

Alien Arrow

by Pamela McCaughey (2007)

based on UFO

created by Gerry & Sylvia Anderson and Reg Hill

With research from "The Avro Arrow Story: The Revolutionary Airplane and its Courageous Test Pilots", written by author Bill Zuk

Please note this story idea is purely speculative and has no basis in reality... My quotations of author Bill Zuk are taken entirely from his book and nowhere in his book is it suggested that the Arrow was taken from alien technology...I apologize for the usage of real people Crawford Gordon Jr., Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and President Ike Eisenhower.

Chapter One

"The aliens are pretty chary about us getting our hands on any of their technology," Alec Freeman commented, helping himself to a gin and tonic from Straker's office bar. Considering the fact Straker was a tee-totaler, it always made Alec smile that the bar existed at all. But, he was often grateful it did, "That last nest extermination - I guess they either committed suicide or let our guys take them out. We didn't get much take-home stuff from it, either. The aliens tried to destroy as much of their equipment as possible."

"Well, they know we've been able to utilize some of their captured technology, or do some reverse engineering, and figure some of it out. And, alien technology has ended up in some civilian hands. Of course, that was quite awhile ago - when security leaks were possible, and SHADO and Omega weren't even dreamed of yet."

Freeman did a double take, "Civilians have used alien technology?"

"I can cite you a few examples...chemo therapy for cancer research, more advanced communications which only the military have access to, satellite technology," he knocked some ashes off his thin cigarillo, "Hell, there was even a plane designed by a Canadian company in the 1950's that may have come from leaked alien technology!"

"A plane?"

"A military jet which might have topped anything the Americans were building at the time and might have made Canada the aerospace centre of the world."

"You're kidding?"

"Nope. I heard about it through the Air Force, when I ended up in the top secret security group after we started thinking seriously about SHADO and Omega."

"How come I never heard about this? A plane built with alien technology would have been pretty special."

"Oh, the plane made some headlines in Canada, but it was an American president who put the kibosh to the whole project..."

* * *

October 1957...

"Goddamn Russkies! They managed to push us off the front page!" fumed Crawford

Gordon Jr., the President of Avro, pounding his fist on the desk. He was into his fifth scotch that hour and every drink just brought more of his resentment to the front of his mind.

He was turning the pages of the Toronto newspapers and the Ottawa Citizen, angry that his company's proudest day has been pre-empted by the Soviet Union's announcement that they had just launched a satellite, named Sputnik, into orbit around planet earth.

Gordon Jr. thought back in his mind several hours. It had been something of a star-studded event - well - as star-studded as anything that could happen in Canada could be. Officials from the Avro company had assembled, along with Canadian aviation luminary John A.D. McCurdy, Air Marshall and Chief of Air Staff Hugh L. Campbell, Defence Minister George Peakes, a gaggle of USAF officers, and the press and public, all of them eager to see Avro's newest aircraft. Touted by Air Marshall Campbell as being able to 'effectively meet and deal with any likely bomber threat to this continent over the next decade', Gordon Jr. had felt his chest swell with justified pride when the Defence Minister opened the hangar doors, and the Arrow, towed by a truck, made its way into the slanting October sunshine. Thirteen thousand guests attended the rollout - surely that should have warranted front page attention? Instead, the launch of the Soviet Union's Sputnik hogged the spotlight, and the Arrow, just as technologically advanced as the satellite, was relegated to page two and sometimes page three in all the important papers.

Unknown to the Arrow's many admirers that day, the Arrow was mostly a shell - still lacking radar, avionics and weapons components as yet. A rigorous series of test flights lay ahead for the Arrow, but Gordon Jr. had no fears that the plane would fail. The technology behind it had come to Avro through some very vital passages, and their Chief Designer had done some ingenious reverse engineering as well. It wasn't the first time Avro had helped themselves to information that they should not have had access to, but Gordon Jr. justified whatever he did for the company. Anything was fair game in the world of big business and selling vital equipment to the military. Especially aircraft. Avro had made its name in World War Two, building the famous Lancaster bombers utilized to such vital effect by the RAF. But, the war was long over and Avro needed to place itself in front of the pack with an effective and futuristic plane.

