

The Information Front: The Canadian Army, Public Relations, and War
News during the Second World War

By

Timothy John Balzer

B.R.E., Northwest Baptist Theological College, 1989

B.A., Trinity Western University, 1991

M.R.E., Trinity Western University, 1993

M.A., University of Victoria, 2004

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the Department of History

© Timothy John Balzer, 2009
University of Victoria

All Rights Reserved. This Dissertation may not be reproduced in whole or in part by photocopying, or other means without the permission of the author.

The Information Front: The Canadian Army, Public Relations, and War
News during the Second World War

By

Timothy John Balzer

B.R.E., Northwest Baptist Theological College, 1989

B.A., Trinity Western University, 1991

M.R.E., Trinity Western University, 1993

M.A., University of Victoria, 2003

Supervisory Committee

Dr. David Zimmerman, Supervisor
(Department of History)

Dr. Patricia E. Roy, Departmental Member
(Professor Emeritus, Department of History)

Dr. A. Perry Biddiscombe, Departmental Member
(Department of History)

Professor David Leach, Outside Member
(Department of Writing)

Supervisory Committee

Dr. David Zimmerman, Supervisor
(Department of History)

Dr. Patricia A. Roy, Departmental Member
(Professor Emeritus, Department of History)

Dr. A. Perry Biddiscombe, Departmental Member
(Department of History)

Professor David Leach, Outside Member
(Department of Writing)

Abstract

War news and public relations (PR) was a critical consideration for the Canadian Army during the Second World War. The Canadian Army developed its PR apparatus from nothing to an efficient publicity machine by war's end, despite a series of growing pains. Canadian Military Headquarters in London appointed the first PR Officer, William Abel, in January 1940. PR services overseas grew along with the size of the army. The early days were marked by lack of coordination and often jurisdictional and personality conflicts between Abel and the other PR Officers and organizations. The 19 August 1942 Dieppe raid was the low point for both the accuracy of war news and Canadian PR involvement because Lord Mountbatten's Combined Operations Headquarters minimized Canadian PR's involvement in planning. This resulted in early portrayals of the raid as successful and the British censored a more honest explanation by the Canadian Army. The Sicilian and Italian campaigns provided a learning experience for the PR units. In Sicily, the news coverage of the Canadians was a public success, but PR had trouble with their allies in gaining national recognition and representation. Additionally, the question

of correspondents' priorities and delays getting to the front and transportation difficulties angered the press. Many of these problems continued in Italy until the appointment of Richard Malone, who enjoyed support from the politicians, press, and military. Applying the Mediterranean experience and participating in Allied publicity planning contributed to the excellence of Canadian PR during the Northwest Europe Campaign. PR maintained the confidence of the press while still controlling the correspondents. The army also largely overcame the temptation to censor bad news although this sometimes embarrassed Ottawa. Allied regulations sanitized war news preventing the reporting of the more disturbing aspects of war. Through censorship, the army exercised a great deal of control over the news media, yet this hegemony was incomplete because of need to keep the press friendly. Although a large sceptical minority remained, most Canadians considered their war news to be accurate. In sum, Canadian Army PR was generally successful, portraying the army positively and attracting media coverage.

Table of Contents

Supervisory Page	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of Contents	v
Abbreviations	vii
Acknowledgements	x
Dedication	xi
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Part One: Canadian Army Public Relations and War News in the Second World War	26
Chapter Two: The Beginnings: The Growth of Canadian Army PR and Policy September 1939 to June 1943	26
Chapter Three: Learning through Trial and Error: Canadian Army PR in Sicily and Italy July 1943-June 1944	62
Chapter Four: The Publicity Machine: The Northwest Europe Campaign and Beyond	83
Part Two: Case Studies	137
Chapter Five: “Sugaring the Pill,” Selling Dieppe to Canadians	137
Chapter Six : Public Relations Triumph, Press Relations Debacle: Canadian Army War News and the Invasion of Sicily	178
Chapter Seven: Murder, Massacre and Friendly Fire: Three Normandy Case Studies	233
Chapter Eight: “We Regret to Inform you...”: Casualty Notification and Publication during the Second World War	270
Conclusion: Second World War Canadian Army PR and War News Management	299
Bibliography	334

Appendix One: PR Organization Chart 1943	347
Appendix Two: Hail the DADPR	349

Abbreviations

AFHQ	Allied Force Headquarters
ADPR	Assistant Deputy Director of Public Relations
Air 2	Air Ministry and Ministry of Defence: Registered Files
Air 16	Fighter Command: Registered Files
Air 20	Air Ministry and Ministry of Defence: Papers accumulated by the Air Historical Branch
AP	Associated Press
BUP	British United Press
CCO	Chief of Combined Operations
CMHQ	Canadian Military Headquarters
CP	Canadian Press
COHQ	Combined Operations Headquarters
CWRO	Canadian War Records Office
DADPR	Deputy Assistant Director of Public Relations
DDPR	Deputy Director of Public Relations
DEFE 2	Combined Operations Headquarters, and Ministry of Defence, Combined Operations Headquarters
DND	Department of National Defence
DND DHH	Department of National Defence, Directorate of History and Heritage
DO	General Records of the Dominions Office
DPR	Director of Public Relations

FO 898	Political Warfare Executive and Foreign Office, Political Intelligence Department Papers
GPO	General Post Office
HS 2	Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive and successors: Headquarters: Records
INF 1	Ministry of Information: Files of Correspondence
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
MoI	Ministry of Information
NA	National Archives, United Kingdom
NDHQ	National Defence Headquarters
NRMA	National Resources Mobilization Act
PWE	Political Warfare Executive
PR	Public Relations
PREM 3	Prime Minister's Office: Operational Correspondence and Papers
PRO	Public Relations Officer
PSW	Psychological Warfare
RAF	Royal Air Force
RCAF	Royal Canadian Air Force
RCN	Royal Canadian Navy
RG 2	Privy Council Office Files
RG 19	Department of Finance Files
RG 24	Department of National Defence Files
RG 25	External Affairs Files

RG 36	Boards, Offices, and Commissions Files
RG 41	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Files
RG 44	Department of National War Services Files
RN	Royal Navy
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force
UP	United Press
WIB	Wartime Information Board
WO 204 and 228	Allied Forces, Mediterranean Theatre: Military Headquarters Papers
WO 219	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force: Military Headquarters Papers
WO 229	War Office: Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force and 21 Army Group

Acknowledgements

The research for this dissertation was funded in part by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Doctoral Fellowship. Many individuals are appreciated for their contributions to this dissertation. My committee members made many contributions guiding the editing of my drafts. My supervisor, Dr. Zimmerman was always encouraging and available to speak about my research and his suggestion to cut down the scope of research from all three armed services to only the army saved me probably a year of writing time. Besides her contributions as a committee member Dr. Patricia Roy provided invaluable assistance to the Dieppe chapter with her expertise at editing and suggestions about content. My SSHRC referees Dr. David Zimmerman and Dr. Eric Sager assisted me during the SSHRC application process and the Canadian taxpayers provided the funding that made much of this research possible. The Department of History at the University of Victoria also helped to finance my research through the awarding of a Doctoral Fellowship and research trip funding, I therefore thank the faculty, especially Dr. Elizabeth Vibert. Paul Marsden at the Library and Archives Canada assisted me in finding my bearings in RG 24 and guided me to important finding aids. Dr. Bob Bergen of the University of Calgary assisted me in locating the current regulations for war correspondents with the Canadian Armed Forces in Afghanistan. David Halton graciously allowed me to access his father's papers and provided me with notes on relevant topics from Matthew Halton's private letters to his wife. He also alerted me to Bizimana's recently published book. I took great joy in discussing the reporting of Canadian war news during the Second World War with someone who shares my interest and I gained an increased understanding of the relationships between and lifestyles of the Canadian war correspondents.

I also greatly appreciate those who assisted me with accommodation during my research. Stephanie McDonnell and Chris Pollock helped me with accommodation in Ottawa for several research trips. David and Val Hayes generously hosted me in London making the cost of research in the United Kingdom much more reasonable. They also made me feel like one of their family while I was there. My father and stepmother John and Doreen Balzer, and in-laws David and Marge Mannings provided accommodation in the Lower Mainland and early morning rides to the airport on my frequent research trips to the east.

I owe a debt of gratitude to several people who helped me with translating the French texts. Nicole Furrer gave generously of her time and expertise, while her husband Armin submitted to many academic invasions of the kitchen. The willingness of Katherine and Sophia Pichée to assist me in translation also speeded my work, I wish them all the best in their postsecondary studies.

Most of all, I appreciate the sacrifices my family has made for me to complete my research and coursework. Thanks to my sons, Ethan and Konrad for putting up with dad being gone. My wife, Colleen endured long absences during my years of commuting to and from Victoria, and the three months during the past two years I was gone to Ottawa and London for research. During this time, she worked as a high school teacher, department head and full time mother. She has been supportive of my studies and our family. None of this research could have been done without her. Many thanks.

Dedication

With love to Col, my wife and best friend, for all your love, support and help.
“She is worth far more than rubies.”

Chapter One:

Introduction

“Compared with all previous wars, the Second was uniquely the Publicity War...”- Paul Fussell¹

War has always been news. According to tradition, the ancient Greek runner Pheidippides ran the 35 kilometres to Athens from the scene of the victory over the Persian force at Marathon in 490 BC to proclaim the news, before collapsing dead. Before the advent of mass circulation newspapers, town criers announced notices of important battles to the populace. Military leaders such as Napoleon courted publicity by using proclamations and bulletins to trumpet their victories to press and public, emphasising the role of their leadership. Unfortunately, his victory bulletins also purportedly led to the phrase “to lie like a bulletin,” because of the unreliability and obvious propaganda purposes. The dispatch of the *Times* war correspondent Howard Russell to report on the Crimean War marked a new development: war news from the front written by a journalist rather than by military officers. The advent of the war correspondent meant a rival source of war news that could contradict and challenge official accounts of operations. Russell’s portrayals of the horrors of war and the suffering of the troops along with his accusations of bungling, particularly by the British commander Lord Raglan, raised anger in both the public and military, although for very different reasons.

In the First World War, these two sources of war news came to greater prominence. The military and governments realized that information had become a potent

¹ Paul Fussell, *Wartime: Understanding and Behaviour in the Second World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 153.

weapon in the context of total war. Official propaganda sought to rally public support for the war effort by declaring the wickedness of the enemy and justice of the cause. At first, British commanders regarded correspondents as little better than the enemy; at one point early in the war, the British Minister of War, Lord Kitchener, ordered the arrest and deportation from France of a number of war correspondents. Grudgingly, the military recognized the value of news reports and allowed a limited number of correspondents to go near the front though tightly controlled by escorting officers and severe censorship.²

During the Second World War, the volume of war news and publicity greatly exceeded that of the First World War. Not only did much of the operational news come from the traditional source, communiqués written by staff officers, but a greater number of war correspondents also accompanied the armies and accordingly sent more reports. While generally, the restrictions on these correspondents were liberal compared with the First World War, the military enacted a number of steps to ensure that their stories did not compromise sensitive or embarrassing information. The armies' military field press censors vetted reporters' copy before transmission, while press conferences at headquarters kept correspondents informed of the "big picture" of operations and implanted the military's interpretation of them into their stories. Public Relations Officers (PROs) maintained a liaison with the press, conducted reporters in the field, and sought to both control and assist them. Military public relations (PR) organizations exploded in size and numbers during the war. As well, the major Western Allies relied on civilian propaganda agencies for stories to motivate the populace, these bodies included: the American Office of War Information (OWI), the British Ministry of Information (MOI),

² Phillip Knightley, *The First Casualty* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1975, rpt. 2000), 98-103.

and the Canadian Bureau of Public Information (BPI), later renamed the Wartime Information Board (WIB).³

The Canadian Army began the war with no PR organization at all, not surprising considering its shoestring budget during the interwar period. Yet by the end of the war, Canadian Army PR was a substantial organization employing hundreds of personnel with First Canadian Army in Europe, Canadian Military Headquarters (CMHQ) in London, National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) in Ottawa, as well as small PR establishments at each of the thirteen military district headquarters throughout Canada. The vast majority of the PR Officers (PROs) were reporters before the war or had worked in the advertising industry. These journalists in uniform oversaw a bewildering variety of tasks: press liaison, press censorship, psychological warfare, film and photographic coverage, accrediting correspondents, ensuring the transmission of news stories to Canada, promoting the image of the Canadian Army, and interacting with the Allied PR authorities.

The Second World War Canadian Army has been the subject of much historical investigation, but army PR has received relatively little attention. The books that have explored related aspects of it vary in quality and accuracy; none provides a detailed examination of the Canadian Army's PR and its interaction with war news. Most memoirs and academic studies that explain PR do so only in the course of exploring related subjects

³ For information on the propaganda organization in Britain see Michael Balfour, *Propaganda in War 1939-1945* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1979); Ian McLaine, *Ministry of Morale* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979). For the United States, Alan M. Winkler, *The Politics of Propaganda: The Office of War Information 1942-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978); For Canada, William R. Young "Making the Truth Graphic," Ph.D. dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1978.

Even though most PROs were journalists in civilian life, only three wrote books about their experiences in which PR is only a secondary focus. The most important are Richard S. “Dick” Malone’s two sets of memoirs.⁴ A peacetime journalist, Malone commanded the PR field units during part of the Italian campaign and in Northwest Europe. Malone later admitted that he wrote his 1946 memoirs to defend the reputations of Minister of National Defence J.L. Ralston and of Field Marshall Montgomery, to both of whom he served as a staff member.⁵ PR receives short shrift compared to this apologetic purpose. Apart from Malone’s own appointment, the PR situation in Italy barely receives mention. His discussion of the D-Day invasion and Northwest Europe focuses on incidents that he considers personal triumphs, standing up for Canadian rights against Allied authorities and crusading against “policy censorship,” the censoring of correspondents’ stories for reasons other than military security.⁶ Malone argues that while occasionally journalists had reason to complain, he always championed them, thus painting a very positive portrayal of army PR.

Malone’s second memoir, a two-volume work, has more detailed descriptions of Canadian PR operations. Nonetheless, PR is secondary to colourful accounts of major military figures and an overview of the war. Regrettably, self-aggrandizement is sometimes also evident. He mentions Joe Clark, head of PR for all three services, only in passing and Lt. Col. Bill Abel, who played a critical role coordinating PR through Canadian Military Headquarters (CMHQ), does not appear at all. Malone takes credit for

⁴ Dick Malone, *Missing From the Record* (Toronto: Collins, 1946); Richard S. Malone, *A Portrait of War* (Toronto: Collins, 1983); Richard S. Malone, *A World in Flames 1944-1945: a Portrait of War: Part Two* (Toronto: Collins, 1984).

⁵ Malone, *A Portrait of War*, 11; Malone, *Missing From the Record*, 80-1.

⁶ Malone, *Missing from the Record*, 169-176.

the creation of the PR structure of the armed services while serving on Ralston's staff in Ottawa.⁷ Malone appears to have relied on memory. Neither volume shows any sign that he revisited the documentary records to refresh his recollections. Thus, his account sometimes conflicts with contemporary documents and tends to simplify and dramatize events. Yet, despite their limitations, Malone's books remain an invaluable insider's look at how PR worked in the field.

Jack Donoghue, who served during the Northwest Europe Campaign as a conducting officer, escorting war correspondents, relies mainly on his personal diary, Malone's memoirs and Malone's 1944-1945 liaison letters chronicling the operations of 3 PR group. Donoghue concentrates on personal experiences and colourful descriptions of war correspondents. His very positive view of army PR portrays the correspondents and conducting officers as working well together even though all reporters were "suspicious" of the military censors.⁸ While limited by its popular style and lack of notation, Donoghue's memoirs of his five months at the front before transferring to the staff of *The Maple Leaf* provide a picture of military PR operations at the "sharp end."⁹

A third book by a Canadian PRO is a collection of letters by King Whyte to his wife in Canada. Whyte, a radio broadcaster in civilian life, served briefly in the PR section of CMHQ in 1944, before being seconded to various radio and reporting tasks for the American and British armies.¹⁰ His letters give insight into the atmosphere of wartime London and his account of his two-day visit to the Belsen concentration camp after its

⁷ Malone, *A Portrait of War*, 91, 92, 213; Malone, *A World in Flames*, 24, 193, 204.

⁸ Jack Donoghue, *The Edge of War* (Calgary: Detselig, 1988) 11, 56, 69.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 55, 123.

¹⁰ King Whyte, *Letters Home 1944-1946* (Hamilton: Seraphim Editions, 2007), 9.

liberation is moving. Yet he provides frustratingly little information about the work of PROs in the Canadian Army.

Closely related to memoirs is a biography of an important Canadian PRO, J. Douglas MacFarlane, by his son Richard MacFarlane. While generally popular in style, it also demonstrates extensive archival research and interviews. Two chapters deal with MacFarlane's army service, focusing on his role as editor of the Canadian Army service newspaper, *The Maple Leaf*. The most interesting chapters deal with MacFarlane's postwar dismissal from the newspaper for criticizing army repatriation policy. Unfortunately, the book gives little detail about the policies and organization of PR outside of the activities of *The Maple Leaf*.¹¹

Like the memoirs by the PROs academic study of the Canadian military services PR apparatus is also limited. Claude Beauregard's 1993 *Guerre et Censure au Canada 1939-1945* focuses on civilian censorship, but his chapter on military censorship has some discussion of the army's PR service, including the broad organization of the Canadian PR Group and the role of conducting officers. His main emphasis is field press censorship, its effect on the war correspondents, and the controlling of the perception of the war by the PR branch of Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF). Beauregard is more critical of the control of news than are the PROs. While recognizing the need to control information of use to the enemy, he argues that the design of the censorship and PR systems prevented the expression of any points of view other

¹¹ Richard MacFarlane, *Canada's Newspaper Legend, The Story of J. Douglas MacFarlane* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2000), 67-90. *The Maple Leaf* is also the subject of an oversized "picture" book by Barry D. Rowland and J. Douglas MacFarlane, consisting largely of reprints of the newspaper. It does contain some short personal reflections on their wartime service by former *Maple Leaf* personnel. Barry D. Rowland and J. Douglas MacFarlane, *The Maple Leaf Forever: The Story of Canada's Foremost Armed Forces Newspapers* (Toronto: Natural Heritage/ Natural History, 1987).

than official ones. SHAEF, through censorship rules, enabled military censors to exclude from correspondents' reports such things as the graphic portrayals of the horrors of war, any act of enemy chivalry, inter-service friction, discrimination against African-American troops, illegal fraternization of Allied troops with German civilians, and mistreatment of German prisoners by Allied troops.¹² Beauregard concludes that military control of news from the front was almost total.

Understandably, Beauregard's brief exploration of military censorship focuses on the big picture and the climactic campaign in Western Europe and almost ignores the campaigns in the Mediterranean. Beauregard also examines the Canadian Army's struggle to control both press and censors during the 1944 mutiny in Terrace, British Columbia.¹³

The most detailed study of Canadian Army PR is in a chapter on information control in Aimé-Jules Bizimana's study of the French Canadian war correspondents of the Second World War (2007) based on the PR records at the Library and Archives Canada and the Directorate of History and Heritage. For the first time he provides a broad outline of the development and structure of the different units of Canadian Army PR overseas as a background to his discussion of censorship. Much of the chapter focuses on the revision and development of war correspondents' regulations books and provides a long history of censorship of operational news by Allied powers during the war, with a special focus on the Dieppe raid. Bizimana, like Beauregard, sees censorship regulations

¹² Claude Beauregard, *Guerre et Censure au Canada 1939-1945* (Sillery P.Q.: Septentrion, 1993), 134-136.

¹³ Daniel German also explores the same incident in an article. Daniel German, "Press Censorship and the Terrace Mutiny: a Case Study in Second World War Information Management" *Journal of Canadian Studies* 31, 4 (Winter 1996-97), 138; Beauregard, *Guerre et Censure*, 89-93.

turning news into propaganda aided and abetted by the patriotism of war correspondents eager to support the war effort.¹⁴ The bulk of the book examines the careers of the twelve French Canadian war correspondents, mostly with CBC radio. It relies on the private papers of the several correspondents as well as CBC and government records. Bizimana clearly admires these correspondents but the approach is scholarly and analytical.¹⁵ While more focussed on army PR than Beauregard, Bizimana also approaches the subject merely as a background to his topic of study. While providing an excellent outline of army PR, the study is limited in detail and does not evaluate PR performance and policies beyond censorship.¹⁶

In contrast to the PR services, scholars have given some attention to the press coverage of Canadian Army operations, particularly in dealing with problem such as the disastrous Dieppe raid and the botched announcement of Canadian participation in the Sicily landings.¹⁷ Press coverage of incidents in Northwest Europe receive less attention

¹⁴ Aimé-Jules Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque: Les Correspondents De Guerre Canadiens-Français Durant La Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* (Montreal: VLB Éditeur, 2007), 290-328.

¹⁵ Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 12.

¹⁶ Several popular works address another aspect of Canadian PR that is not a major focus of this study, the Canadian Army Film and Photo Unit (CAPFU). Veteran Ken Bell produced a coffee table book featuring many photographs taken by the unit with photographs of the same locations in the 1980s. A more valuable account is the booklet by Brian O'Regan outlining a short history of CAPFU. O'Regan, a CAPFU veteran, briefly outlines the creation of the unit and major highlights of its operations. The booklet also includes the author's personal recollections of Normandy. Some archival research is evident through quotations from wartime documents. Sadly, the booklet is unpublished except in e-book form. The book is a companion of sorts to *Shooters* a documentary film about the CAPFU. The film has interviews with veteran photographers and provides a brief history of the unit. Ken Bell, *The Way We Were* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988); Brian O'Regan, *Camera Commandos and Reminiscences of D-Day Normandy* (Ottawa: James O'Regan, 2007). *Shooters*, James O'Regan, dir., www.jamesoregan.com and Department of National Defence, 2004.

¹⁷ C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War* (Ottawa: Queens Printer, 1955), 393-396; Stacey, *A Date with History* (Ottawa: Deneau, 1982), 90-3; Béatrice Richard, *La Mémoire De Dieppe: Radioscopie D' Un Mythe* (Montreal, VLB Éditeur, 2002), 43-74; Timothy Balzer, "In Case the Raid is Unsuccessful... 'Selling Dieppe to Canadians'" *Canadian Historical Review* 87, 3 (Sept. 2006), 409-430; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 57-66, 316-321; G.W.L. Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy* (Ottawa: Queen's

apart from studies about war crimes against Canadian troops.¹⁸ On occasion, the official histories deal with press reports of routine operations such as *Operation Goldflake*, the move of the Canadian corps from Italy to Holland in 1945.¹⁹ Apart from Dieppe and Terrace few of these studies delve very deeply into the coverage of Canadian Army news and its political ramifications, perhaps because bad news attracts more controversy, and thus study, than good news.

A third group of studies relate to PR focus on war correspondents, key players in army news and PR. Many of their memoirs were “instant” books published during the war or shortly after, such as those by *Maclean’s* L.S. B. Shapiro, the CBC’s Peter Stursberg, *The Montreal Standard’s* Wallace Reyburn, and the Canadian Press’s (CP) Ross Munro.²⁰ Several correspondents wrote post war memoirs. These range from

Printer, 1966), 73-74; C.P. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict, Vol. 2 1921-1948, The Mackenzie King Era* (Toronto: U. of Toronto, 1981), 339-345; Brandey Barton, “Public Opinion and National Prestige: the Politics of Canadian Army Participation in the Invasion of Sicily,” *Canadian Military History*, 15:2 (2006): 23-34.; Daniel Dancocks, *The D-Day Dodgers: the Canadians in Italy 1943-1945* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), 38; J.W. Pickersgill, *The Mackenzie King Record Vol. I: 1939-1944* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), 521-526; Lester B. Pearson, *Mike* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 239-243.

¹⁸ Malone discusses aspects of the press coverage of *Operation Spring*, *Operation Tractable* and *Operation Veritable*. Malone, *A World in Flames*, 57-58, 185-7, Malone, *Missing From the Record*, 191-192; Howard Margolian, *Conduct Unbecoming: The Story of the Murder of Canadian Prisoners of War in Normandy* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1998), 244 n. 1; Patrick Brode, *Casual Slaughters and Accidental Judgments: Canadian War Crimes Prosecutions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 9-10.

¹⁹ Nicholson, *Canadians in Italy*, 665-6.

²⁰ The books by Shapiro and Stursberg focus on their personal experiences in Sicily and Italy and read like travelogues. As wartime publications, they were censored. Reyburn was the only reporter to get ashore at Dieppe and was wounded before returning. His 1943 book is largely an apology for the raid retells the events of his brief visit to France. Ross Munro, who had accompanied the Canadian Army in most major operations from the raid on Spitzbergen to V E Day, relates some personal matters, but it is really the first history of the Canadian Army in the Second World War. As such, it is not especially critical in its analysis of operations and tends to celebration. L.S.B. Shapiro, *They Left the Back Door Open* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1944); Peter Stursberg, *Journey Into Victory* (Toronto: George G. Harrap, 1944); Wallace Reyburn, *Rehearsal for Invasion* (London: George G. Harrap, 1943). Ross Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1945, rpt. 1972). A rare later memoir by a Canadian war correspondent is Peter Stursberg, *The Sound of War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

Reyburn's disconnected anecdotes to the musings of *The Montreal Standard's* Gerald Clark on the relationship between correspondents and the army and censors.²¹ More cynical than Reyburn and Clark were Charles Lynch of *Reuters* and Peter Stursberg both of whom freely criticized censorship, military control and wartime journalism. Stursberg's 1993 memoirs are by far the most detailed and lengthy.²²

Only three histories and one biography of Canadian war correspondents have appeared. Of the histories by A.E. Powley, Eric Thompson, and Bizimana, the latter is the most detailed and scholarly, although largely limited to French language reporters.²³ Jock Carroll's biography of war correspondent Greg Clark of the *Toronto Star* provides vivid and moving anecdotes but has some glaring factual errors about PR.²⁴

General histories of war journalism sometimes mention Canadian war correspondents and are particularly useful for providing the context of how military control and censorship affected the accuracy and quality of reporting. In 1957, American historian Joseph Matthews argued that Second World War news was prisoner of the

²¹ Wallace Reyburn, *Some of It was Fun* (Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1949); Gerald Clark, *No Mud on the Backseat: Memoirs of a Reporter* (Montreal: Robert Davies, 1995), 56 334-5.

²² Charles Lynch, *You Can't Print That, Memoirs of a Political Voyeur* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1983), 62; Peter Stursberg, *The Sound of War* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1993).

²³ A.E. Powley's account of CBC war coverage and correspondents is part memoir since the author himself worked for the CBC in wartime London. He explains both the CBC's operations in London and the activities of other CBC war correspondents like Matthew Halton, Marcel Ouimet, Peter Stursberg, and Bob Bowman. Powley praises CBC's wartime achievements while conveying the technical difficulties of broadcasting from the frontlines using early portable recording devices. The only general account of Canadian war correspondents is Eric Thompson's 1990 article briefly examining their role in the war, including four short biographies of Matthew Halton, Lionel Shapiro, Ross Munro and Peter Stursberg. Unfortunately, the article focuses on the correspondents' books rather than the actual reporting. A.E. Powley, *Broadcast from the Front* (Toronto: Hakkert, 1975); Eric Thompson, "Canadian Warcoros in World War II: Professionalism, Patriotism and Propaganda," *Mosaic* 23(Summer 1990).

²⁴ For instance, claiming that Malone headed PR for all the Allies during both the Sicilian and Italian campaigns, when he in fact commanded only Canadian PR for a few months in Italy. Jock Carroll, *The Life and Times of Greg Clark* (Toronto: Doubleday, 1981), 230.

military publicity machine, enforced by censorship and control of correspondents' accreditation.²⁵ Journalist Phillip Knightley's 1975 Pulitzer Prize winning study contended that the correspondents became a virtual component of the military; in a total war against a clearly evil enemy the "patriotic war correspondents got onside."²⁶ Assessments of the effects of the PR machine on the quality and accuracy of war news vary. Matthews warns of "the overwhelming determination to force the news to render service in the common good" as the biggest threat to reporting a "modern war," yet he praises news coverage of the Second World War as giving an accurate overview of events while avoiding the more blatant propaganda of the First World War.²⁷ Knightley is more negative, approvingly quoting columnist Fletcher Pratt that censorship "pretty well succeeded in putting over the legend that the war was won without a single mistake by a command... of geniuses." He concludes his study of Second World War news with a condemning quote from Canadian war correspondent Charles Lynch that "it wasn't good journalism, it wasn't journalism at all."²⁸

How does the literature on Canadian war correspondents contribute to this debate? Gillis Purcell, wartime leader of the CP and briefly a PRO, criticised military censorship in his 1946 MA thesis, based on the opinions of *Globe and Mail* correspondent Ralph Allen. He pictured censors forcing reporters to write success stories that conformed to press briefings, covered up blunders and avoided political embarrassment. Purcell lacked

²⁵ Joseph J. Matthews, *Reporting the Wars* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957), 192. British war correspondent and popular writer Richard Collier makes similar conclusions in Richard Collier, *The Warcos* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989), 145.

²⁶ Phillip Knightley, *The First Casualty* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1975, rpt.2002), 345, 356, 349.

²⁷ Matthews, *Reporting the Wars*, 176-7.

²⁸ Knightley, *First Casualty*, 300, 364.

access to the then restricted government documents.²⁹ Beauregard, Bizimana, and Stursberg share Knightley's views about censorship and correspondent patriotism.³⁰ In contrast, Eric Thompson quotes correspondent Ross Munro as saying that "I never felt I was a PR agent for the government" and that other correspondents are "wrong" when they make such claims. Thompson therefore highlights the correspondents' professionalism seeking "to keep Canadians informed of the truth they witnessed and believed."³¹ Malone also thought war correspondents had considerable freedom after D-Day, when policy censorship was invoked only twice. He says that censors passed criticism even when "untutored", although they sometimes took steps to make sure the "correspondent got the correct facts." Furthermore, "the army neither suggested nor fed direct lies to the press." On the few occasions when correspondents had reason to complain, Malone took up their cause with higher authorities.³² Gerald Clark respected censorship and believed that most Second World War correspondents "accepted it as logical and necessary--not as an attempt to stifle opinion which we could express even during the war."³³ Thus, opinions over the severity of military press censorship and independence of Canadian war correspondents are divided.

²⁹ Purcell did not serve overseas during active operations and therefore relies on war correspondents' opinions of military press censorship overseas. The bulk of the thesis focuses on civilian press censorship in Canada. Gillis Purcell, "Wartime Press Censorship in Canada" (MA thesis, University of Toronto, 1946), 119, 132-134.

³⁰ Beauregard, *Guerre et Censure*, 130; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 325-328; Stursberg, *Sound of War*, xi.

³¹ Eric Thompson, "Canadian Warcoros in World War II," 69-70.

³² Malone, *A World in Flames*, 92-93.

³³ Clark, *No Mud on the Back Seat*, 334.

Despite the memoirs and the existence of popular histories that suggest there is a market for such books, there has been little academic study of the Canadian Army PR and war news during the Second World War that takes full advantage of the rich documentary sources. The often-sweeping comments in the memoirs of correspondents and PRO's need to be checked against archival records to provide a more complete context for discerning the extent of military control over the news media. The whole question of how much PR independence Canada could exercise under the control of its more powerful allies also remains largely unexplored. Both Beauregard and Bizimana correctly place Canadian PR under the command of Eisenhower's Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, but did this leave room for Canadian concerns? Malone indicates clashes with Allied authorities over Canadian PR priorities, but were these conflicts typical? How great a control did the military actually exercise over the war correspondents? Which version of the role of the patriotic press and military censorship debate is more accurate? These various under-explored and controversial aspects of Army PR demonstrate a need for a dedicated study of the Canadian Army and war news in the Second World War.

This study answers these questions by focussing on how the Canadian Army attempted to influence, shape, and control war news during the Second World War. Since the Army PR organizations were created to accomplish these tasks, in large part it focuses on their organization, development, policies and activities. During the war, Canadian Army PR grew both in size and effectiveness from individual officers performing their duties virtually single handed to an efficient publicity machine, part of the larger Allied PR effort coordinated by Eisenhower's (SHAEF) organization. Even so, PR did not plan

and implement every attempt by the Canadian Army to influence news of its operations. Often high-level decisions about PR came from the commanding generals, often in consultation with representatives of the government in Ottawa.

American military historian Russell Weigley wrote, “It is to prepare for war and wage war that armies primarily exist.”³⁴ Since fighting was, ultimately, the most important activity of the Canadian Army during the war, this investigation of Canadian Army PR and war news focuses almost exclusively on operational news, the combat activities overseas and the planning for publicizing them. As such, the focus is on those PR activities that most influenced the production of war news for the public-- those that brought the army into closest contact with the news media. Thus, the activities of the CAFPU receive less attention than those of the conducting officers, PROs, and field press censors who directly influenced the content of newspaper reports and radio broadcasts. Similarly, the psychological warfare units and the producers of the army service paper *The Maple Leaf* receive slight attention because they primarily targeted audiences other than the Canadian public. Furthermore, because this study concentrates on operational war news, it studies the development and activities of Army PR overseas rather than in Canada although the various chiefs of Army PR operating from NDHQ who had policy input into overseas PR activities appear frequently. While news about training, recruitment, publicity stunts and other related activities was doubtless important to the war effort, it was not operational news, so the PROs at the various military districts, with a few exceptions, do not receive attention. The major exception is a brief examination of the conscription crisis in the autumn of 1944, an event of central political importance in Canada and one with implications for the conduct of the war by the army.

³⁴ Russell F. Weigley, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants* (Indianapolis: Indiana University, 1981), xv.

Any study of the military and the war news must place it within the wartime context of censorship and propaganda. During the Second World War, Canadian censorship was not the privilege of the military. In fact, civilian censors carried out most of it in Canada itself; army press censors operated only overseas. Censorship of newspapers, the mail, telegrams, and radio broadcasts were a reality for Canadians, although the severity and procedure for censorship of each medium varied.³⁵ News censorship in Canada was “voluntary” in that censors did not vet each story, rather the media compared their stories to published lists of restrictions and consulted the censors if there were concerns an item might be illegal. Censorship of all types had its basis in law in the *Defence of Canada Regulations*, an emergency wartime measure allowing government greater powers in wartime. Its regulation 39 prohibited a broad range of communications:

No person shall

- a) spread reports or make statements intended or likely to cause disaffection as to His Majesty or to interfere with the success of His Majesty’s forces or of the forces of any allied or associated Powers or to prejudice His Majesty’s relations with foreign powers;
- b) spread reports or make statements intended or likely to prejudice the recruiting, training, discipline, or administration of any of His Majesty’s forces; or
- c) spread reports or make statements intended or likely to be prejudicial to the safety of the State or the efficient prosecution of the war.³⁶

These regulations potentially gave the state the ability to muzzle all dissent. They were used to ban publications and groups deemed opposed to the war effort such as fascist

³⁵ The only complete account of censorship in Canada during the war is Claude Beaugard, *Guerre et Censure au Canada*. Only press censorship is covered by Gillis Purcell. Gillis Purcell, “Wartime Press Censorship in Canada” (MA thesis, University of Toronto, 1946). Jeffery Keshen provides an brief overview of wartime censorship, media and propaganda in Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners and Soldiers* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003), 14-18.

³⁶Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), RG 24, Vol 5529, hqs-24-10-5 vol. 1, *Radio Broadcasting Censorship Handbook of Directives* (Ottawa: Edward Cloutier, 1941), 83.

organizations, the Communist Party of Canada and related groups, Technocracy Incorporated, and the Jehovah's Witnesses.³⁷

Although these uses of the regulations fell mainly on radical or fringe groups, two incidents in which "mainstream" politicians and the media were the target caused great controversy. The first was the internment of Camillien Houde, the mayor of Montreal, for speaking against national registration. Threats to prosecute newspapers for quoting his statements led to the one of the war's biggest outbursts of editorial outrage. The *Globe and Mail* and the *Montreal Gazette* published Houde's remarks in defiance of the censors. They eventually faced no charges but the incident stirred up furor about the freedom of the press.³⁸ The second involved charges laid against Ontario Conservative politician George Drew for criticizing the findings of the Duff inquiry into the despatch of Canadian troops to Hong Kong. Drew called the inquiry a political whitewash to cover up deficiencies in training and equipment. Justice Minister Louis St. Laurent withdrew the charges after the Drew affair knocked an embarrassed government onto the defensive.³⁹ While the government realized it could not push the regulations farther than the mainstream media and politicians would allow, and experienced negative reactions

³⁷Keshen, *Saints, Sinners and Soldiers*, 16; Robert Martin and G. Stewart Adam, *A Sourcebook of Canadian Media Law* (Ottawa: Carleton University 1994), 190-4. The communist party, in accord with the Soviet-Nazi nonaggression pact, opposed the war effort until the invasion of the USSR by Hitler in June 1941, after which it became rabidly pro-war. Later communist justifications for their early actions, claiming that Canada fought an "imperialist" war rather than an "anti-fascist" one, remain unconvincing. Technocracy Incorporated wished to replace democracy by rule by technocratic experts, but was banned for opposing the Canadian War Effort. James A. Oastler, "Ban on Technocracy Placed to Oust enemy Propaganda," *Hamilton Spectator*, 24 Aug. 1940.

³⁸ Department of National Defence, Directorate of History and Heritage, hereafter DND DHH), 78/21, George D. Kerr, *Press Censorship in Wartime: the Case of Camillien Houde*, , Unpublished paper, March 1978, 12-14, 21-4. In 1942, it was agreed that no prosecutions of news media would be pursued for simply reporting subversive statements.

³⁹ Carl Vincent, *No Reason Why* (Stittsville, Ont., Canada's Wings, 1981), 224-225.

when it did, the Defence of Canada regulations gave extraordinary power to control freedom of expression and the press including the power to prosecute journalists who deliberately undermined Canadian military efforts by revealing secret information. This dissertation, however, concentrates on censorship directly under military control.

Any exploration of military PR and war news also relates to propaganda. What constitutes propaganda is murkier than censorship. There is no clear delineation between the positive idea of “persuasion”, the neutral term “information,” and the pejorative “propaganda.” Arguably, the term used relates to the feelings of the person receiving the communication in question. As Gary Evans wrote in his study of the Wartime career of John Grierson, “Propaganda continues to be what you don’t like....”⁴⁰ One person’s information is another’s propaganda. So elastic are the boundaries of propaganda that French Neo-Thomist philosopher Jacques Ellul, in his classic work on the subject, has an entire fifty-page chapter on its multitudinous characteristics that avoids giving a simple definition of propaganda.⁴¹ Victoria O’Donnell, however, has a useful definition: “Propaganda is the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of

⁴⁰ Evans studies the role of Grierson as Mackenzie King’s propaganda czar as head of the WIB and national Film Board. Grierson felt himself through propaganda “engaged in a totalitarian war for the population’s minds,” and “being a totalitarian for the good.” The promise of non-revolutionary postwar social change and reforms formed a major weapon for Grierson in this “war for mens’ minds.” By becoming head of both organizations, Grierson gained the opportunity to direct both towards his goals. Nevertheless, his idealistic aims also contributed to both his undoing as WIB chief in January 1944 and the scaling back of the NFB when accusations of his being too “internationalist” alarmed King. In any case, “once the crisis had passed there was no need to preach about a better world to come.” The book also includes a discussion of individual NFB propaganda films about Canadian military operations. Gary Evans, *John Grierson and the National Film Board: The Politics of Wartime Propaganda* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 5, 9, 11, 14-15, 94, 101.

⁴¹ Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), 3-87.

the propagandist,” and this definition is used here.⁴² Canadian Army PR attempted to influence war news of the Canadian public’s view of the army and its importance, and it sought to motivate Canadians to actively support the war effort and, importantly for an all-volunteer force, to enlist for active service. Thus, even though Canadian PROs overseas wrote very little for publication themselves, their attempts to shape the news were a form of propaganda.

The RCAF and RCN also established publicity services. The RCAF PR service competed with the Army for war news coverage. Since extremely suppressive censorship hampered the RCN Naval Information Service reporting of operational stories, it tried its best to promote the image of the navy.⁴³ The study of the RCAF and the RCN PR departments, which faced different circumstances and challenges in reporting news of their services’ activities, merits a separate study.

The major agency creating propaganda for the Canadian public was not one of the military PR teams but rather a civilian agency, the WIB, which oversaw efforts to insure that Canadians remained committed to the war effort. The initiative began with the small BPI in December 1939, but continually grew with the expansion of the Canadian war effort after the fall of France in 1940. While the press saw the growing role of the government controlled WIB as a threat not only to itself but also to the democratic right of Canadians to form their own opinions about the questions of the day, the WIB increasingly used social scientists and their methods to gauge public opinion and shape propaganda accordingly. When John Grierson became WIB chief in February 1943, he

⁴² Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion* (London: Sage, 1986), 16.

⁴³LAC, RG 24, Vol. 8165, NS 1700-100-42, “Report of the Plans Committee of the Naval Information Service, 11 August 1942, 5-6.

increased the number of academics on the board and emphasised social reforms. These techniques, especially the relationship between the Gallup pollsters and the WIB, remained secret in order to avoid accusations of political stage management of Canadian opinion.⁴⁴ While such fears were exaggerated, the press was correct about the emergence of a new emphasis on the government systematically discerning and manipulating public opinion that continued to gain in importance despite the WIB's disbandment at war's end.

During the war, all of these agencies, of course, had to work with the news media. Indeed, rather than have PROs write press releases, Army PR overseas relied primarily on newspaper correspondents and radio broadcasters to report the activities of the Canadian Army. Therefore, the story of the Army PR service is also the story of journalists at war. At the beginning of the war, daily newspapers were the main source of information for Canadians; during the war radio news broadcasts grew greatly in importance. In 1941, total newspaper circulation in Canada stood at 2,378,657.⁴⁵ Toronto had the largest circulation by daily newspapers in 1942: the *Toronto Star* with 239,219, *Globe and Mail* with 164,729, and the *Toronto Telegram* with 153,395. Montreal was the only other city with newspapers with over 100,000 in circulation, with *La Presse* at 158,122 and the *Montreal Star* with 126,123. Yet circulation is not the only measure of influence and the

⁴⁴ William R Young, "Academics and Social Scientists versus the Press: the Policies of the Bureau of Public Information and the Wartime Information Board, 1939 to 1945," *Historical Papers* 13:1, (1978), 218-220, 223, 233-235. A complete study of the WIB is William R. Young, "Making the Truth Graphic: The Canadian Government's Home Front Information Structure and Programs during World War II," (PhD dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1978).

⁴⁵ W.H. Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967), 70.

Winnipeg Free Press, with a circulation of only 72,706, possessed a great deal of political influence and a reputation for superior journalism.⁴⁶

Canadian newspapers were no longer political organs tied directly to the political parties and merely acting as their mouthpieces. Nevertheless, most had a political bias: the *Toronto Star* and *Winnipeg Free Press* favoured the Liberals; the *Toronto Telegram* and *Globe and Mail* backed the Tories, but political opinions were generally confined to the editorial pages. This separation was a result of the growing move to “objectivity” as a journalistic ethos, emphasising “informational” reporting rather than the partisan politics typical of the nineteenth and the sensationalistic “yellow journalism” of the turn of the century.⁴⁷ Newspapers helped shape public opinion and were the most important way that news of the Canadian Army reached the public.

In the last few decades, scholars of the media have examined whose views and values the news produced by them reflects. Journalism scholars Lydia Miljan and Barry Cooper describe the liberal pluralist explanation of the news media reflecting one basic view of media production. According to them:

the power and the importance of the media lie in the media’s ability to influence the formation and content of citizen’s opinions. We may call this liberal and pluralist perspective because it assumes that public policy to some degree is an outcome of a more or less reasonable and multi-part conversation among citizens and political institutions to which they accord legitimacy.

⁴⁶ LAC, RG24 8165, NS 1700-100-42, “Report of the Plans Committee Naval Information Section,” Appendix B – Circulation Survey,” 11 August 1942, 21; Patrick H. Brennan. *Reporting the Nations Business: Press-Government Relations During the Liberal Years 1935-1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 12.

⁴⁷ Brennan, *Reporting the Nations Business*, 8-9; Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada*, 130-1; Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 4-8.

According to them, the news media operates in a “society of competing ideas and groups” and ultimately the “journalists are responsible for the words they write and for choosing the sources they interview for their stories.” This assumes that reporters enjoy relative freedom in what they write and that the news media enjoys similar autonomy from control of government and other powers in society.⁴⁸ The news then represents the values of those who create it and may reflect those of any number of the competing groups of which society consists.

In contrast to liberal-pluralist thought is the political economy school that grows out of class-based analysis and in its crudest form says that the wealthy and powerful tell the editors what to say.⁴⁹ The most influential of these is the “propaganda model” of Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman. They argue that media “manufacture the truth,” serving as a propaganda arm of the elite and that “money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public.”⁵⁰ Such filters include corporate media ownership, dependence on advertisers for revenue, media reliance on sources and experts provided by and paid for by the state and corporations, media criticism by conservative groups or “flak,” and “anticommunism as a national religion and control mechanism.”⁵¹ All media dissent involves only the “tactics” used by the state. Any voices actually questioning “fundamental premises or suggests that the observed modes

⁴⁸ Lydia Miljan and Barry Cooper, *Hidden Agendas: How Journalists Influence the News* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003), 12.

⁴⁹ Michael Schudson, “The Sociology of News Production,” *Media Culture and Society*, 11(1989), 266-7.

⁵⁰ Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (New York: Pantheon, 1988), 2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

of exercise of state power are based on systemic factors will be excluded from the mass media.”⁵² Thus, while having the appearance of independence, the media functions like that of a totalitarian state.

Both explanations reflect particular political philosophies and views of the nature of society. The political economy approach assumes that the ruling elites must continually impose their values through the media and other societal institutions or risk unrest. The liberal pluralist view also assumes the presuppositions underlying liberal democracy, that many opposing interest groups and viewpoints share and contest power. While recognizing that government and media ownership still exercises a powerful, if not determinative role in news production, the liberal pluralist interpretation of journalism seems to be the norm for peacetime journalism. If the political economy is correct, the government and military should have already covertly controlled news production, but during the Second World War, they enacted legal controls such as censorship and placing correspondents under military law. These controls were not hidden filters but public actions debated in the mainstream media. Nor were the establishment of government information agencies routine or concealed. The government believed it lacked sufficient control over the news media to allow it to continue in a peacetime framework, and this level of intervention in the media was extraordinary. This study will argue that even in the context of wartime, the media remained a powerful force of which the Canadian government and military had to placate or face the political consequences.

The political economy approach to news minimises the agency of two important parties in the production of news, the journalists who produce it and the public that

⁵² Ibid. xii.

consumes it. Influences on journalists include the norms of their profession, their personal viewpoints, as well as the external factors of government and corporate ownership.⁵³ Nor is the public mind merely a receptacle for the message of the news media. Frances Henry and Carol Tator, in their examination of the English-language Canadian press, argue that newspapers primarily reflect the views of their owners, and influence their reader's opinions. Nonetheless, people read the newspapers whose positions they agree with, which influences the media's approach to the news. Thus the "relation between a particular medium and its audience is interactive."⁵⁴ Public opinion and the news media shape each other. The content of news results not wholly from hegemony, but from the interaction of multiple influences and groups.

This study of Army PR focuses primarily on its organization, policies and influence on news of operations: its completeness, honesty, and accuracy. It does not attempt to "deconstruct" the content of war news. While gender is not a major focus, some discussion of the relationship of women correspondents with Army PR and how traditional views of gender roles frustrated and limited the work of these reporters is relevant.⁵⁵

⁵³ Robert A. Hackett and Yuehzi Zhao, *Sustaining Democracy: Journalism and the Politics of Objectivity* (Toronto: Garamond, 1998), 7. Nevertheless, Hackett and Zhao emphasise the growing power of the corporate media and would fall within the "political economy" approach while being cognisant of its limitations.

⁵⁴ Frances Henry and Carol Tator, *Discourses of Domination: Racial Bias in the Canadian English-Language Press* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 7.

⁵⁵ Several books investigate race and gender and the Canadian war effort. Ruth Roach Pierson analyses how Canadian servicewomen were portrayed in war news and military publicity. Scott Sheffield studied the image of First Nations peoples during the Second World War. Ruth Roach Pierson, *They're Still Women After All: The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986); R. Scott Sheffield, *The Red Man's On The Warpath: The Image Of The "Indian" And The Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

The dissertation is in two main parts. The first section, a chronological overview of Canadian Army PR during the Second World War, traces the growth of the PR organization and its policies from nothing to an efficient publicity machine. It examines the growing pains of PR as it began in CMHQ in 1940 and expanded along with the army despite conflicts between the PROs and with other agencies. Nevertheless, PR had its organization and policies ready for the Sicily campaign in July 1943. The campaigns in Sicily and Italy were difficult for PR, which learned by trial and error how to conduct field operations, and to deal with Allied policies and conciliate grumpy correspondents. This experience was a critical building block for the Northwest Europe campaign where Canadian PR performed at its best making superior arrangements for the D-Day landings and enjoying good relations with both the press and Allied authorities. But this success had costs: the news sanitized the war, PR in Italy struggled for enough resources, and the conscription crisis caused by the heavy casualties resulted in some PR blunders in Canada.

The second part consists of case studies that examine in detail, the news coverage and PR activities during major Canadian operations. The Dieppe raid press coverage was not a triumph for Canadian Army PR. Not only was the news politically controversial and deceptive, but Canadian PR also took a back seat role to the heavy-handed leadership of Combined Operations Headquarters. The Sicily publicity had mixed results, the news captured great support among the Canadian public despite its lacklustre content, but the PR arrangements left many correspondents and publishers exasperated with the army. Three case studies of incidents in Normandy, the murder of Canadian prisoners, the massacre of the Black Watch regiment, and the accidental bombing of Canadian troops,

illustrate the growing complexity of PR as multiple military and political institutions clashed on how best to handle controversial news stories. Bad news could not be made to disappear, although this strained relations between Harry Crerar, commanding Canadian First Army, and his political masters in Ottawa. A final case study examines the publication of casualty names and figures, an aspect of war news not controlled by PR, outlining mistakes in the notification process and pressure from the British to conform to their restrictive practises. The last section evaluates the effectiveness and desirability of Army influence over war news during the Second World War.

Part One:
Canadian Army Public Relations and War News in the Second World War

Chapter Two:
The Beginnings: The Growth of Canadian Army PR and Policy September 1939 to June 1943

During the opening years of the war, the Canadian Army developed its PR organization. Since none existed in September 1939, this involved writing policy, creating units and recruiting personnel. This process revolved around three main developments. The first was the creation of the PR organization at Canadian Military Headquarters (CMHQ) in London between the outbreak of war and the end of 1940, after the government and army had decided that the army rather than Canada House and the Department of External Affairs would coordinate its publicity. The second major development, the resolving of many enmities between CMHQ PR and non-military PR organizations, occurred after CMHQ became a functioning organization in 1940. The lack of leadership from Ottawa in coordinating publicity between rival organizations meant that some issues were never completely resolved. The third major development was the creation of additional PR establishments at corps, divisional and army headquarters as the initial single division grew to the First Canadian Army, numbering 189,805 by June 30, 1943.¹ The subsequent organizational and interpersonal conflict had to be resolved by the development of policy and changes in personnel. At the same time, Army PR learned its business by covering raids like Spitsbergen and Dieppe and training and large-scale exercises, organizing a French language service, and creating a culture welcoming to journalists. All the while, PR officers carried out their duty of creating a positive image of the Canadian Army among the Canadian and British public.

¹ C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1955), 191.

The Canadian Army began the Second World War with no PR establishment. Preparing for PR in the event of future war was not a priority during the severe financial restraints of the Depression. Nevertheless, the Canadian Army had not always lacked publicity. Beginning in March 1915, Canadians read reports from the “Canadian Eye-Witness”² supposedly “wired from the trenches.”³ It actually was Max Aitken, soon to be made Lord Beaverbrook, compiling the stories with the help of his organization, the Canadian War Records Office (CWRO). Aitken was the driving force behind Canadian publicity during the Great War. The wealthy Canadian-born politician, industrialist and publisher, already well connected and influential in the British establishment, was in the perfect position to act as intermediary between the British and Canadian governments. His appointment as official “Eye-Witness” added to this influence because he used it to gain access to the meetings of the British General Headquarters.⁴ Aitken enlarged his “Eye-witness” appointment and in May 1915 became Canadian War Records Officer, a position combining the posts of publicist, historian and archivist. Initially, he personally paid a team of writers to assist him. Despite the claims made by the term “eye-witness,” after Second Ypres he seldom visited the front himself.⁵ Using his influence as press baron and Conservative politician, he ensured that British newspapers featured Canadian publicity and even forced military censors to loosen their regulations, powers about

² Jeff Keshen, “All the News that was Fit to Print; Ernest J Chambers and Information Control in Canada, 1914-19,” *Canadian Historical Review*, LXXIII, 3, 1992.

³ *Globe and Mail*, March 27, 1915, 1.

⁴ Tim Cook, *Clio's Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 13.

⁵ Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship during Canada's Great War* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1996), 31.

which later Canadian PR personnel could only dream.⁶ Aitken supervised the publication not only of newspaper reports, pamphlets, photographs and films, but also early wartime histories like the best-selling volumes of *Canada in Flanders* that glorified Canadian troops. The CRWO proclaimed itself the “spokesman for the Canadian Army; it was the official reporter of what was good to report; it was the eyes and the pen of the great inarticulate mass of men who were too busy fighting to tell just how they were fighting.”⁷ Aitken fulfilled his goals of lionizing and publicizing Canadian formations. So effective was Aitken’s propaganda that a number of British observers griped that some Americans believed that the Canadians were the chief combat force. Furthermore, Lloyd George appointed him Minister of Information for the UK in 1918.⁸ There was to be no equivalent dominant figure in the Second World War.

At the beginning of the Second World War, the Liberal government of W.L. Mackenzie King hoped to participate in the conflict with as little cost in blood and cash as possible. Avoiding conscription for overseas service and the bitter national and political division that it had created during the First World War was the chief motivation behind many of King’s war policies. King hoped that the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan would be Canada’s main contribution to the war effort. Preparing British and Commonwealth aircrews and aerial warfare seemed more palatable than repeating the huge casualties that occurred in the trenches on the Western Front. Even so, the government agreed to send a single Canadian division to Europe, easily sustained by

⁶ Cook, *Clio’s Warriors*, 14-15.

⁷ Cited in Cook, *Clio’s Warriors*, 19.

⁸ A.J.P. Taylor, *Beaverbrook* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), 88, 139-143.

volunteers, so the major story for the army in 1939 was the sending of what became the First Division to the United Kingdom

Since the Canadian Army did not have a PR organization in place, the Canadian High Commissioner in the UK, Vincent Massey, had ambitious plans to make Canada House the centre of a new CWRO and sought government funding for such an organization. Canada House Press Officer James Spence assembled “Eye-Witness” accounts such as those created by Beaverbrook, and employed photographers and motion- picture camera operators already in London. As Spence explained to Colonel E.L.M. Burns of CMHQ: “any large immigration from Canada for the specific purpose of strengthening the [existing Canada House] organization, or creating another *de novo*, would be of doubtful economy and equally doubtful expediency.”⁹ Massey was ready to step into the same shoes once worn by Beaverbrook.

For reasons that remain obscure, the army did not follow up on Massey’s suggestions. It likely feared another powerful publicity figure, outside its control. Aitken’s “Eye-Witness” PR program proved a mixed blessing to the high command of the Canadian Army. While ensuring positive publicity, Beaverbrook had been instrumental in having Edwin Alderson removed from the command of the Canadian Corps and “manipulated the command of brigades and battalions.”¹⁰ While Massey would not have had the same power in the British establishment as Aitken enjoyed, he still had connections in both countries and was influential in his own right. The army decided that a PR officer directly under military control eliminated any risk of an outsider

⁹ Library and Archives Canada (LAC), RG 24, C-2, vol. 12369, 4/Press/1, Vincent Massey, Memorandum, 19 Oct. 1939; James Spence to E.L.M. Burns, 15 Nov, 1939.

¹⁰ Cook, *Clio’s Warriors*, 19.

controlling the news. What also worried the army were the poor results of the PR management by Canada House of the first major Canadian Army news event in Britain.¹¹

Canada House coordinated aspects of the publicity for the December 1939 arrival of First Division in Britain, in conjunction with the Canadian Army and British military PR and censorship authorities. The careful handling of the press arrangements was critical. Foremost was the need for security; the enemy must not learn of the movement of troops, the port, names and numbers of transports and naval escorts. The order of battle of the Canadian division was also secret, as were unit names, numbers, and any officer except the commander A.G.L. McNaughton, and any regiment's home localities.¹² Secondly, with the story being of critical interest to the Canadian public, the Canadian Press (CP), a non-profit news agency supplying stories to its member newspapers, was to receive the news simultaneously with the British news media on the second day after the landing. A three-hour delay imposed on the American Press would reduce the possibility of American radio news scooping Canadian newspapers. Finally, the impression would have to be given that the entire Canadian division had arrived, when in reality it took at least three "flights" to do so.¹³ Presumably, this would deceive the enemy about Allied military strength in Britain and disguise later troop sailings. Canada House was to

¹¹ Vincent Massey, *What's Past is Prologue: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Vincent Massey* (London: Macmillan, 1963), 319-321.

¹² LAC, RG 24, C-2, Vol. 12369, 4/Press/2, "Instructions for Press Representatives Covering the Arrival of the Canadian Active Service Force," Dec. 1939. In fact, the units comprising the division had been widely publicized in Canada but Lt. Col. E.L.M Burns felt this information still might not be known to the enemy. Memorandum to Spence by Burns, 15 Dec. 1939.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Cable 794, Massey to External, 13 Dec. 1939. Canadian radio was also not to release the news until the morning newspapers did.

communicate with the press, provide background information for the journalists, and arrange the release time with the other parties involved.

The troops themselves circumvented the careful planning by Canada House and the Canadian military. After disembarking in Southampton, they sent cables to Canada informing families of their safe arrival. No one had informed the British cable censors to hold back private telegrams. Widespread domestic knowledge of the arrival made the “position with respect to the press most difficult,” according to External Affairs.¹⁴ To make matters worse, Winston Churchill broadcast the news of First Division’s arrival on the evening of December 18, before the planned release of the news on the morning of December 20. Canadian General Maurice Pope, who attended the conference on a “hunch” that Churchill “might crash through our previous agreement,” hurriedly notified the CBC and the press censors, who scrambled to revise press restrictions. Release of the story to Canadian newspapers followed quickly. Churchill later ignored publicity arrangements frequently, as Chief UK Censor Admiral George Thompson explained, “Churchill constantly surprised us and time after time he announced things which until he spoke had been covered by a strict ban.”¹⁵

The journalists who had invested several days into the story expressed frustration at its premature release. The British press launched a barrage of criticism. The *Evening Standard*, which had “pleaded” with the War Office and Ministry of Information (MoI) to change the release time, only to be scooped by Churchill, asked caustically if he kept

¹⁴ Ibid., Cable 670, External to Dominion, 18 Dec. 1939.

¹⁵ Maurice Pope *Soldiers and Politicians*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 142; LAC, RG 24, C-2, Vol. 12369, 4/Press/2, unnumbered Telegrams, Massey to External, 18 Dec. 1939; George P. Thompson, *Blue Pencil Admiral* (London: Simpson, Low and Marston, 1947), 103

“back the news in order to provide material for his speeches.” The *Times* called for more effective censorship and publicity coordination.¹⁶ When accounts of the controversy appeared in Canadian newspapers, Minister of National Defence Norman Rogers explained that the intention had been simultaneous release of the story in Britain and Canada.¹⁷ This did not prevent the *Stratford Beacon–Herald* from criticizing King for not announcing the Canadian troops’ arrival in his radio address on December 17 when this would have relieved families anxious for news of a safe arrival. In response, the Liberal-supporting *Toronto Star* warned that a premature announcement would have invited air attack. Even some anti-government newspapers, the *Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Telegram*, defended the necessity of censorship. The arch-Tory *Telegram* refused “to join the criticism of the government... for withholding the news of the arrival until it was announced ... [by] Winston Churchill.”¹⁸ In this instance, the editor’s Anglophile opinions proved a greater priority than a chance to criticize domestic political opponents. Yet the Canadian government was clearly concerned enough about the British scooping them on a major Canadian story. The incident was one of the first of many in which the Canadian government would suffer public relations humiliation at the hands of their senior allies.¹⁹

¹⁶ Cited in *Hamilton Spectator*, 19 Dec 1939; *Times*, 20 Dec. 1939, 9.

¹⁷ *Hamilton Spectator*, 19 December 1939

¹⁸ *Toronto Star*, 23 Dec. 1939; *Globe and Mail*, 21Dec. 1939; *Toronto Telegram*, 20 Dec.1939.

¹⁹ The publicity of the arrival also led to a humorous incident related by Lester B. Pearson in his memoirs. The first soldier to disembark was the leading regiment’s Sergeant Major accompanied by the unit’s mascot, an Aberdeen terrier. While the dog may have been good PR, the British attempted to enforce the strict six-month quarantine designed to keep rabies out of Great Britain. When the regiment was reluctant to surrender its mascot, Pearson obtained the terrier and handed it over for its incarceration. According to the story Pearson heard, two handsome Canadian soldiers, under orders, befriended the young women who staffed the pound to obtain the release the mascot by substituting a similar looking dog obtained locally. The mission was a success, the pound keepers cooperated, and six months later, the regiment sported two

Although little of the blame for this rested on Canada House, the PR arrangements for the first major Canadian Army story in Britain had been a fiasco. Much of the problem had been the multiple agencies involved in making the publicity arrangements. The Canadian Army had already begun steps to establish its own PR apparatus in Britain, distancing itself from reliance on Canada House for publicity. The incident can only have strengthened CMHQ's requests for its own PRO.

The proposal for an Army PR organization at CMHQ originated from the man who was to lead it throughout the war, William "Bill" Abel, a London-based employee of the MacLeran Advertising Company, a leading Canadian publicity firm. He had played a major role in a prewar Canadian commercial publicity campaign in Britain called *Canada Calling*. During the First World War, he served in the militia but went overseas only in 1918 and did not currently hold a commission. In November 1939, Abel approached Lester B. Pearson, the First Secretary of Canada House, with a "hurriedly written" proposal for coordinating Canadian publicity in the United Kingdom. The need for a PR organization was great because "every parent, every community, every Province will be conjuring up reasons to be critical of our war effort." This organization was to "eliminate complaints growing out of operations here." Abel's vision was, like Massey's, for an agency similar to the CWRO controlling both civil and military record keeping, publicity, and the collection of materials for an official history.²⁰

mascots. L.B. Pearson, *Mike, The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson Vol. I* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 160-1.

²⁰ *Globe and Mail*, 18 March 1944, 22; LAC, RG 24, vol. 12383, 4 PRO CMHQ/1, Bill Abel to L.B. Pearson, 7 Nov. 1939; RG 24, 12383, 4 PRO 16, CMHQ to Defensor, Cable GS 639, 17 Feb. 1943; Department of National Defence, Directorate of History and Heritage (hereafter DND DHH), CMHQ Historical Report No.2 "Public Relations Officer – Development, Organization Function and Work," 7 Jan 1941.

Subsequent refinements of Abel's proposal brought some major changes. Pearson forwarded the proposal to CMHQ, where Lt. Col. E.L.M. Burns wrote a memorandum recommending that the army form its own PR office in Britain. The memorandum introduced a significant concept critical to Canadian Army PR during the war, that the "best way" to publicize and promote the overseas war effort was to:

afford facilities to regular journalists – not to set up any sort of "EYE WITNESS" (capitals in original) or group of official writers, whose product, however sound, will invariably be characterized as "hand-outs" or "propaganda." The Canadian Press and individual newspapers would be prepared to send able correspondents.²¹

Burns' suggestion of relying on journalists, rather than official releases as the CRWO had done, remained the army's policy throughout the war, despite occasional arguments against it. This kind of publicity, perceived to be less biased than that written by the army itself, was indispensable both to civilian and military morale. Providing a press liaison organization to coordinate with the news media would ensure that journalists got their story while military secrets remained secure.²² By the end of November, Burns and the Commanding Officer of CMHQ, Brigadier General Harry Crerar, separated army historical and PR tasks into two organizations reporting to Crerar. Canada House retained responsibility for publicity for Canadian civil affairs in Britain and the compilation of its historical records.²³ Beaverbrook's organization did not reappear; Canadians were a more sophisticated news audience in 1939 than they had been in 1914, and, as Burns perceived, it likely would have been dated and ineffective.

²¹LAC, RG 24, vol. 12383 4/PRO/16, E.L.M. Burns, "Memo for Brigadier G.S. Historical, Press, Publicity," 21 Nov. 1939.

²² Ibid.

²³ Cook, *Clio's Warriors*, 94; LAC, RG 24, vol. 12383 4/PRO/16, GS 36 Crerar to NDHQ, 25 Nov. 1939; "Organization GS Branch CMHQ" n.d.; Burns to Crerar, 25 Nov. 1939.

For weeks following the proposal, Abel and CMHQ sought official approval from Ottawa for a PR organization. Addressing concerns about costs, Abel argued that initial requirements were only one officer and a stenographer, but he would need as many as three officers and their assistants in event of active operations in France. Depending on established news organizations and systems for the correspondents and distribution of their material would also save a great deal of money.²⁴ In addition to emphasising economy, Abel lobbied for his appointment with politicians and generals and got the support of Massey, Crerar, McNaughton, Pearson, Burns and Minister of Trade and Commerce T.A. Crerar.²⁵ His name went forward with the proposal for the CMHQ PR organization to National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ).

NDHQ hesitated in approving the establishment of a PR officer at CMHQ, believing such a position to be unnecessary. Although Massey was ambitious to set up a PR establishment under Canada House, he threatened to stop covering PR affairs for the army if he did not get more staff and funding.²⁶ General McNaughton speculated that perhaps the delay at NDHQ was due to confusion in Ottawa about whether the PRO was to serve at CMHQ or First Division.²⁷ By the end of January, NDHQ overcame its reluctance and obtained an order in council appointing Abel as PRO, although without military rank. When his lack of a commission became a hindrance, the army appointed

²⁴ Ibid., W.G. Abel, "Memo to Col. ELM Burns re News Service and Historical Records relating to the Canadian Expeditionary Force," 23 Nov. 1939.

²⁵ LAC, RG 24, vol. 12383 4/PRO/16, GS 36 Crerar to NDHQ, 25 Nov. 1939; Abel to T.A. Crerar, 21 Nov. 1939.

²⁶ LAC, RG 24, vol. 12383 4/PRO/16, Massey to External, 4 Jan. 1939.

²⁷ LAC, RG 24, vol. 12383 4/PRO/16, McNaughton to Harry Crerar, 7 Jan. 1940.

him an acting Captain. Promotions followed; by the end of the war he was a Lieutenant Colonel.²⁸

CMHQ defined the duties of Abel's office. The PRO was to

control the Press correspondents, photographers, and cinematographers; to ensure that the publicity given is within the limits of censorship; to record the publicity given to the Canadian military in this country, and generally, to ensure that favourable publicity reaches Canada, while obviating criticisms and complaints built on incorrect information.²⁹

In addition to these duties at CMHQ, he was to screen all proposals from journalists and photographers before access to First Division to ensure that it would "result in good publicity" and to protect the division's higher-ranking officers from reporters pestering them for details and frequent interviews. CMHQ acted as the link between the Canadian Army and Ottawa; Abel was, therefore, not on the staff of the division itself. Divisional staff officer Captain Churchill Mann handled press liaison at First Division, although as a staff officer he performed many other duties.³⁰ Eventually, the overlapping jurisdictions of the different headquarters of the expanding Canadian Army in Britain led to conflict between PROs, as the PR organization expanded.

When Abel became PRO, arrangements had already been made for the news coverage of the activities of First Division. In November, the Canadian Press (CP) news service reached an exclusive deal with the army to supply a war correspondent to the

²⁸ LAC, RG 24, vol. 12383 4/PRO/16, A.G. 394 NDHQ to CMHQ, 26 Jan. 1940; Abel to Burns, 12 Feb. 1940; A.G. 456 NDHQ to CMHQ, 16-17 Mar. 1940; Aimé-Jules Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque: Les Correspondents De Guerre Canadiens-Français Durant La Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* (Montreal: VLB Éditeur, 2007), 292.

²⁹ LAC, RG 24, vol. 12383 4/PRO/16, E.L.M. Burns, "Duty of Public Relations Officer, Canadian Military Headquarters and Relations with First Canadian Division", 21 Jan. 1940.

³⁰ LAC, RG 24, vol. 12383 4/PRO/16, *ibid.*; C.C. Mann, "Memorandum dealing with discussions of arrangements PRO CMHQ and HQ 1 Cdn. Div. for execution of approved policies," 15 Mar. 1940.

division, although in turn CP supplied stories to all member newspapers in Canada. Those few not belonging to CP were supplied news at the cost of transmission only.³¹ Gillis Purcell, the General Superintendent of CP, became the correspondent. His stories were to be subject both to regular Canadian civil and British cable censorship and Canadian and British military censorship.³² Giving priority for CP correspondents later resulted in controversy when other news agencies and individual newspapers wanted their correspondents to cover operations.

Until April 1940, when the “phoney war” ended with the German invasion of Denmark and Norway, the correspondents and the PRO had precious little Canadian Army operational news on which to report. That soon changed, as the newspapers took the opportunity to invent fictitious actions for the army. The British planned to retake the Norwegian port of Trondheim and asked the Canadians for the assistance of two battalions. With McNaughton’s approval, the Canadians proceeded to the embarkation ports in Scotland on April 18. The British decided they did not require the Canadians after all so they never left port. This did not prevent Canadian soldiers from fighting a lively Norwegian campaign in the pages of the newspapers. The British commander prohibited Johnson, the CP correspondent accompanying the troops, from reporting the expedition until authorized.³³ Contravening these instructions, the Reuters news agency released stories claiming the Canadians were in Norway, which the BBC announced as “officially confirmed.” CMHQ refused comment and the British War Office declared that

³¹ RG 24, vol 10855, 231c1(d29), J.A. McNeil to A.G.L. McNaughton, 30 Nov. 1939; Inspector General to Lt Col Clyde Scott, 1 Dec. 1939.

³² Ibid., “Notes to conference with the G.O.C. Canadian division at Canada House,” 22 Dec. 1939; Gillis Purcell, C.C. Mann, “Memorandum,” 15 Dec. 1939.

³³ LAC RG 24, Vol. 10855, 231c(D29) Vol. 1, C.C. Mann, memorandum, 18 Apr. 1940.

the composition of forces in Norway must remain secret.³⁴ The War Office and MoI prevented the CP correspondent from filing the story of the decision not to send the Canadian force to Norway, which would have quashed the rumours. Captain Churchill Mann, staff officer in charge of press liaison for First Division, noted that when Sam Robertson of the CP heard the decision, he “shook his head sadly.” While waiting for the Minister of National Defence to announce the news, Canadian reporters compensated for lack of hard news with imagination, picturing “Canadian ski troops” battling “Austrians chosen for their skill in snow fighting.”³⁵ An April 23 denial of involvement in the campaign by acting Minister of National Defence C.G. Powers did not convince everyone; the *Globe and Mail* argued that pictures of trucks at the front with Ontario licence plates proved Canadian deployment to Norway after all. The situation remained unclear until the Minister of National Defence repeated the announcement on May 21.³⁶

By the time of that statement, the eyes of the public had turned from Norway to France which the Germans invaded through the Low Countries in May 1940, forcing the British Expeditionary Force to evacuate through Dunkirk by June 4. The Canadians were not involved in this fighting except for a one-day expedition on June 8, when, as part of a British corps; they landed in Brittany but were quickly withdrawn leaving much of their equipment behind. The CP accompanied the troops and CMHQ arranged for other Canadian newspaper correspondents to travel to the disembarkation port of Brest. Despite careful planning of the means and timing of releasing the news of the Canadians in

³⁴ *Globe and Mail*, 17 Apr. 1940.

³⁵ LAC RG 24, Vol. 10855, 231c(D29), C.C. Mann, File memorandum, 24 Apr. 1940, C.C. Mann, “Memo of Telephone Message to CMHQ, 25 Apr. 1940; A.C. Cummings, “Dominion Skiers pitted against Austrian troops in Northern Fighting,” *Hamilton Spectator* 20 April 1940.

³⁶ *Globe and Mail*, 23 Apr. 1940; 2 May 1940; 21 May 1940.

Brittany, the *Times* published the story early, again ruining the press arrangements. The news coverage was generally as positive as could be in the circumstances, with reports emphasising the Canadians' disappointment at not coming to grips with the Germans.³⁷ However, an *Oshawa Times* photograph's caption that referred to how the Canadians "fled from France" caused Abel much consternation and he wrote a special story for that paper refuting the claim.³⁸ These early efforts at publicity control failed due to the British War Office and MoI imposing news blackouts or British newspapers ignoring censorship guidelines. Fortunately for the army, little negative press resulted.

Even without active operations, CMHQ PR had plenty to do and the office expanded. By July 1940 it had added Assistant PRO Lieutenant Eric Gibb, a former Canadian feature writer, and an official photographer, Lieutenant Lawrence Audrain from Winnipeg.³⁹ The volunteer work of Abel's daughter augmented the small office staff and Abel used his own vehicle for travel. The PR office assisted journalists and radio programs in getting stories about Canadian troops, ensured press compliance with security, assisted motion picture makers, and kept an archive of still pictures for publication and the war record.⁴⁰ Sometimes unusual duties arose, such as requesting the British Beer Association to stop citing Canadian troops' love for its product in its "roll out the barrel" advertisements or dealing "privately and leniently" with a drunken war

³⁷ Greg Clark, "Greg Clark tells of 48th's 14 Hours' (sic) Journey into France," *Toronto Star*, 18 June, 1940; *Hamilton Spectator*, 19 June 1940.

³⁸ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3, Abel, "Report for the Week Ending 29 July 1940."

³⁹ LAC, RG 24, vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3, Memorandum- "re PRO: Press: War Correspondents: Photographs" n.d.; RG 24, vol. 12369, 4/press/3, M.A. Pope to 1 Division HQ, 3 July 1940.

⁴⁰ DND DHH, CMHQ Historical Report No.2 "Public Relations Officer – Development, Organization Function and Work," 7 Jan.. 1941, 1-8; RG 24, vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3, P.J. Montague, Ref. Enclosure 43a, 20 Aug. 1943.

correspondent with a distinguished First World War record who divulged secret information when drinking with the troops. Most unusual of all, Abel found the funding to “bring over...those unfortunate young ladies... provided their soldier boys can get permission to get married.” Abel felt this “a logical Public Relations job.”⁴¹ Although Abel employed euphemisms, this seems to refer to arrangements to bring to the UK for marriage several Canadian girls pregnant by soldiers, which if it did actually occur set no lasting precedent. In January 1941, future official historian C.P. Stacey wrote in a CMHQ report that PR did not write stories but rather notified the news media of important news and assisted them in getting the information. This was not strictly accurate because CMHQ earlier in the war issued a number of press releases, some of which appeared unaltered in Canadian newspapers.⁴² CMHQ PR had quickly become a thriving news assisting enterprise.

Despite the establishment of CMHQ PR, coordinating war news between numerous agencies including CMHQ, Canada House, First Division, and NDHQ continued to be difficult. The initial attempts at coordination failed due to organizational rivalries and lack of clear direction from Ottawa. In February 1940, External Affairs, in replying to Massey’s ideas, suggested setting up a “central organization” for coordinating publicity, which it hinted, might even need to be larger than the CWRO because it would look to civil as well as military PR. McNaughton and Crerar agreed that some kind of

⁴¹LAC, RG 24, vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3, Abel to Burns, n. d.; Abel, “Report for Week Ending June 1, 1940”, 3 June 1940; Abel to Burns, 26 Feb. 1940.

⁴²DND DHH, 002.012(D2), CMHQ Press Release, 22 July 1940; DND DHH, CMHQ Report No. 2, 7 Jan. 1941; *Hamilton Spectator*, 13 Aug. 1940.

coordination was required.⁴³ Massey's proposed "Coordinating Committee on Wartime Publicity" gave James Spence of Canada House responsibility for all military journalistic matters, while Abel would coordinate film and radio, then still regarded as secondary in importance to newspapers.⁴⁴ This arrangement would have given Massey and Canada House control of most army news emanating from the United Kingdom. Abel disagreed and argued for limited cooperation and only "the outward appearance of unity," although he supported the pooling of resources in film, radio, and photography and even the creation of a central press inquiries office.⁴⁵

The whole question of division of the responsibility for war news fell to a subcommittee that included Abel and Burns from CMHQ, but not Spence.⁴⁶ The subcommittee's conclusions reflected Abel's vision, with a central inquiry office to funnel news emanating from the autonomous PR organizations. Despite all these plans, the new organization did not materialize. The reasons for this are unclear but appear to be financial. The cabinet refused to approve the appointment of an executive secretary and granted no funding. That certainly was Pearson's explanation of the subcommittee's failure.⁴⁷ Although revived in 1942, the committee had "no executive authority" and became "only a clearing-house" for sharing of ideas between the different PR

⁴³ LAC, RG 24, vol. 12381, 4/PRO/2, Cable 137, External to Dominion, 7 Feb. 1940; Telegram 191, Massey to External, 13 Feb. 1940.

