Avro arrow

Technology

Avro Arrow Since the dawn of mankind, humans have always wanted to conquer the skies. After the Wright Brothers first flight, mankind has dreamed of bigger and better aircrafts. Shortly after World War ll a company named Avro Aircraft Limited was assigned the job by the Royal Canadian Air Force to build supersonic twin engine interceptor which could defend Canada against Soviet Bombers during theCold War. With a plant in Milton, Ontario and 14 000 employees, Avro Aircraft Limited built and manufactured ones of the greatest planes in aviation history.

The plane was a masterpiece; it flew at nearly mach 2 and had futuristic technologies which would match up to planes from today. The Avro Arrow program turned out to be a huge waste of the effort andmoney, as it was cancelled less than a year later. There can be many reasons why it was cancelled but the biggest was the immense pressure put on Diefenbaker by President Eisenhower and the United States Air Force. Other reasons could be because of its huge price tag, a new emerging era of anti-aircraft technologies, or the fact that it had many little flaws in its design.

Terminating the Avro Arrow program was the right and smarter thing to do by Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and his Conservative Government. The Avro Arrow was a Canadian marvel but came with a huge price tag. The program cost hundreds of millions of more than the estimated price. Originally the Royal Canadian Air Force wanted 40 aircrafts for an estimated $118 million but, the price tag for the interceptor rose from 2 million to 12, and at the same time demand for interceptors fell as the world entered the age of long-range missiles.

When Prime Minister John Diefenbaker cancelled the program the price tag stood at $247 million for the aircraft and $132 million for the Iroquois engines. A total cost of $374 million for a bunch of scrap metal. Clearly the project wasn't worth as much as they were spending. The company's estimations were way off and the project turned out to cost one-eighteenth of the total national budget, which was money that the government didn't have to spare and could have used for cheaper alternative defensive mechanisms.

In the mid 50's the world was entering a new era of anti-aircraft missile technologies and smarter missiles were being invented. As Canada was busily trying to find buyers for the Avro Arrow, the Americans were also hard at work trying to sell their BOMARC missiles. When Canada tried to sell the Arrow to the Americans, they tried to sell their BOMARC missiles to Canada. Unfortunately, Canada failed to sell the Avro Arrow to any nation. Instead the newly elected Conservatives cancelled the Avro Arrow program and decided to buy $200 million worth of BOMARC missiles.

With the purchase of the missiles, the Canadians signed the NORAD (North American Air Defense) agreement which made Canada a partner in command and control when it came to attacks and threats in Canadian/American airspace. Also it gave RCAF a chance to learn and share secret Air Defense information with the USAF. The BOMARC missile had the same range as the Avro Arrows. The difference was that the missiles were much cheaper and were a more feasible option for the Canadian air-force and the government's budget.

The Avro Arrow had flaws in its design which didn’t let it be at one hundred percent. One of the major flaws that the Arrow had was its limited fuel capacity. It could only carry approximately 10 000 lbs of jet fuel, which meant it had very limited range. The range was such a concern that the Royal Canadian Air Force had to build many special airfields in the North because the Air-force was worried that if the Avro Arrow went on a mission, it would be able to return by refueling in the airfields because it wouldn’t have enough fuel to go and comeback on one tank full.

The plane also couldn’t pass some RCAF regulations which meant spending millions more just to fix the issues. The major problems were with the avionics and fire-control of the aircrafts. There were some minor incidences as well, during flight testing the landing gears failed during two separate occasions making the RCAF questioning the aircrafts capabilities. A lot of these problems left the Avro Arrow ineffective during many scenarios.

Clearly it was smarter to invest in missiles which could get the job done easier and would cost less than half the price of the existing program. Cancelling the Avro Arrow program was a better and more economically stable decision by John Diefenbaker and his government. The program cost way too much money for our nation to afford. The program turned out to be a complete disaster and a huge waste of time and money.

With a new era of anti-aircraft technologies emerging, the government found missiles to be much cheaper than interceptors and just as effective. With the BOMARC missiles we also got a bonus by having the Americans as our partnered Allies with whom we could share our defense techniques with. Due to the complications with the designs the Avro Arrow had many problems too

expensive to solve with the existing price tag. The government clearly made the right and smarter decision by cancelling the Avro Arrow program.