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The Policy Governing the Finding and Selection  
of Officers for the C.A.S.F. (later C.A.(A))

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28 Jun 50

The Policy Governing the Finding and Selection  
of Officers for the C.A.S.F. (later C.A.(A))

1. The policy which governed the finding of officers for the C.A.S.F. is dealt with in considerable detail in the Preliminary Narrative (Canada), Chapter Four, paras 127 to 133, Chapter Fourteen, paras 72 to 76, 81 to 90 and 94 to 100, and Historical Section, C.M.H.Q. Report No. 156 in its entirety. However, it is considered that four aspects require further expansion. These are: the function of R.M.C. as a training school for cadets, after the outbreak of war in September 1939; the decision to find (with certain defined exceptions) all officers from the ranks; the extent to which officers came from the ranks throughout the period 1939 to 1946; and the part played by the Reserve Army in supplying officers for the active force during the same period. In addition, it has been found necessary to write a complete account of the various methods of selection of officers which were employed in Canada from 1939 to 1946.

WARTIME CADET TRAINING AT R.M.C.

2. In September 1939 R.M.C. was still organized on its peacetime basis of approximately 200 cadets divided into four classes by years, the first class being the senior one, and due to graduate in June 1940. Provision had already been made for the immediate employment of the first and second classes. In Mobilization Instructions for the Canadian Militia 1937, para 41, it stated that these classes could be drawn upon to fill vacancies in the ranks of mobilized Permanent Force units (Mob Instrs for the Cdn Militia, 1937, Part II, para 41(d)). The A.G. wrote to the Comd R.M.C. on 26 Sep 39, giving the necessary instructions to put this policy into effect. He stated that the first class would be offered commissions and leave the college immediately, while the second class would receive the same option at the Christmas break. The third and fourth classes were to remain at the College until the end of the normal year and then would be considered eligible for appointment. (H.Q.C. 1-1-39, vol 8: letter A.G. to Comd R.M.C., 26 Sep 39)

3. Accordingly, on 14 Oct 39 the first class, 44 in number, was struck off strength R.M.C. and proceeded to various units of the C.A.S.F. as lieutenants. (W.D., R.M.C., 14 Oct 39). The second class now became the first class, as such its members were granted commissions and left the College on 20 Dec 39 (*ibid*, 20 Dec 39). This left at R.M.C. only two classes, both of which were to graduate in June 1940. Due to a change in policy, however, only one of these completed its training at that time. At a meeting of the Defence Council on 17 Apr 40, the Chief of the General Staff announced that the present course at R.M.C. would be of two years duration, and also that 100 new candidates would be admitted in September 1940. ((H.S.)112.1(D49), C.G.S. Office Files; Minutes of Defence Council Meetings, vol II, Minutes of Meeting 17 Apr 40)

4. As planned, approximately 40 cadets who graduated on 21 Jun 40 were commissioned in the C.A.S.F. and in September 100 new recruits reported to the College. (W.D., R.M.C., 2 Jun

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and 2 Sep 40) These 100 recruits were destined to be the last cadets taken into R.M.C. during the war, for the Adjutant-General wrote on 21 Dec 40 that: "No more classes of gentlemen cadets will be entered into the Royal Military College until the cessation of hostilities. ((H.S.) 4-6-0, H.Q. 74-116-1 (Org M.R.2): A.G. circular letter, 21 Dec 40). The previous decision to place the course at R.M.C. on a two year basis was to remain in force. (Ibid). As a result, graduations in June 1941 and July 1942 completed the wartime training of cadets at R.M.C. (W.D., R.M.C., June 1941 and July 1942)

#### COMMISSIONING OF OFFICERS FROM THE RANKS

5. On 15 Nov 40 the plan of commissioning all future officers from serving ranks in the Canadian Army was announced in the House of Commons by the Minister of National Defence. Mr Ralston said:

One of the most important questions we have had to consider is how the junior officers for our armies are to be selected and trained. We must bear the following points in mind:

- (a) We face a long war and must use our man-power resources to the best advantage.
- (b) We shall meet a highly trained and efficient enemy and must therefore insist that all officers attain a high standard of leadership. I underline the word "leadership".

We have reviewed the qualifications for officers, which have varied considerably, depending on different units and formations. We have determined on measures which will make for more uniformity, and which, we believe, will improve the standard of officer qualification.

Included in these measures is the decision that for the future every candidate for a commission in the Canadian Army must first pass through the ranks. Then, after a certain amount of training in the ranks, if their commanding officer finds them to have the required standing, they will be given the status of officer cadets and will be trained for their commissions at officer training centres, active or reserve. The system has been based on a study of the experiences of the last war and on the present practice in the British Army.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Would the minister tell us what the practice was up to the time when this decision was made?

Mr. RALSTON: I say this to my hon. friend seriously, I would have to recite to him at least one page and a half of different regulations in order to answer that question. The regulations were three ways in the non-permanent active militia, and two ways in the Canadian active service force and I would not attempt to give the details from memory. But one thing that stuck out was the one-day examination, which I felt was certainly

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not satisfactory, and the other thing that stuck out was that some people, it seemed to me, got in with very little training. The idea here has been to adopt the system of training in the ranks first, and, second, training at a training centre, and not just training at headquarters.

(Debates House of Commons, 1941, vol 1, pp 145 and 146)

6. The working out of the details of this new policy was properly left to the Army authorities. On 5 Mar 41 the C.G.S. presented to the Minister his recommendations for bringing it into effect and received his approval. (W.D., D.M.T., 5 Mar 41) These recommendations, which were put before a meeting of the Defence Council in March, provided that all commissions, with certain defined exceptions, would come from the ranks after 1 Apr 41. ((H.S.) 112.1 (D49), Progress Report No. 14A, Cdn Army, 13 Mar 41). The complete story of the developments which led up to this change in policy has been difficult to find. The first mention of it seems to be a memorandum to the D.M.T. & S.D. from Brigadier K. Stuart, D.S.O., M.C. (then D.C.G.S.), who wrote on 10 Aug 40:

I wonder whether the time has not been reached when all commissions should be granted only through the ranks. This to apply both to C.A.S.F. and to N.P.A.M. By following such a practice, we would be coming into line with the Air Force in Canada, and with the army in the United Kingdom.

