

# PLANE PATTTER

by *Ernie Humphill*



The Conservative government, or more particularly its strong-willed leader, has demonstrated in no uncertain terms the courage of his convictions.

The government's military advisors are persuaded that at the going price the Arrow is not a suitable weapon for current defense, and on this advice the Prime Minister and his cabinet colleagues have now acted in what they feel is the best interests of the nation. This vigorous manifestation of the ability to move swiftly and effectively to guard the interests of the taxpayer will be well received by the Canadian people.

There will be a few citizens, however, rather jaded individuals perhaps, who will wonder in what manner the situation has altered from last September to warrant such strong measures at this time.

Has the government at last been able to resolve its defense dilemma and come up with an over-all, long-term plan for future military requirements which will permit our defense industry to do some sound market forecasting and tailor its productive capacity accordingly?

The next few days should tell; but right now, we have to go to press.

Not to be outdone by the government in this matter of strong will and decisive action, the management of Avro Aircraft and Orenda Engines also demonstrated their ability to move quickly in an emergency. In a matter of hours after the Prime Minister's announcement to Parliament that the Arrow was cancelled, both companies had taken the steps necessary to protect their interests — which in this instance was to prevent any undue drain on the capital of an organization which for the moment at least had no prospect of sizeable revenue.

Once again, there are those who will be able to admire this evidence of sound business sense and the courage to do something about it, but who will not be able to reconcile this with the rather risky policy committing almost an entire organization of the magnitude of Avro and Orenda to a single defense project without some sort of a back-up buffer.

But these doubts and misgivings, in both instances, are only random thoughts.

Not to worry! Canada's government of the day has vigorous leadership, capable of immediate action once all the facts are in. And Canadian businessmen are sound and efficient executives who will protect our investments.

All of which is small consolation to the more than 14,000 residents of the Toronto area who have now joined the ranks of the unemployed.

## Readers' Reaction

Buy Canadian

Toronto, Ont.

Editor,  
Canadian Aviation.

Canada is a fine country. Canadians are fine people. But why don't they get smart?

I have sat back and watched the degeneration of the aviation industry for most of my two years in Canada. Sat back because, like most other individuals, I feel that I lack the power to sway public opinion to the point of influencing the government.

Your magazine has done much in its attempts to bring home the facts in the Avro Arrow situation, and credit is due for that. But there are other aspects which have not been fully covered.

First, there was the Avro Jetliner. A good deal before my time in Canada, but it seems to me that here was an opportunity for Canada to get in at the birth of the jet transport age. From what I am told no doubt a good deal of further development would have been necessary to lick the aircraft into airline shape. This is where Trans-Canada Airlines—the state-operated airline—should have come in.

Given the support and co-operation of the government and TCA, I am confident that the Jetliner would have been successful. By now it would have been flying, not just in Canada, but all around the world, with a great many carriers.

It's just possible, and even probable, that the Jetliner might have avoided the major setbacks that beset the Comet. Yet it is the Comet that now, almost 10 years later, is in airline service having won the distinction of being the first jet to fly passengers commercially across the Atlantic.

Having sidestepped the Jetliner, TCA has ordered Douglas DC-8's. Since there is now no Canadian-built aircraft to compare with it, I can find no argument with this decision. But TCA is also buying turboprops — 20 of the new Vickers Vikings are on order.

The Vanguard was chosen despite strong representations by Canadair Ltd. to sell the Canadian airline their version of the Bristol Britannia, the Canadian-built CL-44C. Though not on all fours with the Vanguard, the CL-44C would probably do the job just as well. It now has exactly the same powerplants and its makers are claiming a seat-mile cost as low as that of the extremely worthy Vanguard.

TCA is not alone. Canadian Pacific Airlines has bought Bristol Britannias, Quebecair has bought F-27 Friendships (though admittedly there was no Canadian-built substitute for the latter available at the time of purchase).

But Canadair's salesmen are now out with their order books looking for buyers

(Continued on page 80)



# Current & Candid

by Veni Vidi

Toward the end of this month we face our annual national dose of reality—the Federal budget. It nearly always means bad news for each and every taxpayer.

