

both as to war establishments and as to units (82).

In accordance with the proposed composition of the Canadian Army Overseas, revised to 15 May 44, this 'manpower sub-ceiling' would total 108,043 all ranks, of which 99,717 represented war establishments and 8326 reinforcements. General Crerar would be permitted to form temporary units from reinforcements (similar to the G.S.D. 602 and the G.S. 778 units). Where such authorizations should be approved on a permanent basis (C.G.S. 139 unit), however, the personnel would be counted against the 'contingency reserve' and transferred to the 'manpower sub-ceiling' for North-West Europe.

392. The only flaw, as General Stuart had pointed out to the Army Commander in an earlier letter of 15 Jun, was that a 'contingency reserve' no longer existed to meet urgent operational requirements or to follow British changes in organization (83). The special increment of 2100 authorized by the Deputy Minister in April (see para 305) had been dissipated by 15 May, as had a further 1100 authorized to cover further commitments. General Stuart had then considered it imperative that no further increases should be permitted without corresponding decreases to other establishments (except those conforming to approved British changes). While the Army Commander could promise nothing, his reply of 17 Jun had indicated that he did not anticipate any need for changes and no request would be submitted unless there were the "strongest operational reasons" (84).

393. General Stuart now proposed to recreate the 'contingency reserve' from the three per cent allowed for non-effectives against the overall 'manpower ceiling'. Generals Murchie and Letson in Ottawa were favourably disposed to deleting non-effectives from the 'manpower ceiling', since the increasing number of battle casualties had made the three per cent allowance "unrealistic" (85).

394. On 5 Jul General Stuart's detailed proposals for a changed system of manpower accounting were mailed to N.D.H.Q. (see para 311). He considered that the 'manpower ceiling' now had served its purpose and should be replaced by a system of accounting which would reflect more readily the manpower requirements of the Canadian Army Overseas. He recommended that capital (Field Force establishments, C.M.H.Q. and static units in the United Kingdom and miscellaneous units required to administer the Field Force) and reinforcement requirements (three months at 'intense' rates for capital requirements, temporary G.S.D. 602 units and a three per cent reserve for non-effectives in the reinforcement pool for the Field Force only) should be shown separately. The provisional increase of 2100 granted by the Deputy Minister on 15 Apr (see para 305) had raised the actual 'manpower ceiling' to 234,836; acceptance of the current proposals, including allowance of 3000 for 'contingency reserve', would raise the total to 246,877 all ranks. General Stuart added that the Assistant Deputy Minister of National Defence (Mr. J. Pembroke) had been put "thoroughly in the picture" during his visit to C.M.H.Q. and was in a position to supply any further details (86).

395. At this stage General Stuart proceeded to Italy to investigate the position of 1st Canadian Corps and the request made by General Burns for an additional infantry brigade (see paras 369-371). Following his return from the Mediterranean General Stuart spent part of a day with the Army Commander in France and then flew back to Ottawa to discuss the question of manpower accounting.

396. As a result of discussions at N.D.H.Q. the submission made to the Minister of National Defence on 2 Aug

varied somewhat from General Stuart's previous proposals. This submission called for a new 'manpower ceiling' of 234,500 all ranks (increase of 1764) in which the capital commitment was "limited to an extent which will allow for provision within the ceiling of a reinforcement pool of three months at the intense rate". These would be utilized as follows:

(a) <u>Field Force</u>	
Canadian Troops, A.A.I.	74938
Canadian Troops, 21 Army Group	127185
(b) Canadian Troops, United Kingdom	30449
(c) Contingency Reserve	<u>1928</u>
<u>Total</u>	234500

Such action was justified since:

According to strength returns as at 30 Jun 44 as reported to CMHQ, the effective overall strength of the Canadian Army Overseas is in excess of the numbers required to meet the resulting proposed composition (including a small contingency reserve) plus an overall reinforcement pool equal to three months at the intense rate. The situation following the formation of the new units will, in consequence, still leave our establishments full and the overall reinforcement pool in a condition which the Chief of Staff CMHQ considers entirely satisfactory (87).

The system of reinforcing the Field Force during actual operations rendered unnecessary the maintenance of a three per cent reserve to offset the number of non-effectives. This saving of 6856 all ranks was utilized to form the additional units considered necessary (including Dental Companies serving the R.C.N. and R.C.A.F. and the Canadian component of the First Special Service Force) and re-establish a small contingency reserve of 1928 all ranks. It was considered, however, that the Chief of Staff, C.M. H.Q. should still possess authority to continue and form temporary units on the basis of telegram G.S.D. 602 of 21 Mar 42. Henceforth, however, such G.S.D. ~~602 units would be~~ manned, so far as possible, by men who were unfit for more active service as reinforcements (88).

397. On the following day (3 Aug) the Cabinet War Committee approved these recommendations (to raise the 'manpower ceiling' to 234,500 all ranks and add a second infantry brigade to the 5th Canadian Armoured Division) on the understanding that the new requirements could be met without any change in the projected supply of men from Canada.

398. In putting up the submission for a revised 'manpower ceiling' it had been pointed out that such action was possible because 5000 reinforcements had been shipped from Canada every month instead of the 4000 agreed upon (89). There was the further fact that the delay in breaking out of the Normandy bridge-head had delayed the commitment of First Canadian Army with the result that casualties were less than had been anticipated (see para 376). General Stuart wrote:

On 30 Jul 44, after over twelve months fighting in the Middle East and two months in France we have a reinforcement pool overseas with a strength in excess of three months reinforcement requirements at intense rates. This is a most satisfactory

situation and will enable my requirements as put forward in two separate memoranda to be met and still leave at 31 Jul a reinforcement pool overseas comprising over three months reinforcement requirements at intense rates.

Estimated casualties for the remaining five months in 1944 are about equal to our reinforcement holdings at 31 Jul. Our pool at end of Dec 44 should therefore comprise reinforcements sent from Canada at previously agreed rates in last five months of 1944, plus casualties recovered from hospital during this period. This should represent a figure of about 25,000 or about one and a half months at intense rates.

A further projection up to the end of Mar 45 gives us an estimated pool of about 17,000 or over one month's reinforcements at intense rates.

The above forecasts, as you know, are based on scales of wastage adjusted in the light of battle experience and on forecasts of activity provided by the War Office. Up to date our casualties have been less than anticipated and although our estimates may be exceeded for short periods I do not anticipate an increase of casualties over our estimates in any period of six months or over.

I am satisfied therefore, with the general reinforcement situation. It is in a healthy position today because our casualties have been less than the number anticipated and because the agreed flow of reinforcements from Canada has not only been maintained but has been exceeded. I congratulate those responsible and hope that the agreed flow will be maintained in future months.

The only part of the reinforcement problem that is worrying me at the moment is the finding of reinforcements for our French-Canadian Infantry Battalions. I am withdrawing French-Canadians from English speaking units overseas for this purpose but unless I can get additional French-Canadian Infantry reinforcements from Canada I shall be faced with the alternative of disbanding units to provide reinforcements. I do not relish either alternative and consequently I hope every effort will be made to increase the flow of French speaking reinforcements (90).

399. In actual fact all was not well, however, since by far the greatest proportion of battle casualties were occurring to general duty infantrymen and reinforcements for other corps were piled up at No. 2 C.B.R.G. Signs, ominous enough for many to read correctly, already had begun to appear. On 14 Jul Brigadier Beament told General Montague that, in his opinion, all was not well. On the following day he put his views on paper. Even when the overall picture had been described as satisfactory to General Montgomery on 16 Mar (see para 293) there had been deficiencies in some corps ("The Arm having the greatest deficiency was Infantry"). Continuing, his letter of 15 Jul pointed out that (91):

The recent operations in Normandy prove, beyond all shadow of doubt, that the prediction that the proportion of Infantry casualties, vis-a-vis other

Corps, would be much greater than indicated by FFC rates was sound. During the five-week period, commencing 6 Jun 44 and ending 10 Jul 44, the actual Canadian battle casualties appear to have been:

	<u>Offrs</u>	<u>ORs</u>
CIC	220	3885
All other Arms	<u>123</u>	<u>994</u>
Total	343	4879

The casualties for the same force, for the same period, calculated at FFC rates, work out at: -

	<u>Offrs</u>	<u>ORs</u>
CIC	132	2150
All other Arms	<u>120</u>	<u>1211</u>
Total	252	3361

Instead of being 63 per cent of the whole force as estimated, 78.6 per cent of the battle casualties actually had been infantrymen. Even non-battle casualties were higher among infantrymen, due to the more dangerous conditions under which they lived. Unlike the British Army which was fighting campaigns all over the world and could offset deficiencies in one theatre by surpluses in another the Canadian Army was fighting only in North-West Europe and Italy. Casualties were so great among general duty infantrymen that already some hundreds of infantry specialists (e.g. Drivers, I.C.) were being temporarily employed as general duty reinforcements. Then again, now that the Allies possessed air superiority little in way of casualties need be expected among anti-aircraft units and rear area troops: therefore, what in fact were surplus reinforcement holdings could be remustered to Infantry.