(H.Q. 54-27-69-2, vol 1: D.C.G.S. to D.M.T. & S.D., 10 Aug 40)

The Minutes of the Chiefs of Staff Committee Meetings reveal nothing beyond the announcement of the new policy. The Minutes of the Defence Council and Army Council Meetings also make no further mention of it. The fact that the Minister laid down his policy in the House of Commons before the details had been worked out indicates that much of the initiative had come from him. That he was largely influenced by the success of a similar plan in the First World War, and prior British adoption of it in the Second World War, is obvious. A statement from the Department of National Defence, released on 19 Jun, also confirms this view. ((H.S.) 5-0-28: Press Release No. 713, 19 Jun 41)

7. The time required to be spent in the ranks was laid down as four months for active units and one year, or the 30 days annual training period, for reserve units. (Progress Report No. 14A, op cit) The exceptions referred to above were designed to look after the filling of officer vacancies in certain specialist classes. They applied to those in possession of the following qualifications: degrees in Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Mining, Forestry or Ceramic Engineering, Medical or Dental degrees, Chartered Accountants, and certain other specialist training that would make the candidate suitable for appointment to the R.C.E., J.A.G's Branch, R.C.A.P.C., R.C.O.C., or Chaplain Service. (Canadian Army Trg Pamphlet No. 8, 1941, para 5 (a) to (e)) As the bulk of the army is non-specialist, however, the strict application of this policy, although leaving a fairly wide field for selection from other sources than the ranks, would ensure that a very large majority of commissions would come from serving other ranks.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH OFFICERS CAME FROM THE RANKS

8. The third aspect under consideration, the extent to which officers of the C.A.S.F. were commissioned from the ranks, will now be dealt with. Figures showing commissions granted from both sources, month by month throughout the war, have been obtained from War Service Records of the Department of Veterans' Affairs. These figures show a total of 42,528 commissions granted during the period 1939-46. Of these, 22,251 were direct and 20,273 were from the ranks. Thus, the number of officers appointed from the ranks approached 50 percent of the total. From 1 Apr 41 to the end of the war 10,579 direct commissions were granted, while, during the same period, 19,321 officers came from the ranks. These figures seem to indicate that the exceptions mentioned above accounted for approximately one third of all the appointments made after 1 Apr 41. ((H.S.) 133.063(D4): Statistics - Commissions by Month and Year of Appt, 1939-46, obtained from D.V.A., 14 Oct 49)

9. Since it appears unlikely that commissioning of specialists alone would amount to one third of the total after 1 Apr 41, it is necessary to ascertain how completely the new policy was put into force. It must be remembered that units of the N.P.A.M. were still being mobilized after April 1941 and that they were officered to a large extent by their own officers, who were granted active commissions, all of which are considered direct appointments. A special examining board\* was set up in September 1941 for the express purpose of reporting upon such appointments. ((H.S.) 5-7-0-2: H.Q. 54-27-20-360 (Pers): A.G. Circular letter, 22 Sep 41)

10. A further analysis of the figures mentioned in para 8 show that the granting of direct commissions reached its maximum (6148) in 1940, being reduced in 1941 to 5256 and in 1942 to 4581. In 1943 and the remaining years of the war there was a much sharper decline: 1742 in 1943, 474 in 1944 and 190 in 1945. In the meantime, the number of other ranks appointed to commissions steadily increased, reaching 1553 in 1941. This more than tripled in 1942 and rose to a peak of 8533 in 1943, the same year in which direct commissions began to drop sharply. ((H.S.) 133.063 (D4): op cit) It would appear then, that for the first two years after April 1941 considerable numbers of direct commissions, other than the exceptions mentioned in para 7, were granted.

C.A.S.F. OFFICERS FROM THE RESERVE ARMY

11. It has been impossible to find, at this time, any figures which would indicate the numbers of men who rose from the ranks within the Reserve Army, and subsequently were commissioned in the Active Army. The Director of War Service Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs states that no compilation of statistics on service previous to that in the Active Army has been undertaken and that no plans for such a task have yet been laid.

12. In the War Diary of the Director General of the Reserve Army only general statements regarding the role of the Reserve Army in supplying a flow of recruits to the Active Army are of special interest. The D.G.R.A., Maj-Gen B.W. Browne, D.S.O., M.C., stated in a speech to the Empire Club in Toronto on 18 Mar 43:

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\* This board is described in paras 22 to 24 of this report.

A secondary task is to train for possible subsequent service with the active force, officers who are under age or are in a business category or group not yet required at the time for the Active Army...the Reserve Army has done commendable work in providing new recruits for the Active Army. In the period April 1 to December 31, 1942, 8712 men are known officially to have entered the Active Force from Reserve Units.

(W.D., D.G.R.A., copy of speech Maj-Gen Browne to Empire Club, Toronto, 18 Mar 43)

#### OFFICER SELECTION, SEPTEMBER 1939 TO SEPTEMBER 1942

13. One of the outstanding problems that confronted the Department of National Defence at the outbreak of war in 1939 was the provision of officers for the rapidly-expanding armed forces of Canada. Mobilization Instructions 1937 detailed the available sources from which such Officers might be drawn, but said nothing about the methods of their selection. This was clarified by instructions from the Minister of National Defence (then N. McL. Rogers) in a letter to the C.G.S. dated 3 Oct 39 which stated:

The Minister has ruled that the granting of commissions and promotions will be determined by the proper service authorities on the basis of merit alone, and that he will make no personal recommendations on these matters. Enlisted men are entitled to feel that merit will open a clear path of promotion to commissioned rank which would not be the case if commissions were granted on the basis of personal or political influence.

Applications for commissions should be made in the first instance to Officers Commanding units of the Service concerned, or to the Officer Commanding the District in which the applicant resides. Such applications will be dealt with solely on their merits. Attempts to urge favourable consideration of any application by the use of outside influence are forbidden, and, if resorted to, will be regarded as an admission on the part of the applicant that the case is not good on its merits. There must be no political or personal bias of any kind.

(H.C.C. 301-3-3, vol 2: Minister of National Defence to C.G.S., 3 Oct 39)

It is evident from this letter that recommendations for commissions were to originate with the applicant's commanding officer or the D.O.C. of the district concerned. These instructions were embodied in a circular letter from the A.G. on 9 Oct 39 and were also subject of a routine order published 18 Oct 39 (*ibid*, A.G.'s Letter No. 42, 9 Oct 39, and C.A.R.O. No. 70, 18 Oct 39)

14. C.A.R.O. No. 379, dated 27 Mar 40, laid down the procedure to be adopted in choosing officers from serving other ranks of the C.A.S.F. Para 2 reads as follows:

Upon selection made by Commanding Officers receiving required approval of higher authority, the soldiers so recommended will be granted temporary commissions as 2nd Lieutenants, Canadian Militia, and provisional

commissioned rank as 2nd Lieutenants, in their respective units, C.A.S.F., pending qualification on attendance at an appropriate training centre. On obtaining required qualification and if satisfactorily reported upon, appointment C.A.S.F. will be confirmed in rank of Lieutenant. If failing to qualify, they will relinquish appointment Canadian Militia and C.A.S.F. and resume status as soldiers, C.A.S.F., in their respective units, or other suitable units, if they so elect.

(C.A.R.O. No. 379, para 2, 27 Mar 40)

This "higher authority" was not specified at the time, but it is presumed that it meant the D.O.C.

