

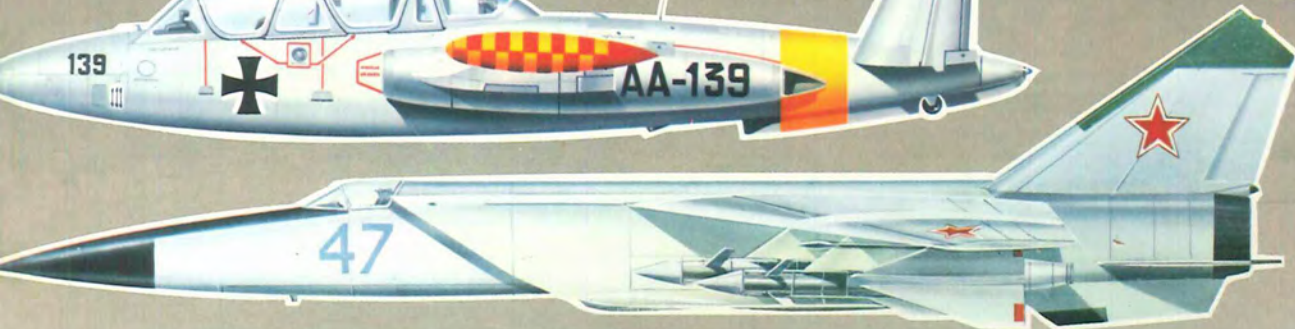
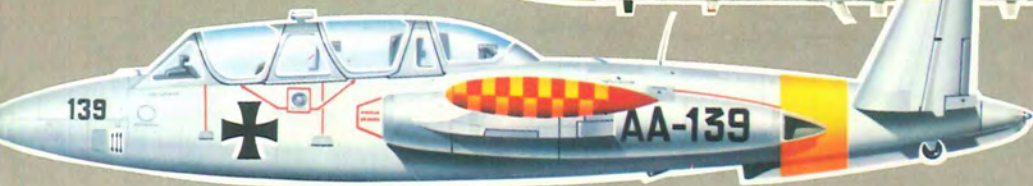
The Illustrated Encyclopedia of the World's

MODERN MILITARY AIRCRAFT

A technical directory of today's major warplanes



Bill Gunston



A Salamander Book Author's Acknowledgements

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I am grateful to Salamander for the opportunity to do this book. There are many books—as there have been since about 1920—with titles similar to this; but I believe this is the first to have colour photography from beginning to end. This is partly the luck of timing, in that such pictures now exist. An equally important factor is the publisher's unrivalled expertise in managing to put together a package which is truly a Rolls-Royce, but at the price of a Mini.

As the author I would like to play down my own part. There is no great kudos in writing a book of this kind, though the grey stuff that goes round the illustrations certainly merits the space it occupies. The real effort lies in collecting the pictures. Editor Ray Bonds and his team have worked in a way that has never been surpassed in book production, and their success can be judged by simply looking at the book. I am sad that in a very few cases incessant bombardment by letter, Telex and telephone still failed to prise loose the pictures that had been promised months earlier.

