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**AVRO ARROW**

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**Debate in the Press**  
June 28, 1999

Debate in the Press

Throughout the late 1940s and early 1950s, Canadians were enthralled with aviation. Most large circulation newspapers and magazines employed journalists on the aviation beat who reported on the wonders of "the jet age." However, by the late 1950s what had once fascinated the Canadians had become routine. The public relations department at Avro worked hard to cultivate contacts with Toronto-area reporters who would write favourable articles and keep the Arrow in the news. But Avro was less successful in convincing other members of the media as to the necessity of the Arrow, particularly Canada's most influential magazines, Maclean's and Saturday Night, which were antagonistic. When the Arrow was cancelled, Toronto-area newspapers condemned the Diefenbaker government. Theirs was the story of the ruination of a company on the cutting edge of aerospace technology, the dispersal of a team of highly skilled engineers and technicians, and the untimely end of a great national project. Outside of Toronto, however, editorial and public opinion was largely in favour of cancellation, applauding Diefenbaker for his political courage in finally killing the obsolete and costly Arrow boondoggle. The Arrow legend that would later capture the imagination of Canadians had not yet arisen; in 1959, its demise was a southern Ontario story of little concern to other Canadians.

Story by:  
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