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Return and Leave to Canada for Personnel
of the Canadian Army Overseas.

1. This report deals with the principal means by which personnel of the Canadian Army Overseas have obtained periods of home service in, or leave to Canada. The report is divided into five sections as follows:

- (a) Compassionate return and leave to Canada.
- (b) Prisoner of War Escort detachments.
- (c) Returned instructors to Canada.
- (d) Proposed scheme for leave to Canada.
- (e) Total personnel returned to Canada.

Insofar as the records are readily available at C.M.H.Q. figures relating to each sub-title will be given.

COMPASSIONATE RETURN AND LEAVE TO CANADA

2. The problem of compassionate leave to Canada for family or business reasons arose within a few months of the arrival of the Canadian troops overseas. As early as 15 Feb 40, Major-General (later Lieut.-General) H.D.G. Crerar, Senior Officer, C.M.H.Q., took the matter up with H.Q., 1 Cdn Div. He pointed out that several cases had already come to his attention and expressed the view that the number of these cases was bound to increase as the time of separation from home life grew longer. He suggested therefore that steps should be taken to lay down a definite policy with regard to the return of individuals to Canada on compassionate grounds, pointing out that it was essential that any policy adopted should consider both the questions of temporary leave for a maximum of four months, and permanent return to Canada for disposal of the personnel concerned (C.M.H.Q. file 19/Compassionate/1; Gen. Crerar to H.Q. 1 Cdn Div, 15 Feb 40). In the case of officers and Warrant Officers, Class 1, General Crerar felt that compassionate leave might be granted at the individual's expense. Should the grounds on which the leave might be granted warrant a permanent stay in Canada, consideration would then be given to the question of refund for transportation. The return to Canada in the case of other ranks (and special cases of officers) would be at Government expense. In every instance the soldier would be struck off strength the Canadian Army Overseas (*ibid.*). This policy was approved by H.Q., 1 Cdn Div (*ibid.*: Col. Sansom, A.A. & Q.M.G., to S.O., C.M.H.Q., 1 Mar 40), and was submitted to OTTAWA on 5 Mar 40 (*ibid.*: Gen. Crerar to Secretary, Department of National Defence).

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3. The files available do not indicate whether the policy outlined above was officially authorized by N.D.H.Q. Nevertheless it would appear that all cases of compassionate leave which occurred during 1940 and early 1941 were governed by the principles suggested by General Crerar.

4. In September 1941, however, the prevailing policy was reviewed at C.M.H.Q. The question of compassionate leave was then under discussion at OTTAWA where it was proposed to issue a routine order on this matter applying to the troops in Canada. This order, C.A.R.O. 1145, was published on 24 Oct 41. It laid down that discharges would only be considered in cases where extreme hardship would be caused to the soldier concerned by his retention in the army. In this connection it must be ascertained that the circumstances have changed since enlistment, and that such change could not have been foreseen at the time of enlistment; if the discharge was requested on financial grounds, it would be necessary to demonstrate that the soldier has made every effort to alleviate the condition. The application must contain all available information and must be recommended by the Officer Commanding of the unit, and the General or District Officer Commanding concerned.

5. Subsequently, a similar order was published overseas. This was Overseas R.O. 1156, 24 Oct 41, published under the heading "Return and Leave to Canada on Compassionate Grounds".

6. This order set forth the conditions under which applications for compassionate return or leave to Canada would be considered. It stated that leave would be granted "only in very exceptional cases" and not ordinarily at public expense. Any application would require the recommendation of:

- (a) O.C. unit.
- (b) In the case of units under Corps: the Divisional Commander and H.Q. Corps.
- (c) In the case of units under C.B.U.: the Commander Canadian Base Units.
- (d) In the case of units under Canadian Forestry Corps: the Commander, C.F.C.

Details would then be sent to OTTAWA, and N.D.H.Q. requested to carry out an investigation with a view to substantiating the facts as outlined by the applicant.

7. This procedure was followed throughout 1942. It appears, however, to have caused some dissatisfaction owing to the time taken to complete each case. On 30 Oct 42, the D.A. & Q.M.G., First Cdn Army, wrote to C.M.H.Q. pointing out that it takes from two to three months for a decision to be reached by N.D.H.Q. as to whether circumstances warrant return (ibid.: 30 Oct 42). In November 1942, in response to numerous reminders regarding delays in investigations, N.D.H.Q. pointed out the various difficulties in the way of obtaining necessary information, but stated that a special

section had been established to deal with these cases in the future (ibid.: Tel A.G. 1076, DEFENSOR to CANMILITRY, 13 Nov 42).

8. A report prepared at C.M.H.Q. in response to a request received from N.D.H.Q. in April 1943 indicated that the situation then was that of 647 applications received during the period 1 Oct 42 to 14 Apr 43, 338 had been referred to N.D.H.Q., and 112 of these had been authorized for return to Canada (ibid.: Tel A.G. 3152, DEFENSOR to CANMILITRY, 11 Apr 43; Tel A. 1237, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 15 Apr 43).

9. With a view to speeding up the rejections or approvals of applications, Lieut.-General A.G.L. McNaughton, G.O.C.-in-C., First Cdn Army, in a letter of 12 May 43, suggested "that in the future applications be forwarded by the unit concerned direct to Cdn Sec, G.H.Q., 2 Ech, for transmission to C.M.H.Q." (ibid.: Gen. McNaughton to S.O., C.M.H.Q.). This proposal was concurred in by C.M.H.Q. and Overseas R.O. 3525 was published on 10 Jun 43. This order provided that applications for compassionate return and leave to Canada for all units under command First Cdn Army would be submitted direct to Cdn Sec, G.H.Q., 2 Ech, for transmission to C.M.H.Q. In the case of units under command C.M.H.Q., applications would be sent direct to C.M.H.Q. This applied in the case of all regimental officers up to the rank of major (excluding however majors holding appointments of 2 i/c of units) and other ranks. The applications of all other officers of field formations and units would require the recommendations of the formation commander immediately concerned, who would refer appropriate cases to higher authority. Such applications would be forwarded through normal channels (R.O. 3525, 10 Jun 43).