15. The next step was the setting up of selection committees, or boards, at N.D.H.Q. and in the Military Districts.\* In Sep 40, two committees were established at N.D.H.Q. They were known as the Senior Selection Committee and the Junior Selection Committee, and were concerned with appointments to command and staff.\*\*

16. There was evidently some concern on the part of the C.G.S. during 1940 regarding selection of officers. In consequence, C.A.R.O. No. 70 was republished as No. 700 on 28 Sep and in Militia Orders as No. 198 on 25 Sep (C.A.R.O. No. 700, 28 Sep 40 and Militia Order No. 198, 25 Sep 40). In addition, he directed, with the Minister's approval, that the A.G. send out a circular letter clarifying and further emphasizing the need for careful selection of officers. This letter reiterated that the primary basis for nomination would, in all cases, be military merit and qualifications. D.O's.C. were instructed to prepare and keep lists of persons within their districts who might be likely to possess the necessary training, experience and characteristics required for a military post. They were also directed to set up selection committees along the lines of those at N.D.H.Q., if they had not already done so. (H.Q.C. 301-3-3: vol 2, A.G. Circular Letter Org 1(b), 14 Oct 40) From the replies to this letter, it appears that most of the District Selection Committees dated from this time (ibid: replies to A.G. Letter Org 1(b), 14 Oct 40)

17. The rapid expansion of the C.A.S.F. in 1940-41 raised the problem of finding officers in large numbers (see Preliminary Narrative (Overseas) Chap 7, para 13). Coupled with the decision to take all officers from the ranks, this made it imperative to prepare and publish additional information on

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\* Apparently, the organization of district committees had been left up to the discretion of D.Os.C. (H.Q.C. 301-3-3, vol 2: Memo, C.G.S. to A.G., 30 Sep 40)

\*\* The Senior Selection Committee had the C.G.S. as chairman and the A.G., Q.M.G. and M.G.O. as members. It dealt with appointments to senior commands and staff, and made its recommendations for such appointments to the Minister of National Defence. The Junior Committee had the D.S.D. as chairman with the D.M.T., D. Org and D. Pers as members. It made recommendations for regimental and battalion command level and junior staff appointments. (H.Q.C. 301-3-3, vol 2: Memorandum C.G.S. to A.G. 30 Sep 40)



officer selection procedure. Consequently, the A.G. sent out a circular letter on 18 Apr 41 in which he stated that a new pamphlet entitled "Notes on Recommendations for Commissions in the Canadian Army" would be issued in the near future. In the meantime, he pointed out that there would be no change in methods. (H.Q. 54-27-69-2, vol 1: A.G. Circular Letter, 18 Apr 41)

18. In answer to a letter from M.D. No. 5, the A.G. on 28 May 41 laid down the procedure to be followed in making recommendations for commissions. He stated that units would establish unit selection boards headed by the C.O., and that these boards would make the initial selection. The names of men so chosen would then be forwarded to the D.O.C., or Formation Commander concerned, who would have the final voice in the matter. (H.Q. 54-27-69-2, vol 1: A.G. to D.O.C. M.D. 5, 28 May 41) This letter merely clarified the procedure outlined by C.A.R.O. No. 379 (see para 14).

19. In view of the above, it appears that the District Selection Committees had no part in selecting officers for commissions but dealt only with appointments to command and staff, as did the N.D.H.Q. Committees. However, there is evidence to show that at least the D.O.C. M.D. 12 did use the District Selection Committee for interviewing prospective officers. (Ibid: Letter D.O.C. M.D. No. 12 to D.N.D., 8 Jul 41)

20. On 27 Jul 41 the A.G. wrote concerning the methods of selection detailed by C.A.R.O. No. 379 (para 18), and emphasized that great care was to be exercised in choosing officers (ibid, A.G. Circular letter, 27 Jun 41). On 9 Aug he again referred to officers' selection and expressed some dissatisfaction with the results being obtained in the districts. (H.Q.C. 301-3-3, vol 2: A.G. Circular Letter, 9 Aug 41)

21. The notes on recommendation for commissions were issued on 1 Aug under the title "Instructions Concerning Recommendations for Commissions in the Canadian Army (Canada)". There was no change in the persons empowered to make selections. C.Os. of units were instructed to set up unit boards, and recommendations were to be sent forward to the D.O.C. or Formation Commander concerned. Very careful consideration of personal qualities, ability and knowledge of all candidates was strongly urged. Candidates on acceptance were to be divided into two classes; those exempted from service in the ranks (see para 7), would be granted temporary commissions, while all others would become cadets. (H.Q. 54-27-69-2, vol 2: A.G. Circular Letter, 14 Aug 41, and copy of Instrs Concerning Recommendations for Commissions in the Cdn Army (Canada)) This, then, was the selection procedure in use until special boards were set up in September 1942.

22. In September 1941 the Army authorities in Ottawa became concerned with the undue length of time required to bring newly mobilized units up to a satisfactory state of efficiency. It was felt that the cause of delay was the appointment of unqualified officers to such units. This was necessarily a reflection on the District Committees which recommended their appointments. Therefore, to ascertain whether or not the above-mentioned officers were properly trained and suitable, an order setting up Officers Examining Boards was issued by the A.G. on 22 Sep 41.

23. There were three of these boards; one each for eastern, central and western Canada. That for eastern Canada dealt specifically with Atlantic Command and Military Districts Nos 4, 5, 6 and 7, the one for central Canada, with Military Districts Nos 1, 2 and 3, and the one for western Canada, Pacific Command and Military Districts Nos 10, 12 and 13. They were to meet from time to time as detailed by the A.G. Their composition

was as follows:

Eastern Canada

Chairman The Inspector General (Eastern Canada)  
Joint Chairman The G.O.C.-in-C. Atlantic Command  
Members D.Os.C. M.D. Nos 4, 5, 6 and 7.  
An appropriate officer from the formation or unit in which the officer under examination is serving.\*

Central Canada

Chairman The Inspector General (Central Canada)  
Members D.Os.C. M.D. Nos 1, 2 and 3.  
An appropriate officer from the formation or unit in which the officer under examination is serving.

Western Canada

Chairman The Inspector General (Western Canada)  
Joint Chairman The G.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Command  
Members The D.Os.C. M.D. Nos 10, 12 and 13.  
An appropriate officer from the formation or unit in which the officer under examination is serving.

24. The boards were to recommend continuance or removal of officers in their appointments. If the decision was removal, the grounds for such were to be explained and an indication was to be given whether the officer should continue employment in the Active Force in a new capacity or whether he was considered to be entirely unfit to hold commissioned rank. Reports were to be made out as soon as possible after the termination of each meeting and forwarded to the A.G., who would then arrange to have such reports brought up at meetings of the Army Council for a final decision. ((H.S.) 5-7-0-2: A.G. to Inspectors General, G.Os.C. in C. Atlantic and Pacific Comds, and all D.Os.C., 22 Sep 41) It can therefore be seen that the District Committees would lose much of their importance, at least in regard to approving slates for newly mobilized units. The nature of these examining boards would tend to make their selections more impartial than a purely local board.