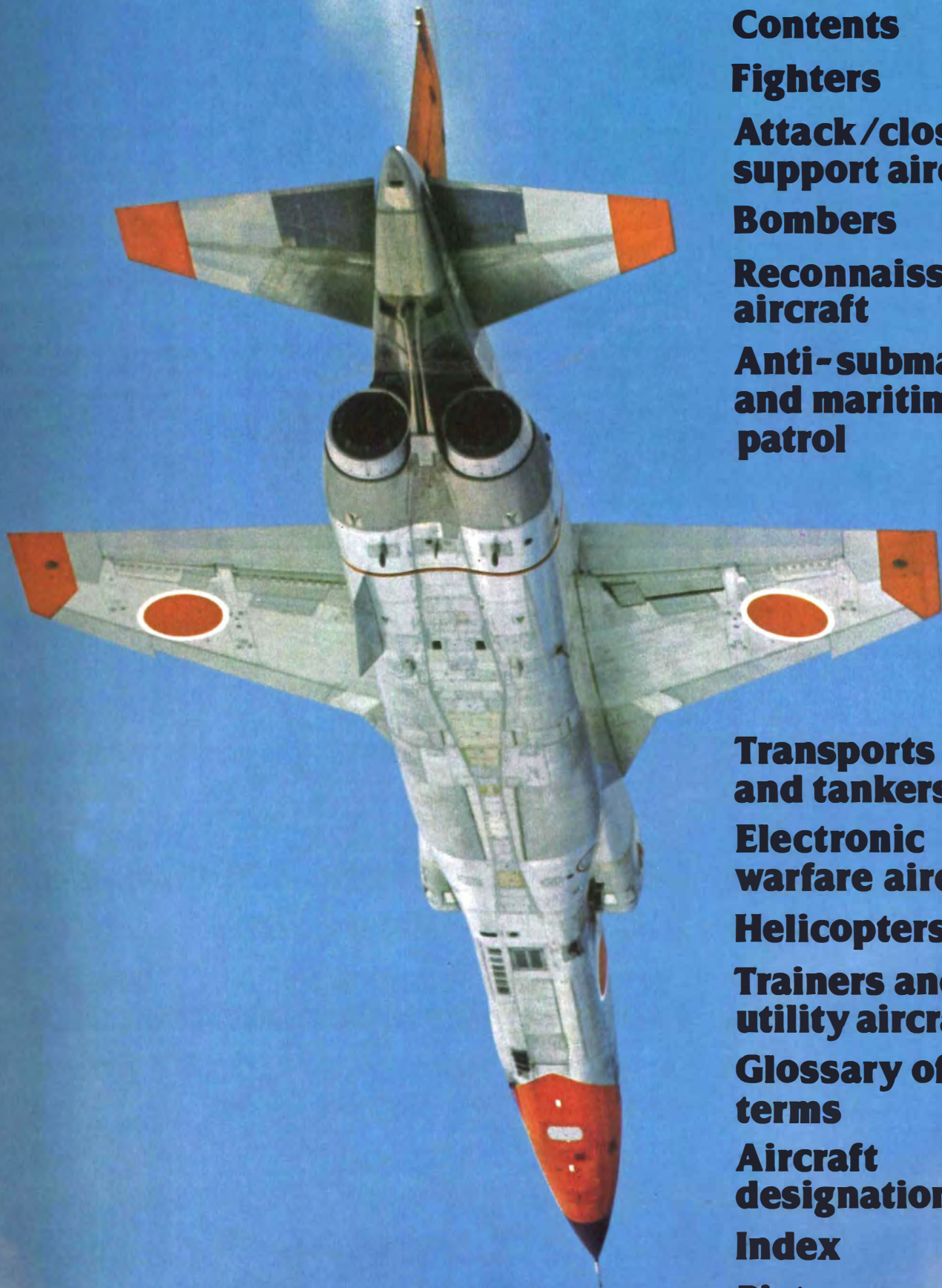
It will be obvious that we have tended to choose dramatic pictures showing aircraft blasting off in fire and smoke. Such choices must always be a matter for subjective judgement. Some readers might prefer a pin-

sharp picture of the aircraft on the ground, while a few would prefer a set of engineering drawings. Our objective is to entertain, and give readers a feel for the subject, so that they can almost hear the thunder of afterburners and feel the g in a turn. And for those unfamiliar with g there is a glossary at the back.