400. The Chief of Staff being in Italy (see para 371), General Montague sent Brigadier Beament's letter to the D.C.G.S. with the following covering note:

It goes without saying that we must face the reality of which he informs me, namely that the demands for GD Infantry prevent sufficient numbers being kept in the Depot, and we must do everything possible to better the situation. The utmost possible remustering and conversions in all Corps ... is to be ensured. Please give this matter top priority consideration and action.

Immediately upon the return of the C of S we must put him in the picture as other action by him may be required (92).

401. On 24 Jul Lt-Col E.G. Pullen (S.D. (O) at C.M.H.Q.) produced an analysis of the casualty figures, broken down into two main groups--battle casualties and sickness and accident cases. He found:

That sickness & accident casualties fluctuate widely and sometimes are three and four times the number of battle casualties.

That for Infantry, the ratio is usually much lower than for other arms and services and for these is higher the farther they are removed from battle.

That sickness & accident casualties have little effect on the number of reinforcement required to support the force once it is well established in the theatre (93).

Thus, although some 36,207 casualty returns had been reported in Italy for the period 1 Jan-30 Jun 44 only 7681 all ranks had been required to replace them, which figure was close to the total battle casualty figure of 8221 for that period. An analysis of the sickness and accident casualties for this period (including several months of inclement weather) indicated that an average of five per cent of the officers and seven per cent of the other ranks in Italy had come under this heading. Lt-Col Pullen deduced, therefore, that:

- (a) battle casualties reported are the most realistic indication of reinforcement requirements, and
- (b) an initial provision of reinforcements, representing 7 to 8% of the total strength of the force, is required to off-set the build-up of the floating population of sickness & accident casualties. The net loss from these sickness & accident casualties being covered by FFC rates of wastage, possibly 3/4% per month.

402. As between corps Lt-Col Pullen's study indicated the following trends and requirements:

- (a) Total battle casualties are 65-75% forecasts. Therefore it is reasonable to assume that future casualties will not exceed 75% of forecasted casualties.
- (b) Infantry OR casualties are approximately 75% of total battle casualties. Therefore 75% of intake should be infantry.
- (c) RCA OR casualties were 34% of forecast for 21 Army Gp and 52% for AAI. Therefore 60% of forecast should be a reasonable assumption for future artillery casualties. This applied to current forecasts for both theatres means we will have approximately 4448 artillery casualties up to Dec 44, against which we now have in X4 lists 6,366 artillery reinforcements.
- (d) CAC OR casualties were 44% of forecast for 21 Army Gp and 38% for AAI. However CAC has not yet had adequate experience under ideal tank battle to accept a cut in forecasts, but it may later be possible to reduce this forecast. Current forecasts are 6,012 against which we have in X4 lists, 6,664 reinforcements. Therefore future intakes could be reduced by 50% and its reinforcement pool may be susceptible to re-mustering in light of later experience.

- (e) RCASC OR casualties were 20% of forecast for 21 Army Gp and 13% of AAI. Therefore 20% of forecast should be a reasonable assumption for future RCASC casualties. This applied to current casualty forecasts for both theatres means we will have approximately 697 RCASC casualties up to Dec 44 against which we now have in X4 lists, 4,038 reinforcements.

His recommendation was that 75 per cent of future intake in Canada should be trained as general duty infantrymen and that up to 25 per cent artillery and 60 per cent R.C.A.S.C. reinforcements on the "X-4" list (reinforcements allotted to a theatre of operations) should be remustered to Infantry.

403. Before leaving for Ottawa General Stuart gave his approval to the remustering of R.C.A. and R.C.A.S.C. personnel surplus to the revised holdings which were set at six and three weeks 'intense' respectively (94). (A subsequent revision increased R.C.A.S.C. holdings to equal six weeks at the "intense" rate of wastage.) C.R.U. could not be used for this remustering programme until certain of its units had moved back to Surrey—Hampshire (where accommodation had had to be relinquished prior to D-Day), and General Montague decided on 1 Aug that, rather than delay the conversion programme, the 13th Brigade\* (in Yorkshire) should be used (95). Apart from 132 all ranks of each battalion required for permanent administrative and training duties all fit personnel of the Brigade (to which had been attached the recently-arrived Régiment de Montmagny) had been posted to the reinforcement stream in accordance with C.M.H.Q. Administrative Instructions (96). It was 5 Aug, however, before the Commander, C.R.U. was actually ordered to post surplus R.C.A. and R.C.A.S.C. personnel to Infantry and despatch them to units of the 13th Brigade, subject to the following provisos (97):

- (a) All personnel must conform to the minimum physical standards for CIC General Duty, i.e. category "A" or PULHEMS 1111221, maximum age 40.
- (b) Personnel in receipt of trades pay under present quotas and confirmed WOs or NCOs will not be transferred.
- (c) Personnel with the necessary aptitude and designated for qualification in the following trades or Non-Trade Specialties will not be transferred -

<u>RCA</u>	<u>RCASC</u>
Driver Ops	Drivers IC
Surveyors	Mechanists
	Motorcyclists
	Clerks
	Clerks TMT
	Cooks Hosp

While it was not desired to change the authorized reinforcement holdings for other corps any personnel surplus to the authorized pool were to be turned into general duty infantrymen, except for tradesmen and those already designated for training in certain trades.

404. As early as 3 Aug Brigadier Beament at Advanced Canadian Section, G.H.Q. 1st Echelon, 21st Army Group had been

\*See para 337.

notified that such remustering would be begun and that the conversion of 5000-6000 such reinforcements might produce 2000-3000 general duty infantrymen after six weeks conversion training (98). This letter must have crossed the following telegram despatched by the Army Commander to General Montague on 4 Aug (99):

Am concerned about Infantry general duty deficiencies which approximate 1900. Our ability to continue severe fighting or to exploit a break out would be seriously restricted through lack of replacement personnel. After forwarding all available reinforcements from 2 CBRG deficiencies exceeding five per cent of unit strength were:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Deficiency</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Deficiency</u>
RHC	370	S Sask R	87
R de Mais	245	S D and G Highrs	78
Essex Scots	171	Regina R	72
Fus MR	139	Calg Highrs	78
Cameron's of C	100	N Shore R	68
QOR of C	99	RHLI	54
R Regt C	91	Toronto Scot (MG)	52
		R de Chaud	47

Other bns have deficiencies but of less than five per cent. I consider this the most serious problem of Cdn Army at the moment and to require most energetic handling.

405. On the following day (5 Aug) General Montague replied that 15 officers and 656 other ranks were en route to North-West Europe; a further 260 officers and 3420 other ranks would be despatched on 10 Aug. Some 2500 Infantry all ranks were completing training and would be ready for despatch to North-West Europe by 19 Aug; a further 2000 infantrymen (including 450 French-speaking personnel) should be ready to join them by the end of the month. An additional 840 infantrymen were then on their way overseas from Canada. It was considered that these last could be sent forward 7-15 Sep. Reference was again made to the R.C.A. and R.C.A.S.C. personnel being remustered. It was pointed out that the only way to hasten the despatch of general duty infantrymen would be to send men who had not completed their training: this, it was understood, was not favoured by the Army Commander. Continuing, General Montague's telegram stated:

... according to operational forecasts 21 Army Gp for period described total numbers given above should be in excess of requirements by approx 1500 CIC. This without taking into account any personnel obtainable from conversion trg ... or making any credit allowance for recoverable casualties which should come in progressively from late September onward. This should indicate favourable margin from which to balance requirements for both theatres.

Appreciate your concern and assure you everything being done here to expedite trg to accelerate provision from which to meet your demands. Would appreciate confirmation of policy under which we propose to withhold despatch of any personnel considered insufficiently trained to minimum acceptable standard and we consider 3 to 4 weeks after arrival CRU essential to meet this requirement (100).

406. General Crerar telegraphed again on 8 Aug that the problem was confined to general duty infantrymen and that the supply of officers and tradesmen could be ignored for the moment (101). Apart from D-Day itself, General Crerar stated that wastage for each infantry battalion had been approximately nine per day up to 31 Jul. For the previous seven days, during which there had been no large scale operations Infantry wastage had been five per day per battalion throughout the 2nd Canadian Corps. For August he estimated that the wastage of general duty infantrymen would be 3,000 to 5,000 for 2nd Canadian Corps, with the higher estimate more likely in view of pending operations (breakthrough down the Falaise road). Continuing, his telegram read:

It is quite clear that only solution lies in vigorous remustering and strenuous conversion training. Request careful study of possibility of shortening conversion training by grading on entry and so securing a proportion in four weeks.

Organization changes in LAA Arty ... will yield from remustering about 15 Aug approx 500 from Fd Units and other probable changes in near future further approx 800. In meantime remustering in Arty and RCASC can be based on maintaining only six weeks intense as total holdings.

In view distinct possibility that operations of next four weeks may prove turning point remustering policy should be based on short view. It is vital that our offensive power be maintained and long term futures must be risked to produce early (102).

407. Once again the uncertainty of the overall strategic picture was complicating the maintenance of the Canadian Army. After much worry lest the War come to an end before Canadian formations might get to grips with the enemy there was now a "high level" belief that German resistance might come to an end with eviction from France (103). Temporarily, therefore, opportunism replaced long-term planning.