⁴⁴ Ibid., "Proposed Agenda for First Meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee on Military Publicity," 27 Mar. 1940.

⁴⁵ Ibid., Abel to Harry Crerar, 18 Mar. 1940; Abel to Burns, 29 Mar. 1940.

⁴⁶ LAC, RG 36, Series 31, vol. 22, 13-40a, "Minutes of meeting ... for the purpose of forming a committee to co-ordinate Canada's wartime publicity overseas." 1 Apr. 1940.

⁴⁷ LAC, RG 25, vol. 1988, Massey to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 3 June 1940; RG 36, Series 31, vol. 22, 13-40a, Pearson to J.T. Thorson, 23 Dec. 1941.

organizations and reviewing and approving applicants for war correspondent credentials.⁴⁸ Ultimately, Massey did play a very important role in Army PR and historical records, echoing a part of Aitken's role in the First World War. Through creating and supervising the Canadian war artists program, Massey ensured an artistic representation of the activities of all three services for Canadians.⁴⁹

Ottawa's inaction resulted in the PR organizations lacking any coordination, a situation lasting well into 1942, made worse by interpersonal conflicts. Abel and Spence in particular did not get along. The official historian, C.P. Stacey observed at the time that "relationships between the two Public Relations Officers... are anything but cordial." Despite having adjoining offices in Canada House the two officers had little communication or cooperation. For example, Abel, completely ignorant of Spence's large film collection of the important recent activities of the Canadian Army, attempted to put together a similar collection. Other officials at Canada House told Abel they had no such film and the CMHQ PRO did not approach Spence himself.⁵⁰ Whether this lack of cooperation was due primarily to policy differences or personality conflict is unclear, but bitter feelings existed. Abel complained about Spence's "wiles" and accused him of taking Abel's old proposals about publicity coordination and putting them forward as his

⁴⁸LAC, RG 24, Vol. 11748, File 595, Minutes, "High Commissioner's Coordinating Committee on Wartime Publicity," 11 June 1942; Minutes, "High Commissioner's Coordinating Committee on Wartime Publicity," 11 June 1942; RG 24, Vol. 6542, HQ 650-92-15, "Regulations for Press Representatives with the Canadian Army in the Field" July 1943.

⁴⁹ Claude Bissell, *The Imperial Canadian: Vincent Massey in Office* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 147-149.

⁵⁰DND DHH, CMHQ Report 3, "Further on Public Relations Interview with James Spence," 2; Aimé-Jules Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 294.

own.⁵¹ Nor were relationships always cordial between CMHQ and the First Division. During an acrimonious exchange, Abel admitted he had “lacked courtesy,” but explained this was the result of on “scores of occasions ... [of] having accepted humiliation, inconvenience and unjustifiable rudeness from members of the division,” despite having “repeatedly pulled chestnuts out of the fire for the division, as far as contacts with the British and Canadian Press are concerned.”⁵² During Abel’s career as CMHQ PRO, he frequently feuded with PR personnel from organizations that were potential rivals. These interpersonal conflicts did not improve the coordination between groups and prevent duplication of services. As Army PR expanded, friction arose between PROs at the different formations.

Army PR also had strained relationships with the Canadian Bureau of Public Information (BPI) (later the Wartime Information Board), the federal government’s information service set up after the outbreak of war to control government publicity. After the fall of France, J.G Gardiner, the Minister for War Services, who oversaw the BPI, wished to “centralize... all government publicity sections” under the Bureau but was blocked by King.⁵³ Despite King’s actions and Abel’s objections, the politically connected General Maurice Pope, ordered the distribution of army photographs through the BPI rather than directly to the newspapers. When sent through the BPI’s distribution system, “less than ten percent” of the pictures showed up in the papers, where previously

⁵¹ DND DHH, 75/315 Abel to J.W.G. Clark, 20 Sept. 1941; Abel to Colonel Currie, n.d.

⁵² LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12369, 4/Press/3, Abel to B.G.S., 3 Sept. 1940.

⁵³ William R. Young, “Academics and Social Scientists versus the Press: The Policies of the Wartime Information Board 1939-1945,” *Historical Papers* (Canadian Historical Association), (1978): 219.

many more had appeared.⁵⁴ Spence believed that the bad feelings between G.H. Lash, director of the BPI, and Abel originated with a press release about General Crerar on his return to Canada. Rather than depend on BPI's distribution services, CMHQ sent it directly to the newspapers. Lash believed that BPI would have circulated it more quickly.⁵⁵ The underlying issue may have been control, as Lash proposed centralizing PR in the UK, with the various army and RCAF press liaison officers working "under the general authority" of James Spence who would represent the BPI. This would have placed all military PR in the UK outside the oversight of both the army and the Ministry of National Defence. Lash's proposal was consistent with his actions in Canada, where he tried to coordinate all federal publicity through an "interdepartmental committee," angering many cabinet ministers.⁵⁶ This lack of a good working relationship with the BPI was another symptom of Ottawa's ongoing lack of coordination of Canadian PR agencies.

Despite these conflicts, both in Canada and overseas, the Canadian Army expanded and organized its PR apparatus in preparation for active operations. The first step was the creation of a First Corps PRO. The Second Canadian Division joined the First in October, forming a Canadian corps. In 1941, after the arrival of several other divisions, Canadian forces in Britain formed the First Army, the largest Canadian military field organization in history. These new formations required new arrangements for PR, the first of which was a PRO and staff at corps level. In September 1940, Gillis Purcell,

⁵⁴ DND DHH, 75/315, Abel to Clark, 20 Sept. 1941.

⁵⁵ DND DHH, CMHQ Report 3, "Further on Public Relations Interview with James Spence," 3.

⁵⁶ LAC, RG25, Vol. 1988, Lash to Dr. Keelyside, Cable 1116A, 13 Jan. 1941; William R Young, "Making the Truth Graphic," (PhD Dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1978), 39.

of the CP was appointed Corps PRO with the rank of Captain, although he could not sail for England until late January 1941.⁵⁷ Captain Purcell handled all PR matters for the divisions, releasing staff officers for their other duties. Purcell was also responsible for the single CP war correspondent attached directly to the corps, while CMHQ oversaw all others.⁵⁸ This arrangement, and the attachment of Purcell as correspondent to First Division in 1939, was a departure from British policy in earlier wars, where journalists dealt with GHQ and only visited subordinate units as permitted.⁵⁹ Purcell soon became a casualty of war. During the filming of the air dropping of supplies during a training manoeuvre, a canister's parachute failed to deploy and struck Purcell whose leg had to be amputated.⁶⁰ The departure of Purcell led to a period of uncertainty in which Abel struggled with the new PR officers over the duties of their respective sections. Purcell's military career had ended, but he returned to CP management and became a major influence in war news, often clashing with Army PR personnel over policy.

Adding to the new complexity in Canadian Army overseas PR was the appointment of Joseph "Joe" W.G. Clark as the Ottawa-based Director of Public Relations (DPR) for the army.⁶¹ Clark won the Distinguished Flying Cross in the First World War and was already serving as head of PR for the Royal Canadian Air Force. He came from a family of prominent journalists; his father Joseph T. Clark had edited the

⁵⁷ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12831, 4/PRO/1, List of enclosures; G.R. Turner, memorandum: Public Relations Officer, Cdn. Corps, 21 Feb. 1941; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 294.

⁵⁸ LAC, RG24.,Vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3, Abel to B.G.S., 10 Mar. 1941.

⁵⁹ M.E. Nichols, *CP the Story of the Canadian Press*,(Toronto: Ryerson, 1948), 232.

⁶⁰ Jock Carroll, *The Life and Times of Greg Clark* (: Toronto: Doubleday, 1981), 291.

⁶¹ LAC, RG 2, 7C, C-11,789, Vol. IV, "Minutes of War Committee of the Cabinet," 13 May 1941.

Toronto Star, and his brother Greg was a popular reporter, humorist and war correspondent.⁶² Clark set up a PR system for the army in Canada, appointing Press Liaison officers to the staff of each Military District whose responsibility was PR within that regional command, while he reported directly to the Minister of National Defence.⁶³ Clark added another dimension to the coming policy debates between the PROs of First Army and CMHQ, but had the authority and mandate to impose solutions. Léo Cadieux, editor of *La Presse* and future Minister of National Defence under Trudeau, became Assistant DPR, although he resigned in August 1944 to serve as a war correspondent for his newspaper.⁶⁴

The underlying root of the PR troubles between the PROs was the unexpectedly long stay of the Canadian in Britain, because of the fall of France and the reluctance of the Canadian government to commit Canadian troops to other theatres. Reinforcing this situation was General McNaughton's nationalistic insistence that Canadian troops should serve only in First Canadian Army under his own command. CMHQ, meant to be the link between the army at the front and Ottawa, now remained on the same island as the army with sometimes overlapping and unclear areas of responsibility.

Despite the lack of clear delineation of responsibility, the working relationship between the corps PRO and CMHQ PRO seemed to work until Purcell's departure. Unfortunately, his replacement as corps PRO, Kim Beattie, a veteran, columnist and regimental historian, developed an intense personal dislike for Abel, who felt the same

⁶² *Globe and Mail*, 21 June 1940.

⁶³ LAC, RG 24, Reel C-5275, 8817-8, Joseph Clark to Commanding Officers all Commands and Districts, 21 Aug. 1941.

⁶⁴ Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 229.

about Beattie. In January 1942, Beattie, in a cryptic telegram to Clark, reported that “AAC” (Abel and company) showed personal spite to Clark and opposed Beattie’s appointment. By March, after several perceived slights, he accused Abel of a “petty campaign which might be termed ‘passive resistance’” whose goal was to “broadcast the impression that PRO Cdn Corps is under CMHQ direction, and generally of little consequence in the scheme of things.”⁶⁵ In reply, Brigadier Penhale, staff officer at CMHQ, wired Brigadier Simonds, his counterpart at First Division, expressing “strong exception” and calling on Beattie to “support the charge or withdraw it,” noting the statements “revealed a state of mind that is petty to the extreme.”⁶⁶ The lack of cooperation between Abel and Beattie constituted a major problem for PR. According to General Crerar, the key to effective army publicity was “cooperation between the PRO CMHQ and the PRO, Cdn. Corps” and the cessation of the “competition between them.”⁶⁷

The dysfunctional situation in Canadian Army PR did not continue long. The personal problems ceased to be a major issue after the appointment of Major Cliff Wallace as PRO for the entire First Army, outranking Beattie and in charge of liaison with CMHQ PRO. Wallace had the advantage of having already served on CMHQ staff for over a year and relating well to Abel. Although some disagreements regarding organizational responsibilities and policy continued, Abel described the personal

⁶⁵LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16, 440, War Diary No. 1 PR Unit 1 August – 31 August 1943, “Personal History, Public Relations Service, Kim Beattie;” DND DHH 75/315, Beattie to Clark, 14 Jan. 1942; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12834, 4/ PRO CMHQ/1, Beattie to Penhale, 8 Mar. 1942.

⁶⁶ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12834, 4/ PRO CMHQ/1, Penhale to Simonds, 13 Mar. 1942.

⁶⁷ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12834, 4/ PRO/ 1 Corps, Crerar to Montague, 27 Jan. 1942.

relationships between PROs as “friendly and harmonious.”⁶⁸ A series of discussions between January and August 1942 resolved major differences concerning the duties of army and CMHQ PR. The First Army PRO dealt with outside media agencies only “when circumstances so warrant,” conducting liaison only with British Army GHQ and the CMHQ PRO, and supervising war correspondents’ visits to First Army units. CMHQ PR interacted with Canadian and British military and governmental agencies and media agencies regarding PR policy. Abel also administered photography and film and coordinated all London publicity and V.I.P. visits. CMHQ and First Army collaborated on communiqués.⁶⁹ This was a compromise because the Army PRO wanted to contact outside Government and press agencies at will. Abel wanted only CMHQ to make these external connections. First Army PROs could contact media organizations, if necessary, but had to inform CMHQ immediately.⁷⁰ The arrangements still required refinement but soon diminished the level of squabbling between CMHQ and First Army PR.

Army PR did not have much news to handle apart from training. Only the minor raid on the Norwegian Arctic island of Spitzbergen in September 1941 and the more substantial Dieppe landing in August 1942, broke the monotony. The publicity for the Dieppe raid (discussed in a detailed case study in chapter five) was egregiously deceptive on the part of British authorities, although less so by the Canadian Army. The Canadian

⁶⁸LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16, 440, War Diary No. 1 PR Unit 1 August – 31 August 1943, “Personal History, Public Relations Service, Clifford Wallace.”; RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/ PR Gen/1, Abel to BGS, Memorandum, 12 Dec. 1942. Beattie continued to serve as 1 Corps PRO until September 1942 when he was seconded to Canada House as Press Officer, Spence’s former position. Beattie’s tenure was short as Massey decided he was unfit for the position without greater supervision. On January 31, 1943 he returned to the Army again serving as 1 Corps PRO. RG 25, vol. 1988/1116A Pt 1, Massey to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 Nov. 1942; Massey to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 28 Jan. 1943.

⁶⁹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/ PR Gen/ 1, Order 2473, 14 Aug. 1942.

⁷⁰ Ibid., Wallace memorandum, 24 July 1942; Abel to Penhale, 3 Aug. 1942,

PROs played only a small part in the planning but had important roles assisting the media after the raid. In any case, these raids were one-time events, and the PROs focused on preparing their organizations for sustained overseas operations and performing their ongoing duties in Britain. The preparations for active operations meant creating units capable of guaranteeing that war news from flowed steadily the front and a PR culture, which would work easily with correspondents.

The groundwork for PR policy for active operations came from meetings in January 1943 of McNaughton, Wallace, CP assistant manager Purcell, and Joe Clark, now Chief of Information for all three Canadian armed services. They assigned a subcommittee of Clark, Purcell, Abel and Wallace to draft a plan for an expanded organization. The meeting also established the principles of a greater role for First Army PR once operations began, of PR personnel at every formation down to the division, and of the training of Canadian field censors to handle Canadian copy.⁷¹

The expanded establishment ensured PR units could manage war news once operations began. Both CMHQ and First Army gained large numbers of personnel and equipment. CMHQ PR personnel grew from fourteen officers to twenty-six, seventeen other ranks to eighty-six, and from no vehicles to twenty-five. Twelve officers, sixty-one enlisted men, and all the vehicles comprised the Canadian Army Film and Photo Unit, which CMHQ controlled. First Army PR increased from five officers to twelve, six other ranks to twenty-five, and three vehicles to seventeen. In the field, it supervised all press and radio correspondents. To conform to British practise, Wallace and Abel received the title Deputy Director of Public Relations (DDPR) and were promoted to Lieutenant

⁷¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol 12381, 4/PR GEN/1, "Memorandum of Conversation - General McNaughton- Mr. Joe Clark- Mr. Gillis Purcell-Major C.S. Wallace at 1740 hrs 28 Jan 43," 29 Jan. 1943.

Colonel.⁷² The title never seemed to stick for Wallace; for reasons never explained, the military later termed both he and his successor Dick Malone as Assistant DPRs. In Ottawa, G.H. Sallans became DPR under Information Chief Joe Clark. NDHQ complained of a “400 % increase in officers and 1200% increase in other ranks” but approved it in March 1943 at Clark’s insistence.⁷³

The new war establishment (see appendix one) received its first test, even before its official approval in March 1943, during *Exercise Spartan*, the Canadian First Army’s full-scale manoeuvres in England. To meet the increased press coverage during the exercise, McNaughton ordered a temporary expansion of the PR establishment.⁷⁴ At a press conference on February 25 General Guy Simonds briefed the correspondents in advance about army organization for the exercise, assuring them of army assistance in obtaining and transmitting their stories.⁷⁵ The press reports for *Spartan* were overwhelmingly positive; CP reporter Ross Munro, who covered Dieppe and Tunisia, declared the Canadians “the top of them all with organization and weapons to handle the big job ahead.”⁷⁶ Others claimed McNaughton’s army scored major victories: a *Globe and Mail* headline proclaimed “Whole Brigade Captured by Canadians” and the military columnist of the *Toronto Star* praised this feat and the “theoretical” destruction of ninety

⁷² LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/PR GEN/1, Memorandum – Public Relations Service (Overseas), Proposed Establishment, 3 Feb. 1943.

⁷³ *Globe and Mail*, 27 Oct. 1942; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/PR GEN/1, GS 126 NDHQ to CMHQ 26 February 1943; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 9956, 5/PR/1, Clark to Abel, 23 Mar. 1943.

⁷⁴ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/PR GEN/1, CMHQ to NDHQ, cable GS 401, 23 Feb. 1943; CMHQ to NDHQ, cable GS 462, 2 Mar. 1943.

⁷⁵ DND DHH, “CMHQ Report 91: Press Conference Concerning Organization of First Cdn Army and Arrangements for Press Representatives, 25 Feb 43; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 296-7.

⁷⁶ Ross Munro, “Canadian Army has become Devastating Attack Weapon,” *Hamilton Spectator*, 23 Mar. 1943.

tanks.⁷⁷ In reality, Canadian command did not perform well; units bogged down in traffic jams caused by McNaughton ordering a corps through the area occupied by a second in darkness. The Canadians also suffered severe theoretical casualties. Both British and Canadian military critics of McNaughton received plenty of ammunition, helping to force his resignation in December.⁷⁸ The PR apparatus, however, had helped the correspondents get out their story swiftly and with a positive outlook on the army.

Another important task preparing the Canadian Army PR system for operations was providing for French language press coverage. Public Relations with French Canada were important because Quebec had the lowest support for the war effort and lowest enlistment rate for overseas service. Ralston set into motion a plan to increase French Canadian participation in the army in August 1941. This contained an array of measures making the army a more attractive environment for Francophones, including an expansion of French language training and formations. The recruitment of more French speakers to the PR units received priority as part of this programme.⁷⁹ In November 1941, Clark instructed Abel to ensure that French Canadian units received “the fullest possible publicity and to gather “photographs of French Canadian soldiers... taken at famous English spots... [and] stories of parties and entertainments at which French Canadians were present.” The purpose of this was portraying French Canadian soldiers as “happy, occupied and get[ting] along well with the other troops... and the civilian

⁷⁷ *Globe and Mail*, 23 Mar. 1943, 13; W.R. Plewman, “The War Reviewed,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 23 Mar. 1943.

⁷⁸ J.L. Granatstein, *Canada's Army* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 215. McNaughton's biographer argues that the policy disagreements with Ralston played a much larger role in his removal than his performance in Spartan. John Sweetenham, *McNaughton, Vol. 2* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1960), 340-6.

⁷⁹ C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970), 421.

population,” and that they were not “being used in dangerous spots exclusively.”⁸⁰ In March 1942, Clark despatched a French Canadian PRO to CMHQ with the duty of French publicity. Minister of National Defence J.L. Ralston suggested the appointment and CP manager Purcell welcomed it. Lt. Placide Labelle, a former Quebec journalist, was to gather, “all possible information about French Canadian troops now stationed in England.” The Canadian press agencies and other correspondents received first crack at this material, what they did not want, PR in Ottawa distributed it to media outlets in Canada. Labelle had the freedom to travel wherever he could get material, including active operations.⁸¹ Abel, who had persuaded the CP to open a French Canadian service just before Labelle’s arrival, concluded, now “French Canadians will be looked after exceedingly well.”⁸² The later exclusion of French-language correspondents from the Dieppe raid and most of the Sicilian campaign demonstrates the incorrectness of his conclusion.⁸³

The task of preparing Canadian Army PR for operations also involved creating a welcoming culture for journalists. Correspondents, like most English-speaking Canadians, already strongly supported the war effort but a hostile environment or unreasonable barriers to reporting could strain the limits of this sympathy. Therefore, it helped that the Canadian Army selected former journalists as PROs; this differed from

⁸⁰ LAC, Vol. 12384, 4/PRO CMHQ/1, Clark to Abel, 28 Nov. 1941.

⁸¹ DND DHH 75/315, Clark to Abel, 9 Mar. 1942; Abel to Clark, 22 November 1943, Clark to Abel, 19 Mar. 1942.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Abel to Clark, 26 Mar. 1942.

⁸³ See chapters five and six for details of the press coverage of these events, including the lack of French language representation.

the British and Americans who often assigned officers without media background.⁸⁴ The employment of former journalists also predominated in the RCAF, RCN and civilian press censorship in Canada.⁸⁵ The PRO could mediate between the military and the correspondent, making the army more aware of journalistic requirements while encouraging correspondents to accept restrictions and controls more effectively than could officers with little understanding of press needs and culture. Despite the logic of this arrangement, the correspondents did not always view it as the best system for selecting the conducting officers who accompanied them on operations. Based on their experiences in Sicily, correspondents like Fred Griffin, Lionel Shapiro, Peter Stursberg and Ross Munro argued the most important qualification was military knowledge and field craft, not a journalistic background. Conducting officers required competence in “map reading, tank and aircraft recognition, first aid, driving and maintenance of motorcycles, cars, hup [sic], and use of prismatic compass, revolver, pistol and automatic weapons.”⁸⁶ The problem was finding officers who were competent soldiers and journalists. Later in the war, the commander of the PR unit in Northwest Europe, Richard Malone, with Abel’s support, refused to take former newspapermen directly from Canada to the front.⁸⁷ Thus, while Canadian policy possibly avoided some of the problems of other armies, the employment of journalist officers could have drawbacks in the field. Despite these objections, most PROs throughout the war had a journalistic background.

⁸⁴ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 9956, 5/PR/1, Clark, Memorandum, 13 Mar. 1943.

⁸⁵ Claude Beaugard, *Guerre et Censure au Canada 1939-1945* (Sillery P.Q.: Septentrion, 1993), 54.

⁸⁶ LAC RG 24 12383, 4/PRO/16, Abel to F.X. Jennings, 22 Nov. 1943; DND DHH 75/315, Clark to Abel, 16 Aug. 1943. HUP is an acronym for Heavy Utility Personnel, a truck-like military vehicle produced by General Motors for the Canadian Army.

⁸⁷ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/PR GEN/1, Abel to F.X. Jennings, 1 May 1944.

Army PR also tried to create a journalist-friendly culture by seeking input on PR policies. The chief example was the inclusion of Purcell as a *de facto* member of the committee that created the organization and policy for Canadian Army PR field operations in January 1943. Purcell was the first to suggest the Canadian Army have its own field press censors, a major policy decision later implemented during the Italian campaign.⁸⁸ The press, or at least the CP, which supplied all major dailies in Canada, received the opportunity to influence the PR environment in which their correspondents would work. This was no guarantee of a frictionless working relationship and some bitter disputes occurred once operations commenced, but the press could not claim it had no input into Army PR policies.

Furthermore, Army PR did not attempt to control stories too rigorously. Abel believed “journalists, as a class, are conceited touchy people.” Therefore, the form, style and tone of a story remained the prerogative of the correspondent. “It was better to keep on the best of terms with newspapermen ...in this way we can have more influence over them.” Sensationalism and error might trouble military minds, but only matters of security would be censored, interference would “lose more than we would gain.”⁸⁹ Only occasionally did the army interfere with stories on non-security grounds.

In its effort to create a culture welcoming journalists, PR also prevented PRO’s from competing with the press by writing their own stories. The policy originated with Minister of National Defence Norman Rogers who, in the first months of the war,

⁸⁸ LAC, RG 24, Vol 12381, 4/PR GEN/1, “Memorandum of Conversation - General McNaughton- Mr. Joe Clark- Mr. Gillis Purcell-Major C.S. Wallace at 1740 hrs 28 Jan 43,” 29 January 1943, Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 300-1.

⁸⁹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12382, 4/Pro/3, Abel, Weekly Report, 24 Aug. 1940.

observed that newspapers paying to keep correspondents overseas would not appreciate PROs supplying their rivals with free stories.⁹⁰ Although occasionally questioned, the policy was never overturned.

In contrast to army policy, the RCN and RCAF relied heavily on their PROs and Information officers to produce most of the stories covering their operations. The scatterings of ships and squadrons to various theatres as well as security restrictions made correspondent coverage difficult. Thus, RCAF PRO stories sometimes appeared under their writer's names but sometimes they offered them to war correspondents and news agencies.⁹¹ This left them open to accusations of furthering their own careers as the rivals of the war correspondents. CBC reporters in France in 1944 were livid when they discovered RCAF PROs producing radio reports for rival stations on non-RCAF stories.⁹² Whether or not this charge is justified, RCAF PR left itself open by allowing its PROs to write war news, while the army did not undertake such tasks apart from NDHQ press releases and "Little Joe stories."

The officials concerned with setting policies sometimes disagreed with what constituted competition with the newspapers. Abel at CMHQ envisioned PRO's not writing anything for publication at all, a literal interpretation of orders from Army Chief of Staff Ken Stuart.⁹³ Clark and others in Ottawa, however, believed that not competing with the newspapers meant not publishing news that would interest major newspapers,

⁹⁰ DND DHH 75/351, Abel, Memorandum, 7 Oct. 1942.

⁹¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 5406, 65-1-4, G.M. Brown to D.C.A.S, 7 Oct. 1943.

⁹² LAC, Rg 24, Vol. 12381, 4/pr-gen/1/2, Marcel Ouimet to Lt Col. Malone, 19 July 1944; RG 24, Vol. 3342, 300-10 -2/1 Vol. 3, AFHQ to DPR, 5 Aug. 1944.

⁹³ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12382, 4/Pro/3,, Vol.GS 98, Stuart to CMHQ, 27 Feb. 1942; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/PR GEN/1, Abel to Penhale, Memorandum, 24 Jan. 1944.

while preparing special articles and news for small town papers was not competition as long as overseas correspondents could use it before anything went to PR in Ottawa.

Ralston, after long consideration, modified the policy. By January 1944, Canadian PR could produce “Little Joe” copy, personal information on a particular soldier, including any interesting stories, accompanied by a photograph, sent to his hometown newspaper.⁹⁴

This clearly did not compete against the war correspondents; rather it actually assisted Canada’s newspapers, and made Canadians more aware of the war effort overseas.

Creating a “journalist-friendly” culture encouraged journalists to view and write about the military positively and to identify with the army. In recent wars, frequent criticism has emerged about “embedded” journalists assigned to one unit and therefore closely tied to the troops. Yet this is unusual only when compared to the relatively loose controls of journalists during the Vietnam War.⁹⁵ The Canadian Army, like its Second World War Allies, promoted an even closer link between correspondents and the troops. Correspondents received the status of honorary officers; they held the privileges of rank but could not issue orders. All correspondents wore military uniforms and were subject to military law.⁹⁶ The 1943 Canadian correspondents’ regulations booklet stated that the correspondent must “comply with any orders received from superior authority and to

⁹⁴ LAC, RG24, RG 24, Vol. 60, HQ/550-92-98; NDHQ to CMHQ, Cable DPR 431 2 Oct. 1942; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/PR GEN/1, Abel to Penhale, Memorandum, 24 Jan. 1944; RG 24 Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-73, “AFHQ Liaison Letter One,” 8 Jan. 1945.

⁹⁵ For a discussion of the relative lack of formal censorship during the Vietnam War see Daniel C. Hallin, *The Uncensored War: the Media and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). For critiques and examinations of the role of the media in the 2003 Iraq operation see Nancy Snow and Yahya R. Kamalipour, Eds., *War Media and Propaganda: a Global Perspective* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004); David Dudge, *The War in Iraq and Why the Media Failed Us* (London: Praeger, 2006).

⁹⁶ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/pr gen/1, “Regulations for Press Representatives with the Canadian Army in the United Kingdom,” May 1943, 9, 12, 18; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 305-6. American correspondents had the same status and restrictions in the U.S. Army. RG 24, vol 12377, 4 /press 3/1/ 2, “Regulations for Correspondents in the European Theater of Operations, United States Army,” 5-7.

conform with the requirements of the Army Act or the Air Force Act, as applicable to a person holding status as an officer, while subject to military or air force law.”⁹⁷ Under military discipline, uniformed and with officer status, correspondents were in effect part of the military, much more so than the recent “embedded journalists.” Their status, akin that of Chaplains, made them an integral part of the army. Seeing themselves as part of an organization would discourage correspondents from writing negatively about it.

Although the PR system in the Canadian Army attempted to be “journalist friendly,” once operations began the PROs were in the middle of inevitable disputes between military authorities and the press. The military in wartime needs to keep valuable information from the enemy and wants its institution and leadership portrayed positively. The press, in contrast, wishes to publish as much information of interest to the public as quickly, and hopefully as accurately, as possible. Newspapers are commercial enterprises. Controversy sells copies and, as the case studies will later demonstrate, can serve to advance a political agenda. These conflicting priorities ensured that there would be friction, especially once active operations began. The attempt to create a sympathetic PR culture lessened the severity and number of these disputes.

Besides creating an organization for field service and press relations, Canadian PR sought to protect and promote a positive image of the army with the Canadian and British public. This was not only a matter of appearances and personal reputations but the reliance of Canadian Active Service Force on volunteers meant that bad publicity could mean fewer recruits. For example, Abel felt the need to “humanize” General McNaughton and paint him in “warmer colours” since the press represented him as “a

⁹⁷ LAC, RG 24, 6542, HQ 650-92-152, “Regulations for Press Representatives with the Canadian Army in the Field,” July 1943, 4.

hard hitting soldier-scientist” and “mothers would be more anxious to have their sons join an army commanded by a warm-blooded human being than by some cold calculating killer.”⁹⁸ Likewise, when the CP reported the refusal of Air Force personnel to board a transatlantic ship because of filthy conditions onboard, Abel succeeded in “suppressing news of its arrival” to avoid interviews with those on board. Abel felt it wise to avoid controversy over conditions on troopships.⁹⁹ Dirty ships would not encourage recruiting.

PR also promoted the image of the army by producing radio programmes and newsreels for Canadians. Radio was a major entertainment and a growing source of news for Canadians during the Second World War. Canadian PR took advantage of this by providing much material for CBC produced programmes and some for the BBC as well. Although it consumed much effort, Abel was glad that the army received “such a large share of radio publicity which is so effective in a direct link between the men here and their families back home.”¹⁰⁰ These programmes included *Khaki Scrapbook*, *Sur le Qui Vive*, *Eyes Front*, *Canadian Calendar*, and *Jean Baptiste s’en va-t-en guerre*. A French PRO wrote the latter. They frequently contained messages home from ordinary soldiers and described their experiences overseas.¹⁰¹ Newsreels, along with photographs, provided Canadians a visual link with the action overseas. During the war, the Canadian Army Film and Photo unit provided materials for 106 newsreels. Cameramen took the shots and

⁹⁸ LAC, RG 24, Vol. Vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3, Abel, “Report for the Week Ending 29 July 1940.”

⁹⁹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. Vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3, Abel, “Report for the Week Ending, 3 Oct. 1941,”

¹⁰⁰ LAC, RG 24, Vol. Vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3 Abel, “Report for the Week Ending Mar. 1941.”

¹⁰¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. Vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3/2, Abel, “Report for the Week Ending 2 May 1942;” Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 326.

shipped them to CMHQ PR where they were edited for release.¹⁰² Although Canadians did not rely on newsreels for current news as much as newspapers and radio, seeing moving pictures of their troops was important to Canadians. An April 1945 WIB survey of Canadian moviegoers revealed that forty-eight per cent wanted more newsreel coverage of the Canadian Army, only seven felt there was too much.¹⁰³ Radio and newsreels took much of the time of CMHQ PR throughout the war.

Relations with the British press and public were also an imperative function of CMHQ PR, combating the stereotype of wild, potentially dangerous, Canadian soldiers running amuck. Canadian legal arrangements with the UK helped to promote this view. The army tried only military infractions while Canadians accused of civil crimes faced the British legal system and subsequent bad publicity. This stood in contrast to the Americans who retained jurisdiction over both military and civil crimes, allowing trials to remain secret.¹⁰⁴ Abel lobbied key players British press figures, such as W.T. Bailey of the Newspaper Society and Viscount Rothmere of the Newspaper Proprietors Association, to refrain from the term “Canadian” in crime stories just as they would not mention an offending soldier being “Scottish, Irish or Welsh.”¹⁰⁵ The DDP sent dozens of letters with the same request to editors of newspapers, which reported the all too

¹⁰² Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 302; King Whyte, *Letters Home 1944-1946* (Hamilton: Seraphim Editions, 2007), 14.

¹⁰³ LAC, RG 2, Vol 50 w-34-2-S, WIB Survey No. 60, 7 Apr. 1945.

¹⁰⁴ C.P. Stacey and Barbara M. Wilson, *The Half Million: The Canadians in Britain, 1939-1946* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 156-8. The book provides an overview of the Canadians experiences in the UK and includes a more detailed study of Canadian soldiers’ crimes and their publicity on pages 156-158.

¹⁰⁵ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3, Abel, “Report for the Week Ending 8 Feb. 1941,” 12 Feb. 1941.

frequent crimes by Canadian soldiers.¹⁰⁶ In December 1942, CMHQ announced that discipline was improving, and “only one seventh of one percent” of Canadians “were involved in police court cases,” a decrease since January 1941. The *Times* ran a short story with the information. General Crerar was not impressed, commenting that this appeared to be “admitting that things were really bad indeed.”¹⁰⁷ The figure was probably overoptimistic because the military tended to refer only to convictions not to the charges that British judges, lenient with Canadian soldiers, often dismissed. Certainly, there was crime, mostly petty theft and drunkenness. According to C.P. Stacey and Barbara Wilson, the Canadians had a “sordid record, but one that could easily be paralleled in any large community, civil or military, in peace and war.”¹⁰⁸ Captain E.N. Ackroyd, a British PRO attached to Canadian First Army to help with the PR difficulties, believed that by May 1943 the British people’s familiarity and intermarriage with Canadian troops had helped to melt away the earlier stereotypes. As Stacey and Wilson concluded: “Imperceptibly, the men from Canada were increasingly absorbed into ...[the British] social system.”¹⁰⁹

From the outbreak of war to the time of Canadian troops’ entry into ongoing active operations in Sicily in July 1943, PR grew along with the army, experiencing the growing pains accompanying rapid expansion. The process of creating a PR organization and making it capable of handling the needs of not only an army in training but also an

¹⁰⁶ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3, Abel, “Report for the Week Ending 25 Jan 1941,” 27 Jan. 1941; Abel, Memorandum, 6 Feb. 1941.

¹⁰⁷ LAC RG 24, Vol. 12383, 4/Pro/17, Crerar to R.E. Beamish, 22 Dec. 1942; clipping from the *Times*, “Canadian Troops Good Behavior,” n.d. 1942.

¹⁰⁸ Stacey and Wilson, *The Half Million*, 161, 168.

¹⁰⁹ LAC RG 24, Vol. 12383, 4/Pro/17, Captain E.N. Ackroyd. “Notes Re Relations Between Troops of the Canadian Army in England and the Civil Community”, n.d., May 1943; 4/PR Gen/1, Ackroyd to H. Tufton, 17 Oct., 1943; Stacey and Wilson, *The Half Million*, 174.

army in battle took years. This development involved overcoming many difficulties: organizational and personal rivalries, government indifference, and the lack of a unifying direction. Nor were all these problems resolved by July 1943, although an organization for handling operational army news existed where none did before. Conducting officers escorted and assisted war correspondents, while army photographers took pictures and movies of operations. PR developed the important philosophy of influencing the news media through assistance, explanation, and identification rather than by censorship alone. The test of combat in the Mediterranean revealed that the PR organization still had much to learn. Despite later difficulties, without this time of developing organization and policy it is difficult to believe that Canadians would have received high-quality news coverage during the upcoming campaigns.

Chapter Three:

Learning News Management through Trial and Error: Canadian Army PR in Sicily and Italy July 1943-June 1944

The long years of waiting ended in July 1943 when the Canadian First Division participated in *Operation Husky*, the invasion of Sicily. The government, eager to have Canadians into action before the war ended, persuaded McNaughton to let the division go in spite of his policy of keeping the First Canadian Army together. Canada committed a full corps to the Italian campaign, which began in September. The Mediterranean campaign was controversial, as some, mainly American, strategists argued that landing in France and making a direct approach to Germany would be better strategy. Canadians debated the efficacy of splitting their army between two fronts. Despite the controversy, it proved an important task for Canadian Army Public Relations (PR), which experienced the second stage in the development of its organization and policies, characterized by learning to manage war news production by trial and error. This chapter traces this development and the difficulties of Army PR including press unhappiness with the correspondent's rota priorities, slow transmission of press stories to Canada, censorship, and a lack of transportation. The army had varying degrees of success in overcoming these problems. The major step was appointing a PR chief in the theatres who possessed enough political and military influence to make the needed changes.

The Sicilian campaign was a Canadian Army public relations triumph, but a press relations disaster. The month-long campaign (the war news and PR details are examined in chapter six) was the first extended field activity for Canadian Army PR. The news media featured prominent and positive stories of the Canadian Army's first campaign.

Ross Munro, using an irregular means of transmission, got his copy out ahead of all competitors and outside the planned pooling of stories and narrowly avoided arrest by the Allied Force Headquarters (AFHQ) afterwards.¹ The government was pleased with the news coverage apart from the Allies' refusal to include Canadian participation in the initial communiqué and then having Washington announce it before Mackenzie King. The successful publicity encouraged cabinet members to advocate the dispatch of more Canadian troops for Mediterranean operations. Not only was First Division retained in the theatre, contrary to promises made McNaughton, but the cabinet insisted on sending the Fifth Armoured Division to Italy despite the Allies not really wanting it due to the mountainous terrain.²

While the war news from Sicily garnered positive reactions from the public and in government, the PR arrangements for the campaign angered many in the media. The major complaints concerned the allocation of the limited spaces for correspondents at the front. Both the CP and many independent correspondents representing individual newspapers felt unfairly treated by Army PR. CP believed the army had broken its promise to give it priority over all other agencies and correspondents. When Ross Munro took ill, CP claimed it was because he was being "worked to death" as CP's sole correspondent in Sicily. This embittered the close relationship once enjoyed by the army and CP.³ The independent newspaper correspondents also were upset with the army, which invited seven of them to the theatre with a warning that they could not proceed

¹ Ross Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1945), 376.

² Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1999), 210.

³ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/Press-Gen/1, D.C. Spry, Memorandum, 8 Feb. 1943; LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29, J.L. Ralston to J.A. McNeil, 26 Aug. 1943; McNeil to Ralston, 21 Aug. 1943; DND DHH 75/315. Abel to Clark, 23 Sept. 1943.

immediately to the front. Since Allied Force Headquarters (AFHQ) initially allowed only four Canadians to land, the remainder sat frustrated in North Africa without word from Lt. Col. Clifford Wallace, who was in Sicily with the PR field until the end of Canada's fighting in the campaign. The angry journalists complained to their papers, CMHQ and even Canada House and, in protest, formed a "Canadian War Correspondents Association."⁴ Many of the issues rested not with the Canadians but with Allied officers with scant sympathy for Canadian news needs. Yet the Canadians' biggest mistake was inviting a large contingent of correspondents without guaranteed front-line facilities. Therefore, the army attempted to placate the press; by December, Richard S. Malone, who held the confidence of both Minister of National Defence J.L. Ralston and the correspondents, replaced Wallace.⁵

Following the completion of the Sicilian campaign, the Allies decided to invade Italy, encouraged by the fall of Mussolini from power and negotiations with Marshall Badoglio's government for Italy's surrender. With American reluctance overcome, Churchill hoped his prediction of Italy being Europe's "soft underbelly" would prove correct. The British Eighth Army crossed the straits of Messina on September 3, 1943 to Italy's "toe" and six days later, a second Anglo-American force landed at Salerno, south of Naples. The Italian campaign showed that the underbelly was very hard indeed; the Allies barely held on to the Salerno beachhead, a portent of the hard fighting to come. As the American Fifth army advanced up the left of the peninsula and the Eighth in the east, bad weather and clever use of the mountainous terrain and three fortified lines by the German hindered the advance. In January 1944, in order to break the stalemate on the

⁴ LAC, RG24, Vol. 16,440, R.L. Sanburn to Major. Wilson, Frederick Griffin to Wallace, 1 Aug. 1943.

⁵ R.S. Malone, *A Portrait of War* (Toronto: Collins, 1983), 209.

German line at Monte Cassino, the Allies landed at Anzio near Rome, but the Germans contained the beachhead in bloody fighting. The Allies finally broke the line at Cassino on May 17, and the Germans retreated. On June 4, 1944 Rome fell, six months later than expected, but fighting in Italy continued until May 1945.

Canadian participation in the Italian campaign forced Army PR to focus on planning for future operations and cleaning up the complaints from the Sicilian campaign. Many of the problems of Sicily recurred, but that experience and learning from trial and error in Italy allowed the resolution by early 1944 of many issues, notably complaints about rota priority for correspondents, censorship, transportation, transmission and PR leadership

The Italian campaign's PR effort began with efforts to settle the dispute over the rota system that determined which correspondents went to the front. On August 31, a new draw, held at the press camp in Sicily, determined the priorities for the Italian campaign. The draw gave places to Canadian Press (CP), CBC, BUP (British United Press), CP, CBC, and finally the independent newspapers chosen by lot. The BUP did not receive a sixth priority, in addition to their third, because of an ongoing review by AFHQ into its status as an independent news agency. The draw assumed that twenty Canadian correspondents would accompany the forces, but Eisenhower considered this number as "excessive for present or prospective coverage required."⁶ On the other hand, Lt. Col. William Abel, head of Canadian Military Headquarters (CMHQ) PR believed that because the Canadian force in Sicily constituted a national body, rather than a mere

⁶ LAC RG24 Vol. 16640, War Diary No. 1 CDN PR Detachment, Appendix 20, Minutes, 31 Aug. 1943; RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/press/29, AFHQ to CMHQ, CDNS 8322, 30 Aug. 1943; National Archives, London (hereafter NA) WO 204/3718a, Eisenhower to Brigadier Lawson, No 3163, 19 Aug. 1943.

division, it was entitled to a large number of correspondents. On July 29, British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden informed Parliament that the quota for correspondents in the Mediterranean was “two per newspaper or six per news agency.” Lt. Col. Abel contacted the War Office who confirmed that this also applied to the Canadians.⁷ In contrast, AFHQ held that Eden’s statement did not apply to any dominion or empire news agencies, insisted that it alone could grant facilities in the theatre, and took steps to reduce the number of Canadian correspondents. Abel believed that the loud complaints of the disgruntled independent newspaper correspondents contributed much to AFHQ’s annoyance. AFHQ also justified its decision by citing “transmission difficulties and the need to include other empire correspondents.” After September 9, the quota of Canadian correspondents in Sicily and Italy was reduced from twenty to twelve.⁸ This decision forced Wallace into a new rota draw and three unlucky independents involuntarily returned to the UK. The publishers of the *Toronto Star* protested that larger circulation newspapers should have priority over smaller ones after their popular reporter Greg Clark had to return to the UK. Finally, since some newspapers would not live by the agreements made by their overseas representatives, Abel recommended that Joe Clark, PR chief in

⁷ DND DHH, 75/315, Abel to J.W.G. Clark, 23 Sept. 1943; *The News Chronicle*, 29 July 1943; LAC RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, Abel to B.G.S., 29 July 1943.

⁸ LAC RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, Eisenhower and McClure to Brig Lawson DPR, 19 Aug. 1943; RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/press/29, Abel to W.T. Cranfield, 11 Oct 1943; RG 24, Vol. 12376, CMHQ to NDHQ, Cable PR 428, 1 Oct. 1943; RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/press/29, Eisenhower and McClure to CMHQ and DPR, Cable No. 2374, 9 Sept. 1943; Aimé-Jules Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque: Les Correspondents De Guerre Canadiens-Français Durant La Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* (Montreal: VLB Éditeur, 2007), 117.

Canada, and the Canadian publishers, settle on a rota for all future operations. They met but made no major changes to the rota set up in Italy.⁹

The consternation of the independents increased after AFHQ reduced the number of Canadian correspondents in the theatre. Only seven were with the division at any one time; two wrote stories in Sicily waiting for their rota turn; one correspondent each covered Algiers, the Air Force and Navy.¹⁰ The editor of the *Toronto Telegram* wrote Abel repeating accusations in the press in Canada that the “British” were discriminating against Canadian correspondents. Abel explained that reduction resulted partly because the independents had made a nuisance of themselves while waiting in North Africa to go to Sicily. Furthermore, the number of correspondents allowed in the Mediterranean theatre and especially at the front had to be restricted because the military needed its limited transmission facilities for vital communications. Allowing more correspondents at the front would result in shorter stories unacceptable to the press. While the military recognized the value of the press reports, Abel contended they did not contribute directly to its most pressing business, “killing Germans.” In any case, First Canadian Division received a far more generous allotment of correspondents than a British division, which was limited to two.¹¹ Eventually Canadian PR convinced AFHQ to allow three more correspondents, one each from the CP, CBC and the Southam Newspaper Group.¹²

⁹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/press/29, CMHQ to NDHQ, cable PR 441, 5 Oct. 1943; NDHQ to CMHQ, cable GS 2397, 4 Oct. 1943; RG 2,4 Vol. 60, HQ 550-92-98, K.S. Edey to J.W.G. Clark, 18 Oct. 1943; RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/press/29, Abel to B.G.S., 8 Oct. 1943; RG 24 Vol 12381, 4/pr gen/1, Abel, Memorandum: “Public Relations Service, General Outline,” 25 Oct. 1943, 4.

¹⁰ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29, McClure to CMHQ, 7 Sept. 1943.

¹¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29, Abel to W.T. Cranfield, 11 Oct. 1943; McClure to CMHQ, 2 Sept. 1943.

¹² LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29/2, CMHQ to NDHQ, Cable PR 525, 25 Oct. 1943.

A ruling by AFHQ that BUP was part of the UP news agency gravely affected Canadian PR. Under protest, BUP recalled its correspondent. This was serious because the BUP was the main source of news of the Canadian Army for the UK press. Once BUP left, the Canadian Army disappeared from the UK newspapers, losing the prominent coverage it enjoyed during *Operation Husky*. Abel considered releasing news directly from CMHQ to the British media but instead asked the British PR spokesman for 8th Army, Col. McCormack, to mention the Canadians more often in his talks. That produced more UK press for the Canadians.¹³

The problems in setting placements and priorities for correspondents resulted in part from the large number of institutions and personnel involved in the discussion. The military decision makers included CMHQ PR, 1 Canadian PR detachment, AFHQ, Canadian Army Chief of Staff Ken Stuart, British Eighth Army, and Canadian First Division. The debates also drew in J.L. Ralston the Minister of National Defence and High Commissioner Vincent Massey. The press agencies included the publishers of each newspaper in Canada with overseas reporters and each individual correspondent. Additionally, the CP, BUP and the CBC had bureaus in London as well as head offices in Canada. That there were frequent miscommunications, misunderstandings and working at cross-purposes is not surprising given the number of voices involved. The other complication was the competitive commercial nature of the news business. It was not surprising that those with lower priority in the rota complained considering that they were

¹³ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29/2, CMHQ to Wallace, 16 Oct., 1943; Abel to Wallace, 19 Oct. 1943; Brigadier Neville to Abel, 28 Oct. 1943.

keeping expensive correspondents overseas writing secondary rear area stories while rivals with higher priority were getting front-line news.

Canadian PR also had difficulties in Italy moving the correspondents to the action and transmitting their stories home. Transportation difficulties plagued PR during the Sicily campaign because most of the PR-assigned vehicles were lost when enemy action destroyed several cargo ships.¹⁴ The shortage continued in Italy. Often a driver, conducting officer and two correspondents and their personal equipment crammed into each jeep. The overcrowding disadvantaged the CBC journalists who required cumbersome equipment to record their broadcasts onto wax discs. Radio correspondent Matthew Halton soon protested, and the CBC pressed for the provision of jeeps with trailers. Since the Canadian Army in Italy was short of transportation generally, transportation difficulties continued. Even in June 1944 when informed that the batch of “long promised” jeeps and trailers was available, the PR unit actually received only one jeep and no trailers.¹⁵

Transmission of the correspondents’ stories and broadcasts also proved difficult. Historian Aimé-Jules Bizimana argues that the time differences between Italy and Canada often caused missed deadlines, especially with stories redirected through London.¹⁶ The Canadians landed in Reggio on September 3, 1943 as part of Montgomery’s Eighth Army and spent the next several months slowly advancing through the toe of Italy and up the

¹⁴ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29/2, Capt. Frank Royal to Abel, 11 Aug. 1943; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 113.

¹⁵ LAC, RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29/2, Matthew Halton to CBC London, copy of cable, n.d.; Major G.W. Gilchrist to C.S. Wallace, 19 Oct. 1943; Abel to Col. F.X. Jennings, 16 Nov. 1943; NDHQ to CMHQ, cable DPR 849, 30 June 1944; RG 24, Vol. 16641, War Diary No. 2 PR Group, Narrative summary for month of June 1944, 2.

¹⁶ Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 112.

east coast. The Canadians suffered light casualties in several skirmishes, but there were no large-scale battles until December when the Canadians crossed the Moro River. A lack of stories in Canadian papers caused great concern at NDHQ about why the Canadians had disappeared from the headlines.¹⁷ Part of this was due to the difficulty of getting the stories out. Until early October, the transmission centre remained at Syracuse on Sicily and the advancing PR units could not quickly get their stories there. Major William “Bill” Gilchrist, commanding the forward detachment, complained that the “communications system had broken down” and dispatch riders were unable to carry out their duties. At one aerodrome, Gilchrist reluctantly left all accumulated copy for future delivery in the hope that courier planes would begin functioning. A jeep laden with stories, film and recordings was dispatched from the PR unit in Potenza to Reggio, a 700-mile round trip. Poor road conditions and traffic jams made it a six-day journey. An attempt to send copy through the nearer Salerno beachhead failed because of flooding.¹⁸ Under these circumstances, the lack of news about the Canadians in Italy was not surprising. CP issued stories speculating that the lack of news indicated Canadians must be “out of the line” or involved in secret activities, neither of which PR officials felt were healthy speculation.¹⁹

When Canadian publishers occasionally complained about the lack of news, Canadian PROs blamed censorship rather than poor facilities.²⁰ Field Press Censors

¹⁷ LAC RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29/2, NDHQ to CMHQ, cable DPR 416, 28 Sept. 1943.

¹⁸ LAC RG 24 Vol. 59, H.Q. 650-92-73, Gilchrist to F.X. Jennings 12 April 1944; RG 24 Vol 16,440, War Diary No. 1 Public Relations Detachment, Sept. 1943, Personal Diary of Maj. Gilchrist, 5-9.

¹⁹ LAC RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/ Press/29/2, Capt. Fred Payne to Abel, 12 Nov. 1943.

²⁰ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 60, HQ 550-92-98, FX Jennings to CMHQ, Cable DPR 597, 19 Feb. 1944; JWG Clark to R.A. Farquason et.al. , 6 Mar. 1944.

examined each correspondent's copy for violations of security regulations, excising all information deemed to be of value to the enemy. In some cases, they exercised "policy censorship" to prevent the circulation of information deemed embarrassing or damaging to the military or war effort. Normally, censors removed only information of value to the enemy; this could include items like the names of units, troop movements, strengths, and losses. Policy censorship was censorship for reasons other than military security. The most egregious case in Italy occurred during the German siege of the beachhead following the Anzio landing in January 1944. AFHQ ordered closure of the press transmitter in Anzio and the transfer of censorship of all copy from the beachhead to Naples. That further delayed the stories. Although claiming that security was the basis of the censorship, military cables warned that the correspondents' "unduly pessimistic" reports would create a negative "public reaction" and be "bad for morale." Those in the beachhead, including censors, were believed too "unnecessarily sensitive to feelings of isolation and lack of progress" compared to the "balanced" perspective possible elsewhere.²¹ This clear attempt to avoid telling the public of bad news had little direct effect on news of the Canadian Army as only one unit, the mixed American/ Canadian Special Service Force was present. Although most Canadian correspondents' complaints of censorship involved less egregious cases than that at Anzio, it still was an irritant. For example, *Globe and Mail* correspondent Ralph Allen wrote a column when he was home on leave in January 1944 criticizing field press censorship and listing examples of petty and silly censorship rulings, such as deletion of the fact that the 48th Highlanders fought

²¹ NA WO 204/5458, Headquarters ACMF to VII Corps, 11 Feb. 1944; ACMF DDR to Neville PRO, 13 Feb. 1944.

at Vimy Ridge in 1917. Allen also complained of being unable to name award recipients until the *Canada Gazette* listed them or casualties until notification of next-of-kin.²²

While the correspondents chafed under difficulties with transportation, transmission and censorship, Lt. Col. Wallace attempted to coordinate PR in Italy from AFHQ in Algiers. According to Richard S Malone's memoirs, Wallace "meekly accepted" AFHQ's orders to remain in Algiers. It is ironic that Wallace, who faced criticism for operating with the field units in Sicily, now received criticism for staying at headquarters. The situation had changed; the correspondents were in Italy, not North Africa, and Wallace was out of close contact with them. The constant complaints from the news media began to affect the government and convince it to take action.²³

Although no one raised the issue explicitly, Wallace also suffered from Abel assuming many of his responsibilities. The approved plans for PR (see Appendix One) pictured the First Army ADPR responsible for PR in the field, with Abel handling general policy, the Film and Photo units and relationships with outside agencies. These plans quickly fell apart because they assumed that the First Army would deploy as a whole to Europe, not a single division or corps to the Mediterranean. This gave Abel a much larger role in operational PR than anticipated. Already in May 1943, McNaughton declared his intention to rely on advice from Abel while Wallace was in the Mediterranean.²⁴ A memorandum outlining PR operations written by Abel in October 1943 claimed he was "in effect ... administering the whole P.R. system." An

²² Ralph Allen, "Answers by Allen," *Globe and Mail*, 15 Jan. 1944.

²³ Richard S. Malone, *A Portrait of War* (Toronto: Collins, 1983), 209.

²⁴ LAC RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press /28, Extract, HQ Canadian First Army, 19 May 1943.

accompanying chart showed his position above that of Wallace who appeared as an equal in the chart agreed to in the spring of 1943.²⁵ Thus, Wallace operated with less authority than planned. In the face of Wallace's perceived weaknesses, Ralston decided to change PR leadership during his November tour of Italy.

The new leader of PR in Italy was Richard S. Malone, former circulation manager of the *Winnipeg Free Press*. Earlier in the war, he had served briefly as Press Liaison Officer at NDHQ and later as Assistant Director of Public Relations in Ottawa. While working for Ralston he helped organize the Directorate of Public Relations in Canada, although the minister agreed that after three months he could attend Staff College and head overseas. After a wound as an infantry major in Sicily, he became liaison officer between General Montgomery and the Canadian Army.²⁶ Malone's good relationship with Defence Minister Ralston and connections with the Eighth Army, combined with his newspaper and PR experience, made him the logical candidate for the job.

According to Malone's memoirs, his appointment originated from suggestions of correspondents during a closed press conference with Ralston in November 1943. In fact, new corps commander Harry Crerar, who was dissatisfied with Wallace, wrote to Ralston "nominating" Malone for the job and suggesting he get broader powers.²⁷ Malone was reluctant to accept this "thankless job" since correspondents tended by nature to "bellyache" and he enjoyed his assignment with Montgomery. Despite these objections, according to Malone, Ralston talked him into accepting, but not until after he had

²⁵ DND DHH, 75/315, Memorandum- Public Relations Service, 26, Oct. 1943.

²⁶ DND DHH 0.009(d 93) Press Release, 19 May 1945; *Globe and Mail*, 2 Oct. 1945, Malone, *Portrait of War*, 90-92.

²⁷ Malone, *Portrait of War*, 208; LAC, Mg 27 III b II, Vol. 66, Ralston Papers, Crerar to Ralston, 29 Nov. 1943.

wrangled a number of conditions from the minister. Malone received complete control of Canadian PR in the theatre, including the movement of correspondents and could set up headquarters where he wished. He could contact the minister directly and received a letter confirming this concession and his other terms of reference. He was also to inform Ralston of any embarrassing news about to hit the newspapers. The high-speed wire service from Naples often got news stories to Canada faster than military messages that had to pass through the chain of command before reaching NDHQ. The new PR head also received authority and cash to start a Canadian Army newspaper equivalent to the American *Stars and Stripes* and the British *Eighth Army News*. Ralston and Malone also secured the agreement of Crerar and General Beament, commander of the Canadian First Echelon in Italy, to the terms of reference after getting assurance that the generals would receive copies of all messages to Ottawa.²⁸ Malone's memory was not perfect. The documents show that rather than simply receiving ministerial *carte blanche* directly from Ralston, Malone accepted the job "provisionally" until Montgomery gave his blessing, and that, with Beament, Joe Clark, and Abel, he had worked out a memorandum concerning PR in the Mediterranean acceptable to all parties. Crerar approved the final draft and Clark represented Ralston in the discussion.²⁹

In any case, in January 1944, the newly promoted Lt. Col. Malone began the job with more powers and personal influence than Wallace had enjoyed. Besides the freedom to move his headquarters, he had complete control over Canadian war correspondents with the power to approve, move and discipline them by barring them from the theatre if

²⁸ Malone, *Portrait of War*, 209-212.

²⁹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59, H.Q. 650-92-73, Malone to Ralston 22 Dec. 1943; "Memorandum covering in brief outlined, functions and policy of Canadian Army PR in Central Med Theatre," n.d.

necessary. Malone's powers were only limited by the fact that general PR policy still was the purview of CMHQ and the Director of PR in Ottawa and that security matters remained under the control of the intelligence section of the headquarters to which PR personnel were assigned.³⁰

Malone immediately used his power to address issues that hindered the flow of war news. He moved the Canadian PR headquarters from Algiers to Naples, the cable head for high-speed news transmission from Italy and the location of the administrative units of the Canadian First Echelon under Brigadier Beament that represented Canadian non-operational concerns to AFHQ. Eisenhower approved this Canadian move appreciating the extraordinary difficulty of Beament continually shuttling back and forth from North Africa. Naples also was the site of FLAMBO, the Advanced Administrative Echelon of AFHQ. The main headquarters of AFHQ, however, remained in Algiers and did not move to Italy until July 1944. Malone's decision irritated AFHQ staff, but "Ralston's" document, later countersigned by Montgomery, overcame objections. A Canadian PR liaison officer remained in Algiers. Canadian First Echelon made similar arrangements for representation at AFHQ while based in Naples. The Naples PR headquarters building had ample bedrooms and bathrooms to accommodate correspondents and PR personnel. The discovery of the building's normal civilian use as a brothel became a point of humour. The living was pleasant, especially with the building's owner, an Italian chef, running the officer's mess.³¹ In contrast, the forward

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ LAC RG 24 Vol. 16640, No. 2 PR Unit War Diary: 12 Mar. 1944; Malone, *Portrait of War*, 217-219; Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy*, 38, 350.

press camp moved with the army and relied on billeting close to the front.³² With his headquarters in Italy, Malone could assess any problem quickly and usually first hand.

Malone gave immediate attention to censorship. He assigned one of the Canadian censors to liaise with the Censorship authorities in order to uphold national interests. Like the British and American liaison officers, he would have a voice in making censorship policy and would confer with the censors if there were any doubt about censorship issues that concerned the Canadian Army. Even though AFHQ censors would retain final authority, they were reluctant to have a Canadian liaison officer and took several months to approve the appointment.

Malone also had problems that originated with Canadians. Despite publication bans, Canadian war correspondents frequently tried to identify Canadian units “through local references in their stories.” CMHQ and NDHQ complained about “the laxity of field censorship.” When British censors handled Canadian copy, they lacked the “local knowledge” to detect this bending of the regulations. Malone believed that Canadian censors acting as liaison officers could give advice on Canadian matters and ease the situation.³³

Policy censorship also remained an option for the Canadian Army. Although in his memoirs, Malone speaks harshly of policy censorship, the addenda to his terms of reference mention that policy censorship remained available for “cases where a censor feels certain copy should definitely be injurious to the war effort, cause friction within an army, injure morale of the troops etc...” Normally, this was the prerogative of Allied

³² Vol. 59, H.Q. 650-92-73 “Memorandum covering in brief outline, functions and policy of Canadian Army PR in Central Med Theatre,” 2.

³³ LAC RG 24, 12494, 6/Laision letter/7, Malone to Clark and Abel, Liaison Latter 5, 15 Feb. 1944.

command but the Canadian corps commander could impose it for “purely Canadian matters,” on Malone’s advice. Although policy censorship was risky, it was to be “used when warranted.”³⁴

Malone’s terms of reference also granted the right to act as a *de facto* censor. If Malone believed “a decision was required, or if he feels the facts of a story are false,” he could order the censor to stop the copy. Malone would notify the correspondent and “place proper facts before” him; if the journalist continued to submit “false information” disciplinary action could result, including loss of credentials.³⁵ While a PR officer and a journalist himself, Malone was concerned with controlling correspondents as well as facilitating their work.

Although never explicitly mentioned, Malone’s mandate greatly curtailed the influence of Lt. Col. Abel in the theatre. Crerar recognized Malone needed “great liberty of action in regard to publicity arrangements.”³⁶ Malone’s terms of service specifically stated that he controlled the movement of correspondents to and from the theatre a duty that Abel in consultation with AFHQ had been handling. There is no record of Abel protesting these arrangements and he agreed to Malone’s job description, although it would have been impossible to oppose an appointment supported by Ralston, Crerar, and Clark. Nonetheless, after the decision to recall Malone to head the field PR unit for the second front he objected to the move, revealing that some tensions existed.³⁷

³⁴ Vol. 59, H.Q. 650-92-73 “Memorandum covering in brief outline, functions and policy of Canadian Army PR in Central Med Theatre,” 4.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

³⁶ LAC, Ralston Papers, MG 27 III B 11 Vol. 43, Crerar, Major General H.D.G. Operational reports -2, Crerar to Ralston, Nov. 29, 1943.

³⁷ DND DHH, 75/315, Abel to Clark, 17 Jan. 1944.

A more open aspect of Malone's mandate was creating a Canadian Army newspaper, the *Maple Leaf*. The daily paper began regular publication in February 1944. Malone received guarantees of a proper wire service and the other necessities for running a daily newspaper. The editor, Lt. J.D. MacFarlane, enjoyed editorial freedom except he could not comment on Canadian politics or military controversies. The newspaper published only English language stories. Originally, Malone wanted to include French articles but PRO Placide Labelle, in charge of French language publicity, argued that it was more important that English-speaking Canadian soldiers read about the activities of their French Canadian comrades. Labelle clearly wished to counteract common prejudices against French Canadians, such as the belief they were slackers not really supporting the war effort, fed by the lower support for the war and conscription by Quebecers. By 21 February, the newspaper published over 16,000 daily copies.³⁸

Before Malone's departure to head No. 3 PR Group in northwest Europe, General Crerar declared, "Public Relations has definitely found its feet out here."³⁹ While this is true, Malone's leadership alone does not account for the turn around. The intention from the start was for Canadian censors to look after Canadian interests, although Malone ensured the implementation of the idea. Another development from which Malone benefited but did not initiate was Eighth Army's movement of the transmission centre from Bari to Naples, improving submission times. Malone's work was also assisted by intense fighting in December 1943, including the crossing of the Moro River and the

³⁸ LAC RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/ Press/ 29/ 4, Malone to Abel and Clark, n.d. 4.; Labelle to Malone, n.d.; RG 24 Vol. 16440, War Diary 2 Canadian PR Group 21 February 1944; Richard MacFarlane, *Canada's newspaper Legend, The Story of J. Douglas MacFarlane* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2000), 45.

³⁹ LAC, RG 24, 12494, 6/liaison letter/7, 13 Mar. 1944.

savage house-to-house battle in Ortona that ended the drought of operational stories for Canadian war correspondents.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, with ministerial backing and his personal connections with Montgomery and Crerar, Malone had the “juice” to lead Canadian PR, implementing plans, and responding to changing circumstances with a speed that Wallace, isolated in Algiers, could not.

This did not mean that Canadian PR troubles in Italy ended. Difficulties often arose through changing circumstances rather than PR policy. For example, some newspaper editors blamed slow transmissions for delaying copy in February 1944, but were reassured by Canadian PR that these delays were due to censorship not cable problems.⁴¹ Yet almost immediately after this explanation, transmission difficulties between Eighth Army headquarters and Naples began to hamper Canadian stories further. Although publishers blamed inadequate facilities after the headquarters moved, the delay resulted from a scheduled radio silence to ensure the enemy did not anticipate a pending operation.⁴² Despite the best efforts of Canadian PR to address issues affecting the flow of war news back to Canada, there would always be factors beyond their control.

While the Canadian public wished to read about the troops in action in Sicily and Italy, those with even a rudimentary understanding of military affairs knew that only an Allied invasion of the European mainland would be decisive. Generals like Montgomery, Simonds, and Crerar were transferred to the United Kingdom to play a role in the coming

⁴⁰ For an account of Marcel Ouimet’s radio coverage of these battles see Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 123-130.

⁴¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 60, HQ 550-92-98, F.X. Jennings to CMHQ, DPR 597, 19 Feb 1944; J.W.G. Clark to R.A. Farquason et.al. , 6 March 1944.

⁴² NA UK, WO 204/6880, Brigadier E.G. Weeks to HQ ACMF Administrative Echelon, 12 Mar. 1944; Lt. Col. Edward Bomar to BGS, 16 Mar. 1944.

invasion. The key players in Canadian PR also wanted in on the Second Front. Top correspondents such as Ross Munro and the CBC's Matthew Halton left Italy to cover the expected landings. Abel was outraged as CP now left fewer correspondents in Italy. In January 1944, Abel raged against the CP that had insisted at the onset of the campaign on a requirement of three correspondents to cover Italy because overwork in Sicily had led to a collapse in Munro's health. Abel mused to Joe Clark, "perhaps we did not kill Ross Munro after all." Clark, with Abel's permission, showed the DDPR's complaints to Purcell who "blew a gasket," protesting it as "unfair" because it "misrepresents the effective effort to straddle two theatres simultaneously." CP informed its members that it required fewer correspondents in Italy because the situation had become static.⁴³ Clearly, Italy would lose its news interest once the Second Front opened.

This exodus from Italy also included Malone. Ralston verbally promised him a position in Northwest Europe if he "made a good job of it, and got matters into shape before the invasion of France."⁴⁴ The new ADPR in Italy would be Major Bill Gilchrist, who had served in the front lines of Canadian PR throughout the Sicilian and Italian campaigns. Malone moved to the United Kingdom on 20 March 1944.⁴⁵

Gilchrist led the No. 2 Canadian PR unit through the rest of the Canadian involvement in the Italian campaign. The tempo of PR activities and flow of news stories followed that of the campaign. A slower period followed the battle of Ortona in

⁴³ LAC RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29/4, Abel, Memorandum: Canadian Press Priorities, 28 Jan. 1944; Abel to Clark, 28 Jan. 1944; Alan Randall to Abel, 18 Feb. 1944; DND DHH 75/315 Clark to Abel, 20 Feb. 1944; LAC RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29/4, "Excerpt from 20 April CP Report." At times CP did have two correspondents in Italy after 1944.

⁴⁴ Malone, *Portrait of War*, 212.

⁴⁵ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/press/29, ACA 2508 Beament to Montague, 26 Feb. 1944; RG 24 Vol. 16640, No. 2 PR Unit War Diary: Narrative Summary March 1944 1 Canadian PR unit, 3.

December, with the Allied advance floundering on the Gustav and Hitler lines. The Canadians corps rebuilt its strength and conducted patrols and occasional small-scale engagements, such as the costly attack across the Arielle River, while the bloody stalemate at Cassino continued. The PR unit war diary complained that the correspondents wrote more about the eruption of Mount Vesuvius than the war, although the Canadian Army Film and Photo unit also documented the event. During a lull in stories in April, PROs Captain McIntyre, Lt. Boss, and Lt. Agnew, along with war correspondents Peter Stursberg and Doug Amaron, who had discovered famous Italian artist Federico Spoltore in Lanciano, sat for life-size pastel portraits by him. He refused payment.⁴⁶ Once the Canadians joined in the attacks on the Hitler line in May 1944, the tempo of war news increased dramatically. In three weeks of bloody fighting costing 7300 Canadian casualties, the German lines shattered and Rome fell on June 5.⁴⁷ Covering the city's liberation, the Canadian PR group set up HQ in the Pensione Jaccarino, which proved to be more dangerous to PROs than the battles they had recently covered; on two successive nights the darkened stairs inflicted casualties, one officer suffering internal bleeding and another a broken elbow.⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the much-anticipated liberation of Rome proved disappointing both militarily and from a PR standpoint. Fifth Army commander Mark Clark, by focussing on the city, failed to cut off the retreating Germans, who regrouped in Northern Italy. The fall of Rome dominated the

⁴⁶ RG 24 Vol. 16640, No. 2 PR Unit War Diary 21 Mar. 1944; No. 2 PR Unit War Diary, Summary of Activities Field Detachment, Apr. 1944 .

⁴⁷ Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 251-2.

⁴⁸ More seriously, PR Captain Brophy died after an oversized American trailer struck him while he stood on the side of the road to Rome. Combat photographer, Terry Rowe died at Anzio. LAC RG 24, Vol. 16441, War Dairy No. 2 PR Group, 28 May 1944, June 1944; RG24 Vol. 12494, 6/liaison letter /7, Malone to Clark and Abel, Liaison Letter 4, 11 Feb. 1944.

news for only one day, June 5. The next day was D-Day, the long awaited invasion of France. The Mediterranean theatre, the Canadian forces, and their PR now took the back seat to the Northwest Europe campaign.

The Sicilian and Italian campaigns were a learning experience for the Canadian Army in the management of war news. Army PR learned how to control war correspondents in the field and press relations during a campaign. Canadian PR managed to improve many of the problems it faced, although with the constantly changing situations made permanent solutions difficult. Many of the complications originated with being the junior partner of the American and British. Appointing a new leader, Malone, with the necessary political backing and connections with Eighth Army leadership, proved invaluable to Canadian PR, allowing them to “stand up” against Allied leadership when necessary. Occasionally, in situations such as Ross Munro’s Sicily Scoop, Canadian PR managed to dominate international headlines, although this resulted as much from chance as from careful planning. Despite this, the lessons learned from the Mediterranean allowed the Canadian Army PR machine to function at its greatest efficiency during the third stage of its development, the Northwest Europe campaign.

Chapter Four

The Publicity Machine: The Northwest Europe Campaign and Beyond June 1944- May 1945

Many Allied strategic thinkers, especially British, hoped to find a way to defeat Germany without the feared costly assault on the beaches of Northern France. The proponents of air power, like Arthur Harris, hoped that by destroying cities and industry, strategic bombing would break Germany's will and ability to fight. The failure of the Battle of Berlin, the intense Allied attacks on German cities in the winter of 1943-1944, cost the RAF heavily and Germany showed no signs of surrender. Proposals for an indirect approach to the Axis, through Italy or the Balkans, showed little promise when Churchill's "soft underbelly of Europe" proved considerably harder than anticipated; during the bloody Italian campaign, the mountainous terrain favoured the defenders. As American Army staff predicted and desired, the major campaign to defeat the German forces in the west would be an attack against France and an advance into Germany. The Northwest Europe campaign formed the major and decisive effort of the war for the Western Allies.

For Canadian Army Public Relations (PR), the Northwest Europe Campaign was also the major effort of the war. No. 3 Canadian PR Group, the largest Canadian PR formation deployed in warfare, escorted and housed correspondents, censored news copy, photographed combat, performed liaison duties with Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), and even operated loudspeaker units attempting to induce German troops to surrender. Canadian Army PR learned much from its experiences in the Mediterranean and produced superior publicity for the Army during the campaign. This

resulted from the meticulous planning carried out by Canadian Military Headquarters, (CMHQ) and by Lt. Col. Dick Malone, commander of No. 3 PR Group, after he arrived from Italy. The planning assured it could accomplish its tasks of proper coordination with SHAEF and secure timely publicity and recognition for Canadians on D-Day. During the campaign, the Canadian PR machine reached the peak of its efficiency by maintaining excellent relations with the news media and with Canada's allies, while ensuring that the army featured prominently in the news. The news coverage of the campaign was favourable to the army and presented a sanitized picture of warfare in keeping with SHAEF censorship regulations. The Northwest Europe campaign did affect Canadian PR operations elsewhere. The media's focus on the battles in the north overshadowed Canadian operations in Italy, and PR struggled to retain correspondents. In Canada, the losses incurred in Northwest Europe triggered the Second Conscription Crisis. This led to conflict between officers in Pacific Command, who publicly supported conscription, and Mackenzie King's government, while mutiny by conscripts ordered overseas led the army and government to attempt to impose much stricter censorship in Canada itself.

The Allied forces spent the years and months before June 6, 1944 preparing for the final campaign, which began with the invasion of France. Some students of strategy criticize the Allies for spending more effort on preparing for the initial landings and too little on the campaign that followed. Canadian PR planning also emphasised the landing but also laid the groundwork for subsequent campaign. Canadian PR focused on three planning priorities before D-Day: organizing Number 3 PR Group, the field units of Canadian PR; news management arrangements with SHAEF; and securing high-speed

transmission equipment for the Canadian field units. To avoid repeating the Sicilian communiqué embarrassment, PR personnel lobbied hard for Canadian national recognition in the D-Day communiqués.

All frontline Canadian PR fell under the administration of No. 3 PR Group, commanded by Lt. Col. Malone. Originally, designated the No. 2 PR Group, it became No. 3 Group and the Mediterranean detachment became No. 2 Group in April 1944. With the new formation, field PR duties, formerly supervised by CMHQ, now became Malone's responsibility.¹ Predictably, given his history of protecting CMHQ's authority over PR, Lt. Col. Bill Abel, the Deputy Director of Public Relations (DDPR), opposed Malone's transfer to the UK, partly because he feared Malone, who had doggedly pursued Canadian sovereignty in Italy, would undermine the arrangements the CMHQ staff had already made for PR operations with SHAEF and 21st Army Group. Twenty-First Army Group, commanded by General Bernard Montgomery, was the formation under which the Canadian First Army would serve. Secondly, Malone's presence and equal rank would threaten CMHQ's influence over PR, because Abel had faced no real rival since Cliff Wallace went to the Mediterranean. In his liaison letters with Joe Clark, information chief in Ottawa, Abel, trying to obstruct Malone's transfer, complained "for years we have been interfered with through dual responsibility since Purcell came here as Army PRO. That has gone." Malone could not enjoy the "same freedom to operate" as in Italy. Clark recognized Abel's opposition was largely personal. Abel complained that Malone bought into the "story that we at CMHQ interfere with units in the field." Next to

¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/2, Lt Col. Gibbs, memorandum on No. 3 PR Group, 4 Apr. 1944.

this passage, Clark wrote “not CMHQ! Dick has fallen for Abel interference story! (Emphasis in original).”²

Malone did not try to undo the groundwork with SHAEF and the British, but Abel’s caution had some basis. Malone later clashed with Allied PR leadership as he attempted to get his way by appealing to the “terms of reference” governing his appointment, as he had done in the Mediterranean. Furthermore, in September 1944, Malone proposed reorganizing Canadian PR, including a promotion to Brigadier for himself. On that occasion, the opposition of Abel along with that of SHAEF PR leadership forced Malone to withdraw the proposals.³ Despite these few incidents, Abel and Malone seem to have worked well enough together during the campaign.

The No. 3 PR Group consisted initially of nine smaller PR sections: five for conducting journalists, three for film and photography, and one in charge of censorship and transmission. The group also included six Psychological Warfare (PSW) sections; three amplifier and three leaflet units. The group expected to be able to handle thirty war correspondents.⁴ In June 1944, the group’s establishment incorporated 41 officers and 168 other ranks, although some were detached for PR and liaison duties at SHAEF or 21 Army Group. In May, the group possessed 67 vehicles, including 31 trailers. This scale

² DND DHH, 75/315, Abel to Clark, 12 Jan. 1944.

³ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/ Press/ 31/7, Lt. Col. Malone, *Memorandum on the Reorganization of PR in the Field*, 27 Sept. 1944; Letter to Colonel Dyde, 2 Nov. 1944.

⁴ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, War Diary No. 3 PR Group May 1944, “Brief Outline Plan Covering Projected Operations and Dispositions of Number Three Public Relations Group”.

dwarfed Canadian PR in the Mediterranean theatre which numbered 16 officers and 40 other ranks at the beginning of the Italian campaign in September 1943.⁵

The expansion of the No. 3 Group, combined with the needs of the corps in Italy, made it difficult to obtain conducting officers possessing both journalistic and military experience. Conducting officers accompanied, protected, assisted and controlled war correspondents as they travelled at the front gathering stories. Officers with press experience came over from Canada but initially received assignments to jobs not directly involved with escorting correspondents, with some non-journalist conducting officers with overseas experience used ahead of them.⁶ Despite the stretch placed on resources No. 3 Group was a well-equipped and staffed PR unit, which would serve the military and news media well.