The Arrow's bold design, "a powerful delta-winged interceptor, would combine all the latest cutting edge technology in aeronautics, electronics, jet engines and weaponry into a streamlined dart." (page 77 - "The Avro Arrow Story: The Revolutionary Airplane and its Courageous Test Pilots", written by author Bill Zuk) It was a "steel, titanium, and aluminum wonder" (page 76) that Gordon Jr. knew would stand the aeronautical community on its ear. Elaborate tests of models would withstand wind tunnels, water tests, and other important exams to "verify its drag coefficients, and the longitudinal and lateral stability of the proposed supersonic fighter". (page 76) Gordon Jr. believed the Arrow would beat out all the American test aircraft currently in design on the runways - including their new spy plane.

Getting the specs for the Arrow's prototype had been difficult, and Gordon Jr. worked through a variety of top secret channels to get some drawings and tech sheets. He'd uncovered a leak within the American government's own topsecret project which investigated UFO sightings and experiences, and he felt money was no object to acquire this information. It had not been easy. His contacts were highly-placed men who feared being uncovered, and the payoffs had to be very carefully arranged. But once Gordon Jr. had the much desired information in his hands, it had all been worth it. Gordon Jr. and Avro had been able to liaise to some degree with both British and American investigative groups since WWII. All three

countries were allied against the Nazi threat, and they did share some intelligence on a "need to know" basis. But, where it really paid off for Gordon Jr. was after the war. Acquired alien technology managed to slip through the tightest control and make its way sometimes into civilian life, and most especially into the military. Ever since the UFO incident at Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947, the American government had been sitting on a heap of alien technology - some it they could figure out through reverse engineering, some of it was still pretty incomprehensible. Some of it the aliens offered freely in return for other considerations. Gordon Jr. wasn't interested in whatever hush-hush chats the American government was having with the aliens - he was a businessman, not a politician - but alien technology he could utilize to push his company into the number one spot in aerodynamics - well, that was worth paying for. And it was this information Gordon Jr. fed into the brilliant minds in the Avro Project Research Group to engineer and design the Arrow. They took what was given then and came up with many more ideas than the Arrow itself, and "more intriguing yet was the pure research into nuclear and chemical power plants, automation, electronics, and advanced composite materials. Designs by James Chamberlain for a hypersonic (Mach 5) vehicle led to an advanced STV (Space Threshold Vehicle)" (page 118) that would closely resemble the later NASA Space Shuttle concept. John Frost, a member of the Special Projects Group was also involved in another interesting alien technology project which they collaborated on with the Americans. "The first prototypes of the Avro VZ-9-AV Avrocar" (page 118) had been realized from a U.S. military-backed 'flying saucer' research and development project which had started in 1954. Frost and his team were never able to develop the Avrocar to any sufficient level of performance - it could only hover and travel at low speeds. "The USAF and U.S. Army were the sole funding agencies" (page 118) for the Avrocar, but when they deemed it a "failure" they quickly withdrew their monies and transferred them elsewhere.

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"The more secret this information is, the harder it is to steal and that means more money, you know."

"Look, I'm taking the bigger risk here," Crawford Gordon Jr. spat on the ground. It was dark inside the parking garage, "What if I end up paying for something my guys can't work with?"

"I wouldn't have offered this to you if I didn't know it was worth it. The source says this info comes straight from a top secret American military think tank. They'd like to build it themselves, but they've already got the U-2 spy plane on the drawing board right now. If Avro builds this thing, it could catapult your company into the vanguard of the aeronautics industry. It's light years ahead of the U-2. In fact, this design may have come from a source many light years away - if you get my drift..."

"Little Green Men?" Gordon Jr. scoffed.

"You ever hear of a major UFO incident in 1947 - Roswell, New Mexico? I'm not shittin' ya, Craw, this is right from the horse's mouth."

"Supposing this is true, why would aliens from outer space give technological information to the American government?"

"I guess its sort of a - you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours. Think, man, would you rather the little green men deal with us? Or the Soviets?"

"Point taken. But, if this info doesn't live up to your hype, I'll blow your cover sky high."

"How many years have we been doing business? Have I ever steered you wrong?"

Gordon Jr. sighed theatrically, "Call me when you've got it - I'll pay you then."

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After sitting down with his design team, and looking over the purchased specs, Gordon Jr. was anxious to know if the thing was workable, "So whaddya think, boys?" "It's ambitious, Craw. I mean, it's practically sub-orbital. Not even the Americans have anything like this yet. The U-2 spy plane is limited compared to this. Anything designed like this is bound to cause a splash."

"And, hopefully put Avro back on the map again," Gordon Jr. added.

"Where did the specs come from?" one of the junior designers asked, "It's so advanced."

Gordon Jr. cocked an eyebrow, "I have alot of sources. Let's just say that I paid alot for these - sight unseen - and I think if you boys can engineer this baby - all those dollars spent will have been worth it."

