

**“I didn’t have time to find the English words”:
The Korean War’s Role in the Evolution of Bilingualism in the
Canadian Armed Forces**

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Abstract

This thesis explores the impact of the Korean War on the evolution of the role of the French language in the Canadian military between 1946 and 1954. It explains how the Korean War acted as both a catalyst for a more accommodating stance towards the French language in the Canadian Armed Forces, and an immediate impediment to the implementation of such changes.

Particularly, this thesis explores the conflict that emerged between various officials in the Department of National Defence concerning the place that should be made for the French language, and how best to recruit more French Canadians. It shows that there was serious disagreement between the Minister of National Defence, Brooke Claxton, who wanted more bilingualism in the Canadian military, and the Chief of General Staff, General Guy G. Simonds, who resisted further concessions to francophones.

Moreover, this thesis reveals the extent to which there was goodwill within the Canadian Armed Forces on the part of both anglophones and francophones on the frontline in Korea. This constituted the basis on which the Department of National Defence was able to begin the process of implementing a more bilingual system. In this respect, this thesis shows the Canadian military to have been ahead of the federal Civil Service.

Acknowledgement

The idea of studying the place of francophones in the Canadian military first came to me as I was sitting in the Chamber of the Senate of Canada as a Page on November 1, 2011. That day, the Senate met in Committee of the Whole to hear the new, unilingual, Auditor General of Canada Michael Ferguson. During the questioning of the witness, Senator Roméo Dallaire stood up and said:

Quand j'ai décidé d'entrer dans les forces armées, mon père, qui était soldat de carrière, m'a dit, avant de partir: "Roméo, if you want a career in the forces as an officer, you had better change your name from Dallaire to Dallard," because in 1964 you would go nowhere. By assimilation and a lot of extra work, I learned English and I achieved that rank because I mastered English, among other qualities.¹

That was an epiphany of sorts for the young student that I was who had never known a world where the *Official Languages Act* was not an assumed reality. This, along with a long-standing interest in the Korean War, led me to my topic. I could not submit this thesis without thanking everyone that helped me throughout my research and redaction.

First and foremost, I must express my deepest thanks to my advisor and mentor, Professor Serge Durflinger from the University of Ottawa. He was the one who sparked my interest in military history in my undergraduate degree, and it was he who urged me to pursue my interest at the graduate level. He was always there ready to help me, share his knowledge, ask the difficult questions, or simply talk politics. His ruthless, but always pertinent, comments and corrections have been invaluable in helping me improve my writing skills, and find my voice as a writer. I can no longer write anything without asking myself: "Could it be shorter?"

¹ Canada, Senate, "November 1st 2011," 41st Parliament, 1st Session, *Debates of Senate*, 490.

I would also like to acknowledge the financial support of the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture that allowed me to complete my research.

Je dois remercier sincèrement les archivistes du Centre d'Archives du Royal 22^e Régiment à la Citadelle, et particulièrement Sara Bélanger. Elles m'ont accueillies et m'ont aidé à trouver les documents dont j'avais besoin avec une patience et une passion remarquable.

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Finalement, j'aimerais dédier cette thèse à tous les 22 dont les témoignages m'ont aidé dans l'élaboration de ce projet et qui nous ont quitté au cours de l'écriture de celui-ci.

Je me souviens.

Acronyms

CDS – Chief of the Defence Staff

CGS – Chief of the General Staff

CMR – Collège militaire royal de St-Jean

CO – Commanding Officer

DPRK – Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

HMCS – His/Her Majesty’s Canadian Ship

LAC – Library and Archives Canada

LHS – Lord Strathcona’s Horse (Royal Canadian)

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NCO – Non-commissioned Officer

PPCLI – Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry

1PPCLI – 1st Battalion, Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry

2PPCLI – 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry

3PPCLI – 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry

PSO – Personnel Selection Officer

R22^eR – Royal 22^e Régiment

1R22^eR – 1st Battalion, Royal 22^e Régiment

2R22^eR – 2nd Battalion, Royal 22^e Régiment

3R22^eR – 3rd Battalion, Royal 22^e Régiment

RCA – Royal Canadian Artillery

RCAC – Royal Canadian Armoured Corps

RCASC – Royal Canadian Army Service Corps

RCCS – Royal Canadian Corps of Signals

RCE – Royal Canadian Engineers

RCEME – Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

RCHA – Royal Canadian Horse Artillery

1RCHA – 1st Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery

2RCHA – 2nd Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery

RCIC – Royal Canadian Infantry Corps

RCOC – Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps

RCR – Royal Canadian Regiment

1RCR – 1st Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment

2RCR – 2nd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment

3RCR – 3rd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment

RMC – Royal Military College

RRMC – Royal Roads Military College

ROK – Republic of Korea

UN – United Nations

UNC – United Nations Command

UNSC – United Nations Security Council

USS – United States Ship

VCGS – Vice Chief of the General Staff

Introduction

Forgotten War, Forgotten History?:

The Korean War and Canadian Military Historiography

The place of French Canadians in the Canadian Armed Forces has long been the object of political debate. French Canada, and particularly the province of Québec, struggled to reconcile pride in its military feats with its general animosity, or sometimes indifference, towards military engagements. In the first half of the 20th century, the military's relationship to French Canada was also complex in that the institution sought to recruit more men in French Canada, while preserving its fundamentally English-speaking, and British-inspired character. It wanted more French Canadians in its ranks, but was very reluctant to make a greater place for their language and culture.

This tension reached new heights after the Second World War, during which the military's image in French Canada had once more been damaged by conscription. In the increasingly uncertain world of the emerging Cold War, improving recruitment amongst francophones, and ensuring the participation and cooperation of French Canada in any future conflict, became a matter of national security as much as a matter of national unity. To do so, however, the military had to make itself more attractive to French Canadians, a goal it had thus far largely failed to achieve.

As long as peace endured, this question could be delayed. When the Korean War erupted in June 1950, and when Canada committed troops to fighting the Communists there, this formerly theoretical question became a pressing problem. Canada had to find men to fight in Korea, and French Canada had to contribute as well. The object of this thesis is to reveal the Korean War as a turning point in the process of making the

Canadian military more welcoming to French Canadians. This process culminated in the implementation of official bilingualism in the Canadian military in 1969 when the *Official Languages Act* came into effect. The Korean War did not give the Department of National Defence the idea of making itself more welcoming to French Canadians, but it did provide the impetus to enact change that many government officials and senior officers knew was needed. However, the Korean War also constituted an impediment to rapid change. It laid the problems bare, and led to new plans being devised to improve the place of French in the military, but the manpower requirements it brought delayed the full implementation of such plans until after the war was concluded. It ultimately was a catalyst for further bilingualism in the Canadian Armed Forces, but an immediate hurdle to the enactment of increased bilingualism. On the battlefield, the Korean War demonstrated that Canadian soldiers of both linguistic groups directed an impressive level of goodwill at each other. It showed that there was a certain openness in the rank-and-file for increased bilingualism and for a more accommodating stance towards francophones. There existed a foundation of men on which to build a more bilingual institution.

This thesis argues that the Korean War's importance to the implementation of institutional bilingualism in the Canadian Armed Forces is understated. It was a peculiar conflict fought with Second World War equipment, featuring First World War-like defence systems and patrols, and waged in the context of Cold War diplomatic tensions. It happened at a time when the world was emerging from the Second World War, and was restructuring around two political-military poles, the United States and the Soviet Union. It was a war about ideas – communism versus capitalism – in a remote area of the globe that had few resources, and ambiguous geostrategic importance. Yet, the

stalemate that resulted in Korea influenced Cold War diplomacy for years. It is particularly significant to Canadian military history, and specifically to French-Canadian military history, for its impact on bilingualism. For one, it began as the Canadian military was demobilizing, following the war years, at the same time as it was planning for an eventual war between the capitalist and communist worlds. In this international context, then, the Korean War differs from the previous Canadian military adventures overseas because it did not stem from British Imperialism. The Canadian military was also in transition as it recuperated from two conscription crises, which put the English dominated institution at the centre of the controversy and national tensions. The Korean War also happened in the 1950s, when French Canada, and particularly Québec, was beginning a process of national awakening that reached a high point with the *Révolution tranquille* of the 1960s. But English Canada, too, was reshaping its re-articulating its identity by abandoning the British connection in favour of a more distinctly Canadian sense of nationhood.²

The Canadian military, for its part, was subject to increased activism on the part of some French-Canadian officers who wanted their institution to be more culturally respectful of francophones. These high-ranking officers, like Joseph Paul-Émile Bernatchez et Jean-Victor Allard had risen through the ranks during the Second World War and, in the early 1950s, were in a position to effect change in the Canadian military apparatus. Moreover, they found in the Minister of National Defence, Brooke Claxton, and other officers of the Department of National Defence, English-Canadians who were open to increased bilingualism and who were open to greater accommodation for

² José Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada 1945-1971* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007).

francophones. The Korean War is also significant in that many of the francophone officers who subsequently would be the driving forces of further bilingualism in the Canadian Armed Forces had served in Korea. Yet, the conflict remains understudied in this respect, especially in French Canada.

American scholars have paid the most attention to the Korean War, but they have understandably been primarily concerned with American issues. At the end of the war, many were puzzled as to what had happened in Korea. What had drawn the United States, and the United Nations (UN), into such a brutal conflict, far from North America and in a country of minor strategic significance to either American or Soviet security? It follows, then, that the main point of contention in the historiography regards the question of what precipitated the Korean War, and perhaps more importantly, what spurred international involvement in it. With Soviet and Chinese sources inaccessible, scholars concentrated on American, and to a lesser extent United Nations and Commonwealth, foreign policy and its relation to the peninsula. In addition, the later years of the war, consisting largely of a static war of patrols, attracted less interest from scholars who investigated the actions of decision-makers, both political and military.³

³ See: Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs, Volume Two: Years of Trial and Hope* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1956); David Rees, *Korea: The Limited War* (New York: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1964); Charles M. Dobbs, *The Unwanted Symbol: American Foreign Policy, the Cold War and Korea, 1945-1950* (Kent, OH: Kent State University, 1981); Max Hastings, *The Korean War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987); Bruce C. Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War, Vol.2: The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947-1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); William Stueck, "Revisionism and the Korean War," *Journal of Conflict Studies* (Online), Vol. 22, No. 1, 1 August 2002, <http://journals.hil.unb.ca/index.php/jcs/article/view/365/576#a22> (accessed September 26, 2015); Kathryn Weathersby, "'Should We Fear This?' Stalin and the Danger of War with America." (Working Paper No. 39, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2002) <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/ACFAEF.pdf> (accessed September 26, 2015); William Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History* (Princeton: Princeton

The historiography on Canada's military contribution to the Korean War is limited, but some debates have emerged from it. The main historical point of contention amongst Canadian military historians concerns the extent of Canada's combat readiness and the adequacy of training and equipment the soldiers who were sent to Korea received. At the core of this debate is the Canadian Government's approach to recruitment. While Canada, in 1950, had permanent professional troops who were trained and combat-ready, the Government decided to look elsewhere for soldiers to send to Korea. Instead of relying on the Canadian Army Active Force, the professional soldiers, Canadian officials elected to raise a Special Force for service in Korea consisting of men enrolled for a period of 18 months.⁴ This decision, which can seem counter-intuitive to contemporary observers, stemmed from senior officers and Cabinet's understanding that any future large-scale conflict would take place in Europe, and perhaps even North America. As such, trained troops were better used in the defence of Canadian territory, and if required as part of a deployment against Soviet aggression in Europe, not in a far-removed country in a relatively minor war with debatable strategic importance.⁵ Adding to the problems, the recruitment standards of the Special Force were inferior to those of the Active Force in order to promote rapid enlistments and deployments.⁶

In his 1966 official history of the Canadian Army in Korea, Lieutenant-Colonel Herbert Fairlie Wood initiated the debate with his sharp criticism of the Government's

University Press, 2002); William Stueck (ed.), *The Korean War in World History* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2004); and David Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter: America and the Korean War* (New York: Hyperion, 2007)

⁴ Herbert Fairlie Wood, *Strange Battleground: The Operations in Korea and their Effects on the Defence Policy of Canada* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1965), 23.

⁵ *ibid.* 20-22.

⁶ *ibid.* 25.

actions and policies on the Special Force. Though the book is primarily narrative in nature, the author nonetheless seeks to assess the consequences of the war on the Canadian military establishment. He argues that Canada was unprepared to fight a war aimed at preserving an idea, namely collective security. For him, officials were uncertain of what the purpose of the war truly was, and this translated into improvised plans, often with negative repercussions.⁷ Initially, most soldiers of the Special Force were either veterans from the Second World War, whom the government had been hoping to recruit for this conflict, and young men looking for adventure. The cause for which they would fight in Korea was often a secondary concern. Moreover, and more importantly, Wood explains that Canada's Army was not prepared for the task its government gave it in 1950. The Active Force was too small, ill equipped, and inadequately funded. The decision to raise an entirely new fighting force with different enlistment terms and requirements, and what he sees as unreasonable deadlines, led to the recruitment of undesirable elements and other administrative problems.⁸ The army was additionally unprepared in terms of equipment, which was lacking, inadequate, or not suited to Korean conditions.⁹ Thus, Wood blames decision makers, both military and civilians, for their lack of foresight and general improvisation in their approach to participation in Korea. However, Wood concludes that the army solved its problems, and that the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade became an effective fighting force by 1952.¹⁰

In 1999, David J. Bercuson published *Blood on the Hills: The Canadian Army in the Korean War*. This book is one of the major contributions to Canadian scholarship on

⁷ *ibid.* 26, and 30-40.

⁸ Wood, *Strange Battleground*, 26, 29-30, and 34-38.

