

# 188 Shocked and Bewildered As Nobel's Orenda Plant Closes

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Nobel, Feb. 22—Most of the 188 men and women who worked at Orenda Engines Ltd. here, seven miles north of Parry Sound, are still shocked and surprised today.

Their jobs were wiped out Friday after the government announced cancellation of the Avro Arrow program.

About 20 Orenda employees were retained temporarily to guard the Orenda test establishment here and keep its heating equipment functioning.

The jobless personnel are bitter and bewildered about the decision. There is strong personal antagonism toward Prime Minister Diefenbaker.

Disbelief and fear are written on their faces.

They find it hard to believe that this really is the end of the Orenda plant. They don't want to believe it, especially at this time of year when jobs are scarce and fuel bills high.

A cutback in March was expected but not a complete shutdown now, they say.

Many are afraid they will have to leave the Parry Sound district to try to find jobs elsewhere, giving up their homes and severing community ties. Not one interviewed this week-end knew for certain where to go or what to do.

Each time the question: "What will you do now?" was asked, the consensus was: "We're lost. We haven't a clue."

Even the children old enough to understand their parents' plight are subdued.

"I won't turn on the lights any more unless I can't see and you don't have to give me an allowance any more," Bryan Wilson, 10, told his mother.

Mrs. W. R. Wilson said that his brother, David, 13, suggested that she take back his (David's) new pair of trousers to the store where she had bought them on sale and use the money to help out now that his father, an Orenda tool and diemaker, is out of work.

The Wilson's, with a half-completed bungalow and a mortgage, are baffled as to their next step. "We won't be able to sell the house until we finish it and perhaps there no longer will be a market for houses in the Parry Sound district," they said.

"Most of the blame lies on the shoulders of Mr. Diefenbaker and his underlings," said Otto Kraus, 27, a fitter tester. "I'd like to get hold of our fellow Canadian," he added.

Mr. Kraus, a father of two, said: "A lot of us went into aircraft work straight from school. That's all we know. Now much of the industry is being destroyed. I don't know why Canada has to buy missiles manufactured in the United States."

"I will head for the unemployment office Monday but after that I don't know. Maybe we will go to the United States," he said.

T. A. Dunk, 29, an Orenda instrument laboratory worker for eight years, said: "The Conservative Party will never get another vote from me as long as I live. I voted for Mr. Diefenbaker in 1958, but I can't accept his statement on the Avro Arrow."

"I think that perhaps one of the reasons the Conservatives killed the Arrow was that they went on a spending spree, used up the surplus built up by the Liberals and now have to cut back. Only excuses, not reasons, were given for the Government's decision," he asserted.

Paul Marcok, a test technician and chief steward of Local 1922, International Association of Machinists, said the men had felt there might be a cutback at the end of March but "no one expected anything so drastic and so soon."

"I think the decision should have rested more with the members of Parliament rather than just with the prime minister, the cabinet and a few advisers," he said.

Mr. Marcok added: "I believe Mr. Diefenbaker is an egotist who should not be prime minis-

ter. I think he has decided he is an expert on defense."

"The conditions of our contract with Orenda have not been lived up to. Those with five years service or more are supposed to get two weeks notice and those with less than five years service should get one week notice. We weren't given any written notice at all," he said.

"Some of the workers are physically sick over the decision. It's grim," he stated.

Mr. Marcok added: "The majority will have to leave the district and seek employment elsewhere. Maybe we'll have to ride the rails in the summer."

"It came as a bombshell," said D. G. Kingston, chief steward of Local 717 of the IAM.

Mr. Kingston said he believed that if the Government had withheld its decision until March 31, as indicated earlier, the Arrow would have officially smashed the world speed record with its Iroquois engines.

"I feel the prime minister pulled a fast one by making this decision now. He would have been embarrassed by the Arrow's speed record if he had waited," the union steward said.

The Kingstons came to Canada from England 11 years ago. "We may be forced to go back to the old country although we love it here," said Mrs. Kingston.

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