

2 April 1959

Air Chief Marshal Sir Thomas G. Pike,
A.O.C. -in-C, K.C.B., C.B.E., D.F.C. and Bar,
R.A.F. Fighter Command,
Bentley Priory,
Stanmore, Middlesex,
ENGLAND.

Dear Tom,

I am sure that you will have followed the events in Canada over the last few weeks, and must know how disappointed we all are at the way the final decision went. It begins to appear that the politicians are now ruling the roost, with the Services taking a very second place. It has, naturally, affected us to a very great extent, and I have lost approximately 75% of my engineering staff, however, we do have some interesting projects coming along, and intend to stay in the development business, if humanly possible.

Our Air Force and the Government have still not made up their minds on what to do with the five Arrows that were flying, and the five that were being prepared for the flight test program. However, it occurred to me that they might be useful in the research work which is going on in the U.K. on a Mach 2 supersonic transport, since, with their large armament bay, they would be a perfect laboratory for equipment testing, and, at the same time, would be useful in the simulation of airport approach and take-off for ground control, etc.

I have written to George Gardner to see what he thinks about this idea, since it would appear to be a great pity to have these aircraft, which have behaved themselves so well, just ground into the dust, when they might be usefully used on some such research program to great effect. To my knowledge, there is nothing approaching their performance and capacity available for this purpose at the present time.

I wondered what you, personally, thought about the idea. The request, of course, would have to be made on a government-to-government basis, and time is extremely short, since our Department of Defence Production are now formulating their policy for disposition of these aircraft.

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Incidentally, Sir Roy has asked me to take a position in the U.K., and I am in the process at the moment of trying to decide just what to do, however, we are most anxious that there be no discussion of the possibility of my going to the U.K. at this time, because of the effect that it might have on our programs at this end. I just mention it on a personal basis, since, when I was at your house in October, Lady Pike discussed the possibility of exchanging our teen aged boys for the summer so that they may get a better appreciation of our two countries, and I promised to write closer to the summer holidays and try to arrange this. Unfortunately, the uncertainty with regard to my future moves makes it difficult to arrange anything at this time, but I will try to keep you posted on the decisions that may come out over the next few weeks.

Please give my regards to Lady Pike. I will be over in June and hope to have the opportunity for a quiet chat with you at that time.

Kindest regards,

Sincerely,

 J.C. Floyd.

J.C. Floyd,
Vice-President, Engineering

JCF-kas