

Otter patrol aircraft.¹¹

The utility of aerial surveillance was immediately obvious as many of the northern passes were too difficult for the Yugoslavians to effectively patrol in their search for infiltrators. Using forward bases, the Canadians flew patrols of the mountain regions looking for groups that might be using the passes. The patrols were difficult as it was a local custom to travel only at night to avoid the intense heat. Tell-tale signs of movement could often be spotted the next day, however, and the Yugoslavs given direction to intercept the convoys. In addition to the difficulties encountered during the patrols themselves constant heat and dust, lack of proper maintenance facilities and a heavy flight schedule were amongst the problems with which the air and ground crews struggled.¹²

By the time it was disbanded, in September of 1964, UNYOM had overseen a reduction in the scale of the fighting, and in the extent to which outside support was affecting life in Yemen. In the final analysis, however, the fighting did not stop until the Saudis and the Egyptians agreed to end their dispute in the region some years later.

UNEF II and the SFM

It was to be almost ten years from the end of UNYOM before a new peacekeeping venture involving aircraft was established in the Middle East. In the wake of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the need for an independent force to occupy the Sinai peninsula was as apparent as it had been after the Suez Crisis. The United States, which was particularly active in diplomatic efforts to end the conflict, was keen to have the UN play a role in the cease-fire. Accordingly, the ground was laid for the second United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF II), which was established on October 25, 1973.

To a great extent the operational procedures of the UNEF II were similar to those of the UNEF. The territory covered was much the same, and the basic procedure was also similar. In particular, the force relied on a series of observer posts, supplemented by roving patrols, both on the ground and in the air. As in the UNEF, these aerial patrols were especially useful in monitoring events in areas which were not easily accessible to ground based troops.¹³

¹¹ ibid.

¹² In addition to ibid, see Bowderey, R.M.L. "With the RCAF in Yemen" Roundel, v. 15, no. 1, 1963.

¹³ See Blue Helmets, op cit, p. 96.