408. Upon his return to London, General Stuart found that the reinforcement situation had grown worse. After reading the Army Commander's telegrams General Stuart despatched his D.C.G.S. by air to Army Headquarters on 10 Aug in order to obtain first hand information. Brigadier Penhale spent only one day there but reported on his return that the Army Commander had "stressed the political importance at this time of maintaining units at full strength, in particular Inf, where shortages are apparent" (104). General Crerar had impressed upon Brigadier Penhale that "the next few weeks represent the most critical period and that, having regard to this, we would be justified in taking most energetic and drastic measures to ensure that the operational effectiveness of Canadian units is maintained to the fullest possible extent". The actual composition of reinforcement drafts was discussed with Brigadiers A.W. Beament and A.E. Walford (D.A. & Q.M.G., First Canadian Army). It was pointed out that certain of the reinforcements held in No. 2 C.B.R.G. would be transferred to Infantry, after screening at No. 3 Canadian Reallocation Centre which was just about ready to start work: a number of these, particularly R.C.A. reinforcements then might have to be returned to the United Kingdom to undergo conversion training. Existing Infantry deficiencies within Canadian units totalled 1651 all ranks. Even then, General Crerar had told Brigadier Penhale that there had been fewer casualties during the recent advance down the Falaise Road



than originally estimated.

409. Following Brigadier Penhale's departure from Army Headquarters the question of accepting Infantry reinforcements with a lower standard of training was debated. A certain amount of refresher training was necessary for reinforcements just over from Canada (where instruction in the latest weapons and techniques could not be given) and it had been the practice to provide such instruction at the several Reinforcement Units: nine to 11 weeks for C.A.C., seven weeks for R.C.A., R.C.E. and R.C. Signals and four weeks for others (105). The Army Commander approved the recommendation of his staff that no lowering of standard should be accepted for general duty infantrymen (106). His wishes were accepted by C.M.H.Q., with the proviso that infantrymen who could complete refresher training more quickly would be despatched in fulfilment of outstanding demands for reinforcements.

410. In a letter of 16 Aug Brigadier Walford reiterated the matters upon which agreement had been reached during Brigadier Penhale's visit:

- (a) That when the "float" of approximately 8% of the force strength, covering illness, accident and other sources of ineffectives, had been built up in the theatre, the holding for Corps may be reduced to the following provision at intense rates of wastage:
  - (i) RCA (Fd, Med, A Tk and Sy - 7 weeks
  - (ii) RCA (AA) - 6 weeks
  - (iii) RCASC - 5 weeks
- (b) That in the case of CAC the present scale of three months holdings at intense rate plus 3% for non-effectives, is to remain unaltered, but remustering may be done on the basis that this is a maximum requirement which may be "shaded" as a temporary measure, if necessary to produce the requirements of Infantry General Duty by remustering. It is recognized that CAC personnel represent the type most easily and quickly convertible to Infantry (107).

After deducting the reinforcements despatched to North-West Europe on 14 Aug, there was the following deficiency of general duty infantrymen on the morning of 15 Aug:

In 2 Cdn Inf Div.	1674
In 3 Cdn Inf Div.	461
In 4 Cdn Armd Div.	<u>509</u>
Total	2644

It is again stressed that all available Infantry General Duty, whether returned from hospital or otherwise provided, should be despatched as soon as available. Reinforcing is now on a day to day basis, and every additional man produced adds to the "bayonet" strength of some unit during this decisive phase of operations.

411. Two days prior to this (14 Aug) a total of 2045 other ranks (including 65 French-speaking soldiers) remustered from the several Reinforcement Units in the United Kingdom were to have commenced infantry training with the 13th Brigade in

Yorkshire, even though only 1923 men\* actually turned up (108). A second intake numbering 1077 was due on 25 Aug and, as Brigadier Penhale pointed out to General Stuart: "It is our intention to authorize further intakes from surplus personnel whenever the number undergoing this conversion trg falls below 3000 either as a result of natural wastage or outgoing drafts." (109). [This was the maximum number which could be trained by the 13th Brigade and even to do this it had been necessary to borrow 100 N.C.O. instructors from Nos. 3 and 4 C.I.R.Us.]

412. In response to a call for additional reinforcements (before the "Falaise Gap" was closed) the D.A.G. at C.M.H.Q. instructed C.R.U., on 17 Aug, to send forward as general duty infantry reinforcements all infantry tradesmen not in receipt of trades pay\*\* and non-tradesmen specialists (111). Enemy resistance in the Falaise pocket having been eliminated on 23 Aug, after heavy fighting, the Canadian formations immediately pushed towards the Seine valley where they again encountered heavy opposition. In a telegram of 26 Aug General Stuart endeavoured to give General Crerar the impression that everyone at C.M.H.Q. was aware of the "vital importance" of the next three weeks and that all available infantrymen would be sent forward as quickly as possible: the policy of weekly drafts would be abandoned temporarily in favour of despatching men in lots of 100, as soon as that minimum number was collected (see para 381). He assured General Crerar that the War Office was "playing ball" and would meet any request on 48 hours' notice (112).

413. Earlier that day (26 Aug) General Stuart had despatched the following telegram\*\*\* to the C.G.S. in Ottawa:

I We will have the infantry reinforcement situation in a satisfactory condition in from three weeks to one month's time when remustered personnel will begin to come out of the stream in reasonable numbers. At present time because of recent heavy casualties in general duty infantry I am unable to keep inf units up to strength in general duty personnel although we have a considerable surplus of inf tradesmen and inf specialists. At present time we show a shortage of about 3000 general duty infantry in our 21 battalions in 21 Army Group. By utilizing general duty infantry now under training at CRU for tradesmen and non tradesmen specialists plus general duty inf available I shall be able to find drafts totalling about 2000 within the next six days.

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\*Due to sudden sickness and absenteeism brought on by over-indulgence in liquor, apprehended crime or compassionate grounds there generally was a last minute wastage from drafts of soldiers about to be despatched anywhere. In this instance, it would not have been possible to remuster sufficient additional men at the last moment to remedy the deficiency.

\*\*Only those tradesmen actually counted against the authorized reinforcement holding, based on three months' wastage at "intense" rates, were entitled to receive trades pay. A surplus in some trades had come about because it was not possible to plan future needs exactly (110).

\*\*\*Later, and following his resignation, Mr. Ralston admitted that he had initialled this telegram but had not considered it necessary to take any action (see para 394).

II I would like to be able to use at my discretion a proportion of qualified and paid inf tradesmen in a vital and I feel decisive period of next three weeks. It is ridiculous to have surplus inf tradesmen who are trained also as general duty infantry available and not be able to use them simply because under present regulations if we use them as general duty personnel they will lose their trades pay. I consider we would be breaking faith with them if we cut their trades pay. I recommend therefore that I be authorized at my discretion and in an emergency only to use as general duty inf a proportion of infantry tradesmen in receipt of trades pay and that these men shall continue to receive their former trades pay. It being understood that these men will be tagged as tradesmen and will be absorbed as such in the infantry as and when the supply of general duty inf permits.

III The present situation is not a manpower problem in the true sense. We have the men. It is not a problem of general supply. It is a problem of detailed distribution. We have taken British FFC rates as a guide. Experience of particular conditions of war in France has shown that FFC rates for infantry are too low and for practically all other arms are too high. In addition we did not anticipate that practically all inf casualties would be in general duty personnel. We are now going through a period of adjustment. In three weeks to a month we will be alright [sic]. I need assistance to bridge this intervening period. My recommendations in para II represent the only way you can help me to bridge this gap....(113)

414. On the following day concurrence was cabled by the Adjutant-General who wondered, however, whether it might not be better to permit a 25 per cent surplus to tradesmen establishments rather than settle particular cases on their merits (114). After informing the Army Commander that authority had been granted to use infantry tradesmen for general duty (115). General Stuart replied to the Adjutant-General, setting forth his objections to this suggestion. This telegram of 29 Aug pointed out that "no increase in cost is involved" and that, as the situation was temporary in nature, it would merely be necessary to make unposted tradesmen eligible to continue receiving trades pay after being posted to other than tradesmen's vacancies in unit establishments (116). Furthermore, operational demands might necessitate large numbers of tradesmen being posted to a unit that had suffered heavy casualties while other units received few or none. The Army Commander seemed satisfied with General Stuart's proposal but, in a telegram of 31 Aug, emphasized the "urgency" of its adoption (117), since the battalions of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division had been short an average of 300 men on the preceding day, chiefly riflemen\*

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\*The diarist of the 10th Canadian Base Reinforcement Battalion recorded on 30 Aug that, in addition to sending forward the infantry reinforcements earmarked for battalions of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division orders had been received to send 225 "unallocated" reinforcements of an incoming draft to that division. Since a good number of these men came from the Maritime Provinces which were not represented in the infantry of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division only 173 actually went forward.

415. The greatest obstacle to remustering tradesmen from other corps to Infantry was the men's fear of losing trades pay. This point was emphasized in a telegram from 1st Canadian Corps where there had been an Infantry shortage of 52 officers and 4888 other ranks (5 Sep) (118). It was 29 Sep, however, before C.M.H.Q. was able to find a solution: acceptance of the British practice (A.C.I. 1096 of 10 Aug 44) whereby tradesmen remustered to Infantry from other corps would be permitted to retain their trades pay\* "for a period of not more than six months" (119). Although approval was not forwarded until 6 Nov action had been taken at C.M.H.Q. as early as 23 Sep to have tradesmen surplus to the revised reinforcement holdings (see para 418) remustered as general duty infantrymen within C.R.U. (120).

