

DEPARTURE OF AIR MARSHAL H.S.P. WALMSLEY, CB, CBE, MC, DFC.

11
May 10/57
The last official function of the Royal Air Force in Delhi took place today when Air Marshal H.S.P. Walmsley, C.B., C.B.E., M.C., D.F.C., left Delhi en route to the U.K. Reconstitution and Nationalisation of the Royal Indian Air Force and Royal Pakistan Air Force has proceeded with the utmost speed since August 15th so that, apart from a few volunteers who have been requested to stay on with the Dominion Air Forces, Reconstitution has virtually been completed and the task of the Supreme Commander's Headquarters, Air Headquarters is now over. On completion of his duties as Deputy Supreme Commander (Air), Air Marshal Walmsley was, therefore, free to take up another appointment in the U.K.

2. Ever since his appointment as A.O.C-in-C, India, in October 1946, he has preached the doctrine of complete and speedy Nationalisation, and later, in his appointment as D.S.C. (Air), he has striven to ensure that both Dominion Services were given a firm foundation for building strong and efficient services for the future.

3. An officer with a distinguished record in both world wars, Air Marshal Walmsley was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment in December, 1915. He was seconded to the Royal Flying Corps in September, 1916, and served as a pilot with No. 55 Squadron B.E.F. till the end of the war, during which time he was awarded the Military Cross. In the interim period between the two wars, he held many and varied appointments at home and overseas, including a period of service in Iraq during which he was awarded the D.F.C. During the second world war he commanded R.A.F. Station Scampton, and later No. 91 Group who were responsible for the operational training of a majority of Bomber Command crews. From February, 1944 to May, 1945 he was Senior Air Staff Officer at Headquarters, Bomber Command. For those services he was mentioned in despatches five times and awarded the C.B., and C.B.E. He took over as A.O.C-in-C India in October, 1946, after having been Air Officer i/c Administration since May of that year. On the Partition of the Air Forces on August 15th, he became Deputy Supreme Commander (Air).

4. Air Marshal Walmsley's last official act was to send the following message to Air Marshal Sir Thomas W. Blomfield, Commanding R.I.A.F., and Air Vice Marshal A.L.A. Perry-Keene, Commanding R.P.A.F. :-

"On relinquishing my appointment of Deputy Supreme Commander (Air) and Air Officer Commanding Royal Air Force Units in India and Pakistan, please convey to all ranks of the R.I.A.F. and R.P.A.F. my sincere thanks and appreciation of the excellent work and loyal support they have given me throughout a difficult period of Reorganisation, Demobilisation, Clearing up the aftermath of world war two and finally of Reconstitution.

That the R.I.A.F. and R.P.A.F. have a great future and very important role to fulfill in the restoration of peace and prosperity to all men of good will there is not the smallest doubt. May I wish you all every success and good fortune in the great tasks which lie ahead of you."

5. On arrival at Palam Airport, the Air Marshal was received by a general salute from the guard of honour of both R.A.F. and R.I.A.F. Amongst the many friends who gathered to say farewell to Air Marshal and Mrs. Walmsley were H.E. The Supreme Commander, Sir Terence and Lady Shone, H.E. the Belgian Ambassador, Air Marshal Sir Thomas Blomfield, Gen. Sir Arthur and Lady Smith, Gen. Sir Reginald Savory, Air Commodore R.B. Jordan, Air Commodore S. Mukerjee, Col. D.H. Currie and many other high ranking officers of the Army, R.A.F. and R.I.A.F.

6. Before departing, Air Marshal Walmsley handed over his duties of D.S.C.(Air) and A.O.C., R.A.F. Units in India and Pakistan to Air Commodore R.B. Jordan, C.B., D.F.C., who will complete the closure of Supreme Commander's Headquarters, Air Headquarters on the 17th November, 1947.

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