No. 3 PR Group came under the control of SHAEF and 21 Army Group. SHAEF's Publicity and Psychological Warfare Division coordinated PR for all Allied forces. General Robert McClure, former head of PR at AFHQ in Algiers, commanded. The responsibilities of SHAEF PR included supervising war correspondents, communiqués, and the censorship of all media, including copy, broadcasts and

⁵ Ibid., War Diary No. 3 PR Group, June 1944, Field returns; War Diary No. 3 PR Groups, May 1944, "Brief Outline Plan Covering Projected Operations and Dispositions of Number Three Public Relations Group", Appendix B; RG 24 Vol. 16640, War Diary No.1 Canadian PR Detachment Sept. 1943, Nominal Roll of I CDN Public Relations Detachment, 3 Sept. 1943.

⁶DND DHH, 75/315, Abel to Clark 25 Feb. 1944; Abel to Jennings, 1 May 1944; Clark to Abel, 14 Apr. 1944; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, War Diary No. 3 PR Groups, May 1944, Malone, Liaison Letters numbers one and three, 21 Apr. 1944, 11 May 1944. Jack Donaghue's memoirs express puzzlement at why Abel told the newly arrived PR officers from Canada that they would not get to the front, while Malone asked for "one or two at a time when the opportunity is afforded", in Liaison letter No.1. Abel may have been trying to avoid building up and then dashing hopes of the officers wanting to get getting to the front, if he felt that they had a good chance of not getting there. Jack Donaghue, *The Edge of War* (Calgary: Detselig, 1988), 29-30.

photographs.⁷ In practise, much of the responsibility for handling PR occurred at Army Group and Army level, but SHAEF remained the “final authority on all press policy matters.”⁸

In preparation for the campaign, CMHQ PR officers participated in planning meetings with both SHAEF and 21 Army Group. Canadians also served in SHAEF PR, Major Fred Payne was the senior Canadian at SHAEF in the Press Policy division, and there were spaces for eight Canadian officers and seven other ranks. These included officers attached to the press censorship, information, communiqué and the photograph and film sections. Besides carrying out SHAEF duties, they represented Canada’s national interests in their respective areas. For example, the communiqué officer ensured that “Canada’s military effort has its proper place in the two daily communiqués.”⁹

Twenty-First Army Group, commanded by Montgomery, initially included every unit in the invasion, but as American numbers grew, it became only one of several army groups, and consisted of the Canadian First and British Second armies. Canadian PR cooperation with 21 Army Group was crucial because SHAEF delegated censorship responsibility to army group commanders.¹⁰ The British and Canadian Assistant Deputy Director of Public Relations (ADPRs) in 21 Army Group, of whom Malone was one, were responsible for coordinating the PR within their own armies. Canadians had freedom to

⁷ Forrest C. Pogue, *The Supreme Command* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1954), 84, 88.

⁸ NA, WO 219/2056, SHAEF memorandum, Press policy, 8 Feb. 1944.

⁹ LAC. RG 24, Vol. 12383, 4/PRO/16/3, Payne to Abel, 27 May, 1944; SHAEF War Establishment, Canadian element, 29 May 1944; Aimé-Jules Bizmana: *Les Correspondents De Guerre Canadiens-Français Durant La Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* (Montreal: VLB Éditeur, 2007), 157.

¹⁰ NA, WO 219/2056 SHAEF Memorandum No. 27, Press Censorship, 25 Apr. 1944.

govern their own domestic publicity unless it affected 21 Army Group as a whole. The Canadians assigned a permanent press liaison officer with 21 Army group and stationed a HQ detachment including the ADPR at Montgomery's HQ.¹¹

In addition to forming No. 3 Group and arranging PR relations with their Allies, Canadian PR worked to avoid the criticism it faced in Sicily and Italy over transmission problems.¹² The Canadians persuaded SHAEF to regard them as one of three national contingents on D-Day rather than as a single division, receiving one of the three assigned light type 76 transmitters, which were less satisfactory than the British made Creed High-Speed Wireless system attached to a type 33 radio. Because the Creed system recorded onto ticker tape at reception, an operator did not have to decipher Morse code in real time. When first introduced in 1922, it allowed the transmission of up to two hundred words a minute compared to thirty or forty words a minute on other sets.¹³ Canadian PR began what seemed at times a quixotic quest for Creed attachments, trying to beg, borrow or steal one from all possible sources. Malone, Abel, and even General Kenneth Stuart, then commander of CMHQ, unsuccessfully lobbied SHAEF and the War Office, only to discover that the sets in production were assigned to other Allied organizations. Finally, after much wrangling and diplomacy the British finally loaned a set to No. 3 PR group. Ironically, on June 1, Abel despatched a memorandum noting, "You will be amused to know that ... the Canadian PR section will be the only Public Relations section in the

¹¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31 Abel to BGS, 8 January 1944; Maj. A.E. Austin, Memorandum on PR, 23 Feb. 1944.

¹² Ibid., Record of Conversation between Lt Gen. Ronald M Meeks, Lt. Gen. K Stuart and Brig. Penhale in C of S Office, CMHQ, 0915, 17 May 1944.

¹³ Ibid., Minutes of Meeting Held at Twenty First Army Group, 30 Mar. 1944: *New York Times*, 12 Oct. 1922.

field with high-speed transmitters.” The expectation was the Americans would not obtain one until D +40.¹⁴ The Canadians believed they had succeeded, at least temporarily, in securing the best press transmission facilities in Normandy. This prediction proved false.

The other major PR embarrassment of the Mediterranean campaign was the exclusion of Canadian participation from the initial Sicilian communiqué and the American announcement of it ahead of Mackenzie King. Vincent Massey contacted Stuart in December 1943, requesting action to avoid a similar PR fiasco with the Second Front communiqué.¹⁵ Well before D-Day, Canadian PR was pushing for the recognition of Canadian participation in the landings in the communiqué. In his memoirs, Malone claimed that he persuaded SHAEF to include Canadians, but “two days before D-Day” he discovered that the communiqué simply read “Allied troops” and the press guidance read “American, British and Empire troops.” Malone then struck a personal agreement with Col. Pat Saunders, censorship head of 21 Army Group, who led censorship for the land forces, to pencil in “Canadian” in place of “Empire.”¹⁶ Malone’s recollections of the timing, however, do not conform to the information in the archival documents. Malone and the Canadians knew of the decision to use the term “Allied troops” more than a month before D-Day. SHAEF, expecting Canadian pressure for immediate acknowledgement of their participation, passed the final decision about national identities in the initial communiqués on to 21 Army Group on May 25. Nowhere in these documents was the term “Empire troops” used. On June 2, a final censorship ruling

¹⁴ Richard S. Malone, *A World in Flames* (Toronto: Collins, 1983), 26-28; LAC, RG 24 Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/3, Abel, Memorandum, 1 June 1944.

¹⁵ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31, Massey to Stuart, Dec. 1943.

¹⁶ Malone, *World in Flames*, 21-22.

allowed release of Canadian participation in the press guidance and the explanatory bulletins issued simultaneously with the communiqués.¹⁷ While Malone remembered the incident in a more dramatic fashion than in actuality, Canadian lobbying made an impact on SHAEF decisions and ensured the immediate announcement of Canadian participation on D-Day, if not in the actual communiqué itself.

This success did not mean that everything went smoothly in Ottawa on June 6. Awakened by an RCMP officer at 4:30 AM, Mackenzie King was surprised that SHAEF would announce Canadian participation so quickly because of the agreement to use “Allied” in the communiqués. King later learned of the receipt of materials by Washington two days earlier, which could have provided some of the background material he required for his announcement.¹⁸ CMHQ staff puzzled at the confusion in Ottawa, especially since SHAEF assured them that all information sent to Washington also went to Ottawa. The material in question proved to be press guidance notes that CMHQ did not consider of interest to NDHQ and thus routinely withheld.¹⁹ Despite the ensuing confusion in Ottawa, Canadian PR achieved its objective of ensuring the prompt announcement of the Canadian Army’s participation in the invasion.

The PR planning paid off with excellent coverage of the Canadian efforts on D-day. The landing of the correspondents required much careful planning. Eager to avoid

¹⁷ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/3, Malone to Abel, 24 Apr. 1944 ; Malone to Abel, 2 May 1944; NA, WO 229/56/7, SHAEF PR Memorandum: release of Nationalities taking part in Bridgehead Operations “OVERLORD,” 31 May 1944; LAC, RG 24 Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/3, Fred Payne to CMHQ, 3 June 1944; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, Malone Liaison letter no. 5, 8 June 1944.

¹⁸ LAC, William Lyon Mackenzie King Diaries, 6 June, 1944, 1-5, <<http://king.collectionscanada.ca>> (accessed 30 Nov. 2007).

¹⁹ LAC, RG 24 Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31, Stuart to Murchie, 3 June 1944; Abel to DCCS, 8 June 1944; Stuart to Mr. Ritchie, 10 June 1944.

squabbling over priority of assignments and rota policy as in Sicily, Joe Clark, Director in Chief of PR, sought the input of the sponsoring news media in Canada, who unanimously supported the new press rota. Most of the early spots accompanying the invasion went to CP, BUP and CBC, but included one independent by draw, Ralph Allen of the *Globe and Mail*.²⁰ In addition, provision was made for the participation of some French-speaking war correspondents, including Marcel Ouimet of the CBC French network, in the initial landings. To avoid tipping off enemy agents by the absence of correspondents prior to D-Day, in the months before the invasion the journalists participated in “fake trips” creating a pattern of frequent absences.²¹ Ross Munro avoided a friend and the cleaning staff in his apartment building who might have recognized the significance of his field kit. On May 30, the correspondents discreetly met at the Canadian Army Film and Photo Unit headquarters but did not receive any briefing until inside the “sealed marshalling areas” prior the invasion.²²

The PR detachment did not land as a single group on D-day. Spreading out the war correspondents among several ships gave wider coverage at the landing site and guarded against losing all correspondents in one unlucky blow. The tight logistics situation also made smaller groups necessary; PR, like everyone else, had to “bid” for the

²⁰ LAC, RG 24 , Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/4 Memorandum Concerning Questions Submitted to War Correspondents Overseas and Answers Unanimously Agreed to by the Publishers, n.d; Memorandum: Canadian War Correspondents Allotment of Places, 29 Mar. 1944 . The priorities arranged at the draw were as follows: CP, CBC French; BUP, *Globe and Mail*, CP bilingual, CBC, BUP, CP French,, *MacLean's*, *Toronto Star*, *Montreal Standard*, *Montreal Star*, Sifton Newspapers, *Toronto Evening Telegram*, and Southam newspapers. The BUP did not fill its second position for the D-Day landing. LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/4, CMHQ to NDHQ, DPR 1546, 8 June 1944.

²¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16442, 4/Press/31/Malone, Liaison Letter No. 2, 2 May 1944, Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 157,160.

²² Ross Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord* (Toronto : McMillan, 1945), 30-1, 37; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, War Diary No. 3 PR Group June 1944, Instructions to ADsPRs (*sic.*) and PRO's, 22 May 1944; War Diary No. 3 PR Group, 1 June 1944.

limited available space for personnel and equipment aboard ship.²³ The landing detachment accompanying Third Canadian Division to Juno Beach included the six Canadian, one British and two American correspondents, grouped into four sections, each with a conducting officer, divided between each of the infantry brigades and the divisional HQ. Also landing were three attached sections of the Film and Photo unit and censors: two from the Canadian Army and one each from the Royal Navy and U.S. Army Air Force. Captain Placide Labelle commanded the detachment.²⁴

Besides reaching the beach alive, the biggest worry of Canadian PR on D-Day was getting the stories away from the beaches. Due to the expected delay in landing the Creed equipment, planners recognized the correspondents' difficulty in submitting their stories and arranged alternate methods. Therefore, they permitted the journalists to write batches of background stories several weeks in advance for release immediately after the invasion announcement. Unfortunately, NDHQ misunderstood the release procedure and failed to send them to CP on D-Day.²⁵ Nonetheless, some material, written just prior to sailing and entrusted to Canadian PR at the embarkation point, appeared in late edition papers beginning on June 6.²⁶ Unfortunately, neither method provided any news of the actual landings. Initially, correspondents ashore could transmit stories of 125 words twice

²³ LAC, RG, 24, Vol. 16642, Malone, Liaison letter No. 2, 2 May 1944.

²⁴ Ibid. War Diary No. 3 PR Group, 6 June 1944.

²⁵ Ibid., Maj. L.W. Taylor, Memorandum: Preliminary Submission of D-Day Stories, 19 May 1944; Maj. Fred Payne, Memorandum: Canadian Press, Pre Operation Stories; 26 May 1944; NDHQ to CMHQ, GS 374, 10 June 1944; Brig. Penhale to Chief of Staff, 12 June 1944.

²⁶ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, Malone, Liaison Letter no. 5, 7 June 1944; Ralph Allen, "Amazing Embarkation Starts Men, Machines, to Date with Destiny" *Globe and Mail*, 7 June 1944, (reprinted from 6 June late edition), 8; Ralph Allen, "Montgomery Expresses Confidence," *Globe and Mail*, 7 June 1944; Ralph Allen, "CWACS in Army Show Give Invaders Sendoff," *Globe and Mail*, 7 June 1944; Ross Munro, "Attack Drill so Real Canucks were Fooled," *Globe and Mail*, 7 June 1944.

daily, only from the appointed type 76 set at divisional HQ, and only after the SHAEF signalled general approval for press transmissions and field censorship. In these circumstances rapid transmission of stories on D-Day itself appeared unlikely. Nor would the Air Despatch Letter System and air couriers systems be fully functional on D-Day. Until June 8, only the naval despatch boats were operational. Carrier pigeons served as the final back up, although these messages had to await the SHAEF signal and approval by field censorship before despatch.²⁷

The Canadian correspondents on Juno Beach were the first reporters to get their stories out of Normandy. Ross Munro scooped the world as he had done at Dieppe, Sicily and Italy. He learned the destroyer on which he embarked would return the same day to the United Kingdom to transport Montgomery and “would not be sidetracked by other orders,” thus, he beat all other stories by sending copy back with the ship.²⁸ The situation on Juno Beach was frustrating for correspondents who were witnessing the biggest story of the war but unable to get news out quickly. Cornelius Ryan’s best selling *The Longest Day* recorded how correspondents Joseph Willicombe and Charles Lynch, after being refused permission to transmit a press message on the RN Beach Master’s radio, released pigeons. As they flew towards the German lines rather than the UK, Lynch cursed them as “traitors, damned traitors.” Lynch’s memoirs differ somewhat with Ryan’s version.²⁹

²⁷ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, War Diary No. 3 PR Group, Brigadier Neville, Memorandum: Instructions to ADPRs and PROs, 22 May 1944; War Diary No. 3 PR Group, 8 June 1944; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 163.

²⁸ Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord*, 66.

²⁹ The movie adaptation not only assigned Lynch an English accent but moved the entire sequence to the British Sword beach. Lynch was offended by this assumption that “anyone working for Reuters must be a Limey. That was a Canadian cry and it came from the heart.” The correspondents in the movie are also shown handling the pigeons, which according to Willicombe were brought by BUP correspondent Ronald Clarke. However, Malone claims that he assigned the pigeons to the field censor, following War Office

Most Canadian stories made it out by means more loyal and conventional. PR Captain Jack Wilson gathered the correspondents' copy and splashed into the water carrying the press bags to departing landing craft. Wilson's midday wade allowed four other Canadian correspondents to get their stories out before any other Allied reports reached the UK. The press bags also carried the first motion picture film of the landings, sealed by the Canadian camera operator Sgt. Bill Grant as soon as shot and marked "rush" to the Ministry of Information (MoI). It showed in London cinemas on June 11 and in New York on June 15. Shots from the remarkable two-minute film headlined the international newsreels reporting the landings.³⁰ It was more difficult for CBC reporters Matthew Halton and Marcel Ouimet to get out their stories because they could not take the necessary heavy equipment to record their broadcasts. At the last moment, Malone obtained special passes to return to the UK to broadcast on June 8.³¹ While it might seem juvenile to celebrate "being first," speed was and is crucial to the news business. In the same way "being first" was a coup for Canadian PR who ensured that not just the Canadian public but the entire Allied world would notice the Canadian Army's efforts

regulations, to prevent correspondents sending uncensored messages. According to No. 3 PR Group war diary, the censors landed in the same group as Clarke, which could explain why Willicombe believed Clarke brought them. Lynch however, claims that he and Matthew Halton brought the birds. Cornelius Ryan, *The Longest Day* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett, 1962), 192-193; Charles Lynch, *You Can't Print That! Memoirs of a Political Voyeur* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1983), 54-7; Richard S. Malone, *World in Flames*, (Toronto: Collins, 1984), 28.

³⁰ The screening dates are from Brian O'Regan's booklet. Malone's memoir says that the film appeared on London cinema screens on June 6 and New York on June 7. O'Regan's dates seem much more realistic and are preferred since he engaged in archival research while Malone did not. Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord*, 70; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16442, Malone, Liaison Letter No. 5, 7 June 1944; *Ibid.*, No.3 PR Group war Diary, 6 June 1944; Malone, *World in Flames*, 32 Brian O'Regan, *Camera Commandos and Reminiscences of D-Day Normandy* (Ottawa: James O'Regan, 2007), 17; *Shooters*, James O'Regan, dir., www.jamesoregan.com and Department of National Defence, 2004 .

³¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16442, No.3 PR Group war Diary, 6 June 1944; Matthew Halton, "Witness to D-Day" *CBC Radio News*, CBC Archives (Online) <http://archives.cbc.ca/IDCC-1-71-1317-3448/conflict_war/d-day/> (accessed 4 Dec.2007).

before the PR machines of their larger Allies began to produce their overwhelming volume of news. The success of Canadian PR on June 6 and the subsequent campaign resulted from careful planning based on experience, and the initiative and creativity of its personnel to adapt to unpredictable circumstances.

The Northwest Europe Campaign that continued until May 7, 1945 was the major effort of the Canadian Army in the Second World War. The First Army fought bloody battles in Normandy until the German collapse and its savaged remnants escaped eastwards through the Falaise Gap in mid August. As the Germans fled from France in late August and September 1944, the Canadians battled to clear the French channel ports in fighting often overlooked in popular memory. In the fall of 1944, the Canadian Army engaged in bitter operations to clear the Germans from the banks of the Scheldt River estuary in the Netherlands, allowing supplies to flow into the port of Antwerp, a necessary precursor to the Allies' advance into Germany. After a rest, the Canadians engaged in a series of costly operations in February and March clearing the German Rhineland, and finally crossing the Rhine itself. The remainder of the war saw the Canadian effort concentrated on the liberation of the Netherlands. This section does not provide a blow-by-blow account of Canadian PR in Northwest Europe, instead focussing on policy and evaluation, although chapter seven consists of case studies of three specific incidents in Normandy. During the Northwest Europe campaign, Canadian Army PR operated at the peak of its performance as demonstrated by its success in three areas: relations with the press and correspondents, securing the Canadian Army publicity, and successful relations with its Allies.

In Northwest Europe, the Army enjoyed far better relations with the news media and its correspondents than in the earlier phases of the Mediterranean campaign. Unlike the Sicilian campaign, both the Canadian news media and the correspondents understood and approved the rota system. Although an agreement was in place, there were still the inevitable complaints from publishers whose correspondents had not yet arrived in France, citing a repetition of the “Sicilian failure.” On July 5, NDHQ also complained that only eight of the fourteen correspondents with the Canadian troops were Canadian, which was “wholly indefensible” when correspondents of such vitally important publishers such as “Sifton’s, [*The Toronto*] *Telegram*, Southam’s and *La Presse* [were] left in the UK.” Ottawa wanted them in France immediately “withdrawing British and American correspondents if necessary.”³² These criticisms were unfair and uninformed. The American and British correspondents accompanying the Canadians were a matter of SHAEF policy, ensuring that the press in each country mentioned the actions of other Allied forces. Malone permitted two extra Allied correspondents as part of an agreement, allowing two more Canadians to arrive early. When SHAEF wanted the Canadians to bring over more of the foreign war correspondents accredited to them, Malone invoked his “terms of reference” as a national PR leader to bring over four Canadians first.³³ As in Italy, Malone employed his “terms of reference” much as a gunfighter drew his six-shooter, as the final settler of arguments. By mid July, Canadian PR moved virtually the entire of its quota of thirty correspondents to France. This was good work, considering

³²LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/5, NDHQ to CMHQ, DPR 868, 5 July 1944.

³³ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-74, Malone, Liaison Letter No.9, 9 July 1944.

the “sausage machine,” the nickname for the movement of troops and material to France, was behind schedule.³⁴

This dispute with the publishers, while unfortunate, was not as serious as the Sicilian incident since neither of the major press agencies, the CP and BUP, complained. In addition, the war correspondents themselves do not seem to have been a major source of friction, probably because the ADPR constantly kept them informed of developments at the front. General Penhale at CMHQ, although supportive of Malone on the issue, believed him “needlessly concerned” about criticism.³⁵ His observations proved correct; once all the correspondents arrived, there was relatively little trouble over the rota and movement of correspondents to the front.

Improved PR management of transportation also helped relations with the press. Conducting officers needed jeeps to move correspondents from press camp to the front or back to headquarters for press conferences. The CBC required a dedicated van to transport its cumbersome recording equipment. Motorcycles allowed despatch riders to carry copy to the transmission centres. Losses from enemy fire, mechanical breakdown, bombing, and mines meant vehicles were often in short supply, but PR improvised and operations continued. On June 21, the war diary of the PR detachment recorded that only three jeeps remained operational for the fourteen war correspondents, but the diarist observed, “The transportation just does.”³⁶ In July 1944, Malone worried because it was harder to get vehicles to France than the journalists that required them.³⁷ Accidents

³⁴Ibid., Malone, Liaison Letter No. 7, 26 June 1944; Malone to Abel, 15 July 1944.

³⁵ Ibid., Penhale to Secretary, Department of National Defence, 12 July 1944.

³⁶ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, War Diary No. 3 PR Group, 21 June 1944.

³⁷ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-74, Malone to Abel, 15 July 1944.

claimed two jeeps in the first week of September and theft took two others, “an acute problem” because of widespread vehicle shortages. PR improvised by salvaging two German staff cars, although how it identified the vehicles as Allied is unknown.³⁸ War correspondents occasionally obtained their own transportation; near Falaise, a Colonel of a Canadian tank regiment, ordered an armoured scout car written off as “destroyed by enemy action” and then presented it to Munro quipping, “It might add years to your life.”³⁹ Even as late as November, shortages of transportation necessitated creative planning by PR for correspondents’ trips.⁴⁰ Despite these continual difficulties, by improvisation and careful management, PR stayed on the move.

Canadian PR in Northwest Europe ensured that correspondents could get to the news and transmit it in a timely manner to Canada. The high-speed Creed equipment was important for both the Canadians and the British but it was not as great a national triumph as initially believed. The Americans, lacking Creed equipment, substituted by D plus five, a powerful high-speed 400-watt commercial transmitter that could send 45,000 words per day directly to New York. This violated the SHAEF Signal Plan, under which all nationalities were to have equivalent transmission facilities. A commercial link was approved only after an American army group became operational, which did not occur until August 1. According to a SHAEF report, the Canadian Creed set, located at British Second Army Headquarters, cleared up to 16,000 words per day, handling the majority of copy from the British zone. Abel claimed that the daily word allowance was 50,000

³⁸ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-74, Malone, Liaison Letter No. 18, 8 Sept. 1944.

³⁹ Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord*, 196. Understandably, the Colonel remains unnamed considering the book’s 1945 publication date.

⁴⁰ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, War Diary No. 3 PR Group, 19 Nov. 1944.

words a day but this had never been necessary and was “more than adequate” for Canadian needs.⁴¹ Once the Creed set became operational, each Canadian correspondent’s daily allowance increased to 750 words and then to 1400 by July 2. The British also possessed their own, albeit slower set and used the Canadian for extra transmission. Later in July, the line became exclusively Canadian, but even while sharing their transmission line, the Canadian correspondents sent more overall than their British counterparts, despite being half their number.⁴²

Regrettably, for Canadian war correspondents, once the signals left Normandy transmission became an Allied responsibility and Canadian PR could do no more than advocate on behalf of the correspondents. Following D-Day, the SHAEF system for handling copy through the MoI broke down after receiving 2,500,000 words in the first six days. Canadian news stories routinely disappeared after entering the MoI, including one by CBC’s Marcel Ouimet, the only French language correspondent in the assault. Matthew Halton’s first submitted story also disappeared and he complained to his wife, “You risk your life covering the greatest story in history, men risk their lives getting it back to England – and then it is lost in the Ministry of Information. I’ve known some epoch-making balls-ups in PR, but never anything like that.” Canadian PR action resulted in the SHAEF Receiving Room sending a daily log of received stories to the press camp and alerting correspondents to any missing copy.⁴³ After a group of Ralph

⁴¹ NA, WO 229/56/1, Col. R.E. Dupuy, Investigation of the Press Coverage and Communications at Present Operations in Normandy, 5 July 1944; RG 24 Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-74, Abel, Appendix to Liaison Letter No. 9, 11 July, 1944, 2.

⁴² LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, War Diary No. 3 PR Group, 17 June 1944; 2 July 1944, 23 July 1944; LAC, RG 24 Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-74, Malone, Liaison Letter No. 9, 9 July 1944.

⁴³ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press /31/4, Stuart to Currie, G.S. 1778, 13 June 1944; Malone to Abel and Brig. Neville, 9 June 1944; Fred Payne, Memorandum, Routing of copy through SHAEF, 12 June 1944;

Allen's despatches were "pigeon holed" in the MoI, Canadian PR attempted to create a Canadian copy centre there, but it is unclear if they succeeded.⁴⁴ Probably, the most irritating incident occurred July 28, when Canadian publishers received hefty retroactive transmission charges from the British General Post Office (GPO), for use of the Canadian Army PR signals line. Both the Canadian military and publishers understood this to be a military line with free press transmissions. Yet SHAEF, without consulting or informing Canadian PR, arranged for the staffing of the UK end of the line by GPO personnel on a commercial basis. SHAEF did not even bother discussing the rates. Canadian PR goaded SHAEF to renegotiate with the GPO, although SHAEF eventually gave up, and the dispute over the rates between the press and the GPO dragged on even after the end of the European war.⁴⁵ Where Canadian PR could not control the movement of Canadian war news they advocated on behalf of the Canadian media.

Canadian PR also streamlined the required censorship process before transmission out of France. To avoid delays, Canadian PR gathered the necessary censors at the Press camp, including both English- and French-speaking Canadian Army censors, as well as representatives from the Air Force and the British.⁴⁶ Although the idea for the mixed service censorship teams originated with SHAEF for D-Day, Canadian PR made the extra effort of providing censors forward at corps level rather than only at army headquarters,

LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/Press Sigs/1/2, Copy Register MOI, 19 July 1944; LAC, R 10120, Matthew Halton Papers, Vol. 1, File 1, Matthew Halton to Jean Halton, 15 June 1944.

⁴⁴ Molly Magee, another *Globe and Mail* reporter, located Allen's stories at MoI. LAC, RG 24, Vol. 60, CMHQ to NDHQ, P.R. 1768, 11 July 1944.

⁴⁵ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/Press Sigs/1/2, Fred Payne to Abel, 28 July 1944; Abel to Payne, 29 July 1944; Abel to Malone 31 July 1944; Abel, Memorandum on High Speed Charges, 19 Dec 1945; Captain Harry S. Butcher to Col. Gibbs, 12 Dec. 1944.

⁴⁶ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-74, Malone, Liaison letter 11, 27 July 1944.

which was the standard practise.⁴⁷ While onsite censors might seem a hindrance to the media, this was extremely helpful because it allowed most stories to be processed on the spot. This direct interaction with the censors minimized the number of stories requiring referral elsewhere.

In addition to assisting with transmission, Canadian PR looked out for the safety of war correspondents. The gathering of war news could be fatal, although Gerald Clark of *The Montreal Standard* explains that the peril usually was considerably less than that faced by the infantryman:

I was not a combat soldier. When a battle situation became too rough, I could pull out – and frequently did. I operated by a simple rule: I was no good to anyone - my editors, my readers and most important of all to myself – as a casualty.⁴⁸

PR personnel kept correspondents from unnecessarily dangerous situations, sometimes against the will of reporters less sensible than Clark. During the final attack on Caen, a conducting officer prevented a correspondent from accompanying the leading infantry platoon in the assault. On another occasion in Normandy, a conducting officer and Malone prevented an inebriated journalist from accompanying a night attack, much to the correspondent's chagrin. Probably in both cases, the correspondent, or at least the publisher, was later thankful for this restraint; dead reporters do not file stories.⁴⁹

Correspondents still faced dangers; on June 13, 1944, heavy German shelling caused a fire and sent correspondents and typewriters flying out the windows from their press

⁴⁷ SHAEF, *A History of Field Press Censorship in World War II* (Paramus, N.J.: 201st Field Press Censorship Organization, n.d.), 69,104.

⁴⁸ Despite the stresses of the correspondent's life, Clark's high blood pressure which kept him from military service dropped to normal during the Northwest Europe campaign. Gerald Clark, *No Mud on the Backseat: Memoirs of a Reporter* (Montreal: Robert Davies, 1995), 102.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, Malone Liaison letters No. 9 and No. 10, 9 and 20 July 1944.

camp billet in a chateau in Beny-Sur-Mer. Ralph Allen, Matthew Halton and several PR personnel re-entered the building to bring out important equipment and kit. Fortunately, no one died or suffered critical wounds.⁵⁰ The accidental bombing of the Canadian Army during Operation Tractable gave all correspondents a “shaking up,” and left Allen and British correspondent H.D. Ziman of the *Daily Telegraph* “covered in dirt” for “over an hour.”⁵¹ The most serious loss to enemy action was the capture of Bill Kilmont of the *Toronto Star* and a Canadian driver in Belgium after taking a wrong road. The CBC’s Clifford Speer died after V-E Day, on 12 May 1945, from traffic accident injuries.⁵²

During the Second World War, filming and photographing combat was more dangerous than writing about it. To get combat shots requires the photographer to be often as close to the fighting as the front line soldiers, while correspondents could observe from a distance, interview soldiers post action, and rely on press conferences. The Canadian Army Film and Photography personnel lost three killed and five wounded in Northwest Europe and National Film Board correspondent and advisor Julian Roffman was seriously wounded.⁵³ The Canadian record for correspondent safety was excellent when compared to U.S. Army losses of 37 war correspondents killed.⁵⁴

⁵⁰LAC, RG24, Vol. 16642, Capt. J.A. Wilson, Report of Enemy Shelling 13 June 1944, 14 June 1944; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 170-1.

⁵¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59., HQ 650-92-74, Malone, Liaison letter No. 14, 17 Aug. 1944.

⁵² Robert W. Desmond , *Tides of War: World News Reporting 1931-1945*(Iowa City: University of Iowa Press , 1984) 399; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 222.

⁵³ Malone, *World in Flames*, 120-1; LAC, RG 24, Vol.59, HQ 650-92-74, CMHQ to NDHQ, DPR 1373, 21 Sept 1945; *Hamilton Spectator*, 23 Dec. 1944. Other PR casualties in Northwest Europe included one dead, thirteen wounded and one captured.

⁵⁴ “Covering Korea” *Time*, 10 August 1950, <<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,813012-3,00.html>> (accessed 6 October 2008). A website about American war correspondents killed in the Second World War lists the number of killed at a higher 54, of which at least 27 were combat casualties. The list is based on a January 1946 War Department document, although the archival source remains unnamed.

Besides ensuring their safety, PR officers also often went the “extra mile” to help the reporters obtain stories. The clearest case is Canadian PR getting a contingent of correspondents into Paris to cover the liberation of the city. It had nothing to do directly with the Canadian Army, whose zone of operations lay far to the north. Still, because it was the biggest international press story since the Normandy landings, Canadian Army PR went to great lengths to ensure Canadian correspondents would cover the story. At Malone’s urging 21 Army Group created a publicity plan for the liberation of Paris, to which the Americans also signed on. Malone gained permission to rush a group to the city and set a “joint transmission centre in a Canadian requisitioned building” there. Besides covering the story, it allowed the creation of a Canadian Press Liaison Office in Paris.⁵⁵ The small Canadian groups included CP reporter Maurice Desjardins, CBC correspondents Ouimet and Halton in the new CBC radio van, J.A.M Cook of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, Allan Kent of the *Toronto Telegram*, and Gerald Clark of the *Montreal Star*, along with some Army photographers. Entering the city during its liberation, the team had the transmission centre operational before the American forces arrived. The next day, Canadians heard Halton broadcast with a Paris dateline.⁵⁶ The transmission centre was the Hotel Scribe, incredibly owned by the Canadian National Railway. Subsequently, it became SHAEF PR headquarters in Paris.⁵⁷ PR enabled the

<http://www.54warcorrespondents-kia-30-ww2.com/government_file.html> (accessed Nov.30, 2008). Two Canadian correspondents died during the war: Sam Robertson by a U-Boat attack and Eddy Baudry in an air accident. Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 149.

⁵⁵ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59., HQ 650-92-74, Malone, Liaison letter No. 14, 17 Aug. 1944.

⁵⁶ Malone, *World in Flames*, 67-8, 70; Matt Halton “We were all Kings for a Day”, CBC Radio Broadcast, 25 August 1944, <http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-71-636-3449/conflict_war/halton/clip3> (accessed 11 Dec 1944); Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 201-9.

Canadian media to report on the biggest story since D-Day even though Canadian Army interests were not directly involved.

Although Canadian PR expended great effort in keeping the media happy, this did not mean that the correspondents were “running the show.” Malone firmly believed that in return for the services PR provided, the correspondents should concentrate on the Canadian Army. It was tempting for the correspondents to drift over to the other armies or report on political developments in liberated territory. For example, following the Allied advance into Belgium in September, the British let their correspondents travel freely, covering what they wished in liberated Europe. Malone on the other hand, allowed the Canadian correspondents only limited travel, “a day or two at a time,” to cover other developments. He insisted that because they had been granted facilities with the Canadians, the army was their main concern.⁵⁸ Correspondents operated under military discipline and control and PR made sure this remained clear.

Despite these restrictions, most correspondents and news media organizations remained pleased with Canadian PR at the time. The clearest evidence of this is the refusal of Canadian correspondents to join in the angry protests of British correspondents against their working conditions and the British PR services in late June and July 1944, resulting in a SHAEF investigation. Canadian journalists chose not to attend a meeting where correspondents could air grievances to the SHAEF committee. The committee was incredulous after Malone reported that the correspondents had no more issues to report than those that Canadian PR had already raised. SHAEF insisted on a second meeting; it

⁵⁷ The French manager concealed the hotel’s Canadian ownership and rented it to the Gestapo, investing the income and making a profit for CNR. Clark, *No Mud on the Backseat*, 78-9.

⁵⁸ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-74, Malone, Liaison Letter No. 19, 30 Sept. 1944.

produced the same results, this time backed up by a signed letter from the correspondents. Later in July, Canadian journalists, satisfied with their own armies' press talks, avoided further British protests over the British press conferences, and recurrent problems with the transmission and copy clearance system.⁵⁹

Correspondents also demonstrated their satisfaction with Canadian PR performance in letters to their publishers. H.D. Ziman of the *Daily Telegraph*, with the Canadians since D-day, praised Canadian PR in a letter to his editor. "I am very happy with the Canadians and consider their organization, briefings and transmission superior to Second British Army or any of the Americans."⁶⁰ Charles Bruce, London Superintendent of CP, forwarded to Abel excerpts from a Ross Munro report expressing the reasons he appreciated Canadian PR:

Facilities provided for us here have been better than in any other campaign and practically all the lessons learned by Canadian PR in the Mediterranean have been applied in France. We have had jeeps from D-Day, camp arrangements, liaison with army people, and all the routine problems which might have stymied PR have been dealt with well... No. 3 PR group has used all the knowledge that was gained in Sicily and Italy and a first-rate PR unit has functioned here... This is a glowing account of the PR but it has honestly exceeded my expectations and we have been able to do more and I hope better, work....⁶¹

Additionally, Munro extolled Malone's administration and the preparatory work done by CMHQ PR. The same report also brought a congratulatory letter from perennial complainer Gillis Purcell, who further elucidated that all CP correspondents were "unanimous in their reports that a marvellous job has been done under considerable

⁵⁹NA, WO 229/56/1; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-74,, Malone, Liaison letter, 3 July 1944; Malone, Liaison Letter No. 9, 9 July 1944; Malone Liaison Letter No. 11, 27 July 1944; NA, WO 229 21/7, Dupuy to Neville, s-55690, 27 July 1944.

⁶⁰ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/6. Fred Payne to Malone, 10 Aug. 1944.

⁶¹ Ibid., Charles Bruce to Abel, 22 Aug. 1944.

handicaps in maintaining the flow of Canadian copy from the field.”⁶² The arch-Tory *Toronto Telegram*, usually critical of Canadian government and military PR policy, declared, “Canadian readers are indebted to” the PROs for the excellent national news coverage from Normandy. This was high praise from a paper that once suggested military press liaison salaries should be “invested in war savings certificates.”⁶³ Undoubtedly, the praise for PR was for assisting the war correspondents in gathering war news and its transmission, rather than for censorship or the quality of the news stories produced.

Camaraderie between war correspondents and the PR personnel also helped Army PR / press relations. They shared a common journalistic background, common conditions and dangers, and many already knew each other from Canada, like good friends Matthew Halton and Eric Gibbs, Lt. Col. Abel’s second in command.⁶⁴ The hard drinking off-duty hours helped cement these bonds. An example of these high jinks occurred in the press camp in Italy in January 1945. Bill Boss of the CP, a former PRO, returned from leave sporting a beard, and a plot was hatched to get rid of it. An amusing doggerel, written by Captain M.D. Spencer, immortalizing the occasion:

Then they went to work to get Bill high,
Mac, the Colonel, Spencer and Nye.
They did it as quickly as you could wish
By playing a game called Nishy-Nish.
I won’t explain how this is done,
But Bill had three drinks while the rest had one...

⁶² LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/6, Gillis Purcell to Abel, 24 Aug. 1944.

⁶³ *Toronto Telegram*, June 26, 1944; *Toronto Telegram* 20 June 1940. For a few examples of anti government information policy editorials see: *Toronto Telegram* 20 Oct. 1942; *Toronto Telegram* 28 Aug. 1942; *Toronto Telegram* 14 Nov. 1941.

⁶⁴ LAC, Matthew Halton Papers, R10120, Vol. 5, Interviews Research Files, Eric Gibbs, 1979- 1981, John E. Marshall Letter.

Drunk and cornered by razor wielding PROs, Boss promised, “If you leave my beard alone tonight. I’ll shave it myself in the morning light.” In the morning, he tried escape but after apprehension and escort to the quarters of Major Maclellan, the press camp commander personally took the shears to Boss.

He argued and wrangled for half an hour,
 Then he fought and struggled with all his power,
 But in end the scissors snipped,
 And the tangled growth was soon short-clipped.
 A razor and soap completed the job;
 Then, with an inarticulate sob,
 He looked in a mirror, and nought was seen
 Where his pride and glory once had been.
 And the story’s moral seems to be:
 Let’s thank God that the press is free.
 “But from this day on all beards I bar”
 --- Signed the DADPR⁶⁵

In remembrance of this type of comradeship, correspondents invited PR personnel to join the Canadian War Correspondents’ Association after the war. Former PRO Bill Austin later mused, “Years of preparation had resulted in an old boy network that was hard to beat.”⁶⁶

There remained one group of journalists unhappy with Canadian PR: women correspondents. SHAEF regulations initially refused women full accreditation, instead allowing only facility visits to certain units, usually hospitals, although practise varied between formations. The War Office prohibited women correspondents with British units until May 1944. Canadian PR argued for the change, although this did not mean that they believed that women should enjoy the same freedoms as male correspondents.

⁶⁵ For the complete poem, see Appendix Two. LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16641, War Diary No. 2 Public Relations Group Jan 1945, Appendix 1, “Narrative of Activities for Month of January 1945, Field Detachment, No. 2 PR Group, AFHQ; Unnumbered Appendix, M.D. Spencer “Hail the DADPR.”

⁶⁶ George Powell, *A Compact Record of the Canadian Press War Correspondents’ Association and the Canadian War Correspondents Association 1953-1995*(Ottawa: Canadian War Correspondent’s Association, 1994), 40.

Twenty-First Army Group allowed women journalists only as far forward as women military personnel; First Army headquarter and Canadian PR followed their lead. Women correspondents generally covered what female readers supposedly wanted to read, such as the activities of nurses and women soldiers. In spite of this restriction, in August 1944, when an American woman correspondent visited the Canadian section of the front without Malone's approval, CP correspondent Margaret Ecker asked to do the same. Ecker violated several regulations by leaving the hospital unit, where she had been granted facilities, and traveling to Cherbourg without escort. Another unapproved visit by a British female correspondent to Canadian PR camp in February 1945 resulted in further demands from Canadian women correspondents to visit the front. It also caused grumbling from the monks at the monastery providing PRO and correspondent lodgings. Clearly, some female correspondents wanted a role beyond reporting from field hospitals.⁶⁷

Female correspondents in the American army faced a similar prohibition regarding staying in press camp with the male reporters. The official explanation was lack of facilities for women. This placed women at a disadvantage when filing copy, since their stories went to London for censorship rather than being handled by censors near the camps. This meant female reporters could not revise their stories in a timely way to adjust for cuts. Unlike the Canadian Army, the American Army did give two

⁶⁷ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 123774, 4/Press/31/6, Malone to Abel, 20 Aug. 1944; Marjory Louise Lang, *Women Who Made the News: Female Journalists in Canada 1880-1945* (Toronto: McGill-Queens University Press, 1999), 276; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3/2, "Report Ending Week 20 May 1944," "Report Ending 27 May 1944;" Deborah Chambers, Linda Steiner, and Carole Fleming, *Women and Journalism* (London: Routledge, 2004), 129; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-72, Malone, Liaison letter no. 15, n.d., Aug. 1944; *Ibid.*, Malone, Liaison Letter no. 25, 1 March 1945. Mollie McGee did not want to go to the frontlines explaining it was "dusty beyond belief . . . and I understand dangerous." LAC RG24 Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/5, Mollie McGee to Fred Payne, 4 Aug. 1944.

experienced female reporters full accreditation, allowing them to cover the front with the First American Army in December 1944.⁶⁸

Given the discrimination female correspondents faced, it is unsurprising that the bitterest complaints against Canadian PR came from Mollie McGee of the *Globe and Mail*, who was “thoroughly disgusted with their setup.” She expressed personal antipathy towards Malone, mocking his efforts to obtain a female conducting officer for the women correspondents because the officer would be “a liability” without enough rank or knowledge of the army.⁶⁹ In turn, Malone articulated frustration that women correspondents increased the difficulty of Canadian PR’s attempts to assist them because they “did not understand and will not play the game by army rules.” Abel expressed the same frustration in 1941, when Mollie McGee repeatedly and unrepentantly violated regulations during visits to the Canadian troops.⁷⁰ It is understandable that women correspondents were willing to break the regulations handicapping them in order to get their story. American female correspondents also frequently bent the regulations to get their stories, although in one case following D-Day, Iris Carpenter of *The Boston Globe* faced court marshal for travelling to Cherbourg when only permitted to proceed to the

⁶⁸ Nancy Cardwell Sorel, *The Women Who Wrote the War* (New York: Harper Collins, 2000), 242, 245, 283.

⁶⁹ Malone was still fighting for a woman conducting officer in December 1944. Approval was then given reluctantly to appoint Capt. Helsey White a Canadian Women’s Army Corps officer to “wet nurse female warcos.” LAC RG24 Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/5, Mollie McGee to Fred Payne, 4 Aug 1944; Mollie McGee to Abel, 9 Aug. 1944, Rg 24 Vol. 12381, 4/PR L of C/1, C.S. Booth, memorandum, 4 Dec. 1944; R.S. Malone to E.L. Gibbs, 10 Feb 1945.

⁷⁰ LAC RG 24 Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-74, Malone, Liaison Letter No. 15, n.d. Aug. 1944; RG 24 Vol. 12382, 4?PRO/3 Abel, “Report for Week Ending 15 February 1941,” 10 March 1941; RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650-92-74, Malone, Liaison Letter No. 15, n.d. Aug. 1944.

“beachhead.”⁷¹ Nonetheless, the poor relationship with women correspondents did not sour relationships between PR and the publishers, because there were rarely more than two or three female correspondents with the Canadian Army in Northwest Europe and the publishers regarded them as secondary to front-line male correspondents.

Canadian PR operated at its peak during the Northwest European Campaign not only through excellent press relations but also by giving the Canadian Army publicity, sometimes enough to anger the British. Traditionally, the Canadian Army struggled for recognition distinct from British efforts. Ironically, during the Northwest European campaign this situation was sometimes reversed, with the British complaining of lack of recognition compared to American and Dominion armies. The situation came to a boil during Operation Veritable in February and March 1945, which saw the temporary increase of the First Canadian Army to thirteen divisions, nine of them British, “the largest Canadian commanded force ever.”⁷² On February 19, Brendan Bracken, the British Minister of Information, angry at the lack of British Army headlines raised the matter at a war cabinet meeting, and secured permission to tell the British media the truth: that the “so called Canadian Army” was “three quarters British.” Even so, after ten days of effort, he bemoaned the “hopeless effort” of convincing the press that British troops were fighting alongside North American ones.⁷³ The war cabinet feared that lack of publicity for British Army efforts could “have serious effects on the British

⁷¹ The vagueness of the area covered in the “beachhead” led to acquittal. Carpenter Sorel, *The Women Who Wrote the War*, 234.

⁷² J.L. Granatstein, *Canada's Army* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 298.

⁷³ NA, PREM 3/339/10, Brendan Bracken to Winston Churchill, 27 Feb. 1945.

contribution to the peace settlement.”⁷⁴ Canadian newspapers picked up the controversy in early March, and anti-government newspapers used it to stoke the conscription crisis, suspecting that the need for British units reflected shortages of Canadian troops. None of this information should have been a surprise; stories published before Bracken’s tirade reported British divisions formed at least half of the First Canadian Army and CP dispatches accurately put the British in the majority. The failure of censorship to release the names of all units involved in Veritable until March 7 was a major cause of the confusion. While it might seem like Bracken’s anger arose only from the circumstances of Veritable, the minister previously made a similar “fuss” after Canadian PR’s great showing at D-Day resulted in Canadian Army news dominating the UK papers.⁷⁵ Bracken’s increasing anger at Canadian PR success was a testament to its effectiveness.

The army also was superior to the RCAF and RCN in capturing Canadian news media attention. While the army was idle in the UK, the RCAF felt confident that they were “top of the line” in capturing the attention of the media, although even before the Sicily invasion, RCAF leadership feared that news of air force activities would become secondary to that of the army, which would attract all the correspondents.⁷⁶ Air Vice Marshall Harold “Gus” Edwards commanding the RCAF overseas, realized that stories written by RCAF PROs could not compete with reports by correspondents and proposed exclusive “air correspondents” for the Normandy invasion. Although eight spaces were

⁷⁴ Ibid., Extract from the W.M.(45) 26th Conclusions, 6 Mar. 1945.

⁷⁵ *Toronto Telegram* 5 Mar.1945; *Toronto Telegram* 8 Mar. 1945; *Toronto Globe and Mail* ,16 Feb. 1945; Douglas Amaron, “Canadians Form Powerful Flank in Crerar Push,” *Hamilton Spectator* , 16 Feb.1945; LAC RG 24 Vol. 16643 No. 3 PR Group War Diary, 7 Mar. 1945; LAC MG 30 E157 Crerar Papers Vol. 3, GOC C in C 3-7, Malone to Crerar, 13 June 1944.

⁷⁶ DND, DHH 79/721, Box 64, D1081, Folder 14, Gus Edwards to L.S. Breadner, Report Number 14, 23 Apr. 1943.

created, only four correspondents signed up, and by July 19, 1944, all had gone over to the army. The RCAF PR evaluated its coverage at D-Day as “the best possible secondary coverage,” behind the army “naturally.”⁷⁷ The major difficulty faced by Naval Information was not who wrote the stories, but rather the severe censorship on operational stories to avoid providing the enemy with intelligence. An August 1942 Naval Information plan identified the major PR problem as the public’s desire for a “flood” of operational news that could only be released as “at best, a trickle-almost invariably belated.” The RCN Naval Information, with greater restrictions and relying on stories by naval officers, could not enjoy the same level of media attention as the army.⁷⁸ The army, despite its long idleness, rapidly took centre stage in Canadian war news once it entered action.

Despite the set-to with Bracken, Canadian PR also showed its peak efficiency by maintaining a good working relationship with Allied military authorities. By careful preplanning, Canadian PR minimized the frequency of strains over correspondents, censorship and national interests. Much of this resulted from the involvement of Canadian PR in the process establishing the PR structure and policies of both SHAEF and 21 Army group, whereas in the Mediterranean they unexpectedly entered a theatre with an established structure. Lt. Col. Abel, Lt. Col. Gibbs and Major Payne represented Canadian interests at these meetings. Surprisingly, the SHAEF PR Council, formed to

⁷⁷ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 5406, 65-1-4, Edwards to Breadner, Cable O. 573, 1 Oct. 1943; G.M. Brown to D.C.A.S, 7 October 1943; DND DHH, 79/721, Box 64, D1081, Folder 13, L.S. Breadner to C.G. Power, Monthly Report No. 4, 4 Apr. 1944; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 3342, 300-10-2/1 Vol. 2, G.M. Brown to RCAF HQ, Cable PR 730, 19 July 1944; L.M. Mackecknie to RCAF HQ, Cable PR 692, 12 June 1944.

⁷⁸ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 8165, NS 1700-100-42, C.N.I. to D.N.I., D.P.D., C.N.S., 22 Mar. 1940; Charles M. Nelles to J. Connolly, 17 Feb. 1942; “Report of the Plans Committee of the Naval Information Service, 11 August 1942, 1-3

make policy decisions initially, lacked Canadian representation. Yet once Fred Payne raised the issue, CMHQ received a seat filled by Brigadier Penhale, Deputy Chief of Staff CMHQ or by Abel and additionally, after more negotiation, SHAEF allowed Canadian civilian representation, either by Campbell Moodie representing Canada House and the Wartime Information Board or T.A. Stone of External Affairs.⁷⁹

Although the PR setup made for greater cooperation of Canadian PR with the Allies, it did not mean everything always went smoothly. Several times, SHAEF PR and Censorship made decisions contrary to the wishes of the Canadian government and army leadership, as in the Normandy case studies examined in chapter seven. Conversely, vigorous defence of Canadian sovereignty sometimes also threatened the smooth operations of Allied PR in Northwest Europe. Malone continued his stalwart championing of Canadian PR interests much as he had in the Mediterranean. As he had used his trump against Allied intransigence, so in Europe he similarly used his “terms of reference” that guaranteed “freedom of action in the theatre regarding Cdn warcos [war correspondents] and PR personnel.”⁸⁰ Malone cited his “terms of reference” several times, once to bring a Canadian correspondent to France instead of an American ordered by SHAEF, and again, to prevent SHAEF PR personnel, including one Canadian, from dealing directly with members of the Canadian Film and Photo Unit. In both situations, he complained that SHAEF seemed unaware of his “jurisdiction” and “terms of

⁷⁹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/2, Minutes of SHAEF PR Meeting, 5 Apr., 1944; Minutes of SHAEF PR Meeting, 13 Apr. 1944; RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/ 31, Rankin and Overlord PR plans, 6 Jan. 1944; Note on Meeting at 21 Army Group, 2 Mar.1944; RG 24, Vol. 12369, 4/PRC SHAEF /1, Fred Payne to Chief of SHAEF PR and PW Division, 17 May 1944; Abel to Penhale, 24 June 1944; Gen. W. Bedell Smith to Brig. Penhale, 9 Aug. 1944; NA, WO 229/59/4, Major Pickney to Chief of Staff, 9 Aug. 1944.

⁸⁰ NA, WO 229/21/7, Exfor Main to SHAEF PRD, 29 June 1944; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/5, Brig. Penhale to Malone, 12 July 1944. The contents of this unsigned letter make clear that Penhale is the author.

reference.”⁸¹ British PRO Brigadier Turner in an angry letter denounced Malone’s actions “wrong and damned impudent.”⁸² Abel disagreed with Malone, interpreting the ADPR’s terms of reference as applying only within the Canadian Army. Although possessing “greater latitude than any other PR officer” of any nation, Malone could not overrule SHAEF or 21 Army Group, nor were the Canadian officers at SHAEF responsible to his “terms of reference” instead of Eisenhower. Agreeing with Abel, Brigadier Penhale explained to Malone on July 12 that his terms of reference “merely constitute a guide from us governing your activities in a purely Canadian sphere, and are of course in no sense a firm contract... .”⁸³ Malone’s showdowns over PR were more appropriate in the Mediterranean theatre than in Northwest Europe, where Canadian Army PR played an integral role in PR planning. CMHQ responsible for PR policy prevented Malone from potentially damaging PR relations with SHAEF in the name of national interest.

Canadian PR operated at peak efficiency during the Northwest European campaign; the correspondents and publishers were kept happy and protected; copy usually moved quickly back to Canada and relations with Allies had improved. None of these things necessarily meant that the Canadian public received a clear and accurate picture of the campaign. As other students of military censorship have observed, it ensured that the “official point of view of the authorities” was present in all copy and that correspondents had “no liberty in treating the information.” This censorship resulted in a

⁸¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/5, Malone to Penhale, 4 July 1944.

⁸² Ibid., Brig. Turner to Abel, 12 July 1944.

⁸³ Ibid., Abel to Penhale, 11 July 1944; Penhale to Malone, 12 July 1944.

controlled and sanitized view of the war.⁸⁴ This opinion is correct as long as one does not consider the “official view” a narrowly focussed narrative to which all must entirely agree; instead SHAEF set the limits within which correspondents could write as they chose. SHAEF censorship rules and military control of correspondents did indeed shape the image of the war sent to Canada, since all stories were reviewed by field press censors according to the rulings in the *SHAEF Censorship Bible*. The March 1945 version contained 321 pages with rulings on air, sea, and land topics, some of which were changed in the course of the campaign.⁸⁵ SHAEF’s general censorship policy prohibited the passing of the following:

- 1) Reports likely to supply military information to the enemy to the detriment of the Allied war efforts.
- 2) Unauthenticated, inaccurate or false reports, misleading statements and rumours.
- 3) Reports likely to injure the morale of the Allied forces.⁸⁶

The question of what constituted a “misleading statement” or what was “likely to injure morale” was not clear-cut, giving SHAEF censors the ability to silence criticism, dissent and the reporting of negative news.

Although empowered by these regulations, SHAEF urged the avoidance of policy censorship; meaning censoring on grounds other than keeping valuable information from the enemy. For the most part, security issues predominated in the censorship

⁸⁴ Claude Beaugard, *Guerre et Censure Au Canada 1939-1945*(Sillery P.Q.: Septentrion, 1998), 132, 135; Paul Fussell, *Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War* (London: Oxford, 1989), 268; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 310-12, 328.

⁸⁵ DND DHH 71/325, *SHAEF Censorship Bible*, 1.

⁸⁶ NA, WO 219/2065, Operation Memorandum No. 27, Press Censorship, 25 Apr. 1944.

regulations.⁸⁷ Unfortunately, many subjects of great interest to the press were valuable to the enemy. For example, unless specially released, regulations prohibited the publication of casualties suffered in any operation or by any particular unit, a topic certain to be of public interest.⁸⁸ As a result, correspondents could only speak in generalities, such as characterizing casualties as “heavy” or “light.”

These rules meant that the news media provided the public with a sanitized war. The correspondents and photographers toned down the horrors of war, giving a portrait similar to a Victorian painting of a battlefield, all heroic soldiers and only an occasional “red badge of courage” discreetly wrapped in a bandage. SHAEF directives permitted pictures of casualties who are “walking wounded or obviously cheerful,” but not of “a horrific nature.”⁸⁹ Censors also cut out horrific details in stories. An example is Capt. Labelle’s D-Day report, which PR submitted to the censor since Malone believed it would be of interest to the press. Labelle wrote that when he landed “there were bodies lying in the sand, one of them all twisted and disembowelled, which looked to us like a somewhat gruesome welcome.”⁹⁰ Only the first phrase of the quotation about “bodies lying in the sand” passed. Gory stories and pictures could cause distress back home and would not help recruiting. The policy appears to have been contentious; in January 1945, SHAEF censors expressed the intention to lift the ban on “horrids” whose purpose had

⁸⁷ One major exception to this avoidance of policy censorship in operational news to soften bad news occurred during the German Ardennes counter attack in December 1944 when censors used the “blue pencils freely” to counter “sheer hysteria.” Knightley, *The First Casualty*, 355,

⁸⁸ DND DHH, 157.4c2009(d3), SHAEF Press Guidance No.14, 25 May 1944.

⁸⁹ DND DHH, 71/325, *SHAEF Censorship Bible*, 28.

⁹⁰ The duplicate copies of censored war correspondents stories have not made it into the archives. LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, No. 3 Canadian PR Group War Diary June 1944, Placide Labelle, “report on CDN PR Operations since D-Day, 10 June 1944; Malone, Liaison Letter No. 6, 12 June 1944.

been preserving morale. SHAEF reneged on the change since the restrictions still appear in the March 1945 *Censorship Bible*.⁹¹ SHAEF's image of war did not include widespread battle exhaustion, banning any mention of the "percentages, rates or number of neuropsychiatric casualties," although allowing "sober, well balanced" stories on the topic.⁹² There was also little room for the misbehaviour of Allied troops in this image of war. Orders to censors allowed only reports of "isolated" cases of looting involving "not more than six soldiers working in unison." Stories of large scale looting or of "officers ignoring" the offence were prohibited. Likewise, "disorderly conduct" appeared in stories only as small isolated occurrences. Mentioning any mistreatment of German civilians or P.O.W.s by Allied troops stood under a complete ban, ostensibly to avoid possible German reprisals on Allied prisoners.⁹³ Allied censorship thus ensured only a relatively palatable and complimentary version of the conduct of the campaign appeared in the news media. While allowing a little of the reality of war to be communicated, it ensured that it was not realistic enough to damage the image of Allied forces or home-front morale.

Should field press censorship fail to keep the correspondents' stories within the acceptable parameters, Allied PR could impose disciplinary action with severe consequences. The correspondents totally depended on the good will of SHAEF to operate. Besides licensing them, SHAEF controlled all movement to the continent through the issuing of SHAEF visas. This licence was a six-page document appearing

⁹¹ NA, WO 219/4621, "Minutes of Press Censorship Conference," 25 Jan. 1945.

⁹² DND DHH, 71/325, *SHAEF Censorship Bible*, 91. Beauregard is incorrect in stating that no stories on the topic could be passed. Beauregard, *Guerre et Censure*, 135

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 74a.

and functioning much like a passport. Greg Clark's license contained his Canadian credentials signed by representatives of CMHQ, the Canadian High Commissioner, the RCAF and British Air Ministry, and allowed him to cover these different organizations. His ability to operate in Europe, however, depended ultimately on SHAEF's endorsement of the Canadian credentials. His documents included several SHAEF visas allowing travel to mainland Europe in 1944.⁹⁴ Without this approval, Clark could not have operated as a correspondent, or even travelled to liberated Europe. Loss of credentials and expulsion could result from the reporter violating regulations. The possibility of discipline also existed in case of "distortion or violation of the approved stories, messages, and captions" by the correspondent's employer.⁹⁵ Punishments could vary in severity; six British and American correspondents who made uncensored radio broadcasts during the liberation of Paris were banned for sixty days.⁹⁶ In the most famous incident, Edward Kennedy of the AP sent out the story of the German surrender on May 7, 1945, one day before the official release of the news. As a result, he was discredited and the privileges of the AP and its fifty-four reporters were suspended.⁹⁷

Nothing that serious occurred with Canadian correspondents in Northwest Europe, although there were some lesser incidents. BUP correspondent W. Wilson received official warning after alleged frequent misdeeds including misquoting Crerar,

⁹⁴ LAC, Gregory Clark Fonds, R8259-0-8-E, Vol. 4, 4-8, "License for Canadian War Correspondents." In Italy in September 1944, military authorities arrested a Canadian deserter posing as a CBC correspondent. He used his forged passes to travel between Italy, North Africa and Gibraltar, reportedly making \$20,000 on the black market. RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650 92-73, Lt. Col. Gilchrist to Abel, 2 Sept. 1944.

⁹⁵ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/3, "Regulations for Press Representatives accompanying Allied Forces in the Field 1994," 3; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/3/4 "Memorandum: SHAEF Overseas Visas," 14 June 1944.

⁹⁶ NA, WO 229/21, Ernest R. Dupuy, Violation of Regulations by War Correspondents, 4 Sept. 1944.

⁹⁷ Phillip Knightley, *The First Casualty* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 363.

leaving press conferences early and then driving dangerously so that the BUP could be first agency to file reports, and giving away troop movements in a story.⁹⁸ In Italy, Joe Clark and Lt. Col. Gilchrist revoked the license of Paul Morton of the *Toronto Star* in October 1944, after he “shot up” an army mess in Italy with his pistol while drunk.⁹⁹ In January 1945, Charles Foulkes, commander of I Corps in Italy, wanted to ban Bill Boss because of several stories about the Canadian attempt to cross the Lamone River on December 5, 1944, that appeared in the *Canadian Press News*, a publication for Canadian troops overseas. The correspondent mentioned that the Hastings and Prince Edward regiment took casualties from friendly artillery. Foulkes denied this friendly fire but the official history of the campaign confirms it. In addition, a transmission error resulted in the deletion of a note, accompanying the original story, not to release the names of casualties until the next-of-kin were informed, resulting in the mistaken reporting of a missing officer as killed. Foulkes also took offence over “the general tone of the stories on the grounds that they ‘gave comfort to the enemy.’”¹⁰⁰ Lt. Col. Gilchrist, the Deputy Assistant Director of Public Relations (DADPR), and Major Maclellan, the commander of the press detachment, met with Foulkes, smoothed the ruffled feathers, and Boss

⁹⁸ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 123774, 4/Press/31/6, Malone, “BUP Accredited War Correspondents,” 22 Aug. 1944. In March 1945, Molly McGee temporarily lost her credentials in Italy. DND DHH 157.4c2009 (D7) Maj. L.W. Taylor to Lt. Col. Gibbs, 5 Apr. 1945.

⁹⁹ LAC, RG24, Vol. 16641, War Diary No. 2 Public Relations Group, 16 Oct. 1944; RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650 92-73, Lt. Col. Gilchrist to Abel, 2 Sept. 1944.

¹⁰⁰ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650 92-73, Gilchrist to Abel, “Liaison Letter no. 2,” 30 Jan. 1945; G.F. Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy 1943-1945* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1956), 618.

retained his credentials.¹⁰¹ Any correspondents deliberately flouting the rules could quickly find themselves back in the United Kingdom.

Despite the possibility of discipline, SHAEF preferred to use the carrot rather than the stick to ensure cooperation. In May 1944, Eisenhower told correspondents at his inaugural press conference that he “considered them quasi staff officers,” and sent a memorandum to all commands ordering “all reasonable assistance” and no hindrance in speaking with military personnel.¹⁰² By being taken into his confidence, correspondents identified more closely with the military and accepted “off the record guidance” from commanding officers, which could not be directly quoted but helped correspondents understand the situation and write intelligibly.¹⁰³ Rather than keeping reporters in the dark, SHAEF policy attempted to “make them part of the team.” Off-the-record guidance also helped correspondents view the war through SHAEF eyes.

Besides using military control and censorship, SHAEF influenced the tone and content of war news through press conferences and communiqués. Only SHAEF could issue official communiqués. These tended to be short statements issued twice a day summarizing operations in Northwest Europe by all Allied forces, land, sea, and air.¹⁰⁴ While communiqués were the purview of SHAEF alone, the staffs of army groups and

¹⁰¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16641, War Diary No. 2 Public Relations Group Jan 1945, Appendix 1, “Narrative of Activities for Month of Jan. 1945, Field Detachment, No. 2 PR Group, AFHQ.

¹⁰² NA, WO 219/3884, SHAEF, Office of Supreme Commander, Accredited War Correspondents, 11 May 1944.

¹⁰³ Pogue, *The Supreme Command*, 520.

¹⁰⁴ Brigham Young University Online collection, Eisenhower Communiqués, <http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cgi-bin/browserresults.exe?&CISORESTMP=/site-templates/eisen_browse_results.html&CISOVIEWTMP=/site-templates/eisen_item_viewer.html&CISOMODE=grid&CISOGRID=thumbnail,A,1;title,A,1;subjec,A,0;descri,200,0;0,A,0;10&CISOBIB=title,A,1,N;subjec,A,0,N;descri,K,0,N;0,A,0,N;0,A,0,N;10&CISOTHUMB=2,5&CISOTITLE=10&CISOROOT1=/EisenhowerCommuniques> (accessed Sept. 17 2006).

armies hosted press conferences. Held at headquarters, these conferences were vital for the war correspondents' understanding of the larger strategic picture, something they could not observe themselves or gather from troops in the field who were often just as ignorant. Malone described the correspondents as being pleased with Canadian press conferences. In contrast, Ralph Allen criticized the conferences as “verbal handouts” because the censors would not pass stories that did not fit “into the structure of the handout.” Since the conferences always stressed success while downplaying negatives, correspondents sometimes erred “grotesquely” as they sought to write “bigger and better success stories.”¹⁰⁵ Unhappily, the later destruction of the records of General Crerar's press conferences, although originally indexed in his papers, eliminates comparison between First Canadian Army conferences and the stories written afterwards but fortunately, the records of the SHAEF press conferences have survived.¹⁰⁶

Operation Market Garden, one of the major Allied setbacks of the Northwest European Campaign, provides an opportunity to compare press conference records and stories. It was an attempt to cross the Rhine quickly in September 1944 by capturing three Dutch bridges with airborne troops and rushing land forces across each in turn to cross the Rhine at the final bridge at Arnhem. The relieving troops could not advance as quickly as planned and the survivors of the British First Airborne Division in Arnhem, after nine days of fighting and devastating losses, withdrew back across the Rhine on the night of September 25. To preserve security, SHAEF kept the withdrawal story under a news blackout until a press conference held the morning of September 27 characterized

¹⁰⁵ LAC RG24 Vol. 59, HQ 650-90-74, Malone, Liaison letter no. 11, 27 July 1944; Gillis Purcell, “Wartime Press Censorship in Canada,” (M.A. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1946), 134.

¹⁰⁶ LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30, E157, ,Vol. 3, GOC C in C 3-7-1, Index list.

the battle as a “gallant defence” that prevented the Germans from reinforcing the defenders of the other bridges and inflicted “heavy casualties” on the best German troops.” A press conference that evening estimated that only two thousand paratroopers of the eight thousand dropped on Arnhem escaped but it avoided the term “failure” and claimed that the Arnhem operation partly succeeded because it enabled the holding of the second last bridge at Nijmegen.¹⁰⁷ Of course, since the ultimate goal of the operation was the quick crossing of the Rhine, holding Nijmegen Bridge was important only as a route to Arnhem, hardly justifying the decimation of the British Airborne Forces. Some of the stories for that day were so shaped by the optimistic claims of SHAEF that they quoted directly from the conference and used the framework of the “gallant defence.” The evidence suggests that in this case, the press conference provided the basic trope for the correspondents, who varied little from it. In spite of this reality, one United Press correspondent stated bluntly, “they had suffered defeat,” an explicit statement that did make it through censorship.¹⁰⁸

Unless Canadian Army censors cut more harshly, Allen’s later complaints of censors holding reporters strictly to the explanations of the briefing officer seem somewhat exaggerated. Wallace Reyburn, of *The Montreal Standard*, explains that the bad tempered Allen possessed an “acid pen” that he reserved for “venting on army inefficiency and red tape. He was particularly down on censors... .”¹⁰⁹ Although Allen

¹⁰⁷ WO 219/4648, Extracts from Press Conferences, 27 Sept. 1944.

¹⁰⁸ Richard D. McMillan, “Lost Division Remnants tell of Arnhem Hell,” *Washington Post*, 28 Sept. 1944, 1. Accounts that closely follow the SHAEF conference include: E.C. Daniels, “6000 Left Behind,” *New York Times*, 28 Sept. 1944, 1; *Times*, 28 Sept. 1944, 4. McMillan was not present at the SHAEF press conference as he was with Second Army but censorship was coordinated between SHAEF and the armies.

¹⁰⁹ Wallace Reyburn, *Some of it was Fun* (Toronto: Thomas Nelson, 1949), 128.

may have stretched the truth to make his point, he correctly saw the conferences as playing a key role in providing the framework for the correspondents' stories.

It would be a mistake to think that war correspondents wished to provide “objective” reporting of the war and that the censors prevented them. The war correspondents were also eager to promote Canada’s war effort. They were similar to what today would be called “embedded journalists” who are sometimes criticized as being so identified closely with the troops and their mission as to preclude objective reporting.¹¹⁰ Charles Lynch, a Canadian war correspondent and later a renowned journalist, explained to Phillip Knightley in an oft-quoted passage:

It’s humiliating to look back at what we wrote during the war. It was crap- and I don’t exclude the Ernie Pyles or Alan Mooreheads. We were a propaganda arm of our governments. At the start the censors enforced that, but by the end we were our own censors. We were cheerleaders. I suppose there wasn’t an alternative at the time. It was total war. But for God’s sake, let’s not glorify our role. It wasn’t good journalism. It wasn’t journalism at all.¹¹¹

Similarly Ross Munro recalled:

We felt the Germans were going to wreck this world of ours and that we would have to stop them. The troops were committed to it, and I think the correspondents were--I certainly was. But it won’t ever happen again. The war we were involved in was very clear-cut. It really was a crusade.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ For discussions of embedded journalism and criticism of the media’s role during the Iraq invasion see David Dudge, *The War in Iraq and Why the Media Failed Us* (London: Praeger, 2006); Ronald Paul Larson, “Anatomy of a Bonding: An Embedded Reporter’s Account of the Bonding Process with the Soldiers,” in *War, Media and Propaganda: A Global Perspective*, Yahya R. Kamalipour and Nancy Snow Eds, (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004)125-130; Dana Hull, “The War in Iraq: A Reporter’s Observations,” in *War, Media and Propaganda*, 131-7.

¹¹¹ Phillip Knightley, *The First Casualty* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1975, rpt. 2000), 364. Reginald Thompson, Aimé-Jules Bizimana, Claude Beaugard, and myself have relied heavily on Knightley’s quotations of Lynch or Munro in our analysis of this topic. Eric Thompson, “Canadian Warcos in World War II: Professionalism, Patriotism and Propaganda,” *Mosaic* 23(Summer 1990), 69; Beaugard, *Guerre et Censure*, 130; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 326-327; Timothy Balzer, “Selling Disaster: How the Canadian Public Was Informed of Dieppe,” (M.A. Thesis, University of Victoria, 2004), 65-66.

¹¹² Knightley, *First Casualty*, 348.

The Second World War correspondents identified so closely with the cause that they made no pretence of unbiased reporting. Thus, they incorporated the promotion of the war effort, the rightness of their cause, and the evil of the enemy into their writing. Correspondents clashed with censors over details and particular incidents, but they shared similar presuppositions about the war. Even if a correspondent wished to contest SHAEF's version of the war, thwarting the censorship regulations, he or she risked discipline and the penalization of his employer. Correspondents could only operate within the limitations set up by SHAEF and dissent was acceptable only within these boundaries. Patriotism and the threat of discipline formed a difficult barrier to overcome. Thus, while Canadian Army PR operated at the peak of efficiency in Northwest Europe, Canadians received the view of war shaped by SHAEF censorship regulations and patriotic correspondents.

Canadian Army PR may have worked effectively in Northwest Europe but the news media's focus on the campaign, and the consequences of the hard fighting, negatively affected PR in Italy and in Canada. Canadian correspondents began leaving Italy *en masse* for the anticipated Second Front in early 1944, symptomatic of the decrease of public interest in the Italian campaign. Canadian soldiers fighting bloody and difficult battles, such as breaching of the Gothic line in September, felt forgotten, and began calling themselves the "D-day Dodgers." By January 1945, only five correspondents reported in Italy, down from twenty in 1943, although several were on Christmas leave. That month only one CP correspondent, Bill Boss, remained and he was a PRO discharged to carry out the job. PR personnel, with fewer journalists to supervise, put greater effort into writing the "little Joe" stories that always were in demand. This

desperate situation forced Clark to write to Canadian publishers and news agencies asking for more reporters.¹¹³ The requested correspondents proved unnecessary, because by mid February 1945 the First Canadian Corps began its redeployment to Northwest Europe. The last phases of the Italian campaign demonstrate that although the news media depended on the Army to access war news, the military also depended on the willingness of the news media to cover the story. When public interest shifted to bigger stories elsewhere, the news agencies, reluctant to spend their limited budgets on a secondary front, left the military to scramble for publicity.

The pressing need for journalists in Italy caused a more relaxed attitude to female correspondents than in France. In April 1944, during a lull in the fighting, journalist Edi de Mirabel visited the Royal 22nd Regt., the “Vandoos,” for several days near the front. The PR group’s diarist recorded that the “frontline accommodation” for a woman caused some concern but de Mirabel was billeted “with a respectable Italian family across the street,” to avoid any implication of impropriety.¹¹⁴ In late August and September 1944, Martha Gellhorn of *Collier’s*, the famous American correspondent and wife of Ernest Hemingway, and the AP’s Lynn Heinzerling covered the Canadian attack on the Gothic Line in Northern Italy. Gellhorn even spent an entire night at the front lines escorted by a conducting officer.¹¹⁵ Clearly, the Canadian PR personnel in Italy did not share No. 3 PR

¹¹³ LAC RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29/4, C.W. Gilchrist, “Coverage of CDNS in Italy by CDN War Correspondents,” 6 January 1945; RG 24 Vol. 60 HQ 650-92-99, Lt. Col. F.X. Jennings to Adjutant General, 27 May 1944; LAC RG 24 Vol. 16641, Narrative for the month of June 1944 Field Detachment 2 Canadian Public Relations Group; LAC RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29/4, NDHQ to CMHQ, DPR 1360, 25 Jan. 1945.

¹¹⁴ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16,440 War Diary No. 2 Cdn. PR group Apr. 1944, Appendix 2, “Summary of Activities, Field Detachment, 2 Canadian PR Group.”

¹¹⁵ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16,441 War Diary No. 2 Cdn. PR group., Aug. 1944, Appendix 1, “Summary of Activities, Field Detachment, 2 Canadian PR Group;” Sept. 1944, Appendix 1, Summary of Activities,

Group's aversion to female reporters near the front; the need for correspondents outweighed prejudice.

In February 1945, as the Italian campaign neared its end, the Allied Chiefs of Staff ordered the Canadian Corps moved from Italy to rejoin First Canadian Army in northwestern Europe. This *Operation Goldflake* caused much strain between the press and military authorities. In order to hide the redeployment from the Germans, *Goldflake* included a deception plan involving fake radio transmissions and the ongoing production of the Mediterranean edition of the *Maple Leaf*. This also necessitated a publication ban about the movement, until SHAEF approved.¹¹⁶ Initially the press cooperated with the news blackout, writing stories for future release only. Despite these precautions, in March the movement of the Corps became widely known in Canada. On April 3, a CP story revealed that the Canadians were "together once more as an army," contributing to increasing "speculation, comment and questions in press and parliament."¹¹⁷ Finally, under great Canadian pressure, SHAEF allowed Canada to make the announcement, despite no evidence of enemy knowledge of the troop movement. Eisenhower approved the release but the SHAEF was unable to act until 23 April 1945 because the Mediterranean Allied Force Headquarters was reluctant to agree.¹¹⁸

Field Detachment, 2 Canadian PR Group;" Martha Gellhorn, *The Face of War* (New York: Atlantic Monthly, 1994), 130-1.

¹¹⁶ G.W.L. Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy 1943-1945* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1966) 665; DND DHH 157.4C 2009(D7) Col. G.S. Warden to P &PW 21 Army Group HQ, 24 Feb. 1945.

¹¹⁷ Nicholson, *Canadians in Italy*, 666; *Globe and Mail*, 4 Apr. 1945, 1; NA, WO 229/22/3, SHAEF FWD to AFHQ, FWD-19031, 9 Apr. 1945.

¹¹⁸ Nicholson, *Canadians in Italy*, 666.

While correspondents in the Northwest of Europe had to adhere to rules laid down by SHAEF, they also had a role in domestic Canadian politics, particularly in the conscription crisis of 1944. Although permitted by the 1942 plebiscite to despatch National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA) conscripts for overseas service, Mackenzie King hoped to avoid a divisive act that would further split English- and French-speaking Canadians. Because the Canadian Army grossly underestimated the actual losses of infantry in Normandy, the Scheldt, and Northern Italy, units were dangerously under strength. The prohibition on the publication of the strengths and losses of individual formations, to avoid giving useful information to the enemy, meant that censorship helped to cover up the replacement shortages.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, the story began to emerge in September 1944, after Major Conn Smythe, famous for his hockey career, charged that shortened and inadequate training led to high casualties among replacements: the political and press opposition pursued the issue.¹²⁰ Army PR in the field could do little to answer these charges, although a press release from NDHQ denied them.¹²¹ Smythe's charges put into motion the series of events leading to the second conscription crisis of the war: Ralston went to Europe to investigate the claims and found they were very real. Since the only source of large numbers of trained combat infantry were the NRMA units in Canada, pressure to send them overseas resulted in a crisis for

¹¹⁹ Ralph Allen, cited by Gillis Purcell, "Wartime Press Censorship in Canada" (MA Thesis, University of Toronto, 1946), 133-4.

