manufacturing rights were acquired for the Russian Yak-12

general-purpose monoplane and Mi-1 helicopter, and productio was also partly switched to non-aviation engineering products avoid closing down some of the factories.
When the national design offices were liquidated, a few of the

former members who had found shelter at the 1L (Aviation Insttute) began limited work on new projects, despite the fact th
such activities were officially discouraged. Eventually, studies fo the TS-8 Bies trainer and BZ-4 helicopter were evolved at the IL and, as soon as the political tension began to subside, construct of prototypes of these machines was authorized. With the bree of freedom growing stronger and the factories yearning for desig which would secure continuity of production, proposals for severa

new aircraft were quickly put forward and the IL became transformed into a major design centre. This rather spontaneous eff
had to be directed to meet actual requirements, and the appropri development programme was worked out. Accordingly, a principa design centre was formed at the WSK (Transport Equipme Manufacturing Plant), Warsaw-Okecie, and all design activitie conducted at the IL were there transferred, the IL itself returnin to its original task of scientific and technological research. This new centre, officially established by an order issued by th Minister of Heavy Industry on October 12, 1957, and name Osrodek Konstrukcji Lotniczych (aviation design centre), was give the responsibility for design and development of all kinds o powered aircraft, engines and equipment, and incorporated seve specialized teams to perform these duties. Smaller design offic were also established at the WSK Mielec and WSK Swidnik aircra plants.
Then a new factor of economical integration between the Sovi bloc countries began to exercise growing influence upon the pla of the Polish industry. Around 1958, with completion of LiM-5 (MiG-17) orders, production of combat aircraft ceased completel equipment of the Polish Air Force being subsequently modernize with comparatively small batches of the Russian-built MiG-19 an Mikoyan delta-wing fighters (and recently, too, with the type of surface-to-air missile first seen in Moscow in 1957).
The Soviet Union, which had transferred the main stresses of policy from the military to the economic field, agreed to help to

fill the vacuum created by lack of military orders, and in consequence Poland received large production contracts for the Russ

Also by the OKL factory, the MD-12 four-engined feederlmer developed for domestic use by Polish Airlines LOT. Four 340 h.p. Narkiewicz engines are fitted