The Vought V-143 Fighter

Lesser nations not equipped to produce modern military aircraft now have access to this fast American fighter.

FOR reasons best known to the Army Air Corps, the Vought V-143 will never be a U. S. fighting plane. Though originally designed and built first for the U. S. Navy (by Northrop), then for the Army (by Vought), this ship has finally ended up on Washington's "released for export" list.

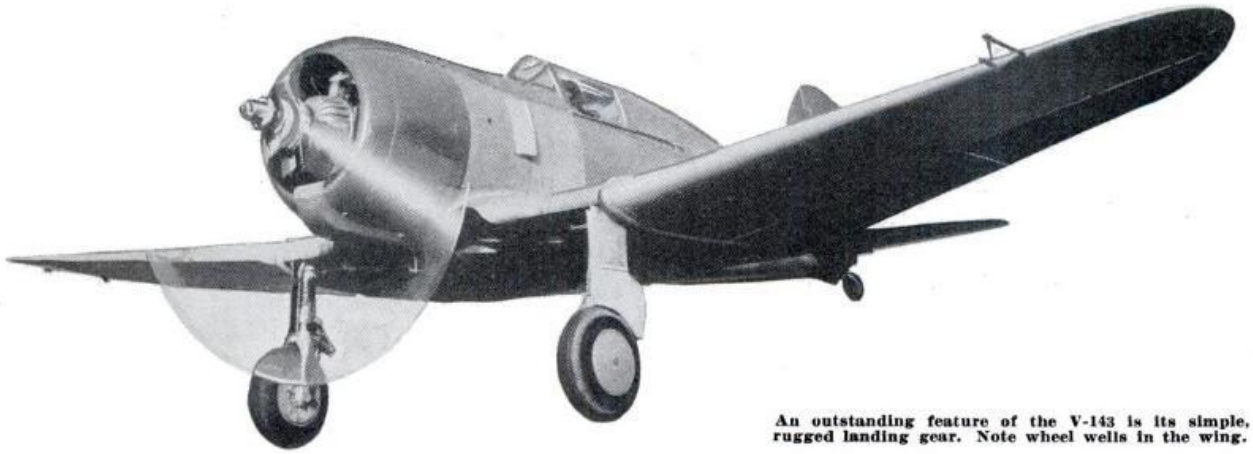
Basic design of the original V-143 was turned out several years ago by Northrop Aircraft. The ship built then was intended to be a high-performance Navy shipboard fighter. Somehow the Northrop fighter never got beyond that experimental ship. The design was shelved for some time, then turned over to Vought Aircraft for further development. About two years ago it reappeared as the Vought V-143. Since then, this design has again been altered somewhat and the ship on this page has had its fuselage lengthened somewhat to increase its longitudinal stability. Also, the tail assembly has been redesigned.

Though no actual performance figures have been released concerning the latest redesigned V-143, those figures applying to the older version shown on this page are representative. Tests, many of them conducted by the Army Air Corps at Wright Field, gave the V-143 a maximum speed of 250 m.p.h. at 8,000 ft. with a cruising speed of 220 m.p.h. at 75 per cent power at the same altitude. Fully loaded, the landing speed of this ship is 60 m.p.h. while its rate of climb at 8,000 ft. is 2,100 f.p.m. Using this same altitude for further tests, the ship's range, using 75 per cent power, was found to be 770 miles. However, by using only 50 per cent power the range is increased to 1,070 miles. Service ceiling is 28,000 feet, absolute ceiling between 30,000 and 31,000 feet. These figures were obtained with the ship using a 750 h.p. 14 cylinder Pratt & Whitney *Twin Wasp Junior* engine.

Though U. S. military forces have no particular need for this ship at present, there is urgent need for a rugged, high-speed airplane of this type elsewhere in the world. Hence, as an export model, the ship should prove a good seller. China, for instance, is in need of a fighting plane like this at present. That nation's air force is made up mostly of a conglomeration of many types of obsolete aircraft. Against modern Japanese equipment Chinese airmen are comparatively impotent. Other of the smaller nations also might well invest in modern equipment like the V-143.

Normal armament on this ship includes two .30 caliber machine guns that fire through the propeller arc. Two .50 caliber guns may be substituted. In addition, the V-143 can carry 300 lbs. of bombs on two external racks mounted under the wings.

The V-143 is metal throughout. The covering, with the exception of the fabric-covered control surfaces, also is metal. A metal controllable-pitch propeller is standard equipment, although increased performance can be obtained through the substitution of a constant-speed propeller.



An outstanding feature of the V-143 is its simple, rugged landing gear. Note wheel wells in the wing.