25. There was no further change in the procedure of selection of officers until September 1942, when the matter once again came up for revision. At the meeting of the Army Council on 1 Sep 42 the A.G., Maj-Gen H.F.G. Letson, C.B., C.B.E., M.C., E.D., submitted a plan for a new selection board to take over the

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\* An appropriate officer was described as: the brigade commander when the officer being dealt with was a regimental or battalion commander, the regimental or battalion commander when the officer was a company commander, etc. This applied to all three boards.

duties of the Senior and Junior Selection Boards at N.D.H.Q. (Minutes of Army Council Meeting, minute 5, 1 Sep 42). The need for such a change is expressed in the War Diary of the D.A.G. (Officers):

The rapid expansion of the Canadian Army has made the discovery of suitable officer material, elimination of man-power wastage and proper selection of promotion of officers extremely important... The previous system was very cumbersome in practice.

It was felt that the importance of this work was such that a Brigadier (H. Kennedy, M.C.) should be Chairman of the Board and control the Directorate of Personal Services. This Board would handle the selection, promotion, reclassification and disposal of officers and form an important part of the Adjutant-General's Branch.

(W.D., D.A.G.(O), 1 Nov 42)

This board was to collect and record information regarding possible future appointees, and to exercise a general supervision over all officer selection. The name of Col H. Kennedy, M.C., was suggested as chairman, and approved by the Army Council. (Minutes of Army Council Meeting, minute 5, 1 Sep 42). He was subsequently promoted to Brigadier.

26. Further discussion of the board took place at the Army Council Meetings of 3 Sep and 24 Sep. At the second meeting the A.G. read a memorandum submitted by Brigadier Kennedy which outlined its proposed organization. (Ibid, minute 13, 3 Sep 42 and minute 6, 24 Sep 42). His proposals, which were approved by the Minister of National Defence on 11 Oct, contained the following: the board was to be named the Committee on Selection, Promotions and Reclassification of Officers,\* the chairman to become the newly created D.A.G. (Officers), the Directorate of Personal Services to be placed under its control, and the board to consist of a chairman, a vice-chairman, a consultant, three A.A.Gs., a secretary, a member-ex-officio (the Director of Personal Services) and an officer in charge of classification. (H.Q.S. 8686-2: A.G. to Minister of National Defence, 24 Sep 42). The board so composed sat for the first time on 30 Nov (W.D., D.A.G.(O), 30 Nov 42) \*\*

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF O.S.A.Cs. AND O.S.A.Bs.

27. Since the O.S.P.R.D. Board had been established for the express purpose of devising a more efficient system of officer selection, Brigadier Kennedy lost no time in producing a new plan to effect this end. At the meeting of the Army Council on 10 Dec he gave a preliminary outline of his plan. Its salient points were the earmarking of potential officers in each group of fresh recruits, constant review of those so considered

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\* This name was later changed to the Officers Selection, Promotion, Reclassification and Disposal Board. (W.D., D.A.G.(O), Nov 42)

\*\* A summary of the nature and functions of the O.S.P.R.D. Board is given in the War Diary of the D.A.G.(O) for June 1943. (W.D., D.A.G.(O), June 43: Appx 11, Memorandum on O.S.P.R.D. Board).

throughout their basic and advanced training, and the establishment of central boards near the Officers' Training Centres. These boards were to assume the additional character of holding units, carry out necessary pre-O.T.C. training, and make the final selection of candidates for officers' training courses. Discussion of the plan brought forward for consideration two recommendations. These were: that any soldier might be permitted to apply for a commission and that a careful review be made of personnel already serving in the army. The meeting approved Brigadier Kennedy's proposals in principle, subject to the further working out of details. (Minutes of Army Council Meeting, minute 3, 10 Dec 42).

28. The matter of officers selection boards was brought up again at the Army Council Meeting of 14 Jan 43. It was then proposed to establish two boards in eastern Canada and one in western Canada. It was suggested by the A.G. that each of the two eastern boards have a French-speaking associate chairman. No decision on this suggestion was reached, but the A.G. was instructed to ask the D.A.G.(O) to give it consideration. (Ibid, minute 3, 14 Jan 43)

29. Preparatory work on the new boards went forward. A survey of A. 17 M.G.T.C. at Three Rivers as a possible location of one of the eastern boards was begun on 14 Jan (W.D., D.A.G.(O), 14 Jan 43). The A.G. reported additional progress at the Army Council Meeting on 6 Feb. It had been decided to set up two eastern boards at Three Rivers, one of which was to open as quickly as possible. Brigadier Kennedy was at this time in Western Canada discussing the arrangements for the establishment of the western board. (Minutes Army Council Meeting, minute 4, 6 Feb 43)

30. On 14 Feb Brigadier Kennedy produced a progress report on the work being done towards the organization of the officers' selection boards. The objects of these selection boards were: to produce 1000 suitable officer candidates during the next 12 months, to develop more fully the field of officer material above the age limit for reinforcements in order to ensure that sufficient combat officers were available for overseas duties, and to cut down the numbers of failures and repeaters at the O.T.Cs. (W.D., D.A.G.(O) Feb 43: Appx VI)

31. There were to be two Officers Selection and Appraisal Centres, one for eastern Canada and one for western Canada. The eastern centre would be established at Three Rivers and open by 1 Mar. The western centre would be located at Chilliwack and begin operations by the end of April, or the beginning of May. At the eastern centre there would be two Officers Selection and Appraisal Boards, at the western centre only one such board. (Ibid)

32. Selection was to begin with the establishment of Reception Centres,\* where all recruits would be interviewed by an Army Examiner, "M"-tested, and initially appraised. All those obtaining an "M" test score of over 145 and who had two or more years high school education would be grouped together. Constant review of those so selected would be carried on throughout basic

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\* Although Brigadier Kennedy recommended the establishment of Reception Centres, he must have been referring to those then being organized throughout Canada. For a brief outline of the origin and formation of Canadian Army Reception Centres see Appendix "C" attached.

training, and necessary weeding out done. Similar procedure would be followed at advanced training centres. In addition, all those having an "M" test below 160, and who did not show outstanding qualities of leadership, would be removed from the list of candidates to go forward to the Selection and Appraisal Centres. Thus, the intention was to cut down the numbers of applicants to such an extent that a large majority of those proceeding to the selection centres would be finally accepted. Provision was also made for consideration of applications made by individuals in order to take care of specialists coming in from civilian life. (Ibid)

33. It was proposed to maintain a pre-O.T.C. training company at each O.S.A.C. On arrival at the centre, the candidates would be given a series of mental and physical tests lasting for three days. The results of these tests would be tabulated and arranged for the use of the Selection and Appraisal Board. A period in the training company would be followed by a further report, and the candidates would then appear before the board for final disposal. It was recommended that the decision then reached would be absolutely final, or, alternatively, that no case could be reconsidered unless instructions were given by the Minister for such action. (Ibid)

