

Time Capsule

441 Squadron's New Role

by Randy Rice

The Cold War spanned the period 1945 -1991. During that time RCAF and Air Command squadrons came and went. One of those squadrons was 441 " Silver Fox" Squadron. Soon to be a unit of NORAD and a significant tool in the defence of North America.

On June 26, 1987 NORAD'S newest squadron was officially reactivated as a CF-18 squadron at CFB Cold Lake. 441 Tactical Fighter Squadron had returned to Canada, flying CF-18's after more than 30 years serving with NATO in Europe. The Squadron had been deactivated in March 1986 at CFB Baden-Soelingen with the phase-out of the CF-104.

The Squadron based at CFB Cold Lake dedicates two aircraft on full-time alert at CFB Comox B.C., its deployed operating base.

LGen Donald McNaughton, NORAD'S deputy commander-in-chief (DCINC) stated at 441's activation, "It will help us fill in the gap between two squadrons from Tacoma and Alaska".

For LCol Ian Struthers, commanding officer of 441 Sqn and a member of the squadron in its CF-104 days, the time ahead is one of challenges and excitement. It involves taking 203 personnel-including 20 pilots and turning them into an operational ready squadron.

In addition to the presence of 410 Squadron, already based in Cold Lake, 441 Squadron provided additional punch to North America's first line of defence.

Current time frame. In recent weeks much emphasis has been directed to strengthen the first line of defence and how significant it continues to be. As of this date personnel of NORAD continue to provide for our

security at a time when it is needed more than ever and yet their service continues still to be unacknowledged by our government's honours and awards system by not awarding a "NORAD bar" to the Special Service Medal similar to what is done for service in NATO.