⁹ *ibid.* 35-36.

¹⁰ This date coincides with the entry in the war of Permanent Force units – the professional soldiers. David Jay Bercuson, *Blood on the Hills: The Canadian Army in the Korean War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 222; and Wood, 257-8.

the Korean War, and in some respect is a re-evaluation of Wood's arguments. Above anything else, the author seeks to evaluate the performance of the Canadian infantry during the Korean War, and to assess whether it was sufficiently prepared to face the conditions in Korea. He, too, claims that Canada's armed forces were unprepared, undertrained, ill equipped, and poorly led. For this, he blames the Government's post-war military policy and defence cuts. According to Bercuson, the government had forced the army to reduce its manpower to a dangerous level, and allowed its infrastructure and equipment to become outdated and unusable.¹¹ Bercuson holds that "The Canadian Army was not ready for even the mildest sort of international emergency in the summer of 1950."¹² Bercuson agrees, to an extent, with Wood's assessment, but feels it was too generous still. Contrary to Wood, himself a professional soldier and veteran of Korea, Bercuson felt that later contingents of men sent to Korea were even less ready than the first unprepared units. He claims that they were "not short on courage, tenacity, or dedication. But they went to Korea unprepared in doctrine, untrained in tactics, and woefully ill-equipped to fight a defensive war."¹³ Bercuson is careful not to blame the men themselves, but is scathing towards commanders, politicians, and planners.¹⁴

In 2002, Brent Byron Watson published *Far Eastern Tour*, the first study treating the experiences of the Canadian Infantry in the Korean War. Watson's work constituted a departure from the previous Canadian historiography on the Korean War that had been mostly concerned with decisions, command, strategy, policies, and operations. Rather than exploring those subjects, Watson adopts a soldier's perspective by examining such

¹¹ Bercuson, *Blood on the Hills*, 21.

¹² *ibid.* 23.

¹³ *ibid.* 222.

¹⁴ *ibid.* 225.

issues as food, technology, social events, entertainment, housing, alcohol consumption, and other aspects of the daily life of Canadian soldiers. The author concludes that life in Korea was needlessly hard, dangerous, and unpleasant for the common soldier, due to the poor work of the policy-makers of the Department of National Defence.¹⁵ Weighing in on the debate regarding preparedness, Watson firmly agrees with Bercuson and Wood in his apportioning of blame. He writes: “How senior commanders and defence planners could allow Canadian soldiers to endure such hardship remains a mystery[.]”¹⁶ Although groundbreaking in many ways, this book, like Bercuson’s, is primarily concerned with anglophone units, and specifically the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry’s (PPCLI) experience in Korea, and to a lesser extent the Royal Canadian Regiment’s (RCR). The Royal 22^e Régiment (R22^eR) is generally absent from the work.

One of the most recent additions to the Canadian historiography of the Korean War is William Johnston’s *A War of Patrols: Canadian Army Operations in Korea*, published in 2003. As the title suggests, it’s main interest lies in operations, planning, command, and performance. Unlike Bercuson, Wood, and Watson, the author argues that Canadians demonstrated greater professionalism than commonly understood. In particular, the author draws a distinction between the Special Force and the battalions that followed. Johnston holds that the Special Force and its soldiers were much more competent and prepared, mostly because they were often veterans of the Second World War, while the other battalions were much less prepared and did not achieve the same

¹⁵ Brent Byron Watson, *Far Eastern Tour: The Canadian Infantry in Korea, 1950-1953* (Montréal : McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 14-15.

¹⁶ Watson, *Far Eastern Tour*, 178.

success.¹⁷ The book unfolds on a month-by-month basis and offers a thorough, and unprecedented, evaluation of strategy, tactics, and performance for each major action. Johnston concludes that the success of the second battalions, that is the Special Force, over the first and third battalions that followed them is to a large extent attributable not to training but to action in the field and previous experience during the Second World War.¹⁸ For him, the extensive patrolling undertaken by the Special Force was instrumental to its seemingly better performance.¹⁹

In 1983, John Melady, a Canadian author of non-fiction and educator, published *Korea: Canada's Forgotten War*, a popular account. The author uses interviews, newspaper articles, and secondary literature to build a narrative account of the war. As such, he does not seek to make an argument, but rather attempts to bring to light Canadian involvement in this conflict in order to undermine the Korean War's status as a forgotten war.²⁰ In 1999, broadcaster Ted Barris wrote *Deadlock in Korea: Canadians at War, 1950-1953*, another popular history of the war. In his book, Barris concentrates on the experience of anglophone units, specifically from the Royal Canadian Navy, the PPCLI, and the RCR. Based primarily on interviews, this book is narrative in nature and does not seek to make any particular argument. The author relates events through quotations from the men who enlisted. Almost nothing is said of official policy, aside from references to press coverage of government statements.²¹

The first attempt at writing the history of the First Commonwealth Division was *The First Commonwealth Division: the Story of British Commonwealth Land Forces in*

¹⁷ William Johnston, *A War of Patrols: Canadian Army Operations in Korea* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003), xix.

¹⁸ Johnston, *A War of Patrols*, xx.

¹⁹ Johnston, 375-376.

²⁰ John Melady, *Korea: Canada's Forgotten War*. 2nd ed. (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2011).

²¹ Ted Barris, *Deadlock in Korea: Canadians at war, 1950-1953* (Toronto: T. Allen Publishers, 1999).

Korea, 1950-1953, by C.N. Barclay published in 1954. Of a non-academic nature, the book constitutes a narrative history of the division as a fighting unit. Stress is put on operations and specific engagements, rather than on experience or administrative matters. While Barclay does not advance an argument, he does conclude that the First Commonwealth Division was an unprecedented project of collaboration. He claims that it served as a demonstration that the armed forces of Commonwealth Countries could work effectively under integrated command.²²

Writing in 1988, Jeffrey Grey brought more balance to the narrative of the First Commonwealth Division. His *The Commonwealth Armies and the Korean War: An Alliance Study* looks at the patterns of relations between Commonwealth countries in Korea. To do so, he examines issues of command, financing, supply, administration, and combat effectiveness. For Grey, the division was consistently effective, but equally consistently riddled with deep internal disagreements.²³ The Australian scholar agrees that the Korean War demonstrated the extent to which Commonwealth forces remained highly interchangeable, thanks to the British-pattern organizational system that they all maintained, but he also states that the war highlighted some basic conflicts amongst Commonwealth countries. He shows that all countries were striving to highlight and maintain their independence from Britain throughout the war, and that Canada was perhaps the least co-operative of the Dominions. Even amongst military formations that have a common basic *modus operandi*, disunity remains a fundamental consequence of

²² Brigadier C.N. Barclay, *The First Commonwealth Division: The Story of British Commonwealth Forces in Korea, 1950-1953* (Aldershot: Gale & Polden Limited, 1954), 198.

²³ Jeffrey Grey, *The Commonwealth Armies and the Korean War: An Alliance Study* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 11-12.

collaboration in military affairs.²⁴ This multi-archival study of the First Commonwealth Division in Korea remains the most convincing contribution to its historiography.

The topic of French-Canadian military history has not attracted much interest from Canadian historians, regardless of their mother tongue. In 1974, Jean-Yves Gravel remarked that:

Il y a peu de travaux portant spécifiquement sur la participation des Canadiens français aux événements militaires et à la politique de défense. La plupart des historiens qui se sont intéressés aux questions militaires étaient des anglophones, qui, à l'exception de Desmond Morton, firent peu de place aux francophones.²⁵

Notwithstanding the passage of four decades, this observation, unfortunately, still largely holds true. While language might constitute a barrier for anglophone historians, one can only wonder why there is such limited interest amongst French-Canadian and Québec historians for their military history. While the historiography of pre-confederation French-Canadian military history is somewhat more developed, there is a void of scholarship for the following years. Amongst the authors who have been concerned with topics related to the wars of the 20th century, most have concentrated on the First World War, and even then the primary focus is almost invariably the conscription debate and the ensuing political and civil unrest.²⁶ The same conclusion

²⁴ *ibid.* 89-90.

²⁵ Jean-Yves Gravel, ed., *Le Québec et la guerre, 1867-1960* (Montréal: Éditions de Boréal Express, 1974), 9.

²⁶ Jean-Marie Fallu makes this interesting comment: “la littérature existante met l’accent sur l’opposition à la conscription au Québec, sur les problèmes de recrutement, de désertion, le tout alimenté par la ferveur nationaliste de l’époque. La persistance du mythe de l’opposition à la conscription a occulté l’importance de la participation volontaire de nombreux Québécois à des guerres, particulièrement au cours de deux grands conflits mondiaux. L’armée canadienne, retranchement ultime du pouvoir, prendra du temps à accepter les francophones. Peu d’ouverture est faite à ces Québécois dans la marine et l’aviation. À cause de leur langue, on les cantonne dans l’armée de terre, le corps d’armée le plus meurtrier. Le Canada anglais aura du mal à comprendre qu’on ne peut exiger l’égalité des sacrifices de la part des francophones sans leur accorder au préalable l’égalité des chances. Un autre mythe tenace est celui des désertions, dont

applies to francophone historiography of the Second World War, to which one must add the traumatic events of Dieppe.²⁷ Only two books are entirely devoted to the Korean War – along with a few passages from other volumes. Of these two, Jacques Castonguay's book is a regimental history of the Royal 22e Régiment's experiences in Korea, while Pierre Vennat's is a collection of articles from *La Presse* about the French-Canadian participation in the conflict.²⁸

When it comes to general French-Canadian military histories, only five attempts stand out. The first, Charles-Marie Boissonnault's 1967 *Histoire politico-militaire des Canadiens-français* is of a rather mixed quality. Published in the context of the centennial celebrations of confederation, and amidst the *Révolution tranquille*, the book is a curious blend of French-Canadian nationalism and pro-Canada rhetoric. Boissonnault wants to simultaneously demonstrate that French-Canadians held little attachment to the Crown and the British Empire, while being fiercely loyal subjects of the sovereigns.²⁹

The main study of the military history of Francophones in Canada is Jean-Yves Gravel's *Le Québec et la guerre*, published in 1974. This book is a collection of six

la fréquence au Canada anglais prouve qu'elles ne furent pas l'apanage du Québec." Jean-Marie Fallu, *Le Québec et la guerre, 1860-1954* (Québec : Les Publications du Québec, 2003), p.xiv; See also : Gérard Filteau, *Le Québec, le Canada et la Guerre de 1914-1918* (Montréal: Éditions de l'Aurore, 1977); Jean-Pierre Gagnon, *Le 22e bataillon (canadien-français), 1914-1919* (Ottawa et Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, et le ministère de la Défense nationale et le Centre d'édition du gouvernement du Canada, 1986); Jean Provencher, *Québec sous la loi des mesures de guerre 1918* (Trois-Rivières : Les Éditions du Boréal Express, 1971); Jean Provencher, *Québec, printemps 1918* (Montréal : L'Aurore, 1974); and Patrick Bouvier, *Déserteurs et insoumis : les Canadiens français et la justice militaire, 1914-1918* (Outremont : Athéna, 2003).

²⁷ See for instance: Lucien A. Dumais, *Un Canadien français à Dieppe* (Paris : Éditions France-Empire, 1968); Pierre Vennat, *Dieppe n'aurait pas dû avoir lieu*, (Montréal: Méridien, 1991); and Béatrice Richard, *La mémoire de Dieppe : Radioscopie d'un mythe* (Montréal : VLB Éditeur, 2002).

²⁸ Jacques Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépôt du Royal 22e Régiment : Vingt ans d'histoire, 1945-1965* (La Citadelle, Québec: Régie Du Royal 22e Régiment, 1974); and Pierre Vennat, *Baptiste au pays du matin calme: Les militaires canadiens-français en Corée, 1950-1953* (Montréal: Méridien, 2000).

²⁹ Charles-Marie Boissonnault, *Histoire Politico-Militaire des Canadiens-Français (1763-1945)* (Montréal: Éditions du Bien Public, 1967).

essays on different aspects of the military history of the province, most of which had previously been published as scholarly articles. From New France to the 1960s, this book aims to undermine the idea of Québec as a non-military people and to encourage further studies on the issue of Québec's military past. The editor wrote two of the articles, one on the Second World War in Québec, and the other on the Collège Militaire Royal de St-Jean (CMR), both of which are interesting in that they challenge the image of Québec as an anti-military society.³⁰

In 1987, Jean Pariseau and Serge Bernier published the first of their two-volume history of bilingualism in the Canadian Armed Forces for the Directorate of History and Heritage of the Department of National Defence. *Les Canadiens français et le bilinguisme dans les Forces armées canadiennes* is the only serious study of the place of the French language in Canada's armed forces. The authors trace the evolution of the defence establishment's attitude to the French language from 1763 to 1987. The first volume, entitled *Le spectre d'une armée bicéphale*, studies the initial Anglicisation of the military, which then morphed into separateness, and eventually a slow progress towards official bilingualism. The second volume, *Langues officielles: La volonté gouvernementale et la réponse de la Défense nationale*, looks at the slow implementation of the *Official Languages Act* in the armed forces and the people who fought for the advancement of the French language. The authors are mostly concerned with the official status of the French language in the armed forces, not the use of French at the rank-and-file level. Their history, though ground-breaking, is institutional in nature and concentrates on the administrative level, not the unit day-to-day realities of

³⁰ Gravel, ed., *Le Québec et la guerre*.

linguistic co-existence.³¹ Moreover, the chapter on the 1950s is largely based on Jean-Yves Gravel's previous work and incorporates relatively little new primary-source research.³²

The last attempt to study the military history of the province of Québec is Jean-Marie Fallu's *Le Québec et la guerre, 1860-1954*, an heavily illustrated book published in 2003. The book has a superb collection of photographs of Québec's participation in wars, from the Papal Zouaves of the 1860s to the Korean War. The short narratives that put the images in context are purely descriptive and sometimes factually incorrect. While hardly a major research effort, it has some value in that it attempts to reignite interest in Québec's military contributions.³³

The most recent contribution to the general history of French Canadians in the armed forces is Colonel Bernd Horn and Roch Legault's 2007 *Loyal Service: Perspectives on French-Canadian Military Leaders*. This book, like a significant segment of military history, is concerned with leadership and generals. The authors' purpose is to highlight French-Canadian loyalty to their country through the prism of military service:

The loyalty of French Canadians towards Canada and the Crown of England has been suspected since the first governor of the colony, Major-General James Murray, came to office in the 1760s. [...] Nonetheless, the matter normally came down to a widespread belief by anglophones that their French-Canadian brethren were not pulling their weight in national undertakings that required sacrifice and service. Conversely, many francophones felt loyalty did not necessarily entail

³¹ Serge Bernier and Jean Pariseau, *Les Canadiens français et le bilinguisme dans les Forces armées canadiennes: Tome I – 1763-1969, Le spectre d'une armée bicéphale* (Ottawa: Groupe Communication Canada, 1987); and Serge Bernier and Jean Pariseau, *Les Canadiens français et le bilinguisme dans les Forces armées canadiennes: Tome II – 1969-1987, Langues officielles: La volonté gouvernementale et la réponse de la Défense nationale* (Ottawa: Groupe Communication Canada, 1991).

