

# Current & Candid

by Veni Vidi

Production sharing. It's a nice friendly phrase isn't it? Paints a picture of people working together to achieve a common aim. Shoulder to shoulder, united we stand, and all that sort of stuff. In fact one of the best examples of togetherness — if it means anything like it is reported to mean.

Now if things really work out the way Ottawa would have us believe they will, this whole matter of defense production sharing certainly has its advantages.

But this observer is not impressed. And it seems that right now would be a first-class time for both the aviation industry and Ottawa to face up to a few painful realities.

For the last fifteen years or so we in Canada — aided and abetted by our press — have been indulging in a remarkable glow of self satisfaction. And nowhere was this more noticeable than in the aviation industry. We proved to our own satisfaction that we could produce aircraft, engines, electronic equipment and the like, every bit as good as anyone else's.

The Americans — always warm and quick to praise anyway — were ready to say nice things when they came to call. And I don't doubt they were genuinely impressed to find how well we were doing.

But the fact remains that in U. S. eyes we are still small potatoes industrially and militarily. And that, difficult as it may be to face, is a factor that must color any Washington thinking on the matter of production sharing. After all defense is a crucial matter. It must be as effective as possible. And, nearly as important, it must offer a return on the dollars spent that profits the economy as much as possible.

With that background, I put it to our dreamers that it is the worst kind of optimism to expect that Washington will ever allow Canada to take on any of the more ambitious or rewarding defense projects.

If they are vital, then in American eyes they must be handled by loyal and proven concerns that have served the U. S. military for years. If they are rich in employment and earnings then political pressures to keep them in the States will be enough to melt any other consideration.

The best we can hope for is the role of a minor subcontractor. We may get a bit of this and a little of that. And even these contracts can be expected to fade and disappear quickly should the U. S. face another business recession.

I don't doubt we will get some business if we fight hard for it. But anyone in Canada who sees in the promise of shared production a never ending series of easily-come-by orders is in for an awful shock. It certainly won't replace the sort of home orders the industry has thrived on over the last fifteen years.

## Readers' Reaction

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### Fate of the Arrows

The Editor,  
Canadian Aviation.

Sir,

According to a report in a Toronto newspaper recently, the existing Avro Arrows are being broken up for scrap. This may seem a logical thing to do with the abandoned aircraft, but to me the waste seems criminal. I very much doubt that the parts removed from the airframes would ever be put to good use again—or that their salvage value is very high. Wouldn't it be very much better to offer these historic aircraft to the various museums, in the hope that at least one of them might be preserved for posterity?

Ex-Avro-ite.

(name and address supplied)

The Editor

Sir,

I wonder if it would not be possible, now that the Arrow program has lost all other potential, to restore the feeling of intense pride Canadians once held in their aviation industry, and to salvage a welcome portion of the aeronautical prestige in which Canada once basked.

It is a generally conceded fact that if unleashed, it would be all in a day's work for Avro RL-206 Arrow to walk away with a substantial collection of aircraft performance records.

Why not complete the almost-finished No. 6 — with public-donated funds? Why not bring to Canada the slew of records the Arrow is capable of bringing — with public-donated funds? Why not prove false the government statements on the Arrow's performance — with public-donated funds?

Surely there is someone, somewhere, who is capable of either condemning this proposal as foolhardy or carrying it through to success. Let's start the ball rolling before Uncle Dief makes absolutely certain Canada will never know how potent a defense she almost had by not only grounding the evidence, but by destroying it.

R. W. Dickey,  
Callander, Ont.

(Canadian Aviation is advised by the Minister of Defense Production, the Hon. Raymond O'Hurley, that the seven planes that were in varying stages of construction would be broken up eventually. No decision had been made with regard to the five finished Arrows.—Ed.)