

# THE AIRBORNE SERVICES

## Home for Christmas

Squadron Leader Andrew R. MacKenzie, a prisoner of the Chinese Communists since December 13, 1952, was released on December 5 last and before a week had passed he was back at his home in Montreal.

S/L MacKenzie was shot down during the Korean War when flying on a fighter patrol on exchange duties with the USAF, one of 21 Canadian fighter pilots who so served at various times during this conflict.

## New CF-100 Squadron

The formation of a new all-weather fighter squadron equipped with CF-100 aircraft, has been announced. The squadron, 409, is based at RCAF Station Comox, B.C., and is commanded by Squadron Leader Francis E. Haley.

S/L Haley flew with 409 during World War II when it was a night fighter unit operating out of British and continental bases. The squadron was originally formed in England in June, 1941, at which time it was equipped with Boulton Paul Defiants. During the next few years it also flew Beaufighters and then Mosquitoes. It disbanded in July, 1945, in Holland.

No. 409 is believed to be the sixth regular all-weather squadron to be formed for home defence purposes, and the first to be based in Western Canada. This means there are about three squadrons, all all-weather units, still to be formed to bring the RCAF to its planned 41-squadron strength.

## L-19's for the Army

The Canadian Army is to re-equip its Air Observation Post Flights at Shilo, Manitoba, and Petawawa, Ont., with Cessna L-19 spotter aircraft. The Army recently announced that 16 new L-19's had been purchased for \$270,000 and will be used to replace the Auster type which it has used since shortly after the War. Deliveries of the L-19's have already started.

## Automatic Navigator

Wing Commander Jerauld G. Wright, DFC, has been credited by the RCAF with the invention of an ingenious automatic navigation instrument for use in high-speed aircraft.

The new instrument, known as the R Theta Computer and adopted for

use by the RCAF, gives the pilot of an aircraft the direction to steer and the distance to go to any position he sets into the device. It is independent of radio transmission for its operation, making it entirely immune to jamming, or radio interference. It also has the desirable qualities of being small and light.

Developed and manufactured by PSC Applied Research Ltd., Toronto, the R Theta Computer has been undergoing early tests by the RCAF.

A later navigational device, the Position & Homing Indicator, based on the same general principles as the R Theta Computer, was produced and

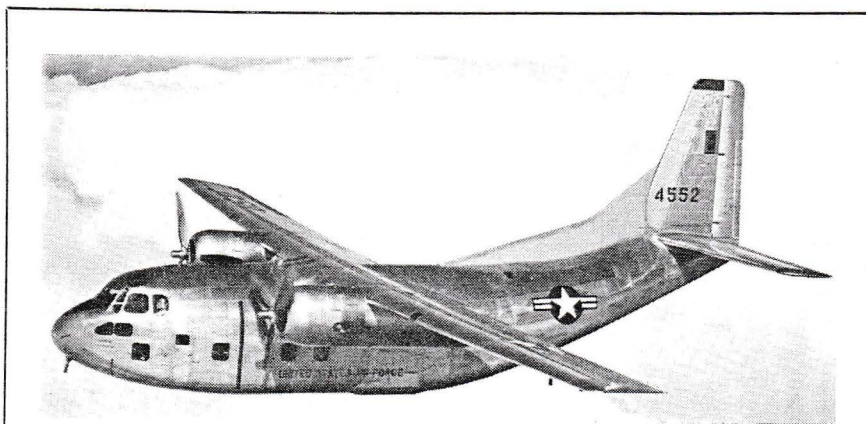
mander of HMCS Magnificent, has been posted to a staff position at Naval HQ, Ottawa.

- Captain A. H. G. Storrs, commander of the RCN's air station, HMCS Shearwater, has been named to succeed Cmdre. Rayner in command of HMCS Magnificent.

- Captain D. G. King has been appointed commanding officer of HMCS Shearwater. He was formerly director of naval plans & operations at Naval HQ.

## No. 7 Supply Depot

Now in operation is the RCAF's new supply depot at Namao, Alberta, near Edmonton. Known as No. 7 Supply Depot and operated by Air Materiel Command, the sprawling single-storey reinforced-concrete struc-



**AIR TRUCK:** Production models of the USAF's C-123B Avitruc assault transport are now rolling from Fairchild Aircraft's assembly lines at Hagerstown, Maryland. Originally designed by the now-defunct Chase Aircraft Co., the Avitruc is classified as an assault transport because of its ability to land in or immediately after the initial military assault. It is powered by two 2500 hp P & W R-2800's.

developed under contract from the RCAF by Computing Devices of Canada Ltd., Ottawa. It differs from W C Wright's invention in that names of pre-selected positions are indicated on push-buttons mounted in the instrument, and homing indications to any of these positions may be obtained by simply pushing the button carrying the name of the base.

## Postings and Careers

- Air Commodore Keith L. B. Hodson, OBE, DFC, CD, has been named commandant of RCAF Staff College, Toronto, succeeding Air Commodore J. L. Hurley, who has retired from the service. Prior to this new appointment, A C Hodson was chief staff officer of Air Defence Command, St. Hubert, P.Q.

- Commodore H. S. Rayner, com-

mander of HMCS Magnificent, has been posted to a staff position at Naval HQ, Ottawa.

No. 7 covers 18½ acres with one roof and is so big that the staff of 300 civilians and 200 airmen move around on bicycles.

The Depot is an object lesson in materials handling. A spur line connects it with a railway siding 3½ miles away, and inside the building proper is some five miles of track on which a 50-ton diesel locomotive moves about with freight cars. Trucks unload or load at a covered ramp which is equipped with 20 hydraulic hoists adjustable to any truck's height. Inside there are more than 30 mobile cranes to handle supplies. There is an assembly-line packing area and shops for making wooden crates and cartons.