416. Since the F.F.C. rates of wastage obviously were not applicable to conditions within the Canadian forces in either Italy or North-West Europe this question had been made the subject of further study by Lt-Col Pullen (slated to return to N.D.H.Q. as Director of Staff Duties) whose earlier memorandum (see para 401) had not stood up to the realities of the campaign in Normandy after the first month. Signed by Brigadier Penhale this memorandum of 23 Aug advised:

It is obvious that our forecasts of activity (or the way we apply them to all arms and services) or the FFC rates of wastage (as applied to comparatively small forces in only two theatres) are out of balance. However, to determine which is at fault and to what extent would require a comprehensive study of factors, many of which are not available, and would require so much time as to make the information obtained of little use for present operations (121).

It had been found possible to make adjustments in the F.F.C. rates of wastage so that they would coincide with actual Canadian battle casualties by corps. It was necessary to emphasize, however, that such amended rates would hold good only so long as the relationship of the total establishment for each arm and service to the total force in each theatre remained approximately what it then was, and the conditions of battle remained similar to those experienced in preceding months (i.e. Allied superiority in aircraft, armour and artillery).

417. Lt-Col Pullen's study had been confined to other ranks casualties, since it was here that adherence to the F.F.C. rates had let down the Canadian Army badly. General Stuart was ready to accept revised figures provided the Army Commander would agree (122). Therefore, Lt-Col Pullen spent 25-26 Aug at Army Headquarters and, after certain minor modifications had been made, agreement was obtained (123). According to Lt-Col Pullen's report, however;

... while the method of calculating the new rates was accepted as logical and the resultant reduced rft holding were accepted as a result of experience,

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\*On 30 Sep the diarist of the 10th Canadian Base Reinforcement Battalion wrote:

Our rfts continue to contain very poor quality troops. Many of them, for example, badly blistered their feet in the 3 1/2 mile march from DIEPPE. Very large numbers are tradesmen who have had very little inf training of any kind.

it is quite clear that the only reason Army will accept the risk of reduced holdings in the arms and services is because of the imperative need for more Inf. On the other hand, I gathered the impression that the peak of the losses in Inf is passed.

I made it quite clear to Brig Walford that these new rates will require careful watching in the light of subsequent experience and stated that this would be done at CMHQ (124).

On 29 Aug General Stuart authorized the adoption of these new wastage rates and directed that the task of remustering personnel surplus to the new rates should get under way at once (125).

418. By 31 Aug revised wastage rates for officers also had been calculated and approved. Thereupon, the following table of monthly percentages was issued (126):

	<u>Intense</u>		<u>Normal</u>	
	<u>Officers</u>	<u>ORs</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>ORs</u>
1. C.A.C. (incl Recce and Armd Recce Regts)	20	7	7	2 1/2
2. R.C.A. (Fd, Med, ATk and Svy)	12	5	5	2 1/2
3. R.C.A. (AA and CA)	3	1 1/2	2	1
4. R.C.E. (Fd and Svy)	9	3 1/2	3 1/2	1 1/2
5. R.C.E. (L of C, Tn and MC)	3	2	1 1/2	1
6. R.C. Sigs (Div incl Armd Bde Sigs)	4	3	1 1/2	1 1/2
7. R.C. Sigs (Non-Div and L of C)	2	2	3/4	3/4
8. Inf, S.S., and Para Bns and Army Air Corps	45	30	13	13
9. Inf MG, Mot, Sp Bns and Bde, Div, Corps and Army Def Units	35	15	8	8
10. R.C.A.S.C.	2	3/4	3/4	3/4
11. RCAMC, CDC, C Ch S and RCAPC	2	2	3/4	3/4
12. RCOC and RCEME	1	3/4	3/4	3/4
13. C. Pro C. (less Mil Prisons and Det Bks)	5	5	1 1/2	1 1/2
14. C. Pro C. (Mil Prisons and Det Bks)	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4
15. Pioneer and Employment Units	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4

16. H.Q. Units				
Inf Bde	35	15	8	8
Armd Bde	20	7	7	2 1/2
Inf Div (incl FS Sec)	2 1/2	1 1/2	3/4	3/4
Armd Div (incl FS Sec)	2 1/2	1 1/2	3/4	3/4
Corps (excl Def Coy)	1 1/2	1 1/2	3/4	3/4
Army (excl Def Coy)	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4
C.M.H.Q.	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4
17. All C.M.H.Q. Units	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4
18. Any other Units	3/4	3/4	3/4	3/4

("Quiet" rate remained 3/4 per cent throughout.)

It was officially recognized, moreover, that only 35 per cent of the 50 per cent "recoverable" casualties would be available for further operational employment.

419. This information was forwarded to N.D.H.Q. the same day, with the request that formal approval be granted (see para 438). It was pointed out that, for the present, the Army Commander did not want remustering carried too far: therefore, a reinforcement pool of approximately four months at the new 'intense' rates would be retained for the following corps—C.A.C., R.C.E., R.C. Signals, R.C.A.S.C., R.C.O.C., R.C.E.M.E. and C. Pro C. (127).

420. Canadian battle casualties for August had been 693 officers and 8108 other ranks; although injured or wounded, 39 officers and 225 other ranks of this total had remained on duty. In addition, of course, there had been non-battle casualties and other wastage. However, the Army Commander had been assured by General Stuart on 31 Aug that there would be sufficient Infantry reinforcements either at No. 2 C.B.R.G. or in transit by 2 Sep (2205 plus 565 other ranks) to bring Canadian field units "practically" up to strength. Furthermore, General Stuart had confidently ended his telegram with this sentence: "Once up to strength we'll keep you there." (128).

(iv) Autumn 1944 Losses in Italy

421. The opening days of September 1944 found the 1st Canadian Corps strenuously engaged in Operation "OLIVE", by which the Eighth Army hoped to break through the Gothic Line and debouch into the valley of the Po. Once again Canadians found themselves opposed by the redoubtable 1st German Parachute Division. Following the capture of San Fortunato on 20 Sep the 1st Canadian Infantry Division was sent into reserve for a three weeks rest. The 5th Canadian Armoured Division took up the offensive but premature rains soon turned the offensive into a purely infantry battle, destroying all hope of getting armour into the valley of the Po.

422. On 20 Sep the Corps Commander had informed General Stuart by telegram that battle casualties during the period 21 Aug-18 Sep had been 150 officers and 2700 other ranks, not including those incapacitated by sickness (129). After making good unit deficiencies there were only 18 officers and 688 other ranks left in the Infantry reinforcement pool. With further Infantry casualties during this Operation then estimated as being 267 officers and 3676 other ranks the middle of October might find 1st Cdn Corps short some 219 officers and 2640 other

ranks of authorized holdings. Reinforcements for other Corps were still being remustered to Infantry if considered suitable and G.S. 778 unit establishments (see para 282) were being reduced but General Burns did not expect to gain many general duty infantrymen by these means. Furthermore, it was considered that certain of the newly-approved wastage rates (see para 418) did not agree with experience in the Italian theatre. Both General Burns and Brigadier Weeks were afraid that the future employment of 1st Canadian Corps would be jeopardized unless a greater number of general duty infantrymen could be despatched with the October draft (KMF 35) from the United Kingdom.

423. Due to the difficulty of meeting the priority needs of First Canadian Army it was not possible, however, to provide more general duty infantrymen for despatch on KMF 35 than the 70 officers and 450 other ranks already authorized. A C.M.H.Q. telegram of 22 Sep informed General Burns, however, that an additional 500 other ranks would be despatched: they would mainly be R.C.O.C. personnel then surplus to the requirements of No. 1 Canadian Central Ordnance Depot and would have to be remustered and trained as general duty infantrymen following their arrival in Italy. Continuing, this telegram read:

... To facilitate such retraining we will send by bomber mail the standard four week syllabus of remustering training which is designed to produce general duty inf soldiers trained to minimum standards.

I would request you pay particular attention to weapon trg and range practices on all platoon weapons because time will not permit assessment of this draft in respect of trg before despatch and many may be unfamiliar with some platoon weapons or in need of refresher trg\*. Hardening trg will also need special stress (130).

424. In a further telegram of 24 Sep General Stuart pointed out that "at present stage of war" it was "vitally important to keep infantry in First Cdn Army up to strength plus small reserve even if it means under insurance for you for a limited period" (131). In addition to remustering further available reinforcements to infantry General Stuart suggested that the continuing 2nd and 5th L.A.A. (Light Anti-Aircraft) Regiments, R.C.A. and other less essential units might be further reduced in personnel (see para 372): if necessary, and as a temporary expedient only, general duty infantrymen might be removed from one infantry brigade of the 5th Canadian Armoured Division. He hoped, however, to bring the reinforcement pool back to strength with the draft reaching Italy in November on K.M.F. 36.