This silenced any more such queries, as it was meant to do. Crawford Gordon Jr. could play the autocrat when he had to.

"If we build this, who are we planning to sell it to?"

"I'll offer it to Ottawa first. If they don't bite, there are lot of NATO countries who'd jump at it. Right now, the French are looking to upgrade their fleet, not to mention the Brits. They've done business with us before," Gordon Jr. was making reference to the RAF's WWII purchase of the Avro Lancaster bombers, used to such great effect against Nazi Germany, "They know we produce top quality aircraft."

The team's head designer stood up and tapped the specs lying in front of him, "Give us a couple of weeks, Craw. Something like this requires some brainstorming."

"Don't keep me waiting too long. I pay you for results, remember?"

* * *

The brainstorming sessions by the Avro design team was well worth the wait. By the time they were able to present him with a full design work-up, Gordon Jr. knew he had a winner. As they showed him the paperwork and explained the salient points, he could feel himself getting excited. Here was an aircraft that would make Avro a force to reckon with, It was bold, simple, streamlined and looked unlike any other military aircraft in the world. The design team had already decided the plane would have a pure white exterior to accent its unusual delta-wing configuration.

"So. What are we going to call this beautiful bird?" Gordon Jr. asked.

"We thought the delta-wing shape was kind of suggestive of an arrowhead - so we wanted to call it the Avro Arrow, boss. And, since we're working on the Iroquois engine, we thought it fit nicely with the native Indian theme."

"I like it!" Gordon Jr. pounded a fist on the desk, causing the ice cubes in his glass of scotch to jingle, "How soon can we get some models and prototypes into production?"

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Of all the projects currently on the Avro drawing boards, or going into production, the Arrow, or the CF-105, its factory designation, was Crawford Gordon Jr.'s favourite. He had high hopes for this aircraft. It had cost him plenty to secure the ideas for it, and he was watching its progress eagerly. The plane's specs excited him because of its innovations, but most of all, the thought the Arrow could elevate Avro to its WWII status or higher, was foremost in his mind. As president of the company, he felt the pressure to seek out new ideas or designs which would interest buyers worldwide. The aircraft design business was highly competitive, and Avro, being a Canadian company, was not expected to provide any real threat to the industry, mostly centred in the United States. Being able to go the Yanks one

better appealed to Gordon Jr.'s sense of nationalism and his pride in Avro's achievements. The Arrow had the potential to explode alot of precious ideas about what an aircraft should look like or what it could do. If his design team was right, the Arrow could fly higher and faster than any known aircraft on either side of the Cold War. Selling it for the right price and to the right buyer would be Gordon Jr.'s decision. And, he wanted very much to convince the Canadian government that they should be the lucky buyers.

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"Who in the American government would be crazy enough to steal specs for alien technology? I mean, the Rosenbergs were executed earlier for sellingatomic secrets to the Russians! And how could a sub-orbital aircraft be of alien design?" Alec sipped his G and T.

"I didn't say the aliens gave us spaceflight technology. We can thank guys like Werner Von Braun for that. The aliens gave us their old technology. Humans had only recently broken the sound barrier - a plane like the Arrow was the next step for us - but a step thousands of years old for the aliens. Remember: the deal with the American government was to give "technology" - something usable. The aliens just gave us enough to keep up their end of the bargain. The American government opted to trade human lives to the aliens in return for technology which would push them past the Russians. You can imagine how cheated the American government felt when Sputnik was launched. They felt cheated - like maybe the aliens were double dealing with the enemy."

Alec nodded, "I can understand that. The aliens are just crafty enough to make a deal of some sort with the Soviets. They wouldn't have cared about earth's economic, political or idealogical divisions - they'd do whatever was most expedient for their own purposes."

"Exactly. And you can bet there was further angst in the American camp when the Avro Arrow made its appearance on the same day Sputnik was launched. It all probably looked pretty fishy to the Americans."

"That's what happens when you make a deal with the devil. So what ended up happening?"