34. On 2 Mar Brigadier Kennedy produced a second progress report on the selection and appraisal of officer candidates in which he recommended some changes from the procedure previously outlined. He suggested that segregation of those deemed to be potential officer material be abandoned as harmful to morale. As an alternative, he proposed that recruits be divided into three categories, as had been experimented with at the Training Centre in Brantford. These categories would be lettered "X" (Bright), "Y" (Average) and "Z" (Dull), producing, in effect, the same result as the original plan, since the great majority of the officer material would be found in the "X" groups. Pre-O.T.C. training at the Selection and Appraisal Centres was to be dropped. Consequently, a candidate deemed suitable for commissioning but requiring further training, was to be returned to his unit for additional instruction (at an N.C.O's. School), and then proceed directly to the O.T.C., when he had reached the required standard. It was strongly recommended that with one exception, only members of the Active Army on General Service be considered for commissions. The sole exception was to be officers of the Reserve Army, who would be required to take a special course at their appropriate Corps Training Centre before proceeding to the O.T.C. In this respect, members of C.O.T.C. contingents would be required to serve in the ranks at an advanced training centre before being recommended for commissioned rank. (W.D., D.A.G.(O) March 43: Appx 3, Second Progress Report, 2 Mar 43)

35. As the next step in establishing Officers Selection Centres and Boards, the A.G. sent out a circular letter on 4 Mar informing the G.O.S.C in C. Commands and D.Os.C. of the intention to constitute O.S.A.Cs. He explained the reasons for taking this step as follows:

Hitherto there has been a vast variation in the standard of training of candidates arriving at O.T.C. The extreme range of this variation extends from that of a complete lack in the case of certain civilian personnel for technical corps to that of the standard of a well trained N.C.O. Instructor from a Corps Training Centre. Various gradations from Reserve Army, from Field Units and from C.O.T.C. extend across the range.

(W.D., D.A.G.(O.), March 1943,  
Appx VI; para 2)

He also outlined the procedure to be adopted in training and selecting candidates. This procedure followed most of the recommendations laid down by Brigadier Kennedy in his second progress report (para 30). No details were given, however, regarding the grouping of recruits and their constant observation during training. The decision concerning entry from the Reserve Army, C.O.T.C. and civil life, was left in abeyance for the time being. Seven months in the Active Army was to be the length of service required before consideration for a commission. (H.Q.C. 7434-3-1 (D.A.G. (O): A.G. Letter, 4 Mar 43)

36. On 13 Mar, the A.G. despatched a second letter giving further details on the officers' selection centres. He directed attention to the necessity of obtaining N.D.H.Q. approval for recommendation, prior "M"-testing and medical examination of nominees, special questionnaires to be answered by R.C.E., R.C.C.S., R.C.A.S.C., R.C.O.C. and C.F.C. personnel, and special authority before a Federal Civil Servant could be considered. Candidates were to proceed in the rank, or acting rank, they held at the time of recommendation. After acceptance at the O.S.A.C., they would acquire the status and pay of acting serjeants provided that such rank was higher than their own. Those holding a higher rank would retain it until departure for the O.T.C., when all would become cadets. Lists of recommendations were to be prepared and forwarded to N.D.H.Q. as soon as possible. French-speaking candidates were to continue as before. After receiving training at the Canadian Officer Cadet and Basic Training Centre, St. Jerome, they were to go direct to the O.T.C. without passing through the O.S.A.C. (H.Q. 650-110-4, vol 1: A.G. letter, Selection and Appraisal, H.Q. 54-27-20-705 (Pers 2A), 13 Mar 43)

37. In a third letter on 13 Mar, the A.G. indicated that it had been decided not to follow Brigadier Kennedy's recommendation (para 30), but to adhere to instructions issued on 27 Jul 42. By these it was agreed to accept C.O.T.C. members as cadets in the Active Army and post them to advanced training centres. From there they would proceed to the O.S.A.C. when vacancies arose. (Ibid, A.G. letter, C.O.T.C., H.Q. 54-27-20-705 (Pers 2A), 13 Mar 43) It must be noted that these three A.G. letters left certain questions unanswered. This is reflected by the queries that came in from Commands and Districts after they were issued.

38. Meanwhile during March 1943, the eastern O.S.A.C. was organized at A.17, C.M.G.T.C., Three Rivers. The training centre staff remained to run the administration of the selection centre. Two selection and appraisal boards were set up with Brigadier W.W. Foster, D.S.O., V.D., as chairman in charge, heading one board and exercising a general supervision over both. The second board was under Brigadier M.F. Gregg, V.C., M.C., and Brigadier J.P.U. Archambault, D.S.O., M.C., was appointed to assist both boards as French-speaking representative. The first quota of candidates was to arrive by 1 Apr. (W.D., A.17 C.M.G.T.C. March 1943; H.Q. 650-110-4, vol 1: A.G. to D.O.C. M.D. No. 4, 11 Mar 43)\*

39. 2 Apr saw the arrival of the first group of candidates, 85 in number, at the O.S.A.C. in Three Rivers. During April, 495 all ranks arrived for appraisal. (W.D., A.17 C.M.G.T.C., 2, 8, 9, 29 and 30 Apr 43). They stayed an average of approximately two weeks before posting to the O.T.C. (Ibid, 19 Apr 43) In order

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\* No separate War Diary was kept by the eastern O.S.A.C. Its activities are recorded by War Diary of A-17, C.M.G.T.C.

to test the candidates in leadership, man management, alertness, initiative, military knowledge, self confidence, power of expression, attitude towards work, and administrative ability, a series of tests lasting one week were carried out by the training staffs of the selection centre. The syllabus followed is attached as Appendix "A".

40. As mentioned above (para 33), the questions left unanswered by the instructions which dealt with the formation of the O.S.A.Cs. brought forth certain queries from Commands and Districts. These were mainly concerned with the change of the qualifying period in the ranks from four months to seven months (para 31), the status of C.O.T.C. and Reserve Army candidates, and entries from civil life. (H.Q. 650-110-4, vol 1: G.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Comd to D.N.D., 2 Apr 43, D.O.C. M.D. 13 to D.N.D., 16 Mar 43, D.O.C. M.D. 3 to D.N.D., 25 Mar 43). In replying to these queries the A.G. pointed out that the new policy was not yet completely firm. He stated on 22 Mar:

It will be appreciated that there must be a combination of the old and new systems of officer selection for a month or two until the O.S.A.C's. are firmly established and the flow of candidates is uniform. The instructions mentioned in para 5 above are, therefore not inconsistent with H.Q.C. 7434-3-1 D.A.G.(O), dated 4th March 1943, but were issued to provide for any candidates from Reserve Units or Civil life who might be nominated for attendance at O.S.A.C's. as well as those candidates who proceeded from Advanced Training Centres. Complete instructions will be issued as soon as possible.

(Ibid, A.G. to D.O.C. M.D. 13,  
22 Mar 43)

A second letter dated 29 Mar read:

With reference to your K.36-7-Q(A2) of 25th March, 1943, please be advised that as the O.S.A.C. system is not yet fully organized, no change is yet required in the length of service for candidates recommended for Officer Training.

