

Government Counts On Success of Arrow For Front-Line Duty

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Ottawa, June 10—The National Defense Department has virtually made up its mind that Canada's front line defense squadrons will ultimately fly the Avro Arrow.

Defense Minister Pearkes told the Commons estimates committee today that barring some serious breakdown during tests, the CF-105 Arrow would be the Canadian answer to what he said was the serious threat of Russian supersonic bombers.

The Government decision on whether to proceed with the further development and production of the Arrow, on which \$387,000,000 will have been spent by the end of the current fiscal year, will have to be made this fall.

If Canada doesn't order the Arrow, Mr. Pearkes said, emphasizing that he hoped this would not be the case, the Defense Department will be forced to purchase an advanced fighter aircraft from some other country.

He also warned that large sums would be needed to modernize the communications and control of Canada's air defenses.

The Government is spending 175,000,000 in this fiscal year for further development of the Arrow. Thirty-seven pre-production models have been ordered from the Avro plant at Alton.

The prototype Arrow, first flown in March, has broken the sound barrier while climbing and has flown faster than 1,000 mph. The aircraft it is designed to replace, the CF-100, was outstanding in its class, Mr. Pearkes said, but its period of usefulness is restricted

by development of bombers which fly faster and higher.

In Mr. Pearkes thinking there can be no need for argument with the need for another and better interceptor. All the best information he has, he told the committee, indicates it will be many years, if ever, before Russia or any other nation is able to rely solely on intercontinental ballistic missiles as offensive air weapons.

Russia has a fleet of between 1,500 and 1,700 bombers of various types capable of attacking a target in North America, he added, "but there is not reason to believe that the Russians have long-range missiles in sufficient numbers for operational use."

The Russians no doubt have some prototype missiles, the minister conceded. And missiles would move into the operational field gradually supplanting manned and unmanned bombers. But the fact that missiles are not flexible for a variety of targets after launching is one main factor which will keep bombers in action for many years to come.

Asked about an announcement that the United States had obtained Canadian permission for a survey of sites for missile warning stations, Mr. Pearkes conceded that there is no equipment in Canada capable of warning of missile attacks.

Intensive research is being carried on, he said, into the means of getting such warnings. The Distant Early Warning line stations and other radar installations in Canada are being continually improved to make them more effective.

He repeated that there are no missile bases in Canada and that no request has been received from the United States for establishment of such bases.