

Readers' Views on the Arrow and Defense

It has been stated by Mr. Diefenbaker and Labor Minister Starr that almost all of the Avro workers can be gainfully employed immediately. If that is possible, then is it not possible to find immediate employment for the many thousands who are now unemployed throughout the rest of the country?

In a well-planned economy under a true democracy no able-bodied person in good health should be unemployed at any time. Under our present system we have nothing to look forward to but continued unemployment and, eventually, chaos.

Waterloo.

W. D. Pope.

One fact seems to be emerging from amid the confusion of statements made since A. V. Roe closed February 20. That fact is that no country (United States or Britain) is going to adopt a policy that will close factories at home in order to keep factories in Canada in business. The elected representatives of the American and British Governments cannot and will not authorize the purchase of Canadian products if such purchases mean unemployment for their constituents.

There is no simple or easy answer to this situation. But it would seem that the time has come for our elected representatives to start considering a policy that will not take jobs away from their constituents.

Whitby.

H. F. MacKay.

I left home as soon as I knew that there was no immediate prospect of further employment in Avro, and since coming here I have been thinking a good deal about what could be done to get the plant started again.

This is how I have figured it: The Arrow is a good plane. The Air Force approves of it and needs it. We need it for the defense of Canada now.

How to finance it? Let the unions step out of the picture. Let the Avro employees and the other estimated 10,000 interested workers in other shops contribute \$50 a month, let the subcontractors contribute something and between us we could finance the building of at least two planes a month.

Perhaps in a year's time something better will turn up; meanwhile, if we all put our shoulders to the wheel, this arrangement could tide us over. I know that I shall not go back to Avro again, but I hope with all my heart that someone will have the imagination to do this thing as I have outlined it to you.

Lake Worth, Florida. Arthur Williams.

I worked in the Canadian Aeroplanes Limited in Toronto during the First (so-called) World War. Like Avro, we knew that the contract could be cancelled at any time—just as Avro workers knew. We made good pay for those years—just as Avro workers did. We got laid off suddenly one day—just as Avro workers were, but we didn't make any big fuss about it as Avro workers are now doing with the help of various papers and citizenry.

We expected to get it any day and we weren't disappointed. Personally, I didn't spend every nickel I received and though I didn't get steady work again until November, 1919, my family didn't have to go on relief and were never in want.

I have very little sympathy with folk who, when they have the opportunity, will not prepare for that layoff which they must know is certain to come some time, sooner or later. They must have a big car, television, the latest in refrigerators and appliances of all sorts, and when payday comes around that pay cheque barely suffices to pay bills due. "There's summat up wi' summat," as the Yorkshire man says.

Durham, Ont.

Alfred V. Begbie.

As a New Canadian reading the average viewpoint on the Avro layoff, and also as an Englishman having experienced the evils of disarmament, may I question the wisdom of the Government in cancelling the production of manned interceptor aircraft. To disarm is to be weak—as England was in the '30's. What horrors we could have pre-

vented in Europe had we had the strength to do so before Hitler's rampage!

Science has brought the trouble spots of Europe on the doorstep of this continent. That you are fully aware of this fact is evident by the vigorous Civil Defense program now under way and approved by your Government.

Plans are being made to counteract the effects of radiation from H-bombs. History tells us occupation of any land is made by the Armed Forces. How do they come? By radiation? No! By jet troop carriers. That's why we need the Arrow and the men to man them, or does the Government think the Civil Defense volunteers can deal with them, too?

I know we have radar-controlled weapons of defense but we still need the Arrow. As for cost—better for the taxpayer to pay up and avoid the horrors of war. I will gladly pay my share in taxes for the defense of freedom.

Toronto.

H. R. Harvey.

The belated efforts of the Government and Avro to find a solution and retain a nucleus of technical personnel from which to rebuild a future for the air defense of Canada show what a muddle the Arrow decision was. The shutdown of Avro and the method used will have indicated to the technical personnel the value placed upon them by the company and the Government.

These men have spent years, studying often under adverse conditions, at universities, technical colleges, etc., to forward their knowledge and so be able to probe the unknown. To them the project is all-important; the development snags, obstacles to be overcome by taxing the mind. True, engineers and scientists are the wealth of any nation bent upon industrial expansion, and yet on Friday, February 20, the Government and Avro slammed the door in their faces, an experience that will not be forgotten. The confidence they held in the Government and Avro has now been shattered, and who in his right mind would go back for a second dose?

So we are left with a vacuum in air defense, a crippled aircraft industry, and the break-up of the finest technical team ever assembled in Canada. One only needs to turn to the unemployment page to see where they will go. Who can blame them? Even engineers have to eat.

The lack of foresight by both the Government and Avro will come home to roost in the next few months, when finally some future plan emerges. Who can say the "know-how" will be available? This is the real tragedy of the Arrow story.

Toronto.

H. L. Dennis.

Next Step, 50th State

There can be no valid excuse for the failure to have a substitute program long before the Arrow was cancelled. One of the excuses used—and no doubt it will be employed again and again—is the necessity of awaiting American decisions and co-operation.

It is a well-known fact that the whole Arrow and Orenda program was undertaken against United States advice and without that country's co-operation. The reason is clear: The U.S. prefers a Canada totally dependent on it in every way for its defense and the equipment required for it.

If this is where we are headed, then the Government ought to make this amply clear immediately. The next step would be Canada as the 50th or 51st State.

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