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EVACUATION OF CANADIANS FROM IRAN

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Don Jamieson, today announced the completion of an airlift operation in which Canadians in the Caspian area of Iran, who were unable to leave by commercial means, were evacuated to Ankara, Turkey, by Canadian Forces Hercules aircraft. The operation began on the evening of December 31, 1978, and ended with the arrival of the fifth flight of CAF aircraft in Ankara on January 5. During this time the Canadian Government brought out 266 Canadians and 140 nationals of other countries.

The decision to bring out the Canadians by CAF aircraft was taken after the Canadian Ambassador, following consultations with other western countries, recommended that Canadians not having compelling reasons to remain in Iran leave the country as soon as possible. Shortly afterward, the government received, on December 31, a formal request for assistance in this regard from the Stadler Hurter (Montreal) and Dillingham International (Vancouver) companies operating in northern Iran.

Mr. Jamieson then instructed the Department of External Affairs, with the cooperation of the Department of National Defence, to implement the contingency plan which provided for such an eventuality. The operation is considered to have been fully successful.