Italy's aircraft industry

America is proving a particularly interesting growth area in this respect.

No visit to Siai-Marchetti would have been complete without seeing the SV.20, for Dr Ing Emilio Bianchi of the Vertical Flight Division is thereby hoping to gain entry into the helicopter market. The SV.20 was first exhibited at the Turin Show last year in mock-up form and will be seen again, also as a mock-up but with some modifications, at Paris next month. It is at present a winged helicopter powered by two externally mounted UAC PT6-30s, but subsequent development envisages a compound design with a pusher propeller on the starboard PT6-40 which will be brought into play above about 140kt. The asymmetric thrust will thus allow the tail rotor to be off-loaded completely while the port engine drives only the main rotor. Dr Bianchi is confident that the SV.20 will be flying in 1972, but future work is for the moment dependent on a Government R&D contribution. An examination in depth of the whole project has been submitted, as is required, to the Government for this purpose, claimed to be the first complete one of its kind, and Dr Bianchi is hopeful of a favourable result.

The experience of Nardi led to this Milan firm getting the licence for Hughes 300 and 500 manufacture and marketing in Italy. An initial military order for 500Ms has been fulfilled for the Frontier Guard and this is being followed by orders for civil versions. Flight understands that, although the transition from assembly of Hughes components to complete self-manufacture has not been accomplished with the speed originally planned, construction is going ahead and the possibilities of an outlet in the Middle East are being investigated.

With a home market that would not seem to warrant very large-scale general-aviation manufacture, Italy has a healthy interest in this area—there is no shortage of ideas and an increasing amount of hardware, notably from Nardi led to this Milan firm getting the licence for Hughes 300 and 500 manufacture and marketing in Italy. An initial military order for 500Ms has been fulfilled for the Frontier Guard and this is being followed by orders for civil versions. Flight understands that, although the transition from assembly of Hughes components to complete self-manufacture has not been accomplished with the speed originally planned, construction is going ahead and the possibilities of an outlet in the Middle East are being investigated.

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