



October 4, 1957 – sleek and shiny, the first Arrow rolled onto a runway at Malton, Ont. That same day, Russia launched her first Sputnik.



March 25, 1958 – a time of triumph for test pilot Jan Zurakowski, after the Arrow's first flight. It could soar at 1,000 miles per hour.

The 'Arrow' that fell

Seven years later, at the greatest moment in the whole history of Canadian technology, we did it again. This time, the victim was the Canadian jet fighter plane, the powerful *Arrow*. On March 25, 1958, with Avro's chief development pilot Jan Zurakowski at the controls, the CF105 *Arrow* flew for the first time. The aircraft was magnificent, taking off and landing without a hitch.

After all the heartbreaking difficulties and obstacles that had been overcome, Avro's 14,000 men and women took it – as well they might – as a personal triumph. Morale was high and it looked as if, for the first time, Canada was going to make a lasting mark on world technology and get credit for it.

Then, at 4 p.m. on September 24, 1958, Prime Minister John Diefenbaker suddenly announced that the *Arrow* programme was cancelled. Avro president Crawford Gordon announced over the public-address system that afternoon that Avro's 14,000 people were now unemployed. Canada lost a priceless pool of talent as nearly all the technical staff quickly got jobs in the U.S.

Six of the jobless engineers stayed in Canada, however, and formed Avian Aircraft Limited, of Georgetown, Ontario. After overcoming initial technical and financial disasters, they got their "gyroplane" into the air in 1962. This is a vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) aircraft that can make a sudden 30-foot jump from the ground and then fly away. This enables it to land in, or take off from, a parking lot.