All indications are that this year will be no different. But we of the aviation fraternity, and particularly the plane and engine makers, can look forward to particularly glum news.

*The facts of the matter are clear enough. As a nation we are spending too much. By this time next year, we are cheerfully assured, we will be \$700 million in the red. There are plenty of financially sound reasons why this should be so—at least they make good enough sense to our present Minister of Finance.*

Deficit financing has its strong supporters—and some bitter enemies. It is not within the scope of this column to attempt to pass judgment on the matter. Enough to say the Government faces two simple alternatives, either to spend less or earn more.

Earning more involves upping personal and corporate taxes. That's hard medicine to take, and—politically speaking—even harder to dish out.

So the other alternative becomes increasingly attractive. Spend less and the problem becomes at once less acute. But where can spending be cut? There are major capital expenses to face up to, and the "welfare state" is pretty well accepted as a necessity.

Defense expenditures must come up for consideration. They are unpopular and full of problems. No peacetime government can spend enough to secure absolute defense. To the average voter and taxpayer the return of such spending seems lean and rather pointless.

With that in mind the Cabinet cannot pass up the glowing prospect of cutting down the defense bill.

*If reduced defense spending leads to a marked reduction in defense efficiency, the situation is critical indeed. I am sure there will be a tendency on the part of some aircraft makers to jump into the fray with that charge.*

*But perhaps that isn't the whole story. Is there no room for economy in our industry? Has the concept of "buy Canadian" been carried too far?*

The recent demise of the Arrow is sad. It's a bad thing for national morale. It has yet to be proved, though, that with the Arrow canceled, our effective air defense will actually suffer.

In the meantime, Avro should not be blamed for spending fortunes in its development: The company was doing what the Government told it to do. Nor should other firms that waxed prosperous on mountainous helpings of government spending face any moral criticism. That was the order of the day.

Now, though, the orders seem to be changing. Our defense bill is just too high for a country unwilling to shed its high standard of living.

The aircraft business has no divine right to tax dollars. In the current climate, then, the industry's urgent duty is to look for a way to deliver the goods at minimum cost.

I know it's not popular to say, but I wonder if our industry won't find it can produce almost as much for less money if we examine our present way of doing things closely enough.

## Readers' Reaction

(Continued from page 78)

for the Canadian-built 540, which will have two Eland turboprops. Really, with the events of the past haunting them I wonder they have the courage to leave the office.

The problem goes beyond the mere decision to buy Canadian.

Canada has to work hard at not being a military and economic satellite of the United States. I don't know whether it is even worth it.

The way we have it rigged now, we in Canada are paid lower wages with which to buy U. S. goods at higher prices than those paid by more highly paid U. S. workers. Do we think we are going to make any headway like this?

Surviving economically is going to be expensive to the Canadian taxpayer and wage-earner, unless Canada — and I mean the government and the people — get the buy-Canadian habit.

Perplexed.

### Historic Bleriot

Montreal, Que.

Editor,  
Canadian Aviation.

Dear Sir:

I understand from the letter of Mr. Fogden on page 86 of your February issue that Frank Ellis is looking for information concerning a Bleriot trainer which was once located in Montreal.

I can help a little along the line, but do not know where it is at present.

In the early 1930s this machine was in the hangar of the Franco-Canadian Aviation Co. at Pointe-aux-Trembles, near Montreal. I believe the manager of the company, Commander Quedreu, moved it out to his farm on the Ottawa River near the Seigneurie Club.

It might be possible to locate his heirs through the French Consulate in Montreal and learn what happened to the Bleriot. There were several other old aircraft, which would now be museum pieces, in the collection.

The old Canadian Airways engine repair shops were across the road from the Franco-Canadian hangars and if any of their personnel should be available, particularly Mr. F. McClellan or Jim Hertle, further information might be forthcoming.

Possibly Mr. Emile Patrault, Superintendent of Maintenance for TCA at the Malton Airport could be of some assistance.

I have been in aviation since 1910, so please do not hesitate to contact me any time regarding old timers and their aircraft.

Sincerely,  
Eric S. Neal,  
6696 de Normanville, Apt. 12,  
Montreal 10, Que.