

Arrow Cancellation 'Colossal Blunder' Labor Chiefs Charge

By MURRAY GOLDBLATT

Labor leaders today branded the Diefenbaker administration's scrapping of the Avro Arrow program as a "colossal blunder" which will wreck Canada's aircraft industry.

Union spokesmen focussed their attack on the fact Prime Minister Diefenbaker offered no alternative plan for employing the 13,800 Malton employees laid off yesterday by A. V. Roe.

"This decision is economically wrong, morally wrong and politically stupid," declared Dennis McDermott, United Auto Workers' international representative and executive member of the UAW-Machinist Aircraft and Guided Missile Council of Canada.

Douglas Hamilton, Ontario Federation of Labor secretary-treasurer, said the Malton workers "are being treated like cattle."

Mr. McDermott said it made a mockery of Mr. Diefenbaker's election "crusade" for Canadian development.

Claude Jodoin, president of the Canadian Labor Congress, said the decision was a "tragic blow" for thousands of aircraft workers and threatened to destroy the core of skilled workers "which could mean so much to the nation's future development."

Pete Podger, business representative for the International Association of Machinists representing four locals of Avro and Orenda engine workers, charged Mr. Diefenbaker had "sold out the Canadian aircraft industry."

The cancellation "violated the very platform of national development that the prime minister ran on," he said.

"Badly Managed"

Mr. Podger said the government had given no reply to union requests for a three-way conference of labor, management and Ottawa officials to cushion the shock of any cut-back or cancellation of the Arrow program.

The OFL's Mr. Hamilton, who pointed out that he was in no position to assess the

technical aspects of the Arrow decision, said the move was "badly managed."

"We've spent years bringing in highly skilled people to build up an aircraft industry—and now without any thought or planning whatsoever, the government has shut the door and cut them off from employment," rapped Mr. Hamilton.

The OFL spokesman said Mr. Diefenbaker during his campaigns had pressed for reduction in purchase of U.S.-made products.

"Why not see that the missiles they're now ordering in the U.S. are made here? We have the plant facilities at Malton every bit as good as any in California, I'll venture," said Mr. Hamilton.

He felt the sudden lay-off left the employees "caught in a squeeze play between this company and the federal government. Both A. V. Roe and the company had plenty of time to do something "concrete" about the situation but didn't.

The UAW's Mr. McDermott said his union had already been affected by the Avro layoffs. Between 50 and 65 UAW workers at Garratt Aircraft Ltd., Malton, an Avro supplier, were laid off.

Others will be affected at Toronto's York Gears Ltd., he said.

Like Begging Dog

The decision had thrown another 5,000 workers in UAW-organized aircraft plants into a state of anxiety since the Avro cancellation represented "a vote of non-confidence" in the industry.

Mr. McDermott lashed out at A. V. Roe as well. The company should not be allowed "to pull up its tents and steal away." It had a responsibility to supply some alternative and severance pay to the jobless, he felt.

He criticized Mr. Diefenbaker for being "far more subservient" to U.S. interests than the Liberals. "This man set himself up as a crusader for Canadian development but now he talks about getting a share of U.S. orders like a little dog begging for a bone," he charged.

ARROW DEATH IS SELL-OUT TO YANKS--CCF

The sudden death of the Arrow program was labelled "a complete sell-out to American defence policy" and the present government was compared to the Bennett regime in a telegram sent to Prime Minister Diefenbaker by the Toronto and District CCF council last night.

Signed by council president Francis K. Eady and approved by the annual meeting, the CCF wire said the decision made "nonsense of former Tory Canada first statements" and promises to stop unemployment. "It makes Canada even more dependent on U.S. defence policy," the wire said.

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Aviation authorities pointed out that Monday, the day Avro plants will probably be nearly empty, marks the 50th anniversary of the flight of the Silver Dart and Canada's embarking on the air age. And, they noted ironically, the Arrow represents the greatest air achievement of the nation's aircraft industry.

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