

editorial

A Clean Slate, A New Start!

For the past several weeks workmen at the Avro Aircraft plant in Malton have been engaged in a trying but inevitable task: The physical killing of the CF-105 Arrow project.

At time of writing, airframes which stood at various stages of completion on the production line had already been dismantled and cut up. Of the six which were completed when Prime Minister Diefenbaker announced the government's decision to discontinue the program last February all but two had had salvageable systems and components removed and have fallen to the cutters' torches. The remaining two were in the process of being stripped in preparation for break-up.

As we said, a trying task for workmen who once viewed the Arrow as the culmination of their individual efforts and a pinnacle in achievement for the Canadian aviation industry.

It is indeed unfortunate that the Arrow program should die so ignominiously, and so completely, leaving no tangible evidence of the heights to which our industry struggled or of the peaks to which we aspired.

There is further cause for disappointment and chagrin in the thought of Arrow's contribution to our growing but still far from complete knowledge of

hypersonic flight disintegrating before the cutter's torch instead of being sacrificed, as it were, in the test to destruction chambers of aeronautical research.

It is almost as if having done with the Arrow, it had been decided to eliminate any vestige of evidence that the project ever existed.

It may be that this is the wise course.

We've made the break with our defence procurement system of the past. We're launched on a new regime. Let's start with a clean slate.

As far as the Arrow program is concerned the slate is certainly clean.

What is now desperately required are a few intelligent markings to indicate what direction the government intends that the industry move in maintaining Canada's defence commitments.

A growing number of the engineers and skilled personnel who managed to salvage jobs following the cut-off of the CF-105 program have now despaired of any early government decision as to employment of their talents. If the move of these key people to jobs outside the country continues at its present pace it is possible that at least a portion of the Canadian aviation industry's hard won capability will be irreparably damaged.

The Arrow and all it implies will then be legend only.