

*Supply—National Defence*

aircraft carrying an advance party headed by the air officer commanding, air transport command. Since that time successive flights have continued and as of yesterday 309 army personnel and 328 air force personnel, or 637 in all, are now in the Middle East. There may be others en route but I am not sure as to the exact number. However, that is the number actually overseas. The twelve North Stars of 426 transport squadron are now operating an airlift between Canada and Naples in support of the Canadian United Nations emergency force contingent.

The army personnel in the Middle East, when their airlift over is completed, will represent service elements so essential to the functioning of any force. The day before yesterday I indicated that the component elements were made up of the army service corps, signals, army medical corps, ordnance, R.C.E.M.E. and engineers.

The 328 Canadian Air Force personnel now in the Middle East will be increased as required to 599. They are made up of the air crew and ground crew for the twelve C-119 aircraft or flying boxcars of 435 transport squadron which on Sunday last took over the United Nations emergency force airlift responsibility across the Mediterranean for taking men and supplies from Naples via Crete to the United Nations emergency force base at Abu Suweir in Egypt.

The order in council which was passed on November 20 provided for the dispatch of up to 2,500 members of Canada's armed forces as this country's contribution to the United Nations emergency force organized "to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities in the Middle East". In addition to the 637 army and air force personnel now with the United Nations emergency force overseas, and approximately 275 Royal Canadian Air Force personnel who are still available if required, there are 900 officers and men of the 1st Queen's Own at Halifax ready to go, by sea or air as required, and the 600 composing the reduced ship's company of the *Magnificent*. These elements of the three services which I have just mentioned make up roughly the 2,500 Canadians authorized for service with the United Nations emergency force.

I trust that the brief chronology which I have endeavoured to give hon. members and put on *Hansard* of events as they took place during the serious, uncertain, rapidly changing and unprecedented period through which we have just been passing will be sufficient to indicate how capably our armed forces have taken hold of each urgent demand made of them, and how insistent we have been because of the extreme gravity of the situation that there should be nothing dilatory, nothing hesitant, in our efforts to anticipate

[Mr. Campney.]

the needs of the United Nations emergency force.

While proud to be a part of this international force and being fully aware of the risks inherent in such an operation, Canada's concern has been and continues to be simply this: Within the limits that the government has defined to make whatever contribution the United Nations authorities assure us could best serve the interests of the emergency force and to make it available quickly. All else must be secondary to that.

What we have been dealing with is not a mere staff exercise to gather and move troops, but rather a dynamic and so far successful effort to help create an institution unique in the world's history, a United Nations police force designed by its international character specifically to discourage the outbreak of further fighting in the Middle East and thus make possible the hope of an enduring peace.

I should like here to interject a few personal observations arising out of this brief period of rather intensified activity in the Department of National Defence. A great deal of credit rightly accrues to the uniformed and civilian members of our staff for the whole hearted way in which they have pitched into the rush assignments given to them. I think they deserve the warm commendation of this house and this country for their efforts. I have been particularly impressed by the efficient and competent and decisive way in which the services have quickly planned and executed each order and each change necessitated by changing events.

Especially notable has been the team work of the services working together with a fine tri-service co-operation and esprit de corps with only one objective in mind: to do a job of which Canada can be proud. While our activities thus far have not been on a particularly large scale, yet they do represent the largest single operation of recent years to be carried out on a tri-service basis. This has been to me one of the most encouraging aspects of this matter, as I am sure it must be to my predecessor and former colleague, the Honourable Brooke Claxton, who did so much to initiate the tri-service concept in our service regulations.

By good organization and by good planning, by getting the necessary troops and transports prepared and strategically located, it proved possible in a few days to do the following.

First, to airlift from Canada to Italy and Egypt several hundred air force and army personnel and a substantial tonnage of army supplies, aircraft spares and ground handling equipment.

Second, to establish an airlift from Italy to Egypt.