

JAN 23/97 Put that out

Re Ron Haggart's letter on the Avro Arrow (Jan. 18):

I agree with all his comments, but one glaring error has been omitted: The "fictional engineer" portrayed by Sara Botsford should not have been *smoking* in the hangar with the Arrow.

George Hansen, Scarborough, Ont.

Re The Myth Of Broken Arrow, by J. L. Granatstein (Jan. 11):

He must be right. The Arrow program wasn't so great. Just as it is today, our support of innovative technical enterprises was a waste of money and bound for failure and had to be cancelled. And we probably didn't lose much when all those nerdy engineers headed south to fuel the U.S. space and defence industries.

He is right about marketing as well, there weren't dozens of orders for the plane. Needless to say, to market an aircraft takes many years of effort to build an order book.

What an effete, academic analysis of a Canadian tragedy. I'm glad Mr. Granatstein is a fellow at the Canadian Institute of International Affairs and not running a business.

But we do have our big U.S. branch plants to be proud of! What great Canadian success stories.

Michael M. Boyd, Etobicoke, Ont.

In the "fire storm of controversy" which has come to life again through the CBC mini-series *The Arrow*, a number of questions remain unasked:

Why is a private-profit, military-industrial project costing the equivalent of billions of today's dollars of taxpayers' money glorified as "a story of patriotic pride" when Canadians generally abhor such vast expenditures on military-industrial idols south of the border?

Why was the corporate interlock of the Avro Arrow project with the military-aircraft manufacturer, Hawker Siddeley of Britain, never mentioned, although Crawford Gordon reported to Hawker Siddeley's chairman of the board, Sir Roy Dobson?

Were Canadian taxpayers, in fact, footing the bill for the very high development costs of a nuclear-tipped fighter plane for a foreign transnational corporation which was seeking a larger market share of the heating-up arms race?

Why does no one connect the very large sums of public money devoted to subsidizing foreign military-industrial corporations to the very same pattern paid for by Canadian taxpayers today, such as the \$147-million handout to U.S. Pratt and Whitney by Canada's "debt-fighting" Minister of Finance in January of this year? (Pratt And Whitney Gets Federal Handout — Jan. 10).

Why does "the eviscerated CBC" devote large sums of its very short funds to a glorification of the transnational arms race at Canadian taxpayers' expense when there are truly heroic and creative publicly funded enterprises in Canada's recent history which have been far more harmfully dismantled by federal government politics?

The Avro Arrow story may be a symbol of something gone systemically wrong in Canada's political culture. But the problem is

RL 893-1997

The Globe and Mail, Saturday, January 18,

Avro Arrow

Although I was tremendously impressed by the CBC-TV mini-series, *The Arrow* — probably the best popular summary of the case yet done — there are a few matters which should be put on the record:

An air force officer salutes while hatless. Canadian military personnel don't do that (the same error occurred in the CBC's Louis Riel series).

And the RCAF officer gives a U.S. salute, with palm parallel to the ground. Canadian officers don't salute that way.

At the rolling-out ceremony for the first Arrow, the minister of defence is introduced as "the Honourable George R. Parks." The man's name (spelled Pearkes) was pronounced Perks. He was a genuine war hero; how quickly we forget.

When the Arrow first flies, an escorting pilot has a "mini-cam" mounted on his helmet. No such miniaturized equipment for capturing moving images on film or tape existed in 1957.

When the Arrow first flies, its undercarriage remains extended for a very long time, too long in my opinion. And I rather doubt that officers of so junior a rank as a U.S. colonel and a Canadian flight lieutenant would be talking to prime ministers and other top-ranking officials.

Still, the technical and political details, and the strategic considerations, were handled with great skill; a fine example of popular history.

Ron Haggart, Toronto

vancouver

Every cloud. . .

May I have the last word on the Avro Arrow?

Brilliant plane. My father was one of the design engineers, and it broke his heart when former prime minister John Diefenbaker cancelled it.

But we moved to Boston, where I met Diane. We celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary in September.

Thanks, Dief.

Don Whiteley, North Vancouver

JAN 25/97