

ARMED FORCES IN 1968

The year 1968 has been one of the most significant in the history of Canada's armed services.

As the country entered the second century of Confederation, the final major step was taken in the unification of the Navy, Army and Air Force into a single service. With the final phase of the integration process, which began in 1964, came the introduction of the Canadian Forces Ensign, the Naval Jack, a trial uniform for women, and changes in rank titles for some members of the land and air components of the forces.

Other 1968 highlights were:

The realignment of Mobile Command land units into combat groups, the formation of an airborne regiment and the addition of a tactical air-group to Mobile Command's formations to complete the integration of a unique Canadian land and air team.

New equipment, including helicopters, tactical ground-support aircraft and the "O" class of submarine were added to the military inventory, while the use of two types of aircraft was discontinued. The year also marked the completion of the re-equipment programme for the 4th Mechanized Brigade Group in Germany.

Participation in NATO and NORAD exercises continued as in past years, and operational training manoeuvres on land, sea and in the air proceeded without interruption. Canadian servicemen continued to serve the United Nations in Cyprus and other parts of the world and took part in supplying relief in Nigeria.

During 1968, the Armed Forces were active in search and rescue and reserve and cadet training,

both at home and overseas.

The Defence Research Board's 1968 programme included the completion of final preparation of the ISIS "A" ionosphere-probing satellite for launching in 1969, and the launching of an ultra-modern research ship, the *Quest*, which will be used by the Defence Research Board for anti-submarine warfare research.

A new retirement policy combining the best features of the three previous service plans is now in effect.

New green walking-out uniforms for men and women won approval from trial users, and distribution is scheduled to begin in May 1969.

Servicemen continued to serve with the United Nations Military Observer Group, India and Pakistan, the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organization Palestine, and the International Commissions for Supervision and Control in Indo-China during 1968.

Maritime Command ships visited Australia, Japan and the Far East and participated in "Canada Week" in New Orleans. Armed Forces aircraft played a major role in two international air shows, the Canadian International Air Show, Toronto, and the Abbotsford International Air Show on the west coast. The *Red Knight* aerobatic jet-flyer performed at many exhibitions across the country.

Lieutenant Colonel R.A. White won Canada's top aviation award, the Trans-Canada (McKee) Trophy for his outstanding achievement in setting the Canadian absolute altitude record of 100,110 feet in a specially modified *CF-104* aircraft last year.

CZECH REFUGEE PROGRAMME ENDS

Mr. A.J. MacEachen, Minister of Manpower and Immigration, announced recently that Canada had discontinued on January 10 the special refugee programme established last September to meet the crisis in Czechoslovakia.

Under the programme, Canada relaxed its immigration regulations to help Czechoslovaks enter Canada. The Government was now satisfied, Mr. MacEachen said, that in the four months that had elapsed, during which the borders of Czechoslovakia had not been closed to refugees, the special programme had enabled Canada to deal efficiently with the greatly increased number of refugees applying for settlement in Canada. There was, he said, no longer the same need for special admission procedures.

Henceforth, Czechoslovaks applying for admission as refugees will be considered by the normal refugee selection criteria, under which more detailed information is called for and the processing of applications requires more time. Applicants who do

not qualify as refugees will, of course, still have the opportunity to apply as regular immigrants.

Czechoslovak immigrants, whether they qualify as refugees or not, will, as with all immigrants, be eligible for assisted passage loans and for subsistence assistance in Canada, and for job-placement services, as well as language and occupational training, under the regular programmes of the Department of Manpower and Immigration.

NUMBER OF ARRIVALS

During the week of October 19 an estimated 1,500 refugees arrived in Canada. The smallest number arriving was 472 persons, during the week ending December 17.

Under the special programme, it was possible to waive until arrival in Canada the requirement that refugees be medically examined and documented before being allowed to come to Canada. Normally, refugees must provide their medical examination and documentation completed overseas, and applicants must have a travel document at least from the country in which they apply.