Sir Thomas Sopwith

Thomas Octave Murdoch
Sopwith died peacefully on
January 27 at his home near
Winchester, England, at the
age of 101.
Sir Thomas Sopwith led the
companies responsible for the
most successful British fighter
of the First World War, the
Sopwith Camel, the decisive
fighter of the Battle of Britain,
the Hawker Hurricane, and
such classic combat aircraft as
the Hunter and Harrier.

Born in London on January
18, 1888, he trained as an
engineer and developed an
early enthusiasm for yachting,
motor-racing, and ballooning.
In 1910, as he later put it, he
was "incurably bitten by the
aviation bug" on seeing a
Bleriot flown by the American
Johnny Moisant at Dover.
After a £5 joyride at Brook-
lands in a Farman piloted by
Frenchman Gustav Blondeau,
he bought a British Avis
monoplane and taught
himself to fly.
After winning many flying
competitions and prizes in
Europe and the USA, he
started a flying school at
Brooklands, England. Among

those he taught were Henry
Hawker and Hugh Trenchard.
Hawker, an Australian,
became test pilot of the
Sopwith Aviation company,
which was formed in 1912.
In the First World War
this company produced or
licensed 16,237 Camels, Pups,
and ll-Strutters.

The Sopwith Company
went into voluntary
liquidation after the war,
reforming in 1920 under the
name Hawker. Sopwith
remained at its head until he
retired in 1978 as president of
Hawker Siddeley. Under his
chairmanship the Hurricane,
which flew in 1935, was
launched as a private venture.

Belgium faces combat aircraf
Eurofighter and Eurojet have
briefed senior Belgian military
and Government officers on the
European Fighter Aircraft as a
potential future fighter for the
Belgian Air Force, and with a
view to Belgium becoming a
full participating partner in the
present four-nation EFA
consortium of the UK, West
Germany, Italy, and Spain.
The in-depth briefings were
requested by Belgium as long
ago as March last year, when a
Belgian study team seeking
information on EFA visited
Eurofighter at Munich. The
Belgian team posed a series of
questions, some of which could
not be fully answered until the
four nations signed the EFA
development contract in
December. The Belgian team
also requested briefings from
Dassault on the Rafale, and
General Dynamics on the Agile
Falcon F-16 derivative.

On January 18 Belgium's
National Armament Director,
Chief of the Defence Staff,

Cyprus flies A320 with V2500
The second Airbus A320 with International Aero Engine V2500 powerplants flew on December 29, 1988, and has now joined the flight-test programme. It is the first of eight A320s ordered by Cyprus A irways, which is taking delivery of the aircraft this spring. It will be the first V2500-powered A320 to enter service.

Chief of Air Staff, and officials
from the Ministries of Defence,
Economic Affairs, Foreign
Affairs, and Scientific Policy
were briefed by Eurojet and
Eurofighter directors, with the
general manager of the Nato
European Fighter Manage-
ment Agency on hand to answer
any questions.
On January 19 the EFA team
invited members of the Belgian
aerospace industry for briefings.
This session was also attended
by regional government heads.
The briefing outlined in detail
the levels of industrial partici-
pation in EFA that Belgium
could expect on joining the
programme.

Development share
Belgium has been offered a 6
per cent share in development
and production if it is willing to
finance its BFr20,000 million
(£295 million) development
share. The offer assumes the
Belgian Air Force will purchase
50 aircraft.
The BFr2C,000 million
would be paid over a period of
11 years. Further investment,
tooling up, and production
would cost another BFr60,000
million (£885 million). Taking
into account that the Belgian
Air Force has no requirement
for new combat aircraft before
the year 2005, Eurofighter
agrees to the Belgian aircraft
being delivered according to
these requirements.
The offer covers five sectors
of research and development:
airframe, engines, avionics, and
general and ancillary equip-
ment. Weapon system equip-
ment remains open for Belgium
to indicate specific items that
might be of special interest to its
aerospace industry.
Eurojet aimed its collabo-
ration offer on the EJ.200
engine specifically at FN
Moteurs, which is urgently
looking for a new high-
technology programme. Speci-
fic engine parts offered for
manufacture by FN include
low-pressure compressor
rotating seals, high-pressure
compressor vanes, and inner
cases, intermediate casing, low-
pressure turbine liner segments
and centring ring, and jet-pipe

2 FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL, 4 February 1989