10. The commitment of a large part of the Canadian Army Overseas to operations in the Mediterranean theatre accentuated the problem of compassionate leave. Many of these troops, particularly in 1 Cdn Div, had had long service overseas, and the long separation from their families was increasingly occupying their attention. This matter was the subject of a cable of 26 Apr 44 from Lt.-Gen. E.L.M. Burns, G.O.C. 1 Cdn Corps, A.A.I., to the Chief of Staff, C.M.H.Q., Lt.-Gen. K. Stuart. The following is a summary of the points raised in this cable in connection with compassionate leave problems in that theatre:

- (a) The subject of leave to Canada is more in the minds of troops in this theatre (Italian) than ever before (see Appendix "C"). Many men have been away from home for over four years. Discontent is added to by the belief that return to Canada on Compassionate Grounds is about impossible.
- (b) This belief is incorrect, but the following facts lend colour to it. Figures from Cdn Sec, 2 Ech, Allied Armies Italy, as of 22 Apr 44, give the total applications received as 169. New cases received during preceding week 25. Number of applications approved during the week 3. Average time required to complete investigation six weeks.

- (c) It would appear that the back log indicated above will never be cleared up and simply gets worse as time goes on.

General Burns recommended that "fresh assurance" should be given all ranks "that every effort will be made to deal promptly and generously with future applications", that "every effort be made to shorten the period between submission of applications and approval or rejection" and that "special consideration be given to those who have seen long service overseas" (19/Compassionate/1/2: A.C.A. 2649, ADNAP (from CANDEX) to CANMILITRY, 26 Apr 44).

11. C.M.H.Q. took up the matter with N.D.H.Q., recommending that A.A.I. applications be given priority and that every possible effort be made to complete investigations in the shortest possible time (ibid.: Tel A.2975, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 3 May 44).

12. A further cable in May to General Stuart from General Burns gave additional information on the situation as follows:

2 Echelon data here indicates applications being received at rate of 70 per month. Based on total strength Cdn forces here this works out to one application per thousand men per month. If five percent of applications were approved each month this would mean routing of forty Cdns each month to UK or Canada. Am informed that no difficulty would arise in obtaining surface passage for this or a greater number.

Number of headquarters through which each application goes tends to slow up completion of investigation. Recommend strongly that 2 Echelon here be allowed to cable direct to Defensor.

(ibid.: Tel A.C.A. 2808, ADNAP (from Candex) to CANMILITRY, 11 May 44).

13. The points brought up by these communications were investigated by C.M.H.Q., particular attention being paid to the lapse of time. It was estimated that:

- (a) By airmail using the channel, Unit - 2 Ech-C.M.H.Q. - N.D.H.Q., the time taken was 71 days.
- (b) By cable using the same channel of communication, the time taken was 42 days.
- (c) By cable direct from 2 Ech to N.D.H.Q., the time taken was 39 days.

Investigation in Canada took up 35 days of this time (ibid.: Memo by A.G.7a, C.M.H.Q., 17 May 44). From this it appeared that the delay was caused by the time taken to complete investigations in Canada (ibid.: Minute by Col. C.H. Walker, A.D.A.G. (B), C.M.H.Q., no date).

14. Steps were taken to eliminate as far as possible the complaints outlined by General Burns. Cdn Sec, G.H.Q. 2 Ech, A.A.I., was instructed to forward all applications for compassionate leave and compassionate return, by cable to C.M.H.Q. (45/Trans/3/2: Tel A.3972, CANMILITRY to 1 Cdn Corps, 11 Jun 44). At the same time, it was recommended that compassionate cases and married personnel, who had been more than four years away from their families, would have priority for P.O.W. escorts. This ruling applied more particularly to A.A.I. (For further information on this point see para 31) (Ibid.).

15. Statistical data with respect to compassionate return and leave to Canada is not readily available prior to August 1942 (for figures after Aug 42, see Appx "B"). However, a report submitted to A.D.A.G. (B), C.M.H.Q. on 26 Aug 43, yields the following information for the period 1 Aug 42 to 31 Jul 43:

We have handled compassionate return cases to the number of 899.

Of these 153 have been sent back to Canada under R.O. 3525.

In approximately 10 per cent of the cases handled the O.C. unit has been informed of the nature of the investigation in Canada and advised to include the individuals in P.O.W. escorts. The remainder have been rejected or are still under investigation.

(ibid.: A.A.G. (Pers) to A.D.A.G. (B), C.M.H.Q. 26 Aug 43). For further figures see Appx "B".

PRISONER OF WAR ESCORT DETACHMENTS

16. An opportunity to send men back to Canada on leave, on other than purely compassionate grounds, was opened to C.M.H.Q. in October 1941. At that time a proposal was received from the British authorities to employ Canadian personnel as P.O.W. escorts, and a request was made for a first escort. (C.M.H.Q. file 45/Trans/3: Memo from Directorate of P.O.W., War Office, to S.O., C.M.H.Q., 20 Oct 41).

17. The British proposal was viewed favourably by C.M.H.Q. Brigadier Beament, D.A.G., wrote "We might take advantage of the offer to give, what would be, in fact, leave in Canada to personnel who had been in this country for a long period. I suggest 18 months continuous service overseas as a minimum" (ibid.: D.A.G. to A.A.G. (Pers), 28 Oct 41). He went on to say that although a limited number might be found from personnel returning to Canada permanently, the majority would have to be from personnel who would be returned to the United Kingdom on the conclusion of duty and leave (ibid.). The matter was referred to the Corps Commander, Lt.-Gen. A.G.L. McNaughton (ibid.: 30 Oct 40), and on receiving his concurrence, to N.D.H.Q. (ibid.: Tel A.1995, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 31 Oct 41). Official approval was received from OTTAWA on 3 Nov 41 (ibid.: Tel A.G.254, DEFENSOR to CANMILITRY, 3 Nov 41).