(Ibid, A.G. to D.O.C. M.D. 3,  
29 Mar 43)

Further confirmation of the A.G.'s policy is reflected in his letter to the G.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Command on 13 Apr 43, which stated:

The question of consolidating information so far distributed on the operation of Officers' Selection and Appraisal Centres is under consideration, but pending the complete establishment of all projected boards, it is not considered advisable to do more than has been at the present time or as may be necessary from time to time. At present as no doubt you are well aware, the board now operating is at Three Rivers, Quebec and Officer Candidates from Eastern Canada only are being sent to this Centre. As regards candidates from Western Canada the method and system of recommendation and selection have not yet been changed.

(Ibid, A.G. to G.O.C.-in-C. Pacific  
Comd, 23 Apr 43)

41. A summing up of the policy of officer selection as it was to function after the establishment of both O.S.A.Cs. is set out in a memorandum prepared by the A.G. on 8 Apr 43 for a speech given by the Minister of National Defence.\* This memorandum is reproduced and attached as Appendix "B" to this report. (H.Q.C. 7434-3-1, vol 1: F.D. No. 6, memo prepared 8 Apr 43 for Minister's speech)

42. Meanwhile, the selection of a western O.S.A.C. had been under discussion, and on 28 Apr the A.G. informed the C.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Command that No. 112 B.T.C. at Chilliwack would be taken over for this purpose on 20 May. (Ibid, A.G. to G.O.C.-in-C. Pacific Comd, 28 Apr 43) Brigadier A.D. Wilson, D.S.O., V.D. was appointed chairman of the O.S.A.B. and the centre began to operate on 27 Jun with the arrival of the first group of candidates, 337 in number. The composition of the selection board was as follows:\*\*

Chairman (Brigadier Wilson)  
Secretary  
Corps Representative (except Medical, Dental and Chaplains)  
Chief Army Examiner  
Statistician  
Three Assistant Army Examiners  
Education Officer  
Psychiatrist

(W.D., O.S.A.B. (W), May-Jun 43  
and Appx 1)

#### FINAL POLICY ON OFFICERS' SELECTION

43. A consolidated instruction on officers selection, as promised by the A.G. (para 35), was produced as R.O. No. 3319 dated 17 Jun 43. The only change in procedure for soldiers in the Active Army was that they would have to serve five months before recommendation. Soldiers of the Reserve Army were to enlist in the Active Army, and then follow the same course as Active Army candidates. C.O.T.C. other ranks were also to enlist in the Active Army, and enter the stream of potential officers at a corps training centre. Until 16 July they would be granted the status of Cadets on enlistment, but after that date they would not become cadets until arrival at the O.T.C. C.O.T.C. candidates who had graduated with engineering degrees during the period from 1 Jan 40 to 16 Jul 43 were considered as an exception and could be accepted as P/2 Lieuts until 16 Jul 43. After acceptance, they were to be posted to an appropriate corps training centre and there await a vacancy at the O.T.C. Qualified officers of the Reserve Army were to take a special officers course at a corps training centre, and then appear before the O.S.A.B. If selected, they would then proceed to the O.T.C., but, if rejected, they would automatically return to their former reserve status. Provision was still made for entry of civilians

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\* The Minister of National Defence gave this speech on 18 May 43 (Debates, House of Commons, 1943, vol 3, p. 2773)

\*\* The composition of this board was identical to the other two in east. It has, therefore, been recorded to serve as an example of what these boards consisted.



with special technical qualifications required by certain corps. They were to be referred to a N.D.H.Q. committee that would pass on their qualifications. If accepted, they would be required to enlist as privates. They would then be sent to the O.S.A.C. for further approval. If considered suitable, they would be granted the status of cadets, and proceed through the normal channels of training to the O.T.C. It is noted that all the above categories of potential officers would have to appear before the O.S.A.B. Para 2 of the Routine Order pointed out that instructions for the selection of French speaking officers would be clarified later. (C.A.R.O. No. 3319, paras 1-4, 17 Jun 43)

44. Certain classes of candidates, intended for the arms and service listed below, were exempted from the procedure mentioned above (para 38), and after acceptance by the O.S.A.B. could be commissioned directly.

R.C.A.M.C.  
C.D.C.  
Canadian Chaplain Services  
Detention Barracks Staffs of the C. Pro C.  
R.C.A.P.C.  
C. Int C.  
R.C.E. (Engineer Services and Works Officers only)  
V.G.C.  
Canadian Postal Corps  
Quartermasters, all corps  
Provisional Officers appointed to General List  
(Specialist)

(Ibid, para 4)

45. Officers for Home War Establishment employment and reserve officers appointed under the provisions of C.A.R.O. 2820 were also exempted from the usual procedure. C.A.R.O. 3321 provided that selected officers and N.C.Os. from the Reserve Army who, by age or category, were not eligible for overseas service could be recommended to N.D.H.Q. for employment in Home War Establishments. C.A.R.O. 2820 stated that reserve officers, in the same age and category group as above, might be called out under G.O. 139, 1939, and after eight months probationary service in the Active Army be confirmed in the rank of lieutenant. (Ibid, para 5, C.A.R.O. No. 2820, 23 Jan 43, and C.A.R.O. 3321, 17 Jun 43)

46. Certain candidates, possessing civilian experience or training which would fit them for the appointments listed below, could be accepted after successful completion of a special common to all arms course of four weeks duration at the O.T.C. These appointments were:

Clerical Officers (excluding adjutants and quartermasters)  
Army Examiners  
Educational Officers  
Records Officers  
District Audit Officers  
Regimental Funds Board Officers  
Recruiting Officers  
Messing and Catering Officers  
Translators and Interpreters  
Special Services Officers  
Auxiliary Services Officers  
C. Int C. Officers  
Special Employment Company Officers  
Photographic Officers  
Officers for employment in a legal capacity

It must be noted that the above officers were to be known as "Ancillary Officers" and posted to the General List. (C.A.R.O. 3320, 17 Jun 43)

47. The policy on officer selection remained substantially the same throughout the remainder of the war. Certain amendments to C.A.R.Os. 3319, 3320 and 3321 were issued, but they did not materially affect the principles of selection. C.A.R.O. No. 4286, 29 Mar 44, and C.A.R.O. No. 5487, 24 Mar 45, altered the status of C.O.T.C. applicants after entry into the Active Army. The only change in methods of selection concerned C.M.S.C. candidates for commissions in their own service. C.A.R.O. No. 5000, 18 Oct 44, provided that they would be approved by the O.S.P.R.D. Board at N.D.H.Q. (C.A.R.Os. No. 4286, 29 Mar 44, No. 5487, 24 Mar 45, and No. 5000, 18 Oct 44)

48. A search through Routine Orders has not revealed anything dealing specifically with French-speaking candidates. In a memorandum to the D.C.G.S. (B) on 22 Apr 43, however, Brigadier Kennedy recommended that a decision should be made on this subject and suggested, as prior action, that a conference of certain senior French-speaking officers be held. (W.D., D.A.G.(O), Apr 43: Appx 21, D.A.G.(O) to D.C.G.S.(B), 22 Apr 43). This resulted in the A.G. calling a conference on 15 May. The policy then in force for French-speaking candidates was outlined (see Preliminary Narrative (Canada), Chap Fourteen, para 100), and discussion took place on ways and means of fitting them into the system applicable to their English-speaking compatriots. (W.D., D.A.G.(O), May 43): Appx 6, Minutes Conference French-speaking offr, 15 May 43)

49. At a second conference held on 17 May certain decisions were recommended. These were, in brief: that French-speaking candidates would continue to pass through the training centre at St. Jerome, that they would not be given the status of cadet until reaching the O.T.C., that they would pass through the O.S.A.C. in the normal way after leaving St. Jerome, and that this new procedure should be taken into effect on 16 Jul 43. (Ibid, Jun 43: Appx 4, Minutes Conference, 17 May 43) As no Routine Order can be found, relating to these points, it is presumed that the decisions of this conference were final.