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\*In addition to the fact that all soldiers were supposed to have taken two months basic training, or its equivalent, personnel of R.C.O.C. and other supporting arms in the United Kingdom had been subjected to a few hours of "military training" every week to fit them for a possible all-round defence role against enemy parachutists or motorized troops (Preliminary Overseas Narrative, Chap XI, para 197). On 12 Dec 44 the war diary of Headquarters, No. 1 C.B.R.G. noted that the infantry training of the 496 remustered R.C.O.C. and R.C.E.M.E. personnel had been completed on the previous day. Of this number 30 had been re-boarded as medically unfit for service as infantrymen and a further 21 would have to repeat the course, having missed too much instruction through hospitalization, detention or other reasons.

425. In his telegram to the C.G.S. of the same date General Stuart pointed out that one trouble with the system of troop convoys to the Mediterranean was that they sailed only once a month: not until the next convoy (K.M.F. 36) was made up in October would the reinforcement situation have improved sufficiently for a larger allocation to be made from the pool in the United Kingdom (132). Therefore he suggested that the C.G.S. approach Washington to obtain a direct sailing from North America to Italy during October for 1000 general duty infantrymen. (General Burns was advised that this proposal was being made.)

426. On 30 Sep a negative reply was despatched from Ottawa. The British Army Staff in Washington considered that there was "little possibility" of obtaining shipping space direct to Italy: moreover, Canada could send men direct to the Mediterranean only by reducing the numbers planned for despatch to the United Kingdom during October. Furthermore, this telegram went on to point out that:

In view of difficulties of opening new channel for administrative and supply purposes consider that there would be little advantage in changing present arrangements and ... it is unlikely that any time would be saved.

Proposal considered on staff level only. You will appreciate there are other reasons why change in method of despatch at this stage might be considered undesirable (133).

427. Meanwhile information of another colour had reached C.M.H.Q. On 18 Sep Brigadier Weeks had addressed a personal letter to Brigadier W.H.S. Macklin, newly appointed D.C.G.S. at C.M.H.Q.: on 27 Sep the latter passed extracts to General Stuart:

The rft situation out here is causing some concern to the Corps Comd, but not to me. From what Gilbride\* told me on his arrival out here, I can see little hope of us getting a considerable number of C.I.C. rfts from the U.K. Personally I think we can live off our fat for a reasonable period. If the present intense fighting extends over a period of two weeks, we will be in the position of having to rely on rfts from those discharged from the Convalescent Depot. This is not so bad, as personnel are experienced and can go forward almost immediately. They do require a little freshening, especially on the physical side at the Base Rft Bns.

The tradesmen situation remains a headache, but we are slowly re-mustering, and keeping the situation well in hand. The tradesmen problem does not cause me very much concern, principally because the forward Commanding Offrs have no serious grouses in this respect. For example, there is a paper deficiency of Drivers I.C., but all units succeed in moving their vehicles without any difficulty (134).

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\*Brigadier W.P. Gilbride had returned to Italy to take up the appointment of D.A. & Q.M.G., 1st Canadian Corps, with effect from 19 Sep 44.



These views were more in accord with those held by General Stuart and may have helped to convince him that all would yet be well.

428. The Minister of National Defence did not think so, however, as a result of his visit to Italy 26 Sep-3 Oct. The Eighth Army Commander had told him that, although it was not considered advantageous to attack an enemy without a superiority of three to one, in reality the Germans were as strong or stronger than the 15th Army Group (135). Thus there would be heavy fighting before the Eighth Army could make any appreciable advance. Brigadier Weeks later explained that, should 1st Canadian Corps continue to be actively engaged, all the general duty infantry reinforcements would be committed by 10 Oct (136). Although there was a constant daily flow of 60 to 100 all ranks from the convalescent depots back into the reinforcement stream the number of daily casualties might run as high as 300 all ranks when there was fighting. Moreover, experience had shown that casualties from sickness and accident might equal the numbers of those killed, wounded and missing during the inclement months of the year. Therefore, something like 500-600 reinforcements might be required daily to maintain 1st Canadian Corps. It would seem that the earlier optimism about debouching into the valley of the Po without further serious fighting had been washed away with the coming of the rains.

429. Speaking to the House of Commons considerably later about this trip to Italy the Minister of National Defence summarized his findings as follows:

In Italy I visited the reinforcement unit and most of the infantry battalions. I talked with the men themselves, and time and again I got the same story—about having to go back to the line repeatedly, or not having leave, or being short-handed, when trained N.R.M.A. men could be made available to give them relief.

At the end of September, just before I left Italy, the pool of trained infantry reinforcements was down to between ten and fifteen per cent of what had been planned, and infantry reinforcements were so scarce in the United Kingdom that the only addition they were getting was the monthly convoy to arrive in about two weeks, bringing not even enough trained infantry men to meet the casualties which would have been incurred in those two weeks.

The corps commander in Italy pressed strongly that the pool be established in the area sufficiently strong to relieve the tight situation and ensure prompt replacement of day-to-day casualties (137).

430. On 11 Oct the 1st Canadian Infantry Division, which had been in reserve since the capture of San Fortunato on 21 Sep, returned to the line and the Armoured Division retired into corps reserve. A slow advance continued across water-laced ground but all initiative had passed to the weather man and on 28 Oct the Canadian divisions were withdrawn. The casualties suffered by the ad hoc "Porterforce" and the detached 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade continued slight and could be replaced without undue difficulty. The draft arriving in late November on convoy KMF 36 included 867 English-speaking infantrymen and 316 reinforcements for other corps. No French-speaking general duty infantrymen had been available, however, and the

problem of reinforcing the under-strength Royal 22e Régiment was acute, being relieved only slightly by the return of "recoverable casualties" and men from other sections of the X-List (see para 452).

431. Unlike the British component of the Eighth Army which had had to disband the 1st Armoured Division, reduce one brigade of the 56th (London) Division to a cadre basis and decrease all its Infantry battalions from four to three rifle companies, 1st Canadian Corps was able to continue with unaltered establishments (138). It next saw action on 2 Dec in the Eighth Army's unsuccessful attempt to reach the line of the Santerno before halting for the winter.

(v) Remustering Reinforcements for North-West Europe

432. The opening days of September 1944 saw Canadian armour joining in the pursuit across France and Belgium while the two infantry divisions remained behind to invest the Channel ports of Boulogne, Calais and Dunkirk. On 7 Sep Brigadier C. Lloyd (D.A.G., Rear Headquarters, 21 Army Group) informed Brigadier Beament that he was worried by the extent of the deficiencies in the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division. He wished to be informed of the Canadian situation since, should there be continued heavy casualties, the situation might become acute (139). On the other hand, by energetic action it was going to be possible to bring British infantry units up to establishment: on 16 Aug the decision had been taken to disband the 59th Infantry Division and one brigade of the 49th (West Riding) Division and use their personnel as reinforcements (140). (During the same month it had been decided to transfer some 11,000 men from the Royal Navy and R.A.F. to the Army, two-thirds of whom would become infantrymen.) (141)

433. In the reply despatched to Brigadier Beament from C.M.H.Q. on 15 Sep it was pointed out that there were sufficient Canadian reinforcements then in transit to make up the First Canadian Army's 3351 Infantry deficiencies as of 12 Sep (142). Further reinforcements equalling seven weeks wastage for all Infantry units at the new 'intense' rates were already in view. Some adjustment would have to be made for infantry 'specialists' and tradesmen employed as general duty infantrymen to be returned to their proper role eventually. Reinforcements also would have to be sent to Italy. On the other hand, no allowance was being made for 'recoverable wounded'.

434. On the day following the commencement of Operation "MARKET GARDEN", by which the First Allied Airborne Army hoped to seize the approaches to the North German plain, General Crerar despatched the following message to General Stuart:

Reinforcement situation as regards general duty infantry shows no general improvement over that which obtained a month ago. Matter concerns me greatly and requires your personal and urgent investigation (143).

With the failure of the British Second Army to link up with the 1st Airborne Division at Arnhem it became obvious that there would be considerable heavy fighting before the Wehrmacht was forced to capitulate.

435. Immediately on receipt of this message General Stuart ordered his A.D.A.G.(A) to prepare another statement. Brigadier Bostock replied that since 16 Aug when the Chief of Staff had ordered top priority to be given to the despatch of

Infantry reinforcements (and that infantry tradesmen not in receipt of trades pay and specialists were to be employed on general duty) some 233 officers and 4779 other ranks had been despatched to No. 2 C.B.R.G. (144). A further Infantry draft of 31 officers and 977 other ranks was being prepared for despatch on 22 Sep, while 450 infantrymen were earmarked for Italy (see para 422). The fact that the Infantry holdings of No. 2 C.B.R.G. on 14 Sep had been listed as 312 officers and 1781 other ranks against a deficiency of 3075 other ranks in field units might or might not be an adequate picture of the situation, since investigation disclosed that reinforcements remained on the strength of No. 2 C.B.R.G. during the four or more days travelling by road to catch up with the forward battalion and the field units (see para 382). As long as transportation difficulties persisted there always would be delays in getting reinforcements forward (145). In what started out to be a telegram to the Army Commander and finished as a letter on 25 Sep General Stuart pointed out the alleviating factors, as well as saying:

I can assure you that the question of reinforcements generally and in particular infantry reinforcements has been subject to my personal attention for some time. I am fairly hard to please but I am satisfied with what has been done this end. We have a minimum of 15000 infantry reinforcements in sight for the balance of 1944, not including those returned from hospitals. This is practically the equivalent of three months at intense rates for your First Cdn Army or two months including 1 Cdn Corps. This I am satisfied will be sufficient to look after our infantry requirements until the collapse of Germany (146).