Chapter Two

When the prototype Arrow made its public rollout in October 1957, the Liberal government, under Louis St. Laurent had already lost the federal election to John Diefenbaker's Conservative Party. Diefenbaker was a Saskatchewan lawyer, whose heavily jowled face had already provided political pundits and cartoonists alike with enough humorous ammunition for decades. He wasn't considered to be all that politically astute, although his powers of oratory were amazing. Some of his own party members referred to him as "honest John", in an effort to depict him as a politician with no underhanded agendas. However, it had been rumoured that his election might have had some small help from "south of the border". It was said in some circles that the American government had contributed financially to Diefenbaker's win in order to plant a Canadian government into place which could be favourably influenced to see the American point of view in all things. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, the WWII General who had masterminded D-Day against the Nazis, was revered in his own country and respected abroad. He was the perfect Cold War Leader - a military logistical brain - and a careful politician. Eisenhower could appreciate the demands of his dual role as Commander in Chief of the US military, and that as his nation's civil leader. Eisenhower was also a good ear for the military in terms of research and development - he was adamant that his own military-industrial complex would never fall behind the Soviet Union. When the Russians launched Sputnik, the American government felt caught with its pants down. How could the Russians have managed to keep such a vital project so quiet that not even the NATO spy network had gotten wind of it? The arrival of the so-called "Space Race", with Sputnik's appearance, meant the Americans could not afford to be left behind technologically or militarily. Stalin was dead, but it didn't look like his successor, Nikita Khrushchev, for his all talk of remaking the Soviet Union into a better place, would be dropping the challenge in terms of which country could produce the most vital technology on the planet.

Russian spies had only heard rumours that the American government had made some kind of "deal" with space aliens in 1947. The Soviet government had sent out the word to their own military to capture any alien spacecraft they might encounter - to no success. The mythos surrounding the Roswell Incident divided Russian leaders - some scoffed and said it was a 'red herring' aimed directly at their spy network to feed them false information. Others gave some credence to it - enough to want to make the same kind of 'deal' if the opportunity ever presented itself.

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Avro had a history of building aircraft and engines which lead the way technologically. Their C102 Jetliner set speed records in the air. This aircraft could 'operate routinely at 30,000 feet and cruised at twice the speed of the latest piston airliners' when it debuted in 1950. (page 42 Bill Zuk) The Orenda engine test bed was used post-WWII and some pilots enjoyed spooking the Americans on test runs in refurbished Lancasters. The pilots would stage "over Lake Ontario well below radar, the Lancaster would pop and instantly appear on the USAF radar scopes. The sudden appearance of an intruder would cause all sorts of panic on the U.S. side. When the tired, old Air National Guard P-47 Thunderbolts would be scrambled, the Orenda Lancaster would fire up the jets and effortlessly 'squirt away'. The USAF was not amused by Avro stunts. Another favourite trick of the pilots flying this test-bed was shutting down the Merlin engines and sweeping over the airfield with just the jet engines going. The nearly silent test aircraft would swoop over and twirl away to the astonishment of spectators

on the ground." (page 48 - Bill Zuk) The fact these aircraft could do such stunts made them appear unusual, and almost alien in their versatility. It was this pre-history of achievements that Crawford Gordon Jr. wanted to build on. The Avro Arrow, in addition to all its innovations, "would be the first aircraft to incorporate titanium in critical structural areas. Many new innovations were needed in order to produce the components, from autoclaves to giant stamping machinery. The anticipated performance would require new materials that could withstand the heat generated by Mach 2. Control surfaces were fly-by-wire, the first use of electric and electronic systems rather than the usual mechanical systems...The test aircraft would be loaded with electronic signaling devices, known today as black boxes. These elements of the design would be integrated seamlessly into the final configuration." (pages 79-80 Bill Zuk). The Arrow would even have special ergonomic features figured into its design - totally ahead of its time in the 1950's. And while the Orenda engine was powerful, the Iroquois was eventually earmarked for the Arrow's usage as it was even more advanced than the Orenda. The project had not been without its snags. During a computer simulation training program, by Avro's resident computer expert, the test pilots seemed doomed to failing with the prototype. Even an audit by IBM experts affirmed the Avro Arrow would be a disaster. But a genuine test flight, with a pilot in the Arrow's cockpit would prove the aircraft was more than just the sum of a few computer sims, and the project went ahead. Later test flights would also sustain problems with hard landings and other assorted problems, but the Arrow proceeded through her series of trials and the glitches were re-assessed every time and fixes made. Even before her mighty Iroquois engines were installed, she could hit Mach 1.52 (1157 mph). Once the new engines were part of the Arrow, the plane would achieve Mach 1.98 and reach heights of 50,000 feet. No other aircraft in the world could do any of this.

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The Oval Office...

