



# PRESS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 39

FOR RELEASE AT 3:00 A.M. EDT,  
TUESDAY, JULY 20, 1954.

The Department of External Affairs announced today that the first six of 82 Canadian F.86E Sabrejets have been handed over by the Canadian Charge d'Affairs, Mr. G.K. Grande, at Eleusis Airport near Athens to the Greek Minister of National Defence, Mr. Kanellopoulos. General Gyalistras, the Greek Under-Secretary for Air, General Kitrilakis, the Chief of the General Staff, and the Chiefs of Staff participated with Mr. Grande and representatives of the R.C.A.F. in the ceremony.

These F.86E jet fighters, flown to Greece by pilots of the R.C.A.F., are being transferred as part of Canada's programme of mutual aid to members of NATO. The balance of the 82 Sabrejets will be delivered to Greece in forthcoming months.

In addition to these aircraft, Greece is also receiving from Canada 195 spare jet engines together with other military equipment to the value of approximately \$55 million.

During the ceremony at which these first aircraft were handed over to the Greek authorities, Mr. Grande read a short message from Prime Minister St. Laurent which stated: "We have watched with great admiration your great achievements in reconstructing your country which had suffered so much, not only during the war but also in the post-war years. We therefore welcome this opportunity to assist you in strengthening your defence forces".

Mr. St. Laurent also expressed confidence in the role that Greece was playing in NATO: "These aircraft will also, I am sure, make it clear that, although our two countries are oceans apart, we are, in fact, partners in the defence of peace and the promotion of security".

In a message Lord Ismay, the Secretary General of NATO, stated that he was gratified that these Sabrejets would strengthen "our means to defend ourselves against aggression", and that he was pleased "to see these aircraft turned over to the capable hands of the Royal Hellenic Air Force for assignment in a new country, but always for the same cause, the preservation of peace".