³² Pariseau and Bernier, *Le spectre d'une armée bicéphale*, 427-430.

³³ Fallu, *Le Québec et la guerre, 1860-1954*.

supporting imperial foreign policy. As always, the truth lay somewhere in between.³⁴

The book assembles ten case studies of francophone generals from the 18th century to the UN mission in Rwanda. It seeks to explore the peculiarity of French-Canadian command and leadership and the contribution of the individuals studied to the development of the Canadian and French-Canadian nations.³⁵

Recently, French-Canadian scholars have reignited interest in francophone military history, and particularly Québec's role in the world wars. Michel Litalien has established himself as one of the most important writers on Québec and the First World War with his editing of soldier diaries and other studies of the experience of the First World War for francophones.³⁶ With respect to the Second World War, Yves Tremblay and Sébastien Vincent have published books in an effort to dispel the myth of coerced enlistment through conscription and to direct overdue attention to those French-Canadians who volunteered for service.³⁷ One of the more prolific authors on Québec's military history remains, however, Jacques Castonguay, a Second World War veteran who later served as professor of psychology and then director of the Collège Militaire Royal de St-Jean (CMR). His many works are mostly regimental histories commissioned

³⁴ Bernd Horn and Roch Legault (eds.), *Loyal Service: Perspectives on the French-Canadian Military Leaders* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press & The Dundurn Group, 2007), 11-12.

³⁵ Horn and Legault, *Loyal Service*.

³⁶ Michel Litalien and Stéphane Thibault, *Les Tranchées: Le quotidien de la guerre 1914-1918* (Outremont, Québec: Athéna, 2004); Michel Litalien, *Écrire sa guerre: Témoignages de soldats canadiens-français, 1914-1919* (Outremont, Québec: Athéna Éditions, 2011); and Honoré-Édouard Légaré, *Ce que j'ai vu - Ce que j'ai vécu, 1914-1916*, Michel Litalien (ed.) (Outremont: Athéna Éditions, 2013).

³⁷ Yves Tremblay, *Volontaires: Des Québécois en guerre, 1939-1945* (Outremont, Québec: Athéna, 2006); Sébastien Vincent, *Laissés dans l'ombre: Quatorze Québécois racontent leur participation volontaire à la Seconde Guerre mondiale* (Montréal: VLB, 2004); and Sébastien Vincent, *Ils ont écrit la guerre: La Seconde Guerre mondiale à travers des écrits de combattants canadiens-français* (Montréal: VLB Éditeur, 2010).

by these units, but nonetheless often constitute the only existing histories of these institutions.³⁸

The Royal 22^e Régiment has predictably been the object of more French-language publications than any other Canadian unit. However, all but one of the books published are regimental histories, produced to tell the story of the Regiment's participation in different conflicts. The first such book was Claudius Corneloup's 1919 *L'Épopée du vingt-deuxième*, a short book relating his experiences and the telling the story of the unit in the First World War.³⁹ His effort was followed in 1952 by Joseph Henri Chaballe's *Histoire du 22^e Bataillon canadien-français*, the official regimental history of the unit in the First World War. Chaballe's book is the first of a three-volume history of the regiment. A former soldier of the 22^e in the First World War, his book is a memoir-regimental history hybrid. He blends personal recollections, opinion, oral history, documentary evidence, and archival research in an interesting, but at times inaccurate, narrative of the Vandoos in the Great War.⁴⁰ The only academic study of the Royal 22^e Régiment is Jean-Pierre Gagnon's *Le 22^e Bataillon (canadien-français)*,

³⁸ Jacques Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépôt du Royal 22e Régiment : Vingt ans d'histoire, 1945-1965* (Québec: Régie Du Royal 22e Régiment, 1974); Jacques Castonguay, *Les défis du fort Saint-Jean: L'invasion ratée des américains en 1775*. (2nd ed.) (Saint-Jean: Éditions du Richelieu, 1975); Jacques Castonguay and Armand Ross, *Le Régiment de la Chaudière* (Lévis: Le Régiment, 1983); Jacques Castonguay, *Les Voltigeurs de Québec: Premier régiment canadien-français* (Québec: Les Voltigeurs de Québec, 1987); Jacques Castonguay, *Le Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean* (Montréal: Méridien, 1989); Jacques Castonguay, *Le 5e Régiment d'artillerie légère du Canada et ses prédécesseurs à Québec* (Courcellette, Québec: 5e Régiment d'artillerie légère du Canada, 1993); Jacques Castonguay, *La 16e Escadre Saint-Jean: Ses antécédents, ses unités, 1941-1994* (Saint-Roch-des-Aulnaies, Québec: La Beaucassière, 1994); Jacques Castonguay, *Les casques bleus au Rwanda* (Paris: Harmattan, 1998); Jacques Castonguay and Richard Garon, *Le 6e Régiment d'artillerie de campagne* (Lévis: 6e Régiment d'artillerie de campagne du Canada, 2002); Jacques Castonguay, *C'était la guerre à Québec, 1939-1945* (Montréal: Art Global, 2003); Jacques Castonguay, *Pourquoi a-t-on fermé le Collège militaire de Saint-Jean?* (Montréal: Art Global, 2005); Jacques Castonguay, *Rwanda: Souvenirs, témoignages, réflexions* (Montréal: Art Global, 2005); Jacques Castonguay, *Un trou de mémoire: La Guerre froide au Québec et dans le grand nord canadien* (Outremont: Carte Blanche, 2009); and Jacques Castonguay, *Les Opérations de l'armée et la Crise d'octobre: Ce qui s'est vraiment passé* (Outremont: Carte Blanche, 2010).

³⁹ Claudius Corneloup, *L'Épopée du vingt-deuxième* (Montréal: La Presse, 1919).

⁴⁰ Joseph Henri Chaballe, *Histoire du 22e Bataillon canadien-français* (Montréal: Chanteclerc, 1952).

1914-1919, published in 1986. The author described this work as a social-military study of the unit in the First World War. The author's main objective, here, is to uncover who exactly were the men who fought with the unit in Europe. To do so, Gagnon explored various records and paints a demographic portrait of the unit which reveals its class, ethnic, regional, provincial, and linguistic makeup.⁴¹

In 1964, Lieutenant-Colonel L. Lamontagne published the second volume of the R22^eR regimental history. This volume is primarily concerned with the interwar years and the Second World War. Its focus is essentially operational, with a particular attention being given to the Italy campaign.⁴² The third volume of this trilogy was written by Jacques Castonguay and published in 1974. In *Les Bataillons et le Dépôt du Royal 22^e Régiment : Vingt ans d'histoire, 1945-1965*, Jacques Castonguay explores the history of the Vandoos in the Korean War, along with various peacekeeping operations that took place from 1953 to 1965. It is the only regimental history of the Royal 22^e Régiment that is concerned primarily with the Korean War.⁴³ The final book on the unit, Serge Bernier's *Le Royal 22^e Régiment, 1914-1999*, was published in 1999. This book, offers a summary of the history of the R22^eR during the 20th century. It constitutes somewhat flawed contribution to the history of the regiment that nonetheless complements previous regimental histories. Although Bernier's coverage of the Korean War is insufficient – only 57 pages – his book is the most recent contribution to the history of the R22^eR.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Jean-Pierre Gagnon, *Le 22e Bataillon (canadien-français), 1914-1919: étude socio-militaire* (Ottawa: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1986).

⁴² Lt-Col. L. Lamontagne, with Charles Marie Boissonnault, *Histoire du Royal 22e Régiment*. Comité d'officiers du régiment (eds.) (La Citadelle, Québec: Éditions du Pélican et la Régie du Royal 22e Régiment, 1964).

⁴³ Jacques Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépôt du Royal 22^e Régiment*.

⁴⁴ Serge Bernier, *Le Royal 22e Régiment, 1914-1999* (Montréal: Art Global, 1999).

The historiography on bilingualism in the Canadian public service is more developed, and the topic has been the subject of more academic and non-academic studies. Marcel Chaput's *Pourquoi je suis séparatiste*, published in 1961, is an important source which reveals the overwhelmingly English-speaking nature of the federal civil service in the years prior to the *Révolution tranquille*. In this manifesto, Chaput, a former federal civil servant, explains how his nationalism emerged from his experience as a civil servant in Ottawa in the 1950s. As he points out, bilingualism in those years meant that francophones needed to learn English, without the reverse being true, which he saw as a demonstration of the inferior position of francophones in Canada at the time.⁴⁵ Pierre Elliott Trudeau in his memoirs echoed Chaput's conclusion about the small place of French in the federal apparatus.⁴⁶ In 1967, Ramsay Cook also published a book, *Canada and the French Canadian Question*, that argued for more cultural and linguistic duality in Canada as a key to the preservation of national unity, but also as a fundamental element of a distinctively Canadian nationhood.⁴⁷ Of late, however, scholars like Marcel Martel have questioned this perspective. In his book, *Le deuil d'un pays imaginé: Rêves, luttes, et dérouté du Canada français*, he chronicles the failure of the liberal project for a bilingual and bi-cultural society as promoted by the likes of Wilfrid Laurier, Henri Bourassa, and Louis St. Laurent.⁴⁸

More recently, scholars have argued that English Canada was undergoing its own Quiet Revolution at the same time as Québec was experiencing its *Révolution tranquille*. In his groundbreaking study *The Other Quiet Revolution*, José Igartua explored the

⁴⁵ Marcel Chaput, *Pourquoi je suis séparatiste* (Montréal: Les Éditions du Jour, 1961).

⁴⁶ Pierre Elliott Trudeau, *Memoirs* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1993).

⁴⁷ Ramsay Cook, *Canada and the French Canadian Question* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1967).

⁴⁸ Marcel Martel, *Le deuil d'un pays imaginé: Rêves, luttes, et dérouté du Canada français* (Ottawa: Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1997).

dynamics of English Canadian identity in the 1960s as it gradually abandoned its British conception of identity rooted in ethnicity, in favour of a more civic nationalism based on shared values and notions of liberty. To do so he explored key events and debates that shaped and determined how English Canada perceived its national identity in this time, such as the flag debate, the Bilingualism and Biculturalism commission, the Suez Crisis, and debates surrounding the monarchy.⁴⁹ In his 2014, Ph.D Dissertation, Robert Talbot showed that this change emerged from a long process of national redefinition in English Canada that had begun as a result of the First World War. He showed that English Canadian intellectuals were already calling for a more tolerant Canada that would fully embrace its French population and be accommodating of the French fact. He also explained that the Liberal Party became a major vehicle for English Canadians who sought a more bi-cultural and bilingual society. These two works show that the Korean War occurred at a time not only of greater French-Canadian self-awareness and nationalism, but also at a moment when an element of English Canada was willing to change its rapport to the French minority and build a more bilingual society.⁵⁰ Many liberals who were active in the Liberal Party in the 1940s, and who adopted these ideas, held key roles in the St. Laurent government. Such was the case of Brooke Claxton, who would be instrumental in changing the Canadian Armed Forces relationship to French Canadians.

⁴⁹ José Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution*.

⁵⁰ Robert Talbot, "Moving Beyond Two Solitudes: Constructing a Dynamic and Unifying Francophone/Anglophone Relationship, 1916-1940" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ottawa, 2013).

The Canadian historiography of the Korean War is a good example of the two solitudes in Canadian military history. English-Canadian historians have overlooked the experience of French Canadians in Korea and concentrated instead on the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and the Royal Canadian Regiment. They have also all but ignored existing sources written in the French language. On the other hand, French-Canadian historians, when they have not simply ignored the Korean War, have concentrated on the Royal 22^e Régiment. As such, the image of the Canadian participation to this conflict, as presented in the existing historiography, is not one of a common Canadian experience, but that of two distinct experiences, which appear only to be vaguely connected. This is problematic considering the necessary close collaboration between all Canadian units in Korea. A more unified vision based on a bilingual approach and study is required in order to produce a more coherent and unified narrative of the Canadian involvement in the Korean War. This thesis proposes to begin this work by looking at the French Canadians' interaction and relations with their English-Canadian peers. As a result, it relies on both English- and French-language sources that have been combined in order to draw a more complete understanding of events and processes that took place during the Korean War.