Since North-West Europe was the decisive theatre of operations he was prepared to let 1st Canadian Corps go short until the middle of November.

436. After outlining the steps taken to alleviate the shortage of general duty infantrymen, in a letter of 20 Sep to Ottawa, General Stuart proposed that, for the time being, the training of infantry reinforcements in Canada might be terminated at the end of the 13 1/2 weeks common-to-arms training syllabus, apart from six per cent who should receive additional training as Drivers, I.C. (M.V.). By extending the existing basic refresher-training course in the United Kingdom from two to three weeks (for a total of five weeks training) it would be possible to cover the instruction eliminated in Canada. This would save time and permit more infantry reinforcements to be sent overseas (including instructional personnel made surplus) at an earlier date (147).

437. In a telegram of 4 Oct the C.G.S. replied that this proposal had been turned down, since it would be "undesirable to despatch reinforcements from Canada with less than 4 months service in Army" (148). He doubted whether the proposed three weeks training in the United Kingdom would both make up for the month's collective training at No. 1 Training Brigade Group (Debert) and provide adequate refresher training to men whose training had deteriorated whilst in transit. Considering that the result would be the earlier despatch of reinforcements into battle with a correspondingly lower standard of training, he continued:

It is questionable whether any reduction in present training time should be accepted at this stage. Present program in Canada with not less

than two weeks refresher in UK is considered minimum requirement to produce physically fit and efficient infantry soldier ....

As period of training is important question of policy suggest you discuss with Minister informing him of our views .... (149)

438. The C.G.S. already (23 Sep) had telegraphed concurrence in the revised wastage rates issued by C.M.H.Q. on 31 Aug (see para 418). However, he stipulated that they should be under constant review and appropriately revised from time to time as necessary in the light of future experience of battle casualties and changes in the composition of the Army. That telegram also had stated:

We note that an initial infantry pool based on three months intense at the proposed rates would have been approximately 27400 instead of 17800. We assume that these will be available by your continuing remustering of surplus in other corps now overseas who are surplus under your proposals (150).

Claiming N.D.H.Q. had anticipated that the F.F.C. wastage rates were too low for Infantry the C.G.S. pointed out that since mid-April some 68 per cent of the intake into the Training Centres had been allocated to that Arm. It was now proposed to increase this to 75 per cent, although it would not be easy to maintain the desired quality. Furthermore, rather than convert personnel then completing corps training in Canada into infantrymen, it was suggested that they be despatched overseas for remustering and conversion training. This would make for speed. Men undergoing basic training or still in the early weeks of corps training would, however, be sent from Canada only as trained infantrymen. The following provision was added:

You will appreciate that your proposed new rates will not be used to apply to Forces whose composition by corps differs from that of our Forces now in Europe as the basis of calculation is only upon the ratio which the casualties of each corps bear to the total battle casualties of our Forces as now constituted (151).

439. Any belief in Ottawa that remustering overseas would produce the difference of 9600 infantrymen between three months 'intense' wastage at the new Canadian and the older F.F.C. rates was doomed to disappointment. As of 15 Sep some 4720 had been converted to Infantry and another 500 (from R.C.O.C.) despatched to Italy but the opinion was held within 'A' Branch at C.M.H.Q. that 7850 was the maximum number of men who might be remustered to Infantry before the end of the year (152). In a memorandum passed to D.C.G.S. on 27 Sep Brigadier Bostock wrote that:

Bearing in mind that the surpluses in the rft holdings of other corps created by these new rates were not all personnel physically fit for Gen Duty Inf, and that certain types could not be remustered to Inf but to other corps where trades etc shortages still existed, this figure of 7500 is, I consider, a very creditable achievement by AAG (Req) (153).

440. The transfer of surplus reinforcement officers

to Infantry had been discussed at C.M.H.Q. during August and it had been decided that valuable time would be saved by soliciting volunteers rather than working through the lists of R.C.A., R.C.E. and R.C.A.S.C. officers, where the chief surpluses existed, and selecting potential candidates (154). Since it did not prove possible to obtain 140 R.C.A. officers for the second six weeks conversion course scheduled to open at the Canadian Training School on 16 Sep approval was given for the compulsory transfer of that number (155).

441. In addition to continuing the remustering of officers Canada was asked to supply 100 "aggressive" young subalterns in each of October and November to offset a deficiency of 450 English-speaking and 10 French-speaking Infantry officers (156). An N.D.H.Q. telegram of 13 Oct stated that 90 Infantry reinforcement officers could be despatched during October, 100 during November and 100 in December (157). Since this would not completely meet requirements, however, authority was sought to continue remustering overseas (158). It was 20 Oct, however, before authority was granted to effect the compulsory transfer of further surplus C.A.C. and R.C.A. officers (159). Subsequently it was decided that the surplus of officers in technical corps was too small to bother with and that a disproportionately large number of the surplus R.C.A.S.C. were over-age for service with Infantry units (160). Moreover, from early November on officers from Canada would require most of the vacancies on the C.T.S. courses (161). The final C.M.H.Q. ruling on compulsory transfer appears to have been issued on 24 Nov:

Until further instruction, surplus rft officers of RCA and CAC will be remustered, either voluntarily or compulsorily as necessary, to complete the normal intake of 105 candidates per course at No. 3 Wing CTS.

The numbers so remustered will be dictated by the requirements for course vacancies of 13 CITB\*. It is understood that the number of Inf rft officers directed to this Course by 13 CITB will be kept to the minimum required by the state of training of officers arriving in the UK from Canada as assessed by Os. C. CITRs (162).

442. Beginning in September only five overseas candidates were accepted monthly for commissions in the R.C.A. and C.A.C., and one in Royal Canadian Signals; other O.C.T.U. candidates would have to transfer to Infantry if they wished to become officers. An Officers Survey and Classification Board was established, under the chairmanship of the President of the O.C.T.U. Selection Board, to determine whether useful employment could be found for existing officers who were surplus to existing needs due to age, medical category or temperament. A second such Board commenced hearings on 23 Oct (C.M.H.Q. Report 156).

(vi) Shortage of French-Speaking Infantrymen

443. Although the internal composition of units is bound to change over a period as the result of illness, accident,

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\*During early November Infantry refresher training was concentrated in a new 13th Canadian Infantry Training Brigade and the Infantry Reinforcement Units disappeared as a training organization. The new formation comprised four (later five) Training Regiments, each consisting of one depot and two training battalions (C.M.H.Q. Report 133).

death, transfer and promotion the following units were still classified as French-speaking during the spring of 1944 (163):

First Canadian Army

4th Medium Regiment, R.C.A.  
No. 3 Battalion, R.C.E.  
4th Medium Regiment Signal Section  
Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal  
Le Régiment de Maisonneuve  
Le Régiment de la Chaudière  
4th Canadian Infantry Brigade Company, R.C.A.S.C.  
4th Medium Regiment Platoon, R.C.A.S.C.  
No. 6 Field Dressing Station, R.C.A.M.C.  
No. 18 Field Ambulance, R.C.A.M.C.  
No. 104 Light Aid Detachment, R.C.E.M.E.

Canadian Troops, A.A.I.

82nd Anti-tank Battery, R.C.A.  
Royal 22e Régiment  
No. 5 Field Hygiene Section, R.C.A.M.C.  
No. 1 Convalescent Depot, R.C.A.M.C.

C.M.H.Q. Units

No. 17 General Hospital, R.C.A.M.C.  
No. 9 Canadian Provost Company.

Naturally enough, it was considered most important that the four Infantry battalions with total establishments of 136 officers and 3148 other ranks should remain French-speaking. A memorandum of 13 Apr 44 noted, however, that there were 201 officers but only 348 other ranks against French-speaking Infantry reinforcement requirements of 90 officers and 1563 other ranks (164). Furthermore, there were current demands for six officers and 124 other ranks for the Royal 22e Régiment's share of the reinforcement pool in Italy and for 11 officers and 327 other ranks for Le Régiment de la Chaudière which would be participating in the D-Day assault.

444. On the following day General Stuart directed that the reinforcements requested for the Royal 22e Régiment (the senior French-speaking unit) should be despatched to Italy and that C.R.U. should be searched for French-speaking personnel suitable for remustering to Infantry (165). Brigadier deLalanne queried N.D.H.Q. by telegram as to what might be expected in the way of French-speaking general duty infantrymen (166) and was advised of the action being taken in Pacific and Atlantic Commands to enlist the N.R.M.A. personnel of French-speaking personnel for overseas service with their own battalions (see paras 328-340).

445. Personnel Selection Officers at C.M.H.Q. reported a total of 3601 (2653 general duty and 948 drivers) French-speaking Canadians serving with English-speaking units (167). Many of these were of too low intelligence to post away from existing employment, however, while some 800 were serving as infantrymen in English-speaking units. Regarding these latter, Brigadier Bostock uttered the following caution:

With regard to the remustering of French-speaking personnel, it will be more difficult than the normal remustering of General Duty from one arm to another, as experience has shown that French-speaking individuals in English-speaking units are very loth to leave

the English units and transfer to a French-speaking unit. Therefore, if the remustering programme is to be put into effect, special care will have to be taken that the individuals are approached by their C.Os, and that it is explained to them that it is their duty to accept this remustering for the good of the Army as a whole. If this is not done, I am afraid the results of the remustering will not be satisfactory (168).