"Mr. President, nice to see you sir," the special envoy held out his hand to shake with Eisenhower. The President waved him to a seat in front of his desk. "I don't have to stress to you how important it is to get the Canadian government to buy the Bomarcs and to put the kibosh to this Avro Arrow plane. I have it from the most strict sources within the military and the aircraft industry here that not only is the Arrow superior to our U-2, but it may even have been designed from stolen specs. Specs stolen from a think tank so secret that even I don't know much about it. The CIA is still trying to track down who stole the specs and how Avro ended up with them. We have no solid proof as yet, so nothing has been leaked to the press of course. But, suffice it to say that killing the Arrow is of the utmost importance for America's continuing national security, as well as removing a gigantic threat to our own aircraft industry. If Avro is permitted to proceed with the Arrow, I hate to think what would happen to our own companies here."

"Why don't we just buy the Arrow ourselves?"

"We can't. We already have the U-2. We can't even suggest, by buying an aircraft from another country, that our own aren't up to snuff. Unthinkable. It could have enormous consequences worldwide for our industry here," Ike leaned forward, "I can't tell you everything, but the Arrow's stolen specs could compromise us with another...ally...who gave us that material in exchange for us keeping up our part of the bargain we struck with them. I think they would consider the very existence of the Arrow's design, outside American borders, as treacherous. You have to make certain that the Arrow dies - no prototypes must remain - the whole project HAS to be scrapped - you must impress that on the Canadians - let them know

America will not tolerate their insolence - you can even tell them, if you want, that we know those specs were stolen - and those responsible for stealing it are liable to execution for treason. I can guarantee, from everything I've heard about this fellow Diefenbaker, and his phony little General Blimp Minister of Justice, that they'll be all too willing to keep us happy."

* * *

The Arrow had indeed interested the Canadian government on several levels. One: the Arrow would be a major innovation which would capture a lot of foreign attention. Two: it was the perfect aircraft to service Canada's huge land mass against any incoming enemy. However, there were some problems to overcome. One of them being Avro's need for continued funding by the government. C.D. Howe, one of Avro's greatest champions, had been behind the federal funding given to the company. He originally saw the company as vital to putting Canada on the front page with its many innovative aircraft. But, in 1959, with the PCs forming the new government, and Howe losing his seat in Parliament, Avro was behind the eight ball. "...an internal review by George R. Peakes, the new Minister of Defence, hinged on the impact of an escalating Soviet missile threat, brought to the forefront by the successes of the Sputnik and the Soviet space program. Largely heeding the direction that the U.S. and Great Britain had taken concerning the manned interceptor aircraft role, Peakes had re-evaluated his position on the Avro Arrow's mission in the months following his public declarations at the Arrow rollout ceremony. At this juncture, Peakes had consulted with the chiefs of staff and received some conflicting messages. While the RCAF's Air Marshall Hume L. Campbell had vehemently protested, the other chiefs of staff had argued that the Arrow would drain funds from any other armed forces program. The recommendation had left the decision up to Peakes." (pages 99-100 Bill Zuk). Peakes was a WWI veteran who had been elevated to the rank of Major General. He got involved in politics, served as the Conservative defence critic and was assigned to the position of Minister of Defence when Diefenbaker's PCs won the federal election. His detractors did not think much of him. They felt he relied too heavily on the say-so of non-Canadian military experts, such as the Americans. The United States government had started shopping their IM-99 Bomarc guided missiles to other nations - claiming the missiles would eliminate the need for sending pilots up against intruders - thus sparing many lives. However, the Bomarc was largely a dud - it had 'garnered a reputation for test failures and a lack of accuracy in intercepting targets. A desperate effort to save the program depending on Canada's involvement in the 'picket line' of Bomarc bases stretching across the Northern border states.' (pages 100-101 Bill Zuk) Since the Bomarc carried nuclear warheads, the fear of such a weapon running amuck and detonating in the wrong place at the wrong time was a genuine one at the height of the Cold War. There had actually been a 'half-hearted effort to interest the Americans in purchasing the Arrow' (page 101 Bill Zuk) but the savvy Americans managed to instead sell Peakes the Bomarc! The American military further inveigled Peakes by offering to provide funding to build the missile bases on Canadian soil. The other conflict at this point was Peakes buying a nuclear weapons system - PM Diefenbaker was totally against the idea of Canada having or using such weapons. The monies going out to buy the Bomarc missiles was funding which should have gone to Avro, and although the company had been hitherto doing very well and had even diversified into non-aircraft types of production, the Canadian government's financial assistance in the Arrow project would be sorely missed. Getting John Diefenbaker's Conservative Party to agree to assist the company was not easy. The Conservative Party traditionally was in the habit of selling out even companies which weren't experiencing difficulties - most often to the Americans. Crawford Gordon Jr. knew if

