

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES



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CANADA ADOPTS A NEW DEFENCE POSTURE

Statement by the Honorable Léo Cadieux,
Minister of National Defence, September
19, 1969.

To set the scene for the statement I am about to make, I would refer you to two previous statements: the Prime Minister's on April 3 and my statement in the House of Commons on June 23. In these statements the rationale for changes in Canada's defence posture is set out with the roles for the forces stated as follows:

- (a) The surveillance of our territory and coastlines, i.e., the protection of our sovereignty;
- (b) the defence of North America in co-operation with United States forces;
- (c) the fulfilment of such NATO commitments as may be agreed upon; and
- (d) the performance of such international peacekeeping roles as we may from time to time assume.

The Government, as you will recall, has undertaken to re-structure our forces over a period of time so that the equipment and training for the above roles at home and abroad will be compatible. As I informed the House at the beginning of June, we believe, barring unexpected international developments, that we can achieve the transition within a defence budget which will be maintained for the next three years at its current dollar level of \$1.815 billion per annum.

It is against this background that I shall now enlarge on the outline force structure contained in my June 23 statement, which forecast the changes necessary to give substance to the Government policy on defence. There are still some consequential decisions to be made but, by and large, the forthcoming shape of the Canadian Armed Forces can now be enunciated.

The force I am about to describe is considered by my military advisers to be a viable force capable of meeting the tasks set by the Government.

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.

We shall take out of commission the carrier Bonaventure and the escort maintenance ship Cape Scott in 1970. We shall retain most of the Tracker aircraft from the carrier for land based operations until 1973. We shall retain the Cape Scott as an "alongside" workshop and accommodation facility in the dockyard in Halifax for the foreseeable future and we shall dispose of the Bonaventure as surplus.

Plans are continuing for bringing into service our second new operational-support ship and the four helicopter-destroyers now being built. The manning of three existing destroyer escorts will be reduced to training levels over the next two years.

We shall retain our Argus long-range patrol aircraft and increase their role in the Arctic, while continuing their mid-ocean surveillance duties. We shall employ our Tracker aircraft from shore bases on a coastal surveillance role until they are disposed of in 1973. We plan to replace the Argus after 1973.

Mobile Command

Mobile Command forces in Canada will remain at approximately their present level but will be re-structured in 1970 from four combat groups to three (with headquarters in Calgary, Petawawa and Valcartier) and we shall form a task force headquarters, initially at Gagetown (present location of the fourth combat group headquarters), for subsequent location in the Far North.

The Airborne Regiment is being retained and will have three Commandos instead of the present two. The third Commando is being formed in the battle group in Europe, where it will share infantry duties with the 1st Battalion, Royal 22nd Regiment.

Infantry battalions in the combat groups will again have their normal four companies, rather than the present three. We are re-equipping our artillery and armored regiments in the combat groups with the "airportable" artillery and "airportable" armored vehicles. Some heavy mechanized equipment is being retained at Gagetown as training support for our interim land force in Europe.

We shall move the Combat Arms School from Borden to Gagetown and we shall move the Artillery School from Shilo to Gagetown, where it will become part of the Combat Arms School.

As part of the re-configuration in Europe in 1970, we shall return the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, to Canada and station them at Shilo and return the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, and station them at Gagetown.

We are budgeting over the next few years for some 2,500 new 1½-ton trucks to modernize our land-force vehicle fleet and have recently signed a contract for 50 Bell Utility Tactical Transport Helicopters (UTTH) to be used primarily in Mobile Command. These twin-engine helicopters will be powered by Canadian-built engines from United Aircraft of Canada. Delivery will begin in 1971.

A decision to revert to a nine-battalion, three-regiment infantry structure was based on military advice following the experience of recent years which convinced infantry corps officers that regiments of one, or even two, battalions posed serious career, manning and morale problems related to the necessity for frequent cross-postings. Consequently, it was decided to retain the three infantry regiments with the longest history of regular force service: The Royal Canadian Regiment, the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and the Royal 22nd Regiment.

As a consequence, and regrettably, the following well-known Canadian infantry regiments will no longer form part of the regular force: The Canadian Guards, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada and The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada.

The 2nd Battalion, The Canadian Guards, will be redesignated as the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment, and the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, will be redesignated as the 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.

In our force re-structuring, it was also found necessary to remove one artillery and one armored regiment from the regular force. Using the seniority principle, but retaining two recently organized francophone regiments, we have decided that the Fort Garry Horse and the 4th Regiment, The Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, will no longer appear in the regular force order of battle.

Members of the Fort Garry Horse, the Black Watch and 4 RCHA will be transferred to other units as individuals frequently remaining on the same base. For example, members of the Black Watch will be absorbed into the 2nd Bn, RCR, when the unit moves to Gaagetown.

Air Defence Command

We are continuing close consultations with our U.S. allies on the question of the immediate and future structure of North American air defence forces. The Canadian air defence forces will remain much as they are for the present.

Air Transport Command

Air Transport Command's long-range Yukon fleet will be reduced from 12 to four by 1973. The nine Cosmopolitans now in that command will be transferred to Training Command in 1972 for a new role. We shall retain our 23 Hercules troop and cargo aircraft but shall reduce Transport Command's Dakota fleet by approximately 15 during 1970. We are continuing our studies for the requirement for a long-range jet transport to replace the Yukons.

Search and Rescue

Search and rescue continues to be an important part of our activities. We shall maintain our present number of rescue-co-ordination centers and, over the next two or three years, improve our aviation capability in this field, although slightly reducing the numbers of aircraft. This will be done by converting six of our Buffalo aircraft to this role and purchasing six new STOL aircraft capable of operating off land, water or snow. We shall retire

our Albatross aircraft and search-and-rescue Dakotas as the new aircraft come into service. We shall also make some adjustments to our present helicopter distribution.

Training Command

Training Command will reflect the reduced size of the forces. The Dakota navigation trainer (23 aircraft) will be retired in 1972 and replaced with the Cosmopolitans from Air Transport Command. During 1970, our Tutor and T33 trainer fleet in this command will be reduced. We shall retire the C-45 Expediter trainer (53 aircraft) also during 1970.

Reserves and Cadets

We intend to reduce the size of our reserve forces and we are consulting with the Conference of Defence Associations on how we can make the most effective use of a smaller reserve force in support of our revised regular force. I should stress, however, that the reserves will continue to play a significant role in our defence structure.

Our support for the cadet program will continue at the present level of 100,000 cadets.

Base Closures

Some weeks ago, I announced the closing of a number of bases and facilities. At that time, I said a further announcement regarding a small number of other bases would be forthcoming. This is still the case. Final decisions have not yet been made on these bases, but I expect to be able to make an announcement in a few weeks' time.

Personnel

To operate the re-configured force I have just described, we shall require approximately 82,000 military personnel and 30,000 civilians. This will mean a reduction of something in the order of 16,000 military and 5,000 civilian positions over the next three years. I previously announced that we should not institute a plan of forced attrition of military personnel for the purpose of reaching the new force levels. This is still our intention, and, in fact, we shall continue recruiting at a reduced but still substantial level. A determined effort will be made to assist civilian personnel in finding new employment either in or out of the public service.

National Development

The Defence Department is vitally interested in, and is contributing to, Government studies now going on concerning use of the forces in the field of national development. Particularly, we are interested in such subjects as government maritime operations, government air transport activities, engineering development and international economic aid. The Department has traditionally been in the forefront of national development and can be expected to contribute significantly in the future.