50. By August 43 it became apparent that the flow of officers from the O.T.Cs. had overcome the shortages and that a reduction in officers' training facilities was desirable. The D.A.G.(O) prepared a memorandum on 4 Aug for the text of a cable to be sent by the A.G. to the Minister of National Defence (who was then overseas) recommending the closing of the western O.T.C. and the western O.S.A.C., and the concentration of the eastern O.S.A.C. at Brockville. (Ibid; Appx 2, D.A.G.(O) to A.G., 4 Aug 43) This matter was discussed at a meeting of the Army Council on 15 Aug, when it was decided that the O.S.A.C. at Chilliwack would be disbanded after the appraisal of the 42nd quota on 20 Aug, and that the eastern centre at Three Rivers would be moved to the O.T.C. at Brockville some time in September. (Ibid: Appx 2, Memo 15 Aug 43, and H.Q.S. 9011-3-1 F.D. 1)

51. A press release, dated 25 Aug, announced the above changes, and gave the reason for them:

It is expected that in future, most of these potential officers will come from the Canadian Army Overseas. They will be chosen from those Other Ranks who have had battle experience or have proven themselves capable of leadership in the field. The new programme calls for

officer training both in England and Canada. In England British Army Officer Training Units and Canadian Officers' Training Centres will be utilized for Arms other than Infantry and Army Service Corps. Candidates for these latter will return to this Country for initial training at Brockville and final training at special Corps Training Centres.

In keeping with this policy and the fact that the Army in most Corps is becoming well supplied with officers, a curtailment in officer training facilities in Canada is indicated. It is also a well-known fact that there has been a low percentage of casualties among all ranks, including officers, during the period when the Canadian Army was building up its officer quota.

Under the new plan it is proposed to close the Officers' Training Centre at Gordon Head, B.C. and the Officers' Training Centre at Three Rivers, Que., concentrating all officer training at Brockville. The establishing of both of the above training Centres was actually an emergency measure and these camps will now be available for other purposes. They will be closed on September 30th. The Officers' Selection and Appraisal Board and Centre at Chilliwack, B.C. will likewise close down in September while a similar Board operating at Three Rivers will be transferred to Brockville.

(Ibid, Appx 20, Press Release,  
24 Aug 43)

52. In accordance with these decisions, the western O.S.A.C. closed on 19 Aug, having examined 693 potential officers (W.D., O.S.A.C. (W) July 43: Appx 2 and 3 and August 43: Appx 4), and the eastern O.S.A.C. moved to Brockville on 30 Sep (W.D., A. 17 C.M.G.T.C., 30 Sep 43, and H.Q.S. 9011-3-1, 26 Aug 43). There remained functioning in Canada only one O.S.A.B. which continued operations until June 1945.\* (W.D., O.T.C. (E.C.), Jun 45)

53. This report was prepared by Capt J.C. Newlands, Historical Section, A.H.Q.

*J.C. Newlands Capt*  
(C.P. Stacey) Colonel,  
Director Historical Section.

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\* Since the War Diary O.T.C. (E.C.) mentions only one O.S.A.B. functioning at Brockville, it is presumed that the second one was disbanded on 30 Sep.

SYLLABUS OF ACTIVITY FOR O.S.A.C.

23 APR 43

Based on a daily schedule of 8 periods of 45 minutes each.  
44 periods in a week. Coy Parade to be held each morning,  
0800-0815.

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- Squad Drill (5 periods) 1. Platoon broken down into squads of 4 or 5 and formed into a group.
2. Marching men in a controlled body from one spot to another.
  3. Position man should assume in marching.
  4. Moving men in a controlled body from one point to another.
  5. Moving in line (small groups)
  6. Moving in single file small groups.
  7. A controlled squad changing direction.
  8. Forming up a larger body (platoon)

During the conduct of this activity a candidate will be prompted to collapse or act insubordinately or walk off parade, or create some other diversion. Candidates reaction noted.

The object of this subject is to provide a vehicle to bring out self confidence, alertness, energy, team work, military bearing, power of expression, attitude towards work, administrative ability.

Arms Drill - 1. (included in above 5 periods)

- Candidates to give a short talk on the necessity for and value of arms drill.
2. Teach how to fall in with a rifle.
  3. Teaching simple rifle movements.  
Situations - Candidate drops his rifle and damages it.  
Candidate loses self control and throws rifle on ground.  
Candidate coming out of the ranks and engaging in conversation with the instructor. A rifle is discharged on parade.  
Candidates reaction noted.

These subjects are designed to bring out sense of responsibility, initiative, power of expression, common sense, alertness.

Physical Training (5 periods) Conditioning, elementary tables of training to be used, candidates to conduct under supervision. Platoon Commanders to observe for all characteristics.

Organized Sport (6 periods) Candidates to organize games of baseball, etc., as well as games without apparatus. Platoon Commander to observe for administrative ability, teamwork, attitude to work, initiative.

Fieldcraft and Vis Training (6 periods) Schemes indoor on sandtable or cloth model or outside in selected areas to show the individual or section Stalk and quick decision exercises.

Searching a cloth model or sandtable or landscape target or assortment of articles indoors, or a piece of ground outdoors and giving description.

Points to be brought out: Alertness, Energy, Power of expression, Initiative, Common sense, sense of responsibility, teamwork.

Fundamental Training (4 periods) Kit inspection for condition of Kit, Barrack room inspection daily by a candidate. Points to be noted. Attitude to work, Military Bearing, Alertness, Sense of responsibility.

Verbal Messages (4 periods)

Candidates to be given a verbal description of a situation which later on, under stress, he has to repeat back. A situation is described and the candidates will be required to write a short message describing the action.

Designed to bring out: Power of expression, alertness, common sense, energy, stamina.

Lecturettes (6 periods)

Candidates required to prepare and deliver a ten minute talk on assigned subjects. Also candidates to give impromptu 2 minutes talks on assigned subjects without previous preparations.

Designed to bring out alertness, initiative, energy, self-confidence, freedom from annoying characteristics, common sense, stability.

S.A.T. Rifle (3 periods)

Cleaning and examination General description, aiming. Candidates to organize and give description and instruction. As a preliminary to range work at a later date.

Designed to bring out, Administrative ability, power of expression, initiative, common sense, alertness.