To do so, this thesis relies primarily on archival documents found at Library and Archives Canada, in Ottawa, and the Archives du Royal 22^e Régiment, located at the Citadelle in Québec City. The second chapter relies primarily on documents related to bilingualism in the Canadian military produced in the early 1950s. These are mostly correspondence between the Minister of National Defence, Brooke Claxton, and the Department of National Defence, and specifically with the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) General Guy Granville Simonds. While these sources have been examined

before, they have not been combined in a way that paints a full picture of the debate surrounding bilingualism in the Canadian military. Indeed, previous scholars have tended to examine the work of the *Committee on Bilingual Problems* from a single set of sources, usually Brookes Claxton's papers. While an excellent resource, this archival fond only reveals one side of the story, namely the documents that Claxton received. However, this fond has a sister set of archives, those of the Department of National Defence, which contain the other half of the correspondence between the Minister and his Department. Taken together, these two archival collections reveal a much more complex and nuanced story of the evolution of bilingualism policies in the Department, than what has thus far been reported in the historiography. The third chapter, relies primarily on the war diaries of the various units composing the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade, which testify to the day to day activities of these units. This chapter also taps into the various testimonies of soldiers who fought with the Royal 22^e Régiment in Korea. They include recorded oral history interviews, personal correspondence written during the Korean War, newspaper interviews, and memoirs produced after the war. These sources have been put in relation with each other in order to determine whether events were perceived similarly by francophones and anglophones in Korea.

This thesis does not seek to offer an overly positive or understanding interpretation of sources. Rather, it acts as a challenge to the conclusions of previous scholars rooted in more detailed and thorough research. Indeed, the current historiography has sought to highlight tension and conflict with respect to francophones and anglophones in the Canadian Armed Forces. In contrast, this work re-examines sources and uses a greater variety of documents from different archival collections to reveal that previous interpretations can only stand if the different sources are not put in

dialogue. Taken individually, they might suggest linguistic tensions, but taken together in a comprehensive multi-archival approach, they offer a much more balanced and nuanced story. The research for this thesis began with an expectation that it would reveal widespread conflict, but the sources when taken together told a different tale. In this respect, then, this thesis acts as a revision of previous scholarship on the topic of bilingualism in the Canadian armed forces in the 1950s, using a more complete approach and a more diverse set of evidence. This thesis, then, seeks to fill a gap in the extant literature and challenge its conclusions through a more thorough and diversified research.

The first chapter sets the stage for the main argument that will follow. It begins with the international context that led to the Korean War, and follows with the American and international response in the summer and fall of 1950. The narrative then turns to Canada's immediate reaction to the unfolding crisis, the government's decision to commit troops to the Far East, and the raising of the Special Force. In the second half of the chapter, attention turns to the history of French Canadians and the French language in the Canadian military in the first half of the 20th century, and to the role of the Royal 22^e Régiment in that history.

The second chapter explores the Department of National Defence's attitudes towards francophones in the early 1950s, and its attempts to move towards increased bilingualism. It reveals a the complex clash of interests between the high-ranking officers of the department, who resisted change, the Minister of National Defence, who wanted change, and other more junior officers, who wanted to make change work. It shows that Brooke Claxton, the Minister, was not opposed to bilingualism, as some

francophone historians have suggested,⁵¹ but was in fact one of its driving forces. On the other hand, it shows that the Chief of the General Staff, General Guy G. Simonds, lionized in the English-language historiography for his actions during the Second World War,⁵² was in fact the main obstacle to further bilingualism. While his contribution during the Second World War was remarkable, this chapter highlights his failure to make the Canadian Armed Forces more welcoming of French Canadians, arguing that, in fact, he had a negative impact on the progress of French in this institution.

The third chapter turns the lens of analysis to the implication of linguistic difference on the battlefield in Korea. It looks at interactions between francophones and anglophones in Korea to reveal how both groups worked with each other. The chapter demonstrates that, unlike what some officers in the Department of National Defence claimed, a bilingual force did not constitute an impediment to effective military operations. It also shows that there was a willingness to cooperate between francophones and anglophones, and that anglophones were willing to make accommodations for French-speaking soldiers when and where possible. It demonstrates that, when French Canadians had grievances with respect to their conditions in Korea, they were not directed at their English-speaking peers in the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade, but at the Department of National Defence in Ottawa.

This project is rooted in recent historiographical currents in military history that explore themes of soldier culture, experience, and *vécu*. Authors, such as John Keegan,

⁵¹ See: Pariseau and Bernier, *Le spectre d'une armée bicéphale*; and Jean-Yves Gravel, "La fondation du Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 27, no. 2, (September 1973).

⁵² Dominick Graham, *The Price of Command: A Biography of General Guy Simonds* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1993); J.L. Granatstein, *The Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders in the Second World War* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005); Terry Copp, *Guy Simonds and the Art of Command* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); and Douglas E. Delaney, *Corps Commanders: Five British and Canadian Generals at War, 1939-1945* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011).

in his seminal *The Face of Battle*, argued for the emphasis of military history to be re-centred away from operations, high command, and strategy, towards the more micro-level of soldiers. His book explored the experience of the common soldier in various important battles, to reveal the reality of combat for the men who conduct it.⁵³ This approach developed later in the writing of Canadian military history, and is spearheaded by Tim Cook, with his study of First World War soldier culture.⁵⁴ In French Canada, Sébastien Vincent has been the main advocate of such studies, but he concentrates primarily on the Second World War. As he explains, “Le public contemporain [...] ne veut pas seulement comprendre comment vivaient les soldats, il est fasciné par leur vécu; il veut saisir leur représentations, ressentir leurs émotions, comprendre leurs comportements et leurs attitudes.”⁵⁵ Official organisations have also participated in this reorientation of military history around the soldier. Initiatives like the Memory Project or the War Museum’s Oral History Project are contributions to this burgeoning interest.

This thesis is located at the intersection of military, institutional, cultural, social and political history. It is military and institutional in its context and general subject, cultural in its focus, and socio-political in its implications. It constitutes a contribution to Canadian social-military history, to French-Canadian and Québec military history, and to the history of the Royal 22^e Régiment itself. It is also an addition to the history of the French language in the Canadian armed forces. This thesis does not claim that the experiences of all French Canadians in Korea were excellent with respect to language, or

⁵³ John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1976).

⁵⁴ See: Tim Cook, *Clio’s Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006); Tim Cook, *At the Sharp End: Canadians Fighting the Great War 1914-1916* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2007); and Tim Cook, *Shock Troops: Canadians Fighting the Great War 1917-1918* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2009).

⁵⁵ Vincent, *Laissés dans l’ombre*.

that all English Canadians were respectful of the French fact. Nor does it claim that the Korean War forced the Department of National Defence to implement official bilingualism. Instead, it shows that overall, language did not constitute a source of tension and conflict amongst Canadian soldier on the battlefield in Korea, and that goodwill generally characterized interactions between Canadians. With respect to the Department of National Defence, the present work maintains that the Korean War offered additional justification, and gave traction to, a policy of increased attention and respect for the ambitions of francophones in its ranks. The Korean War did not solve the problem, but it gave momentum and support to the processes and individuals who would enact solutions.

Chapter 1

“The wrong war, at the wrong place, at the wrong time, and with the wrong enemy”⁵⁶:

Canada, the Korean War, and the Royal 22^e Régiment

This chapter will offer context on the outbreak and progression of the Korean War from the post-1945 partition of the Korean peninsula to the Canadian entry into the war. It will explain the American and international response, and look at the Canadian government’s decision to join the American-led war effort. In addition, this chapter will explore French-Canadian military history in order to provide context regarding the place of French Canadians in the Canadian military, and the role of the Royal 22^e Régiment in it.

Often dubbed “The Forgotten War,”⁵⁷ the Korean War was in many respects the first “hot” conflict of the Cold War and had a lasting impact on the development of the post-1945 world. The war itself was largely a result of the post-WWII partition of the Korean peninsula by the United States and the Soviet Union. Korea had previously been under Japanese influence since 1876, and made into a Japanese protectorate in 1905. Five years later, Japan annexed the peninsula and ruled it until the Empire’s defeat in the Second World War.⁵⁸ In 1945, American President Harry S. Truman reached an agreement with the USSR, arranging for the Japanese troops stationed in Korea to be disarmed south of the 38th parallel by the Americans, while those north of the dividing

⁵⁶ This comment from American General Omar N. Bradley, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, regarding the Korean War was delivered in a testimony to Congress on April 11, 1951. The Canadian government could likely have sympathised with this point of view.

⁵⁷ Melady, *Korea*.; Cadeau, *La guerre de Corée*, 10; Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter*, 3; and Bercuson, *Blood on the Hills*, 3.

⁵⁸ Cadeau, *La guerre de Corée*, 29-33; and Halberstam, 67.

line were to surrender to Soviet forces. As a result of this, the Korean nation was divided arbitrarily across a virtual line.⁵⁹ Though this division was intended to be a temporary measure,⁶⁰ the two occupying powers could never reach an agreement on the terms of an eventual reunification. Neither party was open to the possibility of a Korean government ideologically aligned to its rival.⁶¹

Two dramatically different regimes thus emerged on each side of the new border, propped up by their respective occupying powers. In August 1948, the United States supported the creation in the south of the Republic of Korea (ROK), a conservative authoritarian regime headed by Syngman Rhee.⁶² Rhee was educated in the United States, where he had lived for thirty-five years. A staunch anti-communist and a virulent nationalist, Rhee had not been associated with the Japanese occupier, as some of his rivals had, and had the added advantage of strong American support. Soon, the regime he led became notorious for its ruthlessness and intolerance of dissent, especially towards communist sympathizers.⁶³

In the north, the USSR soon retaliated by creating the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), a Stalinist regime, led by Kim Il Sung. Born Kim Sŏng Ju, he had grown up in a nationalist family and spent much of his youth in a communist guerrilla group dedicated to fighting the Japanese.⁶⁴ During the Second World War, he joined the Soviet Army, and was later installed as leader of the Soviet-controlled section of the Korean peninsula because of his commitment to the USSR's worldview and the

⁵⁹ Wood, *Strange Battleground*, 4.

⁶⁰ "Cairo Declaration of December 1 1943," in *Documents on the Korean Crisis* (Ottawa: E. Cloutier, King's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1951), 1.

⁶¹ Wood, 5.

⁶² Wood, 6 and 11; and Halberstam, 47.

⁶³ Hastings, *The Korean War*, 37-40.

⁶⁴ Bradley K. Martin, *Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader: North Korea and the Kim Dynasty* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2006), 29-30; and Halberstam, 73-74.

communist cause.⁶⁵ Soon after taking power, Kim began a program of reform that increased education and industrialization, thanks to financial and technical support from his Soviet sponsors, while implementing a totalitarian Stalinist police state.⁶⁶ Although postwar agreements had specifically provided for a reunification of Korea through a democratic system, both Kim and Rhee would claim to represent the legitimate government of the entire peninsula, and advocate for reunification, albeit on their own terms.

The Korean War began in the early hours of 25 June 1950, when North Korea's Korean People's Army crossed the 38th parallel and invaded the Republic of Korea.⁶⁷ The offensive followed months of cross-border clashes initiated by both sides. Rhee and Kim both had ambitions for unification and welcomed an eventual military conflict to impose their dominance on the country. However, neither could afford to jeopardize their precarious regimes by going on the offensive without the blessing, and financial and military support of their respective guarantors. This support was not forthcoming, and thus both sides initiated minor skirmishes in an attempt to draw their opponent into launching a full invasion, forcing the two superpowers to offer help.⁶⁸ Nonetheless, as was made obvious by Kathryn Weathersby's groundbreaking research in the Soviet archives, Kim was indeed the one to propose the invasion, though she maintains that it was Stalin who made the final decision to invade South Korea.⁶⁹ As for Stalin's motives,

⁶⁵ Halberstam, 76-77; and Martin, *Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader*, 48-49.

⁶⁶ Martin, 56-58.

⁶⁷ Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*, 10-11; Wood, 3; and Cadeau, *La guerre de Corée*, 67.

⁶⁸ Cumings, *The Roaring of the Cataract*, 406 and 618; and William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*, 10-11.

⁶⁹ Kathryn Weathersby, "The Soviet Role in the Korean War: The State of Historical Knowledge" in William Stueck (ed.) *The Korean War in World History* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2004). 65.

Weathersby emphasizes the question of security in the Soviet Far East, which the communist leader believed would be jeopardized by Japan in the coming decades.⁷⁰ By September the communists had quickly seized most of the peninsula. As a result, ROK forces, and the small American military advisory group stationed in Korea, were confined to the small enclave around the port-city of Pusan in the southeast of Korea.⁷¹

When the United States received news of the invasion, it called a meeting of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to present resolution 82, requesting “the immediate cessation of hostilities.”⁷² The resolution passed thanks to the Soviet boycott of the Security Council over the granting of China’s seat to Taiwan – or Formosa as it was commonly called then – notwithstanding a communist triumph on the mainland the year before.⁷³ Soon after, the United States committed troops to a UN-sponsored “police action” to repel North Korea’s aggression and re-establish peace on the peninsula. The United States contributed the most troops to the operations, and sought troop commitments from other countries, including Canada, in an effort to maintain the action’s legitimacy as a genuine collective security endeavour, and not as an American unilateral effort under the guise of UN approval.⁷⁴ Still, the UN constituted little more than a veneer for a response planned and directed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and its member states.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 67.

⁷¹ Wood, 3; and Johnston, 19.

⁷² Wood, 8; Cadeau, *La guerre de Corée*, 88-89; and United Nations, United Nations Security Council, “82 (1950) Resolution of 25 June 1950,” *Security Council Resolutions*, (1950), 4. Accessed 27 September 2015: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/82\(1950\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/82(1950)).

