

Letter from C.D. Howe, Minister of Defence Production, to Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence re. apprehension over Arrow programme. [25](#)

PERSONAL

December 19th, 1952.

My dear Colleague,

Re - Estimates for 1953-54.

I understand that your Department is planning a substantial development programme for new supersonic jet engines and for a new fighter aircraft. .

Before authorizing these items, I think you should appreciate what has already been spent on the Orenda engine and on the CF-100 to date. I must say I am frightened for the first time in my defence production experience. I would urge that at least a year be allowed to pass before any further development work at Avro is undertaken, so that we can work out some kind of amortization of the figures on the enclosed sheet and without enlarging those figures further.

I must tell you that the design staff at Avro is far from competent to undertake work of this importance. Their designing record to date is very bad indeed, measured by any standard. If we must have further development work, let us contract it with a British firm which has the personnel, equipment and experience that qualifies them to do work of this kind. Someone so equipped, can do the work for a fraction of the cost involved in making the attempt at A. V. Roe.

I hope you will give serious consideration to the dangers inherent in worsening our financial position at A.V. Roe and issue a directive accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

Honourable Brooke Claxton,  
Minister of National Defence,  
OTTAWA.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY  
G. D. HOWE