18. The War Office estimated that a guard of six officers and 110 other ranks, who would be trained in their duties at a special British establishment, would be required. Their services would be needed for three months, varying, of course, in accordance with the supply of shipping at both the United Kingdom and Canada ends. All expenses, apart from pay and allowances which would continue to be a Canadian responsibility were to be borne by the British Government. It was agreed that upon the conclusion of their duties in Canada, personnel would be released for return to the United Kingdom (ibid.: Memo D.A.G., C.M.H.Q. to A.A.G. (Pers), C.M.H.Q., 28 Oct 41). The escort detachment was to consist of a headquarters staff and a guard whose number, all ranks, would approximate ten per cent of the prisoners escorted (ibid.: C.M.H.Q. Adm O. No. 208, 13 Dec 41).

19. Steps were now taken at C.M.H.Q. to determine a suitable selection procedure. Three guiding principles were agreed upon. The individuals chosen were to be men who had completed 18 months' service in the C.A.S.F., with a record of good conduct throughout, and whose bearing was such that it would reflect credit upon the Canadian Army. Those selected would be sent for training in British P.O.W. camps. Upon the conclusion of their training, they would be either returned to their own units or detailed for duty in a P.O.W. escort detachment. The tour of duty was to count against a privilege leave in the United Kingdom, with free transportation warrants for their Canadian leave (45/Trans/3: Tel A.1995 CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 31 Oct 41; Tel A.G. 254 DEFENSOR to CANMILITRY, 3 Nov 41).

20. The granting of privilege leave in Canada having been C.M.H.Q.'s primary object in agreeing to the provision of this personnel, it was agreed that 1 Cdn Div, as the senior formation overseas, should have first claim in the allocation of numbers. The proportion finally agreed upon was 50 per cent from 1 Cdn Div and 25 per cent each from Corps Troops and Canadian Base Units. Provision was made for the inclusion of a small number of compassionate leave cases irrespective of length of service or the formation to which they belonged (ibid.: D.A. & Q.M.G., Cdn Corps to Units under Command, 5 Nov 41). This was, however, subsequently altered. Such compassionate cases were only to be eligible on the strength of their military record and length of service (ibid.: Tel. A.139, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 20 Jan 42).

21. The first P.O.W. escort was composed of six officers, one warrant officer, 23 S/Sgts and Sgts, and 175 rank and file. This represented an increase over the original estimate; in addition three British officers in the role of interpreters were supplied by the War Office (C.M.H.Q. file 6/1 POW Escort/1: Tel A.2379, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 26 Dec 41). Major A.G. Norrington, Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, was appointed to command the detachment. A medical staff of one officer and five other ranks were to serve the escort and draft (45/Trans/3: Memo of A.G.2, C.M.H.Q., 16 Dec 41). Arrangements were made for 1000 Ps. O.W., all other ranks, to embark on 19 Dec 41 (ibid.: Tel 2404, MASSEY to EXTERNAL, 16 Dec 41). The detachment sailed from LIVERPOOL in H.M.T. "Moreton Bay" on 23 Dec 41, arriving at HALIFAX on 1 Jan 42 (ibid.: Personal report of the voyage by Maj. A.H. Norrington, 1 Jan 42).

22. The Toronto Globe and Mail of 5 Jan 42 reported the arrival at "an Eastern Canadian Port" of "one thousand German prisoners ... under the eyes of jubilant Canadian soldiers headed for a few weeks precious leave after eighteen months in England". The officers in charge of the movement were reported to have said that the "experiment of having troops headed for leave guard the prisoners was a complete success on this its first try out". All ranks were reported as being very excited at the prospect of seeing their homes again.

23. The escort returned to the United Kingdom on board H.M.T. "Orion". Of the original group only three officers and 130 other ranks returned. Three officers and 61 other ranks were retained in Canada (reasons unspecified) (45/Trans/3: Tel A.848, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 28 Mar 42; Tel A.G.949, DEFENSOR to CANMILITRY, 23 Apr 42). Of the remaining eight, one was granted additional leave by the embarkation authorities in HALIFAX, seven were absent without leave (ibid.: Report of Capt. T.M. Powers, A/O.C. 1 Cdn P.O.W. Escort Det to A.A.G. (Org), C.M.H.Q., 17 Mar 42). The Detachment disembarked at GLASGOW on 9 Mar 42 and proceeded from there to BORDON. After a short period, allowed for documentation, they were returned to their respective Reinforcement Units (ibid.).

24. During the period November and December 1941, while arrangements for the first P.O.W. escort were being made, no definite commitments were made by the War Office as to their future needs in this respect. Nevertheless consideration was given by C.M.H.Q. to the possibility of Canadian troops being used in further P.O.W. convoys. Provision was made for P.O.W. Detachments to be set up "from time to time as requested by the War Office and approved by this Headquarters" (45/Trans/3: C.M.H.Q. Circular Letter No. 285, 13 Dec 41). They were not entirely unprepared, therefore, when in March 1942 the War Office asked for Canadian personnel to form a second and third P.O.W. guard. There have been many later requests. At the date of writing a total of 21 Canadian P.O.W. Escort Detachments have been formed and despatched.

25. Selection policy during this period, December 1941 to July 1944, passed through three phases. The original intention was that personnel should be selected entirely on the basis of military record and length of service; only in very exceptional cases would leave on compassionate grounds be accepted as a valid reason for inclusion in the P.O.W. escorts (45/Trans/3: Tel A.139, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 20 Jan 42). At the request of C.M.H.Q. lists of personnel who met these requirements had been compiled by the units concerned, and from these lists the escorts were chosen. Generally speaking, this policy was adhered to throughout 1942. A detailed break-down of personnel comprising the escorts for this period is not readily available, but from an examination of the figure at hand (see Appx "A") it would appear that, although personnel selected came within the conditions laid down, age and medical category were used as a secondary basis of selection.

26. In January 1943 there was a change in policy. The original requirements remained in force, but provision was made for the inclusion of a small number of compassionate cases. The percentage of compassionate cases which might be

included was not then made firm. This change was the outcome of an investigation into a particular case, where an application for compassionate leave had come to the attention of General McNaughton (19/Compassionate/1: Major.-Gen. Turner, D.A. & Q.M.G. First Cdn Army to Major.-Gen. Montague, 1 Jan 43). On the grounds of not conforming with existing selection policy the application had been turned down, but the following recommendations were made by the Army Commander:

In this as well as in all others of a similar nature, if some military duty calls for the return of certain officers, and the officers for whom compassionate leave has been requested are suitable in all respects, every consideration should be given to detailing them for such duty. He (the Army Commander) requests, therefore, that no case of this nature be overlooked when we are sending personnel either officers or other ranks, back to Canada on duty.

