

FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2009

The Way We Were ::: 1953 ::: CANADA



That's CRAWFORD GORDON (President, A.V. Roe) and FRED SMYE (Vice President, A.V. Roe) shaking hands with the men who were rolling THE FIRST CF-100 Mark IV Canuck off the line, in 1953. On time, and right on schedule.

What a difference two years made with Crawford at the helm.

The earlier CF-100s were delivered to the RCAF in 1951, two years late by that point, and structurally unsound. Shortly thereafter Crawford turned the whole lackluster enterprise around, commandeering Avro to become the 3rd largest company in Canada by 1955!

So when the tale of Canada is told...the story of Avro CANADA (A. V. Roe Canada) must be told, as well.

To Canadians.

Forget Louis Riel, who was only an insignificant dreamer. But, whom, my history teachers were absolutely mesmerized with back in the soulless high school years of the late 70s.

The esprit de corps at Avro Canada, and the aeronautical achievements at Avro and Orenda for Canadians, and by Canadians, in the 17 short years of her aviation related existence, were absolutely breathtaking for the outsider to behold. Employees were enthusiastic. And unquestionably devoted. As a collective they had that strong regard for the honour of their company. And their country.

Avro was the only place to be, in Canada, in the 50s.

But, let's not pretend. It'll will never happen again.

The little country that could.

Did. However briefly. And that's where it ends.

We will never again repeat the scope and diversity of those aviation technological achievements from such a united and singular industrial base.

Marvels, really—

In technology, and industrial amalgamation.

Avro Canada funded initially and exclusively by the Government of Canada...but moving toward a more public and commercial model of self-sufficiency, only to be ruined in the end.

The Jetliner, the CF-100, the Avrocar, the Orenda Iroquois, and the Arrow. And all that stuff on the drawing boards. Only far flung memories now.

So Avro Canada must always be remembered for lofty dreams, detailed planning and brilliant execution...but only, only—by those Canadians that matter.

"NEVER WAS" does acknowledge the commercial and technological success of Bombardier Aerospace Canada...but I've always been partial to military stuff.

Hey, I gave my heart to Avro.

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