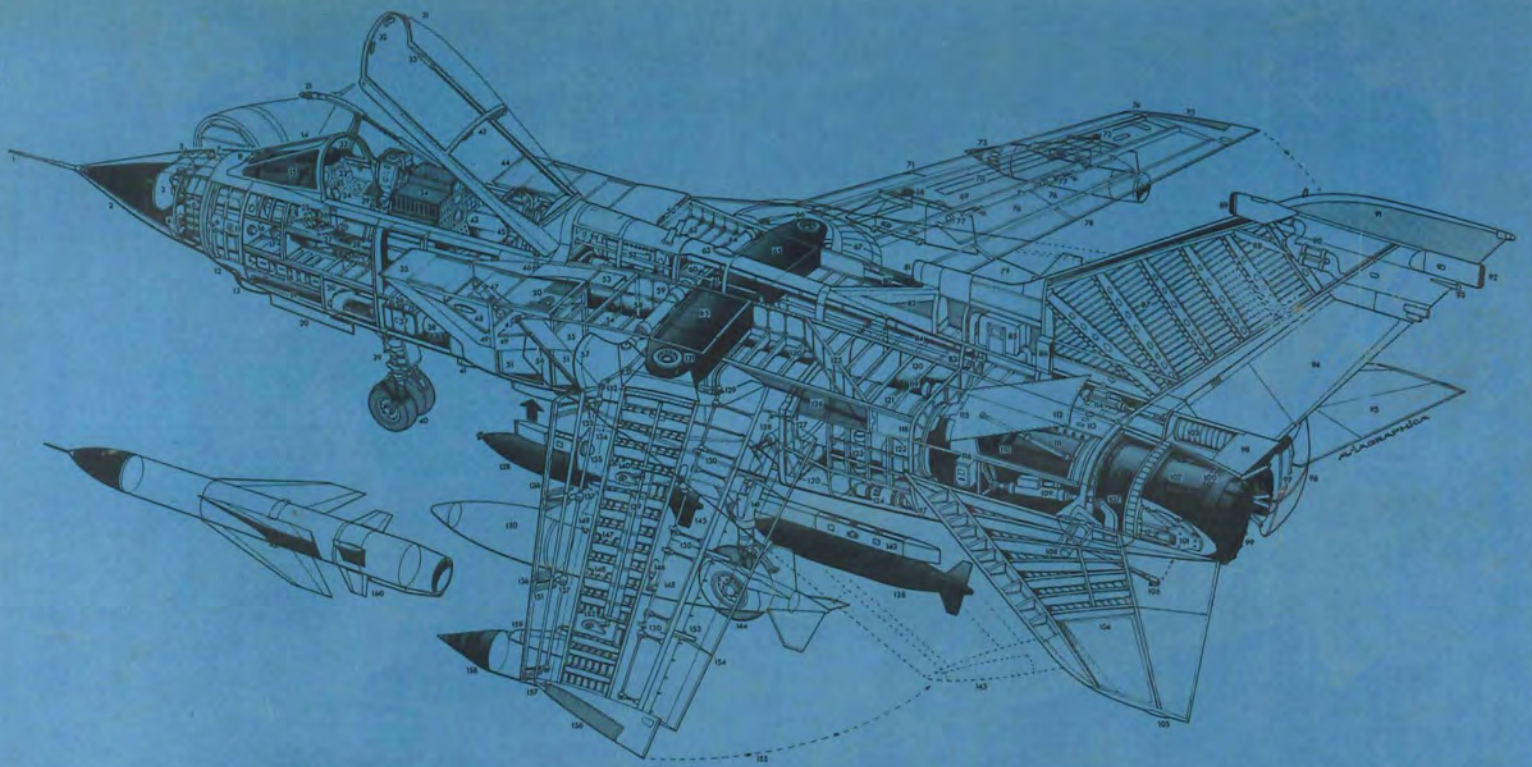
Obviously there are several ways of arranging *Modern Military Aircraft*. The contents could be in rigorous alphabetical order, or arranged by country of origin. We have chosen to divide the contents into 'chapters' by function. The names of these duties—such as 'Fighter' or 'Attack/close support'—are not puzzling, but several aircraft were hard to fit into rigid slots. The Il-28, an old bomber, is today used chiefly as a trainer, while the main role of many A-3 Skywarriors is electronic warfare. Each basic type appears once only, so that all Canberras and B-57s appear together, as do the Intruders and Prowler. The main exception is the Boeing KC-135/707, whose complex descendent the E-3A AWACS insisted on separate treatment. For unavoidable reasons, dictated by the space needed for each entry, the alphabetical order within 'chapters' is not absolutely rigid.

Bill Gunston





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A magnificent, colourful encyclopedia detailing the most important combat aircraft in service today.

More than 210 warplanes, plus variants, are described in 150,000 words of text and data.

Over 340 close-up photographs, most in colour, show the aircraft in action.

24 highly detailed cutaway drawings, 132 colour profile drawings plus over 200 technical three-view diagrams illustrate every facet of these dynamic aircraft.

