

editorial

## ***Another aviation project going under the hammer***

Many years of work and development will go under the hammer at an auction at Grand Bend, Ont., next month. Going to the highest bidder will be the assets of Found Aviation Ltd., including three Model 100 bush aircraft.

This waste of effort is saddening, but even more disturbing is the loss of yet another Canadian aviation project.

A month or so ago, we were reminded of two earlier and much more devastating cancellations — the Avro Arrow and Avro Jetliner. Dr. O. M. Solandt, chancellor of the University of Toronto, referred to these projects when he addressed the Toronto chapter of the American Marketing Association. He said they were commendable aircraft, and he lamented their early demise.

The Avro Jetliner was a Canadian-built twin-jet transport — the first in North America — which flew within two weeks of the first flight of the British Comet in 1949, but was abandoned for lack of orders.

The Arrow, as readers may remember, was an ambitious twin-jet interceptor designed for the RCAF, which was junked — mostly for economic reasons — in 1959.

Said Dr. Solandt: "They failed, not for technological reasons, but as a result of unsuccessful marketing. In most cases of failure we didn't find out in advance whether there was an adequate market, and we must learn from this lesson. For unless we carry right through from research to production, we shall not contin-

ue to be the affluent country we are now."

The Found aircraft obviously is in a different category. In one respect it has an advantage over either of the Avro projects — it has an adequate market demand, provided the design and performance are acceptable. Found's market analysis showed that \$20 million is spent annually on aircraft in this general category.

A great deal of private money, and some government money (about \$72,000), has been invested in the Model 100 to date, but neither source of capital is prepared to invest any more. Unless further support is forthcoming to complete the development of the aircraft and to launch production and promotion programs, all this money and effort will go down the drain.

Shortly before the Found shutdown, one of our correspondents, Capt. John Gallagher, made a pilot's evaluation of the Model 100 on wheels, and he judged it a good aircraft. He said it was strongly built and had good characteristics making it eminently suitable for bush and cargo operations. With the installation of the proposed larger 400 hp engine, he felt it could be a winner.

Given this assessment, we can only hope that someone will pick up where Found left off, and keep this Canadian project flying. If they do, they will need — and deserve — government help to market the aircraft.

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