Beijing's National Agricultural Hall was the show venue. More than 100,000 visitors attended during the week-long event

Competition among Western compa-
nies vying for a slice of the enormous aero-
space market is, needless to say, intense,
and is drawn along the traditional battle
lines. At the show, for example, Airbus
Industrie's product models pointed directly at Boeing's across the floor, most of which were painted in the colours of national airline CAAC (which operates 747s, 737s, and 707s). CFM International and International Aero Engines were also engaging in the usual infighting as to which engine best suited the A320 (for which a number of Chinese sales are mooted).
Offsets are a feature of all deals with Chinese industry, barter sales being rare simply because the greater need is for technology—not for finished products. Both the Chinese Ministry of Aviation and the CAAC (see accompanying feature) have said that "major purchases" of foreign equipment will be made over the next several decades, but only if the manufacturers co-operate in the devel-opment of the Chinese aviation industry. Offset arrangements will therefore become more rigorous than before, the aim being to ensure that increasing proportions of the finished product are locally made. The most significant deal now in the pipeline, and due to be decided within the next few weeks, is for the licence manufacture of 25 medium-range aircraft for CAAC, either MD-80s, or Boeing 737-300s.

China also expects long-term returns in the form of an export market for its own products, and is known to be particularly keen to promote its avionics and composites expertise. Eventually, of course, the Chinese hope to offer complete locally-built aircraft for export, but this will have to await the development of a complete manufacturing infrastructure. A number of aircraft are, of course, now in production, most of which are straight copies of Soviet machines. China is, however, flight testing the Yun-10, a Boeing 707 look-alike of entirely local design and construction (but powered by Pratt & Whitney JT3Ds).

Another important development that will ease the two-way flow of trade will be the conclusion of bilateral aviation co-operation agreements with the West. These will pave the way for the export of

A batch of 100 Boeing 737-300 fins is being manufactured in China. This example was displayed near to the BO105

Chinese products meeting the relevant airworthiness standards.

Aviation Expo/China '84 was not simply a forum for the display of aero-space wares. A number of seminars also took place in rooms set aside for the purpose, hosted by companies and groups from all the participating countries. Topics included, "forest fire suppression" and "full flight simulation" (Canada); "weapons systems for combat aircraft", "evolution of the CFM56", and "what is meant by the transfer of technology" (France); "fly-by-wire actuation" and "collaboration in civil aviation" (UK); and "propfans go full scale" and "computational aerodynamics applica-tions to transport aircraft design" (USA). Over 100 of the half-day seminars were held during the week-long show. It is not known how many of these the Chinese managed to attend, although for certain

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seminars specialised personnel were sa to be present.
The biggest exhibitor at Aviation Expo/China '84 was, not surprisingly, the USA—but only just. France was presen in almost equal strength, possibly even outnumbering the USA if joint stands were taken into account. Next bigges exhibitor was the UK, followed by Canada, West Germany, and Sweden Several important manufacturers were absent (Fokker, Casa-Nurtanio, Redif-fusion, for example), while others had only a very limited presence. The reason fo

this was mainly the sheer cost of attending, which, for some, could not be justified

against the anticipated returns from appearing. Many companies have, afte all, been working in China for many years and have achieved sales successes alrea

While originally intended to be for the promotion of civil products only, the Chinese decided at the last minute tha military displays were also acceptable. Fo many, the news came too late. But a few companies were able to respond, Dassau for example, producing a video display of a Mirage 2000 flight routine, Shorts a full-scale model of its Blowpipe, and MBB and Aeritalia models of their full range of military helicopters and aircraft. Given the amount of "military" visitors present, the last-minute decision seemed entirely appropriate.

The climate for aerospace business i China has, of course, never been so goo Since the announcement by leader Den Xiaoping in 1979 of the "open door" policy, an enormous amount of effort has

been devoted to penetrating what is geneally accepted as the last major untappe

market for aircraft and related products China's landmass is largely deprived o modern ground and air transport, the development of which is a clear nationa priority. Road and rail travel is still only realistically possible between large towns and cities, most rurally-produced goods being carried to these centres on foot or b bicycle.

Apart from military requirements, there appear to be three major sectors fo which aircraft are needed—tourism, heavy transport, and resource developmen Business traffic is unlikely to grow to anything like the proportions of that in the USA because China will soon benefi

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