⁷³ Wood, 8-9; Hastings, 50; and Cadeau, *La guerre de Corée*, 89.

⁷⁴ Lester B. Pearson, *Mike : The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson PC, CC, OM, OBE, MA, LLD, Volume 2 : 1948-1957*, John A. Munro and Alex I. Inglis (eds.) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 148.

The first year of the war featured sweeping movements with successive advances and retreats up and down the peninsula – what one author has termed the “yo-yo war.”⁷⁵ The following two years consisted of mostly static fighting along a more or less fixed front line. Though the initial northern invasion was a resounding success, the Korean People’s Army quickly overstretched its supply lines, leaving it unable to decisively capture and hold the entirety of the peninsula. By the beginning of August 1950, the offensive had lost steam and, lacking munitions, food, and having suffered massive casualties, the North Koreans were forced to settle around the Pusan perimeter.⁷⁶

The Americans then proceeded to massively build-up forces within the perimeter in preparation for a counter-attack, which came on September 15. That same day, Commander in Chief of the United Nations Command, General Douglas MacArthur, the Second World War American hero who was then also Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers charged with supervising the reconstruction of Japan, launched what would become his last great initiative. The masterfully executed amphibious landing at the port of Inchon, a few kilometres from Seoul and more than 300 kilometres northwest of Pusan, was a daring and dangerous plan that required precise timing due to the peculiar tidal patterns of the area. At the given time, 13,000 soldiers landed virtually unopposed far behind enemy lines and rushed to Seoul, which they captured on September 25.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, on September 16, the American troops in the Pusan perimeter went on the offensive against the Korean People’s Army, which effectively collapsed on September 21.⁷⁸ The UN offensive soon overran the North Koreans and

⁷⁵ Barris, 43.

⁷⁶ Cadeau, *La guerre de Corée*, 121 and 131; and Halberstam, 254.

⁷⁷ Halberstam, 306.

⁷⁸ Cadeau, *La guerre de Corée*, 159.

captured most of the country, reaching the Yalu River, the natural border between North Korea and China, on October 26.⁷⁹ Emboldened by the tremendous progress of his troops and his triumph at Inchon, MacArthur now wanted to enter Manchuria and pursue his progress towards Beijing in order to overthrow Mao Zedong's communist regime.

The United States had been shocked at the success of Mao's People's Liberation Army in defeating the pro-Western Chinese government the previous October. Domestically, the Republicans were criticising the Democratic administration over the "loss of China" and the loss of the nuclear monopoly as the USSR had developed atomic weapons in 1949.⁸⁰ But Mao's China, though victorious, remained weak and without international legitimacy. It needed a strong demonstration of resolve and the threatening presence of US forces on its border afforded just that opportunity. Moreover, striking at the United States, the driving force behind the UN's war in Korea, was an attractive option given that it had been the biggest foreign sponsor of the Nationalists, the communists' rivals in the Chinese Civil War.⁸¹ As such, on October 2, Zhou Enlai, the Chinese foreign minister, had informed the Americans, through the Indian ambassador – the United States and China having no diplomatic relations – that were the UN offensive to continue its drive into North Korea, that is to say were they to cross the 38th parallel, China would have to retaliate. MacArthur, who proceeded with his advance, did not heed these warnings.⁸²

Since the month of August, the Chinese had been preparing for entry in the war and had mobilized their troops near the Yalu River, but Mao took the decision to fight in

⁷⁹ *ibid.* 173-74.

⁸⁰ William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*, 42.

⁸¹ Xiaobing Li, *China's Battle for Korea: The 1951 Spring Offensive* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 17.

⁸² Halberstam, 336.

Korea on October 8 after the Americans had failed to respond to the Chinese ultimatum. Following many incursions into Korean territory in the month of October, the Chinese proceeded to move 18 infantry divisions, about 300,000 men, into North Korea. The Chinese were hardened veterans of the Second World War and the Chinese Civil War. Some had been combatants for most of their lives. Using the guerrilla techniques that had been very effective against the Nationalists combined with a more conventional invasion, and supported by seemingly endless amounts of men, the Chinese made blistering progress, and forced United Nations Command (UNC) into a staggering retreat. From November 1950 to January 1951, the People's Liberation Army launched a succession of large-scale operations that culminated in the capture of Seoul on January 4.⁸³

After the Chinese offensive, the relationship between MacArthur and Truman became increasingly tense as the general disobeyed orders and publically contradicted official government policies. Further embattled by these setbacks, MacArthur began advocating the use of nuclear weapons against China.⁸⁴ On April 11, 1951 the President had had enough and he officially relieved the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers and replaced him with General Matthew B. Ridgeway. As commander of the UN forces in Korea, Ridgeway stabilized the front along the 38th parallel by the month of February 1951. From then on the war became largely static, not unlike the First World War. In late 1951, the belligerents began truce negotiations and large military offensives were replaced by endless patrols and comparatively minor skirmishes.

⁸³ *ibid.* 57-58.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 243.

In Canada, the Korean crisis was initially met with confusion and hesitation by Liberal Prime Minister Louis S. St-Laurent's government. Lester B. Pearson, then Secretary of State for External Affairs, recalled in his memoirs that:

When [the invasion] happened I was caught completely off-guard by the North Korean aggression and by the United States response to it. At almost the exact time on 26 June when President Truman was deciding that the United States would be giving air and sea support to the South Koreans, I was talking to some press people in Ottawa and telling them, off the record, that I did not expect a US military response to the invasion.⁸⁵

Indeed, the 21st Parliament was approaching the end of its 2nd session and was busy settling supply matters before the summer prorogation when news of the situation in Korea reached Canada. George Drew, then Conservative Leader of the Opposition, questioned Pearson on the UN resolution and on other developments, but MPs seemed rather more concerned by the safety of any Canadians who were in Korea than by a potential military commitment.⁸⁶ On June 30, the final sitting of the House of Commons before the summer recess, the Prime Minister rose to inform the House that the government supported the UN Security Council resolution and that

Any participation by Canada in carrying out the foregoing resolution [...] would not be participation in a war against any state. It would be our part in collective police action under the control and authority of the United Nations for the purpose of restoring peace to an area where an aggression has occurred [...].⁸⁷

St-Laurent added that Canada was sending three destroyers, HMCS *Cayuga*, *Athabaskan*, and *Sioux*, to Korean waters. The ships departed Esquimalt on July 5,

⁸⁵ Lester B. Pearson, *Mike*, V.2, 145.

⁸⁶ Canada, House of Commons, "June 26th 1950," 21st Parliament, 2nd Session, *Debates of the House of Commons*, 4115-6.

⁸⁷ Canada, House of Commons, "June 30th 1950," 21st Parliament, 2nd Session, *Debates of the House of Commons*, 4459.

1950.⁸⁸ When the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Norwegian Trygve Lie, asked Canada to commit ground forces on July 14, the government found itself in an uncomfortable situation as postwar demobilization meant it did not have the immediate capacity to do so. This state of affairs was particularly embarrassing since NATO, which provided for the collective security of its members had been created only the year before. Canada, which had committed to offer troops for the defence of collective security, was unable to deliver on its promises at the first occasion. Although the Korean War did not constitute an aggression against a member state according to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, Canada's lack of military preparedness for the Korean War cast doubts on its ability to meet an aggression in Europe.⁸⁹ Nonetheless, Canada announced on July 21 that it would send a long-range RCAF transport squadron to serve in support of the operations in Korea. The RCAF would play an important role in carrying supplies from North America to Japan and would complete 600 round trips and carry 13,000 passengers and 7,000,000 tons of freight across the Pacific.⁹⁰

Cabinet famously took the decision to send ground troops to Korea on the train that was bringing its members back to Ottawa from Toronto, where they had attended the funeral of former Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King who had passed away on July 22.⁹¹ Lester Pearson recalled the event in his memoirs:

Mr Mackenzie King died on 22 July 1950, and the Cabinet went to Toronto in a special train for the funeral. On the way back to Ottawa the Cabinet at last got down to the business of Korea. For almost the entire trip we argued about what we should do. [...] It was during that train ride

⁸⁸ *ibid.*; Johnston, 21; Bercuson, *Blood on the Hills*, 29; and Wood, 13.

⁸⁹ Bercuson, *Blood on the Hills*, 30-31; and Johnston, 23.

⁹⁰ Wood, 14, and 179; and Bercuson, *Blood on the Hills*, 31.

⁹¹ Dale C. Thompson, *Louis St. Laurent: Canadian* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1967), 295.

that Mr St Laurent first expressed his support for an active Canadian involvement in Korea.⁹²

On the 7th of August, the Prime Minister delivered a statement over the CBC in which he announced that Canada would recruit an army brigade, known as the Canadian Army Special Force, which would be “specially trained and equipped to be available for use in carrying out Canada’s obligations under the United Nations charter or the North Atlantic pact.” This brigade, the Prime Minister explained, could naturally be used in Korea if so required by the UN. Canada, he said, was looking for “young men, physically fit, single or married, and particularly just as many veterans of the Second World War as possible.” That unit was to be organised around existing permanent units of the Canadian Army, namely the Royal Canadian Regiment, the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry, and the Royal 22^e Régiment, in order to ensure association with the proud regimental histories of these units. All of these units had one battalion of professional soldiers who formed the core of the Canadian Regular Force. To ease recruitment and to promote a sense of shared identity, the Special Force units were created as second battalions of these three regiments, along with third battalions that were to take the excess recruits and train them for future reinforcement to Korea.⁹³

In time, this brigade would become the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade, which in June 1951, would be placed under the command of the newly created 1st Commonwealth Division, a formation that also included troops from the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and India.⁹⁴ The Royal 22^e Régiment was the only francophone unit in

⁹² Pearson, 148-149.

⁹³ Louis S. St-Laurent, “The Korean War: Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent appeals for volunteer soldiers,” *CBC Radio*, 7 August 1950, CBC Digital Archives, <http://www.cbc.ca/player/Digital+Archives/War+and+Conflict/Korean+War/ID/1795669868/>

⁹⁴ Wood, 117-118.

Canada's regular army at that time, and the hastily raised 2nd Battalion would prove the only francophone unit in the 1st Commonwealth Division. It constituted the largest francophone unit in Korea during the war, though not the only one, since France and Belgium had each sent a battalion.⁹⁵ The Bataillon français de l'ONU had a very difficult war. It served in some of the most active sectors of the battlefield, and suffered 268 men killed out of a total of 3,763 men who served with the unit between 1950 and 1953.⁹⁶ It fought with the 23rd US Regiment, 2nd US Infantry Division, and amassed an impressive number of decorations, including the Croix de guerre des théâtres d'opérations extérieures with four palms, 3 US Presidential Unit Citations, and 2 Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citations. Its soldiers earned 1,898 individual citations.⁹⁷ While some linguistic problems arose, especially concerning training, the French Battalion did not suffer excessively from operating in an English-language environment. In fact, the French "Télégramme officiel No3769," which announced the recruitment of a battalion for service in Korea made it clear that knowledge of English

⁹⁵ See: Erwan Bergot, *Bataillon de Corée, les volontaires français 1950-1953* (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1983); Jacques Bouttin, *Bataillon Monclar* (Paris: Éditions du Scorpion, 1961); Ivan Cadeau (éd.), *Le bataillon français de l'ONU en Corée: le combat méconnu des volontaires français 1950-1953* (Paris: Service Historique de la Défense/Éditions du coteau, 2010); André Lemoine, *Un du bataillon de Corée* (Paris: Amiot-Dumont, 1951); Jean-François Pelletier, *Le bataillon français de l'O.N.U. en Corée (historique: 1950-1953)* (Les Jonquerets de Livet: Éditions des Argonautes, 2004); and Jacques Vernet and Pierre Ferrari, *Corée 1950-1953. L'héroïque Bataillon français* (Paris: Lavauzelle, 2001). There was also a Belgian contingent, the Corps de Volontaires pour la Corée, See: Albert Crahay, *Bérêts Bruns en Corée 1950-53* (Brussels: Editions J.M. Collet, 1985); Jean-Pierre Gahide, *La Belgique et la guerre de Corée: 1950-1955* (Brussels: Koninklijk Legermuseum, 1991); Petra Gunst, Armand Philips, and Benoît Verhaegen, *Une saison en Corée : Du « Kamina » à l'Imjin* (Brussels : Racine, 1999); Henri Moreau de Melen, *Mémoires de Léopold III à la Corée* (Brussels: Racine, 2009); and Roland Gaul, Kevin Gony, Patrick Marmann, et Jan Van der Fraenen, *Belgians Can Do Too!: Le bataillon belgo-luxembourgeois en Corée, 1950-1955* (Bruxelles: Musée royal de l'Armée et d'Histoire Militaire à Bruxelles, 2010). For Luxembourg see : Fernand Kartheiser, *Le Luxembourg et la guerre de Corée, 25 juin 1950 - 27 juillet 1953*, Doctoral Thesis (Lille : Thèses de l'Université de Lille, 1991).

⁹⁶ Cadeau, *Le bataillon français de l'ONU en Corée*, 206-207.