(ibid.).

27. Early in May 1943 there was a further change in policy. The War Office had requested the loan of approximately 1400 all ranks of the Canadian Army for new escort duty. While willing to meet this request, C.M.H.Q. felt that it was obviously undesirable to use young, fit soldiers for this purpose, and therefore decided that overage and category personnel must be obtained. These men would be retained in Canada and would "be replaced by young, fit reinforcements" who could be utilized in the Canadian Army Overseas (C.M.H.Q. file 6/POW Escort/1: Gen. Montague to H.Q. First Cdn Army, 13 May 43). General McNaughton concurred in this proposal generally, but recommended that a maximum of 200 should come from fit personnel requiring temporary return on compassionate grounds (ibid.: Tel A.313 First Cdn Army to C.M.H.Q., 14 May 43). On 28 May, the proportion of compassionate cases to be included in the P.O.W. Detachments, was laid down by the Army Commander. The composition was to be as follows; one-seventh were to be category "A" personnel, while the remaining six-sevenths were to be overage and low category (19/Compassionate/1: Memo from A.G.7b, C.M.H.Q., to A.A.G. (Pers), 28 May 43).

28. An examination of the figures available (see Appx "A") reveals that, during the period ending 3 Feb 43, a large percentage of the personnel in P.O.W. escorts were being retained in Canada as overage or under category. From this, it might be concluded that such personnel were selected with the point in view that they would not be returned to the United Kingdom on the completion of their escort duties. Other personnel included were those returned as instructors, candidates for O.C.T.U., and various unclassified duties. A small number are listed as returned for compassionate reasons.

29. On 3 Mar 44 the P.O.W. evacuation programme for Operation "OVERLORD" was placed before C.M.H.Q. by the Director of P.O.W. at the War Office. It was estimated that during the three months following the operation approximately 40,000 prisoners of war would be sent to Canada and the U.S.A. each month. The War Office share of the escort required would amount to about 1,500 - 2,000 men per month. C.M.H.Q. was

asked to consider the possibility of providing all or a portion of this number (45/Trans/3/2: Memo Director P.O.W. War Office to S.O., C.M.H.Q., 3 Mar 44). In reply, General Montague stated that 400 Canadian personnel per month could be provided for P.O.W. escorts (ibid.: Gen. Montague to the Under Secretary of State, War Office, 9 Mar 44). This figure was based on a consideration of figures regarding personnel returned to Canada during the six months previous (see Appx "B").

30. This proposal provided an opportunity to clear up the situation as regards compassionate and semi-compassionate cases among troops in the Italian theatre. A cablegram was accordingly despatched on 11 Jun 44 by General Montague to General Burns, asking him to despatch from Italy, on each of two drafts, up to 380 other ranks, and a limited number of officers to the United Kingdom for this duty. Priority was to be given to married men with wives in Canada, who had been away from home for over four years, and to personnel who had been wounded two or more times. Authorized compassionate cases must be sent; other compassionate cases where the evidence available was satisfactory might also be sent (ibid.: Tel A.3972, CANMILITRY to 1 Cdn Corps, 11 Jun 44). This was further extended on 22 Aug 44 by the inclusion of compassionate leave and compassionate return cases whose applications have been submitted (ibid.: Tel A.5914, CANMILITRY to A.A.I. for CANDEX, 22 Aug 44). On 23 Aug 44, Canadian troops under 21 Army Group were requested to select personnel for inclusion in P.O.W. escorts, the policy of selection being the same as that laid down for 1 Cdn Corps (ibid.: Gen. Montague to Cdn Sec, G.H.Q., 2 Ech, 21 Army Group, 23 Aug 44).

31. During the period from 23 Dec 41, when the first escort sailed from the United Kingdom, until 28 Aug 44, a grand total of 140 officers and 3,904 other ranks had been returned to Canada under this scheme (see Appx "A" for further details).

RETURN TO CANADA OF INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL

32. The provision of instructors for the training centres in Canada was a further method by means of which personnel of the Canadian Army Overseas obtained periods of home service. The first request from Canada for such personnel was received at C.M.H.Q. on 5 Oct 40. General Crerar, Chief of the General Staff, N.D.H.Q., in a cable of that date to General McNaughton, stated that it had been anticipated that returned battle casualties would be used for this purpose, but owing to the changed strategical situation, it would be necessary for the Canadian units in the United Kingdom to provide instructors to strengthen the staff of the Canadian Training Centres (C.M.H.Q. file 1/Instructors/1: Tel G.S. 2206, DEFENSOR to CANMILITRY). It was desired that these instructors be sent from time to time until returned casualties were available (ibid.). General McNaughton approved the proposal, and arrangements went forward for the selection of suitable personnel (ibid.: Tel G.S. 2139, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 10 Oct 40).

33. During 1940 and 1941 the Canadian Army Overseas supplied from time to time, as requested, instructors for the Training Centres in Canada. On 29 Feb 42 an amendment was made to the selection policy. In a letter of that date, to the formations and units under his command, Lieut.-General Crerar, then G.O.C. 1 Cdn Corps, announced that where possible instructors would be employed in their home districts

(ibid.: 24 Feb 42). This meant that, although selections would continue to be based on instructional ability, an effort would be made to choose men from the provinces or military districts in which the Training Centres requiring instructors were located; in other words consideration was to be given to the soldier's territorial affiliations (ibid.: Tel G.S. 2223, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 24 Oct 40).

34. This policy, which offered returning instructors every opportunity for home leave, was, however, later abandoned. The paramount need was for instructors of the highest calibre to train recruits in Canada. Thus, with this in view, Gen. K. Stuart, Chief of Staff, C.M.H.Q., in a letter to the Secretary, Department of National Defence, on 6 Jun 44, wrote that "compassionate grounds and territorial questions will not be considered in the selection of returning personnel" (1/Instructors/1/5).

