OPERATIONS: DEFENC E

Canadian Chinooks to be retired
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udget cuts are forcing Can-
ada's air force to retire its
CH-147 Chinook helicopters
and reduce the number of
fighter squadrons in Germany.
Canada's seven Chinooks are
operated by two squadrons: 447
Transport Helicopter Sqn at
CFB Edmonton, which will be
disbanded, and 450 Transport
Helicopter Sqn at CFB Ottawa,
which will be reorganised and
fly the CH-135 Twin Huey tacti-
cal utility helicopter for military
transport, and the Royal Cana-
dian Mounted Police's Special
Emergency Response Team.
Air Command currently oper-
ates 43 Twin Hueys, but Lt Gen
David Huddleston, Deputy
Chief of Defense Staff, says the
Department of National Defense
hopes to buy additional Twin-
Huey-type aircraft.
One of three CF-18 squad-
rons in Baden-Soellingen, Ger-
many — 409 Tactical Fighter
Squadron — and one of the two
Fighter Wing Headquarters, are
to be disbanded as part of a plan
to reduce Canadian Forces in
Europe. The CF-18s and their
pilots will be re-assigned to the

other two fighter squadrons. Air
Command has 126 CF-18s in its
inventory — 26 deployed in the
Persian Gulf.

Other Air Command changes
include the transfer of 413
Transport and Rescue Sqn from
CFB Summerside, to CFB
Greenwood, Nova Scotia. Its
CC-115 Buffalo aircraft will be
replaced with CC-130 Hercules,
which will be used as the pri-
mary fixed-wing search and res-
cue aircraft. It is not yet known
what, if any, navigation, com-
munication and sensors upgrade

the search and rescue Hercules
aircraft will receive — Air Com-
mand is acquiring five more
Hercules to increase its current
32-strong CC-130 fleet.
429 Transport Sqn and its
four CC-130s will be transferred
from CFB Winnipeg to CFB
Trenton later this year. The
Hercules were being used for
air-navigation training, but will
be replaced by four new CT-142
Dash-8s. The Dash-8s will be
operated by 402 Air Reserve Sqn
and the Canadian Forces Air
Navigation School. •

DND decision removes Canadian medium lift capacity

Belgium to mothball a third of air force
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he Force Aerienne Beige
(FAB) is to lose 24 of its
144 aircraft and 3,000 person-
nel as part of its defence cuts.
In future, a third of the Air
Force's aircraft will be moth-
balled to provide funds to keep
the remainder flying.
The cuts, called "Plan-Char-
lier." after the Belgian Joint
Chief of Staff who originated
them, fall most heavily on the
Air Force where 172 officers
(10.57% of the total), 974 non-
commissioned officers (11.62%)
and 691 airmen (17.29%) will
be cut from the payroll.
The FAB's Bierset AB will be
handed over to the Army's light-
aviation component, while 8
Sqn's will be disbanded upon
the return of its Mirage 5BAs
from deployment with the air-
mobile force in eastern Turkey.
The first of 15 updated Mi-
rage 5BAs and five Mirage 5BDs

should be delivered to 42 Sqn
from 1993 onwards if a Mirage
update programme is approved.
The latter would introduce im-
provements, including canards
which could reduce airframe
fatigue and help keep the air-
craft in service until 2005.
The defence cutbacks could
still mean that only 12 of the
Mirages will be converted fi-
nally. The aircraft are likely to
move to Florennes AB in 1995
once new buildings there have
been completed. Following this
move, 3 Wing (now based at
Bierset) will be disbanded.
A third of the General Dy-
namics F-16As from 2 and 10
Wings at Florennes AB and
Kleine Brogel AB respectively
will be mothballed, meaning
both Wings will each lose 12 of
their present 36 aircraft. In any
future emergency the aircraft
would be flown by reservists.

The air force's Air Com-
mando intervention squadron
will be disbanded.
Qualitative improvements to
Belgium's air-defence capability
will be through the introduction
of beyond-visual-range weap-
ons. From 1992, delivery of 500
AIM Sidewinders will begin and
the purchase of another batch of
400 missiles is planned.
AMRAAM or MICA air-to-air
missiles may be purchased.
A midlife update programme
for the F-16s will extend the
aircraft's service life until 2010.
The F-16s will be equipped with
a French Carapace electronic
countermeasures system which
will be introduced from 1993.
All 12 Lockheed C-130 Her-
cules aircraft are undergoing a
midlife update. There are addi-
tional plans to equip C-130 and
F-16s with air-to-air refuelling
capability. •

USA wants more

maritime RPVs

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he US Navy and Marine
Corps want to procure an-
other four Israel Aircraft Indus-
tries Pioneer remotely piloted
vehicle (RPV) systems. The suc-
cessful operation of the six Pio-
neer systems deployed on the
ground and on US Navy ships
in the Gulf has resulted in the
new request.
The additional Pioneers are to
give more capacity, and are not
being purchased as attrition
buys.
Together with five Pointer
RPVs, they are operated by the
four Marine Corps RPV compa-
nies, the 82nd Airborne and the
battleships USS Wisconsin and
Missouri. The service has pur-
chased nine Pioneer systems al-
together. •

USAF considers

new Popeye use
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he USAF Tactical Air Com-
mand (TAC) is to evaluate
the Israeli-developed Popeye
AGM-142 television-guided mis-
sile. The TAC intends to operate
a mixture of guided stand-off
weapon systems and Popeye is
considered a candidate.

The Popeye, developed by Ra-
fael, the Israeli armament devel-
opment authority, has a 454kg
warhead and can be launched
from a range of up to 113km
(70nm). The US Air Force Stra-
tegic Air Command (SAC) has
already procured the Israeli mis-
sile following a series of suc-
cessful test launches from
B-52s. Popeye has been de-
ployed on B-52s operating
against Iraq and Kuwait say
reports.
Meanwhile, upgraded ver-
sions of the Rafael Python 3
air-to-air missile are being eval-
uated by the Israeli Air Force
—according to sources outside
Israel, a Python 4 is under
development.
The Python 3 is a third-
generation short-range missile
with all-aspect capability, in-
cluding head-on interception.
Python 3 has a maximum range
of 15km, but it is most efficient
at ranges of 600m to 5km. •

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