

He also said that the combat capability of the brigade group would be enhanced still further "by increasing the strength of the artillery regiment by six self-propelled guns, thereby raising its total artillery strength from 18 to 24 guns".

"At the same time," he said, Canada would be "implementing an approved program to improve these guns, in accordance with one of SACEUR's (Supreme Allied Command, Europe) proposals, by the installation of longer barrels to provide increased range, and consequently improve our artillery support".

The minister also said that "not only will we be maintaining our stationed manpower at its current level, but we will also be increasing the strength of the reinforcements which will be flown over from Canada, to ensure that our brigade and its equipment is fully manned to war strength in time of crisis".

#### Substantial budget increase

Mr. Richardson also told his NATO colleagues that the budget estimates for the Canadian defence department for the fiscal year 1975-76 had already been "increased substantially by supplementary funding to a total of almost \$3 billion, representing an increase of 18.7 per cent over the fiscal year 1974-75".

He added that "our estimates for 1976-77 will rise by a further 12.4 per cent to \$3.345 billion". He said that "in terms of the NATO definition, our defence expenditures will have risen from \$2.834 billion to \$3.350 billion in 1975-76, and are tentatively estimated to rise to more than \$3.75 billion in 1976-77".

Referring to capital expenditures for equipment, Mr. Richardson said that they would rise in 1976-77 to approximately \$460 million from the currently forecast figure of \$334 million in 1975-76.



Defence Minister James Richardson

The Canadian defence minister added that "Canada would provide full details of the revised force plans to the major NATO commanders and the international staff in the course of the normal consultations in the coming year".

At the conclusion of the two-day session in Brussels, NATO defence ministers officially commended Canada for its new defence policy.

In the final *communiqué* they stated that they welcomed the statement by Defence Minister James Richardson "on decisions taken regarding the re-equipment and modernization of Canadian forces".

Mr. Richardson commented that if NATO's major objective of creating a deterrent to war were more widely understood there would be more public support for the alliance.

Canada has decided on a new fleet of long-range patrol aircraft costing \$950 million, will maintain its manpower strength in Europe and provide forces with modern and effective tanks.

#### Panarctic strikes oil in Arctic Islands

Panarctic Oils Limited recently made a significant oil strike which indicates the possibility of the first commercial deposits found in the Canadian Arctic Islands, states Northern Affairs Affairs Minister Judd Buchanan.

The well, Panarctic Bent Horn F-72A on Cameron Island, flowed high grade crude oil at the rate of 3,000 barrels a day on a long-term drill stem test conducted in October.

Cameron Island, located at the latitude of 76 degrees between the north end of Bathurst Island and the Sabine Peninsula of Melville Island, lies 300 miles northwest of Boothia Peninsula.

Charles R. Hetherington, president and chief executive officer of Panarctic Oils Limited, said the new well was directionally drilled to a location about one mile south of the Panarctic Bent Horn N-72 well, which is completed as a 500-barrel-a-day oil producer.

#### Diplomatic appointments

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Allan J. MacEachen, has announced the following diplomatic appointments which will take effect during the coming weeks.

Thomas Paul Malone, Ambassador to Israel and concurrently High Commissioner to Cyprus, to be Ambassador to Finland.

Mr. Malone replaces Ernerst Côté who is retiring.

Jack F. Godsell, Director-General, Commonwealth Africa Bilateral Program, Canadian International Development Agency, to be High Commissioner in Bangladesh.

Mr. Godsell replaces Robert W. McLaren, whose appointment as High Commissioner in Tanzania was announced earlier.

#### Canada continues peacekeeping in the Middle East

Following a request from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Canada will continue participation in the UN peacekeeping forces in the Middle East, until October 24, 1976 in the case of the United Nations Emer-

gency Force (UNEF) and until May 31, 1976 with the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF).

The Canadian participation coincides with the mandate renewal dates recently set by the Security Council for

these two Middle East forces.

Canada shares with Poland the logistics-support role for UNEF in the Sinai and UNDOF in the Golan Heights. Approximately 1,000 Canadians are serving in the two contingents - about 850 in the Emergency Force and some 150 in the Disengagement Observer Force.