his company failed, others like Boeing and McDonnell-Douglas would pounce on Avro's assets and on the company's lifeblood - its people - and the aircraft industry in Canada would grind to an abrupt halt. The PCs were only lukewarm in their enthusiasm and that scared Gordon Jr. He knew their reputation - they weren't interested in expansion industrially if they had to put the country's tax dollars to work. They tended to favour foreign investment - again most notably American. The stress of his job and worries over losing federal monies took its toll on Gordon Jr. - 'at the very time when he should have provided leadership, his world was collapsing around him. He had just left his wife and family and was drinking heavily.' Others tried to pick up the slack for him, but it was impossible not to notice what was going on. A fatal meeting between Prime Minister Diefenbaker and Crawford Gordon Jr. would have serious consequences for Avro and the Arrow.

* * *

"Craw, you're in no condition to go to this meeting - let me call it off - say you're sick and we'll try again in a few days," Gordon Jr.'s right hand man said, reeling from the booze on his boss's breath, "Dief's a tee-totaller - he'll be pissed at you for going in there drunk and it isn't exactly going to enhance Avro's rep to have the company president greet the Prime Minister in this state!"

"I just had a few extra. The bastard's kept me waiting out here, pretending he's too busy to speak to a lowly businessman. What does he know about aircraft?" With that statement, Gordon Jr. lurched to his feet and walked across the antechamber, a little unsteadily. He didn't even bother to knock on Diefenbaker's office door - he just shoved it open and stalked in.

"You can stall me all you want, Dief, but you and I both know Canada needs the Arrow!"

Looking up from his desk, John Diefenbaker, pugnacious as he was himself, was not about to back down. He coolly observed Gordon Jr. who was weaving a bit as he stood in front of him, breathing scotch fumes and glaring down with a black expression on his face. "Goddamn it, man, you can't shut down the Arrow project! Too many people are dependent on this company - think of all the jobs lost, the economic losses to the Malton area, the plant closings," Gordon Jr. planted his fist firmly on Dief's desk, "You're supposed to be a man of the people! You want the whole world to know you threw thousands of people out of work because you bought that stupid Bomarc missile which doesn't even work? What horseshit did the Americans promise you to those buy those duds?"

Dief stood up behind his desk and faced Gordon Jr. down, "What this administration chooses to do is our business, not yours! If we decide to make a purchase from the Americans, we are doing the best we can with our taxpayers money! Avro has been costing this government too much money and the gravy train is stopping here and now! The Avro Arrow is a dead duck as of this minute! Do I have to summon the Mounties to escort you out of my office?"

White as a sheet, and realizing he had overstepped himself, Gordon Jr. left without further incident. But even he knew it was the beginning of the end of his dream.

Epilogue

"There was an intense media blitz to bolster the image of Avro and the Arrow project, but it had little effect on the public or the government. Diefenbaker made the announcement to cancel the Arrow on Feb 20, 1958. In Avro history, the date went down as Black Friday," Straker pushed his chair back and put his feet up on his desk;

"President Eisenhower had made it clear the Canadian government had to scrap the Arrow - he cited fear that the Soviets might feel obliged to steal the secrets to the Arrow's advanced design. What he didn't authorize his envoy to say was that the American government also didn't want the aliens to discover technology secrets they'd given them had been stolen. Keeping the aliens on their side of the Cold War was imperative. A fledgling American organization, later to be re-named NASA, whose top brass are aware of alien technology, swiped as many of Avro's engineers as they could when the company folded - the rest go on to American aircraft manufacturing companies - creating unusual designs - some of which are built and some of which are built but kept secret because they are so controversial and weird."

"More leaked alien specs?" Alec asked.

"It's possible."

"So what actually happened to the Avro Arrow? You said they had a prototype..."

"They not only had the prototype, but a number of tested models which had proven the aircraft's design was ahead of its time. When Eisenhower said he wanted Canada to scrap the Arrow, he meant it literally. He told Diefenbaker to have the tested models taken apart and destroyed, as well as all the specs and paperwork on it. He wanted nothing left of the Arrow."

"My God. Talk about your Cold war paranoia!" Alec whistled, "Not one of the planes escaped?"

Straker smiled mysteriously, "Well, there was an urban rumour that at least one complete Arrow did manage to get spirited away while the others were destroyed. Take a closer look at a couple of our own aircraft sometime. You might see the Arrow's grandchildren!"

THE END