35. No evidence has been found to indicate that the granting of leave to Canada for deserving personnel was ever, during the period October 1940 to June 1944, a real factor in the selection of instructors for Canada. However, between January 1942 and August 1944 587 officers and 2292 other ranks (see Appx "B") did obtain a period of home service under this scheme, and a large number of them were undoubtedly men with long service overseas. And the fact of returning to Canada did give them opportunities of visiting their families.

PROPOSED SCHEME FOR LEAVE TO CANADA

36. Early in 1944 the question of laying down a definite policy for home leave to Canada was broached by C.M.H.Q. Many Canadian soldiers had been overseas since 1939 and 1940. Moreover the War Office had announced a policy for British and Colonial troops. This provided for the despatch of Indian troops home on leave after three years service abroad; East and West Africans after two years; and United Kingdom troops after five years (C.M.H.Q. file 19/Gen/2: Director Staff Duties, War Office to C.M.H.Q., 14 Feb 44).

37. On 21 Feb 44, the repatriation of British troops with long service abroad was the subject of a statement by Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons. Replying to questions, the British Prime Minister stated that "such shipping as can be made available -- is being used to bring back to the home establishment men who have been overseas for many years"; further that "men who have been abroad for over five years are being brought home". He made it clear that the intention was to shorten the term of service; "We are hoping to shorten this as shipping permits and as the war progresses but I cannot do any more than I have said up to the present" (ibid.: Evening Standard, London, 22 Feb 44).

38. The situation, in the case of the two sister Dominions of South Africa and New Zealand, was even more favourable to the soldier. The South Africans had been completely exchanged, after two years service abroad. In the main, this was caused by the need to refit after Tobruk, where casualties had been very heavy. The New Zealand plan was that all troops would be eligible for return after three years service abroad. Under this scheme it was estimated that all

New Zealand personnel would have been on leave or repatriated in three months time (ibid.: Memo of Col. V.S.C. McClenaghan, A.D.A.G. (B), 22 Feb 44). "The chief reason for granting this leave is to avoid deterioration of morale and lowering of efficiency. It has been observed in many cases that the long time away from home has resulted in a lowering of efficiency and morale" (ibid.).

39. No provision had been made for the return of Canadian personnel to Canada after a period of overseas service; nor had there been any large scale exchange of personnel except those returned to Canada for duty, liaison, P.O.W. escorts and compassionate leave under the circumstances outlined above (ibid.: Minute to Memo from Director of Staff Duties, War Office, to C.M.H.Q., 14 Feb 44). The deterring factors would appear to have been the lack of shipping and the effect upon the manpower situation in Canada (ibid.: Memo of Col. V.S.C. McClenaghan, A.D.A.G. (B), 22 Feb 44). Nevertheless the absence of such provision, in view of the announcement of British policy and the opportunities afforded to other Dominion troops and the Americans, excited considerable dissatisfaction among Canadian personnel, principally those serving in Italy. This was particularly true of those who had been overseas since 1939. The following extract from a soldier's letter quoted in the Censorship Report for 16-31 Mar 44 was typical of many:

I am sure at home there are plenty of able-bodied men to take our places some who would take over for awhile while we met our loved ones. (2 Cdn Fd Amb).

(C.M.H.Q. file 19/Canada/2:
Extracts from Appreciation and
Censorship Report No. 41, Period
16-31 Mar 44. For further
extracts, etc., see Appx "C").

40. In order to meet this problem a step towards the granting of home leave was taken in April 1944. In a letter to Lt.-Gen. H.D.G. Crerar, G.O.C.-in-C., First Cdn Army, on 27 Apr 44, General Montague proposed the adoption by the Canadian Army of the War Office Tri-wound scheme. "As you know", he wrote, "there is a considerable demand for general leave to Canada for those soldiers who have been away from home for a matter of four years or more, and the adoption of the Tri-wound scheme would in a small measure help to meet this demand" (ibid.). This scheme, as proposed by the War Office, provides for the return to the United Kingdom of personnel who have been wounded, other than trivially, three times since 3 Sep 40. Qualifying wounds were those which had necessitated removal to General Hospitals, Casualty Clearing Stations, or Field Dressing Stations. The Commanding Officers concerned would receive applications and forward them to Cdn Sec G.H.Q., 2 Ech for verification and consideration. 2 Ech would keep the records of eligibility and would be responsible for notifying Commanding Officers as to personnel who were eligible. Return of personnel, thus selected, would not be automatic, but only if and when passage was available. The personnel so returned would be retained in the United Kingdom for a period of at least six months. In applying such a scheme to the Canadian forces it would be

necessary to consider the return of personnel to both the United Kingdom and Canada (*ibid.*). The proposal was approved by H.Q., First Cdn Army, and a Routine Order was published making the scheme firm along the lines indicated above (R.O. 4902, 9 Aug 44).

41. In March 1944 Lt.-Col. G.S. Currie, Deputy Minister of National Defence, visited the United Kingdom. General Montague discussed with him the question of leave to Canada. It was agreed, however, that nothing could be done for the present owing to the fact that active operations on the Continent of Europe were then pending. There was also the question of shipping to be considered. In a memo dated 13 Apr 44 General Montague wrote:

My quick appreciation of the subject was that we would be glad to have a system for leave to Canada established, but that it would be entirely dependent on N.D.H.Q. producing the shipping. I think the Deputy Minister appreciates this.

He added, however, that the whole question should be considered from every angle (19/Canada/2: Memo to Brig. Booth, from Gen. Montague).

42. On 2 May 44 a submission was received at C.M.H.Q. from Brigadier E.G. Weeks, O.I.C. Cdn Sec, G.H.Q., 1 Ech, A.A.I., outlining the view of the G.O.C., 1 Cdn Corps, on the subject. This pointed out that, apart from compassionate leave, no provision existed for the return of Canadian personnel to Canada on leave. Brigadier Weeks referred to the fact, already noted, that other Empire forces, and the Americans, had a policy governing return home on leave (see Appx "D"), and that the absence of a similar policy for Canadians had resulted in dissatisfaction on the part of Canadian troops in the Mediterranean theatre. For this reason, it was requested that the granting of leave of absence to Canada should be given immediate consideration and a policy announced. To assist the determination of such a policy several proposals were made by Brig. Weeks, which were briefly as follows:

- (a) No service leave to be granted before 15 Sep 44.
- (b) The length of service counted as qualifying for such leave to be four years unbroken service outside Canada, of which period six months must have been served in A.A.I.
- (c) Only 5 per cent of unit strength to proceed on service leave in any one month.
- (d) Of those eligible under (b) preference to be given to:
 - (i) Individuals with longest service.
 - (ii) Married personnel.
 - (iii) Individuals with satisfactory conduct.
- (e) Leave of absence, based on service, to be separate from compassionate leave.

