

U.S. to Remove All

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AF Units in France

NATO Shift Will Affect 20,300

**Pullout Scheduled
In Few Months,
McNamara Says**

By John G. Norris
Washington Post Staff Writer

Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara announced yesterday that all U.S. Air Force units and stocks of air and ground munitions and equipment will be withdrawn from France in the next few months.

Responding to President de Gaulle's demands for the evacuation of American forces from French soil, McNamara disclosed plans for the first major U.S. shifts of military men, dependents and equipment to new locations within NATO.

McNamara could give no immediate estimate of the cost of the move. He said the United States had about \$700 million invested in U.S. bases in France—not counting \$300 million contributed to the joint NATO infrastructure

there—and that it had been anticipated that the cost of relocating the American facilities might run as high as \$1 billion.

Sees Cost Reduced

But a recently approved plan to eliminate "excess" and "obsolete" war stocks in West Germany and move much of the munitions now in French depots to Germany, said McNamara, will cut this cost to a "fraction" of the former estimate. He said the actual moving costs will be small.

Some 122 aircraft, 7500 American airmen and civilians, 10,700 U.S. dependents and 2100 French employes at four U.S. air bases in France are involved in the Air Force withdrawal. McNamara said the total "American military presence" in France now affects 84,300 people—30,000 military personnel, 37,000 dependents and 17,300 French nationals on the American payroll.

The Pentagon chief said he could give no information at this time on the remaining U.S. personnel in France. He said discussions still are going on with the French government on the future of the 30 major

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France informs NATO it has withdrawn 15 planes from West Germany.

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Plans for Pullout In France Revealed

U.S. bases now maintained in standby or active forces by American Army, Air Force and Navy personnel.

He did announce these shifts:

- Movement of the USAF 322d Air Division and its two C-130 turboprop transport squadrons to Britain by Sept. 1.

Division headquarters will be transferred from Chateauroux, France, to High Wycombe, England, and the two squadrons totaling 32 planes will leave Evreux, near Paris, for Mildenhall AFB, near London. There are 2300 American airmen and civilians, 3100 dependents and 1200 French employes involved.

- Six squadrons of U.S. Air Force reconnaissance planes now based at Laon, Toul-Roisiere and Chambly air bases in France will be relocated. Efforts are being made, McNamara said, to base them elsewhere in Western

Europe, but some may be returned to the United States with an advanced base in Europe assigned for emergency use.

The 25th, 26th the 66th Tactical Reconnaissance Wings, consisting of 90 RF-101s, RB-66s and RF-4Cs, organized into six squadrons, have 5200 airmen and U.S. civilians, 3100 dependents and 1200 French nationals assigned.

- Shipment of "combat-essential" stocks of both ground and air munitions and equipment—about 575,000 tons—to other NATO countries, principally West Germany. He said there are now about 750,000 tons of war stocks in France and a like amount in Germany. McNamara added that a total of 124,000 tons in Germany and 175,000 tons in France have been adjudged "excess," as a result of the U.S. arms modernization program.

Some of the munitions in French depots will be shifted to Italy, said McNamara, for distribution to that country, Greece and Turkey under the military aid program. The remainder will be returned to depots in the United States, or made inoperable and sold as junk in Europe. He said that as far as he knew no equipment or ammunition will be moved directly to Vietnam, although some may later end up there.

The Pentagon chief insisted there would be no reduction in U.S. military capability in Europe as a result of the reduction in war stocks there.

McNamara was unable to estimate how many Army troops now manning the depots and the largely inactive "LOC"—or line of communications—running from French

ports to West Germany will be pulled out of France. Negotiations on many aspects of the troop withdrawal President deGaulle wants by April 1, 1967, are still under negotiation.

For the time being, U.S. maintenance cadres will be maintained at the four American Air Force bases put in inactive status several years ago, as well as the five bases from which the USAF units now will be moved. McNamara said that the French had indicated in correspondence that the United States could continue to use the fuel pipeline across France after the troop withdrawal.

The Pentagon announced also that official travel of dependents of U.S. military and civilian personnel to France from the United States will be suspended Aug. 1.