

Gibson Promises Demobilization Of RCAF Sept. 30

Ottawa, May 27 (CP).—Air Minister Gibson announced today that Sept. 30 had been set as the deadline for RCAF demobilization.

This would conform to the February estimate of Defense Minister Abbott, who said that demobilization and discharge of all wartime forces would be completed by October or November, and that all aspects of winding up wartime forces—including the movement of war brides—will be completed by December.

A release plan, for those serving in Canada, sets forth the diminishing number of release points necessary for discharge in each month until the deadline. Thus, each serviceman is told the month in which he will qualify for release and may make his plans accordingly.

Personnel overseas, unless interim force volunteers or regular force desirous of continued service, are released upon return to Canada. Present strength of the overseas force is approximately 5,000.

It is planned that the overseas force will be completely repatriated during the summer, with the exception of a small London headquarters staff which will be made up of regular personnel.

"An examination of demobilization figures as at April 30, 1946, reveals that satisfactory progress has been made," Col. Gibson said. "Since VE-Day—June 8, 1945—the air force has reduced its strength by over 83 per cent. On VE-Day, total strength was about 173,000, of whom approximately 114,000 were serving in Canada and 59,000 overseas. As at April 30, total strength had dropped to just under 29,000, with approximately 23,000 serving in Canada and 6,000 overseas. Of these personnel, more than 5,000 have volunteered and have been accepted for continued service." A permanent force strength of 16,100 men has been authorized.

149
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