(*ibid.*: Brig. Weeks to Chief of Staff, C.M.H.Q., 2 May 44).

43. On 2 Jun 44, General Montague requested Brig. Booth to have some system in force by August, as he considered that:

N.D.H.Q. are expecting our appreciation and suggestions earlier. Of course, the bottleneck of the matter is shipping. I should think, however, that in so far as personnel returning from Italy is concerned, we could count on a couple of hundred a month without much difficulty, although this should be gone into, and possibly at least that number could be handled going to Canada.

(ibid.: Memo of Maj.-Gen. Montague to Brig. Booth, 2 Jun 44).

44. In accordance with this instruction a statement was prepared covering the situation and setting forth a proposed policy. The chief obstacle was the non-availability of shipping. This question had been discussed with the War Office, which, although sympathetic, would make no definite commitment as to what shipping space could be placed at the disposal of the Canadian authorities. This, the War Office pointed out, was dependent upon operational requirements. It was, however, suggested that probably 2000 men per month could be handled. With regard to the number involved, a rough survey had been made at Records, C.M.H.Q., which indicated that there were 45,000 personnel serving overseas, who had arrived in the United Kingdom prior to December 1940, and 110,000 who arrived prior to December 1941. These figures, owing to the confidential nature of the inquiry, are not statistically accurate, but sufficiently so to consider the question on a broad basis (ibid.: Memo to D.A.G. from A.D.A.G. (B), C.M.H.Q., 10 Aug 41). Thus, a scheme, based on the conditions of:

- (a) no more than 5 per cent of unit strength to proceed on leave during any one month;
- (b) the qualifying service to be four years unbroken service outside Canada;

would mean, that, based on the 45,000 estimate, 2,200 would proceed on leave each month. Preference would have to be given to certain classes of personnel. Provision had already been made for compassionate and Tri-wound personnel so that these were not to be considered in deciding preferences. Broadly speaking the proposals put forward were as follows:

- (a) The leave be for 30 days plus travelling time.
- (b) The length of service required be not less than 4 years unbroken service outside Canada.
- (c) The number proceeding on leave each month be not more than 5 per cent of unit strength.
- (d) Preference would be given, if they were eligible under (b) for personnel:
 - (i) With the longest record of service.
 - (ii) In a theatre of operations, with the longest service outside the U.K.
 - (iii) Who are married and whose wives are residing in Canada.
 - (iv) Whose conduct has been satisfactory.

(ibid.).

45. In a letter dated 13 Aug 44 General Montague placed these recommendations before the G.O.C.-in-C., First Cdn Army. It was suggested, however, that the period of service qualifying towards such leave be $4\frac{1}{2}$ years of unbroken service outside Canada. This would decrease the number eligible to return, thus reducing the number of complaints from personnel who were eligible for leave but for various reasons could not be sent (ibid.).

46. The same question had meanwhile been under consideration at OTTAWA. On 4 Aug 44, Major.-General H.F.G. Letson wrote to C.M.H.Q. stating that N.D.H.Q. considered that three years service outside Canada should be the minimum qualifying period, but pointed out that the shorter qualifying period would mean that larger numbers of personnel would be eligible, thus increasing the difficulties of providing shipping and replacements. General Letson also drew attention to several problems attendant upon the general question of home leave to Canada. The points raised by the Adjutant-General were briefly as follows:

- (a) What would be the position of personnel who had been drawing trades pay overseas.
- (b) What would be the policy in regard to the ranks of personnel returned, if vacancies in the O/S establishments were filled.
- (c) Would personnel be retained in Canada if they were above the age limit.

He pointed out that if the total period of absence was to be three months, the number of overseas personnel available for duty, would be decreased by three times the number returning to Canada each month; to offset this would require that an equal number of replacements be sent from Canada. In fact, replacements would continuously be required throughout the operation of any such scheme, due to the number of personnel returning for leave, who would be permanently retained in Canada for reasons such as age and category. The replacement problem would be further complicated by the necessity of providing specially qualified personnel, particularly tradesmen (ibid.: Maj.-Gen. Letson, A.G., N.D.H.Q. to C.M.H.Q., 4 Aug 44).

47. The whole question is still under discussion and no further information is at present available. The urgency of the matter is, however, apparent to all; and the announcement of a policy for home leave for the Canadian Army Overseas may presumably be expected shortly.

TOTAL PERSONNEL RETURNED TO CANADA

48. It is a matter of interest to establish the actual number of men of the Canadian Army Overseas who have, for one reason or another, been returned to Canada, and to compare it with the total strength sent overseas during the war.

49. Examination of the records held by A.G. (Statistics), C.M.H.Q. reveals that from 3 Nov 39 to 31 Aug 44, a grand total of 23,400 officers and 289,417 other ranks of the Canadian Army arrived in the United Kingdom; while 4,715

officers and 33,749 other ranks returned to Canada during this same period. Prior to 1 Jan 42 the records do not specify the reason for return, but after that date details as to why personnel returned are given. These figures indicate, as might be expected, that the commonest cause for return was medical grounds. Other reasons for return, in which length of service would have greater significance, were P.O.W. Escort, Instructors and courses of all types (for figures relating to the above, see Appx "B" & "B.1").

50. This report was drafted by Capt. D.H. Cunningham, Carlisle & York R.

D.H. Cunningham
for (C.P. Stacey) Lt.-Col.
Historical Officer,
Canadian Military Headquarters.

APPENDIX "A"

STATISTICAL DATA - P.O.W. ESCORT DETACHMENTS

NOS. 1 to 21.

