

Now thinking has changed, and allied military planners believe that a major East-West conventional war could, conceivably, last six months or more. Mobilization of trained manpower, available equipment and other supplies would take place, and there would be a massive effort to move them by all available means of transport across the Atlantic. Military engagements could be expected on the Central Front and also in various other localities such as Norway, Denmark, on the Southern Flank, and at sea. Small lodgements or diversions on the mainland of North America would also have to be guarded against.

If all this transpired, the scale of reinforcement and supply would be enormous. Mr. C. Cowie, then Chairman, Civil Aviation Co-ordinating Committee (CACC), stated that: "It is no secret that NATO is planning on air-lifting from North America a million and a half troops in a short time plus 12 million tons of cargo."¹⁶

So far as Canada is concerned, however, this is looking to the future, perhaps sometime in the 1990s, because high Canadian reinforcement rates are not attainable at present. The principal constraining factor is not necessarily air transport but the sheer lack of available personnel in the Regular Forces or the Reserves. The absolute maximum number of reinforcements which might be derived from the present Regular and Reserve forces could not possibly exceed 25,000,¹⁷ and these could be transported to Europe, over a month-long period, by two civil Boeing-747 flights per day. Seven Hercules flights per day across Europe would take them close to the battlefield.

Another major constraining factor is equipment. Mr. Andre pointed out on 24 October 1985 that: "As has been the case for quite some period of time, the degree of mobilization is limited by our equipment or hardware situation. But there is a mobilization plan. When we can have a better degree of certainty as to the equipment that will be available, it will be updated accordingly."¹⁸

Whatever the actuality of wartime turned out to be, the responsibility for airlift would not fall on Air Transport Group alone. ATG's task would be to carry out priority military missions, not to try to perform the entire national air transport function by itself. At the outset of hostilities it would have to ensure that Mobile Command had enough air transport to move one or two battalion-sized battle groups with their equipment and air-portable facilities into the Canadian North or frontier regions, so as to carry out, if necessary, operations for the defence of Canada or the Canada-United States region. It would also be responsible for providing the CAST and ACE Mobile forces with immediate follow-on reinforcements, equipment and supplies. Subsequently, over a period of prolonged conflict, it would probably be called upon to perform such duties as in-theatre transport in Europe, urgent freight shipments across the Atlantic, and priority air transport operations within Canada. It would rely heavily on the civil air fleet to move troops across the Atlantic while maritime shipping and land transport carried most of the equipment and supplies. U.S. and other allied air

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 16 May 1985, p. 3:23.

¹⁷ See *Manpower in Canada's Armed Forces* for figures and discussions of compositions of the Armed Forces' commands, availability of combat troops, etc.

¹⁸ *The Proceedings*, 24 October 1985, p. 12:6.