

Extensive consultations have taken place in NATO over the past three months in fulfilment of the Government's undertaking to take account of the views of its allies in bringing about the planned and phased reduction of the size of the Canadian forces in Europe.

During these consultations, Canada has reaffirmed its intention to meet, in a responsible manner, its collective security obligations under the North Atlantic Treaty and to continue to play an active and constructive role in support of the values we share with our allies.

Certain details remain to be worked out before firm commitments for 1970 are made by NATO governments at the annual ministerial meeting in December, but the general makeup and roles of the Canadian forces for NATO can now be given. I can now also outline the changes being made to our forces in Canada.

### NATO - Europe

First, I shall deal with our NATO commitment in Europe. We plan to phase out our brigade group and our air division in Germany by the fall of 1970, when we will establish co-located land and air elements under one Canadian headquarters. These will be in southern Germany on our present air division bases at Lahr and Baden Solingen, and will be interim forces for the next three years. They will use present equipment and will have a combined total strength of approximately 5,000 personnel. The Supreme Allied Commander Europe has assured me that this provides a structure which will allow Canadian forces to continue to fulfill in Europe a meaningful, though reduced, role.

The land force will be a mechanized battle group of approximately 2,800 personnel with an operational role in the Central Army Group area. The air element will be a group of three squadrons of CF-104s, one in the reconnaissance and two in the strike role. The air group will remain under operational command of the 4th Allied Tactical Air Force. The brigade in Germany will drop the Honest John nuclear role when it is re-configured next year and the nuclear strike role for the air element will continue only until January 1972.

As I said, these are interim forces. For the post-1972 period we plan to equip a land element in Europe, of approximately the same size as the interim group, as a light "airmobile" force and to convert the air element to a conventionally-armed ground support or reconnaissance role.

We shall continue to retain the commitment to provide from the forces in Canada an air-sea transportable brigade group to reinforce the NATO northern flank in an emergency. This brigade group will contain the battalion group which is on standby in Canada as an "airportable" force for the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land). Our similar commitment of a battalion group to NATO's southern flank will be discontinued in 1970.

### Maritime Command

Turning now to our NATO maritime commitment, we shall continue to earmark virtually all of our Atlantic operational maritime forces for assignment to the NATO Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (SACLANT) in the event of an emergency.