Actually it was possible to transfer 233 such soldiers from units of First Canadian Army and 256 from within C.R.U. by 24 Jun, the latter going to Le Régiment de la Chaudière which was the only French-speaking unit participating in the Normandy assault (169). Some of those reported had been posted elsewhere while others turned out not to be French-speaking at all (even though they may have possessed a French name\*).

446. Meanwhile, Brigadier Beament had raised a more serious issue in a letter of 8 May. From GHQ 1st Echelon 21st Army Group he wrote General Stuart as follows:

I do not need to dilate on the extremely serious situation which exists regarding reinforcements for French speaking infantry units. It has always been difficult to maintain the Royal 22e Regiment in the Italian theatre and this has been done at the expense of reserves behind the other three French speaking infantry battalions. At the present time the available reserves behind the Regiment de la Chaudiere are inadequate to meet the demands of the first eight days for an infantry battalion in an assault role, and it is my impression that every available French speaking Canadian has been diverted to this battalion, thus leaving the two French speaking battalions of the 2 Canadian Division without any reserves whatsoever.

Several possible alternatives present themselves, such as:

- (a) Cannibalization.
- (b) An extension of the re-mustering policy.
- (c) Reinforcing French Canadian units with English speaking personnel.

All these courses have obvious disadvantages and strong political implications. The matter, however, is of such pressing urgency that I request that I be furnished at the earliest possible date with a directive regarding the policy to be followed in reinforcing these units (170).

447. On 12 May Brigadier Bostock visited First Canadian Army Headquarters and discussed the problem with Brigadier Walford (D.A. & Q.M.G.). On 21 May General Crerar

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\*Just as there were English-speaking personnel who had inherited French names there were French-speaking personnel named Robinson and Macdonald. To confuse Records personnel still more the name Martin might denote either an English-speaking or French-speaking Canadian.

instructed that French-speaking infantrymen be withdrawn from English-speaking Infantry battalions of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division and the 4th Canadian Armoured Division. A sufficient number of French-speaking reinforcements should then be obtained from other sources to provide the unfilled balance of 60 days wastage, at "intense" rates, for the three Quebec Infantry battalions of the 21st Army Group (171). On 23 May Brigadier Bostock was able to tell General Stuart that, from remustered personnel (including the 120 French-speaking A.A. gunners previously allotted to the 4th Canadian Medium Regiment) and arrivals expected from Canada that month, it would be possible to produce 1221 reinforcements: slightly better than the 1126 required to provide 60 days reinforcements for the two French-speaking battalions of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division and replace the casualties expected by Le Régiment de la Chaudière in the first 17 days of fighting (172). Although this provided for the immediate future there was no reserve in the United Kingdom for the Royal 22e Régiment. Actually a further month's wastage for each of the Royal 22e Régiment, Le Régiment de Maisonneuve and Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal and two months' wastage for Le Régiment de la Chaudière—totalling 1570—should be provided. Some 1290 French-speaking reinforcements were expected from Canada before the end of July but Brigadier Bostock considered it wise to add a caution:

... although we may be able to make up the immediate requirements, the situation regarding French-speaking Infantry is by no means secure, and if any of the four bns should suffer unexpected casualties, it will be essential to adopt either the system of reinforcing with English-speaking personnel, or of cannibalization (173).

On the following day the Army Commander was advised of the steps being taken, together with the decision that French-speaking units within 21st Army Group other than Infantry would have to accept English-speaking reinforcements and lose their distinct identity, if no French-speaking personnel of the right category and trade were available (174).

448. In a secret and personal letter of 29 May General Stuart advised the Army Commander that there was no guarantee that the flow of French-speaking general duty infantrymen from Canada could be maintained in sufficient numbers to make good continuing wastage. General Stuart suggested that the only course might be the cannibalization of one or more French-speaking units to reinforce the others, and replacement with other units (175).

449. On 4 Jun General Crerar replied that the seriousness of the problem depended upon the actual casualties suffered by Le Régiment de la Chaudière up to D plus 18. He considered [rightly as it turned out] that the estimated casualties were too high: if so, the situation would not become acute for some months, probably 1 Oct (176). In the event that cannibalization should then become necessary the Army Commander favoured replacement by an English-speaking battalion of the 13th Brigade, strengthened by a proportion of battle experienced Officers and N.C.Os.

450. The summer passed without incident, even though General Stuart did include a note of warning during the course of his visit to Ottawa to obtain changes in the 'manpower ceiling' (see paras 395-7). His appreciation of the reinforcement situation, dated 2 Aug, concluded as follows:

The only part of the reinforcement problem that



is worrying me at the moment is the finding of reinforcements for our French-Canadian Infantry Battalions. I am withdrawing French-Canadians from English speaking units overseas for this purpose but unless I can get additional French-Canadian Infantry reinforcements from Canada I shall be faced with the alternative of disbanding units to provide reinforcements or reinforce with English speaking personnel. I do not relish either alternative and consequently I hope every effort will be made to increase the flow of French-speaking Infantry reinforcements (177).

451. General Stuart's fears were realized. Apparently Le Régiment de Maisonneuve and Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division had never been at full strength since the first day they went into action (12 Jul) and by 1 Sep they were deficient 276 and 333 other ranks respectively (178). From 1 Sep to 8 Oct the least number of deficiencies was 148 other ranks for Le Régiment de Maisonneuve on 27 Sep and 202 other ranks for Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal on 8 Oct. On that last date Le Régiment de Maisonneuve had 38 officers and 600 other ranks (75 per cent) and Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal had 38 officers and 585 other ranks (72 per cent). Since casualties were concentrated in the rifle companies this meant that the fighting strength was reduced by 50 per cent. Before taking up the matter with the acting Corps Commander (Maj-Gen C. Foulkes) on 8 Oct the acting Divisional Commander (Brigadier R.H. Keebler) secured agreement from the two battalion commanders that English-speaking companies might be added to their units. In fact, Brigadier Keebler had gone ahead and ordered that one such company should be formed from the reinforcements which had arrived for the division.

452. The seriousness of the situation had been realized at C.M.H.Q., where it was pointed out that on 23 Sep Le Régiment de la Chaudière had been short two officers and 86 other ranks and the Royal 22e Régiment two officers and 102 other ranks, although there were believed to be French-speaking holding of 21 officers and 270 other ranks for the latter in Italy. Brigadier Bostock considered that the Royal 22e Régiment should have priority, if any of the French-speaking battalions were to be maintained at full strength, and recommended on 9 Oct that authority be given the Canadian Section, G.H.Q. 1st Echelon 21st Army Group to post English-speaking personnel to its three Infantry battalions from the province of Quebec (179). General Stuart replied that the immediate problem was to despatch as many French-speaking infantrymen as possible on the next draft to North-West Europe (180). Brigadier Bostock then managed to increase this draft (UKAG 11) to eight officers and 126 other ranks. By "greatest endeavours of re-training, and replacing fits with unfits" it was hoped to provide the following reinforcements from Le Régiment de Hull (Le Régiment de Montmagny had been disbanded) and No. 6 Canadian Infantry Reinforcement Unit (181):

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Other Ranks</u>
20 Oct 44	25	142
27 Oct 44	14	89
3 Nov 44	<u>29</u>	<u>188</u>
	68	419

However, only a further 178 French-speaking general duty infantrymen were expected to arrive from Canada in time for despatch to an operational theatre during 1944.

453. In reply to a C.M.H.Q. query, the Canadian Section at 1st Echelon, 21st Army Group replied on 21 Oct that existing facilities did not permit conversion training being carried on in North-West Europe: furthermore:

Rft situation will not permit withdrawal French speaking soldiers from English speaking Inf Bns. Numbers French speaking soldiers in non CIC units physically fit and suitable for emp in Inf Bns negligible (182).

The situation regarding French-speaking Infantry officers was not serious, however, and despatches would be required only in accordance with weekly demands submitted.

454. General Stuart was in Ottawa and the Acting Army Commander's (Lt-Gen G.G. Simonds) letter of 23 Oct went to General Crerar (in hospital at Taplow) and General Montague (M.G.A.). With inclement weather about to boost the sickness rate General Simonds estimated that the deficiency of French-speaking general duty infantrymen would increase from the present (20 Oct) 340 other ranks to 605 by 1 Dec. The previously mentioned letters, written by Brigadier Keebler and General Foulkes were attached (see para 451) and General Simonds went on to suggest:

3. The reinforcing of French speaking regiments has been a problem for some time and it would appear that one of the following courses is open:
  - (a) That sufficient French speaking infantry reinforcements be made available to maintain the required fighting strengths.
  - (b) That one of the regiments be absorbed by the other and that the surplus personnel be used as reinforcements. This would require the formation of an English speaking unit to take the place of the regiment so absorbed.
  - (c) That English speaking reinforcements be used in French speaking regiments in which case complete companies could be sent into the line with English speaking officers and non-commissioned officers.

Of the above courses it is obvious for many reasons that (b) would not be acceptable. It would appear therefore that if (a) is not possible then (c) is the course to adopt and this is strongly recommended.