¹²⁰ *Globe and Mail*, 19 Sept. 1944. C.P. Stacey questioned the accuracy of Smythe's claims. Smythe gathered his information from fellow casualties in hospital in July and August. Stacey points out that Smythe was in the hospital before the retraining of troops from other branches began therefore few of the casualties he met were the result of the alleged lack of training. C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970), 440.

¹²¹ *Globe and Mail*, 20 Sept. 1944.

the King government, as the Prime Minister manoeuvred against pro conscriptionists in the cabinet, House of Commons and the army.¹²²

Suddenly army news, more important than the usual training stories, originated from Canada. In several incidents Canadian Army PR and leadership played a major role. The first event, the so-called “revolt of the Generals” on 20 November, occurred following Ralston’s forced resignation because of his support for conscription. General A.G.L. McNaughton, the new Minister of National Defence, convinced that NRMA men could be persuaded to “go active,” began a last ditch campaign pressuring them to volunteer. The “revolt” began at a meeting of high-ranking officers of Pacific Command at the Seaforth Highlanders’ armoury in Vancouver, to discuss implementation of McNaughton’s policy. Before the conference, reporters from the *Vancouver Sun* and *Vancouver Province*, with the permission of Major General George Pearkes and PRO Major Gus Sivertz, interviewed the officers about the progress of recruiting in their units. The story, as picked up and rewritten by the CP, caused a scandal as it quoted officers actively opposing government policy and advocating conscription. The most damning attack was from Lt. Col. Cuthbert A. Scott who said that, “if the government would assume its responsibility. I am convinced this whole mess could be cleaned up.”¹²³ The

¹²² For general accounts of the conscription crisis see J.L. Granatstein, *Canada’s War the Politics of the Mackenzie King Government 1939-1945* (Toronto: Oxford, 1975),332-381; J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford, 1977); R. MacGregor Dawson, *The Conscription Crisis of 1944* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961); Stacey, *Arms Men and Governments*, 397-482. For an account largely based on Mackenzie King’s perspective see J.W. Pickersgill and D.F. Foster, *The Mackenzie King Record Volume 2, 1944-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968). For recent scholarship concerning the Canadian government’s attempts to coordinate manpower between the military services and various industries that sees it as deeply flawed see Michael J. Stevenson, *Canada’s Greatest Wartime Muddle : National Selective Service and the Mobilization of Human Resources during World War II* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001).

¹²³ LAC RG 24 Reel C-8372 File: 8696-1, Maj General E.W. Sansom, Report to Maj. General A.E. Walford , 29 Nov. 1944 ; *Ottawa Journal*, 21 Nov. 1944.

article was an extreme political embarrassment to the King government. To newspapers supporting conscription, it demonstrated that “informed military opinion,” that is the officers commanding the NRMA troops, believed that McNaughton’s policy was hopeless.¹²⁴ By November 22, running out of options and under pressure from senior officers, the King government finally reversed its policy and ordered NRMA troops overseas as reinforcements.¹²⁵

The conduct of Major General George Pearkes and his officers immediately came under fire from NDHQ, who appointed Maj. Gen. E.W. Sansom to investigate the incident. The final report, in the words of Pearkes’ biographer, amounted to a “light rap on the knuckles.”¹²⁶ It officially laid no blame, finding that, except for statements that appeared only in the CP article and were later denied by the officers, the interviews had been “made in good faith” as an attempt to summarise the progress made in obtaining NRMA volunteers. Although assigning no blame to the commanders, Sansom questioned the conduct of PRO Major Gus Sivertz, who, he believed, should have vetted the articles in order to “suggest modifications ... even without instructions to do so This would have given the officers the protection they were “entitled to.”¹²⁷ Yet, while it may have been possible to persuade the reporters to allow this, they were under no obligation to do so. As Sivertz explained, in Canada no military press censorship existed; only “voluntary censorship.” If uncertain about the materials to be published, newspapers could submit

¹²⁴ *Montreal Gazette*, 21 Nov. 1944.

¹²⁵ C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1970), 471.

¹²⁶ Reginald H. Roy, *For Conspicuous Bravery: A Biography of Major General George R. Pearkes V.C., Through Two World Wars* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1977), 234.

¹²⁷ LAC RG 24 Reel C-8372 File: 8696-1, Maj General E.W. Sansom, Report to Maj. General A.E. Walford, 29 Nov. 1944, 6,7.

articles to civilian censors who examined the article for censorship violations. If a non-submitted story contained restricted information, prosecution could result.¹²⁸ Under the explosive political situation, wisdom suggested that Sivertz should have asked to review the articles, but blame must also rest with Pearkes for authorizing interviews with the press under the circumstances. Doubtless, a properly controlled press conference would have been preferable to the informal mingling of the reporters with the officers.¹²⁹

Pearkes explained to Sansom that he did not expect that the statements would receive national attention nor was the intention to pressure Ottawa. Pearkes did not plan the interviews; Sivertz suggested them only minutes before the officer's conference began.¹³⁰

Given the political state of affairs Pearkes either showed poor judgement or actually hoped to create controversy. If Pearkes' goal was to urge the government to impose overseas conscription, he succeeded, but it was not a great moment for army publicity when measured against the principle of civil control of the military and the regulations prohibiting partisan political statements from officers.¹³¹ Historians have debated the appropriateness of Pearkes' behaviour. Jack Granatstein argues that Pearkes acted improperly by allowing the interviews and probably out of political motivations hoped to

¹²⁸ Ibid., Statement by Major Sivertz PRO Pacific Command; Gillis Purcell, "Wartime Press Censorship in Canada," 1-2.

¹²⁹ Roy, *For Conspicuous Bravery*, 225.

¹³⁰ LAC RG 24 Reel C-8372 File: 8696-1, Maj General E.W. Sansom, Report to Maj. General A.E. Walford, Appendix A, Interview with Pearkes, 29 Nov. 1944.

¹³¹ The King's Regulations stated that "An officer or soldier is forbidden to publish or communicate, either directly or indirectly with the press, any military information, or his views on any military subject, without special permission from National Defence Headquarters." Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*, 469.

force the government's hand on conscription. Conversely, Stacey agrees with Sansom that the incident was "the result of mismanagement rather than of malice."¹³²

The government's decision to despatch the NRMA troops overseas resulted in angry protest and even mutiny in many conscript units in British Columbia, which in turn led to an attempt by the military and cabinet to impose mandatory censorship on news reports about army matters in Canada. Despite the claim of Pearkes' officers that the conscripts were "most ready and anxious to go" when ordered, the government's change of heart angered many NRMA soldiers. Crowds of conscripts marched in protest in Vernon, Courtenay, Prince George and Chilliwack on November 25 and 26.¹³³ By far the most serious incident involved the mutiny of units of the 15th Infantry Brigade in Terrace, whose troops disobeyed orders, marched in protest, and even stole arms, including artillery. The seriousness of the episode beginning on 24 November and lasting for five days, increased because all the commanding officers were absent for Sansom's inquiry. Despite tense moments, the mutiny was resolved without violence, but it severely tested relations between the army and civilian censors.¹³⁴

During the war, conflicts between censors and the military were ongoing, but the chief military antagonist had always been the RCN whose operations were much closer to Canada. With the outbreak of the NRMA disturbances, key army events were occurring in Canada, outside the protection of the war correspondent regulations and field press

¹³² Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 295; Granatstein, *The Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders in the Second World War* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1993) 51; Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*, 469.

¹³³ *Vancouver Sun*, 20 Nov. 1944; LAC RG 24 Reel C-8372 File: 8696-1, Situation Report on Disturbances, 26 Nov. 1944.

¹³⁴ Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*, 474-478.

censorship. Many in the army and government blamed the media's coverage of the Terrace Mutiny for inflaming the situation. Pearkes blamed press exaggerations of the protesters' numbers in earlier incidents for encouraging further illegal actions.¹³⁵ A more serious incident came from a radio broadcast of an incorrect CP report, announcing the dispatch overseas of the Prince Albert Volunteers, an ironic name for a unit with many NMRA conscripts. This inflamed the situation at Terrace because officers had reassured the mutineers that the regiment's destination was Tofino, and the soldiers thought this evidence of treachery.¹³⁶ As a result, Pacific Command demanded that CP present all stories on the disturbances to the army for vetting. Gillis Purcell took up the issue with civilian censorship authorities in Ottawa, who backed up the CP, preventing the imposition of military censorship. Even more threatening to press freedom were subsequent moves in cabinet to impose mandatory censorship. The Prime Minister attempted to order Wilfrid Eggleston, Director of Censorship, and the CBC manager to tighten censorship. Eggleston successfully defended the voluntary censorship system by arguing that what King proposed would require a "ministerial order." The Prime Minister settled for issuing censorship guidance requesting that the media not publish anything "which could damage the safety of the state." In the end, the press downplayed the seriousness of the mutiny, for example, by not mentioning the mutineers stealing arms.¹³⁷ Despite this, suspicions that news coverage contributed to the mutiny remained. In

¹³⁵ University of Victoria, Special Collections (hence UVIC), George Pearkes Papers, 74-1, Box 27, File 4, G.R.Pearkes, "Recruiting, NRMA demonstrations, 5 Dec. 1944, 3.

¹³⁶ Ibid., W. Eggleston to L.R. Lafleche, "Re: Incidents in B.C. Military Camps," 7 Dec. 1944; Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*, 476.

¹³⁷ Daniel German, "Press Censorship and the Terrace Mutiny: A Case Study in Second World War Information Management," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 31:4 (Winter 1996); 129-132.

January, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of National Defence recommended changes to the *Defence of Canada Regulations* under which censorship had its legal basis. These revisions included obligatory submission of all military stories and a role for the military and Privy Council in censorship decisions. Opposition from the Directors of Censorship and fear of the expected reaction from the press led to cabinet abandoning the proposal.¹³⁸

The relationship of the army to the media during the 1944 conscription crisis did not resemble the slick PR machine in Europe that resulted from much experience. Certainly, the alleged response of one army official to a media request for information (“go to hell”) would not have occurred overseas.¹³⁹ Historian Daniel German argues that army actions actually contributed to inaccuracies in reporting by cutting off the release of information to the press:

By breaking contact with the media, the military contributed to a breakdown of the system by which the media obtained access to accurate information that could be published within the limits of military security, and forced the media to look for alternative avenues of information that could not be verified.¹⁴⁰

Thus, the chances of exaggerated and potentially damaging reports actually increased through the army’s hostility to the news media. Overall, despite army and government concern over the censors’ handling of the situation, the censors prevented the most inflammatory and sensational reports. When a *Prince Rupert News* story revealed the mutineers’ armed status and threats to resist attempts to redeploy them, civilian censors quickly intervened and warned all newspaper editors that reprinting the story could lead

¹³⁸ Beauregard, *Guerre et Censure*, 91-3.

¹³⁹ German, “Press Censorship and the Terrace Mutiny,” 131.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

to prosecution. The comparatively moderate approach of the censors and the cooperation of the patriotically minded news media helped prevent stories that could have encouraged greater resistance.¹⁴¹

The Northwest Europe campaign affected Army PR and media relations in Italy and Canada, but the conclusion of the campaign meant the end of the war in Europe and of news of Canadian Army operations. Malone, promoted to Director of Public Relations (Army), travelled to the Pacific to lay the groundwork for news coverage of planned Canadian Army involvement in the invasion of Japan, but found himself attending the surrender ceremony in Tokyo Bay in September and squabbling with American authorities over releasing the names of liberated P.O.W.s to the media.¹⁴² In Europe, Canadian PR continued to work with correspondents covering the Canadian Army's occupation duties and issued press releases about the troops rioting because they were frustrated with the slow pace of repatriation to Canada.¹⁴³ Although some work remained, the main job of Canadian Army PR in the Second World War had ended.

The Northwest Europe Campaign witnessed Canadian Army PR at the apex of its performance. In the early years, PR struggled to develop organization, policy and structure, in the face of inexperienced and squabbling leaders. As the army became involved in active operations at Dieppe and then in the Mediterranean, PR refined its policy and organization to become more effective at handling relations with the press, ensuring a steady stream of war news about the army and overcoming Allied policies that

¹⁴¹Ibid., 130-1.

¹⁴² DND DHH, 000.9 (d93), Department of National Defence, Press Release, 19 May 1945. Malone, *World in Flames*, 256-7.

¹⁴³ LAC RG 24 Vol. 12383, 4/PRO/17, Public Relations Service, News Desk, 5 July 1945.

restricted news of Canadian operations. By the time of the D-Day landings, Canadian Army PR rivalled that of any of its larger allies in publicizing army operations. At the same time, it operated as part of the larger SHAEF PR establishment, emphasising Canadian national and military priorities, but within the framework and image of war laid out by SHAEF. Because of the army's efforts to control war news through censorship and control of war correspondents, the image of the army presented in the press was largely what they wished it to be: overly sanitized, overlooking the horrors of war and potentially embarrassing issues like conscription. At the same time, PROs maintained an excellent relationship with the Canadian news media. Such a performance will likely never occur again because of the vast scale of the PR efforts necessary to accompany the fielding of an entire Canadian Army. Nonetheless, it will remain the standard of measurement for all future Canadian military PR ventures.

Part II: Case Studies

Chapter Five:

“Sugaring the Pill,” Selling Dieppe to Canadians

“We have no doubt it is possible with this kind of news reporting to deceive and lead astray one’s own nation for a time, but we do doubt that one can alter any of the facts by such methods”- Dr. Josef Goebbels, commenting on the news coverage of the Dieppe Raid.¹

On August 19, 1942, two brigades of the Canadian Second Division supported by British Commandos carried out the disastrous raid on the French port of Dieppe. Designated Jubilee, the operation, planned under the authority of Mountbatten’s British Combined Operations Headquarters (COHQ), envisioned the troops capturing the port, taking prisoners and destroying war materiel. British Commando units silenced enemy batteries on the extreme flanks of the raiding force but the Canadians suffered disaster. At Puys, the Royal Regiment of Canada was slaughtered in the narrow space between the cliff and the sea. On the beach in front of Dieppe, the main force landed in the face of heavy fire and only small groups of infantry managed to enter Dieppe, achieving little. The few tanks that made it off the shingle beach could not cross enemy barricades into town. At Pourville, the South Saskatchewan Regiment and the Winnipeg Camerons penetrated inland against initially light opposition but could not reach their objectives and lost heavily in the withdrawal. Under withering fire, only a few reembarked, many were left to face three years of captivity. The cost was immense: of the 5000 Canadian troops involved, 3367 became casualties. Dieppe was a disaster.

Much of this chapter is derived from Timothy Balzer, “‘In Case the Raid is Unsuccessful’... Selling Dieppe to Canadians,” *Canadian Historical Review* 87.3 (Sept. 2006): 409-430, and is used with permission.

¹ NA, DEFE 2/329, BBC Monitoring Report No. 1,159, 0100 Friday Sept. 18 to Saturday 19 Sept. 1942.

Ever since the Dieppe raid there has been vigorous debate about its purpose, planning, execution, and the value of the “lessons learned”. The most recent example is the debate over Brian Villa’s contention that Lord Louis Mountbatten launched the raid without official approval.² The disagreements over that interpretation have overshadowed his revelation that Lord Mountbatten, who coordinated the raid, conspired to influence the writing of the history of Dieppe. He convinced Churchill to replace a critical account in a draft of his *History of the Second World War: The Hinge of Fate* with a more positive interpretation. Similarly, Mountbatten forced C.P. Stacey, the Canadian official historian and arguably the most important writer in Dieppe historiography, to modify the account of Dieppe he wrote shortly after the raid. Thereafter, Stacey relied heavily on Mountbatten’s right-hand man, John Hughes-Hallet, in interpreting the event.³

Despite continuing interest in Dieppe, historians have largely neglected the story of how English-speaking Canadians were told of the raid in 1942, apart from occasional mentions of its propaganda value or of slights to Canadian nationalism. For example, in his official history of the Canadian Army, Stacey noted the emphasis initially placed on

² Villa in *Unauthorized Action* makes a complex and well-researched argument that Mountbatten never obtained authorization from the Chiefs of Staff and on his own initiative revived the raid as *Jubilee* after the original Operation *Rutter* was cancelled in July 1942 because of weather. Mountbatten was concerned with furthering his own career and reputation by launching a successful raid. Villa’s thesis did not convince everyone. Peter Henshaw makes the best counter arguments, contending that the Canadian Army, especially Gen. Andrew L. McNaughton, was also vital to the resurrection of the raid. McNaughton saw the command structure in *Jubilee* giving the Canadian Army full military control of the raid under Mountbatten as a victory in his struggle with Ottawa and the British Home forces for more autonomy for the Canadian Army. Furthermore, while the Chiefs of Staff never specifically approved the raid, Henshaw argues that they had already given Mountbatten permission to remount cancelled raids on his own authority. A debate between the authors in *Canadian Historical Review* did not resolve the issue, with Henshaw arguing that procedures for reviving cancelled raids were unclear and Villa insisting on the necessity of Chiefs of Staff approval. Barring the discovery of new information, the debate may never be totally resolved because both historians admit that *Operation Jubilee* never received specific approval. (Brian Villa, *Unauthorized Action: Mountbatten and the Dieppe Raid* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1989); Peter Henshaw, “The Dieppe Raid: A Product of Misplaced Canadian Nationalism?” *Canadian Historical Review* 77, 2 (1996): 250-66; Brian Villa and Peter Henshaw, “The Dieppe Raid Debate” *Canadian Historical Review* 79, 2 (1998): 304-315.

³ Brian Villa, *Unauthorized Action*, 20-41.

the participation of fifty U.S. Rangers in the raid, the lack of recognition given to Canada in the initial press coverage, the negative Canadian coverage after the release of the casualty figures, and the harm that was done to the reputation of Canadian General Andrew L. McNaughton.⁴ The few authors who briefly surveyed the press coverage found a common pattern of the initial portrayal of the raid as a success, growing concern as the casualty numbers were gradually released, and then shock as the full number was revealed a month later.⁵ Several claim that the publicity was deliberately deceptive and misleading, but cite little evidence to demonstrate this.⁶ A chapter in Béatrice Richard's *La Mémoire De Dieppe: Radioscopie D' Un Mythe* investigates the French language reporting on Dieppe and hints of official manipulation of information but does not examine military and government records.⁷ In fact, the Canadian and British records reveal that COHQ and other Allied authorities planned in advance to portray any failure as a successful "dress rehearsal" for invasion and to manipulate the press to further this

⁴ C.P. Stacey, *History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War: Six Years of War* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1955), 393-6.

⁵ Jacques Mordal, *Dieppe the Dawn of Decision* (Toronto, Ryerson, 1962), 256-8; Ronald Atkin, *Dieppe 1942* (London: Macmillan, 1980), 254-7.

⁶ Phillip Knightley claims that the British Ministry of Information deliberately deceived the public about Dieppe, but does not specify how. His citation of the *Combined Report* sheds little light on this. Phillip Knightley, *The First Casualty* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2000), 345. Gillis Purcell, head of the wartime CP, cites correspondent Ross Munro that military authorities tried to soften Dieppe through censorship of news, especially the casualty figures. Gillis Purcell, "Wartime Press Censorship in Canada," (MA Thesis, University of Toronto, 1946), 131.

⁷ Béatrice Richard, *La Mémoire De Dieppe: Radioscopie D' Un Mythe* (Montreal, VLB Éditeur, 2002), 49. Aimé-Jules Bizimana also discusses press coverage and information control during the Dieppe raid, although his conclusions are similar to Richard, and, apart from information about French Canadian publicity, the details are not greatly different my 2004 thesis and 2006 Canadian Historical Review article. He does not discuss the publicity planning for the raid. Aimé-Jules Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque: Les Correspondents De Guerre Canadiens-Français Durant La Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* (Montreal: VLB Éditeur, 2007), 57-66, 316-32; Timothy Balzer, "Selling Disaster : How Canadians Was Informed of Dieppe," (M.A. Thesis, University of Victoria, 2004); Timothy Balzer, "'In Case the Raid is Unsuccessful' ... Selling Dieppe to Canadians," 409-430.

claim. Yet when the raid actually failed, COHQ portrayed the raid as a tactical as well as an experimental success. Their communications strategy played a key role in shaping Canadian English-language press coverage of the disaster. It was a plan that placed the Canadian Army and its PR apparatus in a clearly subordinate position to that of COHQ PR despite a Canadian commanding officer for the raid and most troops being Canadian.

COHQ's publicity plans for Jubilee had their genesis in the planning for *Operation Rutter*, the original raid on Dieppe cancelled in early July due to weather, after the troops had waited aboard ship for several days. At a meeting on June 29, the representatives of the various Allied military and Government organizations discussed the communiqués to be released during and after the raid. The plan, although not as developed as the one for *Jubilee*, already contained some potential apologetics should the raid fail. As insurance against an embarrassing repulse, the communiqués described the attack as “part of a general strategic plan” which would “‘help save the face’ of any raid...since instead of appearing to be a failure of an independent venture, it can be presented as achieving what was expected of that particular piece of the jigsaw puzzle.” “Security reasons” would spare COHQ from explaining the exact linkage. This gave the raid propaganda value even if it succeeded because it made the raiding program seem organized rather than “haphazard and sporadic.” The communiqué also avoided the term “withdrawal” or “evacuation” of troops, instead employing “return.”⁸ This wording contained no connotation of defeat and would not play into German attempts to portray the raid as a repulsed invasion. The minutes give only the initial communiqué, the planners counted on information derived by listening to the raiding forces’ radio

⁸ NA, FO 898/345, “Minutes of Meeting Held at COHQ on 29.6.42 to Discuss the ‘Rutter’ Communiqué,” 29 June 1942.

messages during the battle to construct subsequent announcements. According to Francis Williams of the British Ministry of Information (MoI), who coordinated publicity with COHQ, this deviated from normal raid policy, which usually depended on coded signal indicating “success,” “failure” or “partial success.” Once the message arrived in the UK, the MoI selected the appropriate communiqué from those “drafted in advance...to meet all eventualities.”⁹

After the raid’s revival, the COHQ planners again went to work on the publicity plans for *Jubilee*. “Jock” Lawrence, former Hollywood publicist, then an American PRO for Mountbatten, although instructed to “handle the Canadians with velvet gloves” and warned about their touchiness, recalled COHQ PR initially communicated with Canadian PR initially only through a British liaison officer. This differed greatly from COHQ PR’s dealings with the Royal Navy, RAF, Royal Marines and American army who each had officers serving as PROs inside COHQ.¹⁰ During much of the planning COHQ also dealt closely with the Political Warfare Executive (PWE), the organization for British propaganda in Europe, although its representative Peter Murphy felt that Combined Operations were rapidly losing their propaganda value.¹¹ COHQ did not consult the Canadians until shortly before the raid when they invited Lt. Col. Cliff Wallace to the final communiqué meeting. This gave the Canadians less influence in publicity planning than the United States Army, with only fifty soldiers in the raid, because of the seconding of an American PRO to COHQ.

⁹ Francis Williams, *Press Parliament and People* (London: William Heinemann, 1946), 52.

¹⁰ Eisenhower Library, Justus Baldwin Lawrence Papers, Box 2, (1), Memoirs, 51.

¹¹ NA, FO 898/345, Peter Murphy, “The Diminishing Political Value of Combined Operations Raids,” 26 July 1942.

In order to ensure information control among all parties, three days before the Dieppe raid, COHQ hosted a meeting of representatives of all organizations involved in the raid or in related publicity. At the meeting, representatives of four British agencies, the MoI, “the Admiralty, Political Warfare Executive, the War Office, the Air Ministry; as well as First Canadian Army and Headquarters (sic) and European Theatre of Operations United States Army”¹² discussed the communiqués, press arrangements and general publicity strategy. The classified *Combined Report*, a summary of all aspects of the Dieppe raid issued in September 1942, contains a sanitized version of the public relations plan discussed by the meeting. Its public relations section contained three major emphases: the propaganda battle with the Germans concerning the communiqués, press difficulties, and confusion over the size of the Canadian contribution. It dealt mainly with the problems encountered immediately after the raid. This version does not suggest that any thought was given to public relations after the release of the initial communiqués.¹³

A *Memorandum for “Jubilee” Communiqué Meeting* includes many of the planning considerations not listed in the *Combined Report*.¹⁴ The memorandum is likely an agenda for discussion at the meeting, the conference before *Rutter* included a similar document. It presented the conclusions of the work done by the COHQ PR for approval and discussion. The *Rutter* meeting made several small changes that are noted in the minutes. No similar notes of changes seem to have survived or ever existed from the

¹² DND DHH, 75/502, C.B. 04244, *Combined Report*, 194,196.

¹³ DND DHH, 75/502, C.B. 04244, *Combined Report*, 194, 196.

¹⁴ The anonymous and undated *Memorandum’s* title and its inclusion of draft communiqués as appendices, as well as its location among items sent by COHQ to First Army, demonstrate its COHQ origins.

Jubilee meeting.¹⁵ Based on the lack of recorded changes and the precedent of only small changes before *Rutter*, the acceptance of the memorandum's policies is almost certain. It argued that the communiqués should emphasise that the raid was not an invasion and stress the “objectives gained,” Canadian and American participation, and the acquisition of “valuable military information.” The fact that COHQ planned to appeal to “lessons learned” before any were actually learned did not appear in the *Combined Report*. An even more potentially embarrassing deletion was an outline of policy if the raid failed.

5. IN CASE THE RAID IS UNSUCCESSFUL: ...

a. The same basic principles must hold.

1. We cannot call such a large-scale operation a “reconnaissance raid.”

2. We cannot avoid stating the general composition of the force, since the enemy will know it and make capital of our losses and of any failure of the first effort of Canadian and U.S. troops.

b. Therefore, in the event of much failure, the communiqué must then stress the success of the operation as an essential test in the employment of substantial forces and heavy equipment.

c. We then lay extremely heavy stress on stories of personal heroism – through interviews, broadcasts, etcetera – in order to focus public attention on BRAVERY rather than OBJECTIVES NOT ATTAINED.¹⁶ (Emphasis in original)

This paragraph makes the startling revelation that any failure was to be portrayed as success and the key to that was to emphasise that the raid was an “essential test” which would provide valuable “lessons learned” for future operations. The communiqués issued following the raid virtually quoted the memorandum: “vital experience has been gained in the employment of substantial numbers of troops in an assault, and in the transport and

¹⁵ NA, FO, 898/345, Brig. G.E. Wildman Lushington, 26 June 1942; “Minutes of Meeting Held at COHQ on 29.6.42 to Discuss the ‘Rutter’ Communiqué,” 29 June 1942.

¹⁶ LAC, RG 24, vol. 10708, 59-1-0 INT. 215 C1 (D360), *Memorandum for “Jubilee” Communiqué Meeting*. The document can also be found in the following files: NA, DEFE 2/329; NA, FO 898 345. The copy in the Combined Operations files (defe) has the word “only” pencilled in changing 5b. to... “must only stress the success of the operation as an essential test...” This changes the meaning somewhat implying that the apologetic would revolve only around the experimental value of the raid should it fail, although it is unclear when this note was added and does not appear in other copies.

use of heavy equipment.” Additionally, if the raid failed, bravery was to be emphasised to distract public attention from defeat. This was not a unique approach to publicity in defeat; early in the Pacific War, American reports portrayed defeats in a “hopeful and heroic cast.”¹⁷

My 2006 article argued that COHQ put the “failure plan” into operation and this determined how the press presented the raid to the public. While this seemed logical, later research in British archives has convinced me that COHQ did not put the “failure plan” into effect initially, although it later used many of its apologetic emphases for Canadian publicity. Incredibly, during and immediately following the raid, COHQ initiated the PR plan for a successful operation. The plans for success and failure are quite similar, except that a successful raid would result in a major emphasis on the achievement of the its objectives and would require less of an apologetic smokescreen, thus downplaying the “heroic” interviews with participants.

Comments from PR personnel inside COHQ demonstrate that the “success plan” went into effect. An August 24 memorandum by Royal Marine Captain F.D.L. “David” Astor, the Naval PRO (NPRO) for Combined Operations, was very critical:

Whereas the publicity of the operation was handled with considerable technical skill, it was very noticeable that the publicity planned on the assumption that the raid would be a success was put through in toto, despite the operation having been described by the naval commander on his return as a “disaster,” and this fact being reported to COHQ by NPRO immediately.¹⁸

¹⁷ DND DHH, 75/502, C.B. 04244, ; *Combined Report*, 199; Richard W. Steele, “News of the Good War: World War II News Management,” *Journalism Quarterly*, 62 (Winter 1985), 712.

¹⁸ NA, DEFE 2/329, F.D.L. Astor, “Public Relations and the Dieppe Raid,” 24 Aug. 1942. David Astor was from the prominent Astor family and later became editor of *London Observer* and one of the founders of Amnesty International.

Astor campaigned against the misleading publicity both within and outside COHQ. The *London Observer* published an article critical of the operation-- no coincidence, since the Astor family owned it and F.D.L. Astor later became its editor.¹⁹ Astor spoke of his outrage at the raid's publicity to his friend George Orwell, who recorded it in his diary on August 22.

David Astor very damping about the Dieppe raid, which he saw at more or less close quarters and which he says was a complete failure except for the very heavy destruction of German fighter planes, which was not part of the plan. He says that the affair was definitely misrepresented in the press and is now being misrepresented in the reports to the PM and that the main facts were: - something over 5,000 men engaged out of which at least 2,000 are killed or prisoners... The idea was to destroy all the defences of Dieppe, and the attempt to do so was a failure. In fact, only trivial damage was done... Only one of the three main parties really made it to the objective. The others did not get that far and were massacred on the beach by artillery fire.²⁰

He noted that Astor believed the failure demonstrated the impossibility of the Allies invading the continent. Orwell did not completely accept Astor's story, feeling that "to get onshore at all... was a considerable accomplishment" and harboured some suspicions that the story may have been "a plant... considering who his parents are."²¹ This referred to Astor's parents Lord Waldorf and Lady Nancy Astor, members of the so-called "Cliveden set," which possessed a reputation as architects of appeasement. Given this and the huge demand, particularly among the British left, for a "second front now" to support the USSR, Orwell's suspicions are understandable, if wrong. Astor's observations on the raid's publicity are accurate and he actually underestimated the casualties.

¹⁹ NA, Air 20/4209, Air Vice Marshall Richard Peck to VCAG, 1 Sept. 1942.

²⁰ George Orwell, *My Country Right or Left 1940-1943: The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus eds. (Juffrey, New Hampshire: David R Gordie, 1968, rpt. 2000), 444.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 445.

Nor are Astor's opinions the only evidence from within COHQ of the implementation of the "success plan." The *Combined Report* claimed that one of the weaknesses of *Jubilee*'s publicity was its portrayal of the raid as successful. "It is insufficient to prepare plans for success alone. If a long term programme is to be carried out properly, Public Relations Planning must include three possibilities: a) success, b) partial success, c) failure."²² This is clearly an attempt by COHQ to excuse the huge gap between the initial publicity and the actual results of the *Jubilee*. Admitting poor planning is probably less damaging than admitting large-scale deception of the public. Nevertheless, the *Memorandum for Jubilee Communiqué Meeting* shows that these claims about planning were less than truthful. If no plans for failure existed, COHQ left itself open to accusations of poor PR planning but not deception.

The August 19 raid was the biggest Canadian news story of the war to that date. For over a month, the news of Canadian soldiers landing in a large raid was almost daily front-page news. In her study of the French Canadian press coverage of Dieppe, Richard describes it as going through three phases: strategic story, the heroic phase, and the revelation.²³ These phases, also discernable in the English language press, were largely influenced in both content and tone by the dominant sources of information on which the newspapers relied and were shaped by COHQ's publicity approach.

In its planning, the COHQ recognized the importance of war correspondents accompanying the force to counter enemy propaganda and to "ensure an unbiased report for the public." COHQ selected twenty-one correspondents and photographers to cover

²² *Combined Report*, 198.

²³ Richard, *La Mémoire De Dieppe*, 49.

the raid, but only allowed them to cable their stories after debriefing at 1045 on August 20 and after the censorship process. Thus, the first reports were delayed until 1805 on August 20. COHQ took steps to avoid future delays, but believed that little harm resulted to public relations.²⁴

The lack of correspondents' stories forced the newspapers to rely on four official communiqués, each progressively longer and more detailed, beginning at 0600 on August 19. They, of course, portrayed Dieppe in the best possible light. The first merely revealed that a raid, not an invasion, was underway. The second, issued at 1258, gave a bare outline of the raid in progress, emphasising the success of the British Commandos on the flanks and mentioning the nationalities of the troops. It incorrectly presented the landing at Puys by stating, "On the left flank one landing party was initially repulsed but reformed and carried the beach by assault." The third, put out at 2010, revealed the use of tanks, described friendly and enemy air losses, and, while admitting that, "casualties were heavy on both sides," claimed that "vital experience" was gained. The final communiqué, released at 2250 on August 20, was much more detailed and confident of success. Emphasising the objectives allegedly achieved, it explained that the encounter between the landing force and the German coastal convoy "only threw out the time schedule of this particular party by twenty minutes." While admitting that casualties were heavy, "they were not unduly so in view of the operation."²⁵ The alleged successes of the RAF also received attention claiming the destruction of 91 German aircraft and twice that

²⁴ DND DHH, 75/502, C.B. 04244., *Combined Report*, 194.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 199-200. The incorrect information about Puys resulted from the extremely fragmentary and misleading communications received by General Roberts about Blue Beach during the landings. Stacey, *Six Years of War*, 368.

“probably... destroyed or damaged,” as opposed to 98 Allied planes lost.²⁶ As planned, the communiqués gave the distinct impression of a hard fought but successful battle.

An August 20 statement issued by Canada’s Minister of National Defence, Colonel James L. Ralston, did not differ much from the COHQ communiqués. It pictured Canadians “reaching objectives” and destroying “many of the enemy defence works before withdrawing.” Although not adding much to public knowledge of Dieppe, it emphasised the courage of Canadian troops. Ralston’s statement was more candid about costs than the COHQ’s communiqués: “Casualties were severe.” For domestic purposes, he exhorted the public to work hard at home to support those who had fought at Dieppe.²⁷

Accepting the information in the communiqués led most Canadian newspapers to portray the Dieppe raid as a success. Headlines proclaimed Canada’s leading role in the great raid. “Canadians Spearhead Battle at Dieppe... Help Smash Nazi Opposition,” declared the *Toronto Star*. “Canadians Lead Commando Raid on France- Objectives Gained after Day Long Battle,” summarized the headlines of the *Victoria Daily Times*. “Success of Operation Proves Jolt for Nazis,” claimed the *Montreal Star*. The *Regina Leader- Post* announced that the “Allied Victory was Decisive.”²⁸ These were typical of the flavour of front-page headlines and the tenor of the stories as well. The editorials also

²⁶ COHQ quoted actual numbers of “probables,” aircraft that may have been destroyed or damage without the confirming witnesses, to the press, which resulted in grossly exaggerated headlines. This did not impress Air Marshall Richard Peck because it violated RAF policy not to report probables in order to avoid accusations of exaggeration. All PRO’s received a message requesting future compliance to this policy to avoid injuring the RAF’s credibility. Post war research reveals that the RAF destroyed only 48 German planes and damaged only 24. NA, Air 20/4209, R.H. Peck to D.P.R., 27 August 1942; Viscount Stansgate “Assessment of Enemy Casualties,” n.d.; Brereton Greenhous et al. *The Crucible of War, 1939-1945: The Official History of the Royal Canadian Air Force Vol. III* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 242.

²⁷ *Toronto Star*, 20 Aug.1942, 3.

²⁸ *Toronto Star*, 19 Aug. 1942, 1; *Victoria Daily Times*, 19 Aug.1942, 1; *Montreal Star*, 20 Aug. 1942, 1; *Regina Leader-Post*, 20 Aug. 1942, 1.

reflected the optimistic tone of the headlines, expressing great pride in the achievements of Canadian troops in attaining most of the raid's objectives as reported by the communiqués.²⁹

Editorial cartoons also communicated the initial belief in Dieppe's success, a favourite theme being gigantic Canadian soldiers threatening tiny Nazis. The cartoonist of the *Vancouver Province* pictured Hitler shivering in bed while a huge spectral Canadian soldier loomed out of the darkness. The *Toronto Star* featured a towering Canadian with a Tommy gun leaping across the Channel to squash an unsuspecting occupier. The *Montreal Star* showed a tiny Hitler covered in European blood sheepishly looking behind him as a giant finger labelled "Dieppe raid" threatens to crush him.³⁰ These cartoons reflected the early view that the raid was a mighty blow against Germany. The *Globe and Mail*, however, was more cautious. While encouraged by the communiqués' "authoritative statements that it achieved its chief objectives," it observed that the "full story" of Dieppe was "yet to be disclosed."³¹

The lack of detail in the official account led to speculation, mainly about the composition of the raiding force and the number of casualties, thus causing some inaccurate reporting. Some papers that went to press before the release of the third COHQ communiqué announcing the withdrawal, pondered the possibility that Dieppe could actually be an invasion. Others speculated on the details of the fighting. Lacking

²⁹ *Montreal Gazette*, 20 Aug. 1942, 8; *Ottawa Citizen*, 21 Aug. 1942, 8; *Globe and Mail*, 20 Aug. 1942, 6; *Hamilton Spectator*, 20 Aug. 1942,, *Calgary Herald*, 21 Aug. 1942, 4; *Toronto Star*, 20 Aug. 1942, 6; *Victoria Times*, 19 Aug. 1942, 11; *Winnipeg Free Press*, 20 Aug. 1942, 13.

³⁰ *Globe and Mail*, 20 Aug. 1942, 6.; *Regina Leader-Post*, 19 Aug. 1942, 1; *Vancouver Province*, 20 Aug. 1942, 4; *Toronto Star*, 20 Aug. 1942, 6; *Montreal Star*, 20 Aug. 1942, 10.

³¹ *Globe and Mail*, 20 Aug. 1942, 6.

eyewitness accounts, the *Hamilton Spectator* imagined “leading raiders with knives and clubs” leaping on “German sentries.”³² Given the slow release of official casualty lists, the press gleaned some information, mainly casualty numbers, from German and Vichy sources. CP cited German communiqués, which claimed 1500 Allied prisoners. Vichy sources reported 3500 “mostly Canadian” troops killed in the landings. Labelling these reports as “claims,” the press, in its initial evaluations of the battle, did not take them very seriously. W.R. Plewman, in the *Toronto Star*, estimated that the Canadians numbered one third of a force of 12,000 to 15,000, and that heavy casualties meant a loss of ten percent, therefore, Canada had suffered “up to 500 casualties.”³³

While most speculation was wildly inaccurate, the fourth communiqué confirmed the *Montreal Star*'s guess that the Canadian units were the same regiments reported to have received amphibious training earlier that year. Other journals were unaware of the extent of Canadian participation. Francis Williams, Controller of Press Censorship for the MoI, issued three statements on August 19 and 20 advising the press not to overemphasize the contribution of smaller Allied contingents at the expense of the Canadians who were said to be one third of all personnel from all involved services. This was misleading because the actual landing force itself was overwhelmingly Canadian. Therefore, the foreign press continued to emphasise the role of American or British troops, much to the consternation of Canadian authorities.³⁴ This understandable

³² *Hamilton Spectator*, 19 Aug. 1942,; *Toronto Star*, 19 Aug. 1942, 7.

³³ *Calgary Herald*, 19 Aug. 1942, 1; *Ottawa Journal*, 21 Aug. 1942, 1; *Toronto Star*, 20 Aug. 1942, 7. Bizimana also notes the scepticism directed at enemy casualty reports, considered as “pure propaganda.” Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 319.

³⁴ *Montreal Star*, 19 Aug. 1942, 1, 11; *Ibid.*, 200-201; LAC, RG24, C-2, vol.12329, 4/Dieppe/1, Cable from Ralston to McNaughton, 27 Aug. 1942.

speculation continued until September, when Churchill revealed the composition of the force and National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ), the total casualties.

After the release of the communiqués, the stories of war correspondents took centre stage and their dominance of the news forms the second period in the Dieppe publicity, beginning August 21 and lasting until mid September. Twelve war correspondents accompanied the raid and their national composition reveals much of the focus of COHQ PR. The presence of six Americans, five Canadians, and three British journalists show Mountbatten's passion for good PR with the Americans. The Americans predominated because the Canadian Army, hungry for positive publicity in the United States, offered three of their original correspondent spaces. None of the correspondents represented French Canadian media, which led to some justifiable, if ill-informed, criticism in the Quebec media afterwards. During the raid, Canadian First Army PRO Major Cliff Wallace commanded the Canadian press detachment, while others were under RN supervision. Only Wallace Reyburn of *The Montreal Standard* made it ashore with the Canadians but returned wounded; British journalist A.B. Austin went ashore with the British Commandos on the flank. Of the others, only Ross Munro of the Canadian Press (CP) made it anywhere near the landing beaches. Thus, most witnessed the operation only from afar. The only photographer to land did not return; as a result, no Allied pictures of the actual landings were available for publicity.³⁵ For the journalistic coverage of the raid, it was an unimpressive beginning.

Despite these limitations, in the days following the raid, reporters attempted to patch together a more complete picture of the raid, but human-interest stories, largely

³⁵ *Combined Report*, 194-196; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 62-4.

focussed on individual acts of heroism, became the main element of news coverage. On August 20, Bob Bowman of the CBC twice broadcast his experiences of watching the battle from a tank-landing craft. The accounts of Fred Griffin of the *Toronto Star* and Wallace Reyburn of the *Montreal Standard* were published both in their own and other newspapers. The most widely read reports in Canada were those by CP reporter Ross Munro. His initial story related his attempt to land with the Royal Regiment of Canada on Blue Beach, where most of the men in his landing craft were killed or wounded. Over the following days, he wrote the story of each regiment. After returning to Canada several weeks later, he made a speaking tour of each Dieppe unit's hometown.³⁶

The correspondents had great difficulty in compiling a more complete story of Dieppe. Like any participant in battle, they knew little more than what they had personally witnessed. After failing to land at Puys, Munro transferred to another landing craft that failed to reach the main beach. Despite admitting the "smoke was so thick that one could not see much of the town," Munro concluded that the Canadians "seemed to have the town well under control." After providing their own eye-witness accounts, the correspondents wrote stories based on interviews of other participants who were also ignorant of big picture and told sometimes contradictory accounts.³⁷

Despite the claim of the *Combined Report* that "correspondents were given every opportunity to write the raid as they saw it," after the war Munro said that censorship made it difficult to produce a more complete and accurate account but he did not specify what was

³⁶ A.E. Pawley, *Broadcast from the Front: Canadian Overseas Radio in the Second World War* (Toronto: Hakkert, 1975), 29-34. Bob Bowman, *Dieppe*, (Ottawa: Wartime Information Board, 1942), 1; Fred Griffin, "I Am Bailing Out," *Toronto Star*, 21 Aug. 1942, 1, 7; LAC, McNaughton Papers, MG30, E133, vol. 135, PA 1-8-1, "CP Told the World... About Canada and Dieppe."

³⁷ Ross Munro, "Mid Shot and Shell on Dieppe Beach," *Regina Leader-Post*, 20 Aug. 1942, 2; Ross Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1972), 338.

censored, apart from revealing the extent of the failure.³⁸ As usual, the MoI reviewed correspondents' cables for information thought to be useful to the enemy and anything that would weaken British relations with its allies. In addition, COHQ departed from normal British policy by insisting it censor foreign correspondents' stories before the MoI saw them. If COHQ had been concerned only with security, the MoI alone could have been entrusted with the job because it had advisors from all three services.³⁹ COHQ's main concern was not security but that stories portrayed the raid as a success. The Combined Operations PROs did the censorship at COHQ, not trained press censors or even intelligence officers, an extremely unusual procedure. At one point, the daily record of PRO activities specifies, "M.P.R.O. continued his policy-censoring of articles." The Combined Report also admitted that the PROs engaged in policy censorship, which is censoring information based on considerations other than military security.⁴⁰ BBC correspondent Frank Gillard felt deep and lasting guilt about how the censorship cuts turned his broadcast into deception.⁴¹

The difference between what correspondents heard at the initial press conference and what appeared in the press indicates the effectiveness of this censorship. On August 20, before allowing them to file any stories about Dieppe, Mountbatten debriefed the correspondents. In his memoirs, American Press reporter Drew Middleton describes Mountbatten during the conference as "shaken but honest" and "did not try to hide the

³⁸ Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord*, 339; LAC, George Ronald Fond, MG 30, E507, *CBC Close Up Interview* File #6, pt.2, Transcript, Ross Munro; Purcell, "Wartime Press Censorship in Canada," 131; Atkin, *Dieppe 1942*, 257; Knightley, *The First Casualty*, 348-349.

³⁹ DND DHH, 75/502, C.B. 04244, *Combined Report*, 195-196.; McLaine, *Ministry of Morale*, 246; Francis Williams, *Press Parliament and People* (London: William Heinemann, 1946) 21.

⁴⁰ NA DEFE 2/ 329, "Record of Main Enquires etc. Dealt with by PR Section COHQ, 26 Aug. 1942;" *Combined Report*, 195.

⁴¹ Timothy Crook, *International Radio Journalism, History, Theory, and Practise* (London: Routledge, 1998), 213; Robert McKay, *Half the Battle: Civilian Morale in Britain during the Second World War* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2005), 148.

extent of the failure.”⁴² If Middleton’s recollections are correct, either censorship kept the correspondents from reporting this fact or the journalists colluded with COHQ to soften the news. Perhaps this is why Munro later admitted to Phillip Knightley, “I never really felt, except maybe on the Dieppe raid, that I was really cheating the public at home.”⁴³

Despite the veil of censorship and warnings not to speculate on casualty numbers, Canadian and British war correspondents filled in some details. Drew Middleton later explained that the correspondents were not even aware of the total casualties.⁴⁴ Not until mid-September did NDHQ officially release this information. Even without mentioning the numbers of casualties and troops involved, Munro’s description of the carnage on Blue Beach, for example, would lead readers to believe that casualties were heavy. Munro described the role of each regiment in the attack, for example, revealing that the Queen’s Own Cameron Highlanders penetrated four miles inland at Pourville and that General Hamilton Roberts and Brigadier Churchill Mann planned the raid based on COHQ’s original outline plan.⁴⁵ Yet journalist William Stoneman concluded that the “whole story could not be told except in the most general terms and in dramatic, personal experience manner” until “the end of the war.”⁴⁶ While the correspondents were able to

⁴²Drew Middleton, *Where Has Last July Gone? Memoirs* (New York: New York Times Books, 1973), 86.

⁴³ Knightley, *The First Casualty*, 348.

⁴⁴ Purcell, “Wartime Press Censorship in Canada,” 151; Knightley, *First Casualty*, 348. C.G. Power, the Minister of National Defence for Air was in London during the raid and met Drew Middleton and Quentin Reynolds on August 20, they initially estimated losses at 80% but by the time they spoke to Power, they thought this was too high. Queen’s University Archive, C.G. Power Papers, Box 68, D-2011, “Diary-Mission to United Kingdom 1942,” 20 Aug. 1942.

⁴⁵ Ross Munro, “Peg Regiment Battles 4 Miles Inland at Dieppe,” *Vancouver Sun*, 22 Aug. 1942, 17; Munro, “Canadian Staff Officers Planned Raid for Months,” *Toronto Star*, 25 Aug. 1942, 10.

⁴⁶ William H. Stoneman “Full Dieppe Story Not Yet Revealed,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 21 Aug., 1942, 10.

communicate some new information, only the military had access to a more complete picture.

Unable to tell the whole story of Dieppe, reporters emphasised human-interest stories and soon fulfilled Ralston's promise of 20 August that "in the next few days there will emerge many stories of dauntless heroism."⁴⁷ Richard characterizes this stage of French language reporting as the heroic phase and heroism became the main ingredient of English language stories as well.⁴⁸ Munro and Griffin reported Col. Cecil Merritt's actions at the Scie Bridge that later earned him the Victoria Cross.⁴⁹ Correspondents also featured the deeds of enlisted men such as twelve members of the Fusiliers Montreal who escaped capture after clubbing their captor with a lead pipe.⁵⁰ Such stories filled the newspapers for weeks and would be repeated in October after the announcement of the decorations awarded to participants in the Dieppe raid.

The Canadian PROs, largely shut out of the planning of the raid, now scrambled to assist journalists in obtaining stories in the raid's aftermath. They made a special effort to accommodate the press, after British United Press reporter Francis H. Fisher publicly complained that accredited war correspondents did not have immediate access to the men of the returning force. To make up for this fiasco, the PR units strove to make eyewitnesses available, probably chosen to shape the heroic focus of the stories.⁵¹ These

⁴⁷ *Toronto Star*, 20 Aug. 1942, 3.

⁴⁸ Richard, *La Mémoire De Dieppe*, 54.

⁴⁹ Ross Munro, "Colonel is Hero," *Montreal Star*, 22 Aug. 1942, p.2; Fred Griffin, "Wounded Give Griffin First-Hand Accounts of Heroism on Beach," *Toronto Star*, 24 Aug. 1942, 2.

⁵⁰ William Stewart, "Fusiliers See Captured Mates Slain by Enemy," *Montreal Star*, 21 Aug. 1942, 4.

⁵¹ DND DHH, 112.1 D66, "NDHQ to CMHQ Cable GS 2995", 21 Aug. 1942; LAC, RG24, vol. 12329, 4/Dieppe/1, "Memorandum Re: GS2286 by Major Abel," 22 Aug. 1942.

formed the basis of many human-interest stories about the raid. Such interviews were not solely the result of the initiative of the PROs; General McNaughton, commander of First Canadian Army, actively encouraged interviews with participants in the raid and was more responsive than the British generals in making them available to journalists.⁵² Correspondent A.E. Cummings credited this to McNaughton's greater understanding of the value of the press in wartime.⁵³ The heroic stories, of course, made good newspaper copy.

While COHQ permitted Canadian and American interviews with *Jubilee* personnel, they prevented their publication in the British press or interviews with British personnel. Controller of Press Censorship for the MoI, Francis Williams tried to authorize the publication of the interviews, but Mountbatten claimed that this "would break an agreement on the subject." Williams then backed down.⁵⁴ Thus, the press coverage of Dieppe in the UK was far more restricted than that in Canada. The newspapers had stories based on the communiqués and the accounts of the British war correspondents who accompanied the raid, but little else. This lack of British publicity resulted from COHQ's decision to "kill" further newspaper accounts of the raid. An internal COHQ report on publicity explains this decision:

Throughout the subsequent days, the raid continued to absorb the interest of the press and broadcasting organizations. COHQ, however, in order to prevent the raid from remaining the main item in the Press and on the radio at a time when the Russian Army was fighting desperately and continuous actions were taking place in other areas of the war, recommended that further news, feature articles and broadcasts should as far as possible be stopped. Exceptions were made on policy

⁵² Ibid., McNaughton to VCGS, cable GS 3070, 27 Aug. 1942.

⁵³ A.E. Cummings, "Gen. McNaughton Sees Value of Press in War," *Calgary Herald*, 10 Sept. 1942, 5.

⁵⁴ NA, DEFE 2/ 329, "Record of Main Enquires etc. Dealt with by PR Section COHQ, 21 Aug. 1942."

grounds in the case of Canada, the United States, the Dominions and to some extent in broadcasts to countries ranking as Allies in enemy-occupied Europe... Refusal to allow broadcasts and to grant Press facilities to obtain follow-up stories, aided by the co-operation of the Service Ministries, the BBC and sections of the Press was responsible for the rapid “killing” of the story of the raid, apart from comments in the Press in articles by special writers.⁵⁵

The idea that the publicity seeking Mountbatten would turn the spotlight away from himself and his organization simply out of concern that it might overshadow the Russian war seems ludicrous. Despite this, the *Memorandum for the Jubilee Communiqué Meeting* has some discussion about avoiding overemphasis on the raid by not holding an official interview session at the MoI, although the questions of other interviews was to be determined according to “conditions after the raid.”⁵⁶ Normally PR policy for COHQ raids allowed only interviews with designated personnel at the post raid press conference.⁵⁷ Therefore, forbidding further interviews might have raised a few eyebrows in the UK, if it were not for the much larger scale of the operation and its international nature. Refusing facilities and forbidding UK interviews were, in the words of Canadian author Ronald Atkin, “part of a deliberate policy to ‘kill’ an embarrassing story as quickly as possible.”⁵⁸ Nonetheless, during the second phase of the Dieppe press coverage, COHQ allowed in effect, two different approaches to publicity. In the UK, where Mountbatten had the most to lose, the story was “killed.” In Canada, where the story was too big to bury, COHQ allowed the interviews that formed so large a part of the apologetics of the “failure plan.”

⁵⁵ Ibid., Squadron Leader F.C. Gillman, “Operation Jubilee, Report of the Public Relations Section,” n.d. 7.

⁵⁶ LAC, RG 24, vol. 10708, 59-1-0 INT. 215 C1 (D360), *Memorandum for “Jubilee” Communiqué Meeting*.

⁵⁷ NA, INF, 1/917, Francis Williams, Letter “Combined Operations, 7 May 1942.

⁵⁸ Atkin, *Dieppe 1942*, 258-9.

The correspondents' reports were the main source of information during this second period, but a few official releases, notably casualty lists, still influenced press coverage. First published on the evening of August 21, they continued on a regular basis until September 4, when Adjutant General Harry Letson announced that all casualty records had arrived from overseas and the next-of-kin had been informed. The list numbered 170 dead and 626 wounded, although Letson indicated, "there are much larger numbers listed as missing."⁵⁹ How much larger these numbers were remained secret until the Canadian military released the information on September 15. The delay was due to the MoI pressuring the Canadian military to stop publishing the names of the missing, allegedly to avoid alerting the Germans to those who may have evaded capture. A more convincing explanation is that the MoI wanted Canadian compliance with the British policy of delaying the publication of casualties.⁶⁰

The growing casualty lists had several effects on the press coverage. First, the tone of the press became more sombre. With pictures and stories of local casualties, newspapers across the country illustrated the cost. The *Globe and Mail* observed, "Dieppe the name that thrilled the nation with high hopes scant days ago, has brought deep gloom to hundreds of Canadian homes." A *Globe and Mail* editorial cartoon featured a group of civilians complaining about conditions on the Home Front; in the background was a shadow of a Canadian Soldier on a giant Dieppe casualty list.⁶¹ Civilian sacrifice could not compare to the loss of life at Dieppe.

⁵⁹ *Ottawa Journal*, 4 Sept. 1942, 1.

⁶⁰ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12329, 4/ Dieppe 1, CMHQ to NDHQ, Cable GS 3008, 24 Aug., 1942.

⁶¹ *Globe and Mail*, 24 Aug. 1942, 6; *Globe and Mail*, 28 Aug. 1942, 6.

As well as fostering a more sombre tone, the casualty lists encouraged some doubt about the official version of Dieppe. Until the release of the final casualty numbers on September 15, most newspapers continued to portray Dieppe as a heroic, if tragic, success. Inevitably, some journalists began to be critical. The *Ottawa Journal* was the first to question elements of the official version, objecting to the comment of Lt. General Kenneth Stuart, the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) at NDHQ, that: “We walked into the Boche’s parlour through the front door at a time we chose and we left by the same front door when we wanted to leave. We were able to test the Boche defences under actual combat conditions, kill Huns and destroy what we could.” The *Journal* could not reconcile these comments and the image of a heroic victory with the growing casualty lists: “Can we be expected to know the truth and act upon it if those who are leaders keep the facts from us and try to feed us on sugar-coated stories?”⁶² Similarly, in the weekly magazine *Saturday Night*, Wilson Woodside called Dieppe both a success and a failure. He cast doubt on whether the Canadians had indeed captured the town or even intended to do so.⁶³ John Collingwood Reade of the *Globe and Mail* was the most critical: “Despite official protestations that the Raid on Dieppe was a startling success, there is little evidence to justify that conclusion.”⁶⁴ Reade’s scepticism became the editorial position of the *Globe and Mail*.

This sombre tone and sceptical view also appeared in the UK press. Although COHQ could prevent interviews and refuse facilities to journalists, editorial opinion

⁶² *Ottawa Journal*, 25 Aug. 1942, 10.

⁶³ Wilson Woodside, “Our Success and Failure at Dieppe”, *Saturday Night* 57, 51 (29 Aug. 1942); 12.

⁶⁴ John Collingwood Reade, “Dieppe’s Lessons Being Studied,” *Globe and Mail*, 26 Aug. 1942, 3.

could not be completely stifled. On August 28, the military correspondent of the *Evening Standard* pointed out many weaknesses in the Dieppe plan: not enough air support, no use of heavy bombers, no heavy ships providing fire support, use of a frontal assault rather than attacking on the flanks, and not dropping paratroopers. It cast doubts on the lessons learned from Dieppe:

It is important to realise that whatever else we may have learned in this raid, it was not a full test of the German defences. Given all the modern forms of battle, which we do not lack, we could have attacked the enemy both in depth and on the front that would have compelled him to disperse his defences. From such an attack, we might have learnt a very different lesson.⁶⁵

The *Evening Standard* editorial was the first appearance in print of what became many of the standard critiques of the raid.

Understandably, the article caused alarm in some of the military services. Because of the criticism of air support, some in the RAF Air Staff became very suspicious of the author's motivations. Air Vice Marshall J.C. Slessor, the Vice Chief of Air Staff (Personnel), believed that the piece represented an attempt to "deliberately stir up trouble between the services" by newspaper owner Lord Beaverbrook "and other saboteurs." Beaverbrook had a history of conflict with the Air Staff in his former position as Minister of Aircraft Production; his current "Second Front Now!" campaign strongly opposed the RAF strategic bombing plan as Britain's major effort against Germany. Slessor suggested that the RAF launch a counter attack by having retired Air Marshall Playfair write an article responding to the offending column. Vice Chief of Air Staff Wilfred Freeman commented, "the WO [War Office], CCO, and Beaverbrook are always ready to combine against the RAF." Air Marshall Richard Peck, who oversaw RAF PR, believed the

⁶⁵ *Evening Standard*, 28 Aug. 1943.

accusations paranoid. Not only did the charges against Dieppe not appear in other Beaverbrook newspapers but several of their editorials were even quite positive about the raid. Peck reasoned that the offending editorial reflected popular opinion and that of “irresponsible parties in the War Office” whose target was not the RAF but Mountbatten, of whom they were jealous. Although Peck recommended publishing no counter opinion piece, the apologetic article appeared in a London newspaper, *The Star*, arguing against an expectation that the RAF could win battles for land forces.⁶⁶ In retrospect, Peck was correct about the *Evening Standard* criticisms being aimed at COHQ rather than the RAF, as Mountbatten’s reaction to the editorial demonstrate. Beaverbrook, angered by the Canadians’ loss in the raid, became unremittingly hostile to Mountbatten.⁶⁷

The Air Staff’s discussions about the article bring to light Mountbatten’s first attempt to silence critics of the Dieppe raid.⁶⁸ The report from a staff intelligence officer concerning the *Evening Standard* article that began their discussions noted,

⁶⁶ NA, AIR 20/4209 Minute 2, Air Marshall J.C. Slessor, 31 Aug. 1942; A.J.P. Taylor, *Beaverbrook* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), 416, 431, 510, 526; NA, AIR 20/4209, Minute 4 Air Marshall W. Freeman, 3 Sept. 1942; Minute 3, Air Marshall Peck, 1 Sept. 1942; Air Marshall Patrick Playfair, “Bombers Will not Win Land Battles,” *The Star* (London), 7 Sept. 1942, 7.

⁶⁷ Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 538. Beaverbrook’s papers include post-war press clippings indicating this hostility to Mountbatten. House of Lords Record Office, Beaverbrook papers, BBK/C/255, *Sunday Express*, 11 Jan. 1953; *Daily Express*, 6 Jan. 1952 (the date is unclear).

⁶⁸ Throughout his career, Mountbatten sought to control public perception of the raid and the writing of its history in such a way as to deflect blame from himself. In 1943 American war correspondent, Quentin Reynolds’s book on the raid accused the Canadians of changing Mountbatten’s original plan to include a frontal assault on Dieppe. C.P. Stacey says that McNaughton believed the source for this to be Mountbatten, although he refused to respond to the C.C.O.’s accusations publicly. Brian Villa demonstrates that Mountbatten convinced Churchill to replace his original critical account of the raid in *The Hinge of Fate* with a more positive one written by Mountbatten himself. Hugh Henry’s Ph.D. dissertation explains how in 1958 Mountbatten ordered the admiralty *Battle Summary* rewritten to blame the decision for the frontal attack on Montgomery, despite protests from former COHQ planners that Montgomery was not involved at that point of the planning. Mountbatten was preparing to defend himself against Montgomery’s negative evaluation of Dieppe in his soon to be published *Memoirs*. In 1974, Mountbatten, in a speech published in the *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute*, again accused the Canadians of changing his original plan to a frontal attack. In a subsequent issue, C.P. Stacey corrected him. Quentin Reynolds, *Dress Rehearsal: The Story of Dieppe* (Garden City: Blue Ribbon, 1943), 263; C.P. Stacey, *A Date With*

The article as published was very much toned down from the galleyproof. What pressure was brought to bear to tone it down is not known, but there is good reason to believe that the pressure came after discussions on a very high plane.⁶⁹

The answer of who these “personages” were came from RAF head of intelligence Air Vice Marshall C.E.H. Medhurst. The story “was toned down by orders of the Prime Minister, whose notice had been drawn to the article by the CCO.”⁷⁰ If the information is correct, Mountbatten and Churchill attempted to stifle press criticism of the raid behind the scenes, but with only partial success, given the level of censure remaining in the column. Although this effort occurred in the British press, Mountbatten’s attempts to protect the raid’s reputation brought him into conflict with Canadian military authorities who wished to release fuller information in the next phase of the press coverage.

In what Richard characterizes as the third phase, the “revelation,” from September 8-19, official releases provided the overview that the correspondents could not and again became the main source of the press coverage.⁷¹ In fact, this last stage really began on September 15, when NDHQ began releasing its information. Churchill’s September revelation that Canadians formed most of the landing force inspired little editorial comment, since Canadians already understood that Canada played the leading role at Dieppe. The publication of the total casualties on September 15 had a more profound effect. Until then, the total casualties published were 925; the release of the figures for

History (Ottawa: Deneau, 1982) 94-96; Villa, *Unauthorized Action*, 39, Hugh Henry, “A Reappraisal of the Dieppe Raid, 19 August 1942: Planning, Intelligence and Execution” (Ph.D. Thesis: Cambridge University, 1996), 35-38; Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, *Memoirs* (London: Collins, 1958), 76-77; Earl Mountbatten of Burma, “Operation Jubilee: The Place of the Dieppe Raid in History,” *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution for Defence Studies* 119 no.1 (1974): 27; C.P. Stacey, “Dieppe,” *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution for Defence Studies* 119 no.4 (1974), 97.

⁶⁹ NA, AIR 16 /764, G.W. Grant to A.C.A.S. (I), 29 Aug. 1942.

⁷⁰ NA, AIR 20/4209 C.E.H. Medhurst to A.C.A.S. (P), 30 Aug. 1942.

⁷¹ Richard, *La Mémoire De Dieppe* , 63.

those missing more than tripled them to 3,350.⁷² This 134-page NDHQ release, the longest one-day casualty list in Canadian history, was so massive that some papers printed it in instalments.⁷³ Editorials almost uniformly expressed shock at the enormity of the losses. For example, the *Globe and Mail* observed, “the announcement... must have shocked and dismayed every Canadian.”⁷⁴ Some newspapers began to criticize the military’s information policy. The *Regina Leader-Post*, while accepting the need for heavy casualties, was critical of the tendency to “soften the blow, to minimize the losses, and accentuate the ‘glory part’ of Dieppe.”⁷⁵

This revelation doubtlessly embarrassed British authorities who had tried to play down the casualties in press guidance, memorandums not for publication, but to help journalists “understand” the operation. An undated guidance, although clearly issued after Churchill’s speech, tried to address “wild and alarmist rumours” about the raid, the main one being that casualties were heavy and that some units “were almost annihilated.” The alleged purpose of the rumours was to “lower army morale and influence civilian opinion against similar operations in the future,” but the gossip gave “an entirely false impression.” Rather than failing, the “raid achieved its basic purpose, namely the successful landing of troops and tanks on an enemy controlled beach.” The guidance downplayed the casualties as “not more than 30%” claiming this “was less than anticipated” and the German losses exceeded those of the Allies. The Canadian casualty numbers doubtless raised great suspicion among the press and Churchill’s opposition. On

⁷² *Toronto Star*, 10 Sept. 1942, 14.

⁷³ *Ottawa Citizen*, 15 Sept. 1942, 12.

⁷⁴ *Globe and Mail*, 16 Sept. 1942, 6.

⁷⁵ *Regina Leader –Post*, 17 Sept. 1942, 11.

October 1, Churchill had no choice but to admit he also included naval and air forces when he earlier claimed in parliament that most of the Dieppe force returned.⁷⁶

The next revelation came on September 18, when Ralston published an official explanation of Dieppe. On August 26, NDHQ had asked McNaughton for this “white paper” to publish in the newspapers. Though giving a more complete overview than the communiqués and correspondents, the “white paper” provided little new information. It claimed the main objective of the raid was to “gather information and experience vital to the general offensive program,” explaining in very general terms the planning, command structure and forces involved. It called a chance encounter with the German convoy a key element in the battle since it alerted the defenders and delayed the landings. Thus, when the Royal Regiment of Canada landed late at Blue Beach, it faced alert defenders and its inability to silence the batteries that enfiladed the main beach “affected the success of the landings.” Therefore, bad luck caused the heavy casualties. The paper also featured accounts of the gallantry of Canadian and Allied troops, retelling the story of the heroism of Col. Merritt. It also highlighted the few tactical successes of the raid. Ralston assured the public that heavy casualties were to be “expected in amphibious operations of this type” and, while saying “no public analysis of the lessons learned is possible,” concluded that the information gained by the raid was of great value.⁷⁷

The first concern behind the “white paper” was to address the “slight uneasiness in the minds of the Canadian people” about Dieppe, reflecting the beginnings of criticism as the casualty lists grew. NDHQ also wanted information beyond the correspondents’

⁷⁶ NA, DEFE 2/329, “Press Guidance No.9” n.d.; *The Times*, 1 Oct., 1942, 8.

⁷⁷ The complete text of the “white paper” is in the *Toronto Star*, 18 Sept. 1942, 3.

accounts, which were “nearly all confined to a description of the evacuation and fighting on the beaches... rather than the fact that our troops carried out an offensive attack and succeeded in penetrating the enemy defences.”⁷⁸ This statement raises doubts concerning NDHQ’s understanding of Dieppe, especially in light of the General Stuart’s ridiculous August 22 comments about Canadians “walking through the Boche’s front door.” Confirming Stuart’s ignorance was his September 24 memorandum to Ralston, defending the raid as a success while admitting he had “limited knowledge,” and was “not aware of the official purposes of the operation.”⁷⁹ The positive portrait of Dieppe in the communiqués and newspapers likely overly influenced Stuart and NDHQ. The penetration of defences at Pourville and by very small parties on the main beach were not typical.

The third purpose of the “white paper” was to justify the cost of the raid. NDHQ wanted “some indication of the benefits gained from the raid,” to counteract the impact of the casualty lists. The paper was to demonstrate “casualties were not, repeat not, unduly high in view of the operations.”⁸⁰ The difficulty was that the casualties were much higher than the anticipated maximum of 600.⁸¹ NDHQ did not necessarily know of these estimates though McNaughton certainly did.

Rather than relying on a PRO, Historical officer Major C.P. Stacey was assigned the task of writing the “white paper.” This made sense since Stacey had greater access to

⁷⁸ LAC, RG24, vol. 12329, 4/Dieppe/1, VCGS to McNaughton, Cable GS 383, 26 Aug. 1942.

⁷⁹ LAC, Ralston papers, MG27, series III B II, vol. 24, HQ S.8809, “Memorandum Stuart to Minister,” 24 Sept. 1942.

⁸⁰ LAC, RG24, vol. 12329, 4/Dieppe/1, VCGS to McNaughton, Cable GS 383, 26 Aug. 1942.

⁸¹ LAC, RG24, vol. 12468, 6/Dieppe/1, “1 CD Corps Adm. Instruction, Jubilee No.1,” 19 Aug. 1942.

the military records. After Stacey submitted it on September 4, Maj. Gen. Haydon of Combined Operations demanded its review and approval by COHQ, who insisted on deleting much of the report, allegedly for security reasons. Outraged, Brig. H.A. Young of CMHQ confronted Mountbatten and complained that “little purpose” would be “served by preparing despatches for submission to Canada if they were to be heavily censored.”⁸² Although understating COHQ’s interference in the “white paper” in the official history, Stacey was not constrained in his memoirs where he recorded his anger and listed the major changes.⁸³ A comparison of the original and the published text makes clear that Mountbatten’s many objections were based on his wish to preserve the illusion of success, although he clearly also emphasised elements of the “failure plan” as well.⁸⁴

Mountbatten felt that Stacey’s paper did not do “justice to the good fighting spirit displayed by the Canadians in the operation”⁸⁵ and added more heroic description to Stacey’s already heroic narrative. This conformed to the plan to distract from failure by emphasising the troops’ courage. COHQ also deleted most of Stacey’s statements hinting at failure or putting the raid in a bad light, including, most significantly, one of his concluding statements: “It is obvious from the above narrative that a great part of the limited and local objectives of the raid were not attained. The demolitions actually effected were on a much smaller scale than had been hoped for, although considerable damage was done.” Instead, the revised version boasted that “enemy batteries and a

⁸² LAC, RG24, vol. 12329, 4/Dieppe/1, “Memorandum by Brig. Young,” 5 Sept. 1942.

⁸³ Stacey, *Six Years*, 394; Stacey, *A Date With History* (Ottawa: Deneau, 1982), 90-93.

⁸⁴ In the following paragraphs all quotations from Stacey’s original draft are from DND DHH, CMHQ Report 83, “Preliminary Report on Operation Jubilee.” All references to the published “white paper” are from the *Montreal Star*, 18 Sept. 1942, 4.

⁸⁵ “Memorandum by Brig. Young,” 5 Sept. 1942.

radiolocation station were destroyed, heavy casualties were inflicted ... prisoners of war were brought back, and one and possibly two armed vessels were sunk.” Since COHQ saw the capture of objectives as the raid’s measure of success; it could not permit Stacey’s honest assessment of the mission’s tactical accomplishments.

Stacey’s original “white paper” was a relatively detailed and frank account of Dieppe; COHQ’s revisions rendered it both less informative and more promotional. Nonetheless, even before its revision, the “white paper” represented an apology for Dieppe, fulfilling some of the purposes suggested by NDHQ. Stacey claimed heavy casualties were expected in amphibious landings, citing Gallipoli as a precedent, although COHQ removed that battle’s name to avoid damning comparisons. Stacey also appealed to the “lessons learned” to justify the cost of the raid. This apologetic was part of COHQ’s publicity strategy from the beginning. Despite its limitations, the report clarified the overall operation and ended some misconceptions, especially the belief that Canadians captured Dieppe, when in reality only “small parties” penetrated the German defences and got into the town.⁸⁶

The “white paper” and the simultaneous release of the total number of Canadians involved in the raid, which allowed the sixty-seven percent casualty rate to be calculated, led to increased criticism of both the operation and government information. On September 19, the *Globe and Mail* complained that Ralston’s report provided no more information and created such new questions as why a raid clearly dependent on surprise was not aborted after the convoy encounter. John Collingwood Reade became even more critical, questioning whether the raid was “well conceived, adequately planned, and

⁸⁶ *Toronto Star*, 18 Sept. 1942, 3; Stacey, *Six Years*, 380, 390.

shrewdly directed.” The gains were not worth the casualties, as any lessons learned were offset by knowledge gained by the enemy. He believed that the chief lesson of Dieppe was “that military commanders should have learned from their own mistakes and the inadequacy of their own equipment. No useful purpose is ever served by puffing up a doubtful experiment and magnifying it into a great victory.”⁸⁷ Similarly, the *Ottawa Journal* observed that had the Germans raided an English port and experienced similar results, the Allies would have marked the repulse as a major victory. It complained that the “effort to minimize the price paid has been rather painfully profuse.”⁸⁸

Most of the press, however, was either silent or accepted the official version of the Dieppe story. A number of editorials had already conceded the high cost of this type of raid.⁸⁹ The *Winnipeg Free Press* claimed that Ralston’s “complete and candid” statement refuted the critics of the raid, pointed to the value of the “lessons learned,” and was far more honest than Stuart’s much maligned statement of Canadians walking through the Germans’ front door. The *Montreal Star* praised the report as revealing the whole story, especially the explanation of the effects of the convoy encounter, and asserting that the raid was part of an “agreed offensive policy.” A *Calgary Herald* editorial cartoon on September 19 demonstrated that the revelations did not change its views on Dieppe. The cartoon showed a surprised Hitler, with a sign reading “Dieppe” on

⁸⁷ *Globe and Mail*, 19 Sept. 1942, 6; Reade, “Many Grave Doubts Raised by Official Report on Dieppe,” *Globe and Mail*, 19 Sept. 1942, 3.

⁸⁸ *Ottawa Journal*, 22 Sept. 1942, 8.

⁸⁹ *Winnipeg Free Press*, 16 Sept. 1942, 15; *Ottawa Citizen*, 16 Sept. 1942, 24; *Toronto Star*, 17 Sept. 1942, 6.

his back, being kicked in the buttocks by a giant foot labelled “Commando raids,” the force propelling him into the arms of an angry Russian bear.⁹⁰

The varying responses of both French- and English-language newspapers to the September revelations often mirrored the editors’ political stance. In Quebec, *Le Canada*, a pro-Liberal paper, used its Dieppe coverage to promote support for the war effort and national unity. *Le Devoir*, strongly opposed to both the war and King’s government, used the raid to attack the government but it did not directly criticise the military aspects of the raid.⁹¹ In English Canada, while the major newspapers fully supported the war, many opposed King’s government, especially on conscription, the most important political issue of 1942. Conservative papers like the *Globe and Mail* saw in the Dieppe story an opportunity to assail the King government’s conscription policy. After the release of the total casualties, Conservative newspapers attacked King’s reluctance to implement full conscription; the *Toronto Telegram* declared that the government “could not through its opposition to conscription, leave our men unsupported in the field.”⁹² These efforts at reviving the issue by invoking the Dieppe casualties failed. This attempt to revive the controversy was futile and the issue faded until 1944.⁹³

Critics had to walk a fine line between attacking King’s policy and not appearing to undermine the war effort. Only those papers most hostile to the government, such as the *Globe and Mail*, openly criticized the Dieppe operation directly. Well known for

⁹⁰ *Winnipeg Free Press* 21 Sept. 1942, 15; *Montreal Star*, 18 Sept. 1942, 10; *Calgary Herald*, 19 Sept. 1942, 7.

⁹¹ Richard, *La Mémoire De Dieppe*, 23, 72-73.

⁹² *Toronto Telegram*, 19 Sept. 1942; *Montreal Gazette*, 17 Sept. 1942, 8.

⁹³ Patrick H. Brennan, *Reporting the Nation’s Business: Press-Government Relations during the Liberal years, 1935-1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 65.

support of the Conservatives, it boasted of being the “foremost newspaper critic of the government.”⁹⁴ Over time, its criticism of Dieppe became blunter. In the spring of 1943, when Ralston defended Dieppe in Parliament from attacks by both CCF MP Tommy Douglas and the Conservative opposition, the *Globe and Mail* consistently rejected the Minister’s explanations, calling the raid “a fiasco of the first order; a tragedy of military blundering without parallel in this war.”⁹⁵ The *Ottawa Journal*, also a Conservative organ, was likewise critical of the raid and the government, but was less blunt than the *Globe and Mail*.

Conversely, newspapers that supported the Liberal government were the least critical of Dieppe. The *Winnipeg Free Press* consistently backed the government’s defence of Dieppe as did the *Ottawa Citizen* and *Toronto Star*.⁹⁶ Despite its usual support for the Liberals, the *Regina Leader-Post* criticized the delay of “military authorities” in reporting the cost of Dieppe, believing that the Canadian public could have handled the bad news. This probably had much to do with the visibility of the casualties and grief in the small communities of southern Saskatchewan. Nonetheless, the *Leader-Post* was careful to attack only shadowy “military authorities” not the Liberal government itself.⁹⁷ Many newspapers avoided taking a clear side in the debate. By default, this gave tacit support to the official version of the story and its handling by government. It also was

⁹⁴ *Globe and Mail*, 27 May 1943, 6.

⁹⁵ *Globe and Mail*, 27 Apr. 1943, 6.

⁹⁶ *Winnipeg Free Press*, 16 Sept. 1942, 15; 17 Sept. 1942, 17; 21 Sept. 1942; 15; 19 May 1943, 15; 27 May 1943, 14.