NO	DATE S.O.S. C.A. O/S	NO of Offrs	NO of O.Rs.	COMPOSITION.
1	23 Dec 41	6	199	(6/1 POW Escort/1: Tel A.2379, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 26 Dec 41). 61 members of this detachment retained in Canada for reasons of age or category (<i>ibid.</i> : Tel A.848, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 28 Mar 42; Tel A.G.949, DEFENSOR to CANMILITRY, 23 Apr 42).
2	25 Mar 42	8	167	Personnel returned to Canada for duty (6/2 POW Escort/1: Tel A.842, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 27 Mar 42).
3	8 Apr 42	7	160	Personnel were composed of 117 OCTU candidates, the balance being N.C.Os. returning for duty in Canada. (6/3 POW Escort/1: Report of the voyage by Major R.E. Buckner, O.C. No. 3 POW Escort Det, 16 Apr 42).
4	2 Dec 42	7	105	(6/4 POW Escort/1/2: Tel A.3758 CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 3 Dec 42). 71 members of this detachment were retained in Canada for reasons of age or category (<i>ibid.</i> : A.G., N.D.H.Q. to S.O., C.M.H.Q., 23 Mar 43, 16 May 43).
5	19 Dec 42	7	105	71 members of this detachment retained in Canada for reasons of age or category (6/5 POW Escort/1: A.G., N.D.H.Q. to S.O., C.M.H.Q., 23 Mar 43, 16 May 43).
6	13 Feb 43	7	105	Composed of 99 candidates for OCTU, balance returned for duty (6/6 POW Escort/1: Nominal Roll of 8/XUK/54, 8 Feb 43).
7	30 Apr 43	6	85	55 members of this detachment were retained in Canada for reasons of age or category (6/7 POW Escort/1: A.G., N.D.H.Q. to S.O., C.M.H.Q., 29 Jun 43).
8	6 Jun 43	7	210	177 members of this detachment were retained in Canada for reasons of age or category (6/8 POW Escort/1: A.G., N.D.H.Q. to S.O., C.M.H.Q., 28 Aug 43).
9	8 Jun 43	8	464	409 members of this detachment were retained in Canada for reasons of age or category (6/9 POW Escort/1: A.G., N.D.H.Q. to S.O., C.M.H.Q., 18 Sep 43).
10	23 Jun 43	6	112	(6/10 POW Escort/1: 8/XUK/62, 17 Jun 43). 77 members of this detachment were retained in Canada for reasons of age or category (<i>ibid.</i> : A.G., N.D.H.Q. to S.O., C.M.H.Q., 27 Oct 43, 2 Dec 43).

NO	DATE S.O.S. C.A. O/S	NO of Offrs	NO of O.Rs.	COMPOSITION
12	4 Jul 43	6	147	(6/12 POW Escort/1: Tel A.2173 CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 6 Jul 43). 123 members of this detachment were retained in Canada for reasons of age or category (<i>ibid.</i> : A.G., N.D.H.Q. to S.O., C.M.H.Q., 27 Oct 43, 15 Nov 43, 3 Dec 43, 9 Dec 43, 7 Jan 44).
13	23 Jul 43	7	215	Personnel returned for following reasons: Escort duty and leave, 14; age and category, 208; (6/13 POW Escort/1: Tel A.2401, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 23 Jul 43).
14	3 Aug 43	2	109	Personnel returned for following reasons: Escort duty, 5; A.Gs. Disposal, 1; Instructors, 34; OCTU 71; (6/14 POW Escort/1: S.O., C.M.H.Q. to Secretary Department of National Defence, 4 Sep 43).
15	21 Aug 43	7	215	All personnel returned for reasons of age or category (6/15 POW Escort/1: Tel A.2861 CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 21 Aug 43).
16	3 Feb 44	7	126	Personnel returned for following reasons: P.O.W. Escort duty, 28; duty, 1; compassionate leave, 1; reallocation, 103; (6/16 POW Escort/1: Rel A.746, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 3 Feb 44).
17	June 1944	6	151	Personnel returned for following reasons: Instructors, 10; duty, 9; compassionate leave, 41; underage, 7; reallocation, 90; (6/17 POW Escort/1: Tel A.4156, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 19 Jun 44).
18	June 1944	7	206	Personnel returned for following reasons: Instructors, duty and courses, 89; P.O.W. escort duty, 5; compassionate leave, 6; medical and age, 80; reallocation, 33; (6/18 POW Escort/1: Tel A.4428, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 29 Jun 44).
19	July 1944	5	102	Personnel returned for following reasons: Instructors and duty, 2; compassionate leave, 3; P.O.W. escort duty, 102; (6/19 POW Escort/1: Tel A.5122, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 25 Jul 44).
20	August 1944	7	285	Personnel returned for following reasons: P.O.W. Escort duty, 243; compassionate leave, 35; miscellaneous, 7; (6/20 POW Escort/1: Nominal Roll of 8/XUK/116 (NETD), 11 Jul 44).
21	August 1944	8	419	Personnel returned for following reasons: P.O.W. escort duty, 388; compassionate leave, 19; category, 20; (6/21 POW Escort/1: Tel A.6119, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 26 Aug 44)
TOTAL		140	3904	

NOTE:

- (a) The dates of S.O.S. Canadian Army overseas of detachments No. 1 - 13 are to be found in 6/12 POW Escort/1: Tel A.269, CANMILITRY to DEFENSOR, 14 Jan 44.
- (b) The dates of S.O.S. of Detachments No. 14 - 16 are to be found in 6/16 POW Escort/1: Memo of Brigadier Booth, D.A.G., C.M.H.Q., 18 Mar 44.
- (c) In the case of Detachments No. 17 - 21 the exact dates S.O.S. are not available; accordingly months only are given.
- (d) Care should be exercised in the use of the figures given under heading "Composition" in the case of POW Escort Detachments Nos. 1 to 12 (exclusive of Nos. 3 and 6). There is no official breakdown of the figures given under headings "Nos. of Offrs" and "Nos. of O.Rs.", available at C.M.H.Q.; and those given in the final column are to be found in the references cited. These figures may, however, be incomplete and should not be regarded as complete or exhaustive; they serve as a general guide only.

