

Readers' Views on Arrow and Defense

I am writing to express my admiration for the courageous action of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker in making a politically unpopular decision with regard to the Avro Arrow. The decision made was undoubtedly the correct one, and the Prime Minister must have realized that he would lose many votes in the Toronto area.

Downsview.

Dennis C. Ord.

If your paper really had any guts, you would call for an immediate cancellation of all defense plans. We have no enemies now, and let us not make any. Canada should try to cultivate the best that Communism and capitalism have to offer and should adopt a role of neutral mediator. This would be more to her credit than any aircraft or missile which she may produce.

Hamilton.

Ralph A. Giacomelli.

I am disgusted at the childish, pass-the-buck attitude of Avro. They made a noisy grandstand play in dismissing their 14,000 employees, after knowing for months that the Arrow had to be scrapped—and why not? What are we to do with a billion-dollar, outdated craft on its completion—frame it? Unemployment is a serious problem, but should we build a few more Burlington Skyways to counteract it? Let's try to be adult!

Three cheers for the Diefenbaker Government in making the right, if unpopular, decision, and being men enough to stand behind it. You will note the Opposition carefully sized up public reaction before screaming non-confidence.

Toronto.

(Mrs.) G. C. O'Reilly.

By their "sell-out" to the United States in the matter of defense, by probably going against the wishes of the country in not producing the Arrow, and certainly in no way fulfilling their election promises, I submit that this Government and the Prime Minister should be forced to hold another election so that the conduct of these so-called representatives of the people can be judged by the people on their record over the past year.

This action could not fail to have a beneficial effect on the nation, in that it would undoubtedly reduce the ridiculous lack of balance between the two sides of the House, under which the two-party system of government cannot possibly work effectively, and democracy becomes an autocracy, or near-dictatorship. "It does not matter what you say, because we shall out-vote you anyway," was a comment recently made in the House. Need one say more? I submit that John Diefenbaker should resign forthwith.

Port Credit.

A. C. Smith.

As a faithful reader of your paper, I cannot but express my disappointment at your editorial, The Beginning—and the End. Surely you must have known that the Government gave Avro a warning as regards the fate of the Arrow as long ago as September last, and it was up to Avro management to readjust its production program to a potential emergency. Its failure to do so proves blatant inefficiency and irresponsibility toward their 14,000 employees.

However, I see it as a case of determined opposition to Government policy and as a "tour de force" on the part of the Avro management. Being now confronted with the Government's irrevocable decision, the bad loser makes one final move, a gesture of "I'll show you," and dismisses 14,000 workers at a moment's notice, knowing full well that by its doing so the full blame for it will fall on the Government. It is not only a case of "embarrassing the Government" (as Mr. Diefenbaker put it), it is a case of calculatingly discrediting a Government that so far has done its best to tackle a cumbersome inheritance from its predecessor.

Toronto.

Rika Dee.

There are now several steps to be taken if we are to counteract the disastrous mistakes of the past: 1. Avro must revive the Jetliner program, and so save for Canada "the brilliant array of engineering and technical talent which built up this great Canadian (aircraft) industry", to use the words of Saturday's

front page editorial. 2. The Federal Government must sponsor this program for as long as is necessary to provide for Canada an industry producing aircraft for competitive, long-run commercial service, as an investment in the future of our nation. 3. The engineering profession and unions involved must agree to a substantial reduction in pay as a demonstration of faith in the wisdom of the Federal Government in dropping military aircraft, and in the future of this country.

The first result of such steps would be a brighter employment picture for the thousands of people immediately involved. This could be also a constructive move in halting the present inflationary trend, and it's possible other unions could be persuaded to follow suit. Definitely, our place as a nation striving for the preservation of peace would be maintained in the eyes of the whole world. Let's start planning for the future, which, with our wealth and resources, is surely ours.

Toronto.

(Mrs.) Charles Norman.

The economic necessity of scrapping the supersonic Avro Arrow admittedly was, for some 17,000 employees, a tragedy; but for 17 million Canadians, relief from over-ambitious spending of the taxpayers' money. The latter, I think, was one of the election promises of the new Federal Government. It was a courageous decision, and, no doubt, weighing heavily in the balance, was the great loss it would mean to the Revenue Department, in both corporation and personal income tax. Nevertheless, the Diefenbaker Government was elected to legislate on behalf of all Canadians—all 17 million, not just a few thousand.

Tuesday's local press reported a charge that the Government had failed to live up to election promises. Mr. Jacobs, Hamilton President of the American Federation of Technical Engineers, speaking on behalf of only 700 members, has sent telegrams out, condemning the Government's action, and even urging the party members to "use every method" to call the Government to task . . . and even overthrow the Government if possible!

Who is this fellow? Who has given him the right to speak for me? By what privilege does he usurp the rights of my elected representative in Parliament? Do American federations now dictate Canadian policy? Does a little band of 700 pretend to be a majority of Canadians? Mr. Jacobs' suggestion of another costly election does not offer relief from reckless spending of the taxpayers' money, a promise Mr. Diefenbaker is trying to fulfil.

The only way to counteract such minority lobbying is for thinking Canadians to send a few telegrams of congratulation to a Government capable of making such courageous decisions for the good of all Canadians.

Hamilton.

G. Hall.

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