⁹⁷ *Regina Leader-Post*, 17 Sept. 1942; 11.

another way to avoid criticism of the war effort.⁹⁸ Therefore, partisan politics were important, but not always determinative of editorial positions on Dieppe.

The press coverage of Dieppe was influenced by the limited sources of information on which it relied, namely the official communiqués that portrayed Dieppe as a success. War correspondents, because of limited knowledge and censorship, emphasised heroic human-interest stories, which the military encouraged. The complete disclosure of casualties and an official overview of the raid broke the illusion of success created by the initial communiqués and continued by the correspondents and created a more sombre tone. What had begun as Canada's first day of martial glory had become a day of grief, and in the opinion of some, a disastrous failure.

While what is truthful may be a question of perspective COHQ's portrayal of Dieppe as a success was too obviously a false claim to stand unquestioned. This was the opinion of several prominent players in military publicity in the United Kingdom. Air Marshall Richard Peck wrote in a private note: "The public feel that the story was a good deal too optimistically told in the newspapers, with which I fully agree."⁹⁹ Major Astor, who clearly did not tow the COHQ party line, also wrote of declining public confidence resulting from misleading communiqués:

Loss of confidence by the public and by our forces themselves in reliability of press stories is already evident. It has long worried those closely those concerned in closely observing morale. Its main cause has been the misuse in communiqués of such phrases as "successful withdrawal," "according to plan," etc. and to

⁹⁸ Newspapers that did not defend or criticize the government on Dieppe after September 18 include *Vancouver Sun*, *Hamilton Spectator*, *Halifax Herald* and the *Vancouver Province*. The *Calgary Herald* did not express an editorial opinion until it called for an end to the parliamentary Dieppe debate on May 29, although even the *Globe and Mail* wanted to end the controversy by this time. The *Regina Leader-Post*, apart from its September 17 editorial, also remained silent.

⁹⁹ NA, AIR 20/4209, Minute 3, Richard Peck, 1 Sept. 1942.

irresponsible “ballyhoo” reporting by journalists who believe that optimism and sound morale are the same thing.¹⁰⁰

The approach criticized by Astor violated the principles of effective military public relations as explained by Phillip Knightley:

All the military manuals follow basic principles- appear open, transparent and eager to help; never go in for summary repression or direct control; nullify rather than conceal undesirable news; control emphasis rather than the facts; balance bad news with good; and lie directly only when certain that lie will not be found out in the course of the war.¹⁰¹

The COHQ version claiming tactical success did not last a month without raising questions, let alone until war’s end. While both COHQ and the Canadian military tried to colour the information, COHQ was more willing to cover up unpleasant facts about the raid. Nonetheless, even after COHQ editing, the “white paper” could not conceal the tactical failure of Dieppe. The “lessons learned” justification was much more effective since the nature of the lessons needed to remain secret until the war’s end.

In his study of German and British propaganda, Michael Balfour discusses three types of falsehood in propaganda applicable to the Dieppe raid: “the deliberate lie,” “suppressed truth,” and the “slanting of news.”¹⁰² Outright lies were the least common element, most notably the claim that casualties were not as heavy as expected. Information allegedly of value to the enemy was suppressed, although much seemed aimed at keeping the public rather than Germans in the dark. Playing up the heroism and the alleged value of the raid-- “slanting the news,”--was the major type of falsehood in the Dieppe publicity.

¹⁰⁰NA, DEFE 2/329, F.D.L. Astor, “Public Relations and the Dieppe Raid,” 24 Aug. 1942.

¹⁰¹ Knightley, *First Casualty*, 484.

¹⁰² Michael Balfour, *Propaganda in War 1939-1945* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1979), 427-431.

Given the deception involved, it is unsurprising that the public relations campaign had very mixed results among Canadians. No poll clearly demonstrates contemporary public opinion about Dieppe. A Canadian Institute of Public Opinion (CIPO) poll about Canadian's trust of war news published on September 19, 1942, showed that fifty-six percent of Canadians trusted war news while thirty-six percent did not, but in Quebec, the majority was distrustful. Although Richard cites this poll, the date of the actual polling is unknown. Typically, CIPO polls, while claiming to be current, were conducted three to eight weeks prior to publication. Both the newspapers and *Public Opinion Quarterly* give only the date of publication.¹⁰³ Since the polling likely occurred before Dieppe, the most that can be concluded from this poll is that the majority of English Canadians trusted war news.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that while some Canadians accepted the official story of Dieppe, others did not. The military felt pressured to issue an official explanation of Dieppe, because of the “feeling of slight uneasiness in the minds of the Canadian people about Dieppe.”¹⁰⁴ This was an understatement; the military would not feel pressured to respond to “slight uneasiness.” Some contemporaries noted public questioning of the official version of Dieppe. Gillis Purcell of the Canadian Press advised McNaughton not to be concerned with newspaper criticisms of Dieppe, even

¹⁰³ Richard, *La Mémoire De Dieppe*, 61; Daniel J. Robinson, *The Measure of Democracy: Polling Market Research and Public Life* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 84; *Public Opinion Quarterly* 6 (Winter 1942), 659. Unfortunately, the date cannot be determined because no CIPO poll records before 1945 are preserved. Association of Public Data Users, *Submission to the National Data Archive Consultation Working Group*, 17 Sept.2000, http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/assoc/capdu/ndac_sub1b.htm (accessed 8 Jan. 2004).

¹⁰⁴ DND DHH, 112.1 D66, 383 VCGS to McNaughton, cable GS, 26 Aug.1942.

though they are “a reflection of comment on the street.”¹⁰⁵ A *Winnipeg Free Press* editorial also condemned talk on the street, criticizing those who claimed that the British deliberately used the Canadians for this “stunt” to avoid casualties themselves.¹⁰⁶ Distrust of the official version of Dieppe was not limited to “the street.” Mackenzie King, after reading aloud the “white paper,” wondered “if the information gained could begin to equal the heavy losses.”¹⁰⁷ There was too much of a divorce between the events at Dieppe and the overly optimistic story sold to the Canadian public to convince everyone.

Ideally, the expectation in a liberal democracy is that government officials and agencies should not lie to the public as this deceit undermines confidence in the political system itself. In wartime, this rule blurs, as there are often valid security reasons to withhold or even falsify information. Nevertheless, even then it usually benefits the government to release as much accurate information as possible. If official information is unreliable, people distrust it, and a critical public policy tool becomes weakened. Balanced against the long-term benefits of wartime openness in publicity is the temptation for short-term gain by covering up or misrepresenting unpleasant items. Nonetheless, there is always the risk that the truth will emerge, doing damage to reputation and public trust. The bitter parliamentary debates of 1943 on Dieppe and the cloud of suspicion that developed about the raid and continues to this day, suggests that this was the case with the Dieppe publicity. The entry of Canada’s Army into continuous

¹⁰⁵ LAC, A.G.L. McNaughton Collection, MG 30, E133, vol. 135, PA1-8-1, Purcell to McNaughton, 28 Sept. 1942.

¹⁰⁶ Reprinted in *Ottawa Citizen* 24 Aug. 1942, 20.

¹⁰⁷ LAC, *Mackenzie King Diaries*, 769, 19 Sept. 1942 <http://www.King.archives.ca/EN/Default.asp> (accessed November 5, 2003). In subsequent years, Mackenzie King came to believe that the lessons of Dieppe were necessary for the successful invasion of France.

action beginning in July 1943 in Sicily certainly focussed the public's attention on other matters. Questions about Dieppe lingered, however; as Stacey wrote in 1948, Dieppe remains "the most hotly-discussed operation of the war."¹⁰⁸ Controversy became the dominant tone in Dieppe historiography. Yet there was little long-term damage to English Canadians' trust in war news in general, as sixty-two percent of Canadians expressed confidence in it in 1944, although a majority in Quebec still mistrusted it.¹⁰⁹

Canadian authorities faced a great obstacle in being more candid about Dieppe; they were part of an alliance. As a junior partner in a larger coalition, Canada has always experienced tension between the ability to act independently and the need to show solidarity with more powerful allies. Had Canada parted from the British pattern of falsehood that characterized the Dieppe publicity, it could have embarrassed the British and strained the alliance. Short-term gain and alliance solidarity trumped an accurate account of Dieppe for the Canadian public. As a result, the raid became the low point for Canadian Army war news during the war.

It also was a low point for the Canadian Army's PR organization. During a largely Canadian operation, they received little opportunity to contribute to the publicity planning which remained the responsibility of COHQ PR. Instead, apart from rubber stamping the PR plan three days before the raid, Canadian PROs' main contributions were conducting the Canadian journalists during the raid and then scrambling to make up for COHQ errors afterwards. Even the most important piece of Canadian publicity about the raid, "the white paper," was assigned to a historian rather than the PROs who were

¹⁰⁸ Stacey, *Canadian Army at War*, 83.

¹⁰⁹ Jeffery A. Keshen, *Sinners Saints and Soldiers* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 18.

experienced journalists. This certainly made sense given Stacey's access to the military records but again relegated Canadian PR into the publicity background. For the first big operation for Canadian Army PR, it was an unpromising beginning.

On the other hand, Lord Mountbatten certainly achieved his goal of protecting his and his organization's sterling public reputations. Despite much public criticism of the raid in the Canadian newspapers, little muck was aimed at him. In time, it no longer became necessary for Mountbatten to maintain the fiction about the tactical successes of the raid and like Stacey, whose "white paper" he had once condemned, he portrayed the raid as a costly tactical failure that taught lessons that contributed to later success in Normandy.¹¹⁰ This metamorphosis is understandable since Mountbatten's goal of protecting COHQ's and his own reputation seemed more important to the original publicity than the actual events of the battle themselves.

During the Dieppe raid, smoke obscured the view of the battle for General Roberts, commanding the landing forces, from the H.M.S. *Calpe*. That, coupled with a communications breakdown, kept the commander from having an accurate idea of what was actually happening on the beaches. The Canadian public also faced a smokescreen when they were told about Dieppe. Stories of heroism, claims of success, and the lack of a timely overview of the raid obscured the reality of disaster. Like Roberts, Canadians squinted through the smoke to get brief glimpses of what had happened to their boys on the beach. For weeks, they had to guess at what had transpired, and even when the "white paper" was released, questions remained unanswered. Those who had lost family, who

¹¹⁰ Earl Mountbatten of Burma, "Operation Jubilee: The Place of the Dieppe Raid in History," *Journal of the Royal United Services Institution for Defence Studies* 119, 1 (1974), 29, 30.

had to suffer for months waiting to hear the fate of the missing, certainly deserved a more open and honest explanation of what had happened and why.

Chapter Six

Public Relations Triumph, Press Relations Debacle: Canadian Army War News and the Invasion of Sicily

In the aftermath of the Dieppe disaster, the Canadian Army returned to its training regimen, and so disappeared from the headlines. General A.G.L. McNaughton's insistence of keeping the army together as a national force and Ottawa's reluctance to take casualties, fearing the bugbear of conscription, prevented the deployment of any Canadian units to active operations. In 1943, following the Axis defeats at Stalingrad and in North Africa, King's government began to pay closer attention to calls from the press and public for Canada's army to play a role before what many believed to be the impending end of the war. Minister of National Defence J.L. Ralston and Canadian Army Chief of Staff Ken Stuart convinced the British and, more importantly, McNaughton to allow the participation of the First Division and the First Tank Brigade in the July 1943 Sicily landings. Nonetheless, McNaughton understood that the troops would return to the First Canadian Army afterwards.¹

Operation Husky, the invasion of Sicily, began with the landing of 160,000 Allied troops on July 10. The campaign lasted until August 17, marked by conflicts between the British and American generals and stubborn resistance from the Germans capitalizing on the defensive advantages afforded by Sicily's mountainous terrain and primitive roads. The Germans eventually evacuated their troops across the Straits of Messina to Italy,

¹ G.W. Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy 1943-1945* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1956), 20-22; John Sweetenham, *McNaughton* Vol. 2 (Toronto: Ryerson, 1969), 292-4.

leading to later debates about the effectiveness of the operation. The invasion instigated Mussolini's overthrow and Italy's surrender.² The First Canadian Division served in General Montgomery's Eighth Army, participated in the initial landings and then advanced north on the Army's western flank, around Mount Etna, next to the American zone of operations. The Canadians fought numerous actions including Valguarnera, Assoro, Catenuova, Regalbutto and Agira. By August 7, the narrowing of the Allied front as it approached Messina left the Canadians out of combat. The Canadians had performed well but suffered 2310 battle casualties, including 562 killed, considerably fewer than in a few hours at Dieppe.³

The Sicilian campaign provided the first opportunity for Canadian Army public relations (PR) to test the preparations they had made in Britain for news coverage of prolonged operations. The war news from Sicily was a public relations triumph for the Canadian Army. The press coverage was overwhelmingly positive, so much so that it influenced the Canadian government's decision to dispatch an armoured division to the upcoming Italian campaign that the Allied command did not really want. The Canadian newspaper accounts hampered by censorship restrictions and other delays did not really provide a clear narrative of the campaign. While good public relations resulted from press accounts, the campaign strained relationships between the army and the news media, who complained about lack of access to the front, the priority of one news agency over others, and lack of leadership by Canadian PR. Some of these problems resulted from Canadian mistakes, but many resulted from PR policies controlled by the Allied authorities, beyond

² Peter Calvocoressi, Guy Wint, and John Pritchard, *The Penguin History of the Second World War* (London: Penguin, 1999), 397.

³ J.L. Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 227.

the Canadian Army's control. The Canadian government was also enraged with Allied restrictions that kept Mackenzie King from announcing the first news of Canadian involvement in the campaign. Sicily proved to be a trial and error learning experience in news management that provided valuable lessons for following operations.

The press coverage of Sicily began with a major PR embarrassment for Mackenzie King regarding the initial announcements of the participation of Canadian troops in Sicily. According to official historian G.W.L. Nicholson, Canadian involvement in Sicily resulted from pressure placed on the government by both the press and the opposition to deploy Canadians to active operations. This lobbying emanated not only from Conservative newspapers like the *Globe and Mail* and *Ottawa Journal*, but also from the Liberal-leaning *Winnipeg Free Press*.⁴ Since the press contributed greatly to the decision for Canadian involvement in Sicily, proper recognition of Canadian participation became extremely important to King's government. When complications arose and King believed the British were behind Canada's lack of recognition, it resulted in a crisis in Anglo-Canadian relations.

Because of King's involvement and the public nature of the dispute, Canadian historians have been more interested in this issue than any other PR aspect of the Sicilian campaign. The first to examine the topic was Nicholson. His official history of the campaign, discusses the process leading to the announcement of Canadian involvement, but little of the aftermath. J.W. Pickersgill, editing Mackenzie King's diary, relates King's viewpoint uncritically. C.P. Stacey in *Canada and the Age of Conflict* argues that miscommunication caused King to blame the British incorrectly for the problems

⁴ G.W.L. Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1956), 21-2, 73.

involved in the announcement of Canadian participation. Brandey Barton's recent article reaches similar conclusions.⁵

Stacey wrote that "to describe the Sicilian 'crisis' briefly is difficult for the affair was complicated," yet is essential for understanding the background of Canadian PR work in Sicily.⁶ The issuing of operational communiqués rested with General Eisenhower, head of AFHQ and overall commander in the Mediterranean. On June 23, Ken Stuart, Chief of the Canadian General Staff, requested that McNaughton arrange a simultaneous announcement of Canadian participation by Ottawa and AFHQ. McNaughton, acting on Abel's advice, warned Stuart that Eisenhower's rulings restricted the Canadians' options and that simultaneous release was "impractical."⁷ The planned initial communiqué mentioned only "Allied" troops, without citing their nationalities. The use of the terms "Allied" and "Anglo-American" also appeared in two other announcements: an "avis" announcing the invasion to the French and a warning to the Italian people of the consequences of pursuing the war.⁸ King was so keen to have the Canadian forces mentioned in these announcements that he took the unusual step of telephoning President Roosevelt. Canadian ambassador Lester B. Pearson further

⁵ Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy*, 73-74; J.W. Pickersgill, *The Mackenzie King Record, Vol. I* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), 520-6; C.P. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict, Vol. 2 1921-1948, The Mackenzie King Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 339-345; Brandey Barton, "Public Opinion and National Prestige: the Politics of Canadian Army Participation in the Invasion of Sicily," *Canadian Military History*, 15:2 (2006): 23-34.

⁶ Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 340.

⁷ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, Stuart to McNaughton, Cable CGS 701, 23 June 1943; Abel, Reply to CGS 701, n.d.; McNaughton to Stuart, Cable GS 1510, 28 June 1943. Both Stacey and Barton begin their investigation of the crisis on July 2, but the documents show that inquiries regarding the communiqués began earlier. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 340; Brandey Barton, "Public Opinion and National Prestige," 26.

⁸ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, Murchie to Montague, Cable GS 1603, 8 July 1943; Nicholson, *Canadians in Italy*, 73.

pressured Washington, while High Commissioner Vincent Massey did the same with the British. These efforts resulted in both the British War Office and the Combined Chiefs of Staff urging Eisenhower to give specific mention of Canadian forces. Eisenhower resisted these intercessions, refusing to reveal the involvement of Canadian troops in the AFHQ communiqué or *avis*, but allowing the Canadian government to announce the troops' participation in a brief statement twenty-four hours after the initial communiqué.⁹ Eisenhower's reluctance resulted from his need to keep the Canadian redeployment to the Mediterranean secret from the enemy.¹⁰ In retrospect, it is difficult to comprehend what difference a mere twenty-four hour delay would make to German intelligence. Nevertheless, despite the arrangements, on the early morning of July 10, the U.S. War Department announced the Canadian participation immediately following the initial AFHQ invasion communiqué. Without any evidence, King assumed that the American announcement resulted from Roosevelt's personal intervention on his behalf. Concerned that any delay would anger the Canadian public, King believed that he now had authority to announce Canadian participation earlier than planned.

At the same time, he convinced himself that the British opposed his publicity wishes because AFHQ's negative decision had reached Canada through the War Office.¹¹

A combination of domestic politics and simmering resentment transformed it into a

⁹ Nicholson, *Canadians in Italy*, 73-74; Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 341; Brandey Barton, "Public Opinion and National Prestige," 28; NA, Air 20/2597, Algiers to ETOUSA, Cable NAF 297, 10 July 1943.

¹⁰ Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 341.

¹¹ Lester B. Pearson, incorrectly states that as a result of his intervention Canadians were mentioned in the actual communiqué. Lester B. Pearson, *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson Vol I* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 243; Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 74; LAC, Mackenzie King Diaries, 9 July 1943, 5, <<http://king.collectionscanada.ca>> (accessed 15 Jan. 2008), Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 341.

diplomatic spat with Great Britain. Although he initially expressed some anti-British sentiment in his diary, noting that not making an announcement might have “ended” his “political career,” he refrained from publicly displaying his frustration until politically expedient.¹² On July 15, the opposition began pressing the government about the announcement and the secrecy of other information, such as the name of the Canadian commander in Sicily. The previous day, a CP despatch identified the Canadian First Division, therefore CCF M.P. M. J. Coldwell wished to know why “announcements with respect to the operations of the Canadian forces were being made from London and Washington.” Mackenzie King then launched into an explanation, blaming the British.¹³ The press depicted King’s speech as marked by “anger and dissatisfaction” at the “military instructions from the headquarters in Britain,” and headlines declared “Premier King Insists on Equality for Canada’s Troops in War News.”¹⁴ Malcolm MacDonald, the British High Commissioner to Canada, noted that King’s protestations brought “cheers” from “every part of the House of Commons” and caused “criticism of Britain ... on all sides.” He feared that “Anglo-Canadian relations had received a hurt which will not be completely healed for years.”¹⁵

King waited to unleash his greatest display of indignation on MacDonald privately. Meanwhile, the issue found its way into the British press and House of

¹² LAC, Mackenzie King Diaries, 9 July 1943, 6, <<http://king.collectionscanada.ca>> (accessed 15 Jan. 2008).

¹³ Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 15 July 1943, 4936, 4937; Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 341.

¹⁴ J.H. Fisher, “Forced to Keep Silent that Canadians in Sicily King’s Ire Aroused,” *Toronto Telegram*, 15 July 1943, *Montreal Gazette*, 15 July 1944.

¹⁵ NA, DO 35/1658, Malcolm MacDonald, War cabinet Memorandum 441, “Relations with Canada,” 14 Aug. 1943.

Commons. The *Daily Express* declared, “no ‘security’ considerations should have been permitted to stand in the way of a full and immediate recognition of Canada’s part in this great amphibious project.”¹⁶ Churchill protested, quite correctly, that the British were just as supportive of King’s right to make an announcement as the Americans were. In preparation for his response in the House of Commons, Churchill despatched MacDonald to confer with King to reach a mutually agreeable statement. The British High Commissioner witnessed a petulant Prime Minister stride “up and down angrily” berating him with a history of the British denying credit to Canadian military efforts and ignoring Canadian sovereignty. King argued that though the RCAF and Canadian personnel in the RAF played a huge role in the air war, they “rarely” received recognition. The angry King even threatened an election on the issue if Churchill contradicted him, a threat MacDonald knew to be unlikely. MacDonald recognized this incident as the explosion of “bottled up... resentments” that included lack of consultation about combined boards, the British ordering German prisoners in Canadian custody shackled in retaliation for similar German actions against those captured at Dieppe, and the exclusion of Canadians from joint statements of policy, such as announcements regarding the Battle of the Atlantic. MacDonald explained to King that because of time differences and difficult telephonic communications, London appeared less helpful than Washington did. Even with that explanation, MacDonald required two more meetings with the King to come to a resolution.¹⁷

¹⁶ *Daily Express*, 19 July 1943.

¹⁷ NA, DO 35/1658, Malcolm MacDonald, War cabinet Memorandum 441, “Relations with Canada,” 14 Aug. 1943, 3-7; Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 342-4.

In the end, the incident was less damaging to Anglo-Canadian relations than MacDonald feared. After Churchill spoke, some Canadian editorial opinion, at least in Conservative papers, accused King of making too much out of a “minor issue.”¹⁸ It is difficult to argue with Stacey that the “childish temper tantrum” demonstrated “Mackenzie King almost at his worst,” especially given King’s lack of an apology to Churchill once he realized his error. Both the Americans and British showed sensitivity to Canadian demands once Canada complained, but as Vincent Massey observed, much of the problem originated with the lack of input by someone cognisant of Canadian sensitivities.¹⁹ This absence reflects Canada’s junior partner status, the lack of senior Canadian representation at AFHQ and the absence of full understanding of Canada’s constitutional position by many Americans, British and even Canadians. Not surprisingly, there was a similar struggle ten months later over the inclusion of Canadians in the D-Day communiqués.

While the communiqué fiasco was a controversial beginning to Canadian war news during the Sicilian campaign, PR had laid plans for press coverage of the campaign. The Canadian PR detachment for *Operation Husky* began modestly but ballooned as the invasion approached. Lt. Col. Clifford S. Wallace, Assistant Director of Public Relations (ADPR) for First Army, departed to North Africa in June for a planned “six or eight weeks” to arrange for Canadian PR for Husky with Allied Force Headquarters (AFHQ) in Algiers, he actually remained in the theatre until January 1944. Initially the Canadian personnel numbered nine for the film detachment, seven for the photographic, and only a

¹⁸ NA, DO 35/1658, MacDonald to Dominion Office, Minum. Preco. No.30, 22 July 1943.

¹⁹Brandey Barton, “Public Opinion and National Prestige,” 32.

single conducting officer escorting one CP and CBC correspondent, Ross Munro and Peter Stursberg respectively. By June 21, as a result of further negotiations, there was a substantial increase in the number of correspondents, including W.A. Wilson of the British United Press (BUP) and L.S.B. Shapiro of the *Montreal Gazette*, who was assigned to the First Tank Brigade, plus ten other correspondents. Two of these latter from independent newspapers would wait in reserve but according to “policy laid down by senior commander in theatre,” would proceed to Sicily only after further approval.²⁰ The rest, including the rear and technical support for the CP and CBC, would remain in North Africa and cover AFHQ. Still, Lt. Col William Abel, DDP, at Canadian Military Headquarters (CMHQ), planned to send an additional five correspondents, no doubt wishing to please the newspapers maintaining them overseas. Wallace warned Abel that AFHQ considered the number of Canadian correspondents excessive and prophetically cautioned that during quiet periods in the North African campaign, American reporters complained of being unable to proceed to the front. Abel, undeterred, sent the extra correspondents.²¹

Despite these behind the scenes disagreements, the Sicily campaign began with a triumph for a Canadian reporter. CP correspondent Ross Munro’s first story out of Sicily obtained widespread publicity for the Canadians and himself. CP bragged that Munro’s “eye-witness account... of the invasion of Sicily near Cape Passero was a 7 ½ -hour

²⁰ Despite the PR reorganization in 1943 describing Wallace as Deputy Director of PR he, and Richard Malone after him, bore the designation. ADPR. LAC, RG2,4 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, “PR and Historical Arrangements for Husky,” 11 May 1943; P.J. Montague to Secretary of State, War Office, 9 June 1943; Montague to A.G.L. McNaughton, 19 June 1943, TOW to CMHQ cable AC 23, 20 June 1943.

²¹ Ibid.; TOW to CMHQ, Cable AC 23, 20 June 1943; Wallace to Abel, n.d. The second undated message clearly shortly follows signal AC 23 dated 20 June 1943; Wallace to Abel, “Canadian Public Relations Personnel and Facilities,” n.d.

‘beat’ or ‘scoop’ over 53 other war correspondents...” Because of this lead, “Munro’s story was broadcast throughout the world by the BBC, was the first eye-witness story published on the invasion by British newspapers and was a broadcast feature all day in Canada and the United States, where no evening papers were published on Sunday.”²² The *Hamilton Spectator* noted that Munro’s efforts resulted in American newspapers being “full of news about the Canadians,” quite a change from the credit the Americans initially received for the Dieppe raid.²³ The Wartime Information Board (WIB), always concerned with Canadian PR in the United States, also noted the prominence of Canada in the news, “almost as good as local copy,” due to Munro’s story.²⁴ The scoop was another achievement for the reporter who had already garnered international attention for his Dieppe stories and had toured Canada lecturing to anxious audiences in the hometowns of each Dieppe regiment. The press knew that the despatch went through Malta but remained puzzled about how this occurred since this was not a planned route for press messages from Sicily.²⁵

Ross Munro’s scoop gained him almost as much notoriety with AFHQ as it did fame in the international press. The PR officer in charge of the field detachment in Sicily arranged for an intelligence officer, Captain Chambers, to censor Munro’s story, which the RAF radio on board ship sent to Malta. The message, marked and treated as “urgent,” made its way through the Air Ministry, which quickly passed along Munro’s copy, albeit

²² *Globe and Mail*, 12 July 1943.

²³ R.T. Elson, “Canada Rates High in the US; Munro Stories Played Up,” *Hamilton Spectator*, 14 July 1943.

²⁴ LAC, RG 36, 31 Vol. 15\8-2G-1, Sid Freefeld, WIB NY to A D Dutton and A McKenna, WIB OTT, 12 July 1943; Sid Freefeld, WIB NY to A D Dutton and A McKenna, WIB OTT, 13 July 1943.

²⁵ *World’s Press News* (London), 22 July 1943, 1.

“with consternation.” Shortly after AFHQ agitated that Munro “filed in clear without censorship” recommended “drastic disciplinary action be taken against the violator.”²⁶

Wallace spent several days interceding with Allied leadership, including Eisenhower, not to arrest Munro.²⁷ The filing of Munro’s story violated the press and censorship regulations in three ways. AFHQ required the submission of stories to a field press censor or through Algiers. Additionally, once sent it was marked with a priority the message did not warrant. Finally, once the story passed through the Air Ministry and the censors of the Ministry of Information (MoI), it did not go in the news pool but directly to CP.

Military authorities imposed the news pool policy in the early days when major operations had extremely limited spaces for correspondents. Stories written at the front became available to all news media, to prevent those organizations fortunate to have a place for their correspondent from getting exclusives. In spite of this planning, CP obtained its scoop because the MoI did not pool the story, probably because the Malta to London route surprised them.²⁸ Munro’s explanation for departing from AFHQ instructions was that “we knew nothing of the rules laid down for other correspondents who sailed with British and American troops who sailed from North Africa.”²⁹ AFHQ had neglected to inform the Canadian correspondents arriving directly from the UK of correct procedures. The lack of such instructions in the Canadian Army PR files concerning the Sicily landings confirms Munro’s explanation.

²⁶ LAC, RG 24 Vol. 16,440 War Diary No 1 Cdn. Public Relations Detachment, 1 July - 31 July 1943, Personal Diary of Major G.W. Gilchrist, 3; Ross Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord* (Toronto: McMillan, 1945 (Rpt. 1972), 376; NA, WO 204/ 3712, CINC to FANTOX, 12 July 1943.

²⁷ Ross Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord*, 376.

²⁸ DND DHH, 75/315, Abel to J.W.G. Clark, 19 July 1943, *The Newspaper World*, 17 July 1943, 1.

²⁹ Ross Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord*, 376

Nor was Munro's scoop the only Canadian news "first" in the campaign. Canadian Army Film and Photo Unit personnel managed to get the first motion picture and photographs out of Sicily. Photographer Captain Frank Royal and movie camera operator Sgt. A.W. Grayston's pictures arrived in the UK on July 16. A British newspaper specializing in news about journalism, *World's Press News*, declared that Canadian PR "registered a 'hat trick' by getting out the first story, [motion picture] film, and photographs from Sicily."³⁰ National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) in Ottawa did not share that enthusiasm. A CP despatch reported the arrival of the movie and photographs in the UK but incorrectly claimed they had reached Canada for distribution. The film, despatched by bomber mail, did not arrive until July 20 and the photographs until July 22. NDHQ cautioned, "Presence of still pictures in UK does not constitute scoop for Canadian papers and advance publicity to effect that pictures had reached Canada merely created justified impatient demand from Canadian publishers for the actual photos." The photographs had arrived late because of their inclusion in the diplomatic bag, rather than in a separately marked bag, which necessitated several extra steps in the delivery process.³¹ The telegram warned Abel, who was celebrating the "days of our triumph" in his reports and letters, to avoid premature self-congratulation.³² Thus, while of value in publicizing the Canadian Army in Britain, the other "firsts" were of less value to Canadian publishers and newsreel distributors.

³⁰ *World's Press News*, 22 July 1943, 1.

³¹ LAC., RG 24, Vol. 12376 4/press/28/2, NDHQ to CMHQ, Cable DPR 371, 7 Aug. 1943.

³² DND DHH, 75/315, Abel to Clark, 19 July 1943; LAC, RG24, Vol. 12382 4/PRO/3/2, Report for Week Ending 24 July 43, 23 July 1943.

In spite of this limitation, most of the Canadian media gave the Sicilian army operations enthusiastically patriotic coverage, demonstrated by expressions of pride in the troops, celebration of their successes, and relief at the relatively low casualties. At the onset of operations, editorials expressed pride in the Canadian Army finally joining operations and helping shoulder the burden borne by Allied troops. The *Globe and Mail* declared, “The much-cried-for second front has been opened... as all in this country so confidently expected it would be, with the Canadian forces spearheading the attack.”³³ The Liberal *La Canada* predicted that Canadian troops would “recueilleront leur part de gloire dans le belliqueux fracas qui commence et dont on espère ébranler la Forteresse Europe.”³⁴ In contrast, *Le Devoir* prudently avoided editorials on the invasion, despite its position as the flagship of the Quebec anti-war press.³⁵ The newspapers presented the Sicily invasion as a test for untried Canadian troops. Some expressed confidence that long training would pay off and “finely developed and hardened” soldiers would “prove their worth in a great strategic operation” and “play their part manfully and well.”³⁶ Several cited the excellent record of the Canadian Corps in the First World War as a

³³ *Globe and Mail*, 12 July 1943.

³⁴ *La Canada*, 15 July 1943. Translation: “will gather their share of glory in the quarrelsome clash that is starting and one hopes will shake Fortress Europe.”

³⁵ Earlier in the war, *Le Devoir* constituted a major source of frustration for the Canadian censors who regularly recommended prosecution under article 39A of *The Defence of Canada Regulations* for opposing the war effort; however, the government lacked the will to press charges and face the political storm. Nevertheless, the successful 1942 prosecution of *Le Droit* for criticizing bombing raids on France may have served as a caution to the editors of *Le Devoir* against outright condemnation of operations, despite the meagre \$200 fine imposed. In 1942, NDHQ PR complained that *Le Devior* published little positive news about the army and ignored official releases. It seems that the editors of *Le Devoir* resisted the invasion by ignoring it in their opinion pieces, concentrating instead on domestic politics. DND DHH, “Report on Censorship: A Narrative on the Organization, Activities, and Demobilization of Censorship during the War of 1939-1945,” 31 Jan. 1946, 17-18; Claude Beaugard, *Guerre et Censure Au Canada* (Sillery P.Q.: Septentrion, 1998), 79-88.

³⁶ *Fort William Times-Journal*, 17 July 1943; *Toronto Daily Star*, 10 July 1943; *Halifax Herald*, 12 July 1943.

precedent and challenge. The July 12 *Globe and Mail* editorial cartoon pictured landing craft approaching burning beaches, within the clouds of smoke the Vimy memorial appeared with a quote from McRae's poem "Take up our quarrel with the foe! To you from failing hands we throw to you the torch; be yours to hold it high!"³⁷ The Canadian press index, a summary of the editorial attitudes on issues of importance to the military, prepared by the press clipping section under Joseph "Joe" Clark, Director of Information at NDHQ, captured the tone of editorial reaction to the Sicilian announcement:

This is a proud day for Canada. At last, the Canadian Army, or a sizeable part of it, was in action. The results of three years of hard training and preparation would now be seen. The Canadian people have every confidence in their troops. They are certain that their troops will march forward gloriously to victory with their British and American comrades did a quarter of a century ago. This is the commencement of the Battle of Europe and not a formal "Second Front." The public must be prepared to accept casualties. Everyone is confident that the High Command have planned the operation thoroughly.³⁸

When the Canadian troops went to battle, most of Canada's press backed them up with enthusiastic support and confidence, which continued throughout the campaign.

Heroism again featured prominently in the reports from the front, although in fewer stories than after Dieppe. For example, a July 30 Ross Munro article described an attack by men of the Hastings and Prince Edwards regiment "clambering up a 2,500 foot precipice" as a "daring and heroic" exploit. Munro expected a "number of awards" from the "numerous incidents of individual gallantry," even more incredible since "although they were supposed to be resting...they were still keeping in the fight voluntarily."³⁹ The

³⁷ *Halifax Herald*, 12 July 1943; *Moncton Transcript*, 21 July 1943; *Toronto Telegram*, 10 July 1943, *Globe and Mail*, 12 July 1943, 6.

³⁸ LAC, MG 30, E133, Series III, Vol 147, pa-3-7-10 vol. 2, Summary Public Relations; Canadian Press Index, Period: 10 July to 28 July

³⁹ Ross Munro, "Surprise Axis Troops by Daring Exploit on Sicily Precipice," *Toronto Daily Star*, 30 July 1943.

Globe and Mail's Ralph Allen relied on information gleaned from hospital patients evacuated to North Africa for a story headlined "Bren-Toting Canadian Rubs out Two Truckloads of Germans in Sicily" detailing how Captain Alexander Campbell of the Royal Canadian Regiment single-handedly rendered twenty Germans *hors de combat*. Campbell actually served in the Hastings and Prince Edward regiment.⁴⁰ Such stories gave the public what it wanted to read after the Canadian Army's long period of inaction. By boosting home-front morale, they were intended to strengthen the war effort.

As part of their patriotic enthusiasm, the press played up the success of Canadian operations. Early examples are Ross Munro's stories about the capture of an Italian general headlined "Canadians Bag Staff of Division" and another detailing the "Victory March through the Vineyards," through light Italian resistance.⁴¹ Later in July, despatches from more intense combat against the Germans in Leonforte proclaimed "Bloody Battle Rages in Streets, On Cliffs Ere the Nazis Driven Out" as the First Division overcame "the stiffest fighting yet."⁴² Near the end of the campaign, the *Winnipeg Free Press* quoted Montgomery's letter of congratulations to General Simonds as evidence of Canadian achievement since the "success" is "recognized by the British General who tolerates

⁴⁰ Ralph Allen, "Bren-toting Canadian Rubs Out Two Truckloads of Germans in Sicily," *Globe and Mail*, 30 July, 1943; Farley Mowat, *The Regiment* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1955, Rpt. 1973).78-79; Mowat. *And No Bird's Sang* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979), 111.

⁴¹ Ross Munro, "Canadians Bag Staff of Division," *Globe and Mail*, 14 July 1943; Ross Munro, "Canadians on Top of the World, Troops Pushing Ahead in Sicily Taking Towns with Little Fighting," *Globe and Mail*, 15 July 1944.

⁴² Ross Munro, "Bloody Battle Rages in Streets, On Cliffs Ere the Nazis Driven Out," *Toronto Star*, 30 July 1943.

nothing less.”⁴³ Unlike the Dieppe raid, the claims of success held up under scrutiny since the Canadians did capture their objectives and inflict casualties on the enemy.

The newspapers used these successes to conclude that long training in England made up for inexperience, providing a key reason for Canadian victories in Sicily.⁴⁴ In contrast, historians C.P. Stacey and John English both criticize deficiencies in the training in England, blaming these for Canadian difficulties in Normandy. English blames the inabilities of the Canadian high command, while Stacey attributes the ineffectiveness of training to poor regimental officers.⁴⁵ Canadian training was haphazard before Montgomery’s reforms began in late 1941 and early 1942. The period of effective training therefore lasted at most around a year, and although the First Division received specialized amphibious tactics for Sicily, it was at best considered “adequately trained.”⁴⁶ Secondly, the press proclaimed that the Canadians’ innate spirit and *élan* contributed to the First Division’s success. “If Canadian democracy can produce the gallant heroes who stormed the steep cliffs of Assoro and cracked the last hinge of the German defence line around Mount Etna its heart is sound,” the *Globe and Mail* declared, “it need have no fear of its future provided it is given honest and proper leadership.”⁴⁷ Even *La Presse*, a centrist paper, celebrated the victory at Regalbuto attributing it in part to the attitude of

⁴³ *Winnipeg Free Press*, 14 Aug. 1943.

⁴⁴ *Regina Leader Post*, 20 Aug. 1944; *St John Telegraph Journal*, 18 Aug. 1943; *Toronto Telegram*, 10 Aug. 1943; *Montreal Star*, 19 Aug. 1943.

⁴⁵ Terry Copp challenges the view that Canadian troops performed poorly in Normandy, arguing that the relative combat effectiveness of the German army is exaggerated. Terry Copp, *Fields of Fire, The Canadians in Normandy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 13-14. See also John A. English, *Failure in the High Command: The Canadians in Normandy* (Ottawa: Golden Dog, 1995), xiv –xv, 44, 46, 47; C.P. Stacey, *The Victory Campaign* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1960), 274-275.

⁴⁶ Granatstein, *Canada’s Army*, 202-5, 219; Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy*, 32-34.

⁴⁷ *Globe and Mail*, 19 Aug. 1943.

Canadian troops.⁴⁸ The *Kingston Whig Standard* cited “the excellence of their training and inherent fighting qualities.”⁴⁹ Newspapers rated Canadian soldiers as vastly superior to the Italian troops, portrayed as surrendering in droves and generally harmless, although the Germans were tougher opponents.⁵⁰ Both conclusions masked weaknesses in the Canadian Army. Training is important but does not give advantages over equally trained but also battle experienced troops. While achievements of the First World War may have convinced Canadians of their inherent fighting ability, which now seemed to show itself again in Sicily; the Canadian Corps at Vimy Ridge had several years of front-line experience to build on and also possessed experienced and outstanding generalship, which the Canadian troops in 1943 did not.

The patriotic press also eagerly featured positive comments on Canadian troops made by Allied commanders. Munro reported General Montgomery’s enthusiastic comments. “I am very pleased indeed to have Canadians under my command, they have done well. In fact, they were terrific on the beaches and the attack inland.”⁵¹ Because of his heroic stature in public opinion, the press widely repeated his remarks, as well as similar comments by General Alexander and other leaders, in order to display pride in the Canadian forces. The coverage of the Sicily invasion confirms some truth to the stereotype that Canadians crave international recognition for national efforts.

⁴⁸ *La Presse*, 4 Aug, 1943.

⁴⁹ *Kingston Whig Standard*, 20 Aug, 1943.

⁵⁰ For example, Louis Hunter, “Italians Give Selves Up in Eager Manner,” *Globe and Mail*, 20 July 1943.

⁵¹ Ross Munro, “Canadians Terrific in Sicilian Warfare Montgomery Declares,” *Globe and Mail*, 17 July 1943.

The patriotism of the Canadian press did not compare to the kind of blind enthusiasm of 1914. The experience of the First World War and the recent Dieppe losses put paid to any idea of a cheap victory. Many initial editorials, while patriotic, also expressed the dread of expected casualty lists like those experienced less than a year before. The *Halifax Herald* expected “sad and terrible days ahead,” exhorting the necessity to “steel ourselves for the ordeal that Canadians... must pass,” because “from now on casualty lists will be heavy.”⁵² The *Globe and Mail* warned Canadians to expect “tragedy... the price of battle glory” and suggested “with the casualties will come sorrow and heartaches and heavy trial for the nation.”⁵³ Therefore, many editors expressed relief following the publication of the campaign’s casualties to August 5 at 1,895, less than that of the Dieppe raid.⁵⁴ Some attributed the lighter than expected losses to the lessons of Dieppe. The *Vancouver Sun* declared the classic apology for Dieppe, later applied to D-Day, that “we were told at the time that the information was valuable enough to justify the original expedition despite the shocking losses. Those lessons applied at Sicily, must have saved the lives of countless soldiers and speeded the success of the expedition.” War columnist W.R. Plewman also credited the lessons for lighter casualties, although he acknowledged that the “tactics in the Sicilian operation were much better and the equipment was superior.” The *Winnipeg Free Press* portrayed the light casualties as “the first substantial dividend” of the raid and attacked those critics who questioned its value.

⁵² *Halifax Herald*, 12 July 1944.

⁵³ *Globe and Mail*, 12 July 1943, 6 and 14 July 1943, 6.

⁵⁴ *Toronto Telegram*, 19 Aug. 1943; *Fort William Times Journal*, 20 Aug. 1943; *Kingston Whig Standard*, 20 Aug. 1943; *Edmonton Journal*, 20 Aug. 1943; *Regina Leader Post*, 20 Aug. 1944; *Montreal Star*, 19 Aug. 1943. By the end of the campaign Canadian casualties numbered 2310. Nicholson, *Canadians in Italy*, 174.

Even the pro-Tory *Toronto Telegram* admitted that Dieppe might have convinced the “Allied high command of the folly of attacking enemy strong points with insufficient men, minus air protection, relying on surprise alone.” This connection to Dieppe was natural, especially since the casualty list appeared on the raid’s anniversary. Nonetheless, a less celebratory tone characterized a few editorials, such as that of the *Edmonton Bulletin*, focusing on the actual casualties instead of their perceived lightness.⁵⁵

The Canadian media coverage of Sicily certainly reflected enthusiastic patriotism, but how accurate a version did Canadians receive? Initially the Canadian media knew little beyond the fact that the Canadians were participating in the invasion. An early CP article was unaware of the size of the Canadian force, its exact location, and even the approximate location of the landing beaches.⁵⁶ AFHQ censors for security reasons initially held back the name of the Canadian division involved and its commander. By July 14, AFHQ released the formation’s name, but not that of General Simonds. The Conservative opposition demanded to know why, since press reports identified other national commanders. Ralston countered that the names of corps and divisional commanders remained secret. Shortly after, the war correspondents forced AFHQ’s hand. Peter Stursberg of the CBC managed to get Simond’s name by the censors by mentioning it in passing in a story as a recipient of a message from Eisenhower. The CP had already speculated about Simonds being in command based on an announcement several months earlier, following the death of First Division’s former commander General Salmon in a

⁵⁵This date was coincidental not planned since NDHQ lobbied their allies hard to get the casualties released as quickly as possible (see chapter eight). *Vancouver Sun*, 28 Aug. 1943; W.R. Plewman, “The War Reviewed,” *Toronto Star*, 19 Aug. 1943; *Winnipeg Free Press*, 20 Aug. 1943; *Toronto Telegram*, 19 Aug. 1943; *Edmonton Bulletin*, 20 Aug. 1943.

⁵⁶ Alan Randall, “Canadian Forces Believed Biggest Ever Assembled,” *Hamilton Spectator*, 10 July 1943.

plane crash. Although some papers credited King with making the announcement, the “scoop” belonged to Stursberg. John Grierson, head of the WIB, desired a Canadian government announcement of the name of the Canadian commander, but the military explained that field censors who make “a thousand and one release decisions daily” could not notify governments in advance about the timing of all censorship releases. The government would have to decide well in advance which information it would like to announce in order to coordinate with the censors.⁵⁷

The delay in announcing the name of the Canadian division and its commander resulted in complaints not only from the opposition but also from the press. For example, the *Stratford Beacon Herald* griped, “there is no important reason for trying to keep such information [secret] for more than a day or two after any major operations..., because the enemy finds out promptly by his own means.”⁵⁸ On July 14, the Germans broadcast the Allied order of battle, including the Canadian First Division. In complaining about the initial secrecy, the *Ottawa Journal* observed “nothing terrible” followed the release of all this information.” Even the *Winnipeg Free Press* argued that the “suppression of military secrets... can be overdone,” while crediting Mackenzie King’s overtures to Washington for any knowledge of Canadian involvement at all.⁵⁹

The decision to release censored information, such as the order of battle, involved a struggle between the need for secrecy and the public’s desire for information. Captain G.W. McCracken, seconded to the WIB, wrote to John Grierson:

⁵⁷ *Globe and Mail*, 15 July 1943; *Globe and Mail*, 18 July 1944; LAC, RG 36, 31, Vol. 15, 8-26, Capt. McCracken to John Grierson, “Announcement of Canadian Commander in Sicily,” 19 July 1943; *Hamilton Spectator*, 15 July 1943.

⁵⁸ *Stratford Beacon Herald*, 6 Aug. 1943.

⁵⁹ *Ottawa Journal*, 19 July 1943; *Winnipeg Free Press*, 22 July 1943.

In democratic countries, any important item of news cannot be successfully withheld from the public any longer than there is a logical public interest argument, such as security reasons for withholding it. In the case of the Canadian Commander in Sicily, democratic public interest for release of the name was obviously increasing. Simultaneously, the public interest argument, namely, “security considerations,” was obviously hour-by-hour decreasing. It was inevitable that a point would be reached where the weight in favour of release would overpower the weight in favour of continuing to withhold the information. At a certain point – the point where common sense was too greatly outraged by alleged security considerations- it was inevitable that the information should come out to the public one way or the other.⁶⁰

McCracken did not know the precise reasons for AFHQ releasing a particular piece of information. Doubtless, some expertise in military PR practices is reflected in his comments; other cases confirm the tensions between security and public interest.

Due to censorship, the Canadian press coverage of Sicily resembled a crumbling ancient cuneiform tablet with many annoying gaps that prevented the understanding of the complete text. The initial story of the Canadians in Sicily contained detailed and compelling vignettes, but AFHQ censorship caused delays and excised material made it difficult to follow operations or locate the movement of the Canadians on the map of Sicily. The Canadians advanced inland on the far left of the Eight Army, initially heading northwest and capturing several towns, including Modica, without significant Italian resistance. For several days, the Canadian division’s location within the Eight Army route of advance remained unknown, forcing journalists to piece together the puzzle from disparate information. On July 15 and 16, both the CP and AP reporters and Ralph Allen of the *Globe and Mail*, writing from North Africa, speculated on the troops’ location.

⁶⁰ LAC, RG 36, 31, Vol 15, 8-26, Capt. McCracken to John Grierson, Announcement of Canadian Commander in Sicily, 19 July 1943; Andrew Olser, “Royal Commissions, Journalism, and Communication” in “The Beginnings of Communication Studies in Canada: Remembering and Narrating the Past,” *Canadian Journal of Communication* 25, 1 (Summer 2000), < <http://www.cjc-online.ca/viewarticle.php?id=562&layout=html> > (accessed 22 Jan. 2008).

Relying on rumours from the London newspapers, they incorrectly reported that the Canadians captured Vizzini and continued to advance onto the Catania plain along with the bulk of the British Army.⁶¹ On July 17, Mackenzie King gave the House of Commons a day-by-day “triumphant timetable” of the Canadians and committed the same error, demonstrating his reliance on information from the media rather than military insiders.⁶² The route of the Canadian advance remained secret until Ross Munro’s delayed July 17 dispatch arrived on July 19. Then the *Toronto Star’s* war columnist could write that “the Canadian First Division has swung hard to the left and that it is driving for the key enemy position of Enna.”⁶³ The British bogged down on the coast before Catania, requiring the Canadians to swing to the left around Mt. Etna in an attempt to outflank the German defences. The Canadians advanced up the highway from Vizzini. In a move that caused one of the lasting controversies in the history of the campaign, Montgomery convinced Alexander to reassign that highway from Patton’s troops to the Eight Army. The move upset the Americans, particularly General Omar Bradley.⁶⁴ Censors ordered no mention of the entire “left hook,” even though it resulted in “a dearth of Canadian, French, and Indian news.”⁶⁵

Because the censors generally forbade the giving of place names apart from those specifically mentioned in the communiqués, the secrecy involved with locations

⁶¹ Ralph Allen, “Canadians Move Down on Catania.” *Globe and Mail*, 16 and 17 July 1943.

⁶² *Globe and Mail*, 19 July 1943.

⁶³ Ross Munro, “Troops Move in a Northward Stream,” *Globe and Mail*, 20 July 1943; *Globe and Mail* published in the morning, CP reports were typically a day behind the afternoon papers. W.R. Plewman, “The War Reviewed”, *Toronto Star*, 19 July 1943. War columnists wrote daily summaries and commentaries on the war based on reports they received from overseas.

⁶⁴ Carlo D’Este, *Bitter Victory* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1988), 327-328.

⁶⁵ NA, WO 204/3712, McCormack to DDIP London, cable 1624, 17 July 1943.

continued, even after the Germans must have been aware of the manoeuvre. This, in the words of an internal CP report, resulted in “ambiguities.”⁶⁶ For example, the town of Leonforte fell to the Canadians on July 22, but war columnist W.R. Plewman could only speculate that “they may have captured Leonforte.” On July 29, a week after the town’s capture, he wrote that the “the Canadians captured Leonforte bearing out our view that it was doubtful the Allies held that place.”⁶⁷ It is unclear if the censorship of these details deceived the enemy, but it certainly confused columnists. On July 27, the censors refused a request to release the “place names [in the] Canadian section.”⁶⁸ As a result, until July 30, Ross Munro’s despatches, the major source of detailed Canadian news from Sicily, virtually disappeared from the newspapers. The few that emerged from censorship were stripped of all place names and other specifics.⁶⁹ AFHQ communiqués contributed nothing beyond daily variations of “Canadian troops continue their advance in the face of determined resistance.”⁷⁰

The information dam broke following the lifting of censorship on July 29 and July 30, with a flood of stories from Ross Munro. These included several detailed accounts of the attack on Leonforte that censors delayed until AFHQ officially announced its capture.⁷¹ Munro’s stories also included accounts of the battles of Assoro, which occurred

⁶⁶ LAC, MG 30, E133, Series III, Vol. 145, Pa-3-7 vol. 3, Excerpt from report to CP Board of Directors, 14 Sept. 1943, 6.

⁶⁷ W.R. Plewman, “The War Reviewed,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 24 July, 1943; 29 July 1943.

⁶⁸ NA, WO 204/3713, FANTOX from Dickson to Phillips PRO, PCL 48, 27 July 1943.

⁶⁹ Ross Munro, “Mass Guns Harass Axis Sicilian Lines,” *Globe and Mail*, 28 July 1943.

⁷⁰ *New York Times*, 23 July 1943.

⁷¹ Ross Munro, “Princess Pats’ Route Nazis in Sicily,” “Canadian Engineers Enable Towns Capture,” *Globe and Mail*, 30 July 1943; Ross Munro, “Bloody Battle Rages in Streets, On Cliffs Ere the Nazis Driven Out,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 30 July 1943.

on July 21 and 22, as well as the assault on Agira, that had required a five-day struggle ending on July 28. These delays and the simultaneous release meant that the news afforded little sense of chronological order; newspaper editors struggled to make stories understandable by inserting explanatory parentheses. The news of the final battles at Regalbuto and Adrano, in early August, appeared within a day of their occurrence.⁷²

To make sense of the campaign, a series by Ross Munro provided a narrative of the campaign. Later published as the booklet, *Red Patch in Sicily*, it filled in many gaps in the chronology and detailed the regiments that fought in each clash.⁷³ Unlike Dieppe, however, no shock like the heavy casualties prompted demands for further explanations. As a result, Munro's articles did not appear on the front pages and failed to provoke the editorial comment that Stacey's "white paper" on Dieppe had produced.

Also in contrast to Dieppe, the Sicily campaign succeeded and no controversy arose about the media or military "sweetening the pill." In fact, the media did not report the reverses that did occur. The most stinging repulse came at Nissoria on July 24 and 25, when troops of the Royal Canadian Regiment, the Hastings and Prince Edwards and the 48th Highlanders assaulted the German positions, losing 187 casualties, including the commander of the Royal Canadians, and 10 tanks before the Germans forced their retreat. In the words of one corporal, "it was a bloody Schlemozzle (sic) right from the start" and

⁷² *New York Times*, 4 Aug 1943; Milton Bracker, "Canadians Seize Key Defence Town, Yanks Pass Triona," *Globe and Mail*, 4 Aug 1943; Milton Bracker, "Bitter Fighting is Raging at Triona," *Globe and Mail*, 6 Aug., 1943; Ross Munro, "Fleeing Enemy Blows Up Road to Avoid Pursuit," *Globe and Mail*, 9 Aug. 1943, 1.

⁷³ Ross Munro, *The Red Patch in Sicily* (Toronto: CP, 1943); Munro, "Red Patch in Sicily," *Globe and Mail*, 26 Aug, 1943, 6; Munro, "Use Canadian Regiments to Chase Germans in Sicily," *Hamilton Spectator*, 27 Aug 1943; Munro, "Red Patch in Sicily," *Globe and Mail*, 30 Aug. 1943, 3.

negatively affected morale, dampening much of the early bravado.⁷⁴ *Red Patch in Sicily* misleadingly concluded, “They mauled the Germans there but were not strong enough to break through their formidable line.”⁷⁵ Another Munro account of the 48th Highlanders at Nissoria admits the loss of “the most casualties” of any of their battles there, but again emphasised Canadian daring and damage inflicted on the Germans. The 48th were not defeated but were “ordered to withdraw... while a bigger attack was prepared to finish off the Germans.”⁷⁶ This was typical of the reporting of the Sicilian campaign; damage to the Germans received maximum emphasis while the Canadians perpetually performed heroic acts apparently without serious losses. Of course, military censorship always forbade specifics about losses, but the war correspondents were clearly “doing their bit” for the war effort and keeping up public morale.

The difficulty of reporting the campaign as a coherent narrative due to censorship cuts became the rule rather than the exception for war correspondents covering Canadian operations. Munro explained the difficulties in a post-war letter to Gillis Purcell:

It must have been a muddle to the people at home... we were often prevented from giving adequate pictures of tactical situations. Details which would have made situations intelligible were cut out for so-called security reasons which I felt did not exist. There is a good case for more liberal use of the names of units and the numbers of divisions.⁷⁷

After the war Purcell explained that after the censors lifted restrictions, CP frequently created “unit stories,” providing a narrative of the actions of formations that censorship

⁷⁴ Nicholson, *Canadians in Italy*, 122-127; Mowat, *And No Birds Sang*, 144; Mowat, *The Regiment*, 97-98.

⁷⁵ Ross Munro, *The Red Patch in Sicily*, 11.

⁷⁶ Ross Munro, “48th Highlanders in three Sharp Fights,” *Globe and Mail*, 30 July 1943.

⁷⁷ Gillis Purcell, “Wartime Press Censorship in Canada” (MA Thesis: University of Toronto, 1946), 132.

had obscured. Purcell regretted that these stories received limited publicity outside the home region of the featured regiment.⁷⁸ Thus, the Sicily experience set a pattern that repeated itself in later operations.

Although not the focus of major media attention, censorship allowed Ralph Allen to mention the malaria plague that infected at least 1200 Canadian soldiers, even allowing estimates that it caused twice as many casualties as battle. This is surprising since it revealed major losses potentially unknown to the Germans. Remaining unmentioned of course was how Canadian rates of infection surpassed those of their Allies.⁷⁹

Not only did Canadians receive an incomplete picture, but potentially embarrassing incidents remained unreported. The major one was Montgomery's refusal to let General McNaughton visit the Canadian First Division following the landings in July. Canadian Army official historian Nicholson wrote that McNaughton was unable to travel to Sicily because Montgomery claimed a shortage of transport.⁸⁰ In reality, Montgomery refused to allow McNaughton's visit because Simonds did not want it and wanted to focus on operations. Montgomery even threatened to arrest McNaughton should he land in Sicily.⁸¹ This affront to his perceived rights as Canada's senior soldier overseas enraged McNaughton and doubtless would have similarly affected other Canadians had they heard of it. Yet the incident went unreported. In fact, on July 20 the

⁷⁸ Ibid., 132-3.

⁷⁹ Most of these casualties of course would have only been temporarily lost to the army. Denis Dubord, "An Enemy More Dangerous Than the German: The Malaria Epidemic in the Canadian First Division in Sicily, 1943" (M.A. Thesis, University of Victoria, 2001) 1-2.

⁸⁰ G.W.L. Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy*, 178.

⁸¹ Viscount of Alamein Montgomery. *Memoirs*. (London: Collins, 1958) 184; Carlo D'Este, *Bitter Victory* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1988), 615.

CP reported McNaughton was visiting Sicily during his July trip to the Mediterranean, when in reality he did not visit until after the end of fighting in August.⁸² Presumably, even if the press knew about the incident, they could not publish the information during the Sicily campaign, because of the potential controversy and damage to Anglo-Canadian relations. On August 3, McNaughton instructed that no further mention be made of a July visit to Sicily, but only North Africa.⁸³ When the story emerged in 1944, it was soft peddled, saying that Montgomery had a blanket policy against visits during the campaign and McNaughton's attempt to visit probably was a "misunderstanding."⁸⁴ Of course by 1944, with McNaughton forced into retirement and the Sicilian campaign old news, it did not have the emotional impact on Canadians that it would have had in 1943.

A second potentially embarrassing incident involved a dispute between General Simonds and one of his brigade commanders, Brigadier Howard Graham. Following some confrontations early in the invasion, Graham, a militia officer who felt Simonds, a regular, was prejudiced against him, tendered his resignation. Montgomery, believing that Simonds was firing Graham, intervened to smooth over the bad feelings. This spat between the divisional commander and a popular officer may have provided some juicy copy, but Ross Munro recalled that the "censors held the thing up," preventing any story on the incident.⁸⁵

⁸² *Globe and Mail*, 21 July 1943; Ross Munro, M'Naughton [sic.] visits Canadians in Sicily," *Globe and Mail*, 22 Aug. 1943.

⁸³ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, CMHQ to NDHQ, PR 273, 3 Aug 1943.

⁸⁴ Peter Stursberg, *Journey into Victory*, (London: George G. Harrap, 1944), 120.

⁸⁵ Howard Graham, *Citizen and Soldier* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987), 160-164; Daniel Dancocks, *The D-Day Dodgers, The Canadians in Italy 1943-1945* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), 55.

A third omission from the news coverage of Sicily involved matters more serious. A number of incidents of amicide, more popularly known as “friendly fire,” occurred when Allied aircraft bombed and strafed Canadian troops. In the first incident RAF aircraft attacked a Canadian column south of Leonforte on July 22, resulting in the deaths of three Canadians and the downing of an aircraft by Canadian gunners. Several more cases occurred in early August when U.S. ground support aircraft bombed and strafed the Canadians around Regalbuto as the Americans fought for nearby Trioina. The Americans did not single out the Canadians: their A-36 fighter-bombers also strafed American troops, including General Omar Bradley; dropped a bomb on the headquarters of British XXX corps; and caused casualties among Allied troops and Sicilian civilians in Regalbuto by bombing it after the Canadians had taken the town.⁸⁶ The stories did not appear in the press. AFHQ permitted no revelations and in September 1943, it threatened to expel correspondent Richard Trageskis, bestselling author of *Guadalcanal Diary*, for submitting a story highlighting the complaints of “ground troops against the air force.” He was warned not to repeat the action. In his 1993 memoir, Stursberg explained that censors prevented him from reporting one strafing incident because it “would be bad for morale,” but the censors let him describe the bombing of the Regalbuto in the 1944 book and say “it was not an isolated incident.” The book merely mentioned that Allied ground and naval forces often made mistakes and opened fire on friendly aircraft.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy*, 111; Stursberg, *Journey into Victory*, 140-141; D’Este, *Bitter Victory*, 465; Omar Bradley, *A Soldier’s Story* (New York: Random House, 1951 (rpt. 1999), 150-2.

⁸⁷ Unsurprisingly, the massacre by trigger-happy naval antiaircraft gunners of a fleet of American transport aircraft carrying paratroopers also went unreported, until admitted by the American War Department in March 1944. NA WO, Air 51/266, Brig. Gen. Robert McClure to Roger Trageskis (Sic.), 10 Sept. 1943; Peter Stursberg, *The Sound of War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 119; Stursberg, *Journey into Victory*, 140-1; *New York Times*, 16 Mar. 1944, 3; D’Este, *Bitter Victory*, 307. The “Roger Trageskis” above is obviously war correspondent Richard Tregaskis, who covered Operation Husky.

Although censorship resulted in inaccurate news, much of it was necessary to deny the enemy valuable information, such as the Allied order of battle and the troop movements. As a result, it was difficult to have an accurate overview of operations. The release of the wrong information could cost lives and undercut success, but some censorship seemed motivated by a desire to avoid embarrassment or resulted from over caution. It is hard to imagine why place names remained secret for days after the Canadians had captured the towns, when the Germans certainly were aware of their loss.

The press coverage of the Sicilian campaign contained many flaws: lack of information, faulty chronology, and a tendency towards uncritical heroic portrayals. Despite this, the campaign was a public relations success with the Canadian public. Although no polls recorded it, there are indications of satisfaction with the coverage of the Sicily campaign. The tone of the press coverage, both an influence on and reflection of public opinion, is positive. Apart from concerns over delays in announcing the First Division and General Simonds, the press made few complaints about the coverage of the campaign. Because the reaction to the news coverage was so positive, the government attempted to use this fact to answer criticisms of the WIB in the House of Commons and press. On July 13, Brooke Claxton gave the WIB much of the credit for providing “early news” about the Canadians in Sicily to the United States and Canada. A *Globe and Mail* editorial argued Munro’s story had nothing to do with the WIB and any assistance came from Army PR. Claxton subsequently claimed he had had meant only that the WIB helped inform Ottawa of the Washington despatch announcing the participation of

Canadian troops.⁸⁸ Obviously, the government believed the public thought enough of the press coverage that crediting the WIB for it would help.

Most significantly, the positive public reaction provided part of the government's rationale for expanding Canadian participation in the Italian campaign by sending the Fifth Armoured Division to join First Division to form a Canadian Corps. The initial plan was for First Division to return to First Army following Operation Husky, but Minister of National Defence J.L. Ralston and Ken Stuart began lobbying for the move during the Sicily campaign. On August 5, Ralston explained the reasons behind the proposed move: "a) giving a Canadian Corps H.Q. training, b) battle experience for additional Canadian troops, c) morale of the Canadian Army in the U.K. d) morale of the Canadian people."⁸⁹ This last point implies that satisfying public demand for Canadian involvement partly explains the decision to place greater numbers of Canadian soldiers in action. King believed that; "the Canadian people would rather have our men in action in Italy rather than remain inactive in Britain throughout the winter." The Prime Minister also understood that having more men in the Italian campaign reduced the likelihood of losses when the landings in France did take place, since Churchill told King that casualties in Italy would be less than in Sicily.⁹⁰ This satisfied King's desire to avoid conscription

⁸⁸ Kenneth Cragg, "Claxton Says Success Achieved by WIB in US," *Globe and Mail*, July 14, 1943; *Globe and Mail*, 14 July, 1943; *Hamilton Spectator*, 16 July 1943. William R Young also credits the WIB for getting the news release of Canadian involvement from Washington to Ottawa quickly As the *Globe and Mail* pointed out, this gave no news about Sicily and amounted to relaying a news release. William R Young, "Making the Truth Graphic" (PhD Dissertation, UBC, 1978), 147.

⁸⁹ Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy*, 341.

⁹⁰ LAC, Mackenzie King Diaries, 31 Aug. 1943, 7. < <http://king.collectionscanada.ca> > (accessed 3 Feb. 2008).

while ensuring the public and the Allies perceived Canada's increasing role in the war effort. Unfortunately, Italy did not prove as bloodless as predicted.

General public support for the Sicily operation did not mean that all Canadians uncritically accepted everything they read. William R. Young's study of the WIB argues that by 1943 many in the Canadian public were hardened against patriotic appeals and that "the exaggerations of earlier military news releases had created a very critical audience not vulnerable to the brouhaha of military prowess and victory parades." WIB observers noted the widespread belief that the "the public is told nothing except what is good for it."⁹¹ Despite this a March 1944, a WIB survey showed that 62 percent of Canadians, excluding Quebecers, trusted the war news they received, while 28 percent did not. In Quebec, the percentages reversed, with 57 percent mistrusting to only 30 percent trusting. This gave a national average of only 54 percent trusting war news, which represented a decline from 61 percent in April 1943. The WIB attributed the higher levels of scepticism and general hopelessness to the stalemate in Italy and the egregious abuse of policy censorship by AFHQ and Churchill, which covered up reverses at Anzio in February. During the Sicily invasion, with the Germans losing ground on the island and in Russia, the percentages of those trusting the news presumably would have been higher than March 1944.⁹² Comparing this result to the Gallup poll released after Dieppe, which recorded 56 percent satisfied with war news and 36 percent feeling there was too much censorship, shows that public opinion about war news did not experience violent

⁹¹ Young, "Making the Truth Graphic," 147.

⁹² Jeffrey Keshen, *Saints, Sinner, and Soldiers* (Vancouver: UBC, 2004), 18; LAC, RG 44, Acc 85/ 537 , Box 5, A.D. Dunton, "WIB Memorandum to members of the cabinet," 26 March 1945; *Ibid*, 28 Feb. 1944.

fluctuations, with maximum changes of eight percent nationally.⁹³ In any case, there was enough scepticism about war news to give fodder for WIB observers seeking signs of negative responses to war news among the public.

Public satisfaction with the war news about the Canadians in Sicily did not necessarily indicate superior news coverage. Given the desire of the press and the public for the Canadian Army to play an active part in the war, even mediocre media reports caused excitement. Some aspects of the news coverage proved excellent, such as Munro's early stories. Even the weaker aspects of the publicity seemed secondary compared to the enthusiasm about Canadian troops finally seeing sustained action. A more critical audience could have found reason to complain, but few did.⁹⁴ The message proved more important than the means of delivery and the accuracy of the details.

Despite public satisfaction, behind the scenes of the press coverage, a bitter battle brewed between the media and Canadian Army PR over press arrangements. Many of these problems involved priority and access to the front for the correspondents of various agencies. Independent correspondents became extremely unhappy with the delay in getting to the front and with the difficulties faced while waiting to go. The CP engaged in an intense argument with military officials over the number of correspondents allowed it. The British United Press (BUP) had to fight AFHQ rulings to cover Canadian operations as an independent news agency. A lack of stories regarding French-speaking units caused

⁹³ *Toronto Star*, 19 Sept. 1942, 10.

⁹⁴ One criticism that did appear is the lack of news about the British Army in Canadian newspapers. A *Winnipeg Free Press* editorial attributed this to the hard fighting by the British with little ground gained when compared to the Canadian and American forces, which advanced more rapidly but faced less opposition, as well as the natural propensity of Canadian correspondents to cover Canadian actions. *Winnipeg Free Press*, 24 July 1943.

some Canadian publishers to complain. Finally, difficulties faced the war correspondents covering the operations in the field, principally lack of suitable transportation.

The correspondents, principally those from the independent newspapers awaiting permission to embark from North Africa to Sicily, complained about Canadian Army press arrangements. As described earlier, anticipating AFHQ approval and Montgomery's permission to let them to proceed to Sicily, the Canadian military brought five extra independent correspondents to North Africa without guarantees of facilities. Those approved for North Africa included two independent correspondents, five more as "rear links" for the news agencies, and two radio engineers.⁹⁵ Wallace had warned CMHQ about the excessive numbers: some Allied PR authorities felt the Canadians were over-represented, even with the original four correspondents, since other divisions had only one. Ignoring these warnings Lt. Col. Abel at CMHQ felt it "wiser to have them immediately available in the theatre rather than held back in the UK pending the expansion of facilities," and backing out would cause "embarrassment."⁹⁶ Ironically, maintaining good relations with Canadian publishers motivated the move. CMHQ felt obligated because "some ... had been maintained in London at considerable expense

⁹⁵ They were "Ralph Allen, *Globe and Mail*; J.A.M.Cook, Sifton newspapers; E.S. Watt, *Montreal Star*; F. Griffin, *Toronto Star*; B. Wemp, *Toronto Telegram*; R.L. Sanburn, Southam Newspapers; W. Reyburn, *Montreal Standard*." The rear links were L. Hunter, W. Stewart, and M. Desjardins for the CP; J.B. Chambers and R. Vermillion for the BUP and CBC radio engineers A. J. MacDonald and F. F. Johnson. LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, McNaughton to Stuart, cable GS 1510, 28 June 1943; CMHQ to FORTUNE Algiers, 24 June 1943.

⁹⁶ LAC RG24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, Montague to McNaughton, 19 June 1943; Wallace to Abel, n.d. This message was clearly sent shortly following message AC 23 dated 20 June 1943; CMHQ to FORTUNE Algiers, 24 June 1943.

waiting for this opportunity.”⁹⁷ Nonetheless, having correspondents idle in North Africa, while the real news stories happened in Sicily, strained relations with these publishers.

In North Africa, the correspondents had three potential bases of operations. In Algiers, the site of AFHQ, correspondents participated in daily press briefings.⁹⁸ The Canadian Sections, General Headquarters, First and Second Echelons at Tunis, the location of General Alexander’s 15 Army Group, provided a second source of news. The third base in Philippeville, Algeria, provided access to the Canadian convalescent and reinforcement depot, as well as the nearby No. 15 General Hospital.⁹⁹ The correspondents’ arrived on July 10. The rear links of the news agencies, the CBC radio engineers, along with two independents, initially deployed to Algiers to cover the “big picture.” The remaining five independents went to Philippeville because they lacked AFHQ accreditation.¹⁰⁰

Cliff Wallace tried hard to obtain permission for the correspondents to proceed to the front. After meeting “at Tunis with highest authority,” despite opposition to the size of the Canadian news contingent, he gained accreditation for the extra five correspondents, allowing them to file stories. Wallace then departed for Sicily to seek Montgomery’s permission for the seven independent Canadian correspondents to go to the front. In preparation for the move, Wallace ordered the party to Tunis to await orders.

⁹⁷ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, CMHQ to Fortune Algiers, Reply to cable AC23, 22 June 1943.

⁹⁸ Stursberg, *Journey into Victory*, 146.

⁹⁹ Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy*, 38.

¹⁰⁰ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, “Canadian War Correspondents in Mediterranean Theatre,” 19 July 1943; RG 24, Vol. 16640, War Dairy No. 1 PR Detachment Aug. 1943, Canadian War Correspondents Association to Wallace, 1 Aug. 1943; RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, Wallace to CMHQ, Cable AC 23, 7 Aug. 1943.

Three days after arriving in Sicily, Wallace received Montgomery's verbal approval and despatched Major Bill Gilchrist to Tunis by ship with a letter ordering the moving of the party.¹⁰¹ Unfortunately, Gilchrist found that verbal orders were insufficient and 15 Army Group did not receive the signal supposedly sent by Eighth Army or a requested confirmation. Lacking verification, 15 Army Group forbade the Canadians to proceed.¹⁰² To make matters worse, the correspondents now lacked proper press facilities in Tunis since the Allied Command Post Press Headquarters at 15 Army Group had "ceased to function" immediately after Wallace departed for Sicily. The correspondents no longer had immediate access to the communiqués or press briefings, and because no press censor remained, all stories required motorcycle or aircraft couriers to Algiers for review. Ralph Allen described Tunis as "one of the few places in the civilized world from which it is impossible to obtain any kind of story on the war and put it on the wire in an hour or two."¹⁰³ Unable to write copy effectively, with no direct word from Wallace and frustrated at the wait, it is not surprising that the journalists protested.

The correspondents' gripes began over small issues and then reached a crescendo. Already in Philippeville there had been difficulty. PRO Lt. Paul Wright offered correspondents the chance to accompany him to a field hospital, but with limited transportation, the only reporters invited were those present in the pressroom. After

¹⁰¹ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, Wallace to CMHQ, Cable AC 23, 7 Aug. 1943; RG 24, Vol. 16640, War Dairy No. 1 PR Detachment August 1943, appendix 13, Wallace to Maj. I.R. Wilson, 23 July 1943.

¹⁰² LAC, RG24 Vol. 16640, 1 Canadian PR Detachment War diary July 1943, "Personal Diary of Major C.W. Gilchrist," 23-26 July 1943, 6; RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, Wallace to CMHQ, Cable AC 23, 7 Aug. 1943; Maj. Wilson to Abel, 5 Aug. 1943.

¹⁰³ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16640, War Dairy No. 1 PR Detachment August 1943, Canadian War Correspondents Association to Wallace, 1 Aug. 1943; Ralph Allen, "War Correspondent Beset with Troubles," *Globe and Mail*, 14 Aug. 1943.

hearing of the missed opportunity, the other correspondents objected and, according to Wright, Fred Griffin of the *Toronto Star* became verbally abusive and accused the PRO of “incompetence.” When Wright protested, Griffin reportedly replied, “I’ll God damn talk to you any way I bloody feel like.”¹⁰⁴ It was a harbinger of things to come.

The strain with Army PR showed at a July 20 correspondents’ meeting with Major Wilson in Tunis. They wanted their stories censored in Tunis, but Wilson informed them this was impossible. Correspondents, unhappy that J.A.M. Cook and Ralph Allen drew first priority to leave for Sicily, “complained that the rota system should be finished and a new system evolved.”¹⁰⁵ According to Abel, the griping soon began to radiate “to the PROs on the spot, to this office, to their London offices, to their head offices and even to the High Commissioner.”¹⁰⁶ A telegram from the independents to Canada House demonstrates the tenor of the complaints:

PRO organization down broken. Wallace missing nine days, subordinates in charge unable appreciate either desirability or mechanics supplying Canada with news. We offcut [*sic*] information and communications for week with no improvement. Allen and Cook supposed go front three days ago others move up in rota. Instead all moving back into complete news and communications vacuum as British and American correspondents flow frontward. Representatives Canada’s six leading independents news organization [*sic*] appeal you urgently institute action. Griffin, Wemp, Cook, Allen, Reyburn, Sanburn.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ LAC RG24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, Lt. Paul Wright to Abel, 28 July 1943.

¹⁰⁵ LAC RG24 Vol. 16640, 1 Canadian PR Detachment War diary July 1943, “Minutes of Conference for War Correspondents,” 20 July 1943.

¹⁰⁶ LAC RG24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, Abel to W.T. Cranfield, 11 Oct. 1943.

¹⁰⁷ LAC, RG24, Vol. 16640, 1 Canadian PR Detachment War diary July 1943, appendix 8, cable to Moodie Canada House, 24 July 1943. This quote adds punctuation and the English translations “and,” “for” and “with” in place of the latin prefixes *et*, *pro*, and *cum* in the original message. *Montreal Star* reporter Sholto Watt did not agree to the message. Although he shared some of the complaints he felt it unfair to blame the PR officers because the decision to let them proceed rested with 8th Army. Appendix 10, Sholto Watt to Moodie, 25, July 1943.

Abel considered this a “very tough act of unfriendliness”¹⁰⁸ and responded in kind:

Independents not satisfied with all efforts being made on their behalf, suggest they be invited return to UK. War Correspondents here fully understand. Inevitable limitations at present but still anxious to proceed overseas to fill any places vacated.¹⁰⁹

With this unsympathetic response added to the delay, the correspondents grew shriller.

Colonel Tow, the chief Canadian liaison officer in Tunis, asked that Wallace return with

confirmation of Montgomery’s order. Gilchrist departed for Sicily because

“communications between ‘Fantox’ and ‘Horriified’ seem to have broken down.”¹¹⁰ The

angry correspondents at the Hotel Majestic, cut off from the war, organized the

“Canadian War Correspondents Association,” drafting a letter to Wallace outlining their

grievances and demands. The war correspondents, “representing fifteen of the largest

newspapers in Canada with a combined circulation of almost two million,” wanted: a

“Canadian Army Press Headquarters” in Tunis, censors; simultaneous availability of

communiqués with Algiers, access to the “official intelligence reports from the front” that

formed the basis of press briefings at AFHQ, and increased access to wireless

transmission.¹¹¹ Major Wilson replied, explaining the impossibility of these demands,

especially with 15 Army Group headquarters in the process of relocating to Sicily.¹¹² The

protests ended August 6, when Wallace returned with Montgomery’s written orders and

¹⁰⁸ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, Abel to Capt. Frank Royal, 27 July 1943.

