

DEFENCE NOTES



Canadian Forces in Europe

■ In testimony to the Commons Standing Committee on National Defence (SCND), Defence officials have revealed more details about the White Paper plan to augment Canada's land commitment to Europe. The commitment to reinforce to divisional strength means that by the end of the White Paper planning period (2002), Canadian Forces Europe (CFE) will be able to deploy 16,500 personnel. The division will include two infantry heavy mechanized brigades each with 4,500 personnel. One of these will be the brigade currently in Europe (4 CMBG), while the other will be the brigade hitherto committed to the defence of northern Norway (5 Brigade), which will be reequipped with tanks and artillery to constitute a mechanized brigade. 5 Brigade will continue to be based in Canada, but only the equipment required for training will be retained at its home base, with most heavy equipment repositioned in Europe.

The division will also include various support elements, including an artillery brigade deploying the new low-level air defence system, combat support engineering units, etc. Some of these elements will be based in Europe and some in Canada. Of the 16,500 divisional personnel, about 9,500 will be regulars, and the rest reserves.

The first major step in the consolidation is due shortly with the beginning of the project definition phase of the new tank for the mechanized brigades. It is expected that the division will need up to three hundred new tanks at a cost currently estimated by DND to be approximately \$2.4 billion. DND officials have stated that they are not yet able to identify the overall cost of the divisional

commitment to NATO. The 1988-89 Main Estimates reveal an increase of twenty-two percent in the cost of maintaining the current Canadian Forces Europe, which accounts for about ten percent of the total defence budget.

Weapons Procurement

■ The Department of National Defence made two announcements in July concerning new equipment. First, the Canadian Armed Forces will receive 820 all-terrain tracked vehicles, to be delivered between 1992 and 1997. The vehicles will be built by a joint-venture company formed by Haggblunds Vehicle AB of Sweden and Canadian Foremost Ltd. of Calgary. Including inflation over the life of the contract, spares, ammunition, and logistics, DND estimates the value of the contract to be \$420 million.

Second, Defence Minister Perrin Beatty announced a plan to build twelve large coastal patrol vessels equipped for mine-sweeping. Crewed by reservists, the vessels will patrol the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. They will be delivered between 1992 and 1998. According to the *Globe and Mail* (26 July 1988), the cost in 1988-89 dollars will be \$550 million, but the official announcement cited the year-over-year total programme cost, including inflation, as \$750 million. This is a departure from standard practice, since most major programmes such as the submarine purchase, are quoted in constant dollars in the year of the decision to purchase.

Slowing Star Wars

■ In May the Defense Science Board, a top-level Pentagon advisory panel, submitted a report to Defense Secretary Carlucci recommending the slowing down of plans to deploy an anti-missile defence. The panel was asked to consider the future development of the programme given the reduced budgets imposed by Congress. While endorsing the SDI goal of a layered, space-based defence against ICBMs, the Board

has recommended a phased development which would concentrate in the first instance on the deployment of one hundred ground-based interceptors to protect missile sites, bomber bases and command centres. It might also provide some defence against accidental missile launches. Only in the later phases of the programme – meaning well into the next century – would space-based systems be deployed.

US Stealth Bombers

■ In May the US Air Force released information about the B-2, the advanced technology bomber whose "stealth" characteristics will make it almost "invisible" to currently deployed Soviet radars. The B-2 is built of composites which absorb rather than reflect radar signals, and has the shape of a crescent or "flying wing."

The B-2 will be subsonic, with a top speed of 750 mph (1,200 kph), and a range of 7,500 miles (12,000 kilometres). Its mission is to fly deep into the USSR, searching out mobile missile bases, command centres and other elusive targets. In the event of a nuclear war, Strategic Air Command envisages an integrated bomber attack: the oldest aircraft, the B-52s, would fly towards the Soviet Union and release cruise missiles aimed at Soviet airfields and radars; the Stealth bombers would penetrate and launch a combination of short-range attack missiles (the SRAM 2) and gravity bombs at remaining Soviet ICBMs and command centres; and the B-1Bs would then attack in a third wave aiming for military installations, production facilities, and, if required, population centres. The SAC concept for the use of strategic bombers appears to be based on the view that a strategic nuclear exchange might take place over a number of days, or even weeks.

The Air Force has ordered 132 B-2s at a cost which has yet to be disclosed, but is reported to

approach US \$500 million per aircraft.

Proliferating Technologies

■ In a speech to the UN Special Session on Disarmament in May, US Secretary of State George Shultz called on Third World countries to co-operate in limiting the spread not only of nuclear weapon technology, but also of other advanced military systems. Within days, reports from Pakistan indicated that it has tested one or possibly two ballistic missiles with ranges between 85 and 290 kilometres. Analysts have speculated variously that Pakistan may have obtained and modified Soviet SCUD missiles, or that their ballistic missile programme has been conducted with technological support from China. Iraq is known to have used modified SCUD missiles against Iran, achieving a range of 965 kilometres. Earlier this year India reported testing a ballistic missile with a range of 240 kilometres. Both India and Pakistan deny that they are manufacturing nuclear weapons which might be used with such missiles.

Shultz's appeal, however, is undermined somewhat by the declared policy of the US administration to promote greater arms exports in order to offset the costs of weapons production.

Soviet Casualties in Afghanistan

■ According to Western diplomats, the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan has been accompanied by fierce fighting along the Pakistan-Afghan border. Mujahideen guerrillas have made dramatic gains at the expense of the Afghan army, which assumed responsibility for key garrisons in the wake of the Soviet withdrawal. On 25 May the Soviets officially announced their war losses in Afghanistan: 13,310 soldiers killed, 35,478 wounded, and 311 missing in action. □

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