

The CBC film on the Arrow was an entirely fictional presentation and any resemblance to real life and real people was purely incidental or perhaps I should say accidental.

However, I thoroughly enjoyed the film because of the wonderful flying shots, the special effects and the fabulous musical score.

My main problem with the film was the use of real names for the entirely fictitious characters, which I thought was an unforgivable liberty, if not an insult to the dedicated engineers who designed, tested and flew that remarkable aircraft.

Unlike the whimsical engineer characters dramatized in the film, who seemed to obtain their inspiration from coke bottles, paper darts and home grinding machines, the real Avro Canada engineers were experienced professionals who had been hand-picked and trained to become what was described by many knowledgeable people as one of the best engineering teams in the world. I was privileged beyond belief to have been chosen to lead that incredible team of experts at Avro Canada.

I was in the aviation design and development business for over half a century and my Avro Canada days accounted for not much more than 25% of that long career, but it was certainly the most hectic, demanding, stressful but totally fascinating time of my life and I made so many lasting friendships at Malton. Unfortunately they are now gradually being terminated by 'the grim reaper' !

To be fair to the film-makers it did highlight the fact that something very special was happening in Canada in the fifties and Canada had become an acknowledged world-class participant in aviation technology, respected and admired by aviation experts in many other countries. Unfortunately, that situation lasted for an all too short period, finally destroyed by the timid chickens in Ottawa !

Jim Fland

Jan 30/97.

*FORMER AVRO V.P. of ENGINEERING
during the Arrow*