¹⁰⁹ LAC, RG24, Vol. 16640, 1 Canadian PR Detachment War diary July 1943, appendix 14, CMHQ to Fantox for Tow, Cable PR 254, 27 July 1943.

¹¹⁰ LAC, RG24 Vol. 16640, 1 Canadian PR Detachment War diary July 1943, “Personal Diary of Major C.W. Gilchrist,” 31 July 1943, 7. Fantox and Horriified are the codenames for 15 Army Group headquarters and Sicily respectively.

¹¹¹ LAC, RG24, Vol. 16640, 1 Canadian PR Detachment War diary, August 1943, Canadian War Correspondents Association to Wallace, 1 Aug 1943.

¹¹² Ibid. Wilson to Canadian War Correspondents Association, 3 Aug. 1943.

the correspondents departed the next day, arriving in Sicily on the tenth, although by this time active combat for First Division had ended.¹¹³

The correspondents' plight raised controversy in Canada. The CP, on behalf of "the newspapers of Canada," protested the lack of "facilities promised" the correspondents and their delay by a "technicality." Furthermore, "even the utmost good will and understanding cannot condone the useless expense and waste of time involved."¹¹⁴ Joe Clark, the Information Chief for all three armed services, writing to Abel on July 30, underplayed the complaints from "one or two" publishers, adding, "most of them understand the situation." Clark, like Abel, took a jaded view of the correspondents' gripes, although as a journalist himself he claimed to understand their motivation:

It was almost inevitable that the war correspondents in the second wave should become very impatient and start raising the hell they have... The war correspondents cable their private beefs to their editors, sometimes to cover up their own inability to gather material. Invariably everyone is to blame but themselves... I won't mention any names, but one or two men have sent back criticisms that were simply childish. However, their position is thoroughly understandable as they are high-g geared reporters, hell-bent for election to get the story right from the scene. Every difficulty in their path is magnified a hundred times. On top of all this, the correspondent is thousands of miles away from his paper, doesn't know if his stuff is getting through, doesn't know what his editors think of it or whether or not it is being used. He probably feels he is being scooped all over the place... he can't lay his hands on the 5 o'clock edition to see if he has made the front page, etc., etc., etc.¹¹⁵

One of Clark's tactics to placate unhappy publishers was to cable CMHQ with "requests and suggestions" that from Abel's perspective "obviously can't be carried out." If the

¹¹³ Ibid, 1 Canadian PR Detachment War diary, 6 and 10 Aug. 1943.

¹¹⁴ LAC RG 24 Vol. 60 HQ 550-92-98, Canadian Press Head Office to Ministry of National Defence, 4 Aug. 1943.

¹¹⁵ DND DHH 75/ 315, JWG Clark to Abel, 30 July 1943.

complainant would not be pacified with an explanation, “the only course to be taken is to record it with you [Abel] in the form of a cable.”¹¹⁶ In other words, the cable gave the appearance of Clark taking action when none was possible. Abel and Clark knew there was little they could do because they also could not contact Wallace on Sicily.

The complaints regarding the “second wave” correspondents did not completely die down in Canada. The *Globe and Mail* published a satirical Ralph Allen article, almost a month after its writing, explaining the correspondent’s predicament in detail. In September, the *Winnipeg Free Press* criticized the “British” giving Canada short shrift in war publicity, especially the RCAF, although the treatment of Canadian correspondents in Sicily was deemed “a minor incident.” The editorial also blamed Canadian officials that “weakly submit to British rulings and red tape on the subject of the news coverage of its army in action.”¹¹⁷ As late as October, PR officials still received inquiries about the delay for the independents in Sicily. When the *Toronto Telegram* complained, Abel blamed the continued circulation of a “great deal of bad information in Canada” about what had happened.¹¹⁸ Unfortunately, for Canadian Army PR this was only one of the issues annoying the press.

In addition to the complaints regarding the independent correspondents, CP and the army became embroiled in a nasty dispute over the number and priority of their correspondents. CP enjoyed a close relationship with the army, with a journalist covering the Canadian Expeditionary Force from the time of its departure to the UK. CP associate

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ralph Allen, “War Correspondent Beset with Troubles,” *Globe and Mail*, 14 Aug. 1943; *Winnipeg Free Press*, 28 Sept. 1943. Censorship also likely delayed Ralph Allen’s article because it revealed that 15 Army Group Headquarters was moving from Tunis to Sicily.

¹¹⁸ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, Abel to W.T. Cranfield, 11 Oct. 1943.

manager, Gillis Purcell, served for a time as Corps PRO until an accident claimed a leg; even after returning to the news agency, he assisted in creating Army PR policy. The CP dispute in Sicily centred on differing interpretations of a February 8, 1943, memorandum outlining “principles governing the selection of war correspondents to accompany a Canadian force on a major operation.” Of the eight principles, three formed the basis of the controversy:

2. It is accepted to assure such a complete and prompt return the basis of war correspondent selections must be that the Canadian Press is given reasonable facilities to cover Canadian newspapers with due attention to diversified regional and racial interests.
3. It is accepted that proper coverage of a major operation might reasonably require the presence in the early stages of four Canadian Press war correspondents including one stationed at HQ, First Cdn Army and three with advance formations. (Underlining in original).
4. It is accepted that in the interests of adequate coverage of French Canadian troops in such an operation, it might reasonably be required to include a French-language war correspondent such as now represents overseas nine French-language Canadian dailies.¹¹⁹

The memorandum failed to specify what constituted “reasonable facilities” or “a major operation.” Purcell’s April 14 report to the CP Board of Directors specified four CP correspondents and a fifth for French language coverage, while the memorandum fails to differentiate him from the four. Furthermore, although Purcell later interpreted the memorandum as guaranteeing the CP priority over independent war correspondents and other news agencies, nowhere in the document are they designated as more than principles.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/Press-Gen/1, D.C. Spry, Memorandum, 8 Feb. 1943.

¹²⁰ LAC, McNaughton Papers MG 30, E133, Series III, Vol. 178, PA-5-0-45, J.A. McNeil to McNaughton, Excerpt from April 14 CP report, 31 May 1943.

Abel was unaware of Purcell's interpretation until after it became an issue and pursued arrangements without regard to it. Consequently, a meeting of all overseas war correspondents on May 21, including those from CP, "agreed to the order they should proceed in the event press facilities should be limited." A further June 4 meeting decided the rota for the Sicily operation: "i) CP ii) CBC iii) BUP iv) and subsequent places to independent correspondents selected by lot." Abel assured the CP that he safeguarded their interests and that "places for Canadian Press war correspondents were being planned on a better basis than Purcell has sought." CP replied that they "assume this meant that the principles outlined by General McNaughton in his Feb. 8 memorandum will be followed."¹²¹ Clearly, CMHQ and Purcell interpreted the memorandum quite differently. In a July 19 letter to Clark, Abel boasted that he offered CP five places in the theatre when the news agency requested only four.¹²² While the CP may have received as many places in the rota as it wished, the dispute centred on the priority afforded their representatives. CP believed that the independents should follow all four CP men rather than only Ross Munro having first priority.¹²³

Beginning in mid-July, CP protested to Abel, Clark, Ralston and McNaughton, about the independents' priority in Sicily over additional CP correspondents. Furthermore, Purcell got all the newspaper publishers with independent correspondents to agree, "That Canadian Press must be given adequate staff for its staff and that such staff

¹²¹DND DHH, 75/315, Abel to JWG Clark, 23 September 1943; LAC, McNaughton Papers, MG 30, E133 Series III Vol. 178, PA-5-0-45, CMHQ to NDHQ, Cable GS 1886 (number not fully legible), 5 June 1943; LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, /press/28/2, Abel, Memorandum "Priority of War Correspondents," 7 Aug. 1943; RG 24, Vol. 60,, Abel to NDHQ, cable PR 158, 8 June 1943; RG 24 Vol. 60, HQ 550-92-98, JWG Clark to CMHQ, Cable DPR 305, 14 June 1943.

¹²² DND DHH, 75/315, Abel to JWG Clark, 19 July 1943.

¹²³ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, D.E. Burritt to Abel, 27 July 1943.

should have priority over special correspondents.”¹²⁴ After making little headway, on August 3, while maintaining that CP remained entitled to five, Purcell moderated his demands to two correspondents in Sicily, since it was not a “major” operation. Despite this retreat the pressure worked because the army agreed to revise the rota, giving CP, CBC and BUP the next places in line after the original three and ahead of the independents for future operations. By this time, it mattered little with all the remaining correspondents, including the CP reporter Bill Stewart, already aboard ship to Sicily.

The dispute continued well into September when it reached the ministerial level. J.A. McNeil, CP general manager, exchanged a series of letters with Ralston. McNeil blamed CMHQ and expressed anger at equal treatment of all news agencies: “we learn that CMHQ has the effrontery to say that if the Canadian Press is granted two first-line priorities ... the same facilities must be extended to the CBC and the BUP.” McNeil argued that the independents should take priority over BUP, citing lack of copy filed by Wilson.¹²⁵ Ralston backed up CMHQ, explaining that the February memorandum applied only to a hypothetical operation, while the Sicily rota was created in response to a real campaign. The Minister also pointed out that because commanders in the theatre of war were responsible for determining the number of correspondents, “no rigid promises as to future promises can reasonably be made.”¹²⁶ The military never admitted that the February 8 memorandum applied to Sicily, but CP got its way and received two initial

¹²⁴ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, Abel, Memorandum “Priority of War Correspondents,” 7 Aug. 1943; C.P. to CMHQ, 5 Aug. 1943.

¹²⁵ LAC, RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4-press-29, J.A. McNeil to Ralston, 10 Aug. 1943.

¹²⁶ Ibid., Ralston to J.A. McNeil, 19 Aug. 1943; Ralston to McNeil, 13 Sept. 1943.

places in the coming Italian campaign. Relations between CP and the army, particularly between Abel and Purcell, soured considerably.

CP worried considerably about the rival BUP, although this proved unnecessary because of the troubles besetting the smaller agency in the Mediterranean. Not only did their correspondent Wilson experience story delays because of censorship, but AFHQ also questioned the status of BUP as an independent news agency. Wilson, along with Shapiro, accompanied the First Canadian Tank Brigade, most of which remained in reserve for the majority of the campaign, and as a consequence censors did not release the name of the formation for publication until August 27. Since censorship cut out any reference to Canadians in Wilson's stories, it appeared that he accompanied the British. BUP management continued to protest even after the army explained the situation, at least until Wilson transferred to First Division and the copy began flowing.¹²⁷

The AFHQ questioning of BUP's status constituted a much more serious problem. The BUP sent three correspondents accredited by the Canadian Army to the theatre. The Associated Press (AP) protested to AFHQ and CMHQ because BUP shared material with the United Press (UP) as their Canadian subsidiary. If BUP writers were included, UP received three extra writers, exceeding the limit of seven per agency.¹²⁸ As a result, AFHQ placed a temporary bar on the activities of the BUP correspondents in North

¹²⁷ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, Incoming cable, Montreal to London BUP, 21 July 1943; RG 24 Vol. 60 HQ 550-92-98, Lt. Col F.X. Jennings to Abel, Cable DPR 340, 21 July 1943; Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy*, 166-168; NA, WO 204/3713, 15 Army to Action AFHQ inc Censorship, Cable 576 SF, 27 August 1943; LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, Abel to NDHQ, cable PR 234, 23 July 1943; Minister to Montague, DPR 346, 24 July 1943; LAC, RG24, Vol. 16640, 1 Canadian PR Detachment War diary July 1943, Personal diary of D.K.S. MacClellan, 11; RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, F.H. Fisher to Major Eric Gibbs, 30 July 1943.

¹²⁸ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12369, 4/Press /28, Robert Bunnelle to Abel, 20 July 1943; 4/Press/29, Wallace to CMHQ, Cable 8587, 31 Aug. 1943.

Africa, allowing one to file copy from AFHQ, but not to proceed to Sicily, while the third remained at Philippeville without writing privileges. CMHQ instructed the Canadian PROs in North Africa to do as much as possible to assist the BUP.¹²⁹ Abel believed the argument against BUP spurious because of Canadian recognition of the news agency; furthermore, CP and AP had a similar reciprocal agreement to BUP and UP. BUP asked Clark, Ralston and CMHQ for aid, citing the value of BUP coverage to both domestic and “Empire” media coverage. While AFHQ allowed the BUP correspondents to resume filing on July 23, this proved only temporary. By August 31, AFHQ ruled BUP and UP the same entity, and began charging all correspondents against the UP quota. Because BUP believed the decision discriminatory, the agency decided to provide only minimal coverage of the upcoming Italian campaign, later leaving altogether. In this situation, commercial rivalry led to AFHQ making a decision harmful to the interest of the Canadian Army and public. Surprisingly, AFHQ claimed that it permitted BUP to operate during the Sicilian campaign only because of “desire to favour Canadian interests far out of proportion to the troops involved.”¹³⁰

In addition to complaints from the independents, CP and BUP, discontent arose over the lack of news about French Canadian troops. In order to facilitate French language coverage, the No. 1 Canadian PR detachment included Placide Labelle, the PRO in charge of French language publicity overseas, CP reporter Maurice Desjardins

¹²⁹ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12369, 4/Press /28, CMHQ to Tow and Wallace, S D 5A, 21 July 1943, RG 24, Vol. 16640, War diary No. 1 Cdn. PR Detachment, July 1944, Appendix 7, I.R.F. Wilson to Abel, 22 July 1943.

¹³⁰ Presumably, CP and AP did not fall under a similar category because the CP was an independent non-profit agency rather than a subsidiary. LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/29, F.H. Fisher to Abel, 29 Sept. 1943; RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/ 28, Abel to Robert Bunnelle, 21 July 1943; RG 24, Vol. 60, HQ 550-92-98 G.H. Sallans to J.W.G. Clark, 14 Aug. 1943; LAC, RG 24, 4/Press/29, Wallace to CMHQ, 8587, 31 Aug 1943; 4/Press/29 Gen. McClure to CMHQ and Lawson, cable DPR 9077, 1 Sept. 1943.

and a bilingual Film Unit photographer, Lt. D.E. Dolan.¹³¹ Only Dolan arrived in Sicily during active combat, accompanying the First Canadian Tank Brigade and, since the formation was held in reserve, he produced little for publication. The brigade contained no Francophone regiment, although the Three Rivers Regiment operated as “functionally bilingual;” the Royal Twenty Second, “the Vandoos,” with the First Division, was the only Francophone regiment in Sicily.¹³² Desjardins’ delayed arrival in Sicily meant a dire lack of stories about Francophones in action.

While planning for news coverage in Sicily did consider French Canadian publicity, it remained a secondary priority. Not including a French-language correspondent in the initial four journalists created the risk of having no French Canadian stories, since any other correspondents might not receive permission to get to Sicily in time. The CP and CBC, despite their pretensions to national coverage, also gave French-language coverage in Sicily little priority. In late July, after French Canadian publishers began to protest the lack of news; NDHQ PR sent requests that Desjardins receive “special facilities for contacting French Canadians at earliest possible opportunity.”¹³³ Contrary to proposal, CP placed Desjardins at a lower priority than Bill Stewart, once it reduced its demands for front-line correspondents to two. Purcell requested that Desjardins take his chances with the independents in the rota.¹³⁴ This did not eliminate the chance of French stories because of Stewart’s bilingualism, but less likely than Desjardins to concentrate on stories of particular interest to French Canadians. CP’s

¹³¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28, Abel to NDHQ, Cable PR 259, 2 Aug. 1943.

¹³² Granatstein, *Canada’s Army*, 193-194.

¹³³ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/press /28, NDHQ to CMHQ, cable DPR 359, 30 July 1943.

¹³⁴ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/press /28/2, D.E. Burritt to Abel, 7 Aug. 1943.

attitude is understandable since English language newspapers constituted the large majority of its members. Abel also suspected, with good reason, that Purcell used the issue of a French correspondent to manipulate the army into accepting greater CP representation. The February 8 memorandum did not specify four CP reporters and an additional French reporter, therefore Abel reasoned that:

By 10 June 1943, Mr. Purcell's demands had risen to five CP War Correspondents... This was achieved by adding the "French language War Correspondent." Mr. Purcell stated that CP regarded this correspondent as "important" – so important that "if representatives cut from five to four, [the] first one dropped would be special French-Canadian Correspondent." This gives rise to the suspicion that CP is using the French-Canadian War Correspondent as a mere pretext to obtain an additional CP place.¹³⁵ (Underlining in original)

On August 7, Purcell complained to McNaughton that the General's "realization of the importance of French language correspondent has been ignored," although in the same cable he admitted that, "we ask no priority for a French Canadian writer."¹³⁶ The CP may not have been as manipulative as Abel believed, but clearly Purcell placed less priority on French Canadian coverage than on four other correspondents writing predominantly in English.

The CBC also failed to provide a French language correspondent early in the campaign. On August 9, the CBC head office in Canada turned down the offer of extra space for a French correspondent because it supported Purcell's claims of priority. But the next day J.M. Kannawin of the London CBC office, after speaking with Abel,

¹³⁵ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/press /28/2, Abel, "Memorandum: Canadian Press, Priority of War Correspondents," 7 Aug. 1943.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 4/press /28/2, Abel, "Memorandum: Canadian Press, Priority of War Correspondents, Appendix A" 7 Aug. 1943.

persuaded the CBC to accept CMHQ's offer.¹³⁷ CMHQ PR despatched two CBC reporters, Marcel Ouimet and Benoit Lafleur accompanied by Greg Clark of the *Toronto Star*, Joe Clark's brother, to the Mediterranean. This initiative occurred without approval by the War Office or AFHQ PR. Although AFHQ allowed them to "go on to Sicily," it told Abel that it was "not very happy at their being despatched without ... being advised." This proved to be an understatement; on 27 August, AFHQ warned, "no correspondents will be accepted without previous authority;" those who arrived without it "will be sent home" and "this applies to Clark, Ouimet and Lafleur."¹³⁸ Contrary to the threats, AFHQ did not deport these new arrivals and allowed Ouimet to go to Italy to provide French CBC coverage. It is no surprise that AFHQ later decreased the overall number of these troublesome Canadian correspondents in the theatre.¹³⁹

Clearly, the French language news coverage was not a major priority for Army PR, CP or the CBC during the Sicily campaign, since none made provision for it in the "first wave" of correspondents. As a result, the first front-line stories about the Vandoos did not reach Canada until August 5.¹⁴⁰ The army and CBC responded only after

¹³⁷ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/press /28/2, NDHQ to CMHQ, Cable DPR 379, 9 Aug. 1943; J.M. Kannawin to Abel, 10 Aug. 1943; DND DHH, 75/315, Abel to J.W.G. Clark, 25 Aug. 1943, 4.

¹³⁸ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376, 4/press /28/2, CMHQ to AFHQ, Cable PR 229, 13 Aug. 1943; Maj. R.E. Beamish to Abel, 14 Aug 1943; AFHQ from Wallace to CMHQ, Cable P.R. 340, 27 Aug. 1943.

¹³⁹ LAC, RG24, Vol. 16640, War Diary No. 1 CDN PR Group, September 1943, Appendix 4, "Conducting Officers, War Correspondents and Personnel on Canadian Invasion of Sicily." For an account of Ouimet, Lafleur and Dejardins in the Mediterranean see Aimé-Jules Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque: Correspondents De Guerre Canadiens-Français Durant La Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* (Montreal: VLB Éditeur, 2007), 101-146.

¹⁴⁰ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/press /28/2, Abel, "Memorandum: Canadian Press, Priority of War Correspondents, Appendix A" 7 Aug. 1943; Ross Munro, "Les Canadiens français se battent avec furie en Sicile," *Le Devoir*, 5 Aug. 1943. Maurice Desjardins had previously submitted a story based on interviews with wounded French Canadian soldiers evacuated to North Africa. Maurice Desjardins, "La campagne de Sicile," *Le Devoir*, 28 July 1943, 6.

complaints from French Canadian publishers, while the CP did not take adequate action. In future operations, CBC demonstrated greater sensitivity to French Canadian needs, requesting both French and English speaking correspondents, and if only one correspondent was possible, he should be “preferably bilingual.” The CP, on the other hand, still preferred to let Desjardins remain “classed as an independent representing nine French-Canadian papers” and “take his chance in the draw.”¹⁴¹ The dominance of English language papers forced CP to make some tough decisions about its limited spaces at the front. Aimé-Jules Bizimana’s study of French Canadian correspondents questions why the *Montreal Gazette* received a place in the original landing, since that newspaper’s audience could not compare to the French CBC network.¹⁴² The answer is that the army needed to placate the independent newspapers who kept their correspondents in Europe at great expense for a chance at a spot. Furthermore, including a French network reporter in the top four spots would have given the CBC priority over the CP and BUP, and led to further controversy. There is little doubt, however, that the lack of French publicity squandered an opportunity for the army to promote the war effort among those Canadians most resistant to it.

Many of the press problems in Sicily related to accreditation and priority of correspondents not at the front; shortages of transportation affected those already there. Submarines sank three ships of the Slow Assault Convoy conveying Canadian troops and equipment from the UK to Sicily, the *St. Essylt*, *City of Venice*, and *Devis*, causing the

¹⁴¹ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376 4/press/29/2 D.C. McArthur to J.W.G. Clark, 7 Oct. 1943; D.E. Burritt to Abel, 22 Oct. 1943.

¹⁴² Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 103.

loss of five hundred vehicles and fifty-seven Canadian troops.¹⁴³ Unfortunately for the PR detachment, this included most of their vehicles and much equipment.¹⁴⁴ Thus, like many Canadian units in Sicily, they scrambled to find replacement vehicles. After the initial landings, the correspondents hitchhiked, trying to keep up to the advance, but never caught up to the front.¹⁴⁵ Conducting Officer Captain D.K. McClellan's jeep arrived onshore, but the Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General, Lt. Col. Gilbride, commandeered it. McClellan traded a heavy utility wagon to get his jeep back after Gilbride's vehicle arrived after all. The jeep, nicknamed "the poor little thing," routinely carried McClellan, Stursberg, Munro, photographer Frank Royal, "a mountain of kit and equipment ...overflowing to the bonnet and bumper," with movie photographer Al Fraser clinging to the hood. For eight days, it provided the conducting section's only transport.¹⁴⁶ The PR detachment, like other Canadian units affected by the sinking, continually scrounged for vehicles, commandeering civilian Lancia and Fiat automobiles, several Italian Spa trucks, but the prize find was a German armoured car, described by McClellan as a "Hahn infantry assault vehicle."¹⁴⁷ The Italian machines proved mechanical nightmares with only one truck surviving the campaign, but the German vehicle, a gift from the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, soldiered on until it broke down at Ortona during the Italian campaign. To avoid accidents, the *panzerwagen*

¹⁴³ Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy*, 46-7.

¹⁴⁴ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12376 4/press/28, Bill Gilchrist to Abel, 10 July 1943.

¹⁴⁵ Stursberg, *Journey into Victory*, 111; Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord*, 399.

¹⁴⁶ LAC, RG2,4 Vol. 16640, War Diary No. 1 CDN PR Detachment July 1943, Capt. D.K.S. McClellan Personal narrative Diary, 5-6; Stursberg, *Journey into Victory*, 122. The jeep was sometimes referred to as a "poor little" expletive rather than "thing."

¹⁴⁷ LAC, RG24, Vol. 16640, War Diary No. 1 CDN PR Detachment July 1943, Capt. D.K.S. McClellan Personal narrative Diary, 9; Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque*, 297.

sported four divisional red patch emblems and “press” written in large white letters. According to McClellan, “it became a familiar sight to the Canadian troops in Sicily.” Its passing resulting in shouts from the troops of “What’s the news...,” “Tell them I’m Okay,” ... “How about taking my picture?...” “Don’t forget my name....” (ellipses in original).¹⁴⁸ On July 20, three jeeps and a heavy utility vehicle arrived, giving Canadian PR more mobility, although they remained chronically short of transportation.¹⁴⁹

Despite the colourful aspect of scrounging for transportation, the lack of transport proved a serious difficulty. The correspondents rarely reached the front early in the campaign, although they could pick up stories at the Brigade and Division headquarters. This may explain some of the small errors in their reporting. Lack of transport also resulted in a dearth of front line photographs, Capt. Royal, who shared the jeep with the war correspondents for two weeks, concluded that immobility hindered the photographic record. He wrote, “Every cameraman and photographer on the island worked to full capacity, but distances that had to be covered, together with the rapid advance of the troops, greatly curtailed the possibilities of obtaining outstanding action pictures.”¹⁵⁰ The transportation situation resulted from misfortune but the improvisation shown to replace the losses showed initiative. The frontline war correspondents, although inconvenienced, appear to have been understanding and most of the complaints that PR received about transportation came ironically from the frustrated correspondents in Tunis.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord*, 400; LAC, RG24, Vol. 16640, War Diary No. 1 CDN PR Detachment July 1943, Capt. D.K.S. McClellan Personal narrative Diary, 11.

¹⁴⁹ LAC, RG24, Vol. 16640, War Diary No. 1 CDN PR Detachment July 1943, Major C.W. Gilchrist Personal Diary, July 1943, 5.

¹⁵⁰ LAC RG24 Vol. 12376, 4/press /28/2, Frank Royal to Abel, 11 Aug 1943.

¹⁵¹ DND DHH, 75/315, J.W.G. Clark to Cliff Wallace, 14 Sept. 1943.

The Canadian Army treated the press problems during the campaign seriously and took steps to prevent their repetition, creating a priority system acceptable to Canadian publishers, followed by attempts to fix the transportation difficulties, and finally replacing Wallace (see chapter three). The question remains who was responsible for the press relations disaster during the Sicily campaign? AFHQ clearly played a major role in limiting the Canadian media's coverage in the Mediterranean. While it appeared oblivious to Canada's national needs, there were legitimate reasons for limiting the numbers of Canadian correspondents. Correspondents used transportation and transmission facilities that also directly supported combat efforts. AFHQ certainly could not allow each national group to provide large numbers of correspondents. AFHQ eventually commanded troops from many nations and colonies, including New Zealand, South Africa, India, Brazil, France, Greece, Poland, and Italy. If each of these had sent as many reporters as Canada did, the situation would have become unmanageable. Nevertheless, AFHQ, although testy at times, demonstrated considerable patience with Canadian PR, allowing large numbers of correspondents to operate during the Sicily campaign, although decreasing them later. The refusal to recognize BUP as a Canadian agency is the only questionable act of AFHQ towards Canadian correspondents.

If AFHQ received much of the blame by Canadian PR for the poor press relations, Cliff Wallace would eventually pay the price. The steps that ultimately led to his replacement originated during the Sicilian campaign. Wallace received much blame for the unhappiness of the "second wave" correspondents, because he was in Sicily rather than with them in Tunis and could not communicate frequently. This proved irritating not only to correspondents but to CMHQ personnel as well. A CMHQ message complained

to Col. Tow that Wallace's lack of communications "leaves this HQ uninformed and it becomes very difficult to justify positions and explain arrangements made by you." The message also questioned Wallace's performance:

Wallace was sent to theatre to control and administer whole CDN PR service to do which he must be in close cooperation with McCormack and Phillips and be available to inform and answer queries this HQ. Report earliest possible whether Wallace is available or who is responsible to you for administration of service.¹⁵²

General Montague, CMHQ Senior Officer, unethically criticized Wallace's absence to CP's J.A. McNeil, saying he should operate "at headquarters from where change of arrangements must be directed and not at a front where his wide experience loses its value to all concerned."¹⁵³ Similarly, CMHQ Brigadier N.E. Rodgers queried Wallace's future in the Mediterranean, highlighting his tendency to go forward rather than tending to administrative duties. His memorandum, while critical, warned of the dangers of "changing horses in midstream," and recommended consulting the CP and General McNaughton about Wallace's future.¹⁵⁴ Surprisingly, the CP and the some correspondents, including Griffin, the chief complainer, later rallied around Wallace.¹⁵⁵ Wallace remained in charge in the Mediterranean for the beginning of the Italian campaign.

Ironically, Wallace following the advice given him after the Sicilian campaign partly contributed to his eventual replacement. As the chapter on the Italian campaign mentioned, administering the campaign from AFHQ in Algiers was a major reason for

¹⁵² LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, CMHQ to Tow, GS 1894, 7 Aug. 1943.

¹⁵³ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, P.J. Montague to Alan Randal for J.A. McNeil, 20 Aug. 1943.

¹⁵⁴ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, N.E. Rodger to P.J. Montague, 16 Aug. 1943.

¹⁵⁵ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, J.A. McNeil to P.J. Montague, 19 Aug. 1943; W.A. Wilson to F.H. Fisher, 27 July 1943.

Wallace's eventual replacement. Abel's "lessons learned" report of August 16, 1943 insisted that Wallace administer PR from "force headquarters" where he could placate waiting correspondents, interact with Allied PR officials, and most importantly, communicate with CMHQ.¹⁵⁶ Many problems resulted from Wallace's absence from the correspondents, but administering the Italian campaign PR from AFHQ resulted in a similar situation. Keeping CMHQ informed and having more direct access to Allied PROs did not result in a happier press. After Wallace's replacement, Abel felt guilty about his role in the affair. Because of "sloppy" documentation in the Mediterranean, Abel received instructions to "write an adverse report to justify his return here and his removal from CMHQ," but an offer to Wallace of an Army PR position in Canada relieved him of that "painful duty."¹⁵⁷ Unfortunately, it also removed any official explanation for his relief, but there is little doubt that questions about Wallace's administrative ability began in Sicily.

Wallace's conduct during the campaign does not deserve as much condemnation as it received. Lack of communication with Canadian PR in Tunis is the most justifiable criticism of Wallace. Yet CMHQ created many problems by dispatching more correspondents than authorized by AFHQ despite Wallace's contrary advice. While Abel may have believed correspondents' promises to sit quietly in North Africa for weeks if necessary, both Wallace and Clark understood trouble would likely result. Abel, an advertising executive, did not have the newspaper experience that Wallace and Clark did.

¹⁵⁶ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/Press/28/2, P.J. Montague to D.J. Tow, 18 Aug. 1943; Abel, "Duties of ADPR in Theatre of Operations." 16 Aug. 1943. Abel wrote this from London without ever speaking with Wallace.

¹⁵⁷ DND DHH 75/315, Abel to JWG Clark, 23 Feb. 1944.

Abel's actions caused many difficulties; he once boasted to Clark "on my own instructions, quite contrary to instructions, and assuming that I represented a national interest rather than a Division, I sent 20 men to the annoyance of everybody."¹⁵⁸ By defying the advice of Wallace and AFHQ, Abel ensured a "second wave" of angry correspondents and an annoyed AFHQ, although his actions increased the number of Canadian correspondents in the theatre. Miscommunication and misunderstanding between the different PR establishments and the news agencies with a home office, London office and correspondents in the field, aggravated the problems.

Many of Wallace's decisions were reasonable given the information he had, no matter how it appeared from Tunis, London or Ottawa. He remained in North Africa until he obtained accreditation for the war correspondents. Getting Montgomery's permission for the correspondents to proceed to Sicily constituted the next critical step and required a trip to Sicily. After obtaining this, he remained in Sicily while despatching his subordinate to bring the party to Sicily. Not returning himself to Tunis was his biggest mistake, although understandable since he trusted Eighth Army to transmit Montgomery's orders. When he finally learned of the situation, he obtained written orders and returned to North Africa himself. Wallace made the necessary choices based on the information he had. What was unanswered in 1943, and remains so, is why the order never arrived or why Eighth Army never replied to the queries from Tunis, or why 15 Army Group did not accept Montgomery's verbal orders. In any case, getting

¹⁵⁸ DND DHH, 75/315, JWG Clark to Abel, 30 July 1943, LAC RG 24 Vol. 12376, 4/Press/ 28 Wallace to Abel, n.d. This message was clearly sent shortly following message AC 23 dated 20 June 1943; DND DHH 75/315, Abel to Clark, 23 Sept. 1943.

Canadian correspondents to Sicily clearly constituted an extremely low priority for the British Army.

The Sicily campaign represented a major learning opportunity for Canadian PR, in many ways a successful one because of the capture of public interest and triumphs like Ross Munro's scoop. The efforts of Army PR did not so much create public interest as they capitalized on the understandable excitement of the Canadian public about their troops taking their place beside their allies in a victorious campaign. The press problems proved embarrassing and although few were repeated, they permanently soured relations between Purcell and Abel. In retrospect, omissions due to censorship that made the news reporting vague and sometimes inaccurate constituted the biggest problem with the Sicily news coverage. Although not as deceptive as the Dieppe publicity, the war news from Sicily still fell short in giving a clear picture of army operations to the Canadian public.

Chapter Seven:

Murder, Massacre and Friendly Fire: Three Normandy Case Studies

During the Normandy campaign, Canadian Army PR operated with the benefit of news management experience in the Mediterranean theatre and Great Britain and had reached the peak of its efficiency, maintaining good working relations with the Canadian news media and SHAEF PR authorities. Yet as the Germans discovered, it is much easier to report operations accurately and clearly with good news than with bad. The temptation to censor, obscure and falsify war news is much greater when reversals occur.¹ This chapter explores how the army handled the news management of three negative incidents during the Normandy campaign: the killing of Canadian prisoners by the 12th SS Panzer division, the massacre of the Black Watch during *Operation Spring*, and the accidental bombing of Canadian troops during *Operations Totalize* and *Tractable*. The tendency to obscure and sanitize unpleasant issues continued. Despite this fact, negative war news had become much more difficult to control, chiefly due to the large number of organizations involved in its production and management. The Canadian Army's handling of these events depended greatly on the directives of the SHAEF publicity machine and the wishes of the Canadian government. As a result, even when it wanted to, the Canadian Army could not totally keep these incidents from the public. The Canadian government, however, demonstrated considerably more caution than the army about releasing news of two of these incidents. News of these difficulties, although highly controlled and coloured by the army and SHAEF, no longer suffered from the crude untruths surrounding earlier disasters like the Dieppe raid.

¹ Aimé-Jules Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque: Les Correspondents De Guerre Canadiens-Français Durant La Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* (Montreal: VLB Éditeur, 2007), 312.

During the first week of fighting the 12 SS *Hitler Jugend* panzer division killed at least 147 Canadian soldiers after their surrender.² The majority of the division were teenaged volunteers from the Hitler Youth organization, led by many officers with combat experience on the merciless eastern front, where German troops routinely ignored the laws of war.³ This created a unit of fanatical Nazi soldiers capable of brutal atrocities. Of course, all war is vicious and surrendering troops do not always receive mercy, especially if they inflicted casualties and then capitulated. After capture, the trip to the rear for prisoners was dangerous, as escorts and follow-up troops sometimes proved vengeful, trigger-happy, or lazy. These sorts of incidents occurred in all armies.⁴ Some historians and the controversial CBC docudrama *The Valour and the Horror* have explained the SS actions as retaliation for real or rumoured Allied crimes, downplaying the atrocities.⁵ Recent studies dismiss these claims, highlighting the role of Nazi ideology

² Twenty percent of Canadian Third Division fatal casualties from June 7-11 occurred after surrender. The total for the entire campaign may be as high as 178. Howard Margolian, *Conduct Unbecoming: The Story of the Murder of Canadian Prisoners of War in Normandy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 123.

³ For a study of the brutal nature of warfare on the Eastern front, see Omer Bartov, *The Eastern Front, 1941-45: German Troops and the Barbarisation of Warfare* (New York: St. Martin's, 1986).

⁴ For discussions of this phenomenon in different periods of warfare see John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: Vintage, 1977), 48-51, 105-6, 194, 277-8, 321-2. The complicated process of giving and receiving battlefield surrender is also discussed in a study of the killing of surrendering Germans and prisoners by Canadians in the First World War, Tim Cook, "The Politics of Surrender: Canadian Soldiers and the Killing of Prisoners in the Great War," *Journal of Military History* 70 (July 2006): 637-66,

⁵ *The Valour and the Horror: In Desperate Battle*, dir. Brian McKenna, Galafilm, 1992, argued that the Canadians committed similar war crimes to the SS, citing Jacques Dextrase's description of German prisoners forced to swim a river and some drowning, and the alleged issuing of Canadian "no prisoners" orders. They also claimed that SS troops "were often retaliating," against Canadian killings. While the program caused controversy, the allegations are not new. Alexander McKee in *Caen the Anvil of Victory* (London, Souvenir, 1964), 86, 199-204, portrays the Canadians as frequently killing prisoners and states that a notebook of a dead Canadian officer ordered no prisoners taken. Tony Foster's popular account *Meeting of the Generals* (Toronto: Methuen, 1986), 313, 322-323, 350, 352-3, shows surprising levels of sympathy for Meyer and the Hitler Youth, being replete with claims of Canadians killing prisoners. Foster recognizes some of Meyer's claims, such as the troops at the Abbey Ardennes knowing about Canadian atrocities, to be untrue and self serving, yet uncritically accepts other undocumented SS justifications at face value. Taking an opposing viewpoint is Patrick Brode in *Casual Slaughters and Accidental*

and the influence of brutal officers in the 12th SS. Howard Margolian concludes that the atrocities resulted from “the noxious atmosphere of hate that had been fostered within the 12th SS ...by its senior officers.”⁶ Stephen Hart’s study of the role of indoctrination in the murders cites multiple factors, including ideological fanaticism, inexperience, and above all the orders of officers, to explain their actions. What makes the SS killings of Canadian prisoners especially odious is that many occurred after interrogation at battalion headquarters rather than in the heat of battle. Hart calculates that officers ordered least 93 of the killings.⁷ The actions of the 12th SS went beyond the normal savagery of the battlefield.

The media coverage of the Normandy atrocities has merited little attention apart from a brief overview in a Margolian footnote and some discussion in Patrick Brode’s study of Canadian war crimes prosecutions. According to Margolian, the Canadian government, concerned that inaccurate reporting could jeopardize investigations, wanted all stories quashed. SHAEF PR disagreed, after which the Canadians decided to

Judgments: Canadian War Crimes Prosecutions (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 219-220. He explains that one of McKee’s key witnesses for the alleged killings, later recanted. Brode accepts that although Canadians sometimes killed surrendering German troops, the evidence for it remains strictly anecdotal. He differentiates between the Canadian actions that occurred spontaneously during or shortly after combat, and the SS murders that occurred after the interrogation of prisoners. Bill McAndrew made similar conclusions in “The Canadians on Verrières Ridge: a Historiographical Survey,” *The Valour and The Horror Revisited*, David Bercuson and S.F. Wise eds.(Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1994), 144-6. Terry Copp in *Fields of Fire* (Toronto; University of Toronto Press, 2002), 71, points out there is no evidence that any Canadian killings of prisoners resulted from orders. For a detailed historiography of the atrocities see P. Whitney Lackenbauer, “Kurt Meyer, 12th SS Panzer Division, and the Murder of Canadian Prisoners of War in Germany: An Historical and Historiographical Approach,” *Gateway* 3 (2003): < <http://grad.usask.ca/gateway/archive9.html>> (accessed 5 Mar. 2008). For a study of Canadian Military law, including war crimes see Chris Madsen, *Another Kind of Justice: Canadian Military Law From Confederation to Somalia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999).

⁶ Margolian, *Conduct Unbecoming*, 124.

⁷ Stephen Hart, “Indoctrinated Nazi Teenage Warriors: The Fanaticism of the 12th SS Panzer Division, *Hitlerjugend* in Normandy, 1944,” in *Fanaticism and Combat in the Modern Age*, Matthew Hughes and Gaynor Johnson, eds.(New York: Frank Cass, 2005): 87, 97.

maximize publicity.⁸ Brode briefly explains the Canadian government's concerns and response to growing rumours about the murders.⁹ This section of this chapter adds detail and examines how the Canadian government, Canadian First Army and SHAEF PR, each with varying and sometimes changing motives, engaged in a three-way struggle over the publication of news concerning the 12th SS atrocities. Only the first incident was publicized; no other 12 SS atrocities appeared in the newspapers until after the war. This illustrates the complexity behind the timing and content of controversial war news.

On June 8, British troops discovered the first Canadian victims at the Château d'Audrieu, thirteen soldiers of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles. Over the next weeks, advancing troops found more bodies at various locations, including thirteen more at Audrieu. In late July came the unearthing of "almost three dozen" bodies of Canadians murdered after the 12 SS's initial counter-attack. The bodies of the victims at the Abbaye Ardenne, for which the 12th SS commander Kurt Meyer later faced prosecution, remained buried in a garden until discovered the following spring. Because the British 21 Army Group initially dragged its feet regarding an investigation of the killings, Canadian Military Headquarters (CMHQ) decided to pressure them to conduct a court of inquiry. After Eisenhower heard of the murders, SHAEF ordered an inquiry headed by an American General but including two officers each from the Canadian and British armies. The court of inquiry commenced on July 8, 1944.¹⁰

⁸ Margolian, *Conduct Unbecoming*, 244 n 1.

⁹ Patrick Brode, *Casual Slaughters and Accidental Judgements*, 9-10.

¹⁰ Margolian, *Conduct Unbecoming*, 125-128.

Reports of the murders began to appear in June 1944 in piecemeal fashion. On June 19, George McCarthy, correspondent of the British newspaper *The Daily Mirror*, wrote the first accounts of the Audrieu killings, quite accurately according to the initial information available to the British troops who captured the chateau. It told of thirteen Canadians clearly executed after capture, lying in a row, killed by head wounds. He also accurately stated that a French female civilian who lived nearby provided the information leading to the discovery of the bodies. The story, which revealed that she believed the total number of victims to be twenty-five, attempted to rouse further emotion by describing how the murdered Canadians had pictures “of their wives, sweethearts and children... clutched in their hands.” The story also identified SS troops as the likely culprits. On June 21, the Canadian Press (CP) carried a dispatch based on the *Daily Mirror* article.¹¹ A June 29 British United Press (BUP) article was based on French civilian reports that “small groups of captured British soldiers have been shot by the Germans as a ‘reprisal’ for the alleged shooting of German prisoners by the British.” Although the piece reveals the Audrieu location, the victims’ Canadian nationality was unmentioned.¹² Other accounts of atrocities trickled back to Canada in June and early July. A CP dispatch detailed how a lone German killed one Canadian prisoner and wounded another, who then escaped with another soldier.¹³ None of these became a major news story.

¹¹George McCarthy, “Huns Shooting Canadian Prisoners,” *Daily Mirror*, 19 June 1944; *Globe and Mail*, 22 June 1944, 15; Margolian, *Conduct Unbecoming*, 87, 125.

¹² *Hamilton Spectator*, 29 June 1944.

¹³ *Globe and Mail*, 20 June 1944, 2.

The story came to prominence when Lt. Leo Heaps, the son of the one-time CCF Member of Parliament and later a popular author, wrote to a friend in Canada, detailing how the “Gestapo... shot 48 Canadians in the courtyard of a Normandy inn.” The letter formed the basis for a Toronto newspaper’s article and a BUP dispatch.¹⁴ CP reporter Alan Randall tracked Heaps down and collected more details. Heaps, who said this occurred at Audrieu, first heard about it from British troops and later saw the scene first hand. This article limited the number of victims to at “least 30.”¹⁵ Heaps’ report was not completely accurate. Twenty-four Canadian and two British P.O.W.’s died at the Chateau, but after the discovery of the first thirteen on June 8, the Germans recaptured the building so the other bodies remained hidden until the British returned a fortnight later.¹⁶ According to the CP article, Heaps passed by the Chateau on June 8, and therefore could only have seen thirteen bodies; he must have only heard of the rest from the French. Many of these inaccuracies doubtless resulted from misunderstandings and the conflating of information, the exaggeration of which alarmed the Canadian government. More stories on the murders did not appear before the end of July because SHAEF asked reporters not to publish the story until the announcement of the court of inquiry findings. Apart from the *Daily Mirror* and articles based on it, the correspondents observed the request, although the Canadian First Army HQ warned SHAEF on July 7, that some American correspondents were pursuing the story. The Leo Heaps stories bypassed the

¹⁴ *Hamilton Spectator*, 13 July 1944.

¹⁵ Alan Randall, “30 Canadian Soldiers Said Slain by Gestapo,” *Globe and Mail*, 17 July 1944.

¹⁶ Margolian, *Conduct Unbecoming*, 126.

arrangement with the correspondents in France because he sent the letter home and the CP reporter tracked him down in a UK military hospital.¹⁷

The inquiry, as well as other recent incidents such as the massacre in Oradour-sur-Glane of French civilians and of fifty Allied air force P.O.W.'s after the "great escape," forced the SHAEF PR Council to create a policy for atrocity stories. The council chaired by Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, Walter Bedell Smith, met on July 6; Canadian representatives were Brigadier Penhale, Lt. Col. Abel and T.A. Stone of the Department of External Affairs. According to Stone, "the complete suppression of all atrocity stories was considered but given the tremendous movement of people and mail in and out of France, this would be impossible" to enforce.¹⁸ The council decided that although some atrocities stories were "without foundation," their control exceeded censorship's mandate. Restrictions without reasons of "military security" would have "unforeseeable" consequences. Because of the discussion:

All agreed that atrocity stories would not be censored or forbidden as a whole, provided the reporter quotes his sources so that the public itself can evaluate the story: but should be released unless the story affects our military operations or involve some principle of military security.¹⁹

SHAEF explained that the rationale for giving sources and concern for accuracy in a February 1945 memorandum ordering the banning of the publication atrocity stories by the military itself. They argued that much First World War official atrocity propaganda that later proved false caused a loss of trust in official information.²⁰ Even if not

¹⁷ NA,WO 219/ 18 /4, Exfor Rear to G-1 SHAEF, Cable A-6080, 7 July 1944; LAC, RG24, 12369, 4 /PRC SHAEF /1, T.A. Stone to N.A. Robertson, 18 July 1944.

¹⁸ LAC, RG24, 12369, 4 /PRC SHAEF /1, Cable, Stone to Robertson, 18 July, 1944.

¹⁹ Ibid., "Minutes of Public Relations Council," 6 July 1944.

²⁰ NA,WO 229/22/3 "Release of Atrocity Stories by Public Relations Officers," 1 Feb 1945.

announced by the military, inaccurate atrocity stories could still negatively affect the Allied war effort if they became too numerous leading to suspicions of deception.

SHAEF remained hesitant to invoke policy censorship and believed the media usually did not publish “inflammatory unsupported stories.”²¹

The SHAEF PR council concerned itself not only with accuracy, but also with keeping atrocity stories from provoking further German atrocities and reprisals by Allied troops. The council defined how the policy worked in the SHAEF Censorship Guidance given to the field press censors. In addition to the requirement that the story give the sources of information about atrocities, SHAEF ordered censors to stop the following:

- a. Any suggestion of reprisals on our part against either the perpetrators of atrocities or any other person.
- b. Any suggestion that perpetrators of such atrocities offering themselves as prisoners of war are shot, or if captured, are dealt with in any other way than strictly according to military law.
- c. Names of Allied victims and of enemy perpetrators if the perpetrators have not been captured.²²

SHAEF certainly was aware of the tendency of soldiers to take revenge on the battlefield and did not want any story even implying this and putting Allied troops at risk of counter reprisals. SHAEF did not give orders for German prisoners to be shot in reprisals, but anticipated how such situations should be handled if they arose.

While the Canadian representatives at the council agreed with this decision, the Canadian government did not. Vincent Massey believed it “would lead to unfortunate results,” and conveyed this to Ottawa. The Canadian War Cabinet agreed with Massey

²¹ LAC, RG24, 12369, 4 /PRC SHAEF /1, “Minutes of Public Relations Council,” 6 July 1944.

²² DND DHH, 157.4c2009(d3), “SHAEF PR Division, Censorship Guidance No.23, Atrocity Stories,” 13 July 1944.

and urged that “a greater degree of care should be exercised by censorship to determine the authenticity of atrocities.”²³ The Department of External Affairs explained to Canada House that King’s government was more concerned than SHAEF because: “Apart from the strain that such stories cause to relatives of men overseas it is felt their circulation, unsubstantiated or not, may lead to conduct on both sides that is productive of actual atrocities.” The Department of External Affairs, knowing only of thirteen cases cited the Heaps article as an example of exaggeration.²⁴ In hindsight, given the extent of the murders, the government’s outlook seems naïve. Perhaps they had Great War atrocity propaganda in mind, such as the notorious “crucified Canadian” and the sinking of a Canadian hospital ship and its lifeboats by a U-Boat that allegedly inspired ruthlessness by Canadian soldiers.²⁵ Whatever lay behind their misgivings, the Canadian government could not change the SHAEF PR Council decision. Stone and CMHQ, after consultation with various Allied PROs, recommended the Canadians not pursue the issue. Stone argued that given German actions at places like Oradour-sur- Glane, the “mere publication of atrocity stories” seemed unlikely to cause war crimes.²⁶

Stone suggested an announcement about the murders as an alternative to trying to get SHAEF to reconsider the policy. Presenting the findings of the court of inquiry to the public and troops would stop the supposed exaggerations and rumours, preventing a

²³ LAC, RG2, C-4876, Vol.16, Minutes of the War Committee, 12 July 1944.

²⁴ LAC, RG24, 12369, 4 /PRC SHAEF /1, N.A. Robertson to T.A. Stone, Cable 1406, 13 July 1944.

²⁵ Cook, “The Politics of Surrender,” 662-3. This last featured as the reason for Canadians killing surrendering Germans in the controversial 1930 anti war novel *Generals Die in Bed* by an American CEF veteran Charles Yale Harrison The novel has General Currie ordering no taking of prisoners at the Battle of Amiens using the German sinking of the Canadian hospital ship *Llandoverly Castle* as justification.

²⁶ LAC, RG24, 12369, 4 /PRC SHAEF /1, T.A. Stone to N.A. Robertson, 18 July 1944; Montague to Murchie, 18 July 1944.

“competition of reprisals by both sides.”²⁷ CMHQ concurred and informed NDHQ that SHAEF would cooperate and that “no official announcement” would “be made without consultation on inter-government level.” General Harry Crerar, commander of Canadian First Army, wished to make a statement to his troops before any by government and the news media. The same telegram also gave Ottawa the current death toll of twenty-four Canadians and two British, double that previously known in Canada.²⁸ Crerar submitted a draft of his statement to NDHQ. The Canadian War Cabinet decided to proceed with the suggested announcement, but demanded that Crerar delete the phrase “under circumstances of great brutality,” because it suggested torture, which would cause further grief to relatives. Nor would the announcement include all twenty-six known victims, Ottawa felt that the evidence for five Canadian cases and the two British was weak. Crerar was limited to announcing nineteen victims. Although unhappy about his toned down message, Crerar complied. Still, he convinced the government not to name the victims, preferring that relatives receive official notification rather than learn from an announcement. Crerar also refused to identify the victims’ units because he wished this to be an issue for the entire First Canadian Army, not only individual regiments.²⁹ The negotiation on the statements reflected the motivations of the two parties; the government wished to minimize the incident and prevent reprisals, and while Crerar also wanted to avoid retaliatory murders, he hoped to inspire his troops to greater efforts.

²⁷ LAC, RG24, 12369, 4 /PRC SHAEF /1, T.A. Stone to N.A. Robertson, 18 July 1944.

²⁸ LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30, E 157, Vol. 5, Goc C in C 6-3, Montague to Murchie, Cable GS 2118, 19 July 1944.

²⁹ Ibid., Montague to Murchie, Cable GS 2157, 22 July 1944; Montague to Crerar, Cable GT 1072, 25 July 1944; Crerar to Montague, Cable C 10, 26 July 1944; Montague to Crerar, Cable GT 1083, 29 July 1944, Jonathan F. Vance, *Objects of Concern* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994), 103.

The censors prevented any premature release of any stories about Crerar's August 1 statement until the Prime Minister's announcement in Canada on August 2, 11:00 Eastern Standard Time. The First Army Headquarters briefed the correspondents ahead of time, giving them a copy of Crerar's statement that enabled them to write and submit advance stories, allowing immediate despatch at the deadline. Richard "Dick" Malone, head of No 3 PR Group, instructed censors not to pass any names and units. Nor could anyone mention that French civilians provided much of the evidence, because of fear of German reprisals against relatives still under occupation.³⁰

The officers read Crerar's announcement to the troops in each unit of the army. The statement related the facts of the Audrieu killings in a concise, restrained fashion and then Crerar presented his more passionate message to the troops:

The universal and natural determination of Canadian soldiers to avenge the death of our Comrades must NOT under any circumstances take the form of retaliation in kind. The commission of atrocities will be left to the bestial prerogative of Hitler's Germans. Instead, Canadian anger must be converted into a steel-hard determination to destroy the enemy in battle, to hit harder, to advance farther and above all never to stop fighting and fighting hard, while life remains.³¹

Crerar's message left no doubt that the Canadian Army opposed the retaliatory killing of German prisoners. He also used the atrocity to urge the troops to greater efforts. On August 1, Canadian troops sat stalled south of Caen before Verrières Ridge. Two bloody demoralizing assaults on the ridge during the last two weeks of July failed to take it. August 1 also was the day that the Canadian divisions finally came under Crerar's First Canadian Army in the field; previously the Canadian units operated as part of the British

³⁰ LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30, E 157, Vol. 5, Goc C in C 6-3, Montague to Crerar, Cable GT 1072, 25 July 1944; Richard S. Malone, "Time of Release on Canadian Prisoners Execution Story," 31 July 1944.

³¹ Ibid., Harry Crerar, "To be read to all Troops," 1 Aug. 1944.

Second Army.³² Crerar's new command, tasked with driving south over heavy German defences, clearly needed a morale boost. Crerar's announcement gave an opportunity to help motivate the troops, unify the Canadians as an army, curb potential reprisals, and let the troops hear from their new commander. Margolian convincingly suggests that the statement would also provide Canadian troops an example of what could happen if they surrendered to the Germans.³³

Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King's announcement to the House of Commons on August 2 lacked the passion of Crerar's message. He gave the brief facts of the case, called it murder, and said that the Canadian and British governments requested that the Swiss government make the court's findings available to the Germans and urge them to take disciplinary action against the killers. King ended by expressing condolences to victims' families.³⁴

The two statements received wide coverage in the Canadian news media. The stories from the war correspondents provided more particulars about the investigation and the evidence that left the reader little doubt about the veracity of the incident. Clearly, the press conference at First Army HQ went into more detail than either statement did. Nevertheless, the correspondents differed in their evaluation of the effects of the statement on the troops. CP reporter Ross Munro described the troops as listening in "silent anger" and that even to battle-hardened troops "this was shocking news."³⁵

³² The Canadian First Army became active on July 23, but initially commanded only British divisions on the Allied left flank east of Caen. C.P. Stacey, *The Victory Campaign* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1960), 196, 203.

³³ Margolian, *Conduct Unbecoming*, 245 n 1.

³⁴ The text of the message in a CP despatch appears in the *Toronto Star*, 2 Aug. 1943.

³⁵ Ross Munro, "In Silent Anger Canadians Hear of Pals Slain," *Toronto Star*, 2 Aug. 1943.

Conversely, the *Globe and Mail's* Ralph Allen, an enlisted soldier earlier in the war, wrote that the statement “evoked nothing like the shock in Normandy that Mackenzie King’s parallel announcement was expected to induce 24 hours later in Canada’s House of Commons.” In contrast, they stoically accepted the news as “a familiar, if abhorrent syndrome” of the “malignant disease” they fought. Of the two, Ralph Allen’s account is the more convincing; most troops probably already knew of the atrocity stories, given the statement’s purpose was to stop exaggerated rumours. The opinion among the correspondents of the efficacy of banning reprisals is mixed. Ralph Allen noted, “Most correspondents agreed that the army’s restrained and factual handling of the matter that cries aloud for violence, was a wise course.” Yet he wrote that a minority of correspondents perceived incompetence or a more sinister purpose behind the statement. “It seemed to some a conspicuous and even dangerous omission that General Crerar made no mention of the army’s intention to exact retribution at the proper time.”³⁶ Mentioning such intentions would have been impossible since Crerar could not comment about matters of political policy.

The Canadian public and the military received the story of the Audrieu murders, but the government and the army did not become as eager to publicise atrocities as Margolian argues.³⁷ While they may have gone along with publicizing the findings of the court of inquiry, further discoveries of atrocities received no mention in the press. Crerar and King’s statements detailed nineteen murders, but over a hundred others remained hidden from the public until some months after V- E Day. By July 13, 1944, the Canadian

³⁶ Ralph Allen “Murder of Soldiers Stirs Canada’s Hatred,” *Globe and Mail*, 3 Aug. 1943, 1

³⁷ Margolian, *Conduct Unbecoming*, 244 n 1.

Army knew of the killing of seven other Canadian prisoners near Mouen. The interim report of the court of inquiry became available by July 31, and its chairman Major General Barker, suggested that the Canadians include them in their public statements. Massey, Stone, and Crerar disagreed because of the difficulty of changing the text and arrangements so close to release time, arguing that the announcement of the Mouen murders could follow at another date.³⁸ Despite this, neither the Canadian military nor government announced the news of Mouen killings or any the other murders until the Meyer trial. Munro's despatch of June 21, 1945 speculating about the likely indictment of members of the 12th SS, still listed only the nineteen soldiers mentioned in the August statements.³⁹ Not until the end of October did he include information from the indictment of Kurt Meyer to reveal the extent of the 12th SS murders. He wrote of "at least 144 Canadian prisoners of war killed in 33 different incidents," based on "estimates by war crimes investigators." During the December trial, the Defence department released the names of 112 of the murdered Canadians.⁴⁰

There are several likely reasons for the delay in publicizing the other murders. Neither SHAEF nor the U.S. War Department and the U.K. War Office wanted to draw official attention to atrocities. SHAEF permitted no official announcements about atrocities without approval of SHAEF G-2.⁴¹ To get approval Canada would have faced

³⁸DND DHH, 112.1009 (d6), Montague to Murchie, Cable MGA 26, 13 July 1944; MG 27 III b 11 Vol 78, atrocity stories, Massey to Ralston and Murchie, Cable 1945, 31 July 1944; LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30, E 157. Vol. 5, Goc C in C 6-3, Ernest Walford to Murchie, AQ 44, 1 Aug 1944.

³⁹ Ross Munro, "SS are Indicted for Killing Canadians," *Globe and Mail*, 21 June 1945, 1.

⁴⁰ Ross Munro, "Canada will Conduct Trail of SS General," *Globe and Mail*, 1 Nov. 1945, 1; Brode, *Casual Slaughters and Accidental Judgements*, 61; *Hamilton Spectator*, 13 Dec. 1945.

⁴¹ DND DHH, 157.4c2009(d3), "Press Censorship Guidance No. 23, Amendment One, 12 Jan. 1945.

an uphill battle against Allied policy since SHAEF rather than the Canadian Army conducted the investigations. In addition, the first court of inquiry permitted no publicity until the completion of the interim findings; this likely remained policy. Despite this, the court completed the Mouen interim reports by the end of July, so nothing prevented publicity in that case.⁴² Furthermore, Crerar's statement had already served its purpose for the Canadian Army and repeated announcements would have brought diminishing returns as the force moved on to other battles; certainly combat motivation ceased to be a concern after V-E Day. Finally, addressing the news stories and escalating rumours motivated the August statements; without further accounts appearing about the murders by the 12th SS, there was little need for further announcements. It appears that the reluctance of the Canadian War Cabinet to publicize atrocities never actually changed; SHAEF, the army and the press forced their hand in July and August 1944. Canada could not ban the publication of atrocity stories, but it chose not to draw attention to such incidents.

A second major "bad news" incident in Normandy was the bloody *Operation Spring*; especially the massacre on 25 July 1944 of the Montreal-based Royal Highland Regiment of Canada, better known as the Canadian Black Watch. In conjunction with the American breakout attack *Operation Cobra* on the Allied far right flank, the objective of the Canadian Second and Third infantry divisions was to capture Verrières Ridge. The Canadians took the village of Verrières but the attack failed to take further ground against formidable defences. The Canadian Army suffered more losses than in any day other than *Operation Jubilee*, estimated by Stacey as "about 1500, and the fatal casualties at least

⁴² LAC, J.L. Ralston Fonds, MG 27, III b 11, Vol 78, Atrocity Stories, Massey to Ralston and Murchie, Cable 1945, 31 July 1944.

450.”⁴³ Like Dieppe, the legacy of *Operation Spring* is controversial with whispers of cover-ups and whitewashes, especially in the case of the destruction of the Black Watch.

The Black Watch fared worst of all the attacking regiments during its assault near the village of May-Sur-Orne. Advancing up the ridge without the right flank secured as planned, led by the inexperienced Major Phil Griffin in place of the fallen colonel, the battalion suffered a hail of fire from German infantry and hidden tanks on three sides. The superior and fortified enemy pinned down the survivors who reached the top of the ridge. Of more than 300 men who advanced, only fifteen returned to their lines; the rest became casualties.⁴⁴

Although attracting less public attention than the debates about the Dieppe raid, the historiography of *Operation Spring* is contentious. Much of the controversy focuses on its purpose and the responsibility for the defeat. Historian Bill McAndrew’s study of the historiography of the operation traces much of the debate over the purpose to disagreements between corps commander General Simonds and divisional commander General Foulkes, both of whom were influential in the post-war army. Simonds claimed *Spring* was merely a holding attack designed to distract the enemy from *Operation Cobra*, while Foulkes insisted *Spring* intended to penetrate the German defences. C.P. Stacey’s official history, relying on information from both generals, plays it safe, ultimately siding with Simond’s interpretation of the operation’s purpose, but admitting that Foulkes was then unaware of it.⁴⁵ Later historians have also sided with Simonds’

⁴³ Stacey, *The Victory Campaign*, 194.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 191-2, 194.

⁴⁵ Bill McAndrew, “The Canadians on Verrières Ridge: a Historiographical Survey,” 136-7; C.P. Stacey, *The Victory Campaign*, 186.

version of the attack's objectives, most convincingly Terry Copp. He cites a letter from British General O'Connor, who had discussed the operation with the Canadian Corps commander, to the leader of the British Armoured units attached to the Canadians for the operation stating that the objectives of *Operation Spring* were limited and were not a "rush to Paris."⁴⁶

Much of the blame for the destruction of the Black Watch has fallen on the divisional and brigade leaders for poorly mediating orders between corps and the battalion commanders rather than on Simonds, who planned the attack.⁴⁷ The 1992 CBC documentary *The Valour and the Horror* blames Simonds, portraying him as a heartless bungler who ordered the ill-advised attack due to political pressure. According to the filmmakers, the whole story of the Black Watch episode "was covered up," a claim for which the film was rightly criticized. In their defence of the film to the CBC ombudsman, the producers, Brian and Terrence McKenna, charged that in 1972 Department of National Defence (DND) historians Stacey and S.F. Wise conspired to keep the only surviving copy of the preliminary report on *Operation Spring* from Major Griffin's relatives. Both Foulkes and Simonds had agreed to its destruction. S.F. Wise replied that Stacey had actually saved the remaining copy against orders, and in 1972 the document remained classified and Stacey wanted the document withheld because it "would have been wounding to the family." In any case, the family never made the inquiry and the DND declassified the report as scheduled. Thus, the accusations of cover up by DND

⁴⁶ Terry Copp, *Fields of Fire*, 165.

⁴⁷ Dominick Graham, *The Price of Command* (Toronto, Stoddard, 1993), 143; Terry Copp, *Fields of Fire*, 180-1; John A. English, *Failure in the High Command* (Ottawa: Golden Dog, 1995), 297, 237-66; McAndrew, "The Canadians on Verrières Ridge," 139-141, 150.

historians remain unconvincing. Ultimately, while the McKennas did not discover a cover up and most of the details of the attack have long been published, they did bring to light Simonds' attempt to influence the writing of the history of *Spring*, something Stacey confirms in his memoirs and Tim Cook discusses.⁴⁸

Following the slaughter on the ridge, the army faced a dilemma: whether to use censorship to muzzle the news of the Black Watch or allow it to appear in the news media. The Canadian First Army chose the latter, much to the chagrin of the Minister of National Defence J.L. Ralston, who would have preferred to cover up the incident and avoid embarrassing criticism. In Ottawa, the PR personnel at NDHQ took the blame. This incident also revealed NDHQ annoyance with communication of the progress of operations from the Canadian Army overseas.

After *Operation Spring*, the war correspondents submitted their copy to the field press censors and articles quickly appeared in Canadian newspapers. A British United Press (BUP) despatch outlined the battle, mentioning the capture of several villages, and that 21st Army Group Headquarters characterized the assault as having “limited objectives and not designed to smash entirely through the fortifications blocking the way into the interior.” The more detailed CP story emphasised the day’s gains but described “the fighting as the stiffest since D-Day.” The most accurate account was provided by Ralph Allen, who compared the battle to a First World War infantry attack against the

⁴⁸ Simonds convinced Stacey to remove the emphasis on heavy casualties from early histories of the operation, especially the comparison to the Dieppe raid. He generally attempted to downplay the scale of the disaster and wanted Stacey blame his subordinates rather than his plan. David J. Bercuson, “The Valour and the Horror: A Historical Analysis,” *The Valour and The Horror Revisited*, 57-8; Brian and Terrence Mackenna, “Response to the CBC Ombudsman Report, Nov. 10, 1992 Galafilm Inc.” *The Valour and The Horror Revisited*, 84-5; S.F. Wise, “Letter to the Globe and Mail and the Montreal Gazette, 16 Nov. 1992” *The Valour and The Horror Revisited*, 89-91; C.P. Stacey, *A Date with History* (Ottawa: Denau, , 1982), 175; Tim Cook, *Clio’s Warriors*, 136- 137.

strong German entrenchments.⁴⁹ Several days later Allen again correctly assessed the situation: “we did not use enough men and armour to ensure more than local penetrations of the thick belts of defences the Germans prepared...we used enough men to take the villages but our strength was not sufficient to take the high ground... .” He cited a lack of cover, poor armoured and anti-tank artillery support for the exposed infantry, and overwhelming German artillery defences as further factors in the failure.⁵⁰ On the other hand, Ross Munro, citing an unnamed “officer,” put a positive spin on the story. Even though the attack proved “disappointing,” the “Germans were forced to put up a fight and use up a great deal of material and men to meet the attack. Heavy casualties were suffered by the Germans.” Even more misleading was the claim that “Canadian casualties have not been unusually heavy, according to a Canadian staff officer who has the figures.”⁵¹ Allen did not take such blatant misrepresentation seriously, avoiding such justifications, and while he could not mention casualty numbers, he implied that they were heavy. Comparing the tone of the characteristically positive Munro with Allen’s more critical accounts demonstrates that despite censorship, a writer could still colour reports of events. It also shows that while at least one staff officer wanted to put the operation only in its best light, the censors did not require a positive evaluation of the battle to pass the story.

None of the initial stories contained an account of the Black Watch or any individual regiment’s actions, although a CP dispatch mentioned that many of the units in

⁴⁹ *Hamilton Spectator*, 25 July 1944; *Globe and Mail*, 26 July 1944; Ralph Allen, “Fighting Below Caen Like First Great War,” *Globe and Mail*, 27 July 1944.

⁵⁰ Ralph Allen, “Too Few Men and Tanks for More than Local Action South of Caen,” *Globe and Mail*, 27 July 1944.

⁵¹ Ross Munro, “Action at Caen Described as Disappointing,” *Globe and Mail*, 27 July 1944.

the battle also fought at Dieppe in 1942, and these formations were widely known.⁵² On July 27, Ralph Allen and Gerald Clark of the *Montreal Standard* submitted stories about the Black Watch to the censors. Because of the prohibition on the naming of any regiment, the field press censors delayed the stories until the release of the Black Watch name on July 29.⁵³ The censors did not consider the stories a security risk because so many of the Black Watch casualties occurred on the German-held ridge, so the enemy already knew the information. Still, because the story revealed the Highland battalion's virtually total loss, the censors worried that the publication of the news before the arrival of casualty telegrams to the next-of-kin would cause "intense discomfort." The censors forwarded the stories to SHAEF PR, but the documents contain several conflicting explanations about why. The earliest explanation is that the stories went to SHAEF so that notification of next-of-kin could be determined. Since SHAEF could not ascertain this notification, it sent them to Lt. Col. Abel at CMHQ to forward to the Director of Public Relations in Ottawa on August 1. What is not clear is why the censors would believe SHAEF could determine the status of next-of-kin notification messages since NDHQ supervised casualty notification.⁵⁴ On August 14, Richard S. Malone gave a different explanation to First Army's Chief of Staff Churchill Mann. He said that policy required the forwarding stories about regiments whose names were under a censorship

⁵² Ross Munro, "Units Which Stormed Dieppe in Normandy Battle," *Hamilton Spectator*, 26 July 1944.

⁵³ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/5, Murchie to Montague, Cable GS 477, 12 Aug. 1944; MG 30 E 157 Crerar Papers Vol. 3, Goc C in C 3-7-1, Memorandum from Capt, Taylor to Captain Duckett, 1 Aug. 1944; RG 24, Vol. 60, HQ 650-92-99, Abel to D.P.R., 2 Aug. 1944.

⁵⁴ LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30, E 157, Vol. 3, Goc C in C 3-7-1, Memorandum from Capt, Taylor to Captain Duckett, 1 Aug. 1944; RG 24, Vol. 60, HQ 650-92-99, Major L.W. Taylor, "Canadian Censorship Guidance, No. 8", 4 Aug. 1944; RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/6, Crerar to Montague, Cable C 25, 14 Aug. 1944; Abel, "Memorandum, Re; C 25 For Montague From Crerar" 15 August 1944.

ban. SHAEF held the stories until released and then forwarded them to Ottawa to make public after casualty notification.⁵⁵ Although Malone's is the later explanation, it makes better sense.

Malone's 1984 memoirs differ from the documents. According to Malone, on the evening of July 25, Ross Munro appealed a censorship ruling that killed his story because it claimed "the Black Watch had been virtually 'wiped out.'" Concerned that once the account of the Black Watch leaked out there would be a public loss of confidence in army news, Malone intervened. He confronted General Crerar. The general believed that Munro's story exaggerated casualties but examined the records, which confirmed its accuracy. Malone convinced Crerar that the enemy already knew the information and that the public would learn of it in any case. Crerar reluctantly agreed to "cancel his order" and there were no further cases of policy censorship except those following the accidental bombings of Canadian troops in August.⁵⁶

Unfortunately, several details in Malone's account could not have occurred exactly as described. No published story by Munro datelined July 25 contained an account of the Black Watch, nor could it have since the regiment remained on the secret list until July 29. Possibly the story once cabled to Canada remained unpublished, but this seems unlikely. The two stories forwarded to SHAEF did not include a Munro dispatch. It is possible that Malone, writing from memory, has confused Ralph Allen with Ross Munro. It is conceivable that his story about convincing Crerar to lift policy censorship is

⁵⁵ LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30, E 157, Vol. 3, Goc C in C 3-7-1, Richard Malone to C of S, First Canadian Army, 14 Aug. 1944.

⁵⁶ Richard S. Malone, *A World in Flames* (Toronto: Collins, 1984), 57-8. Unfortunately while the memoirs of Gerald Clark discuss the Black Watch incident in some detail, he does not discuss his reporting of it or possible censorship involved. Gerald Clark, *No Mud on the Back Seat* (Montreal: Robert Davies, 1995), 68-72.

correct. Munro's source for his July 27 despatch denying unusually heavy casualties was a staff officer, which could indicate early attempts to minimise the incident. It could be that initially policy restrictions as well as security concerns delayed the Black Watch stories and after the lifting of the former, the latter remained in place. Significantly, no account of the Black Watch attack appeared substituting "a Quebec Regiment" which was normal practice. Following the publication of Allen's article August, Malone wrote a detailed explanation for NDHQ of the handling of Allen and Clarke's copy, in which policy considerations remain unmentioned as a factor in their delay. Malone also fails to mention any incident involving a Munro story in this account.⁵⁷

Even if the First Army tried to cover up the story, Malone correctly evaluated the unlikelihood of success, since by August 1 the first whispers appeared in Canadian papers. In an editorial, the *Montreal Gazette* published a few details of the story that reached the editors through unofficial channels. "Two companies" of the regiment after pushing ahead without the expected support suffered many losses including their colonel.⁵⁸ The full impact came only with the publication of Ralph Allen's account on August 12. The dispatch, based on survivors' interviews, explained in detail that the Black Watch suffered casualties, including the colonel, even before reaching the attack's start line. Without the expected flank support, Major Griffin ordered four companies up the ridge where the Germans trapped them. Apart from a "trickle of wounded," none returned. The tone was sensationalistic, uncharacteristic of Allen, and emphasised Griffin's final message "not to send more men" because "we have too many now." It

⁵⁷ LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30, E 157, Vol. 3, Goc C in C 3-7-1, Richard Malone to C of S, First Canadian Army, 14 Aug. 1944.

⁵⁸ *Montreal Gazette*, 1 Aug. 1944, 8, *Globe and Mail*, 2 Aug. 1944, 6.

made clear that the regiment had virtually ceased to exist.⁵⁹ Gerald Clark's account published in a weekly newspaper, did not appear until August 19 long after Allen's.⁶⁰

Allen's revelations upset Ralston who inquired how such a shocking and embarrassing account made it to the papers. Not only was a story of the massacre of a regiment including many sons of Montreal's elite alarming, it was the first word that the Minister and NDHQ had of the incident. Chief of the General Staff John Murchie telegraphed Percival Montague, CMHQ Chief of Staff, demanding explanations. Murchie complained that Allen's story and private letters were creating a "bad effect on the people of Montreal," and requested a report. He complained that the regular situation reports sent to NDHQ lacked detail and asked for "supplementary reports" about "major engagements" that included the "successes of Canadian units" and "severe losses."⁶¹ CMHQ passed the message to Crerar who had Malone write a report explaining how the despatch passed through censorship. Malone suggested that the only possible reason for justifying policy censorship was the impact of such a story on recruiting, since the enemy already knew about it. Malone deflected the blame back to NDHQ: "Ottawa alone was in a position to impose policy censorship on this story, and were given the opportunity to do so but either did not consider it wise or did not consider it at all on this basis."⁶²

NDHQ did not consider policy censorship because its Director of Public Relations (DPR) Col. F.X. Jennings did not share the stories' contents with the Minister or general

⁵⁹ Ralph Allen, "Black Watch Units Died Alone in Trap," *Globe and Mail*, 12 Aug. 1944.

⁶⁰ Gerald Clark, "Many Didn't Come Back," *Montreal Standard*, 19 Aug. 1944, 1, 6.

⁶¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/5, Murchie to Montague, Cable GS 477, 12 Aug. 1944.

⁶² LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30, E 157, Vol. 3, Goc C in C 3-7-1, CMHQ to First Army, Cable MGA 89, 13 Aug 1944; Richard Malone to C of S, First Canadian Army, 14 Aug. 1944.

staff. Ralston learned from his Deputy Minister of National Defence G.S. Currie that the DPR knew about Allen's story prior to publication. Currie also saw an August 4 censorship guidance memorandum by Canadian field press censor Major Taylor specifying that Allen's copy should go to the DPR to await confirmation of the completion of the next-of-kin notifications. On August 15, the public discovered that the army had indeed passed the story for publication. A *Montreal Gazette* editor's note, following a letter questioning the accuracy of Allen's story, explained that NDHQ PR released the story. In a note, the minister ordered Currie to correct Jennings: "[he] should not have given clearance in such unfortunate matter like this, without reference to you, will you please instruct him accordingly."⁶³ NDHQ did not want to be surprised again and certainly did not want the PR directorate releasing controversial matters even if passed by censors. Certainly, DPR followed the instructions sent with the stories by SHAEF and CMHQ with no intent to slip a controversial story past the minister⁶⁴

Crerar's reply to NDHQ's inquiries about the transmission of the story told them little more than what they already knew. Additionally, CMHQ conducted some preliminary research into the operation, relying on historical officer Stacey to give NDHQ a short outline of the operation.⁶⁵ Crerar proved less than sympathetic to NDHQ's requirement for detailed operational reports and replied that "the essential thing

⁶³J. Colin Kemp, "Casualties Exaggerated?" *Montreal Gazette*, 15 Aug. 1944, 6; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 60, HQ 650-92-99, Major L.W. Taylor, "Canadian Censorship Guidance, No. 8", 4 Aug. 1944; G.S. Currie to Ralston, "Memorandum Re: Censorship Guidance No. 8," 16 Aug. 1945, handwritten minutes 25 Aug. 1945.

⁶⁴ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 60, HQ 650-92-99, F.X. Jennings to J.W.G. Clark, 19 Aug. 1944.