X STATISTICAL DATA - PERSONNEL RETURNED TO CANADA
November 1939 to July 1944

APPENDIX "B"

Total
Nov 39 to
31 Jul 44

	1939		1940		1941		1942		1943		1 Jan 44-31 Jul 44		Total	
Reason for Return	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs
Duty in Canada							516	389	455	281	332	91	1303	761
Medical							195	4483	236	4119	465	6067	896	14669
Overage & Category (Incl Reallocation)							-	-	10	782	-	4281	10	5063
A.G. Disposal							115	13	90	22	154	15	359	50
Underage							-	129	-	41	-	18	-	188
Compassionate Grounds							21	88	36	106	41	188	98	382
Leave in Canada							6	18	1	-	-	-	7	18
Instructors							322	1145	150	781	115	366	587	2292
C.J.W.S.C.							137	-	131	-	-	-	268	-
O.C.T.U.							-	663	-	686	-	109	-	1458
Courses							-	-	-	-	89	-	89	-
P.O.W. Escort							20	376	61	1658	7	132	88	2166
On Comd to Canada							4	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
Med Conducting Party							23	109	15	171	29	395	67	675
Ships Conducting Party							80	169	38	143	17	44	135	356
Miscellaneous							55	61	142	1960	54	23	251	2044
No Breakdown Available	N11	N11	122	1362	431	2265							553	3627
TOTALS	N11	N11	122	1362	431	2265	1494	7643	1365	10750	1303	11729	4715	33749

X These figures provided by A.G. (Stat) C.M.H.Q.

APPENDIX "B 1"

STATISTICAL DATA - ARRIVALS IN U.K.

3 Nov 39 - 31 Aug 44

Period	Offrs	ORs
3 Nov - 31 Dec 1939	681	15247
1 Jan - 31 Dec 1940	2805	39892
1 Jan - 31 Dec 1941	3985	66215
1 Jan - 31 Dec 1942	4720	58793
1 Jan - 31 Dec 1943	6840	72662
1 Jan - 31 Aug 1944	4369	36608
TOTAL	23400	289417

... These figures provided by AG (Stat) C.M.H.Q.

EXTRACTS FROM SOLDIERS' LETTERS RELATING
TO THE QUESTION OF LEAVE TO CANADA (C.M.F.)
Appreciation and Censorship Report No. 49
For Period 16-31 Jul 44
inclusive)

Part B.

4. Home Leave. The increasing volume of comment on the question of home leave indicates how large this problem is now looming in the minds of the troops. Those who have served for nearly five years are acutely conscious of the fact that they are unable to look forward to a period of leave as a duly earned right, and the authorities are bitterly criticised for failing to make provision in this respect. The granting of compassionate leave in exceptional circumstances, and the detailing of men for P/W Escort duty, have merely tended to aggravate the question in the eyes of the remainder.

(a) An offer: "As a matter of fact, leave is one of the shocking things about the Cdn Army.. There is no provision for getting men home at all, no matter what length of time they have been overseas or out of Canada. We are the only army that has not a policy covering this matter. We get a few of the more urgent ones home on the odd P/W Escort but it's a bad thing and I wish they would do something about it. Of course the old cry is we can't afford the manpower; and so, because they won't use the powers they have, the lads that volunteered get it in the neck just that much more. The time overseas is getting too long for a lot of the lads. The number of homes that are breaking up are too damn many, and the only solution of it is to get the lads home that have been away too long. There's a very strong feeling of resentment growing in some of the men about this and although it has little effect on this operation over here I feel they will have quite a bit to say after they get home. As a matter of fact it will probably be a good thing. It will make some people wake up".

(b) An N.C.O.: "The Americans get sent home after eighteen months overseas and the English lads with over four years overseas have all been sent back but as usual the Canadian is kept".

(c) A W.O.: "I don't think that I could feel any better, other than being lonesome and tired of this thing. Surely they will do something for us soon, if they haven't forgotten that we are over here. I think that we have done our part in this hell of a war. Five years is a long time off a man's life".

(d) An N.C.O.: "I see where I made a mistake, in not getting married before I left Canada, as the married men who have been away from home anywhere from three years and up are getting the privilege of escorting prisoners back to Canada. Guess I'll just have to remain until the end".

**X SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF LEAVE POLICY OF
OTHER BRITISH, DOMINION AND ALLIED FORCES.**

APPENDIX "D"

COUNTRY	LEAVE GRANTED	REQUIREMENTS	REMARKS	AUTHORITY
British	Posting to U.K.	5 yrs unbroken Army Service abroad.	Ruling date 1 Jan 44. Applies to all arms and branches of the service.	G.R.O. 138/44 d. 25 Feb 44.
United States	Posting to U.S.	(a) 6 mos. service (b) $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1% of units aggregate strength returned each month on rotational basis.	Personnel are not returned to this theatre.	
South Africa	30 days leave plus travelling time.	3 yrs service outside the union.		
India	2 mos. in India (a) V. C.Os. and I.O.Rs. (of all units excepting Gurkha units) (b) 3 mos. in India GOs, GORs and Gurkha NCs (E).	2 yrs service overseas	Vacancies allotted (a) by O2E (Ind) CMF not to exceed 6% of unit strength (b) O.C. unit sanctioning authority (c) leave is reckoned from date of leaving regimental centre until date of reporting back to regimental centre.	G.R.O. 249/44 d. 24 Mar 44
New Zealand (ME Policy)	28 days annually to all ranks (not definitely arranged to N.Z.)	(a) not to exceed 1.5% of unit at any one time (b) Discretion of formation commander.	No definite leave policy for CMF.	2 NZEF Order 1092
R.C.A.F.	(a) Return to U.K. (b) 8 wks leave in Can. from U.K.	Completion of 2 operational tours. Completion of one operational tour and one non-operational tour of 6 mos. in the U.K.	(a) applies only to aircrew (b) An operational tour varies on type of aircraft being used but may be from 6 mos to 18 mos.	

X The above information is taken from C.M.H.Q. file 19/Canada/2; Appx A, Brig. Weeks, Cdn Sec G.H.Q. 1 Ech A.A.I., to Gen. Montague, C.M.H.Q., 2 May 44.