⁹⁷ Cadeau, *Le bataillon français de l'ONU en Corée*.

would be considered an advantage in the selection of officers and non-commissioned officers (NCO), with the result that most recruits could speak at least some English.⁹⁸

A Belgian battalion also served in the Korean War and included Walloon, Flemish, and Luxembourger soldiers. The Corps de Volontaires pour la Corée was initially commanded Lieutenant-Colonel Albert Crahay, and included a platoon of Luxembourger soldiers, who formed 1st Platoon, “A” Company. They were initially placed under British command as part of the 29th Infantry Brigade because the Belgian Army was patterned along British Army structures. When the 1st Commonwealth Division was created, they were transferred to American command as part of the 1st US Cavalry Division, and then the 3rd US Infantry Division. The Belgians seemed to have seen their multinational and multilingual nature as an advantage. Crahay, in his memoirs, wrote:

Le 18 avril 1953, deux pelotons attaqués étaient flamands et les deux autres wallons; nos chars étaient américains, ainsi que les observateurs d’artillerie et de [mortiers] 4’2”; un des deux bataillons d’artillerie en appui direct était américain, l’autre turc; l’artillerie coréenne nous a aussi donné un bon coup d’épaule; nous avons aussi cinq ou six Luxembourgeois dans nos compagnies mais ils n’avaient heureusement pas de postes radio. On peut imaginer les cheveux blancs du S2 d’en face, chargé de comprendre nos messages en français, flamand, américain, turc et coréen; de notre côté, pas un coup ne se trompa d’adresse ni n’arriva trop tôt ni trop tard.⁹⁹

Of course, the Belgian army managed its linguistic duality by enforcing bilingualism on Commanding Officers (CO), and segregating its other ranks by language. In that battalion, for instance, “A” and “B” Companies were French-speaking, and “C” Company was Flemish-speaking. The Luxembourger platoon served in the francophone

⁹⁸ Pelletier, *Le bataillon français de l’O.N.U. en Corée*, 29, and 54.

⁹⁹ Crahay, *Béréts Bruns en Corée 1950-53*, 204.

“A” Company.¹⁰⁰ Like the French, the Belgians’ war was more difficult once they joined the Americans who fought in more active areas. Out of 3,587 Belgians who served in Korea, 101 died, and 2 of the 89 Luxembourgers who joined them were killed. The Corps de Volontaires pour la Corée was awarded l’Ordre de Léopold, a US Presidential Unit Citation, and 2 Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citations.¹⁰¹ The Belgian solution to its linguistic duality is interesting in that it demonstrated that a fully bilingual army was possible provided that certain ranks were bilingual. Moreover, their war record proves that linguistic duality and bilingualism did not constitute an impediment to military effectiveness, an argument that, we shall see, was often put forward by some senior English-Canadian officers in the early 1950s. In fact, Crahay’s memoirs gives the impression that linguistic plurality and the ability to operate in many languages at once constituted a tactical advantage against the enemy.

The Canadian decision to send men to Korea had been taken, but there remained the problem of finding the manpower required. The Special Force had been announced to the public without previously having informed army recruiters and recruitment depots. In the first few months, recruitment was chaotic with the result that many unfit men found themselves in uniform. Officers spent the following months culling their forces of those who could not be deployed, which caused delays in reaching combat readiness.¹⁰² From the outset, the three Canadian infantry regiments, the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry, the Royal Canadian Regiment, and the francophone Royal 22^e Régiment, were faced with organizational problems, which would prove particularly stark for the R22^eR.

¹⁰⁰ Gunst, Philips, and Verhaegen, *Une saison en Corée*, 35.

¹⁰¹ Crahay, 210.

¹⁰² Wood, 29-30; Johnston, 25-26.

Possibly the most famous Canadian francophone unit, the Royal 22^e Régiment occupies an important place in the military history of French-Canada, Québec, and Québec City, where it is located. Its history dates back to the First World War, and the regiment is intimately linked with the French language and the francophone population of Canada. It was created largely as a result of pressure put on the Canadian government by a group of Québec notables who wanted to establish a French-speaking battalion for service in Europe.¹⁰³ Initial recruitment amongst Francophones had been anaemic in the early days of the war because the Canadian Expeditionary Force remained largely an English-language institution. Some have suggested that it derived from a lack of enthusiasm for what was perceived as an imperial war or from the inept propaganda and recruitment material that stressed allegiance to France, or even from the Franco-Ontarian struggle over Regulation 17, restricting access to education in French.¹⁰⁴ The man behind the French-Canadian campaign to raise an infantry battalion for overseas service was Dr. Arthur Mignault, a wealthy conservative militia Colonel who owned a pharmaceutical business.¹⁰⁵ At first, the federal government had been reticent to raise battalions along “racial” lines, but agreed on October 15, 1914.¹⁰⁶ The battalion was first branded as the “Royal Canadien-Français,” but that name had to be changed. Indeed, the

¹⁰³ These included Sir Wilfrid Laurier, then Liberal Leader of the Opposition in Ottawa; Sir Lomer Gouin, premier of Québec; Senator Raoul Dandurand; Sir Auguste-Réal Angers, a former Lieutenant-Governor of Québec; former Premiers of Québec Sir Charles-Eugène Boucher de Boucherville and Sir Louis-Olivier Taillon; the historian, Member of the Legislative Council of Québec, and future Senator Sir Thomas Chapais; Esioff-Léon Patenaude, a conservative Member of the Legislative assembly of Québec who would later become in succession, a Member of Parliament, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, and Lieutenant-Governor of Québec; and Lorenzo Prince, the editor of *La Presse*. See: Gagnon, *Le 22e Bataillon (canadien-français)*, 31.

¹⁰⁴ Filteau, *Le Québec, le Canada et la Guerre de 1914-1918*, 73-75.

¹⁰⁵ Gagnon, 29; Serge Bernier, *Le Royal 22e Régiment, 1914-1999* (Montréal: Art Global, 1999), 17; Col. Joseph Chaballe, *Histoire du 22e Bataillon canadien-français, Tome I: 1914-1919* (Ottawa: L'amicale du 22e de Québec et de Montréal, 1952), 21; and Sergent-Major Claudius Corneloup, *L'Épopée du vingt-deuxième* (Montréal: La Presse, 1919), 13.

¹⁰⁶ Gagnon, 32; and Bernier, *Le Royal 22e Régiment*, 17.

title “Royal” must be earned in combat and officially conferred on a unit by the sovereign. Following Sam Hughes’s battalion numbering system, the new unit became the 22nd Battalion, and was often referred to as the “22^e Bataillon canadien-français.”¹⁰⁷ It has participated in all major military operations and deployments since, including the Second World War, the Korean War, NATO service in Europe, Cyprus, Bosnia, and most recently Afghanistan. The Royal 22^e Régiment, also known as the Vandoos, a nickname deriving from the English (mis)pronunciation of “Vingt-Deux”, has spawned many notable French-Canadian soldiers, including three recipients of the Victoria Cross,¹⁰⁸ one recipient of the Cross of Valour,¹⁰⁹ the first French-Canadian Governor General,¹¹⁰ three Chiefs of the Defence Staff,¹¹¹ and other distinguished men.¹¹²

While the battalion in the First World War was rooted in Québec society, it still constituted an institution for all French-Canadians, and indeed all North American Francophones. According to Jean-Pierre Gagnon, in his seminal socio-military study of the unit in the First World War, 85.2% of recruits enrolled in Québec, though Ontario, the Maritimes, and the West were also represented.¹¹³ Joseph Henri Chaballe, in his *Histoire du 22^e Bataillon canadien-français*, adds to this evaluation with a description of the make up of the unit when he was at the front. He explains that:

¹⁰⁷ Chaballe, *Histoire du 22e Bataillon canadien-français*, 20.

¹⁰⁸ Corporal Joseph Keable, VC, MM; Lieutenant Jean Brillant, VC, MC; and Captain Paul Triquet, VC.

¹⁰⁹ Major René Jalbert, CV, CD served in both the Second World War and the Korean War. Afterwards, he served as Sergeant-at-Arms of the National Assembly of Québec where he earned the Cross of Valour in 1984 after persuading Denis Lortie, a gunman who had stormed the building and killed three people, to surrender to the authorities. He served as Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod in the Senate of Canada from 1985 to 1989.

¹¹⁰ General the Right Honourable George-P. Vanier, DSO, MC, CD.

¹¹¹ General Jean-Victor Allard, CC, GOQ, CBE, DSO, ED, CD; General Jacques-Alfred Dextraze, CC, CBE, CMM, DSO, CD; and General Joseph Gérard Maurice Baril, OC, CMM, MSM, CD.

¹¹² Major-General Thomas Louis Tremblay, CB, CMG, DSO, ED; Major-General Paul-Émile Bernatchez, CMM, CBE, DSO, CD; Lieutenant-General Gilles-Antoine Turcot, CM, CMM, CD; Major-General Roland Reid, CM, CVO, MC, CD; Lieutenant-General Charles-Henri Belzile, CM, CMM, CD; Major-General Alain Forand, CMM, EC, CSM, CD.

¹¹³ Gagnon, 229.

Les Canadiens-français composent les neuf-dixièmes de l'effectif. Mais il y a, en plus, 47 Franco-américains, 18 Belges, 14 Français, 10 Anglais, 4 Suisses, 3 Italiens, 2 Espagnols, 1 Argentin, 1 Mexicain, 1 Juif, 2 Hurons de la Petite-Lorette et 1 Iroquois de Caughnawaga, ainsi que... tenez-vous bien, toute une section de Russes avec, comme interprète, un des leurs, qui est sergent. Très bons soldats, ces Russes, ayant tous servi dans les Armées du Tzar.¹¹⁴

From the outset there was a sense, at least amongst officers, that the unit was not only fighting for Canada or the British Empire, but for the honour and reputation of French-Canada. The “vingt-deux” represented a linguistic, religious, and ethnic minority group in an overwhelmingly British formation. To highlight how slight the French-speaking presence was, one must explain that the 22^e constituted one battalion in a four-battalion brigade, and that there were three such brigades in the 2nd Division – the second of four divisions. Although the 22^e Bataillon was one of 48 Canadian battalions, one must note that some French Canadians served in English-speaking battalions. At home, French-Canadian loyalty was sometimes challenged and social tensions between English Canadians and French Canadians were not uncommon. Both Joseph Chaballe, who was a captain during the First World War, and Sergent-Major Claudius Corneloup express this feeling of responsibility in their respective accounts of the battalion's activities on the Western Front. When the men of the 22^e arrived at Amherst, Nova Scotia, where they would train and eventually depart for Europe, Chaballe recalls that they were greeted with suspicion:

À l'arrivé à Amherst, le 13 mars 1915, l'accueil de la population fut plutôt froid. Quelques âmes charitables avaient dû faire une réputation assez fâcheuse aux militaires canadien-français, pour en dire le moins!

¹¹⁴ Chaballe, 15-16.

Les magasins étaient fermés, les rues à peu près désertes. Les rares habitants qui avaient osé se risquer au dehors avaient des figures inquiètes. On eut cru entrer en pays conquis.¹¹⁵

However, by the time they boarded the ship that would get them to England, the locals had warmed to their French-Canadian visitors, thanks in part to the ‘charm offensive’ launched by the commanders of the unit.¹¹⁶ On that subject, Corneloup noted that “Il semblait que le 22^{ième} était né pour créer le premier lien fraternel entre les populations des deux langues.”¹¹⁷

This distrust of French Canadians, especially regarding military matters, was nothing new, and their loyalty to the crown had been questioned repeatedly ever since the British conquest of New France in 1763. Distrust of this French-speaking, Catholic population was only exacerbated by political conflict over imperial adventures such as the Boer War, and the later conscription crises, which French-Canadian elites, spearheaded by Henri Bourassa, opposed due to their lack of relevance to Canada’s national interest.¹¹⁸ According to Corneloup, this state of affairs translated itself into an added pressure to perform well that the soldiers of the 22^e Bataillon felt. He wrote:

Ils le savaient tous, ces braves, que des yeux louches épiaient leurs moindres actes; que les moindres imprudences seraient commentées, agrandies, falsifiées. Jetés dans l’armée britannique sur le même pied d’égalité, mais à la considération des remarques que l’armée française pourrait faire à un régiment anglais perdu dans ses rangs, que fut-il advenu si un simple fléchissement, une simple erreur, une calamité fatale eussent glissé dans ses cadres? Hélas! Une brigade, une division même eut été excusée par la force des choses: le 22^{ième} eut été blâmé, réprimandé, disgracié, parce que, sur sept million des soldats anglais, il était le seul de langue française.

Nos chefs et nos soldats avaient examiné gravement et depuis longtemps toutes ces questions. Pour parer à toute éventualité il fallait

¹¹⁵ Chaballe, 29.; and Corneloup, 16-17.

¹¹⁶ Chaballe, 30.

¹¹⁷ Corneloup, 16-17.

¹¹⁸ Horn and Legault (eds.), *Loyal Service*, 11-12.

tenir, souffrir, vaincre, prouver que notre race n'était pas inférieure aux autres.¹¹⁹

Colonel Thomas-Louis Tremblay, the commanding officer, echoed such sentiments in a diary entry prior to the September 1916 Battle of Courcellette, the crowning achievement of the 22e in the First World War:

Cependant le moral est extraordinaire, et nous sommes déterminés de prouver que les "Canayens" ne sont pas des "slackers." [...] C'est notre première grande attaque. Il faut qu'elle soit un succès pour l'honneur de tous les Canadiens Français que nous représentons en France.¹²⁰

That battle solidified the unit's reputation as a solid fighting force that was capable of *faits d'armes* equal in worth to those of their English-speaking counterparts.¹²¹ In the end, the Francophones who served during the First World War had made Canada, and French Canada, proud. Corneloup, reflecting on the war, wrote:

Ils ont combattu comme unité canadienne-française, comme catholiques, c'est encore à nos chefs, à ceux qui nous ont conduit à l'honneur, qui ont été témoins de nos peines que revient l'honneur de la propagande en faveur d'une institution française, compatible avec notre religion et notre langue, qui leur servirait à eux, à leurs enfants et prouverait la reconnaissance de notre province envers ceux qui ont si bien glorifié son nom.¹²²

Indeed, Chaballe's assessment of the importance of the Battle of Courcellette for his unit could be applied to the impact of the entire war on the 22e Bataillon: "Le 22e revenait boueux, sanglant, épuisé, mais il rapportait, pour la race, de la gloire plein le casque, de la fierté plein le cœur."¹²³

It was in the interwar period that the 22e Bataillon became the 22e Régiment. It officially obtained its new designation on April 1, 1920, and thus became a unit of the

¹¹⁹ Corneloup, 34.

