

Pilot Hopes Supersonic Tests To Be Carried Out With Arrows

Hope that the Government will decide to conduct supersonic flight research and use Avro Arrows for the job was expressed last night by Avro's chief test pilot, W. J. (Spud) Potocki.

Another Avro test pilot, Peter Cope, who gave up a job in England to come to Canada in 1951, termed the Government's decision to abandon the Arrow "an incredible loss to the Canadian aircraft industry."

"I feel that if we are going to lose this aircraft for defense, it would be desirable to at least keep it for research," said Mr. Potocki.

He said he believes it is the only plane that could provide Canada with much supersonic data. Britain is using planes slower than the Arrow for supersonic studies.

Mr. Potocki was in Centralia where he delivered a talk on the Arrow to RCAF officers. The speech was arranged before Prime Minister Diefenbaker's announcement.

"I'm very upset that the Arrow has been scrapped as it was the most challenging aircraft of my life," said Mr. Potocki, who has flown more than 100 types of planes.

He has flown the Arrow about 30 times. An RAF veteran, he served five years at Farnborough in England.

Mr. Cope, a test pilot since

1946, said: "It's no exaggeration to say that the Arrow is the best plane I've ever flown. The manpower and the brainpower behind it are too great to be dismissed so easily. It took Avro 10 years to build it up and now this effort has been wiped out."

The way we're giving in to the Americans it looks as

though we might as well say that we're the 50th state.

"The day of the manned interceptor is a long way from being dead."

Don Rogers, Avro's flight operations manager, said he could not comment on the decision "as the company will have to spend the next few days sorting this thing out."

Editorial

The Beginning—and the End

This newspaper deeply regrets, as all Canadians must, their Government's decision to make an immediate end of the Avro Arrow and Iroquois engine development program. We regret that, in announcing the decision, Prime Minister Diefenbaker qualified what presumably was expert opinion on the future of manned interceptors such as the Arrow with a reference to "the huge sums which it is our duty to ask Parliament to provide for defense". This can be taken to mean the decision would not have been made but for Budgetary reasons. We regret the decision even more in view of the glowing (and richly deserved) tribute the Prime Minister paid to Avro's achievement in the development of this plane and its power plants.

We are in no position to judge the exact merits or life of the Arrow; on that subject, there is a welter of conflicting opinions. But this Canadian-developed airplane is not the important thing—it might as well have been a Canadian-developed locomotive or automobile. The important thing, the only important thing, is the future of the engineering, technical and research establishment that brought the Arrow into being.

That establishment was built up with great effort, at heavy expense, and over a long period of time. Outside of the troops we have stationed in Canada and in Western Europe (whose cost must be written off, like insurance premiums, as protection against something we hope will not happen), the engineering team that developed the Arrow is the only thing we can show for the \$15 billion which, over the last decade, Canada's taxpayers have paid out in the name of defense.

The public should recognize the peculiar nature of this establishment. It is very young, as industrial enterprises go, but its achievements—"outstanding achievements", said the Prime Minister—in a span of less than 10 years are a measure of its importance and significance to Canada. Its misfortune, perhaps, is that it was created to serve one customer—the Department of National Defense—although ultimately it would have grown, developed and diversified to serve Canadian industry everywhere.

Peculiar, too, was the establishment's function, which was not to manufacture products in the hope of peddling them to this and other Governments, but to design and manufacture defensive weapons to this Government's own specifications. Avro could, in its early and present stages, produce only as—and only what—Ottawa told it to produce. Hence the gravity of the situation in which it now finds itself.