Organized Working Parties (4 periods)

Cleaning up a designated area in barracks, moving barrack equipment, scrubbing a specified area, digging and filling holes, snow and ice removal. Digging weapon slits.

The purpose of this activity is to test the candidates under trying condition, for stability, stamina, administrative ability, energy, teamwork, initiative, attitude to work.

Spare (1 period)

(W.D., A. 17 C.M.G.T.C.,  
Appx IV, 23 Apr 43)

Officers' Selection, Promotion  
and Reclassification

Toward the end of 1942, changes were made in the personnel and methods employed at N.D.H.Q. in connection with the selection, promotion and reclassification of Officers.

2. A new system of obtaining and indexing information concerning the educational qualifications and the civilian and military background of all Officers of the Canadian Army in Canada, together with confidential reports compiled by their superior Officers was developed and is now functioning successfully.

3. All appointments to staff positions throughout Canada as well as appointment of Officers to command or as 2nds in command of Units, are now recommended by an impartial board at N.D.H.Q. who consider all available candidates as indicated by the indexed information on file. This system ensures that all suitable candidates wherever they may be serving receive consideration. It further provides a healthy interchange of Staff Officers and Commanders between the Districts and Units concerned. The recommendations of the Commanders of Districts and the various formations are given full consideration by the Board in arriving at their decisions.

Officers Selection & Appraisal Centres

4. The need of standardizing the methods of selecting junior Officers for commissions in the Canadian Army in Canada has also undergone a very considerable change.

5. Instead of this being left to Units and the various Districts and other Formations concerned, candidates are now marked while in training as having the necessary educational and other qualifications to justify their consideration as Officers. Their progress is watched by Army Examiners and Training Staffs and those whose qualities of leadership justify such action are given instructional courses as N.C.O.'s and further testing as N.C.O.'s in the handling of men.

6. Those who, in the opinion of their Officers and the Army Examiners, are of Officer calibre, are sent to Selection and Appraisal Centres, one in Eastern Canada and one in Western Canada, where impartial Boards composed of senior Officers of all Corps, together with Psychiatrists, Psychologists and Educational Officers, presided over by Brigadiers with long experience in selecting and training Officers, pass final judgment after a series of tests which give a clear indication of their various qualities as Officer material. The Eastern Canadian Centre has now opened at Three Rivers, P.Q., and the Western Centre will open in May in British Columbia.

7. The new selection routine will be in full operation by mid-Summer, after which all Officers except for the Medical and Dental Corps will come through the ranks. Any tendency to select candidates on account of personal or social connections or allied reasons, cannot succeed under the proposed system and pressure will be brought to bear on all Units and Formations to make them put forward all candidates who have Officer qualities, regardless of the desire there may be to retain them in their Units because of their usefulness as N.C.O.'s, clerks, etc.

8. As soon as both Selection Centres are functioning, it is provided that any soldier with more than 7 months' service, who believes he has Officer qualities, may apply to his C.O. for a test with a view to determining his suitability for commissioned rank.

9. The new system stresses the quality of leadership above all others and in the matter of educational qualifications recognizes the necessity of considering the candidate's present knowledge rather than making selections based on the amount of formal education which the candidate may have undergone several years earlier.

(H.Q.C. 7434-3-1: vol 1, Memo prepared by A.G. on 8 Apr 43 for Minister's speech in House of Commons)

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE FORMATION OF  
CANADIAN ARMY RECEPTION CENTRES

1. The details of the establishments and methods of operation of Canadian Army Reception Centres are given fully in the Preliminary Narrative, History of the Medical Services in the Second World War, Chap Twelve, paras 81-97. Although the same source deals with the formation of these centres, it is felt that a more elaborate account of this aspect is required.
2. The institution of reception centres was first considered in September 1942, when the Minister of National Defence told the D.G.M.S. that "the present system of promiscuous and heterogeneous medical boards across the country should cease". He went on to propose a new arrangement whereby medical boards would be connected with recruiting centres. Accordingly, on 17 Sep a conference to discuss the formation of these new centres was held. The D.A.G., D. Org, D. Mob, D. Pers, D.A.R., two representatives from the medical services and one from D. Adm were present. The name "Induction Centre" was first considered, but during the conference it was decided to use "Reception Centre" instead. Finally, it was recommended that a trial centre be set up in M.D. No. 10 (H.Q. 54-27-7-280, vol 1: Minutes of Meeting, Reception Centres, 17 Sep 42)
3. Consequently, the A.G. instructed the D.O.C. M.D. No. 10 to organize a trial Reception Centre at the District Depot on 1 Oct, and later in the month he advised the D.O.C. M.D. No. 6 to do likewise (ibid: A.G. to D.O.C. M.D. No. 10, 1 Oct 42, and D.O.C. M.D. No. 6, 20 Oct 42)
4. A second conference was held on 3 Nov to consider further details of reception centres (ibid: Meeting, Reception Centres, 3 Nov 42). Following more discussion, the A.G. sent a circular letter on 3 Dec to all D.Os.C., advising them to set up centres like those already established in M.D. No. 10 and M.D. No. 6. He stated that, where possible, these centres would be located at the District Depot and be, in that case, under command of the O.C., District Depot. In the event of this not being feasible, they would come directly under the District Headquarters. Provision of such specialists as Medical Officers and Army Examiners was to be the subject of a later communication. (Ibid: A.G. Circular Letter, 3 Dec 42)
5. It was arranged for the D.O.C. M.D. No. 2 to inspect an Induction Centre in Buffalo, U.S.A. This visit was made on 21 Dec and duly reported to N.D.H.Q. on 29 Dec (ibid: Report of visit D.O.C. M.D. No. 2 to U.S. Induction Centre, 21 Dec 42) The purpose was, of course, to examine the workings of the American system of recruiting with a view to incorporating suitable features into the proposed changes in the Canadian routine (see History Medical Services, Chap Twelve, op cit)
6. Lack of accommodation caused considerable delay in the opening of the Reception Centres, with the result that not all were in operation by February 1943 (ibid: letters from D.Os.C. on Reception Centres, December 1942 to February 1943). On 2 Feb 43 the A.G. sent out a circular letter giving the details of amendments to District Depot establishments required by the addition of Reception Centres. It is evident, therefore, that at this time they were all to be at District Depots. (Ibid: A.G. Circular Letter, 2 Feb 43) Later, there appeared to be some



doubt regarding the relationship between the Reception Centres and the District Depots. Accordingly, D. Adm made it quite clear on 18 Aug that the Reception Centres were definitely part of the District Depots and consequently under command of the Depot Commanders. (Ibid, vol 3: Memo D. Adm, 18 Aug 43)

7. From correspondence referring to Reception Centres contained in H.Q. 54-27-7-280, vols 2 and 3, it is apparent that these centres began operating at different times in different districts. As pointed out in para 6, lack of accommodation was the main factor which governed their time of opening. However, by August 1943, Army Reception Centres were functioning in all districts, although some were still awaiting permanent quarters. (Ibid, vol 3: A.G. Circular Letter, 3 Aug 43)