¹²⁰ Thomas-Louis Tremblay, *Journal de Guerre (1915-1918)*, Marcelle Cinq-Mars (ed.) (Outremont: Athéna Éditions with Le Musée du Royal 22e Régiment, 2006), 153.

¹²¹ Chaballe, 203; and Gagnon, 103.

¹²² Corneloup, 150.

¹²³ Chaballe, 203.

permanent forces of the Canadian Militia along with the Royal Canadian Regiment and the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry.¹²⁴ A month later, it was officially relocated to Québec City's Citadelle, a place deeply linked to the military history of the city, province, and country. This fort, perched atop Cap Diamant, occupies a location used ever since the French Regime to monitor shipping on the St-Lawrence River and protect the city, and the country, from invaders. Under British rule, it was expanded and reinforced as part of the large defence construction projects of the 1830s.¹²⁵ In June 1921, the regiment was renamed "Royal 22nd Regiment," after King George V granted it the title "Royal." In order to underline the French nature of the unit, the name was further modified in 1928 to its current name "Royal 22^e Régiment".¹²⁶

When Canada declared war on Germany, on September 10, 1939, the regiment, as a part of the permanent forces, mobilized and reorganized itself for expansion.¹²⁷ While the commanders were setting up recruitment offices across the province and preparing to train new recruits, the first contingent left the country aboard the *S.S. Aquitania* on December 10, 1939, and arrived in Scotland eight days later.¹²⁸ After almost four years of waiting in England, the Regiment finally saw action in 1943 as part of Operation Husky. At noon on July 10, the Vandoos landed in Sicily on the beaches of Pachino, as part of the 3rd Canadian Brigade, 1st Canadian Division.¹²⁹ After the

¹²⁴ Bernier, *Le Royal 22e Régiment*, 82-83; and Lt-Col. L. Lamontagne, with Charles Marie Boissonnault, *Histoire du Royal 22e Régiment*. Comité d'officiers du régiment (eds.) (La Citadelle, Québec: Éditions du Pélican et la Régie du Royal 22e Régiment, 1964), 39.

¹²⁵ Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 5th ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart), 72-73; and Bernier, *Le Royal 22e Régiment*, 82.

¹²⁶ Bernier, *Le Royal 22e Régiment*, 85; and Lamontagne, *Histoire du Royal 22e Régiment*, 44.

¹²⁷ Bernier, *Le Royal 22e Régiment*, 104-106.

¹²⁸ *ibid.* 107.

¹²⁹ *ibid.* 129.

conquest of Sicily, the Royal 22^e Régiment landed on the Italian Peninsula on September 3, 1943.¹³⁰

One of the most important actions of the war for the Vandoos was the assault on Casa Berardi, which was part of the larger Canadian offensive towards Ortona. The objective, a farmhouse located across a ravine, was heavily defended but the men were able to capture it on December 14. Badly outnumbered, the soldiers, under the leadership of Captain Paul Triquet, were able to hold the position until reinforcements came. For his leadership and courage Triquet was awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest military distinction for bravery.¹³¹ The Vandoos also played a key part in capturing the Hitler and Gothic lines in 1944. On July 2, the Royal 22^e Régiment was authorized to visit Rome and obtained an audience with Pope Pius XII who gave them his blessing, a very significant event for a mostly Catholic unit.¹³² They finally left Italy on March 16, 1945, and headed to Belgium to take part in the Canadian effort to liberate the Netherlands.¹³³

After the Second World War, the Royal 22^e Régiment solidified its place in the army, in Québec City, and in Québec. The regiment once more took up residence at the Citadelle, but also stationed a company in Fort Saint-Jean, in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, another location with profound ties to Québec and Canada's military past. In addition, the 22^e worked to convert the camp at Valcartier, used to train men during both world wars into a permanent base.¹³⁴ When the Korean War broke out, the regiment was once again called to active service, albeit this time the regimental unit, the 1st Battalion, was

¹³⁰ Lamontagne, 155.

¹³¹ Bernier, *Le Royal 22e Régiment*, 142; and Lamontagne, 200-201.

¹³² Lamontagne, 266-270.

¹³³ Bernier, *Le Royal 22e Régiment*, 176-177.

¹³⁴ Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépôt du Royal 22e Régiment*, 14-15, and 17-18.

to stay in Canada while a newly formed 2nd Battalion was to represent the regiment in Korea.

In Korea, the Royal 22^e Régiment was a part of the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade where it fought alongside the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, based in Alberta, and the Royal Canadian Regiment, based in Ontario, the two other Active Force infantry regiments. The brigade was soon integrated with the 1st Commonwealth Division, which itself was a part of the I U.S. Corps, one of the corps of the Eighth U.S. Army.¹³⁵ It goes without saying that all of these formations were English-speaking. As such, the regiment found itself in an operational context where English was, for all intents and purposes, the *lingua franca*. The first Canadian soldiers to set foot in Korea were those of the PPCLI's 2nd Battalion.¹³⁶ The soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22^e Régiment (2R22^eR) arrived some five months later on the 4th of May 1951. In November, the 2R22^eR was part of the famous battle of Hill 355, where it took heavy casualties. By the time that the 1st Battalion (1R22^eR) arrived in Korea to replace it, the 2R22^eR had suffered 43 killed, amongst whom were 4 officers, and 137 wounded in action of all ranks, a low tally compared to earlier conflicts.¹³⁷

The 1R22^eR, the Regular Force unit, arrived on the peninsula on the 25th of April 1952, and was sent to the front at once. After having spent the months of June and July in reserve, the battalion returned to the front lines in August. The months of September and October were particularly arduous as heavy combat cost the unit 74 casualties. After another month in reserve, the 1R22^eR spent the months of December and January at the

¹³⁵ Bercuson, *Blood on the Hills*, 5.

¹³⁶ *ibid.* 52-53.

¹³⁷ Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépôt du Royal 22e Régiment*, 46, 70-76, and 88.

front, and the spring of 1953 back in reserve.¹³⁸ The 3rd Battalion (3R22^eR), for its part, reached Korea in April 1953 and stayed there until the armistice was signed on July 27, 1953. Following tough combat in the months of May, June, and July, 7 men lost their lives, 17 were wounded, and the enemy took 3 prisoners. The unit spent the month of July in reserve where its men received the good news of the end of the war.¹³⁹ However, the 3R22^eR's time in Asia only ended on the April 5, 1954, after having spent months supervising the cease-fire.

The two global conflicts of the 20th century had created, amongst many anglophones, a certain sense that French-Canada had not contributed in the right measure to the war effort. Indeed, French Canadians' representation in the armed forces never reached the level of their percentage of the Canadian population.¹⁴⁰ According to the 1911 census, there were 2,054,890 French Canadians out of a total population of 7,206,643, or 28.5% of the population. The total population of Québec was 2,003,232, or 27.8% of the Canadian population, of whom 1,605,339 were French Canadians, 316,103 were English Canadians, and 81,790 were of other ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, there were 449,551 French Canadians living in the other provinces, particularly in Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Manitoba.¹⁴¹ According to Jack Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, 51% of the 619,636 men who served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force 318,705 had been born in Canada. Of those, about 15,000 were French-Canadian volunteers, or only 5%.¹⁴² The situation was different during the Second World War. The French-Canadian population in 1941 was 3,483,038, or 30.3% of a total population

¹³⁸ *ibid.* 89, 95, 102-103, and 107.

¹³⁹ *ibid.* 114, 118, and 127.

¹⁴⁰ Horn and Legault (eds.), *Loyal Service*, 11-12.

¹⁴¹ Pariseau and Bernier, *Le spectre d'une armée bicéphale*, 87-89.

¹⁴² J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1977), 23-24,28.

of 11,506,655.¹⁴³ Historian C.P. Stacey estimates that ultimately Québec provided 175,441 recruits to the war effort, or 17% of the total, and that this amounted to 25.69% of the male population between 18 and 45 years of age of the province, of which a large number were English-speaking.¹⁴⁴

Of course, in looking at these statistics, one must remember that French-Canadian society was very different from that of the rest of the country, with more men working in agriculture, a vital sector for the war, earlier marrying ages, and larger families. Historians Jean Pariseau and Serge Bernier have taken those demographic variables into consideration in their calculations of what they call the “excess male” population, that is men between the ages of 15 and 45, who are unmarried. They show that at the time of the First World War, Québec had the lowest “excess male” population, with only 4.5%, whereas British Columbia had 25.3%.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, during the Second World War Québec had an “excess male” population of 1.9%, whereas Saskatchewan had one of 23.3%.¹⁴⁶ In consequence, such statistics show French Canada’s contribution to the world wars in an unduly negative manner. French Canada simply did not have as many available young men to contribute. In fact, as Pariseau and Bernier argue, Québec had contributed a higher percentage of its available men than any other province.¹⁴⁷

Nevertheless, recruitment of francophones, and especially francophone officers, had always been difficult for the armed forces. There is no denying the fact that, until the end of the Second World War, and arguably after it, the Army was a fundamentally

¹⁴³ Pariseau and Bernier, *Le spectre d’une armée bicéphale*, 122.

¹⁴⁴ C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada, 1939-1945* (Ottawa: The Queen’s Printer for Canada, 1970), 590.

¹⁴⁵ Pariseau and Bernier, *Le spectre d’une armée bicéphale*, 89, 90.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.* 361.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.* 89, and 146.

English-speaking institution. Until the beginning of the Second World War, unilingual francophones could only serve in the Royal 22^e Régiment, the sole French-speaking unit in the Permanent Force, and even they were often limited to the lower-ranks by their poor or inexistent capacity to express themselves in English. Higher-ranking officers had to speak English, if only because the officer course at the Royal Military College (RMC), in Kingston, was only given in that language.¹⁴⁸ During the Second World War, only two French Canadians serving in operational formations reached the rank of Brigadier, Jean-Victor Allard and Joseph Paul-Émile Bernatchez, who nonetheless had to command their brigades in English.¹⁴⁹

J.L. Granatstein shows that the Canadian Army did its best to promote as many francophones as possible during the interwar years, but not all of them were fit for promotion to high levels of command.¹⁵⁰ For him, the Army's "imperial cast of mind" and almost uniquely English-speaking nature did nothing to entice francophones to join, nor did the many obstacles to promotion, like the English-only courses and officer training process. But French Canada, too, was responsible for its low representation in the armed forces, through low enlistment levels, which historians attribute to the fallout of the 1917-18 conscription crisis and to a culture of disinterest in the military amongst francophones. Without francophones, Granatstein argues, the army would not change itself to become friendlier to French Canada.¹⁵¹ The situation of the French language in the armed forces was trapped in a vicious circle. The Canadian military was not welcoming to French-speakers, who largely kept out of it, but their absence also

¹⁴⁸ J.L. Granatstein, *The Generals*, 240-242.

¹⁴⁹ It is important to note, however, there were other francophone generals, though they did not serve in combat roles. *ibid.* 256.

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.* 237-238, and 257.

¹⁵¹ *ibid.* 257.

removed any incentive to accommodate French-speakers. This conundrum, as we will see, was repeated in many sectors of the armed forces where the low number of francophone enlistments was used to justify not investing in programs that would increase those very numbers.

Immediately after the Second World War, Canada demobilized its armed forces. In peacetime, the Canadian Armed forces would only play two main roles: the defence of North America in partnership with the United States, and the ability to supervise a mobilization in the event of a war. The new authorised personnel ceilings for the Navy were 10,000, the Air Force 16,000, and the Army 27,000, an extremely reduced strength. By 1947, the services were only authorized to recruit 75% of what they had been granted, and by 1950 these targets could not even be met. When the Korean War broke out, the Canadian Army could only count on 20,369 men of all ranks. Maintenance had also been appalling with the various camps falling into serious states of disrepair. Equipment, when at all available, was deficient or inadequate, and specialised trades, like engineers, signals, medical, dental, and other non-combat trades that allow the military to function and carry out its combat duties were all seriously understaffed. As H.F. Wood dourly remarked: “This meant that the Regular Army (or Active Force as it was called) was not only unable to provide an expeditionary force at once, but could not hope to carry out with any degree of success its two peacetime roles.”¹⁵²

Francophones, one must note, did not constitute a large segment of this dilapidated force. The Royal 22^e Régiment was the only permanent francophone unit in the Canadian Armed Forces, and constituted somewhat of an anomaly. Upper formations were all English-speaking, as was most of the administration. Francophones with any

¹⁵² Wood, 17-19.

ambition of promotion simply had to learn English to succeed as all staff courses were in English, and they would need to speak that language with every other officer outside of the Royal 22^e Régiment. Only the Royal 22^e Régiment used French on a daily basis, and even there, commands were given in English. That is to say that, on parades or ceremonial events, orders were given to the troops in English, and not French. This was the state of the Canadian military at the time of the Korean War. Thankfully, as we will see, the Department of National Defence knew that its treatment of francophones could be improved, and initiated a review of the condition of French speakers in its ranks. The Korean War, provided additional motivation to enact lasting change.