⁶⁵ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 60, HQ 650-92-99, Stuart to Murchie, Cable GS 477, 19 Aug. 1944; RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/Press/31/6, C.P. Stacey, "Memorandum, Operations R.H.C. 25 June 1944," 15 Aug. 1944; Murchie to Montague, cable GS 2446, 16 Aug. 1944.

is to win battles...he [the Commander of First Army] cannot allow himself, commanders and staff to have their attention diverted from essential tasks in order to follow up these incidents that while regrettable are inseparable from a great battle.” First Army would dispatch the complete story when “pressure diminishes.” Nor did Crerar agree with NDHQ about policy censorship. Citing the SHAEF PR council’s decision about atrocity stories, Crerar stated that news stories must face censorship only on “grounds of military security and to withhold information for any other reasons must inevitably lead to serious and far reaching repercussions.”⁶⁶

Thus in the case of the Black Watch, the Canadian Army overseas, although perhaps initially hesitant, refused to allow policy considerations to interfere with the reporting of a disaster. Having to face the domestic repercussions, NDHQ disagreed but could do little except protest because its DPR simply followed proper procedures. In retrospect, the Canadian Army overseas chose the correct option since it was impossible to conceal the incidents. Many questions remained among the public; in 1946, the Minister of National Defence pressed by Montreal residents for further explanation of the Black Watch massacre assigned Stacey to write a paper about the operation, as he did for Dieppe, although it never appeared in print.⁶⁷ While the historiography of *Operation Spring* demonstrates continuing debate, this resulted from the writing of its history rather than from the initial newspaper reports, as did many of the Dieppe controversies did.

The third “bad news” incident in Normandy, the accidental bombings of Canadian troops during *Operations Totalize* and *Tractable*, two operations designed to carry the

⁶⁶ Vol. 12377 4/Press/31/6, Montague to Murchie, Cable GS 2478, 19 Aug. 1944.

⁶⁷ Bill McAndrew, “The Canadians on Verrières Ridge,” 136, 148 n.21.

Canadian Army south to Falaise. *Totalize*, an innovative plan by General Simonds, called for a massed armoured night attack with the infantry, mounted in improvised armoured personnel carriers called Kangaroos, finding their way through the darkness with the aid of searchlights and tracer shells. The attack on the night of August 7 opened with 1020 RAF heavy bombers blasting the German front lines. In the successful first phase, the Canadians ploughed through the German lines and over Verrières Ridge and southwards. Another heavy bomber attack by 678 American aircraft on the afternoon of August 8 marked the beginning of the second phase. Unfortunately, this time two groups of twelve bombers dropped their bombs short of the German lines on Canadian and Polish troops causing around 315 casualties, including 65 dead, and destroying many vehicles. The bombs wounded General Keller, the Third Division's commander.⁶⁸ The attack continued until August 10, but with greatly diminished success. The bombing contributed to the slow-down of the advance by delaying units and disrupting the chain of command.⁶⁹ The next Canadian attack, *Operation Tractable* launched August 14, used similar tactics to *Totalize* but in daylight. Some of the RAF bombers, in a massive preliminary attack, dropped their bombs on First Canadian Army positions. This time the casualties proved heavier estimated as "65 killed, 241 wounded and 91 missing, many of the missing certainly killed..."⁷⁰

These two incidents of amicide, or "friendly fire," left the Canadian First Army and the Royal and American Air Forces with a potential PR nightmare. In Sicily,

⁶⁸ C.P. Stacey, *The Victory Campaign*, 216-224.

⁶⁹ J.L. Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 272-3.

⁷⁰ C.P. Stacey, *The Victory Campaign*, 243.

ensorship had blacked out any mention of such incidents. In these Normandy cases, the Canadian Army invoked a limited policy censorship, allowing the publication of the stories after a slight delay. Rather than concealing an embarrassing incident, the motivating factors behind the delay were to preserve troop morale and inter-service relations.

The *Totalize* and *Tractable* bombings were not the first such incidents in Normandy. During the American breakout *Operation Cobra* on July 25, some of the bombers in the massive preliminary attack dropped their bombs in American lines, leaving 111 dead and 490 wounded U.S. soldiers.⁷¹ This incident caused a dilemma for the Americans because the bombs killed Lt. General Lesley J. McNair, a key player in their army organization and training. Besides being embarrassing, McNair's death was a security complication since he had recently replaced General Patton as commander of the fictional 12th Army Group. This formation was deceiving the Germans that the main Allied landings would still come at the Pas de Calais and that Normandy was a diversion. Eisenhower permitted no news of the accidental bombings until July 28, when at American Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall's recommendation, the SHAEF press conference announced it. Avoiding conflict between land and air forces through "moderate and sensible" reporting was Eisenhower's main concern.⁷² According to General Omar Bradley, commanding the US forces in the operation, censorship prevented immediate release of the news of McNair in order to preserve the deception plan. The announcement of McNair's death came in stages. On July 27, the War Department

⁷¹ Russell F. Weigley, *Eisenhower's Lieutenants* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 152-153.

⁷² NA, WO 229/55/9, Marshal to Eisenhower, cable w-71972, 28 July 1944; Eisenhower to Marshall, S-56316, 28 July 1944.

released McNair's death as due to "enemy action," although Eisenhower suspected that it might have been due to accidental bombing. On August 3, after receiving the results of an investigation, Eisenhower, believing it "futile and harmful to conceal this bitter truth," arranged a simultaneous announcement of the accidental cause of death with the War Department. By this time, General Dewitt had replaced McNair as the figurehead in the deception plan.⁷³ The delayed announcements led war columnist Fletcher Pratt to accuse the army of employing censorship to mask the embarrassing circumstances of his death.⁷⁴

The accidental bombings during *Totalize* and *Tractable* left Crerar in a similar situation to Eisenhower, although without the security concerns. He shared the need to prevent the development of ill feeling between ground and air forces and preserve morale. On August 10, he instructed Simonds that he wished that:

It should be appropriately conveyed to all ranks that all possible steps are being taken, and will continue to be taken, to prevent the recurrence of such an unfortunate event, but that occasionally mischance in the fortune of war must be accepted, with equanimity and with a stout heart, if we are to drive through without faltering to a successful termination of this war.⁷⁵

The press talks at First Canadian HQ also emphasised that the misdirected bombing did not affect the success of the operation.⁷⁶

⁷³ Omar Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (New York: Modern Library, 1951, Rpt. 1999), 349; *The Washington Post*, 3 Aug. 1944, 1; Eisenhower to Marshall, 26 July 1944 in *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower Vol. III*, Edited by Alfred Chandler (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1970), 2030-1; Eisenhower to Marshall, 2 Aug. 1944, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower Vol. IV*, 2051-2. Alfred Chandler's notes incorrectly portray McNair's death announcement as delayed until August, apparently conflating it with the news of the means of his death. The Allies maintained the deception plan by informing the Germans of McNair's death via a double agent before the public announcement and then ensuring that Dewitt's appointment in McNair's place received widespread publicity. Michael Howard, *British Intelligence in the Second World War Vol. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 192.

⁷⁴ Fletcher Pratt, "The War Today," *The Washington Post*, 8 Aug. 1944, 7.

⁷⁵ LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30 E 157, Vol. 5, D958C.009 (D132), Crerar to Simonds, 10 Aug. 1944.

⁷⁶ William Smith White, "Canadians Hit When Flying Fort Bombs Fall Short," *Ottawa Journal*, 9 Aug. 1944, 9.

While Crerar's concerns with morale are apparent, it is less clear if he invoked policy censorship following the bombings on August 8. The only direct evidence for censorship comes from Malone's 1946 memoir, which mentions both bombing incidents and Crerar's imposition of a 48-hour publication ban as a cooling down period. Unfortunately, Malone does not specify if the ban took place twice or only followed the second raid, but it seems unlikely that it occurred during *Totalize*. The first news of the bombing appeared the next day in Britain and in the Canadian afternoon papers, so any censorship stop could have lasted little more than a day at most, not two as Malone says. One newspaper story datelined on August 8 is marked "delayed," which often meant a censorship stop but also could indicate transmission or courier problems. Thus if there was a censorship delay for *Totalize*, it would have been shorter than Malone described.⁷⁷

Censorship delays or not, the press coverage of the August 8 bombing was characterized by understatement and brevity. The BUP story explained that First Canadian Army HQ said "some bombs" fell short and "killed a few Canadians and wounded others including a high ranking staff officer." It also included a U.S. Air Force statement explaining that the bombers ran into heavy flak and "a few of the stricken bombers including the lead plane which controlled one formation dropped their bombs among our troops..." An accompanying BUP article also portrayed NDHQ as surprised by the news and making no comment.⁷⁸ Several stories cited sources at First Canadian Army HQ as saying the bombing had no effect on operations. Other coverage of the

⁷⁷ Dick Malone, *Missing from the Record* (Toronto: Collins, 1944), 191-2; William Smith White, "Canadians Hit When Flying Fort Bombs Fall Short," *Ottawa Journal*, 9 Aug. 1944, 9; *Winnipeg Free Press*, 9 Aug. 1944, 1; *Toronto Star*, 9 Aug. 1944, 1.

⁷⁸ *Winnipeg Free Press*, 9 Aug. 1944, 1.

incident gave no more details, until the announcement of General Keller's injury on August 10.⁷⁹ Surprisingly, the despatches of Ross Munro and Ralph Allen did not mention the bombing at all. Perhaps the underplaying of the casualties by HQ diminished the importance of the story in the correspondents' eyes.

Once again, NDHQ authorities did not appreciate the press asking them for details about a story of which they knew nothing and demanded an immediate report from Crerar. CMHQ let NDHQ have all the information it possessed, based on a telephone call with Keller's aide. Still, First Canadian Army HQ's reply did not give the minister the details he desired, but only repeated what he already knew from the press coverage. Because of the difficulty of separating bombing casualties from other losses, accurate numbers proved impossible, but estimates were 65 dead and 250 wounded. These proved definitive and appeared in the official history. Crerar opposed making any statement to the public about the bombing because "it might have unfortunate effects on relations with USA Air Force and so affect future co operations and support [sic]." Crerar characterized the incident as an unfortunate but unavoidable by-product of modern warfare.⁸⁰ Perhaps the issue concerning reports to NDHQ about controversial incidents would have died if the *Tractable* incident did not follow a week later, attracting much greater news coverage.

Probably in reference to the *Tractable* bombing, Malone explained that Crerar "ordered press stories on the subject to be held for 48 hours, until feelings had calmed

⁷⁹ William Smith White, "Canadians Hit When Flying Fort Bombs Fall Short," *Ottawa Journal*, 9 Aug. 1944, 9; *Winnipeg Free Press*, 9 Aug. 1944, 1; *Vancouver Daily Province*, 10 Aug. 1944, 1.

⁸⁰ LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30, E 157, Vol. 5, D958C.009 (D132), Montague to Crerar, Cable MGA 74, 10 Aug. 1944; Walford to Montague, cables AQ 2 and AQ 3, 11 Aug. 1944; Paul Douglas, *A Thoroughly Canadian General* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 315.

down a bit and a proper assessment was possible in place of the first rumours.”⁸¹ With the second more intensive bombing causing greater losses, there is little reason to doubt the troops’ anger. Further complicating the situation, the war correspondents were nearby and received a “shaking up,” with Ralph Allen and H.D. Ziman of the *Daily Telegraph* “covered with dirt and under it for half an hour.”⁸² The bombing also destroyed three PR jeeps. To address the situation Crerar met the correspondents at the end of the 48 hours. According to Malone, Crerar “presented the facts” of the case, warning of the threat to “morale and internal harmony that could be caused by wild and unconsidered stories and their effect on the Allied effort, and asked that correspondents each be guided by his own conscience in the matter.” Malone recalled that the correspondents complied with truthful yet non-sensational and balanced reporting that put “the accidents in their proper proportion.”⁸³ Ross Munro agreed: “criticism of the Air Force was rife... a crisis of relations between Army and Air Force would have easily arisen if General Crerar and his staff at Army HQ had not taken a firm stand on the issue.”⁸⁴

An examination of the press coverage of the August 14 bombing demonstrates the accuracy of Malone and Munro’s evaluations. The most dramatic account understandably is Allen’s description of having one hundred bombs dropped within yards of his dug-out shelter, of the terror of the troops, and the black humour of turning on the BBC during the attack to hear that the RAF was bombing “enemy positions near Falaise with complete

⁸¹ Malone, *Missing From the Record*, 192.

⁸² LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16642, War Diary No 3 Canadian PR Service August 44, Malone, Liaison Letter No. 14, 15 Aug. 1944.

⁸³ Malone, *Missing From the Record*, 192.

⁸⁴ Ross Munro, *Gauntlet to Overlord*, 179.

success.” Despite this, Allen assigned no blame and avoided the bitterness, of which he was capable.⁸⁵ James MacDonald of the *New York Times* also related his personal hair-raising experiences; like Allen, he refrained from criticizing the RAF. Other despatches from the CP and J.A.M. Cook of the *Winnipeg Free Press* presented the bombings in a more detached way, only mentioning their own experiences in passing. These correspondents portrayed the bombing error as causing casualties, but having little impact on operations since most bombs hit enemy positions. While the bombing led to some incidents of troops engaging “unauthorized self-evacuation,” they were not in the spearhead of the operation and the accurate bombs heavily damaged the German defences.⁸⁶ The dispatch of Robert Wilson of the Associated Press, who was apparently unwilling or unable to rewrite his article, contained several parentheses declaring the censor’s excision of four, eight and twenty-three words, which from the context appear to describe casualties. Otherwise, Wilson gave a similar overview as the others.⁸⁷ The *Montreal Star*’s Sholto Watt wrote the most critical, yet still dispassionate, account that questioned the effectiveness of using heavy bombers and especially the use of coloured smoke as a recognition signal by ground troops.⁸⁸ Other correspondents like Ross Munro and the *Toronto Star*’s Frederick Griffin did not mention the bombing at all in their accounts of *Operation Tractable*, probably wishing to get their stories out before the

⁸⁵ Ralph Allen, “Canadians Bombed by 500 RAF Planes,” *Globe and Mail*, 16 Aug. 1944.

⁸⁶ James MacDonald, “Had an Outside View, New York Times Special” *Globe and Mail*, 16 Aug. 1944; William Stewart, “RAF Bombs Fall Short of Mark and Cause Canadian Casualties,” *Montreal Gazette*, 16 Aug. 1944, 1; Hamilton Spectator, 15 Aug. 1944; J.A.M. Cook, “Bombers Blast Out the Way,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, 16 Aug. 1944, 1,6; Terry Copp, *Fields of Fire*, 229.

⁸⁷ Robert C. Wilson, “Canadians Hit by RAF Bombs,” *Montreal Star*, 15 Aug. 1944, 8; Robert C. Wilson, “Bombing Error Hits Canadians,” *Ottawa Journal*, 15 Aug. 1944, 4.

⁸⁸ Sholto Watt, “Bomb Errors May Result in New Techniques,” *Montreal Star*, 16 Aug. 1944, 6.

lifting of the ban on the bombing stories.⁸⁹ Overall, the correspondents complied with Crerar's request that the correspondents not seek to stir up animosity against the Air Force.

The *Tractable* bombing incident further stoked tensions between NDHQ and First Canadian Army over the prompt forwarding of controversial incidents. Seeing that the August 16 morning edition of the *Daily Telegraph* featured a story about the August 14 bombing, which doubtless would appear in Canada that day, and knowing NDHQ's demands in earlier incidents, Montague suggested that Crerar immediately forward information to Ottawa explaining the situation. Crerar replied with a brief explanation listing the approximate casualties and emphasising that bombing prevented greater losses by clearing the path for the Canadian advance. When CMHQ received the request from NDHQ on August 15, Montague suspected that Crerar's explanation would be insufficient for the Ralston. Crerar had the last word on the matter. He explained that First Army could not send complete and detailed information as quickly as the war correspondents that relied on sometimes "fragmentary data." The only alternative to slow reports was unacceptable censorship. For Crerar, victory in battle was the task of the staff officers of First Army not getting hot news to NDHQ to avoid embarrassment. Crerar did not submit his official report to Ralston concerning the operations of August 7-23 until September 1.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Frederick Griffin, "Take at All Costs Order Given Canadians," *Toronto Star*, 15 Aug. 1944; Ross Munro, "Bombs, Shells Ravage 12 Mile Escape Gap," *Globe and Mail*, 15 Aug. 1944.

⁹⁰ LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30, E 157, Vol. 2, D958C.009 (D42), Montague to Crerar, Cable MGA 104, 16 Aug. 1944; Crerar for Ralston, Cable C29, 16 Aug. 1944; Montague to Crerar, Cable MGA 107, 17 Aug. 1944; Crerar to Montague, Cable C 35, 17 Aug. 1944; Crerar to Montague, Cable C 32, 17 Aug. 1944; Crerar to Montague, Cable C 33 (unsent), 17 Aug. 1944; LAC, Ralston Papers, MG 27 III B 11 Vol. 43, Crerar, Major General H.D.G. Operational reports-1, Crerar to Ralston, 1 Sept. 1944.

Crerar's refusal might have marked the end of news interest in the August 14 bombings but one more press incident occurred in October 1944. The *Globe and Mail* based a story on statements by Squadron Leader C.P. MacDonald that the bombers were off target because the pathfinders, who guided bombers to their targets, were given "a day off." Instead, the army marked the German positions with mortar flares, but the enemy countered by firing their own flares over the Canadian lines with tragic results.⁹¹ The story contained incredible errors although there was some basis in fact. Air Chief Marshal Arthur Harris' report on the incident specified that the bombers relied on pathfinders to mark the targets and that coloured artillery shells were not used. The report specified human error on the part of some pathfinders, mistaken identification of both the yellow smoke used by the ground troops to mark them as friendly as target indicators and some of the confusion on the flares fired by the pilots of army Auster spotter planes in an attempt to warn the bombers of their error. Incredibly, no one had informed Bomber Command of the significance of yellow smoke, although SHAEF policy designated it as marking friendly forces. Therefore, Harris placed some blame on the ground troops and Auster pilots. Following the report, Harris removed several crews from pathfinder duty and demoted those Squadron and Flight Leaders deemed responsible for the error.⁹²

When Crerar learned about the *Globe and Mail* story, he informed Air Marshal L.S. Breadner, commander of the RCAF overseas, of the article and its errors fearing "unfortunate reactions." Breadner apologized to Crerar and contacted his Minister C.G.

⁹¹ *Globe and Mail*, 28 Oct. 1944.

⁹² DND DHH, 79 /721, Box 64, D1081, Folder 13, "Report of Bombing of Own Troops During Operation Tractable," 25 Aug. 1944, 6, 9-10; LAC Crerar Papers MG 30, E 157, Vol. 5, D958C.009 (D132), Arthur Harris, Cover letter for "Report of Bombing of Own Troops During Operation Tractable," 25 Aug. 1944; Crerar to Arthur Harris, 29 Aug. 1944.

Powers to prevent any further such stories. The RCAF did not wish to revisit the incident since many of the bombers who committed the error were from the Canadian No. 6 Bomber Group, which the press did not report.⁹³ The initial press coverage of the accidental bombings ended and the Army avoided major conflict with Allied air forces and controversy in the newspapers, but still allowed the press limited freedom in reporting the incidents.

These three case studies reveal several important conclusions about the Canadian Army and Normandy war news. The various army headquarters and the Canadian government often disagreed over how to manage the news, largely because of their differing priorities. First Canadian Army's primary concern with war news was its effect on operations. The release of the atrocity stories became a means to inspire Canadian troops and guide their behaviour. During *Operation Spring*, security concerns guided censorship rather than the political ramifications of the destruction of a regiment containing many of Montreal's elite. Maintaining good relations with the Air Forces motivated the temporary policy censorship following the bombings of Canadian troops rather than concern with how the news appeared to Canadians. On the other hand, NDHQ and the Canadian government, with Canadian public opinion a more pressing issue, were concerned with the political implications of controversial news stories. In the case of the Black Watch and the 12th SS murders, they would have preferred the story withheld entirely. After these incidents, Ottawa wanted details immediately, while Crerar's HQ wished to focus on winning battles rather than preventing domestic embarrassments. This is not to say that First Canadian Army did not care what appeared in the news, it always

⁹³ LAC, Crerar Papers, MG 30 E 157, Vol. 5, D958C.009 (D132), Crerar to L.S. Breadner, 19 Dec. 1944; Breadner to Crerar, 28 Dec. 1944; John A. English, *Failure in the High Command* (Ottawa: Golden Dog, 1995), 297.

tried to influence correspondents to write positive stories, but under SHAEF regulations and from experience, it considered censorship as justified primarily for security or morale reasons. The struggle between First Army HQ and NDHQ is an interesting example of the conflicting priorities that complicated civil/military relations during time of war.

Secondly, these case studies demonstrate that SHAEF policy and decisions limited the Canadian government and army's PR options. The government opposed announcing any information of the murder of Canadian soldiers, but SHAEF overruled them. SHAEF also played a role in passing the Black Watch story, much to the chagrin of Ralston and NDHQ. Even though not directly involved in the handling the bombing incidents, SHAEF policy mandated the releasing of stories unless security issues prevented it, guided First Army decision making. The precedent set by SHAEF in the July 25 American episode also doubtless shaped Crerar's decisions about how to handle bombing errors. Despite SHAEF's power, Canada could influence and even circumvent SHAEF policies. Canadian representatives sat in the SHAEF PR council that set press policies for all Allied forces. Furthermore, when the council ruled against Canada's position on the war crimes stories, the Canadian military kept secret the information concerning other similar incidents from the public.

Thirdly, these case studies also demonstrate the willingness of the press to cooperate with the army. By taking correspondents into his confidence and requesting their cooperation by avoiding sensationalism, Crerar favourably coloured the bombing story that could not have remained secret long and would likely have appeared in lurid form. The war correspondents, supporting the war effort, cooperated since the issue

became not one of withholding news, but of reporting it in such a way to communicate the facts without exasperating the army's morale difficulties and inter-service rivalries.

Finally, these case studies demonstrate that while incapable of completely covering up bad news incidents, policy censorship remained a temptation for Canada's political and military leadership. Although unable to get the total ban sought on atrocity stories, by not releasing news of other murders to the press, the government and military engaged in *de facto* policy censorship by keeping the stories from the press. NDHQ clearly demonstrated that it preferred and expected the Black Watch story kept from public. While the duration of policy censorship in the case of the bombing incident was short, it shows the willingness of the field army to hold back news stories for reasons other than security. If Malone's memory of confronting Crerar following *Operation Spring* is correct, the natural tendency of the Commander of the First Army remained to try to cover up bad news, although reasonable arguments swayed him against it.

When compared to the exaggerated claims of the Dieppe raid, these case studies revealed that the army became more accepting of negative news. While attempts to colour news stories remained, no communiqués claimed *Operation Spring* was a success. Certainly, Eisenhower's approach to press relations, allowing more transparency than Mountbatten's, helped with this. Although, the government and military still believed in policy censorship in some cases, in no case did the reputation of the army or its commanders justify interference with the press. This in itself demonstrates, despite a still restrictive system, the improved quality and accuracy of the war news by the time of the Normandy campaign.

Chapter Eight:

“We Regret to Inform you...”: Casualty Notification and Publication during the Second World War¹

During the present Afghanistan mission, the reporting of casualties receives more media attention than any other aspect of operations. Usually within a day, the life story of each fatality appears in the media, followed by footage of the ramp ceremony and reports from the hometown funeral. Politicians debated whether to lower the national flag on the Peace Tower after every fatality. None of this could have occurred during the Second World War due to limitations in communications, administration and the sheer number of casualties. Processing each casualty report overseas, dispatching it to Ottawa and then to the next-of-kin, while allowing sufficient time before publication in the press, took days and often weeks. The Canadian Army sometimes suffered more casualties in a single day of battle than the entire losses in Afghanistan to the date of the writing of this chapter. Nor are there the same levels of security concerns since limited losses do not allow the Taliban to use casualty reports to estimate combat effectiveness of Canadian units. Obviously, from 1939-1945 there could not be today's level of interest about individual casualties in the national media, nor the capability of transmitting the news as quickly. Nonetheless, casualty reporting constituted an important element of Canadian war news in the Second World War. Although most of the process did not fall under the responsibility of the PR units, the subject remains essential for a complete picture of the army's handling of operational news. This chapter examines the notification of next of kin and the publication of casualty names and numbers in the news media. Even though

¹ Sections of this chapter are from Timothy Balzer, “Selling Disaster: How the Canadian Public was Informed of Dieppe” (M.A. Dissertation, University of Victoria, 2004).

the army generally wished to notify the family, members and public as quickly and accurately as possible, it could not always do so. Unofficial communications with the family, procedural failures, and more frequently press and censorship errors, caused occasional mistakes in casualty reporting. Additionally, the interests and regulations of Canada's senior allies often prevented the timely publication of casualty names and figures usually on the grounds of security, sometimes with questionable justification.

The administration of army casualty reporting went through numerous small refinements during the war, but the basic structure and procedure remained relatively constant. Canadian Military Headquarters (CMHQ) in London served as the overseas records office and conduit for transmitting casualty reports to Ottawa. Initially, the administrative procedure for each casualty report was painstaking; an individual casualty card had to be processed, double-checked with the unit and against existing casualty records files, before transmission to the records office at National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ).² As the army grew in size and some Canadian formations deployed to the Mediterranean and later to France, CMHQ could no longer confirm each casualty with his unit. Instead, the Second Echelon, the support and administrative units of the army, received the information in the theatre from units and hospitals and forwarded it to CMHQ. Once the cable arrived at the Directorate of Records in Ottawa, the information was again processed and a telegram of notification sent to the next-of-kin. The name was added to the publication list only after confirmation of its receipt. This procedure took time: according to a March 1944 army press release, "a casualty notice can hardly be

² DND DHH 39.009 (57) Office Instructions Issued Officer i/c of Records CMHQ, "Office Instructions No. 10: Casualty Records Overseas," January 1940.

expected to reach Canada in less than a week or ten days.”³ Two of the major objects of this system were preventing mistaken reports and ensuring the next-of-kin did not have the shock of learning about the death of a family member from a media report.

Despite these painstaking precautions, mistakes happened. In some cases, the responsibility for error lay with the army itself. During the aftermath of the Dieppe raid, many mistakes resulted from waiving normal procedures to speed through the enormous number of casualties clogging up the untried system. To hurry up the process, Second Echelon telephoned casualties to Records “before they had been able to do a proper check.”⁴ The initial information was based on inaccurate embarkation lists and sometimes on anecdotal information collected at the check posts, which resulted in reports of death based on “hearsay evidence” alone.⁵ No formal courts of inquiry were held until nine or ten days later. Conducted by the individual units, with sworn eyewitness evidence, they provided reliable answers about many casualties.⁶ Unfortunately, numerous cables were despatched prior to this. The records office deliberately cabled the names to Ottawa, even though they were aware that the status of some casualties would change. It was more important, in the light of the pressure from NDHQ, to get the names out quickly, with some errors, than to delay their transmission and ensure accuracy. This did not prevent

³ LAC, James Layton Ralston papers, MG 27, III b 11, Vol. 78, Col. C.L. Laurin, “System of Reporting Casualties,” 29 Jan. 1944 ; RG24, vol. 13305, Directorate of Records- Army folder #1, “Statement of Duties in Lieu of a Monthly War Diary, Directorate of Records (Army) September 1939-December 1943, 15 February 1944; *Montreal Star*, 27 August 1942, 1; LAC James Layton Ralston Papers, MG 27, III b 11, Vol. 78, Public Relations Press Release, 1 Feb. 1944.

⁴ LAC, RG24, C-2, vol. 12468, 6/Dieppe/1, “Canadian Section GHQ 2nd Echelon, General Comment on Jubilee Force,” 2 Sept. 1942.

⁵ *Ibid.*, “Major Moran to Deputy Adjutant General,” 22 Aug. 1942.

⁶ LAC, RG24, vol. 10875, Operation Jubilee, 2D/ 5-4-2., “Court of Inquiry, Queen’s Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada”, 28 August 1942; “Court of Inquiry 1 BN Black Watch,” 29 Aug. 1942.

NDHQ from later complaining about changes in the status of casualties that grieved the next-of-kin.⁷

This departure from normal procedure resulted in the categories of some casualties changing two or even three times. The exact numbers of changes were described “as a small percentage” of the casualties, but they may have been as high as fourteen percent.⁸ These changes in category doubtless led to unnecessary grief in many Canadian homes. For example, Mrs. R.W. Barton of Toronto was told her son was missing, the next day he was reported as safe, but several days later he returned to missing status.⁹ The rush to get the casualties to next-of-kin doubtless was beneficial to those who received correct information, but it caused immense uncertainty for those who received inaccurate cables.

Nor was Dieppe the only time that the army made mistakes in casualty reporting. Serious hold-ups in next-of-kin notification took place during the Sicilian campaign. In July 1943, the casualty notification telegrams experienced “lengthy delays” because they competed with operational traffic that took first priority. Although Second Echelon received its own equipment allowing communication with London, it still could not use it on July 24 because AFHQ had not yet assigned it a frequency.¹⁰ Because of the delayed

⁷ LAC, RG 24, vol. 12699, 18/Dieppe/1, “A2728 CMHQ to NDHQ,” 8 Sept. 1942; “AG 283 NDHQ to CMHQ,” Sept. 1942.

⁸ *Ibid.*, “Lt. Appleford to ADAG (A),” 18 Sept. 1942. This document contains a list of the numbers of changes in category. However, the document is a poor carbon copy that appears to have the last digits of every number cut off by the right hand border.

⁹ *Toronto Star*, 16 Sept. 1942, 21.

¹⁰ LAC, RG24, Reel C-5254, HQS 8676-9-7, Vol. 2, Montague to Letson, cable A2450, 27 July 1943.

casualty reports, the instances of next-of-kin learning of casualties by other channels increased and resulted in some anger in the press, which will be discussed below.

Another embarrassing situation arose on December 30, 1943, at the Army Directorate of Records at NDHQ, when a typist, processing four casualties, mistakenly entered “killed” in the place of “wounded” on the duplicator stencil. The correct status already appeared on an earlier form, but another clerk changed that form to match the incorrect stencil. As a result, the next-of-kin of the four men received telegrams notifying them of the soldiers’ deaths. The error escaped detection despite three checking points in the procedure, including a review by the Directorate Duty Officer. The four soldiers remained deceased until resurrected by an update on the condition of one of the wounded, alerting the Directorate of Records to the error, who sent the correct information to the next-of-kin.¹¹ A January 10, 1944 CP story reported the outrage of one of the families, and the Edmonton branch of the Canadian Legion sent a protest to NDHQ. The story, as carried by the *Ottawa Journal*, came to the notice of NDHQ and the records office. A resulting investigation led to changes that ensured more stringent double-checking in the office.¹² It is no coincidence, that two weeks later a press release from NDHQ Army PR described a visit of Minister of National Defence, J.L. Ralston, to the Casualties Section of the Directorate of Records. He outlined the need for accuracy and speed to the staff and said that he was “deeply impressed by the great care taken by the casualty section to guard against errors.”¹³

¹¹ LAC, RG24, Reel C-5254, HQS 8676-9-7, Vol. 1, Major A.C. Barwick, Memorandum, 11 Jan. 1944.

¹² *Ottawa Journal*, 10 Jan. 1944; LAC, RG24, Reel C-5254, HQS 8676-9-7, Vol. 1, C.L. Laurin, “Errors in Reporting Casualties to Next-of-Kin,” 11 Jan. 1944; Major A.C. Barwick, Memorandum, 11 Jan. 1944.

¹³ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 13330, Directorate of Public Relations (Army) War Diary Feb. 44, Department of National Defence (Army), Public Relations, Press Release P.N.61-44, 1 Feb. 1944.

Despite the steps taken after January 1944, a similar mistake happened in November 1944 when a Toronto mother, informed of the death of her officer son, received within hours a second telegram explaining that the first cable was erroneous and he suffered only a light wound. Unfortunately, the records department did not correct the inaccuracy in the publication list for the newspapers and the error was repeated.¹⁴

Mistakes happened more frequently during the campaign in Northwest Europe. Dated 10 October 1944, one memorandum from the Directorate of Records complained about delays and inaccuracies in the reports sent both by units at the front and the hospitals. Progress reports on “dangerously ill” and “seriously ill” came only rarely, while the directorate felt they should be weekly or bi-weekly. “Discrepancies and mistakes in reporting,” also resulted from “carelessness in the writing of cables” and “adding inexperienced personnel in the peak period we are going through.”¹⁵

Thus, despite the attempts by the army to avoid errors and delay, circumstances and clerical mistakes occasionally resulted in the next-of-kin receiving erroneous or belated casualty reports. Sometimes, as in Sicily, the army, despite its best efforts to send casualty notification, ran into difficulties beyond its control. At other times, such as Dieppe and the autumn of 1944, the sheer number of casualties increased the likelihood of error. The information received in Canada always depended on the accuracy of the report from the front, during heavy fighting; mistakes were inevitable because casualty reports did not always have priority for the staff of combat units. In any case, the mere fact that casualty reports involved at least four steps before reaching the next-of-kin

¹⁴ *Globe and Mail*, 11 Nov. 1944.

¹⁵ LAC, RG24, Reel C-5254, HQS 8676-9-7, Vol. 2, Maj. A.C. Berwick, “Reporting of Casualties From the Western European Theatre of War,” 10 Oct. 1944.

increased the possibility of clerical mistakes. While understandable and probably inevitable, these errors caused unnecessary grief and worry for the families affected by them.

In addition to military blunders in notifying next-of-kin, sometimes the families of casualties received notice through unofficial communications, often from other soldiers or even callous hoaxers. Sometimes this news was completely false or misleading. In April 1940, the *Globe and Mail* reported that the father of a corporal in the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry received word of his son's death in Norway. Since the Canadian Army denied having troops in Norway, this became front-page news. The story puzzled officials at NDHQ, but quick inquiries requested by Gillis Purcell of the Canadian Press (CP) revealed the supposedly deceased soldier still with his company in the UK. It never surfaced whether the parents were victims of a hoax or some kind of administrative mistake, since the corporal's father had heard second hand from his estranged wife who did not mention how she was informed.¹⁶ On other occasions, cruel deceivers telephoned the next-of-kin of service personnel informing them of their family member's death. A November 1942, a RCAF press release described this hoax as occurring "frequently" and indicated that there were multiple perpetrators. Newspapers reported other occasions and with other services and no doubt this could have occurred with the army as well.¹⁷

¹⁶ *Globe and Mail*, 26 April 1940, 1; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 10855, 231c1(d29), C.H. Mann, Typed Note, 27 Apr. 1940; Mann, Typed Note, 26 Apr. 1940.

¹⁷ DND DHH 79/453, Vol. 6, RCAF PR Press Release No. 886, 2 Nov. 1942; *Globe and Mail*, 25 May 1944, 6.

More often unofficial reports of casualties came through well-meaning letters from other soldiers. After Dieppe, grieving next-of-kin received shocking news by these unofficial channels, although this was contrary to regulations. While censorship of soldiers' mail existed, it tended to be haphazard and many soldiers and officers ignored the rules.¹⁸ While those writing casualties' families were well intentioned, they probably did not resolve the uncertainty; as long as no official word came, hope doubtless remained. Other next-of-kin were stunned when letters addressed to missing personnel returned, mistakenly stamped "deceased."¹⁹ This was a result of two foul ups: the unit prematurely labelling a missing man as deceased, and the letter being returned instead of being sent to the dead letter office.²⁰

The practise of personnel writing to next-of-kin continued after Dieppe. An October 10, 1944 Directorate of Records memorandum outlined the problems caused by unofficial notifications:

A great amount of casualties, both fatal and otherwise, are being reported to the next-of-kin by personal cables and mail long before the official report is received at this office. This not only puts this Headquarters in an embarrassing position but adds greatly to the burden of answering enquiries on a matter which has not been officially reported to this office. A notable example of this occurred lately when H/Capt. Mooney, a R.C. Chaplain, was killed in action, the news of his death was "officially" reported to all RC district Chaplains in Canada by the Principal Chaplain (RC), almost one week before the notification cable was received in this office.²¹

¹⁸ LAC RG 24, vol. 12699, 18/Dieppe/1/2 "Letson to Montague," 63, 10 Nov. 1942; Claude Beaugard, *Guerre et Censure au Canada 1939-1945* (Sillery P.Q.: Septentrion, 1993), 114-6.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, "AG 862 NDHQ to CMHQ," 46, 26 Oct. 1942.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, "Montague to HQ 1Cdn. Corps," 47, 26 Oct. 1942; "Col. A.M. Brown to DAG and CMHQ," 54, 28 October 1942.

²¹ LAC, RG24, Reel C-5254, HQS 8676-9-7, Vol. 2, Maj. A.C. Berwick, "Reporting of Casualties From the Western European Theatre of War," 10 Oct. 1944.

The memorandum failed to mention the uncertainty that the next-of-kin experienced until officially notified. Much of the blame for the situation addressed in the memorandum lay with the slowness of official communications. While a private cable might conceivably beat military telegraph communication back to Canada, soldier's mail should not. The writers may sometimes have expected the recipient to possess the news by the time the letter arrived.

A similar situation occurred during the Sicily campaign with the casualty notifications hampered by the lack of a Second Echelon radio frequency. Additionally, mountainous terrain, poor quality batteries, and a lack of radio equipment due to the loss of supply ships meant that communications between Canadian units proved difficult, adding to casualty reporting delays.²² This resulted in the inevitable informal revelations. The most conspicuous case, which the Conservative *Globe and Mail* attempted to turn into a government embarrassing *cause célèbre*, involved the family of Lt. Col. Ralph Crowe of the Royal Canadian Regiment, killed on July 24. On August 6, several journalists asked the family for pictures of Crowe, explaining they wanted pictures of all members of the regiment. The family later learned that stories of Crowe's death began circulating at the local military district headquarters that same day. On August 9, the family received a July 30 letter from a Canadian PR officer in London, a friend, informing them of the news. Seeking confirmation, the family made inquiries to NDHQ, through the local military district, which reported that it had no notification. "The assured and relieved" family received the official telegram the next day. The *Globe and Mail* quoted the remarks of an unnamed officer, a family friend, that the situation was "difficult to justify" and he hoped that the publicity would lead to "some reorganization

²² G.W.L. Nicholson, *The Canadians in Italy, 1943-45* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1957), 126-7.

of the records [system] and press releases” so “that a similar experience not will not come to next of kin of future casualties in this war.”²³

A response by NDHQ explained that overcrowded communications systems resulted in casualty notifications delays “during the first three weeks of the Sicilian campaign” and “a number of despatches failed to reach base during that period.” NDHQ knew of a report of Lt. Col. Crowe’s death but it “had not been confirmed.”²⁴ The *Globe and Mail*, unimpressed by the explanation, published several editorials accusing the army of “brutal callousness,” although perhaps not “intentional,” since information in London on July 30 should have reached NDHQ the next day. An even stronger critique followed after the editors learned of a second officer’s family informed unofficially of his death. The editorial accused NDHQ of “inexcusable fumbling,” dismissing its explanation as “a piece of deplorable casuistry” and condemning the Ottawa HQ for “refusal...ever to admit a mistake or concede that it could be in error. It is always ready with a denial, explanation, or an excuse.”²⁵ The *Globe and Mail* editorials showed little understanding of the need for accuracy in army casualty procedure. Just because stories of someone’s death had reached London did not mean that next-of-kin could receive notification. Avoiding inaccurate reports and needless grief prevented such reckless action. The Dieppe raid had demonstrated the dangers of ignoring procedure for speed. Nor did the arrival of rumours in a Canadian military district or even NDHQ mean that the Directorate of Records knew of the information. The *Globe and Mail* editors seemed more intent on building outrage to embarrass the King government than on understanding

²³ Gerry Redding, “Ottawa Ignored Family When Husband Killed,” *Globe and Mail*, 14 Aug. 1943, 1, 2.

²⁴ *Globe and Mail*, 16 Aug. 1944, 5.

²⁵ *Globe and Mail*, 18 Aug. 1944, 6.

the situation. Nevertheless, slow processing of casualty reports left the army open to such accusations.

The third type of mistake in next-of-kin notification happened when the press, contrary to regulations, published the names of casualties before official word reached the family. Slight revisions to the regulations sometimes occurred. The October 10, 1940 censorship directive stated:

Casualties in the Canadian services should not be published or broadcast until an official casualty list has been released. There are three reasons for this:

- a) So that relatives may receive their first notification through official sources.
- b) So that no information of value to the enemy be revealed in details of the time, place and other circumstances of the casualty.
- c) So as to thwart the possible attempts of enemy agents to lower morale by spreading false news of casualties.

Occasionally it happens that the facts of a casualty become known in a community before an official list has been published. In these cases, if the above requirements appear to have been satisfied, an exception may be made but editors should consult the press censors before publication.²⁶

The news media usually observed the directive, but in July 1942, the Canadian censorship authorities issued a reminder to wait for official notification following the premature publication of the names of two officer cadets who drowned in Ottawa.²⁷ Several months later after the Dieppe raid, during an interview by Fred Griffin of the *Toronto Star*, Colonel Menard of the Fusiliers Montreal mentioned Captain Alleyn, whose parents then learned of his death when the story appeared in *L'Evènement*.²⁸ Considering the numbers of casualties at Dieppe, that merely one incident occurred shows the cooperation of the press.

²⁶ LAC, RG 36, 31, Vol. 11, *Canada Press Censorship Regulations April 1941* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1941).

²⁷ LAC, RG 24, d-1-b, Vol 3881, nsc 1029-6-2 vol. 4, Chief Censors of Publications, "Reports of Casualties," 14 July 1942.

²⁸ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12329, 4/Dieppe/1, "GSI 4548 NDHQ to CMHQ," 18 Sept. 1942.

The Sicilian campaign led to some major changes ensuring that next-of-kin received official news first. On July 23, 1943, the Ottawa records office learned that the *Toronto Telegram* and the *Toronto Star* published different reports each naming a wounded Canadian soldier. The families of both men inquired to the records office, which knew nothing about the casualties. The same day, Lt. Col. F.X. Jennings, the Army's Director of Public Relations, while checking on two CP despatches containing names of wounded, discovered several other names that the Directorate of Records did not have. Jennings requested that the CP hold the stories. In spite of this, on July 24, a CP despatch appeared in the *Montreal Gazette*; its clipping in army files has three names underlined with a prominent "no" written beside them. Either the CP ignored Jennings's earlier advice or another dispatch arrived that CP sent to the newspapers without scrutiny.²⁹ These incidents resulted in the Adjutant General consulting the Chief Press Censor, who sent a new directive instructing news organizations that whenever a story contained the name of a casualty, the publisher should send the copy to the censors for review. Alternatively, the press could contact the Army Directorate of Records directly, which would now have an officer on duty twenty-four hours a day in order to make checking easier.³⁰ These concessions to the press appear to have resolved the problem, which like that of the unofficial notifications, resulted in part from the slow rate in which casualty reports reached Ottawa.

²⁹ LAC, RG24, Reel C-5254, HQS 8676-9-2, Vol. 2, "Memorandum: Report of Casualties in Press" 23 July 1943; *Montreal Gazette*, July 24, 1943.

³⁰ Ibid; "Chief Censors of Publications to Newspapers, News Associations and Special Correspondents, Subject: Casualties," 26 July, 1943; "Memorandum: Report of Casualties in Press" 23 July 1943.

While these errors of casualty notification were shocking for the next-of-kin, the numbers of people directly affected remained relatively small. In contrast, the publication of casualty lists and totals helped shape the public image of the conflict, a critical concern to the Canadian Army. Nonetheless, as with many other policies, those of the more senior allies, particularly the British, limited the Canadian Army's options. This occasionally led to accusations of the Canadian government deliberately concealing casualties to make the war more palatable. Thus, it is necessary to trace the development of army procedures for the publication of casualty lists and numbers and how Allied policies shaped them.

Early in the war, the publication of Canadian Army casualties resulted in little controversy, since casualties were relatively few. The first two Canadian Army casualty lists appeared on June 22, 1940. They provided the name, nature of casualty and the next-of-kin but not the name of the regiment lest the enemy calculate unit strength. Instead, the name appeared with a territorial pseudonym such as "Central Ontario regiment" or named the service branch such as "Royal Canadian Artillery." Details about the circumstances did not appear in the list itself, although the introductory paragraph occasionally provided bare information, such as the deaths occurring during a car accident. Still most casualties resulted from sickness or accidents, only occasionally from German bombs or torpedoes, and the numbers were relatively small: 484 total dead and missing to November 27, 1941.³¹ The Japanese attack on Hong Kong changed this.

The government and military authorities responsible for despatching two Canadian regiments to Hong Kong never intended them to engage in combat. Posting

³¹ *Hamilton Spectator*, 22 June 1940; *Globe and Mail*, 27 Nov. 1941.

regiments to colonial garrisons released British troops to fight while ensuring that Canadians did not, helping keep the genie of conscription tightly sealed in its bottle. Unlike similar earlier missions in Newfoundland and Jamaica, it ended with the total loss of these units. When the Japanese entered into hostilities against the United States and Britain on December 7, 1941, the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles of Canada, numbering 1,974 troops, found themselves in a doomed position with no chance of victory or relief. By December 23, after a brutal struggle, the garrison surrendered.³² The army had to rely on London for information on the battle. Carl Vincent's discussion of the Hong Kong news shows that the government handled most of the publicity depending on scanty British reports based on Japanese sources and included deceptive British claims about a planned relief of the garrison by the HMS *Prince of Wales*.³³ NDHQ PR did release a press circular trying to paint as bright a picture as possible. Quoting Mackenzie King and Ralston, it emphasised the heroic defence and claimed that it relieved pressure on Bataan and Malaya, and that it was so successful the Japanese commander needed to offer terms rather than demand "unconditional surrender." This last claim allegedly came from "a Japanese report" indicating the lack of intelligence available to Ottawa about its own troops in Hong Kong.³⁴

Given this dearth of accurate information, news about casualties was even more difficult to obtain. Communications from Hong Kong were sparse and there were few casualty reports. Ralston announced several Canadian casualties, two men slightly

³² C.P. Stacey, *Six Years of War* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1955), 488-489.

³³ Carl Vincent, *No Reason Why* (Stittsville: Canada's Wings, 1981), 215-17.

³⁴ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 11748, Press Circulars, "Press Circular No. 42," 29 Dec. 1941.

wounded on December 10, and a few other accounts of individual casualties emerged.³⁵ The first actual Hong Kong casualty list appeared on December 31, totalling only eleven. The army admitted, “There is no likelihood of further lists for some time until the International Committee of the Red Cross can obtain details and send them here.”³⁶

The casualty notification took a very long time and led to some frustration and accusations of political reasons for the delay. On February 3, the Minister of National Defence J.L. Ralston responded to a Baptist minister’s accusations that the government was concealing the Hong Kong casualty list until after a February 9 by-election. At least one letter to the government from a soldier’s family member made similar charges. Ralston admitted his sources of information to be limited and based only on the estimate of a reporter who escaped from Hong Kong and speculated that one third of Canadians were dead, injured or captured during the fighting and the rest became prisoners after the surrender. Ralston refused to make any definitive statement on casualties with such incomplete information but wanted to dispel rumours placing the Canadian dead at fifty percent.³⁷ Later that month the government released estimates of the total casualties based on Japanese reports, given through Argentina as protecting power, of 1,689 Canadians prisoners, inferring that the remaining 296 were dead or missing.³⁸ The actual notifications of the individual soldier’s fate took over a year. On September 2, 1942, The

³⁵ *Globe and Mail*, 11 Dec. 1941.

³⁶ *Globe and Mail*, 1 Jan. 1942.

³⁷ William Marchington, “4000 Casualties at Hong Kong ‘Rough Guess,’” *Globe and Mail*, 4 Feb. 1942. The 4000 casualties in the headline indicates casualty estimates for the entire British garrison, not only Canadians. Vincent, *No Reason Why*, 218.

³⁸ William Marchington, “1,689 of Defenders Captured by Japs as Garrison Fell,” *Globe and Mail*, 26, Feb. 1942. Argentina served as protecting power between Canada and Japan, representing Canadian interests regarding prisoners of war and internees because Canada no longer had diplomatic relations with Japan.

Department of National Defence announced the names of 507 prisoners, based on the receipt of prisoners' letters carried by the *Gripsholm*, a ship used for diplomatic exchange, rather than by Japanese notification. The letters were "heavily censored" and many rejected outright, and the press release warned against drawing conclusions about the fate of those not mentioned.³⁹ The first prisoner list, based on Japanese notification, consisted of 296 names and was released on October 16, 1942; others followed over the next months.⁴⁰ By December, 1,593 individuals had been named, although not all by official Japanese reports.⁴¹

To obtain the complete lists required diplomatic manoeuvring. When the Japanese inquired about the status of Japanese interned in Canada, the government agreed to cooperate, provided the Japanese furnished all the names of Canadian military prisoners. On August 17, the Department of External Affairs could report that the POW lists were "virtually complete."⁴² The entire process took an excruciating year and a half. The Hong Kong incident occurred in the Pacific theatre and the casualty reporting process, unlike that in Europe, remained almost totally in the hands of the Japanese, the Red Cross, and the protecting power. Thus, it is an extremely atypical case for the Canadian Army during the Second World War.

The Dieppe raid shaped Canadian Army casualty reporting more than any other event. As with much else connected with the Dieppe raid, the publication of casualties

³⁹ *Hamilton Spectator*, 2 Sept 1942,

⁴⁰ *Hamilton Spectator*, 16 Oct. 1943.

⁴¹ *Hamilton Spectator*, 3 Dec. 1942.

⁴² Jonathan F. Vance, *Objects of Concern* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994), 185; *Hamilton Spectator*, 17 Aug. 1943.

became clouded in the haze of distrust. Someone suspecting a conspiracy to deceive the public about Dieppe could not help but notice the delays in casualty reporting in the newspapers. The slow release of the casualties was suspicious enough, but delaying publication of the names of the missing, the vast majority of the casualties, for a month was worse. Seemingly, the military hoped to delay negative public reaction or to preserve public morale by softening the blow. Some newspapers, however, were already suspicious. On September 3, the *Ottawa Journal* warned that the slow release of casualty figures could lead to the “possible public impression – probably a wrong and dangerous one – that the military authorities themselves were trying to cover up something.”⁴³ On September 12, W.D. Herridge, former Prime Minister R.B. Bennett’s brother in law, complained about the delay in a speech to the Ottawa Kiwanis Club.⁴⁴ The release of the names of the missing on September 15 did not stop the criticism. The *Regina Leader-Post* accused the military of a “soft pedal” strategy to try to minimise the impact of the casualties.⁴⁵ On September 26, the Nova Scotia Newspaper Association charged the government with covering up the Dieppe losses and demanded swifter release of information in the future.⁴⁶ Over time, criticism of the delays faded and later works, apart from Gillis Purcell’s 1946 thesis, did not raise the issue. Purcell, citing Ross Munro, accused the military of abusing censorship to delay the casualty numbers to cushion the blow. In 1942, however, Purcell had written to McNaughton supporting the policy of

⁴³ *Ottawa Journal*, 3 Sept. 1942, 8.

⁴⁴ *Globe and Mail*, 12 Sept. 1942, 15.

⁴⁵ *Regina Leader-Post*, 17 Sept. 1942, 11.

⁴⁶ *Hamilton Spectator*, 26 Sept. 1942.

withholding information from the press, even though he claimed already knew the “inside” story of Dieppe directly from Ross Munro.⁴⁷

The delay in publishing the list of the missing until September 15 seems suspicious. Until August 25, the newspapers published the names of the missing along with the other casualties but two days later announced a delay in reporting to allow those who had avoided the Germans to escape. The notice observed, “Any word getting through to the enemy that they are missing is of course a signal for a search.”⁴⁸ On September 4, the newspapers printed the military claim that the procedure was “in accordance with agreed censorship practise of the United Nations.”⁴⁹ It seems no coincidence that the Army Council offered this justification on the same day as the *Ottawa Journal's* critical editorial about the delay.⁵⁰

These explanations, especially about escape, seem very far-fetched. Escape from Dieppe by anyone pinned down on the beaches and unable to get through impenetrable defences was impossible. A few Canadians escaped, but during transportation away from Dieppe after their capture. Secondly, the Germans were unlikely to assume that the missing had escaped because of the nature of modern warfare and amphibious operations. Artillery could blow men to pieces or their bodies float out to sea. The Germans left the dead in place below the high water line, hoping the tide might wash them higher up the

⁴⁷ Ironically, Purcell’s accusation comes from a postwar letter from Munro. Gillis Purcell, “Wartime Press Censorship in Canada,” (MA Thesis, University of Toronto, 1946), 131; LAC, McNaughton papers, MG 30, E-133 III, vol. 135, PA 1-8-1, Purcell to McNaughton, 28 Sept. 1942; Aimé-Jules Bizimana, *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque: Les Correspondents De Guerre Canadiens-Français Durant La Deuxième Guerre Mondiale* (Montreal: VLB Éditeur, 2007), 319.

⁴⁸ *Montreal Star*, 27 Aug. 1942, 17.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 4 Sept. 1942, 1.

⁵⁰ DND DHH, 4112.1 (D145) CGS Office File of Meetings of Army Council, “Minutes of Meeting of Army Council,” 3 Sept. 1942.

beach; many bodies were likely carried out to sea.⁵¹ The idea that the Germans would go through the painstaking process of comparing the names of the missing to prisoner rolls, and use valuable manpower to search for them when they were probably dead, seems farcical. In fact, almost a year after the raid, 246 Canadians remained missing.⁵²

The pressure for delay originated in the British Ministry of Information (MoI). On August 22, CMHQ cabled NDHQ with a rather confused message: “as a result of a despatch from Adam Marshall, Montreal, to *Evening Standard* here, MoI request that names of officers and numbers of casualties be not ...released to press for time being.”⁵³ NDHQ requested specific information about the MoI’s concerns, explaining that they had already released casualty lists, although they had not given the total casualties.⁵⁴ On August 24, CMHQ, after a long discussion with the MoI, responded to NDHQ, explaining that the concern of the MoI was naming missing personnel. In earlier Commando raids, some missing soldiers had been able to escape; therefore NDHQ should withhold publication of the missing for three weeks to a month, although next-of kin could still be informed. There was also an appeal to alliance unity, since British and Americans were also missing, any publication of the names of the missing would jeopardize “the desired security for all concerned.”⁵⁵ How the publication of Canadian names would compromise the security of missing British and Americans went

⁵¹ Terrence Robertson, *The Shame and the Glory: Dieppe* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1962), 381, 412.

⁵² *Hamilton Spectator*, 15 June 1943.

⁵³ LAC, RG 24, C-2, vol. 12329, 4/Dieppe/1, “GS 2996 CMHQ to NDHQ,” 22 Aug. 1942. Adam Marshall was a *Montreal Standard* reporter.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, “AG 151 NDHQ to CMHQ,” 23 Aug. 1942.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, “GS 3008 CMHQ to NDHQ,” 24 Aug. 1942.

unexplained. NDHQ consented to the MoI policy on August 24.⁵⁶ In agreement with the British and Americans, the release date of the names for publication was set for September 15.⁵⁷

Was the MoI really concerned about the escape of missing personnel? There is some reason to suspect that this concern was secondary to the goal of forcing the Canadians into adhering to the British policy of not releasing the total casualties of any action. On September 8, during his defence of Dieppe in Parliament, Churchill reminded the House “it is not the practise to give exact figures of casualties in men or materiel suffered in individual operations.”⁵⁸ This policy was to keep the enemy from being able to deduce the effectiveness of their tactics and the strength of British units. The reporting of all casualties was delayed for up to a month then divided up for publication so it was not apparent in which engagement they were incurred.⁵⁹ This would work for the British forces in combat on several fronts but not for the Canadians, whose only action was the raid. To conceal the extent of the Dieppe disaster from the British people, the MoI had to convince Canada to withhold the publication of missing personnel. Still this only delayed the revelation and Churchill faced potentially embarrassing questions about discrepancies in his earlier claims about Dieppe following Canada’s publication of the total casualty

⁵⁶ Ibid., “GS 379 NDHQ to CMHQ,” 24 Aug. 1942.

⁵⁷ Ibid., “GS 3056 NDHQ to CMHQ,” 26 Aug. 1942.

⁵⁸ *Montreal Star*, 8 Sept. 1942, 15.

⁵⁹ LAC, RG24, C-2, vol.12190, Reel 17483, “Letter from War Office to Gen. Montague, CMHQ re: the Reporting of Casualties,” 15, 10 Feb. 1943.

figures.⁶⁰ This move by British authorities was the first in a long effort to get Canada to comply with their casualty reporting policies.

Was the Canadian military convinced of the necessity to protect missing escapees, or did they simply comply to keep the casualty total from Canadians longer? Four factors indicate that the army took the MoI's claims at face value. First, the "Roll of Honour," as the casualty lists were titled, originally included both the missing and a running total of the casualties in the operation. This was not the action of an organization determined to conceal the losses. After three days of discussing the MoI request, the Army agreed to halt publication. If the Canadian Army had been looking for an "easy out" on the casualties, it could have complied much more quickly.

Furthermore, the army actually believed that Canadians had escaped from the beaches, no matter how unlikely this might seem in hindsight. Lt. Col. Menard, during the "Heroes of Dieppe" tour, mentioned that according to information received in Britain, large numbers of Fusiliers Montreal had escaped into France from Dieppe.⁶¹ How Menard came by the "information" is unclear, although he may have been referring to four soldiers who later escaped from a German train, two of whom had made it to Gibraltar by October 7.⁶² The army quickly killed the story by instructing cable censors to hold all messages dealing with the remarks.⁶³ NDHQ ordered both CMHQ and Commanders of all Canadian Home Forces Commands to prevent Dieppe personnel from

⁶⁰ *Montreal Star*, 30 Sept. 1942, 1.

⁶¹ DND DHH, 112.1 (D66) "GS 3656 CMHQ to CGS," 16 Oct. 1942.

⁶² LAC, RG 24, vol. 12699, 18/Dieppe/1, "Col. Bostock, to BGS," 7 Oct. 1942; Robertson, 412.

⁶³ DND DHH, 112.1 (D66) "Memorandum: Major G.S. to Lt. Col. Cameron," 16 Oct. 1942.

making statements that could compromise the escape of Canadians at large.⁶⁴ The speedy and vehement warning to all commands makes clear that they believed that many of the missing were still on the loose.

Similarly, the British Air Ministry had requested the RCAF to withhold the names of the missing for five weeks to allow downed aircrew the chance to escape. The RCAF adopted this policy July 29, 1942.⁶⁵ The newspapers were informed, “if only one of our men elude the enemy it will be worth the effort”.⁶⁶ McNaughton probably knew of the RCAF decision, if not through official channels, because his own son, Squadron Leader Ian McNaughton, went missing in June 1942.⁶⁷

The fourth indication that the Canadian Army accepted the MoI’s claims was its adoption of the practise of withholding the list of the missing, and later all casualties, for up to four weeks as standard policy.⁶⁸

In the year following the Dieppe raid, NDHQ and the British War Office debated the casualty issue, with CMHQ as intermediary. The British insisted that Canadians wait a month before publishing any casualties because it would be potentially embarrassing if Canada published its casualties earlier in joint operations and could assist enemy intelligence to assess the effectiveness of tactics and remaining unit strength.⁶⁹ NDHQ

⁶⁴ Ibid., “GS 546, NDHQ to G.O.’s, C-in-C, Atlantic and Pacific Commands, All District Officers Commanding, Commander Petawawa, Commander Camp Borden;” “NDHQ to CMHQ,” 17 Oct. 1942.

⁶⁵ LAC, RG 24, 1983-84/049, vol. 580, File 425-1, “Memorandum: Chief of Air Staff,” 29 July 1942.

⁶⁶ Ibid., “Memorandum by Joseph W.G. Clark,” 29 July 1942.

⁶⁷ LAC, McNaughton Papers, MG 30 E133, Vol. 144, PA 3-7 vol.1, “Press Clipping, Obituary of Squadron Leader Ian McNaughton,” 23 Oct. 1942.

⁶⁸ LAC, RG24 , Vol. 12190, Reel 17483, 1/Casualty/1, “Letter Gen. Montague to Adjutant General NDHQ, Reporting of Casualties,” 7, 19 Oct. 1942.

⁶⁹ Ibid., “CMHQ to NDHQ , cable GS 328,” 13 Feb. 1943.

felt the British system would not work in Canada, where there would be “violent protest from press and public opinion” regarding delays in publication and “require [a] complicated procedure open to criticism.”⁷⁰ The War Office countered, “Other Dominions have agreed to the policy of delayed releases.”⁷¹ Yet when NDHQ checked through the Canadian High Commissioners to New Zealand and Australia, it discovered that the War Office misled them; in most circumstances both dominions published casualties immediately after notification of next-of-kin. This deception obviously made NDHQ less trustful of the War Office. Because of the fear of criticism about censorship “on grounds other than security,” NDHQ demanded “a definite statement” from the War Office and McNaughton stating that delays in publishing casualty lists were imperative for security reasons.⁷² McNaughton and the War Office agreed. Furthermore, the War Office argued that because Australians and New Zealanders served on several fronts, the enemy gained no valuable information. Canada’s situation, with the First Division about to embark on the Sicily operation, differed. Should Canada become involved on several fronts, the thirty-day delay in casualty publication might change. After months of debate, NDHQ reluctantly decided to follow British procedure, but reserved the right to alter this policy if conditions changed, after consulting the War Office.⁷³ Nonetheless, the competing motivations behind the NDHQ and War Office--worry over public criticism versus security concerns--guaranteed continued conflict.

⁷⁰ Ibid., “NDHQ to CMHQ cable AG 4009 NDHQ to CMHQ,” 18 June 1943.

⁷¹ Ibid., “CMHQ to NDHQ cable GS 1488,” 26 June 1943.

⁷² Ibid., NDHQ to CMHQ; Cable AG 4203, 3 July 1943.

⁷³ Ibid., “CMHQ to NDHQ cable GS 1488 CMHQ to NDHQ,” 26 June 1943; “CMHQ to NDHQ cable GS 1592, 7 July 1943.

Despite this agreement, the disputes continued during the Sicilian campaign. In early August, Ralston felt pressured to announce casualty numbers, especially after the U.S. Secretary of War Stimson released the total U.S. casualties in Sicily to July 22. NDHQ complained, “These unilateral agreements with Troopers [the War Office] which are not tied with the U.S., place Canada in the position of always being last with the news.” Adding to Ralston’s difficulties, the American papers published casualty records immediately following next-of-kin notification.⁷⁴ A Wartime Information Board (WIB) memorandum reported the observations of a United Church clergyman in St. Lambert, Quebec that his parishioners, suspicious at the lack of information, “read between the lines” to speculate on casualties and complained that Americans received more news. NDHQ requested that CMHQ arrange with the War Office for a similar release, and would go ahead the next day, August 10, unless there were objections.⁷⁵ Predictably, the War Office objected because, although the Canadian participation in Sicilian combat was completed, the information might be of value to the enemy for future operations. Undaunted, NDHQ kept up the pressure, and the War Office passed on the request to AFHQ, who acceded to Canada’s demands, although this process delayed the announcement until August 19.⁷⁶ This gave rise to rumours in Canada, like that one, repeated by an Ottawa “charwoman,” “15,000 Canadians had already been killed.”⁷⁷ Despite this gossip and the sometimes-acrimonious relationship with the War Office, the

⁷⁴ Ibid., Letson to Montague, Cable AG4711, 9 Aug. 1943.

⁷⁵ LAC, RG 36, 31 Vol. 13, 8-3-1g, J.D.K. to Capt. McCracken, n.d.; RG24, Vol. 12190, Reel 17483, 1/Casualty/1, Letson to Montague, Cable AG4711, 9 Aug. 1943.

⁷⁶ Ibid., Montague to Letson, Cable GS 1913, 10 Aug. 1943; War Office to AFHQ, Desp. 1610, 10 Aug. 1943; CMHQ to NDHQ, Cable GS 1996, 17 Aug. 1943; CMHQ to AFHQ, Cable GS 1997, 18 Aug. 1943.

⁷⁷ LAC, RG 36, 31 Vol. 13, 8-3-1g, J.D.K. to Capt. McCracken, n.d.

Canadians stuck to their agreement to withhold casualties for thirty days. The first casualty lists appeared in the newspapers on August 13, a month after the landings, and the last on September 16, over thirty days after the final Canadian actions.⁷⁸ Thus, despite some complaints, the Canadian Army adhered to the agreement and continued to do so during the Italian campaign. Surprisingly when the Canadian Army did become active on two fronts in June 1944, the thirty-day delay continued, even though there were grounds to challenge it.⁷⁹

The Normandy campaign resulted in further confusion about the publication of casualty numbers. Following the Normandy landings, apprehensive Canadians with memories of Dieppe awaited news of casualties but for several weeks none came. Predictably, the opposition and anti-government newspapers pushed Ralston for casualty numbers. On June 16, Conservative MP R.B. Hanson demanded the figures; Ralston replied that the names would follow after thirty days as usual, but “security concerns” prevented giving totals, although he planned to communicate with Allied authorities and release them as soon as safely able.⁸⁰ On June 17, General Omar Bradley, commander of the American army in Normandy, announced the total American casualties to that date. This immediately led to cries that the Canadian government should do likewise. A *Globe and Mail* editorial said that nothing now prevented the release except the “security” of the government. The editorial reminded the public of the secrecy and delay surrounding the Dieppe casualties, to allow the missing to escape, a situation that no longer existed.⁸¹

⁷⁸ *Globe and Mail*, 14 Aug. 1943; 16 Aug. 1943.

⁷⁹ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12190, Reel 17483, 1/Casualty/1, Letson to Montague, Cable AG 490, 1 Aug 1944.

⁸⁰ *Globe and Mail*, 16 July 1944.

⁸¹ *Globe and Mail*, 19 July 1944.

Nor did the criticism come only from the Conservative press. A July 22 despatch from J.A.M. Cook, war correspondent of the Liberal *Winnipeg Free Press*, demonstrated equal bitterness. He credited the Americans for a pattern of greater openness about casualties, while the Canadians appeared even more reluctant than the British did, hiding behind secrecy to conceal their losses. He cited the case of Ortona, the Christmas 1943 battle, of which the public never received precise casualty totals.⁸² Cook did not realise that in the Mediterranean, Canada was bound by agreement with the War Office in which the Americans were uninvolved. Additionally, the army never revealed the specific casualties for any battle. Dieppe was an exception because it was obvious in which battle the casualties occurred; in all other campaigns, casualty reports never specified the individual engagements. Cook's article shows that the critiques emanated not only from political motivations, but also from frustration with the lack of information allowed by military regulations.

In response to these criticisms, Ralston asked CMHQ if he could provide an answer and release Canadian casualty figures. He learned that Bradley's announcement of the American casualties in Normandy was unauthorized. The American First Army censor incorrectly believed Bradley had the right to release the information because there were no specific orders from SHAEF or 21 Army Group prohibiting it. Bradley's action did not automatically allow similar reporting of the casualties of the British Second Army in which the Canadians in Normandy then served.⁸³ Ralston believed an

⁸² J.A.M. Cook, "Why No Casualty Lists?" reprinted in *Globe and Mail*, 28 June 1944.

⁸³ NA, WO 229/21/5, Chief Censor, P and PW Section to Lt. Col. Merrick, 18 June 1944; EXFOR to SHAEF PR, 18 June 1944.

acknowledgement of the mistake necessary, but Brigadier Penhale of CMHQ advised him by phone that “since no public announcement of the mistake has been made...it would be wrong for him to refer to it as such in the house.”⁸⁴ Although Ralston agreed to consider the matter further, political necessity led him to inform the House that same day. Hanson, again on the attack, demanded to know why “there is to be one rule for the American people and another for the Canadian people.” Ralston implied that Bradley violated an agreement on casualty numbers by making an unauthorized announcement, although he did not say so directly. The newspapers however, fully understood and pointed the fingers at Bradley. Ralston would wait until an authorized casualty release to preserve security.⁸⁵

CMHQ and SHAEF reached an understanding that future casualty numbers would be coordinated with the Canadian government for simultaneous announcement.⁸⁶ These arrangements had mixed results. On June 28, the release of the first total went smoothly enough; CMHQ received advance warning and coordinated the announcement in Canada. CMHQ completely missed a later announcement on August 5 because the junior staff handling SHAEF’s message believed it routine and did not treat it with the required urgency. The government again faced embarrassment because the Americans beat them to a casualty announcement. It is just as well that CMHQ then arranged with SHAEF for permission to publish total casualty figures after thirty days had past, although the theatre

⁸⁴ LAC, RG24 , Vol. 12190, Reel 17483, 1/Casualty/1, Digest of Telephone conversation between Hon. J.L. Ralston and Brig. M.H.S. Penhale, 19 June 1944.

⁸⁵ Ibid., NDHQ to CMHQ, “Extract from Hansard June 19, 1944,” Cable GS 3047, 20 June 1944; Kenneth Cragg, “Canadian Casualties Lower Than Expected, but Still Withheld,” *Globe and Mail*, 20 June 1944; *Toronto Star*, 20 June 1944; Charles Bishop, “Ottawa Insists Casualty Total be Kept Secret,” *Hamilton Spectator*, 20 June 1944.

⁸⁶ LAC, RG24 , Vol. 12190, Reel 17483, 1/Casualty/1, Penhale to Chief of Staff, 22 June 1944; LAC, RG24, 12369, 4/ PRC SHAEF /1, Minutes of SHEAF PR Council Meeting, 21 June 1944.

they occurred in would remain secret. This became the method of casualty announcements for the remainder of the war.⁸⁷

As a junior partner in the alliance, Canada experienced many frustrations about casualty publication. The British resorted to manipulation to delay bad news after Dieppe and then later lied about the agreement of other dominions to their policy. Canada's agreement to submit to Allied policies frequently ended with embarrassment for the government, creating suspicions that Ralston and the army concealed casualty numbers to cover up reverses. In all these situations, the sleeping dragon of conscription for overseas service lay underneath much of the tension. By concealing casualty figures, the government may have been hiding a need for drafted reinforcements from Canada. Yet there is no evidence that the government or army ever manipulated casualty reports for political reasons. Rather, in these debates, the Canadian Army eventually chose cooperation with the Allies, over political expediency, despite the political fallout. This guaranteed that the Canadian Army observed the chain of command, as its formations served under British and Allied command. It is unusual in Canadian military history for domestic political concerns to take second place to military necessity, but casualty reporting during the Second World War is one such case. In the end, poor relations with the USA and UK would have caused the Canadian government greater problems than occasionally appearing overly secretive.

The casualty reporting of the Canadian Army during the Second World War to the next-of-kin and the press was not flawless. Sometimes mistakes resulted from a desire to

⁸⁷ LAC, RG24 , Vol. 12190, Reel 17483, 1/Casualty/1, R. Ernest Dupuy to Deputy Chief of Staff, CMHQ, "Release of Casualty Figures," 27 June 1944; RG24, Reel C-5254, HQS 8676-9- 2, Vol.3 Penhale to Letson, Cable GS2328, 7 Aug. 1944; Letson to Montague, Cable AG 479, 5 Aug. 1944; Letson to Ralston, "Release of casualty Figures to the Press," 6 Aug. 1944; RG 24, Vol. 5, HQ 650-92-70-1, Maj. Gen. R.E. Walford to Lt Col. F.X., Jennings, 25 Jan. 1945.

get back the news as soon as possible to the next-of-kin. Other instances, such as clerical errors and the press releasing names too quickly, were regrettable but, given the numbers of casualties during the war, probably inevitable. Delays resulted from poor communications and publication agreements with allies. Nevertheless, it is clear that the sinister motivations behind errors and delays frequently alluded to by opposition politicians and press were fantasy. Still, these incidents doubtless contributed to many Canadians' distrust of war news. The army attempted to inform next-of-kin and the press as quickly and accurately as possible within the limitations of security, communications, and agreements with allies. Regrettably, as the many incidents recounted in this chapter demonstrate, in politics the appearance of guilt can be as damaging as its reality.

Conclusion:

Second World War Canadian Army PR and War News Management

During the Second World War, the Canadian Army's Public Relations (PR) organization grew from nothing to a well-oiled publicity machine as the army influenced what Canadians knew of the war. There were complex interactions between the Canadian military and government and between Allied military authorities and the news media that produced what Canadians heard, read, saw and often thought about the Canadian Army. The army exercised much control over the scope and content of war news but not complete power because news media were an active agent in the process. These limitations on the army's control were partly by choice and partly by necessity. A further complicating factor was that war news could not be divorced from party politics. Even so, Canadian PR needs often took a back seat to the priorities of the more senior alliance members. The final product of military news management produced very mixed results. Many Canadians suspected manipulation of the news and were sceptical, especially in Quebec, although a slim majority trusted what they heard. While some censorship for security and other purposes is necessary in the context of total warfare, it was not always desirable and is open to abuse.

The news Canadians received of army operations represented the end in a long chain of information transmission. The war correspondent gathered his material, wrote the story and submitted it to the field press censors. The censors made cuts, based on Allied policies, and the story might either proceed or return to the correspondent for revision. En route to Canada, through the UK, it again faced scrutiny from British and Canadian cable censors. The article then arrived in Canada, where the editors might

revise it and, if some elements seemed to contradict Canadian censorship regulations, it might again face a censor's review, although most assumed it conformed to the rules by this point. By the time Canadians received their newspapers or listened to the news broadcast, it bore the fingerprints of many individuals and organizations of which the Canadian Army was only one.

The Canadian Army exerted great, but not absolute, control over war news. Throughout the war, Army PR policies certainly were limited by subordination to the higher Allied authorities under which they served: Home Forces, Combined Operations Headquarters (COHQ), Allied Force Headquarters (AFHQ), 8th Army, 15th Army Group, 21st Army Group and Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF). Even when accounting for all these organizations' influence, control of information was limited during the Second World War. Four factors are crucial to evaluating the effectiveness of military control of the media during Canadian operations.

The military attempted complete control of any information deemed critical to military operations. This primarily consisted of "information of value to the enemy." This elastic term included casualty numbers, tactics, and plans for future operations, unit names, and troop movements. Once military intelligence believed the enemy was aware of this information, the restrictions were usually removed, although sometimes too late to be "hot news." For example, the long delay reporting the Canadian "left hook" in Sicily confused Canadians as well as the German intelligence officers, because the flood of deferred stories released simultaneously with current battle reports presented a bewildering narrative. There were exceptions to the normal military procedures, however. Occasionally, information clearly known to the enemy remained secret to avoid

embarrassment. A prime example was COHQ's objection to C.P. Stacey mentioning that the Germans had captured the operational plans in his Dieppe press release. The enemy knew. Likewise, National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) would have preferred to keep the 25 July 1944, slaughter of the Black Watch from the public, despite full enemy knowledge. Conversely, censors intermittently passed stories containing intelligence potentially valuable to the enemy, such as the story of Canadian regiments receiving amphibious warfare training before *Operation Jubilee*. While the definition of an essential military secret was debatable, there was little dispute over the legitimate need to keep truly useful information from the enemy.

Besides censoring copy, the army exercised control of the media through legal means. While, theoretically backed by the Defence of Canada regulations limiting freedom of speech, the army's greatest practical control over correspondents came through accreditation. Without accreditation from the Canadian Army, AFHQ, and later SHAEF, correspondents could not operate at the front. Correspondents also depended upon the military for transportation, lodging, access to stories, and transmission of copy. A correspondent who attempted to defy the army's regulations, for example by attempting to evade censorship, faced the loss of his license to work in the theatre. Although no correspondent faced discipline for this reason, several did on other grounds. In a 1940 incident, W.G. Abel arranged for a correspondent, who had earned the OBE in the First World War but who was overly talkative and indiscreet while drunk, to "return his passes" and go home rather than face discipline. The lenient treatment saved the army

embarrassment and honoured the correspondent's previous record. In 1944, Paul Morton lost his credentials in Italy after a drunken shooting spree in the mess.¹

In addition to accreditation, the army also controlled correspondents by requiring them to agree to serve under military discipline. Right from the beginning, the army realized the benefits of having correspondents accredited because the agreement "places direct control in the hands of the military with disciplinary powers."² The army never used this power to dictate what correspondents wrote; instead, it allowed them freedom within the limits imposed by field censorship. Still, the military had a great deal of power over the news media and used it to prevent the publication of military information it wished to remain secret.

The press, of course, had its own power. High-handed or arbitrary action by the army or government could result in negative publicity and subsequent political costs. The Canadian government was extremely reluctant to take on the press, despite the powers of the Defence of Canada Regulations. In the case of Mayor Houde in 1940, the threat to prosecute papers quoting his subversive speech was quietly dropped. Indeed, throughout the war, Louis St. Laurent's Justice Department refrained from prosecuting the press for violating censorship regulations except on four occasions, despite frequent urgings from both the censors and military services. St. Laurent also refused to take legal action against the openly anti-war *Le Devoir*, despite apparently clear violations of the Defence of

¹ LAC, RG24, Vol. 12382, 4/PRO/3, "Report for Week Ending June 1, 1940; RG24, Vol. 16641, War Diary No. 2 Public Relations Group, 16 October 1944; RG 24, Vol. 59, HQ 650 92-73, Lt. Col. Gilchrist to Abel, 2 Sept. 1944.

² LAC, RG 24, Vol. 10855, 231c1(d29), Untitled Memorandum, n.d.,

Canada Regulations. The political cost was too great.³ In contrast, the government did not hesitate to act against the press arms of the Communist Party and other radical groups because it was less risky. If moving against *Le Devoir* caused St Laurent to pause, action against mainstream English newspapers was unlikely.

