

No. 1 Air Division in Europe, comprised of eight *F86*, four *CF100 Mk IVB* and one *AC&W* squadrons, continued to fill Canada's commitment to the NATO air defence fighter force.

Air Defence Command continued its planned build-up and had under operation three radar systems—the Distant Early Warning Line (DEW), the Mid-Canada Line (MCL), and the Pinetree Line—as an integral part of North American Air Defence Command (NORAD). The RCAF Ground Observer Corps, which acts as a supplement to the radar system, remained at a strength of approximately 54,000 civilian volunteers and 5,000 observation posts located throughout the country.

The program of re-equipping Maritime Air Command squadrons with improved aircraft and equipment continued throughout the year. On the East Coast, one squadron completed conversion to the *Argus*, the largest and most modern anti-submarine aircraft in operational use, and conversion of the second squadron was under way. On the West Coast, the last of the *Lancasters* was retired and the squadron re-equipped with *Neptune* aircraft. The aircrews of Maritime Air Command, in co-operation with the RCN, participated in both national and NATO exercises and increased emphasis was placed on regular daily patrols and surveillance over the waters on both coasts.

Air Transport Command continued to provide support to the Air Division and the Army Brigade in Europe using its *North Star* aircraft. *Fairchild C119* aircraft of this Command were engaged in cargo and personnel carrier operations in Canada and in para-troop training for the Canadian Army. Both *North Star* and *C119* aircraft were used for operations in support of the Arctic weather stations.

In 1958, ice reconnaissance in support of Department of Transport ships supplying DEW Line stations was undertaken by 408 Squadron of Air Transport Command. An ice reconnaissance detachment was established at Frobisher Bay and daily reconnaissance flights were carried out from July 15 to Nov. 1. In addition, 408 Squadron carried out routine reconnaissance missions of the Arctic Archipelago.

During the year, the RCAF continued to provide search and rescue services in Canadian areas of responsibility. Fifty-seven major search operations were conducted of which 37 were for civil aircraft and nine were for military aircraft. Marine craft and miscellaneous cases accounted for the remainder. There were 163 mercy flights conducted during the year. The total flying time for all search and rescue operations was 8,030 hours.

Training and Equipment.—During the year ended Mar. 31, 1959, NATO aircrew training in Canada continued to be active; by the end of 1958, 5,672 aircrew had been graduated under this plan since its inception in 1951. In addition, the RCAF was engaged in training aircrew for its own requirements. Basic trades courses for non-flying list officers produced 402 graduates and basic trades schools graduated 6,112 tradesmen during 1958-59.

Flight cadets entering the service received officer development training and primary flying training at Centralia, Ont. Basic flying training was conducted at flying training schools located at Moose Jaw, Sask., and Penhold, Alta. Advanced flying training on twin-engine aircraft was given at Saskatoon, Sask., and advanced flying training on jet aircraft was conducted at Portage la Prairie, Gimli, and MacDonald, Man. Flying instructor training was given at Trenton, Ont., and instrument rating courses were conducted at Saskatoon, Sask. Observers received their basic and advanced training at Winnipeg, Man.

Formal trade courses for newly commissioned non-flying list officers were conducted at RCAF schools in aeronautical engineering, armament, supply, telecommunications and flying control. Aircraft system trainers were used extensively to support technician and aircrew training programs at field technical training units and operational training units. Trade advancement training programs continued at all units, both regular and auxiliary, to help tradesmen advance into the qualified trade group levels. Semi-annual trade examinations were written under the direction of a Central Examination Board. Language training programs were conducted where necessary.