4. It has been found necessary already to give special battle tasks to these regiments because of their dwindling strengths. The undesirability of having to follow this course of action is obvious. Failure to bear a full share of the battle will become increasingly noticeable to other units and formations and resentment will develop against the regiments concerned. This in turn will prejudice the national interest.
5. In conclusion it is recommended that a policy be adopted of accepting one complete English

speaking rifle company to each battalion. This in turn will allow the French speaking portion of the unit to be kept up to strength if the reinforcements indicated ... arrive in the theatre (183).

After considering every angle General Crerar decided that, unless adequate French-speaking Infantry reinforcements were forthcoming very shortly, it would be necessary to concur in General Simonds' recommendation. This information was forwarded to General Stuart in Ottawa on 28 Oct by Brigadier Macklin (D.C.G.S., C.M.H.Q.), who pointed out that if casualties continued at the same rate it might be necessary to form two English-speaking rifle companies for each of the French-speaking Infantry battalions (184).

455. During the following days General Stuart resigned over the "conscription" issue (see paras 458-545) and was succeeded by General Montague. General Crerar resumed command of First Canadian Army and raised the special problem of French-speaking Infantry reinforcements in a letter of 12 Nov. Present deficiencies and anticipated further wastage until 31 Dec was 1242 other ranks, against which there would be 794 replacements. He informed General Montague that one of the three courses advocated by General Simonds in his letter of 23 Oct was necessary: this was a "matter of national importance and ... the decision must be made at National Defence Headquarters after the fullest investigation and discussion of the problem and treated as a matter of urgency" (185).

456. Le Régiment de la Chaudière was not in quite as bad a condition as the other French-speaking Infantry battalions since its initial "recoverable" casualties already were returning. November was forecast as a "quiet" month but "intense" activity was expected during December and Brigadier Bostock admitted to General Montague on 14 Nov that "on the present estimates we cannot maintain these bns up to strength to 31 Dec 44" (186). Furthermore, the discussion to date had ignored the existence of the Royal 22<sup>e</sup> Régiment: although up to strength, a draft would have to be provided in December for its future maintenance. This information was passed back to the C.G.S. in Ottawa, by telegram on 15 Nov (187).

457. By this time the "conscription" issue was approaching its crisis in Ottawa and no answer was possible until the overall problem had been settled. Once that decision had been reached the problem of despatching overseas sufficient French-speaking general duty infantrymen seemed possible of solution

PART V - CONSCRIPTION CRISIS

(1) Mr Ralston's Resignation

458. The Minister of National Defence had been shaken as a result of his visit to Canadian troops in Italy (see paras 428-9). Following his return to London he instructed that projections should be made, showing the existing and estimated future, manpower situation within the Canadian Army Overseas and information obtained from Canada as to the numbers that could be made available as reinforcements (1). On 4 Oct a preliminary study of the situation overseas was presented to him, although Brigadier Bostock later found it necessary to qualify certain of his conclusions (2). That same day Mr Ralston visited General Crerar at No. 7 Canadian General Hospital, Taplow, where the latter was a patient (3).

459. On 8 Oct the Minister of National Defence flew to Brussels and went on by road to visit the Acting Army Commander (Lt.-Gen. G.G. Simonds) and Brigadier Beament. General Simonds stressed the desirability of having sufficient replacements so that casualties could be replaced promptly and units not allowed to run down so that they had to be refilled with large numbers of "green" reinforcements. The fact that the rifle strength of an Infantry battalion was only about 60 per cent of the unit establishment did much to conceal the fact that a large proportion of the fighting component might be lost in a single engagement (Appendix "L") even though casualties might have been only a small proportion of the total strength. Mr Ralston later told the House of Commons:

I found that on account of the heavy infantry casualties, the infantry reinforcement pool which had been established in France on D-Day had been completely exhausted, and that at one time there had been aggregate shortages in the units themselves of over 3,000. This had been gradually overcome in aggregate numbers, but not in individual units, by vigorous efforts to retrain men from other units as infantry. No pool had been built up. The week I was there, there would be sufficient infantry in aggregate numbers available in the area to bring the units up to strength. To do so would leave only about ten per cent of what should have been on hand to provide the pool for which the acting army commander had asked. Some people have the idea that striving to keep units up to strength means trying to achieve an ideal condition. They think of experience in the last war when units held the line with strength substantially reduced. Experience in the last war is no guide. In the last war battles were short, the objectives were limited and long static periods intervened. In this war a battle is a series of continuous offensive operations, or, to put it the other way, a battle is a continuous series of offensive operations. That makes it most necessary that units, while they are in the battle, be reinforced on the move to keep up the momentum of the operation and each unit's fighting efficiency. That does not mean that units are kept in the line a longer time than they should be. They are withdrawn and replaced constantly by other units. It only means that, while they are there, the activity is more intense, and to support men and the success of the operation

the ranks should be filled up promptly (4).

Mr Ralston also saw Field Marshal Montgomery. During the next two days he visited No. 2 C.B.R.G., two general hospitals and the headquarters of other Canadian formations. He flew to Paris for an interview with General Eisenhower and returned to London on 12 Oct (5).

460. By then Brigadier Bostock had a more comprehensive manpower projection ready for his inspection. Based on the actual situation of 23 Sep Brigadier Bostock's memorandum of 11 Oct presented the reinforcement position as follows (6):

Detail	Infantry		Other Arms		Total	
	Offrs.	O.Rs.	Offrs.	O.Rs.	Offrs.	O.Rs.
Authorized holding at 3 mos Int Rates	2039	28424	1487	10999	3526	39423
Available on 23 Sep after allowing for deficiency in Fd units ex UK	<u>711</u>	<u>7407</u>	<u>2432</u>	<u>14513</u>	<u>3143</u>	<u>21920</u>
Surplus or deficiency	-1328	-21017	945	3514	-383	-17503

The N.D.H.Q. undertaking to despatch 4000 reinforcements per month during 1944 had been more than fulfilled—42,313 in the first nine months of the year for a monthly average of approximately 4700, with greater numbers despatched after April. Further ~~other rank arrivals~~ from Canada before the end of 1944 were estimated as 6197 infantrymen and 6312 for other corps.

461. Brigadier Bostock then totalled the number of all ranks which it was estimated would be available in each operational theatre, including "recoverable casualties", and set these against the generous allowance for casualties during the balance of the year:

	Infantry		Other Arms		Total	
	Offrs.	O.Rs.	Offrs.	O.Rs.	Offrs.	O.Rs.
Casualties all theatres	1404	18975	1207	7401	2611	26376
Rfts available all sources	<u>1318</u>	<u>17023</u>	<u>2558</u>	<u>21523</u>	<u>3876</u>	<u>38546</u>
Surplus or deficiency	-86	-1952	1351	14122	1265	12170

In other words, there was an overall surplus of approximately 13000 all ranks but a deficiency of some 2000 infantrymen. Actually the situation would be even less favourable, however, since the men despatched from Canada during December would require a period of refresher training in the United Kingdom; a proportion of the recoverable casualties would not be sufficiently hardened by 31 Dec; distance would not permit any men despatched to Italy after 30 Nov getting into action before

the end of the year.

462. According to Brigadier Bostock's memorandum, the 34,000 casualties suffered to the end of September and this generous estimate of 29,000 further casualties for the balance of the year presented a pessimistic total of 63,000, instead of the 40,000 originally estimated. If this should turn out to be true then the Canadian Army Overseas would have eaten into its "income" to the extent of 23,000 and reduced its reinforcement pool by that much. His conclusion was that

... we can on a basis of available reinforcements now in sight maintain the present Cdn Army to 31 Dec. In about 2 months time the position for the future will need reassessment in the light of circumstances.

463. After perusing Brigadier Bostock's figures of 15 Oct\* the D.C.G.S. estimated that the end of the year would find the Infantry reinforcement pool exhausted (7). Restoring it to the level of approximately two months' wastage at "intense" rates would require the bulk provision of 15,000 general duty infantrymen before 31 Dec 44. As a basis of calculation he had taken the activity forecast and battle wastage for the first six months of 1945 to be:

	<u>Other Ranks</u>
3 months "intense"	28424
2 months "normal"	8212
1 month "quiet"	<u>239</u>
Total	36875

for both theatres, although not necessarily in that order. Subtracting an estimated 11,000 men recovered from hospital during that period it would be necessary to provide a further 25,875 men from Canada, on an average of 4313 per month to continue the reinforcement pool.

464. After digesting the memorandum of 11 Oct Mr Ralston had indicated his apprehensions in a telegram to the Prime Minister. This telegram of 13 Oct stated that he was returning to Canada almost at once. On 14 Oct Mr Ralston had another talk with General Crerar, who was still receiving medical treatment and then, after examining further manpower projections, left for Canada on 16 Oct (by air), taking General Stuart with him. Arriving in Ottawa on 18 Oct Mr Ralston had a preliminary discussion with the Prime Minister that evening (8).

465. During the time Mr Ralston had been overseas the press had capitalized on an earlier (18 Sep) statement from

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\*Due to the changing situation, misconceptions and minor inaccuracies, and the desire of the Minister of National Defence for up-to-date information, slightly different figures were produced almost daily during this period.