While the army did not have to worry about elections a hostile press that could negatively affect recruiting and budgetary decisions. Operating without press support was an unacceptable option. The army needed to keep the news media friendly and therefore unreasonable restrictions had to be avoided. The army made good press relations a primary element in its management of PR. There are many examples of this consideration. Army PR tried to create a journalist-friendly atmosphere by employing conducting officers with journalistic backgrounds who could understand the needs and priorities of correspondents. Furthermore, the army invited Gillis Purcell, as a representative of the CP, to be a major player in the formulation of Army policy in early 1943. Likewise, when the correspondents complained about their predicament in Sicily, Ralston and Army PR took action, despite the fact that those journalists had agreed to wait without a guarantee of getting to the front. When the unfortunate Clifford Wallace lost the confidence of the news media, Richard S. Malone, who enjoyed their trust, replaced him. Relations between the Army and the news media sometimes became tense, but clearly, the army realized that it could not afford to push media organizations too far.

³ Claude Beaugard, *Guerre et Censure au Canada 1939-1945* (Sillery P.Q.: Editions Septentrion, 1993), 80-9, 186. In April 1942 *Le Droit* was fined \$200 for criticizing Allied bombing in France and *The Vancouver Sun* \$300 for calling into question the strength of Pacific command's defenses. *Le Soleil* paid \$50 as a penalty for publishing the story of a 1944 sinking of a ship. However, the *Ottawa Citizen* was acquitted after being charged for an editorial allegedly encouraging returned veteran to anti government violence. DND DHH, 72/295, "Report on Censorship: A Narrative on the Organization, Activities and Demobilization of Censorship During the war of 1939-1945," 14, 18.

The Canadian news media were far from helpless victims of an all-powerful military who could silence them at will.

The media possessed considerable power of their own, but a third factor in evaluating Canadian Army-press relations during the Second World War is that the vast majority of the Canadian news media fully supported the war effort. Most Quebec journals, while accepting Canada's involvement in the war, viewed the nation's role as a "limited, even a defensive one."⁴ The war correspondent was no neutral observer, dispassionately viewing the war from both sides, but shared the goal of defeating the Axis powers. Nor was the war correspondent alone in this effort; the editorialists and headline writers certainly contributed to the cheerleading as well. As embarrassing as it later was to some correspondents like Charles Lynch, at the time, patriotic support seemed a necessity.⁵ Nor was this limited only to war correspondents; American veteran and academic Paul Fussell writes that "the various outlets of popular culture behaved as if they were the creatures of their governments... together with scepticism, irony and doubt, an early casualty was a wide variety of views about current events."⁶ In Canada, there was less conformity because many French-speaking Quebecers suspected the British imperial connection to be Canada's real motivation in the war. This aside, for English-speaking Canada's popular culture, Fussell's comments ring true. The patriotic expressions of pride and sensationalist headlines for Dieppe and Sicily demonstrate this

⁴ W.H. Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967), 201.

⁵ Charles Lynch, *You Can't Print That: Memoirs of a Political Voyeur* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1983), 62; Phillip Knightley, *The First Casualty* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University, 1975, rpt. 2000), 364.

⁶ Paul Fussell, *Wartime: Understanding and Behaviour in the Second World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 180.

fact. There is no doubt on whose side the news organizations and correspondents with the Canadian Army stood.

While all correspondents worked for the war effort, not all were equally jingoistic. According to Canadian literature professor Eric Thompson, Peter Stursberg of the CBC reported with a “detached yet melancholy, concentration on the destruction wrought by war.”⁷ Ralph Allen also often wrote reflective, ironic and somewhat bitter stories, such as his account of the bombing of the Canadians in the quarry in August 1944. Even Allen, however, could be a cheerleader, as when he began his account of the Black Watch by quoting from Major Griffin: “don’t send reinforcements.”⁸

Even with press cooperation, the Canadian and Allied military authorities still attempted to shape the news to benefit the army and war effort and succeeded in controlling its tone. This produced a sanitized view of the war, contrived to keep up the morale of both the home front and troops and maintain good inter-service and Allied relations. Fussell calls the results of the news produced from the front as “Norman Rockwellized” and “Disneyfied.”⁹ This criticism is something of an exaggeration as shown by Matthew Halton’s March 1945 broadcast about a stretcher-bearer suffering from battle exhaustion. After rescuing a man with a “blown off leg” under fire, he “had had it.” Halton portrayed battle exhaustion, as the eventual consequence for every man in combat, save for the rare few “who knew no fear.” The report, which mentioned other cases, including that of a company commander, made clear that battle exhaustion

⁷ Eric Thompson, “Canadian Warcoros in World War II: Professionalism, Patriotism and Propaganda,” *Mosaic*, 23.3 (1990), 113.

⁸ Ralph Allen, “Black Watch Units Died Alone in Trap,” *Globe and Mail*, 12 Aug. 1944.

⁹ Fussell, *Wartime*, 268.

occurred frequently.¹⁰ Limbs blown off and crying broken troops do not seem like a Norman Rockwell painting. Likewise, American correspondent Ernie Pyle, who achieved fame by describing the dirty, dangerous life of the front-line American soldier, could hardly be accused of providing simplistic, sanitized patriotism.

Despite these examples, there is much truth in Fussell's exaggeration. While perhaps the press portrayal of war was not a Rockwell painting, neither was it an "R"-rated movie. Munro's description of the beach at Puys as "dotted with the fallen forms of men in battledress" is horrific enough, yet still sanitized.¹¹ Munro's story is tame compared to a German soldier's recollections of the beaches of Dieppe: "there were pieces of human beings littering the beach. There were headless bodies, there were legs, there were arms."¹² If Munro had written such a description, the censors certainly would have cut it, just as they had the decapitated body from Placide Labelle's D-Day account.

Even if the censors passed horrific items, there is good reason to believe that newspapers would have hesitated to print them. Early in the war, the American Office of War Information kept a hidden file of graphic photographs of American casualties nicknamed "the chamber of horrors." In 1943, American propagandists decided that releasing a few, more realistic, pictures of war from the file would encourage continued commitment to the war effort. Surprisingly, after their September 1943 release, virtually no one published the photographs, especially the most horrifying ones. A depiction of three dead Americans on a New Guinea beach appeared famously in *Life* magazine, but

¹⁰ CBC Digital Archives, Matthew Halton, "A Soldier at the Breaking Point," CBC Radio, 5 March 1945. http://archives.cbc.ca/war_conflict/second_world_war/clips/3451/

¹¹ Ross Munro, "Eyewitness Describes Grim Fight," *Montreal Star*, 20 August 1942, 5.

¹² Cited in Fussell, *Wartime*, 271.

the editors felt so uncomfortable they wrote a long editorial explaining it. The American news media and public grew more accepting of such pictures as the war continued, although the truly horrific ones remained locked by censorship in the “chamber” during the war.¹³ The news media also wished to present a sanitized view of the war. This is understandable: what consumers of news feel is acceptable to depict limits the press. Overly graphic coverage might cost readers and therefore profits. Even today, television news coverage of an automobile accident will not show close ups of the mangled bodies, out of respect for the victims’ families and what is deemed tasteful by producers. In addition to self-censorship, the censorship regulations ensured that most of what might conceivably decrease morale never left the theatre of war. Thus the Canadian public rarely or never read about cowardice, blunders by commanding officers, graphic horrors of war, looting, shooting of surrendering troops, venereal disease, the inferiority of some Canadian equipment as compared to that of the Germans, and much else of the least heroic and less savoury ingredients of war.

In addition to using censorship, the army relied on “spin” that is, providing the interpretation of news most favourable to it. Spin occurred at the press conferences where headquarters staff briefed the correspondents on the latest developments. The communiqués also interpreted operations and often provided the narrative framework in which the news media placed their stories. Sometimes the spin failed, such as COHQ claims of success for the Dieppe raid. The “lessons learned” spin, emphasised by the Canadian Army, proved more effective as a long-term apologetic than claims of success, so much so that Mountbatten himself eventually adopted it as a key weapon in his arsenal

¹³ George H. Roeder Jr., *The Censored War: American Visual Experience During World War Two* (Newhaven: Yale University Press, 1993), 12-16.

for attacking critics of the raid. The news coverage of the accidental bombings of Canadian troops during *Operations Totalize* and *Tractable* are an example of the successful use of spin. General Crerar convinced correspondents that, despite some tragic accidents, the benefits of using of heavy bombers outweighed the cost. Spin usually involved maximizing the positive aspects of any situation while minimizing the negatives. Since correspondents depended on headquarters briefings and communiqués to keep them informed of the larger picture of any operation, it was extremely difficult for them to distance themselves from the “official” interpretation of events, especially if they lacked experience and military knowledge.¹⁴ Challenges to the headquarters’ version came more often from editorialists and war columnists rather than the correspondents who were closely dependent on the military. For example, after the Dieppe raid, the first UK press criticisms came from the military columnist in *The Evening Standard* and in Canada from a columnist in the *Globe and Mail*. In most cases though, the spin remained unchallenged and the army shaped the public’s understanding of events.

The army also controlled the tone and content of the news through the Film and Photo Unit’s virtual monopoly on visual representations of operations. Requests from the *Toronto Star* and the *Globe and Mail* to utilize their own photographers were flatly refused because the Canadians operated under the British, whose policy did not allow it. It also would take limited quota places from correspondents. The Americans did accredit civilian photographers.¹⁵ The National Film Board later fielded a “correspondent,” Julian

¹⁴ Rookie Charles Lynch who knew almost nothing about military matters considered himself very fortunate to be partnered with CBC’s Matt Halton, the most experienced war correspondent. Charles Lynch, *You Can’t Print That*, 52-61.

¹⁵ LAC, RG 24, Vol 60, HQ 550-92-98, CMHQ to NDHQ, Cable PR 170, 30 June 1943; CMHQ to NDHQ, Cable PR 534, 29 Oct. 1943.

Roffman, with the Film and Photo Unit in Northwest Europe, although this position was one of liaison and advice.¹⁶ The army retained control of photographs and film footage and chose what to release to the newspapers and use in the newsreels.¹⁷ Furthermore, CMHQ PR suggested shots to the Film and Photo Unit that would fit the army's propaganda needs. For example, Major Eric Gibbs, Abel's deputy, suggested that photographs from Sicily include soldiers kissing Sicilian girls, playing with children and dogs, and "French Canadians in Catholic settings." By 1944, a system of formalized requisitions was in place to allow requests for specific types of pictures by various Canadian Army units, National Film Board and Allied propaganda agencies.¹⁸ During the Normandy invasion, SHAEF also issued an eighteen-page memorandum specifying the subjects of photographs essential for publicity, military and historical reasons.¹⁹ Thus, any photograph or film appearing in the Canadian news media had not only been censored, selected by the Army as appropriate, but also may well have originated in the mind of a PRO to fit propaganda needs. While Canadian PR personnel may not have written for publication, if a picture is worth a thousand words, the Film and Photo Unit's output surely rivalled that of the war correspondents.

¹⁶Lt. Col. Abel and the leadership of the Film and Photo Unit remained strongly suspicious that the NFB and its leader John Grierson, were infiltrating personnel into Europe to take control of the unit. Roffman was seriously wounded in December 1944 by enemy mortar fire. DND, DHH, 75/315, J.W.G. Clark to Abel, May 1944; Clark to D.M.(c), 21 Mar. 1944; Abel to Clark, 15 Mar. 1944; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12333, 4 Film 14, Major Gordon Spaulding to Major J.E.R. McDougal, 4 Oct. 1944; *Hamilton Spectator*, 23 Dec. 1944.

¹⁷ King Whyte's collection of letters to his wife mention his work for CMHQ PR in preparing newsreel footage but with unfortunately not much detail. King Whyte, *Letters Home, 1944-1946*(Hamilton Ont.: Seraphim Editions, 2007), 14.

¹⁸LAC RG 24, Vol. 12376, 4/press/28/2, Major Eric Gibbs to Capt. Frank Royal, 19 Aug. 1943; Lac RG 24 Vol. 12336, 4/film and photo/3, Major Gordon Sparling to Lt. Col. Abel, "Requests for Films and Photos," 28 November 1944. Examples of the photo requisitions may be found in LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12336, 4/film and photo/1.

¹⁹ RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/press/31/4, "Subject: Pictorial Coverage," June 1944.

Overall, the balance of power in the army-press relationship lay with the army with its military discipline, power of accreditation, censorship regulations, and ability to influence the tone of the stories. Yet the news media proved far from helpless and the government and military had to tread carefully or risk negative publicity through editorial criticism, although this was limited by the newspapers' support for the war effort.

Although the army controlled many aspects of war news, Canadian party politics, beyond military control, also was an important factor in PR. Civil-military relations in Canada are predicated on government control over the military, thus politicians must accept the ultimate responsibility for military policy. Embarrassment for the army means humiliation and scandal for the party in power; therefore, the handling of war news frequently became an issue of domestic politics. After the Dieppe raid, the opposition press and politicians accused the army and government of a cover up, of "sugaring the pill" by delaying casualty reports and over-optimistic interpretations of its results. Mackenzie King made the handling of the announcement of Canadian involvement in Sicily into an issue only after the opposition questioned inconsistencies in the story. Pressure on the King government to obtain other unpublished Sicily information such as the Canadian formation and its commander, led to the army requesting AFHQ to remove those restrictions. When word of the largely British composition of First Canadian Army during *Operation Veritable* appeared in the newspapers, Army PR rushed to do damage control not only to placate damaged British egos, but also to counter the linking of the story to the reinforcement crisis, another embarrassment to King's Liberals. Conversely, good news enhanced the government's reputation as well as that of the army. An inextricable link exists between military PR and domestic politics.

With most Canadian federal politicians and the mainstream English language press fully supporting the war effort, it was difficult for the opposition to criticize the government without appearing disloyal. The great opportunity for the Conservatives was conscription, since supporting it made them appear to have greater commitment to the war effort than the Liberals. Disasters like Hong Kong and Dieppe also provided the opposition with ammunition, though even then there was a need to tread carefully. Ontario Conservative leader George Drew faced charges under the Defence of Canada Regulations for vigorously criticizing the findings of the inquiry into Hong Kong, although the government dropped the charges to avoid providing him with a soapbox.²⁰ War news and PR also provided an opportunity to attack the government, since it involved how Canadians were informed of the war, rather than its prosecution. Although the main targets were usually the Wartime Information Board (WIB) and its predecessors and the ministers responsible for national defence, occasionally the opposition press and politicians took aim at the PR services directly. For example, the *Toronto Telegram* attacked both the army and RCAF PR services as redundant and expensive, once estimating the job in Ottawa required only a single officer.²¹ Nevertheless, Army PR rarely faced direct criticism because the WIB since it was larger, closer, and more expensive to maintain, was the best target for Conservative politicians and newspapers.

The editorial response to war news owed much to the political stance of the newspaper. Despite the dominant ethic of objectivity in news reporting, most newspapers supported one of the parties, although with a much greater independence not slavishly

²⁰ *Globe and Mail*, 11 July 1942, 1.

²¹ *Toronto Telegram*, 29 Aug. 1942; 14 Nov. 1941; 17 Oct. 1940; 23 Sept. 1943.

than in the days of the party organs.²² Thus, the most violent attacks on the value of and the handling of the information about the Dieppe raid came from Conservative-supporting newspapers like the *Globe and Mail* and *Ottawa Journal*, while Liberal-backing papers tended to support the official explanations. Similarly, the *Globe and Mail* dismissed Mackenzie King's anti-British temper tantrums after the Sicily communiqué as "much ado about nothing," while the Liberal-supporting *Toronto Star* praised his battle for "equality with British troops."²³ Anything that could potentially embarrass the government, without appearing to oppose the war effort, usually split the news media's opinions along party lines.

Domestic politics certainly shaped Canadian war news, but relations with Allied powers were critical. Canadian Army PR requirements often took a back seat to the priorities of the more powerful alliance members. In their overseas wars, the armed forces of Canada have always operated as junior partners in larger coalitions. Rarely have Canadians held senior command positions and taken the lead in policy decisions. The example of Army PR during the Second World War clearly illustrates the difficulties of obtaining sufficient publicity as a junior partner. Beginning with the Dieppe raid, Canadian Army PR and military leadership faced an uphill battle. At Dieppe, despite the predominance of Canadian troops and a Canadian commanding the landing force, COHQ treated the PR planning as its own preserve, giving the Canadian Army PRO a more limited input than the US Army, which had only fifty participants. It is not surprising that the British and even American publics believed their troops played the major role in the

²² Stephen J.A. Ward, *The Invention of Journalistic Ethics: The Path to Objectivity and Beyond* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 247-250.

²³ *Globe and Mail*, 17 July 1943; *Toronto Star*, 16 July 1943.

battle. COHQ's actions after the raid, such as radically revising Stacey's "white paper," made it abundantly clear that the main priority in the Dieppe raid publicity was enhancing and protecting its institutional and its reputation.

This did not improve greatly in the Sicily invasion. Eisenhower's headquarters did not see a need to include Canada in the initial communiqué and *avis*, despite pressure from the Canadian Army and Department of External Affairs. Still, the Canadian military and the Department of External Affairs convinced the British War Office and U.S. War Department to intervene on Canada's behalf, albeit unsuccessfully. While not achieving this initial recognition, the pressure influenced AFHQ to tolerate and finally allow larger numbers of Canadian correspondents. Even so, Allied interference and decisions continued to hurt Canadian national interests, such as considering the Canadian registered company British United Press as part of the United Press. The breakthrough was the appointment of Malone as PR leader, since his personal connections with Minister of Defence J.L. Ralston and General Montgomery gave him the influence to take action on Canadian requirements. Despite this development, the solution in the Mediterranean proved inadequate for the needs of the Northwest Europe campaign. Malone's zeal for the cause of Canadian PR was commendable but reliance on the personal authority granted by the Minister of National Defence could become counter-productive and provoke hostility against Canadian interests. Clark and Abel wisely reined Malone back from his tendency to appeal to his "terms of reference." Instead, Canadian PR experienced its closest cooperation with its Allies during the Northwest Europe campaign because Canadian military and PR leadership were involved in planning and managing PR for the second front through representatives in SHAEF PR and the PR Council.

Although the PR policy decisions did not always reflect Ottawa's wishes, the participation of Canadian representatives in the decision-making made it a less bitter pill to swallow.

The publication ban on the movement of Canadian troops from Italy to Northwest Europe represented the greatest sacrifice of Canadian PR needs to SHAEF priorities. Although it was widely rumoured in Canada, Eisenhower did not permit publication of the news for weeks. In spite of these incidents, First Canadian Army had the freedom, under SHAEF PR policies, to manage its correspondents with a status more reflective of a national contingent.

An example of the effectiveness of the involvement of Canadian PR in liaison and involvement in planning is the number of correspondents accompanying the Canadian Third Infantry Division on D-Day. During the planning sessions with 21 Army Group, Lt. Col. Eric Gibbs argued for an allotment of nine correspondents to accompany the division, while the British officer with whom he negotiated felt three more than adequate. Gibbs insisted that Canadian interests required him to "take into account regional, racial, and language problems." The officer referred the matter to higher authority, but not before Gibbs extracted a promise allowing Canadian participation in the next level of discussion.²⁴ In the end, Gibbs secured permission for all nine correspondents, although only six were Canadian.

Liaison and participation in policy were key factors in getting Canada's PR needs considered in Allied planning. This involvement came with a cost to Canadian PR in

²⁴ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12377, 4/press 31, ADPR to DDPD, 29 Feb. 1944.

manpower because of the limited number of PR personnel. More officers seconded to SHAEF meant fewer were involved in news production.

Liaison and participation in planning assume that one's allies are sympathetic and will allow it. This is not always the case, as illustrated by the example of the Australians, the junior partner in the joint operations commanded by American General Douglas MacArthur in the Southwest Pacific. The strictness of censorship in MacArthur's command surpassed any other front, and all news copy required approval by his headquarters. His publicity machine aimed at self-aggrandizement and produced communiqués so misleading that even American troops became bitter about their inaccuracies. Naturally, such a project allowed little mention of the Australian Army. Australian troops griped about how Australian identity remained hidden in publicity behind the term "Allied," while the nationality of Americans always appeared.²⁵ Australian Army official historian Gavin Long observed, "Probably never in the history of modern war had so large a force, although in action, been hidden from public knowledge for so long."²⁶ This was despite a large Army PR establishment with at two dozen PROs plus supporting staff.²⁷ After some press criticism, the issue erupted into an Australian political crisis in January 1945, forcing MacArthur to reveal the whereabouts of the Australian Army in a communiqué, followed by a brief flood of news and publicity previously held back by censorship. Apart from that short deluge, MacArthur's

²⁵ Knightley, *The First Casualty*, 306-308; Gavin Long, *MacArthur as Military Commander* (Conshohocken PA: Combined Publishing, 1968), 118-9.

²⁶ Gavin Long, *The Final Campaigns* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1963), 37.

²⁷ Prue Torrey-Parlicki, *Somewhere in Asia: War, Journalism and Australia's Neighbours* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2000), 39.

ensorship practises remained unaltered.²⁸ The Australian Army's PR could not compete with an Allied Commander completely unsympathetic to their national publicity needs

In Europe, the Canadians had the good fortune to be commanded by Eisenhower, who had considerable ability to work with subordinates and allies, and possessed the sensitivity to approve policy that considered Canadian PR. While Canadians might have to fight for mention in the D-Day communiqué, SHAEF never attempted to vet all publicity, or to refuse press conferences and briefings at lower level formations, as MacArthur did. If Canada's senior partners in Europe had desired to stifle Canadian publicity, Canada would have found itself in a similar situation.

Although matters could have been worse, the Canadian Army's PR relationship with its senior allies was marked by varying degrees of success. The egregious examples of the Allies ignoring Canadian interests became less frequent as Canadian Army PR improved its technique and became involved in Allied PR planning. Yet clearly, the Canadian Army could not rely on the good-will of its allies to obtain its "share of the credit." The peculiar interests of junior coalition partners are of little interest to major powers; unless the representatives of the smaller power labour hard and long to protect and their forces' efforts they will be overlooked and ignored.

A further conclusion is that the war news that Canadians received during the Second World War achieved mixed results. A small majority of Canadians found the media's coverage of the hostilities satisfactory, although a sizable minority expressed

²⁸ David Horner, *Blamey: The Commander in Chief* (St. Leonards, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1998), 492-5; Horner, "MacArthur: An Australian Perspective," in *MacArthur and the American Century*, William M. Leary, editor (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 124; LAC, RG 24, Vol. 8193, NS 1880-9, T.C. Davis to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 25 January 1945. The Australian Army's poor handling of war correspondents and suspicious attitude towards them did not make news of their troops any easier to obtain. Peter Charlton, *The Unnecessary War: Island Campaigns of the South-West Pacific* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1983), 99-111.

distrust about its reliability. Polls taken during the war measured Canadians' attitudes. A September 1942 Canadian Institute of Public Opinion poll asked "Are you satisfied that you are getting as much important war news as you should, or do you think too much of the news is being censored?" The result was that 56 percent believed the news was adequate while 36 percent disagreed. A second question, the only one broken down by region, concerned news of U-Boat attacks in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, with only 46 percent of Canadians trusting, and 40 percent distrusting the news. The Quebec results showed only 30 percent felt they received sufficient information, while 58 percent did not.²⁹ This issue was closer to most Quebecers than to others, but the lower support for the war among Francophone Quebecers must account for much of the difference. Later polls were slightly more positive. WIB surveys for December 1942 and April 1943 showed national results of 62 per cent and 63 per cent of Canadians expressing trust in the news, although in Quebec the figure was only 36 per cent in both polls. The last WIB public opinion survey on the topic in March 1944 found that 62 percent of Canadians outside Quebec generally trusted war news, compared to 28 percent suspicious of it. Once again, the Quebec numbers were reversed, with 57 percent distrustful to 30 percent not. The high levels of suspicion of war news in Quebec remained constant.³⁰

The WIB provided the cabinet with summaries of public opinion and morale that frequently mentioned attitudes to war news, although these are anecdotal and only rarely include statistical data. They observed that Canadians' trust in war news reflected the

²⁹ "Gallup and Fortune Polls," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 6:4 (Winter, 1942), 659.

³⁰ The percentage of Quebecers expressing trust in war news was 36 in December 1942 and 35 percent in April 1943. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners and Soldiers*, 16; LAC, RG 2, Vol. 49, W-34-2-5, "WIB Survey No. 33," Mar. 25, 1944.

changing events of the war. Their March 1944 survey, for example, revealed that trust in the news stood at only 54 percent nationally after widespread public suspicion of a “cover up” of military reverses in the Anzio beachhead followed controversy regarding the imposition of strict censorship. Once the Normandy invasion began the WIB reports noted “general satisfaction” with the media coverage. This situation reversed again several weeks later due to widespread suspicion that delays in reporting casualty numbers meant they were worse than Ralston had led believe; people suspected that “moderate” was a euphemism for heavy casualties.³¹ Clearly, the public’s perception of the reliability of the war news reflected the changing fortunes of war. This volatility led to some variation in the level of trust in the news, although this was at most eight percentage points according to the polls by Gallup and the WIB. Even so, public opinion proved sensitive to perceived manipulation of the war news by the military and government.

A possible measure of Canadians’ trust in war news is a January 3, 1945 Canadian Institute for Public Opinion poll about public belief in the stories of the “Germans murdering many people in the concentration camps.” Overall 71 percent believed the stories true, 11 percent did not, while the remainder did not know or qualified their answer. Given that a major cause of interwar disillusionment about the propaganda of the First World War was exaggerated atrocity stories, the results showed great confidence that the news media told the truth about Nazi barbarity. Clearly, they did not regard it on the same level as “beastly Huns” bayoneting Belgian babies and crucifying Canadian soldiers. Even 58 percent of Quebecers, who had a greater distrust of news, believed the

³¹ LAC, RG 44, Acc 85 537, Box 5, A.A. Dutton, “Memorandum to Members of the Cabinet,” 28 Feb. 1944, 20 Mar. 1944; 12 June 1944; 26 June 1944.

horrific tales. Only 22 percent felt the stories untrustworthy.³² While, this may not be a measure of the trust in all war news, it does show that late in the war, Canadians were willing to believe what interwar sensibilities might have dismissed as untrustworthy propaganda.

A majority of Canadians trusted the war news to be reliable, but a significant minority, including most francophones, remained suspicious. There was a widespread suspicion that Canada's real purpose in fighting the war was support of British imperialism. A July 1942 poll showed that only 33 percent of French Canadians believed that Canada would be at war if the country were not "part of the British empire," compared to 81 percent of English-speakers surveyed. A large minority of French Canadians (31 percent) supported the idea of making peace immediately by letting Germany retain its conquests, while 59 percent opposed. In English-speaking Canada, agreement with the peace proposal was only three percent.³³

Even those strongly supporting the war could be cynical about the tone and presentation of the news. For example, one of the anonymous interviewees of Barry Broadfoot's oral history complained that, "the newspapers, they were just propaganda sheets." He or she griped, "It was all war, war, and how brave our boys were, did we have to have it shoved down our throats year after year?" It was not a case of lack of support for the war effort, "I think we would have done just as well without all their propaganda... Canadians aren't stupid you know."³⁴ An August 1944 WIB survey found

³² Ontario results were 77 percent believing; only 5 percent did not. "The Quarter's Polls," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 8,4 (Winter, 1944-1945), 592.

³³ LAC RG 36, 31 vol 13, 8-7-A, "A Confidential Report of a Recent Survey of Public Opinion among French Canadians in the Province of Quebec," conducted 25 July 1942.

³⁴ Barry Broadfoot, *Six War Years* (Don Mills, Ontario: Paperjacks, 1974), 31-33.

that fifty-nine percent of Canadians agreed with the sentiment that bad war news should “be published exactly as it happened as soon as possible,” while only thirty two percent wanted the bad news “toned down.”³⁵ The unfailingly optimistic approach of most news stories frustrated those aware of both the heinous nature of the war and its necessity. Still, these individuals were a minority.

The Canadian public was usually eager for war news. Print news set records for sales. Radio purchases in 1940 increased 29 percent over the previous year and a wartime poll indicated that three out of four Canadians heard war news broadcasts daily.³⁶ According to an April 1943 WIB survey, 67 percent of Canadians followed the war news daily, while another 23 followed it regularly but not every day; only 12 per cent remained uninterested.³⁷ Nonetheless, the level of public interest in war news fluctuated with the fortunes of war and morale. A WIB cabinet report noted a drop in Canadian morale in the autumn of 1944. The destruction of the bulk of the German Army in Normandy and the rapid advance across France into Belgium had led many to believe that the war would end quickly. Indeed, had Germany been led by a sane leader, surrender should have resulted. Hitler did not behave rationally, the Allied advance plagued by supply difficulties slowed and a reorganized Wehrmacht emerged to contest the Allied advance. Instead of imminent victory celebrations, Canadians feared they faced months, perhaps years, of bloody fighting before victory in Europe. By October 2, the WIB noted the “sobering effect on public opinion” of the reversal at Arnhem and the dashing of hopes for a quick

³⁵ The poll was conducted in August 1944, although the survey is dated November 1944. LAC, RG 2, Vol. 49, W-34-2-5, “WIB Survey No. 50,” Nov. 18, 1944.

³⁶ Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 14.

³⁷ LAC, RG 2, Vol. 50, W-34-2-S, “WIB Survey No. 16,” 13 July 1943.

victory. As war weariness grew, interest in war news declined. A November 27 briefing noted, “people are reported to be ‘fed up,’ carrying on in sort of a ‘numb passivity’ and taking little interest in war news.” The German Ardennes counterattack in December further eroded Canadian spirits. “Canadians entered 1945 in a far less cheerful mood than they did 1944,” as evidenced by “‘war weariness everywhere,’ low morale, disappointment and ‘shaking their head sadly’ when the war is mentioned,” claimed a WIB report. Eventually the failure of the German counterattack restored public optimism and along with it interest in war news. Ironically, attention to war news dropped off again in late April because the imminent defeat of Germany removed “all anxiety about the final outcome.”³⁸

Canadians expressed satisfaction with the level of Canadian emphasis in their war news. An August 1944 WIB survey found that 60 per cent felt the amount of Canadian content to be “just right,” while the numbers thinking it too great or too little were 10 and 22 per cent respectively. This meant that at least 70 per cent of Canadians believed that the national war effort received its share of credit or better in the media.³⁹

Besides demonstrating fluctuations in appetites for the war news, public opinion also demonstrates that Army PR did not exclusively create the public’s view of the war. It was only one of the players in the creation of war news during the Second World War. The PR services of the RCN and RCAF, the WIB, war columnists, the information and PR agencies of Allied powers all contributed to what Canadians learned of the war. The late war WIB reports indicate that events that did not directly involve the Canadians, such

³⁸LAC, RG 44, Acc. 85, 537, Box 5, A.D. Dunton, “Memorandum to Members of Cabinet,” 5 Sept. 1944, 2 Oct. 1944, 10 Oct. 1944, 23 Oct. 1944, 27 Nov. 1944, 2 Jan. 1945, 22 Jan. 1945, 23 Apr. 1944.

³⁹ LAC, RG 2, Vol. 49, W-34-2-5, “WIB Survey No. 50,” Nov. 18, 1944.

as Operation Market Garden and the Ardennes offensive, had a great effect on Canadian morale. The bulk of war news concerning these events would not have been produced by domestic sources, let alone ones influenced by Army PR. Nevertheless, during this low period, one report gave a nod to the work of Army PR by noting that “the heroic deeds of our men overseas are said to be the ‘only bright spots.’”⁴⁰ The news cocktail came from many sources and influences. It is impossible to separate Army PR’s contribution, yet by overseeing the production of war news concerning its own operations, it played an important role in shaping Canadians’ view of the war.

While the poll results of Canadians’ attitude to war news may be a partial measure of the effectiveness of Army PR, it is only part of the story. French philosopher Jacques Ellul argued an aspect of all propaganda is “pre propaganda.” The “pre propaganda ... does not have a precise ideological objective; it has nothing to do with an opinion, an idea, a doctrine. It proceeds by psychological manipulations, by character modifications, by the creation of stereotypes useful when the time comes.” The propagandist creates in the minds of the listener a “myth,” not necessarily a lie, but a worldview, “an all-encompassing activating image.”⁴¹ Canadian propagandists created a pervasive atmosphere that promoted a pervasive worldview in the consciousness of Canadians; that the nation was at war and each citizen was part of it. Many Canadians thought this way whether they trusted the content of news or not. Ultimately, the important thing was that Canadians work hard, buy Victory Bonds, enlist in the army and “do their bit.” If they did this, propaganda had done its job, regardless of individual beliefs about what that the

⁴⁰ Ibid., 2 Jan 1945.

⁴¹ Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), 31.

“real story” of Dieppe was. By contributing to the creation and reinforcement of this mindset, the news produced through Canadian Army PR contributed to the larger war effort.

Many of these conclusions demonstrate that during the war, Army PR successfully achieved its aims. Bill Abel had defined PR duties as being “control” of correspondents and other media, enforcing compliance with censorship, and ensuring “that favourable publicity reaches Canada, while obviating criticisms and complaints built on incorrect information.”⁴² Army PR clearly achieved the first duties, controlling the accreditation and movement of correspondents and ensuring censorship of all despatches. The second part is more debatable but also was largely achieved. Certainly, there was criticism of the high command of the army following the failures of Hong Kong and Dieppe. Little was possible in the first case; Canada lacked the first-hand information on which to base reports and there were no correspondents’ despatches to control. With Dieppe, COHQ limited the involvement of Canadian Army PR in the planning; leaving them to scramble to salvage what it could afterwards. McNaughton entrusted the most important piece of publicity, the “white paper,” to C.P. Stacey, rather than a PRO. However, given the utter failure of the Dieppe raid, it would have been beyond the ability of even the most skilled PRO to prevent criticism. Army PR’s performance improved greatly after that and situations like the bombing of troops in Normandy and the controversy about the composition of the Canadian First Army in February 1945 were well handled.

⁴² LAC, RG 24, vol. 12383 4/PRO/16, E.L.M. Burns, “Duty of Public Relations Officer, Canadian Military Headquarters and Relations with First Canadian Division”, 21 Jan. 1940.

Most criticism of the Army by the Canadian news media and the opposition focussed on issues of high policy rather than the troops' performance or generals' abilities. As such, they targeted King's government rather than the army itself. One example is the *Globe and Mail's* claim that the creation of First Canadian Army in April 1942 was unsustainable without sufficient replacements.⁴³ Army PR certainly avoided the string of criticisms of cover up and press obstruction that fell on the American Army when censors clamped down during the December 1944 German Ardennes offensive.⁴⁴

While largely successful, the Canadian Army's actions to influence war news raise ethical and moral questions about both their necessity and desirability. The first aspect requiring evaluation is military censorship. There is little doubt that much "information of value to the enemy" would have negatively affected military operations had the Axis gained knowledge of sensitive matters. For example, it would have been extremely hazardous to publicize the sailing of the First Division to the UK in 1939 or to the Mediterranean in 1943. Prohibiting details concerning Allied equipment not yet known to the enemy is another example of necessary censorship. From a military perspective, the news media cannot make gifts to enemy intelligence during times of war. In the context of the Second World War, it is difficult to argue against these types of censorship.

Despite its necessity in many cases, this study has demonstrated the possibility of the abuse of military censorship. It sometimes protected personal and institutional reputations. Mountbatten removed the reference to the capture of the Operation Jubilee operational plans in C.P. Stacey's Dieppe "white paper" to keep embarrassing news from

⁴³ *Globe and Mail*, 6 Apr. 1942, 6.

⁴⁴ "The Old Army Game," *Time*, 1 Jan. 1945.

the public that the Germans knew already. In 1946, Ralph Allen shared his critical opinion of military censorship with Gillis Purcell:

Of course, censorship covered up the mistakes of commanders in the field. That probably wasn't its primary purpose, but it certainly was one of its accomplishments, if only for the reason that the censors never, or almost never, allowed that anything that would be construed as a betrayal of weakness on our side, or that conceivably could have given comfort to the enemy. I do not especially question the wisdom of this policy; I am speaking only of its effect... It was also true that while some of our Canadian commanders were displaying highly dubious qualities of leadership on the road from Caen to Falaise, in a month of time wasting shadow boxing before the Germans got set for the bloody battle of the Schelde, in their head-on drive through the heart of the Hochwald, and in their general inflexibility and pedantic mania for set-piece battles—the same possibly necessary but convenient strictures on free reporting were working for them.⁴⁵

Allen obviously had opinions that he could not express under military censorship. Even without direct abuse of regulations, censorship unintentionally protected the reputation of the Canadian Army and its generals. Through abuse, military censorship could become a tool to keep bad or embarrassing news from the public.

While direct censorship of war correspondents' copy could distort war news in favour of the military and its commanders, it also led to self-censorship by the correspondents. War correspondent, and later popular fiction and history writer, Richard Collier wrote that under the Allied publicity machine "self censorship" became a "way of life" for war correspondents.⁴⁶ Charles Lynch agreed that "by the end we were our own censors."⁴⁷ Anticipating cuts, correspondents avoided content likely to attract the censor's blue pencil. Allen also said that self-censoring led correspondents to favour success

⁴⁵ Purcell, "Wartime Press Censorship in Canada," 133-4.

⁴⁶ Richard Collier, *The Warcos* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1989), 146.

⁴⁷ Knightley, *The First Casualty*, 364.

stories, that the “correspondents erred as grotesquely [as the censors] and probably with less excuse.”⁴⁸ Thus, military censors influenced not only the submitted copy, but also the correspondents’ entire creative process.

A major criticism against the army’s censorship of war news is the sanitized picture of the war that the public received. The title of the conclusion of Paul Fussell’s *Wartime*, an indictment of the popular vision of the war perpetuated by Allied PR, is a Walt Whitman quote: “the real war will never get into books.” It is certain that the “real war” did not make it into the news media of the day. Historical theorist F.R. Ankersmit argues that “historical writing gives us representations of the past.” History gives us merely a picture, always imperfect, of what has occurred. It is equally clear that journalism is but a representation of current events, and is, like any representation, always imperfect. Fussell realizes this dilemma and admits that even his book, however graphic, falls short of portraying the “real war.”⁴⁹ Despite this, some representations are more accurate than others are. In film, the gory and harrowing scenes of the landings at Omaha Beach in the first twenty minutes of *Saving Private Ryan* are more realistic than the movie adaptation of *The Longest Day*, where troops throw up their arms and flop bloodlessly into the surf or sand.⁵⁰ What Canadians read in their papers contained much more of the flavour of *The Longest Day* than *Saving Private Ryan*.

What were the dangers of letting a more frank representation of the war into Canadian papers? Certainly, it could have added worries for the family of soldiers

⁴⁸ Purcell, “Wartime Press Censorship in Canada,” 134.

⁴⁹ Fussell, *Wartime*, 290; F.R. Ankersmit, *Historical Representation* (Stanford: Stanford University, 2001), 11.

⁵⁰ *Saving Private Ryan*, dir. Stephen Spielberg, Amblin Entertainment, 1998; *The Longest Day*, dirs. Ken Annakin, Andrew Marton and Bernhard Wicki, Twentieth Century Fox, 1962.

overseas, who were anxious, even without graphic depictions of the horrors of war. There was also concern about morale. After the Hong Kong and Dieppe disasters, many critics of the government felt that information was soft-pedalled, in the words of the *Globe and Mail*, to “sugar the pill.”⁵¹ Columnist J.V. McAvee observed, “the Canadian people are not children. They can accept Dieppe as the English accepted Singapore, but it is not made easier to accept when what was a failure is represented as a success.”⁵² Most English-speaking Canadians supported the war effort. Although it would have been difficult to absorb another Canadian defeat after Hong Kong, the public could have done so. Canadians, after all, were involved with a life and death struggle against the Axis and had suffered relatively little in comparison to the rest of the Commonwealth or the horrendous casualties of the First World War, as a number of letters and editorials observed at the time.⁵³ The Canadian public’s morale could likely have handled the truth about Dieppe’s failure. Likewise, later in the war, Canadians suffering from war weariness perhaps could have benefited from graphic reminders of the realities of war to convince them of the need to continue contributing to the war effort. The Office of War Information realized this fact in the United States. In contrast, the Canadian government feared the conscription debate and thus relied entirely on volunteers for overseas service until the fall of 1944, a situation the Americans did not face. Tales of blundering generals, the horrors of war, and needless sacrifice were potential barriers to recruitment. Thus, both the Canadian government and army had little reason to encourage realistic

⁵¹ *Globe and Mail*, 27 Apr. 1943, 6.

⁵² J.V. McAvee, “‘Circle- Bar’ Fourth Column,” *Globe and Mail*, 21 May 1943, 14.

⁵³ “Backstage at Ottawa” *Maclean’s*, 15 Oct. 1942, 15; *Toronto Star*, 17 Sept. 1942; R.B. Shaw, “Dieppe – and After,” *Globe and Mail*, 5 Sept. 1942, 6.

depictions of war, or to challenge SHEAF's ban on "horrids." This came with a price, however: the large number of Canadians sceptical about war news.

Of course, Army PR and war news management is more than censorship; it is a whole system of news management. Control of the media might seem harsh by modern standards, but it represented a vast improvement in press freedom, compared to that of the First World War, where regulations handcuffed British correspondents who enjoyed little access to the front lines.⁵⁴ By contrast, Second World War correspondents with the Canadian Army had the freedom to travel and to speak with any military personnel they wished. Despite complaints in Sicily and the early stages of the Italian campaign, the number of correspondents accompanying Canadian formations usually was quite generous. Rather than regarding journalists as potential spies as in the Great War, by the end of the Second World War the military had learned to consider correspondents to be, as Eisenhower put it, "quasi-staff officers," who could be taken into confidence.⁵⁵ Many commanders viewed correspondents as just one more element in the military machine. In later wars, some correspondents with Second World War experience complained that generals no longer trusted them as they once did.⁵⁶ Allied militaries had learned the publicity value of correspondents, whose writing by lacking the appearance of official propaganda, would not produce suspicion from increasingly sophisticated news consumers.

⁵⁴ Knighthley, *The First Casualty*, 99-103.

⁵⁵ Forrest C. Pogue, *The Supreme Command* (Washington: Dept. of the Army, 1954), 88.

⁵⁶ Knightely, *The First Casualty*, 345.

This close association of the correspondents with the military, while understandable in the context of total war, raises ethical considerations concerning the role of the press. The blurred boundaries limited the news media from performing one of most important roles attributed to it in a liberal democracy, that of holding the government and institutions accountable for their actions. For the war was not only sanitized of much of its horrors but also of elements that could have led to public questioning of the decisions of commanders and government and military policy. The press at home, particularly if it was politically opposed to the government, continually raised questions of war policy, but overseas correspondents did not produce critical reports. This was not technically out of the realm of possibility; Eisenhower specified that criticisms of his leadership should remain uncensored.⁵⁷ But as Allen suggests, the censorship regulations had sufficient elasticity to prevent the details needed to criticize the quality of Canadian leadership, shortage of infantry replacements, and inferior equipment. Without such information from correspondents, the press in Canada suffered from a lack of knowledge, making editorial opinion less informed and sometimes inaccurate. The combination of censorship, military control of journalists, and the correspondents' identification with the troops and war effort, turned the media watchdog in Canada into a blind and partly deaf animal that barked loudly--often at the wrong things--but sometimes remained silent when it should have raised the alarm. Actions of the Canadian PR and news management systems, along with the policies of the Allied headquarters under which they served, helped produce this state of affairs.

Today, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* protects freedom of thought, including "freedom of the press and other medias of communication," as one of

⁵⁷ Pogue, *The Supreme Command*, 90.

the four fundamental freedoms, along with freedoms of conscience and religion, of assembly and association. Thus, curtailing freedom of the press is a matter only considered in the cases of utmost necessity. No doubt securing military information that can cost lives if known is one of these situations. Although the *Charter of Rights* did not exist before 1982, the principle of freedom of the press was part of Canadian parliamentary tradition in 1939. The frequent press attacks during the war on what the press considered the excesses of censorship demonstrate this, yet most of the Canadian news media and public accepted some censorship as necessary. During the Second World War in Canada, public support for the total war covered a multitude of censorship and PR sins. The loss of confidence in American government and military after revelations of media manipulation in Iraq is an example of the consequences of poor news management. If the state can stage-manage the media to convince its citizens to wage a “good” war, the same apparatus may be employed to support less justifiable conflicts. Thus, citizens and the media should view state claims of the necessity of censorship with healthy scepticism. If a wartime atmosphere tends to stifle dissent, the news media must regard military press releases and news conferences with a wary eye. While expectations of complete objectivity are impossible, especially in wartime, uncritical acceptance of official information by the press does the public little favour.⁵⁸ Some military control of the media was necessary during the Second World War, but its abuses show that even it was still dangerous to the principles of liberal democracy.

⁵⁸ Recognizing the limitations of positivistic traditional objectivity in the press, journalistic ethics scholar Stephen J. A. Ward has proposed a “pragmatic objectivity” principle for journalists. That striving for objectivity remains an important norm in many situations but that a journalist should not be rigidly bound by it. According to Ward, true objectivity is always a product of “critical, self conscious evaluation,” not a simple uncovering of self evident knowledge. Stephen J.A. Ward, *The Invention of Journalistic Ethics*, 316, 320-1.

Nevertheless, in its performance of duties, the PR system of the Canadian Army did many things right. The PROs of the Canadian Army were mostly reporters themselves, who understood the needs of correspondents. This experience allowed them to better accommodate the news media and at times to act as advocates on its behalf when the army's reflex was to clamp down on a story. On several occasions, PROs stood up to attempts at policy censorship by the Canadian government and Army high command, Army PR even ensured that Canadians would be represented during one of the biggest stories of the war, the liberation of Paris, although the Canadian Army was not directly involved. Army PR effectively lobbied on behalf of Canadian national interests, ensuring the flow of news to Canada and recognition of Canadian involvement in Allied announcements during the Italian campaign and especially Normandy. Looking back on their accomplishments, PROs had some reasons to celebrate.

After the Dieppe raid, much was made of the supposed values of the "lessons learned." These conclusions highlight factors that can possibly serve as "lessons" for Canadian Army PR, or Armed Forces Public Affairs as it has now become. Be as accommodating to the press as possible. Control through "spin" rather than censorship. Cover ups of bad news often end in embarrassment. It is preferable to rely on reports written by the media than on press releases written by military officials. Lack of frankness creates scepticism even among a sympathetic audience. Canada's national news interests require energetic promotion and defence to overcome the insensitivities of more powerful allies. Liaison and participation in designing coalition publicity policy is the preferable means of assuring the appropriate "share of the credit." Certainly, these things

should back up what current Public Affairs officers have learned from their own experiences.

Some factors limit using the Second World War as a blueprint for Canadian military PR and news management. The chief difference is the scale of the conflict. Because the war effort was the key project of Canadian society, news of the Second World War received greater attention from the Canadian news media and public than the Korean War, peacekeeping missions, and the current Afghanistan deployment. The Second World War required a much larger PR organization than subsequent Canadian military operations. Since the Second World War enjoyed vast public support and national mobilization, large numbers of experienced journalists were willing to enlist and become PROs, a situation not often enjoyed by the military. Today the news media and public are much less likely to agree to tolerate journalists being subject to military law and severe censorship. Changes in technology, the advent of satellite communications and the internet have also created a vast gap between Army PR in the Second World War and later operations. Censorship no longer involves controlling access to a single military cable head, as it did for much of the Second World War. The military no longer has the Defence of Canada Regulations to help control the media, who possess much more power than in 1939-1945, although reactions to the 9/11 situation demonstrate that legislation curtailing civil liberties can be swiftly enacted. Currently, the military does not even attempt to censor each media report from Afghanistan individually. Instead, each embedded journalist with the Canadian forces agrees to a list of restrictions in advance

and faces possible expulsion for violations.⁵⁹ Second World War Canadian Army PR may provide some lessons and examples for modern situations but not a model.

The Canadian media and public can also learn “lessons” from Second World War Army PR and war news. Censorship regulations, no matter how well intentioned, have the potential to be abused to protect reputations and institutions by keeping embarrassing items from the public. War news rarely provides a portrait of operations that is both timely and accurate. Breaking news from the front may be quite complete and accurate or missing key information. Domestic political concerns may greatly influence the “spin” on war news by the government, its supporters, and opposition groups, and none may be accurate. Celebrating heroism can be a tool to mask the ugly realities of war, or even to distract from failure. The bleaker the war news, the greater the chance of deceptive publicity to minimize the situation. Again, many of these observations may be common sense but this study confirms them. Certainly, these issues will arise again, because the complex relationships between the military, government, alliance members and the public will play a key role in any war in which Canada participates.

⁵⁹ “Op. Athena Media Embedded Program Instructions,” Feb 2007, National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces Web Site, <http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/newsroom/mep_e.asp> (accessed 12 June 2008).

Bibliography

Archival Sources

Department of National Defence, Directorate of History and Heritage Archives (Ottawa)

Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum (Abilene):
Justin Baldwin Lawrence Papers

Library and Archives Canada (Ottawa):

Boards, Offices, and Commissions Files (RG36), Wartime Information Board
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (RG 41)
Gregory Clark Papers
Andrew Gillespie Cowan Papers
Henry Duncan Graham Crerar Papers
Department of Finance (RG19)
Department of National Defence Files (RG24)
Department of National War Services Files (RG 44)
External Affairs Files (RG 25)
Wilfrid Eggleston Papers
Matthew Halton Papers
A.G.L. McNaughton Papers
Mackenzie King Diaries
Albert Edgar Powley Papers
Privy Council Office Files (RG 2)
James Layton Ralston Papers
George Ronald Papers
Andrew Donald Ross Papers
Peter Stursberg Papers

National Archives (London):

Air Ministry, Assistant Chief of Air Staff (General) Files
Air Ministry, Fighter Command: Registered Files
Air Ministry and Ministry of Defence: Papers accumulated by the Air Historical Branch
Air Ministry, Mediterranean Allied Air Forces: Microfilmed Files
General Records of the Dominions Office
Ministry of Defence, Combined Operations Records
Ministry of Economic Warfare, Special Operations Executive and successors:
Headquarters: Records
Ministry of Information: Files of Correspondence
Political Warfare Executive and Foreign Office, Political Intelligence Department Papers
Prime Minister's Office: Operational Correspondence and Papers
Records of Cabinet Committees, 1939 to 1945
War Office: Allied Forces, Mediterranean Theatre: Military Headquarters Papers

War Office: Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force: Military
 Headquarters Papers
 War Office: Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force and 21 Army
 Group: Microfilms

Parliamentary Archives (London):
 The Beaverbrook Papers

Queen's University Archives (Kingston):
 Charles Gavan Powers Papers

Canadian War Museum:
 Democracy at War: Canadian Newspapers and the Second World War, Online
 Archive, <http://www.civilization.ca/cwm/newspapers/intro_e.html>.

University of Victoria, Special Collections and Archives:
 George W. Pearkes Papers

Newspapers and Weekly Periodicals

<i>Calgary Herald</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
<i>La Canada</i>	<i>Ottawa Citizen</i>
<i>Daily Express</i> (London)	<i>Ottawa Journal</i>
<i>Daily Mirror</i> (London)	<i>La Presse</i>
<i>Le Devoir</i>	<i>Regina Leader-Post</i>
<i>Edmonton Bulletin</i>	<i>Saturday Night</i>
<i>Edmonton Journal</i>	<i>The Star</i> (London)
<i>Evening Standard</i> (London)	<i>Stratford Beacon Herald</i>
<i>Fort William Times- Journal</i>	<i>Sunday Express</i> (London)
<i>Globe and Mail</i>	<i>Time</i>
<i>Halifax Herald</i>	<i>Times</i>
<i>Hamilton Spectator</i>	<i>Toronto Star</i>
<i>Kingston Whig Standard</i>	<i>Toronto Telegram</i>
<i>Maclean's</i>	<i>Vancouver Province</i>
<i>Montreal Gazette</i>	<i>Vancouver Sun</i>
<i>Montreal Standard</i>	<i>Victoria Daily Times</i>
<i>Montreal Star</i>	<i>The Washington Post</i>
<i>National Post</i>	<i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>
<i>The News Chronicle</i> (London)	<i>World's Press News</i> (London)
<i>The Newspaper World</i>	

Books and Articles

- Ankersmit, F.R. *Historical Representation*. Stanford: Stanford University, 2001.
- Atkin, Ronald. *Dieppe 1942*. London: Macmillan, 1980.
- Balfour, Michael. *Propaganda in War 1939-1945*. London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1979.
- Balzer, Timothy. "In Case the Raid is Unsuccessful'... Selling Dieppe to Canadians," *Canadian Historical Review* 87.3 (September 2006): 409-430
- Balzer, Timothy. "Selling Disaster: How the Canadian Public Was Informed of Dieppe." M.A. Thesis, University of Victoria, 2004.
- Barton, Brandey. "Public Opinion and National Prestige: the Politics of Canadian Army Participation in the Invasion of Sicily," *Canadian Military History*, 15:2 (2006): 23-34.
- Bartov, Omer. *The Eastern Front, 1941-45: German Troops and the Barbarisation of Warfare*. New York: St. Martin's, 1986
- Beaugregard, Claude. *Guerre et Censure Au Canada 1939-1945*. Sillery, P.Q.: Septentrion, 1998.
- Bell, Ken. *The Way We Were*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988.
- Bercuson, David J. "The Valour and the Horror: A Historical Analysis." In *The Valour and The Horror Revisited*. David Bercuson and S.F. Wise, Eds. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994: 31-60.
- Bissel, Claude. *The Imperial Canadian: Vincent Massey in Office*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986.
- Bizimana, Aimé-Jules. *De Marcel Ouimet À René Lévesque: Les Correspondents De Guerre Canadiens-Français Durant La Deuxième Guerre Mondiale*. Montreal: VLB Éditeur, 2007.
- Bradley, Omar. *A Soldier's Story*. New York: Random House, 1951 (rpt. 1999).
- Broadfoot, Barry. *Six War Years*. Don Mills, Ontario: Paperjacks, 1974.
- Brennan, Patrick H. *Reporting the Nation's Business: Press-Government Relations during the Liberal years, 1935-1957*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.

- Brode, Patrick. *Casual Slaughters and Accidental Judgments: Canadian War Crimes Prosecutions*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.
- Calvocoressi, Peter, Guy Wint, and John Pritchard. *The Penguin History of the Second World War*. London: Penguin, 1999.
- Carroll, Jock. *The Life and Times of Greg Clark*. Doubleday: Toronto, 1981.
- Chambers, Deborah, Linda Steiner, and Carole Fleming. *Women and Journalism*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Chandler, Alfred, Ed. *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower Vol. III*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1970.
- Charlton, Peter. *The Unnecessary War: Island Campaigns of the South-West Pacific*. Melbourne: Macmillan, 1983.
- Chomsky, Noam. *Media Control*. New York: Seven Stories, 2002.
- Clark, Gerald. *No Mud on the Backseat: Memoirs of a Reporter*. Montreal: Robert Davies, 1995.
- Collier, Richard. *The Warcos*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989.
- Comeau, Paul André. Claude Beauregard, and Edwidge Munn. *La Démocratie en Veileuse: Rapport sur la Censure*. Montreal: Éditions Quebec/Amérique, 1995.
- Cook, Tim. *Clio's Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006.
- Cook, Tim. "The Politics of Surrender: Canadian Soldiers and the Killing of Prisoners in the Great War," *Journal of Military History* 70 (July 2006): 637-66.
- Copp, Terry. *Fields of Fire: The Canadians in Normandy*. Toronto: University of Toronto, Press, 2003.
- Crook, Timothy. *International Radio Journalism, History, Theory, and Practise*. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Dadge, David. *The War in Iraq and Why the Media Failed Us*. London: Praeger, 2006.
- Dancocks, Daniel. *The D-Day Dodgers, The Canadians in Italy 1943-1945*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991.

- Dawson, R. Gregor. *The Conscription Crisis of 1944*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961.
- Desmond, Robert W. *Tides of War: World News Reporting 1931-1945*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1984.
- D'Este, Carlo. *Bitter Victory*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1988.
- Donoghue, Jack. *The Edge of War*. Calgary: Detselig, 1988.
- Douglas, Paul. *A Thoroughly Canadian General*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007.
- Ellul, Jacques. *Propaganda*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965.
- English, Alan D. *The Cream of the Crop: Canadian Aircrew 1939-1945*. Montreal : McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996.
- English, John A. *Failure in the High Command: The Canadian Army and the Normandy Campaign*. Ottawa: Golden Dog, 1995.
- Evans, Gary. *John Grierson and the National Film Board: The Politics of Wartime Propaganda*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984.
- Foster, Tony. *Meeting of the Generals*. Toronto: Methuen, 1986.
- Fussell, Paul. *Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War*. London: Oxford, 1989.
- Gellhorn, Martha. *The Face of War*. New York: Atlantic Monthly, 1994.
- German, Daniel. "Press Censorship and the Terrace Mutiny: A Case Study in Second World War Information Management," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 31:4 (Winter 1996): 124-142.
- Greenhouse, Brereton et al. *The Crucible of War, 1939-1945: The Official History of the Royal Canadian Air Force Vol. III*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.
- Graham, Dominick. *The Price of Command*. Toronto, Stoddard, 1993.
- Graham, Howard. *Citizen and Soldier*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987.
- Granatstein, J.L. and J.M. Hitsman. *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada*. Toronto: Oxford, 1977.
- Granatstein, J.L. *Canada's Army*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.

- Granatstein J.L. *Canada's War the Politics of the Mackenzie King Government 1939-1945*. Toronto: Oxford, 1975.
- Hackett, Robert A. and Yuehzi Zhao, *Sustaining Democracy: Journalism and the Politics of Objectivity* (Toronto: Garamond, 1998).
- Hallin, Daniel C. *The Uncensored War: the Media and Vietnam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Hart, Stephen. "Indoctrinated Nazi Teenage Warriors: The Fanaticism of the 12th SS Panzer Division, *Hitlerjugend* in Normandy, 1944." In *Fanaticism and Combat in the Modern Age*, Matthew Hughes and Gaynor Johnson, Eds. New York: Frank Cass, 2005.
- Henry, Frances and Carol Tator. *Discourses of Domination: Racial Bias in the Canadian English-Language Press*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.
- Henry, Hugh. "A Reappraisal of the Dieppe Raid, 19 August 1942: Planning, Intelligence and Execution." Ph.D. Thesis: Cambridge University, 1996.
- Henshaw, Peter. "The Dieppe Raid: A Product of Misplaced Canadian Nationalism?" *Canadian Historical Review* 77, 2 (1996): 250-66.
- Herman, Edward S. and Noam Chomsky. *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. New York: Pantheon, 1988.
- Horner, David. *Blamey; The Commander in Chief*. St. Leonards, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1998.
- Horner, David. "MacArthur: An Australian Perspective." In *MacArthur and the American Century*. William M. Leary, Ed. Lincoln: U. of Nebraska Press, 2003: 109-143.
- Howard, Michael. *British Intelligence in the Second World War Vol. 5*. Cambridge: Cambridge, 1990.
- Hull, Dana. "The War in Iraq: A Reporter's Observations." In *War, Media and Propaganda: A Global Perspective*. Yahya R. Kamalipour and Nancy Snow Eds. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004, 131-7.
- Jowett, Garth S. and Victoria O'Donnell. *Propaganda and Persuasion*. London: Sage, 1986.
- Keegan John. *The Face of Battle*. New York: Vintage, 1977.

- Keshen, Jeff, "All the News that was Fit to Print; Ernest J Chambers and Information Control in Canada, 1914-19," *Canadian Historical Review* 73, 3, 1992: 315-345.
- Keshen, Jeffrey A. *Propaganda and Censorship during Canada's Great War*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1996.
- Keshen, Jeffery A. *Sinners Saints and Soldiers*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004.
- Kesterton, W.H. *A History of Journalism in Canada*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967.
- Knightley, Phillip. *The First Casualty*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2002.
- Lackenbauer, P. Whitney. "Kurt Meyer, 12th SS Panzer Division, and the Murder of Canadian Prisoners of War in Germany: An Historical and Historiographical Approach," *Gateway* 3 (2003): < <http://grad.usask.ca/gateway/archive9.html>> (accessed 5 Mar. 2008).
- Lang, Marjory Louise. *Women Who Made the News: Female Journalists in Canada 1880-1945*. Toronto: McGill-Queens University Press, 1999.
- Larson, Ronald Paul. "Anatomy of a Bonding: An Embedded Reporter's Account of the Bonding Process with the Soldiers." In *War, Media and Propaganda: A Global Perspective*. Yahya R. Kamalipour and Nancy Snow Eds. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004, 125-130.
- Long, Gavin. *The Final Campaigns*. Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1963.
- Long, Gavin. *MacArthur as Military Commander*. Conshohocken PA: Combined Publishing, 1968
- Lynch, Charles. *You Can't Print That, Memoirs of a Political Voyeur*. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1983.
- McAndrew, Bill. "The Canadians on Verrières Ridge: a Historiographical Survey." In *The Valour and The Horror Revisited*. David Bercuson and S.F. Wise, Eds. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994: 128-152.
- MacFarlane, Richard. *Canada's Newspaper Legend, The Story of J. Douglas MacFarlane*. Toronto: ECW Press, 2000.
- McKay Robert. *Half the Battle: Civilian Morale in Britain during the Second World War*. Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2005.
- McKee, Alexander. *Caen the Anvil of Victory*. London, Souvenir, 1964.

- McKenna, Brian and Terrence. "Response to the CBC Ombudsman Report, November 10, 1992 Galafilm Inc." In *The Valour and The Horror Revisited*. David Bercuson and S.F. Wise, Eds. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 1994: 73-88.
- McLaine, Ian. *Ministry of Morale*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979.
- Madsen, Chris. *Another Kind of Justice: Canadian Military Law From Confederation to Somalia*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999.
- Malone, Dick. *Missing From the Record*. Toronto: Collins, 1946.
- Malone, Richard S. *A Portrait of War*. Toronto: Collins, 1983.
- Malone, Richard S. *World in Flames: A Portrait of War Part Two*. Toronto: Collins, 1984.
- Massey, Vincent. *What's Past is Prologue: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Vincent Massey*. London: Macmillan, 1963.
- Margolian, Howard. *Conduct Unbecoming: The Story of the Murder of Canadian Prisoners of War in Normandy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.
- Martin, Robert and G. Stewart Adam. *A Sourcebook of Canadian Media Law*. Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1994.
- Matthews, Joseph J. *Reporting the Wars*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957.
- Middleton, Drew. *Where Has Last July Gone? Memoirs*. New York: New York Times Books, 1973.
- Miljan, Lydia and Barry Cooper. *Hidden Agendas: How Journalists Influence the News*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003.
- Montgomery, Viscount of Alamein. *Memoirs*. London: Collins, 1958.
- Mordal, Jacques. *Dieppe the Dawn of Decision*. Toronto: Ryerson, 1962.
- Morton, Desmond. *A Military History of Canada*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1999.
- Mowat, Farley. *And No Birds Sang*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979.
- Mowat, Farley. *The Regiment*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1955, Rpt. 1973.

- Mountbatten, Earl of Burma, "Operation Jubilee: The Place of the Dieppe Raid in History," *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution for Defence Studies* 119, 1 (1974): 25-30.
- Munro, Ross. *Gauntlet to Overlord*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1946 (rpt. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1971).
- Munro, Ross. *The Red Patch in Sicily*. Toronto: CP, 1943.
- Nichols, M.E. *CP the Story of the Canadian Press*. Toronto: Ryerson, 1948.
- Nicholson G.W. *The Canadians in Italy 1943-1945*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1956.
- O'Regan, Brian. *Camera Commandos and Reminiscences of D-Day Normandy*. Ottawa: James O'Regan, 2007.
- Olser, Andrew. "Royal Commissions, Journalism, and Communication" in "The Beginnings of Communication Studies in Canada: Remembering and Narrating the Past," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 25, 1 (Summer 2000), <<http://www.cjc-online.ca/viewarticle.php?id=562&layout=html>> (accessed 22 Jan. 2008).
- Orwell, George. *My Country Right or Left 1940-1943: The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus Eds. Juffrey, New Hampshire: David R. Gordie, 1968, rpt. 2000.
- Paret, Peter. "The New Military History," *Parameters*, 3 (Autumn 1991): 10-18.
- Pawley, A.E. *Broadcast from the Front: Canadian Overseas Radio in the Second World War*. Toronto: Hakkert, 1975.
- Pearson, Lester B. *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson Vol. I*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972.
- Pierson, Ruth Roach. *They're Still Women After All: The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986.
- Pickersgill, J.W. *The Mackenzie King Record, Vol. I*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960.
- Pogue, Forrest C. *The Supreme Command*. Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1954.
- Pope, Maurice. *Soldiers and Politicians*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962.

- Powell, George. *A Compact Record of the Canadian Press War Correspondents' Association and the Canadian War Correspondents Association 1953-1995*. Ottawa: Canadian War Correspondent's Association, 1994.
- Purcell, Gillis. "Wartime Press Censorship in Canada." MA Thesis: University of Toronto, 1946.
- Reyburn, Wallace. *Rehearsal for Invasion*. London: George G. Harrap, 1943.
- Reyburn, Wallace. *Some of It was Fun*. Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1949.
- Reynolds, Quentin. *Dress Rehearsal: The Story of Dieppe*. Garden City: Blue Ribbon, 1943.
- Richard, Béatrice. *La Mémoire De Dieppe: Radioscopie D' Un Mythe*. Montréal, VLB Éditeur, 2002.
- Robinson, Daniel J. *The Measure of Democracy: Polling Market Research and Public Life*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.
- Robertson, Terrence. *The Shame and the Glory: Dieppe*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1962.
- Roeder George H. Jr. *The Censored War: American Visual Experience During World War Two*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Rowland Barry D. and J. Douglas MacFarlane. *The Maple Leaf Forever: The Story of Canada's Foremost Armed Forces Newspapers*. Toronto: Natural Heritage/Natural History, 1987.
- Roy, Reginald H. *For Conspicuous Bravery: A Biography of Major General George R. Pearkes V.C., Through Two World Wars*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1977.
- Ryan, Cornelius. *The Longest Day*. Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett, 1962.
- Sheffield, R. Scott. *The Red Man's On The Warpath: The Image Of The "Indian" And The Second World War*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004.
- Schudson, Michael. *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers*. New York: Basic Books, 1978.
- Schudson, Michael. "The Sociology of News Production," *Media Culture and Society*, 11, (1989): 263-282/
- SHAEF. *A History of Field Press Censorship in World War II*. Paramus, N.J.: 201st Field Press Censorship Organization, n.d.

- Shapiro, L.S.B. *They Left the Back Door Open*. Toronto: Ryerson, 1944.
- Snow, Nancy and Yahya R. Kamalipour, Eds., *War Media and Propaganda: a Global Perspective*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004.
- Sorel, Nancy Cardwell. *The Women Who Wrote the War*. New York: Harper Collins. 2000.
- Stacey, C.P. *A Date With History*. Ottawa: Deneau, 1982.
- Stacey, C.P. *Arms, Men and Governments: the War Policies of Canada 1939-1945*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970.
- Stacey, C.P. *Canada and the Age of Conflict, Vol. 2 1921-1948, The Mackenzie King Era*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981.
- Stacey, C.P. and Barbara M. Wilson. *The Half Million: The Canadians in Britain, 1939-1946*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.
- Stacey, C.P. "Dieppe," *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution for Defence Studies* 119, 4 (1974), 97.
- Stacey, C.P. *History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War: Six Years of War*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1955.
- Stacey, C.P. *History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War: The Victory Campaign*. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1960.
- Steele, Richard W. "News of the Good War: World War II News Management," *Journalism Quarterly*, 62 (Winter 1985): 707-716.
- Stevenson, Michael J. *Canada's Greatest Wartime Muddle: National Selective Service and the Mobilization of Human Resources during World War II*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001.
- Stursberg, Peter. *Journey into Victory*. London: George G. Harrap, 1944.
- Stursberg, Peter. *The Sound of War*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.
- Sweetenham, John. *McNaughton Vol. 2*. Toronto: Ryerson, 1969.
- Taylor, A.J.P. *Beaverbrook*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972.
- Thompson, Eric. "Canadian Warcoms in World War II: Professionalism, Patriotism and Propaganda," *Mosaic* 23(Summer 1990): 55-72.

- Thompson, George P. *Blue Pencil Admiral*. London: Simpson, Low and Marston, 1947.
- Torrey-Parlicki, Prue. *Somewhere in Asia: War, Journalism and Australia's Neighbours*. Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2000.
- Vance, Jonathan F. *Objects of Concern*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994.
- Villa, Brian and Peter Henshaw. "The Dieppe Raid Debate" *Canadian Historical Review* 79, 2 (1998): 304-315.
- Villa, Brian. *Unauthorized Action: Mountbatten and the Dieppe Raid*. Toronto: Oxford, 1989.
- Vincent, Carl. *No Reason Why*. Stittsville: Canada's Wings, 1981.
- Ward, Stephen J.A. *The Invention of Journalistic Ethics: The Path to Objectivity and Beyond*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004.
- Weigley, Russell F. *Eisenhower's Lieutenants*. Indianapolis: Indiana University, 1981.
- Whyte, King. *Letters Home 1944-1946*. Hamilton: Seraphim Editions, 2007.
- Williams, Francis. *Press Parliament and People*. London: William Heinemann, 1946.
- Winkler, Alan M. *The Politics of Propaganda: The Office of War Information 1942-1945*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978.
- Wise, S.F. "Letter to the Globe and Mail and the Montreal Gazette, 16 Nov. 1992. In *The Valour and The Horror Revisited*. David Bercuson and S.F. Wise, Eds. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 1994: 89-91.
- Young, William R. "Making the Truth Graphic: The Canadian Government's Home Front Information Structure and Programmes during World War II." PhD Dissertation, UBC, 1978.
- Young, William R. "Academics and Social Scientists versus the Press: The Policies of the Wartime Information Board 1939-1945," *Historical Papers* (Canadian Historical Association), (1978): 217-239.

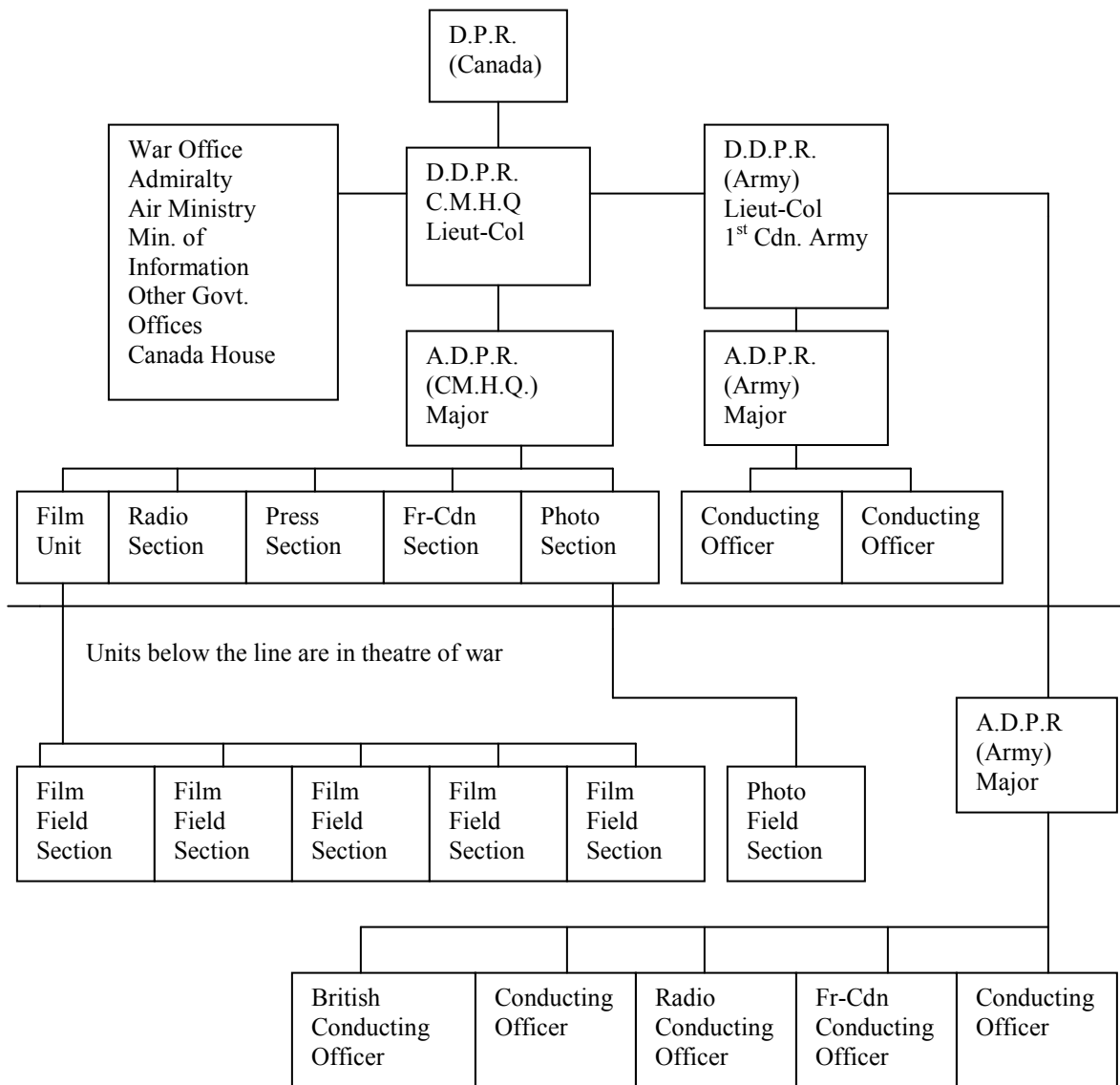
Films

The Longest Day. Ken Annakin, Andrew Marton and Bernhard Wicki, Dirs. Twentieth Century Fox, 1962.

Shooters, James O'Regan, Dir., www.jamesoregan.com and Department of National Defence, 2004.

Saving Private Ryan, Stephen Spielberg, Dir. Amblin Entertainment, 1998.

The Valour and the Horror: In Desperate Battle. Dir. Brian McKenna. Galafilm, 1992.

Appendix One: Public Relations Service Overseas War Establishment March 1943¹

Notes:

(1) Deployment of Conducting Officers as shown above is based on the following assumptions:

¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 12381, 4/PR GEN/1, Memorandum – Public Relations Service (Overseas), Proposed Establishment, 3 Feb. 1943. When Clifford Wallace deployed to the Mediterranean he was referred to as the ADPR, as was his replacement Malone. Thus a Canadian Army DDPR existed for only a few months, Wallace and Malone's second in commands were DADPRs rather than ADPRs.

- (a) a Corps of three Divisions is on active service
 - (b) a Corps of two Divisions remains in Reserve in U.K.
 - (c) Headquarters of First Canadian Army is not G.H.Q.
- (2) If D.D.P.R. (army) chooses to be in the theatre of war when active operations begin he would appear with formations below the dotted line. In his absence he would delegate a deputy to represent him at Army HQ in the Britain.
- (3) All C.M.H.Q. formations available for overseas operations are shown below the line.
(all spelling and capitalization in original)

Appendix Two: Captain M.D. Spencer's Poem Written after the Shaving of Bill Boss'
Beard¹

Hail the DADPR²
 Whose name is famed both near and far,
 And hear the tale about Bill Boss,
 Whose Beard is now a total loss:
 It seems a subtle plan was made
 Over the toast and marmalade
 By Major M and Colonel G.³
 From this red growth the Corps to free.
 They got a bottle of cognac fine
 (10 bucks a bottle, I opine)
 Then they went to work to get Bill high,
 Mac, the Colonel, Spencer and Nye.
 They did it as quickly as you could wish
 By playing a game called Nishy-Nish.
 I won't explain how this is done,
 But Bill had three drinks while the rest had one;
 And though he has a good strong head,
 In three short hours he was put to bed.
 And, just before he fell asleep,
 He said this promise I will keep:
 "If you leave my beard alone tonight,
 I'll shave it myself in the morning light."
 And, though Major Mac had the scissors out,
 He put them back and turned about.
 Came the dawn. Now think of Bill.

¹ LAC, RG 24, Vol. 16641, War Diary No. 2 Public Relations Group Jan 1945; Unnumbered Appendix.

² Deputy Assistant Director of Public Relations

³ Major McClellan and Lieutenant Colonel Gilchrist

His stomach reeled. He felt so ill.
His only thought escape to make,
Before the Major should awake.
Alas poor beard, it had no chance,
No more would it Bill's face enhance:
For somebody saw him sneaking away;
Thinking that none would say him nay.
So they brought him up to the Major's room,
A man who knew full well his doom.
He argued and wrangled for half an hour,
Then he fought and struggled with all his power,
But in end the scissors snipped,
And the tangled growth was soon short-clipped.
A razor and soap completed the job;
Then, with an inarticulate sob,
He looked in a mirror, and nought was seen
Where his pride and glory once had been.
And the story's moral seems to be:
Let's thank God that the press is free.
"But from this day on all beards I bar"
--- Signed the DADPR