Chapter 2

Passive Bilingualism:

The Canadian Military Establishment and the French Language, 1946-1954

Francophone recruitment remained critically low in the postwar period, which constituted a problem for the Canadian military. However, it was also a problem of national unity in the case of a future war. Some English-Canadians thought francophones were not doing their part, while francophones did not feel that the military served their interests enough to be relevant. This chapter will examine the Department of National Defence's efforts to study and improve its approach to the French language and to the Francophone population. It will show that senior officials and politicians were well aware of the problems and were intent on solving them. However, there existed a serious disagreement on the extent to which it was desirable, and practical, to accommodate French speakers. The primary protagonists of this debate were the Minister of National Defence, Brooke Claxton, and the Chief of the General Staff, General Guy Granville Simonds, both of whom's attitudes to francophones have been overlooked, or misrepresented in the extant historiography. The chapter will also highlight the crucial role that the Korean War played in this debate in that the conflict demonstrated the need for a change in approach, while simultaneously delaying the implementation of these changes.

The vicious circle of low French-Canadian enlistment constituted a danger to national unity and national security. If a future, and at that time likely, conflict emerged between the Western world and the Communist world, French Canadians would have to contribute to the war effort. Indeed, the new Cold War technological and political

environment made it possible that Canada's North, in case of a war with the Soviet Union, would become a battlefield. In addition, the scale of such a conflict would put intense demands on manpower. If such a conflict were to erupt, French Canadians would have to contribute as well or Canada might not survive. However, such a war could potentially lead to the implosion of the country if another national unity crisis emerged out of the conflict like it had previously. The Canadian military had no choice; national unity and national security demanded a higher participation of francophones in the armed forces, and that required a new, more understanding attitude towards them on the part of the institution.

Thus, in July 1950 the Department of National Defence created a committee to study the problem of French-Canadian representation in the Canadian Armed Forces. The Committee for the Study of Bilingual Problems was chaired by Brigadier Joseph Paul-Émile Bernatchez, a distinguished officer and Second World War veteran from Montmagny, Québec, who spent the rest of his career advocating in favour of a more bilingual military in Canada. Bernatchez's committee met a total of five times between December 22, 1950, and February 1, 1951, and was composed primarily of English-speaking representatives of the various Corps of the Canadian Army. In fact, the only two francophones who participated in its work were the Chairman himself and the Secretary, Major M.L. Lahaie.¹⁵³ In a memorandum to members of the committee, Bernatchez explained the body's *raison d'être* in this way:

¹⁵³ Its chairman was Brigadier J.P.E. Bernatchez; its other members were Colonel F.A. Clift, Colonel J.S. Ross, Lieutenant-Colonel G.M.C. Sprung, and Lieutenant-Colonel G.H. Spencer. The other French Canadian was the secretary, Major M.L. Lahaie. "Minutes of Meeting No 5 – Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems," 1 February 1951, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (Henceforth: LAC).

1. During the Second World War, the lower percentage of enlistments from the Province of Quebec, compared to the other Provinces, can be attributed to a considerable degree to the following:
 - (a) Prior to the Second World War, French Canadian representation in arms other than the infantry was inadequate and did not provide for wartime expansion.
 - (b) The reluctance to form units other than infantry units on the ground that it was impracticable owing to language and technical reasons.
 - (c) The language handicap which limited a man's opportunities for qualifying for employment except in a few fields and, consequently, for promotion.
2. In order to study these and other related problems, and to make recommendations for their solution, a committee has been formed on the direction of the VCGS [Vice Chief of the General Staff].¹⁵⁴

One must note, however, that, in the interwar period, potential for promotion was also limited due to a lack of combat experience.

In the process of organizing his committee, Bernatchez sent requests to each corps (i.e. artillery, armour, engineers, signals, etc.) asking for their assessments of the causes of the lack of French-Canadian representation, and asking them to offer suggestions on how to remedy the problem for the committee to study. The different answers offer an interesting summary of English-speaking senior officers' perspective on French Canadians in the armed forces, and the difficulties in recruiting them.

Colonel R.L. Purves, Director of the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps (RCAC), in his reply to the committee explained that the corps had failed to offer French-Canadians "a regimental life comparable to the companionship these men enjoy in their own French-speaking communities." For him, the solution lay in creating a francophone armoured unit to be located in Québec, preferably in Valcartier. Such a unit would also allow the training of French-speaking instructors, officers, and Non-commissioned Officers (NCO) who, if transferred to English-speaking units, could make even these

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.*

more attractive to francophones.¹⁵⁵ Purves's colleague from the Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA), however, held different views. For Colonel R.G. Clarke, creating and stationing a French-speaking artillery battery at Valcartier wasn't the solution, since that would lead it to develop as a separate unit and not as one battery of a regiment, which was otherwise stationed at Shilo, Manitoba. The artillery's preferred course of action was to keep the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery (RCHA), the Active Force artillery unit, together, and instead create an independent Medium Battery for Valcartier. Nevertheless, the RCA expressed doubts over whether creating French-speaking units in Québec was the solution, or whether finding a way to encourage francophones to serve and become bilingual instructors at Shilo would not be more effective. Clarke feared that, instead of creating a bilingual army, they would in fact create two separate unilingual armies.¹⁵⁶

Many agreed that one of the main issues impeding recruitment amongst French Canadians was the inability to offer training in French in corps other than the infantry. The military had already put in place a training school in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Québec, in order to teach English to francophones. Brigadier J.W. Bishop, Acting Adjutant-General, believed that waiting for this system to teach recruits English, and then have them undergo trade and NCO training in the hopes of creating a sufficient number of bilingual instructors to then teach francophones in French was too long of a wait for the army. It was imperative to offer quality French-language instruction before that time. As such, he wondered why the responsibility of training francophones should

¹⁵⁵ "Colonel R.L. Purves, – Director, Royal Canadian Armoured Corps, in reply to HQS 1435-2 (DCGS), Localization of Armoured Squadron in Quebec Command," 8 August 1950, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

¹⁵⁶ "Colonel L.G. Clarke, – Director, Royal Canadian Artillery, HQS 1435-2 (D ARTY) to Secretary, The Committee for the Study of Bilingual Problems," 15 August 1950, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

fall only on francophones themselves. Why not take measures to teach French to anglophone instructors and get them to teach francophones? In his view, one could render an anglophone sufficiently bilingual in a matter of months if one was to follow the University of Western Ontario model.

That university had a language school in Trois-Pistoles, Québec, where students sojourned in an immersion setting. Bishop suggested doing likewise with the English-speaking members of the military, that is to say, to create a French school in some region of Québec where English was not commonly spoken, teach them intensive French, and lodge the selected NCOs in French-Canadian families.¹⁵⁷ This program, first mentioned by Brigadier J.W. Bishop, would allow English-Canadian students to spend the summer months in Trois-Pistoles, where they would learn French. Such an initiative would serve the joint purposes of making anglophone NCOs more attuned to the culture of their French-Canadian colleagues, and would produce a body of bilingual instructors and NCOs which would fill the army's current deficiencies.

There was, however, some disagreement on who ought to be selected for this program. Bishop had intended that this training plan be made available to partly bilingual instructors, who already had some knowledge of the language and thus potential for improvement. In the face of the dramatic shortages of candidates resulting from their service in the Korean War, the Adjutant-General, Major-General W.H.S. Macklin suggested offering that program to NCOs who had no knowledge of French, since those with existing French-language skills could improve by other means. He underscored, as all other anglophones who had voiced their approval of the idea, that the

¹⁵⁷ "Brigadier J.W. Bishop, Acting Adjutant-General, Memorandum to VCGS – Instruction in French at Corps Schools," 25 July 1950, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

University of Western Ontario claimed it could give full proficiency to its pupils in 3 months. Bernatchez, one of the only francophones on the committee, and perhaps the only one who had had to learn a second language, offered a more careful assessment. He preferred that a trial be organized to train 2 groups of NCOs, one partly bilingual, the other fully unilingual, through this system and assess which was most effective. In a marginal note on Macklin's memorandum he made the following observation:

The chap who has the ear for French, who knows high school French grammar, [and] is intelligent can perhaps become a bilingual instructor in 6 to 8 months. If he does not know any grammar it will take him well over [emphasis in original] a year. If he has not got the ear for it he will be wasting his time and the Govt's money.¹⁵⁸

These documents show that the Department of National Defence was aware of the need to train French Canadians in their mother tongue. However, they also highlight the stark shortage of qualified francophone men. The logical solution would have been to use French Canadians to train other French Canadians in their own language, but there were simply not enough qualified francophone instructors. This is partly explained by the fact that instructor training was only offered in English, and thus only already bilingual men could become instructors.¹⁵⁹ The Korean War thus acted as a catalyst for change. The manpower shortages that it brought forced the Department of National Defence to implement its plans to improve bilingualism more rapidly, and to expand them to more candidates. There was no time to conduct pilot studies and program evaluations. The battlefield requirements dictated some measure of experimentation and improvisation.

¹⁵⁸ "J.P.E. Bernatchez's marginal note in Major-General W.H.S. Macklin, Adjutant-General, Memorandum to VCGS – Bilingual Problems - Canadian Army," 10 February 1951, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

The minutes of the committee's five meetings reveal a change in approach to bilingualism on the part of some English-speaking officers that has previously been overlooked by scholars, particularly French-Canadian scholars. Indeed, the traditional perspective on the Canadian military's approach to bilingualism, as first enunciated by Jean-Yves Gravel in his article "La fondation du Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean," is that the Department of National Defence systematically blocked any proposal for the advancement of bilingualism in the Canadian Forces and was generally hostile to increased bilingualism.¹⁶⁰ Jean Pariseau and Serge Bernier have reiterated this argument in their study of bilingualism in the armed forces. Interestingly, they identify Brooke Claxton, the Minister of National Defence, as an additional source of blockage to the advancement of this cause.¹⁶¹ However, their analysis is largely based on Jean-Yves Gravel's text, on Claxton's non-committal statements in the House of Commons, and on scathing newspaper articles published about him.¹⁶² In *Le Collège Militaire Royal de Saint-Jean*, Jacques Castonguay uses the same sources to reach the same conclusions.¹⁶³

However, a careful examination of the Brooke Claxton Papers as well the archives of the Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems reveals a more complex picture of the department's reflection on bilingualism. The committee's minutes show a group of English-speaking officers who seemed determined to increase bilingualism in the armed forces, and not only amongst francophones. Indeed, while Pariseau and Bernier argue that until Jean-Victor Allard's tenure as Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS), from 1966 to 1969, "le bilinguisme est l'apanage des seuls francophones et, qu'en

¹⁶⁰ Jean-Yves Gravel, "La fondation du Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean," 273.

¹⁶¹ Pariseau and Bernier, *Le spectre d'une armée bicéphale*, 160-163.

¹⁶² Found in: Vol. 94, MG32 B5, Brooke Claxton Papers, LAC.

¹⁶³ Jacques Castonguay, *Le Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean*, 20-22.

conséquence, ne transparait pas le besoin de faire porter une partie du poids du bilinguisme par des anglophones,”¹⁶⁴ the documents show a desire to make bilingualism and bilingualism the affair of the entire department.

The Department of National Defence’s commitment to improve its performance regarding bilingualism was first expressed in the minutes of the committee’s meetings. At the second meeting, Colonel F.A. Clift suggested the implementation of a system of cross-appointments of officers and NCOs between English-speaking and French-speaking units as a way to improve bilingualism. Under this scheme, sufficiently bilingual men would be sent to a unit of the other language for a period of time in order for them to improve their mastery of the other language in a practical setting; it was a second-language immersion program of sorts. Bernatchez expressed his agreement, but went even further by suggesting that bilingual anglophones as well as non-bilingual anglophones be sent to the R22^eR to learn French, a more sensible proposition than the Trois-Pistoles scheme. Colonel Clift was also responsible for suggesting that the Canadian Army Training School at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, be made into a bilingual school to teach English to francophone recruits, but also to teach French to partly bilingual anglophones. Indeed, the committee agreed that although teaching English to francophones was the more expedient way to achieve increased bilingualism, anglophones should be strongly encouraged to improve their linguistic skills through further training and posting to francophone units in Québec. The minutes also note that:

After considerable discussion, it was agreed that extra pay should be given to bilingual instructors on the basis of instructional ability. It is recognized that there are two official languages in Canada, but in order to encourage instructors to acquire this additional qualification trades pay would be appropriate. It was therefore recommended that trades pay be

¹⁶⁴ Pariseau and Bernier, *Le spectre d’une armée bicéphale*, 241.

given to Other Ranks filling appointments requiring ability to instruct in both languages.¹⁶⁵

Colonel Clift summarised the attitude of the committee by suggesting “that all Corps should put on a spirited drive to increase their numbers of bilingual personnel.”¹⁶⁶ It emerges from this second meeting that there was a willingness amongst some elements of the Department of National Defence, or at least amongst those who took part in the work of Bernatchez’s committee, to make bilingualism a project for the entire Canadian Army, and not only for its French-speaking elements.

The study of bilingual problems in the Canadian Army then turned its attention to the use of French as a working language. The committee members concluded that the use of French posed no problem provided its use was limited to French-speaking units. Further, they underscored the need for signallers to be bilingual for communications purposes and the need for a “sufficient” number of bilingual officers in order to ensure “efficient servicing of English-speaking units and formations,” working on a francophone unit’s flank or in higher formations. Members categorically rejected suggestions that some regiments might be made to incorporate French-speaking sub-units to accommodate francophones. They believed that dividing regiments along linguistic lines would only lead to the emergence of distinct units, *de facto* separate if formally part of the same unit, with different cultures, histories, and identities. This proposal had initially been aimed at preventing the emergence of two armies, one English-speaking, the other French-speaking. This fear that Jean Pariseau and Serge Bernier call “*le spectre d’une armée bicéphale*,” had been a recurring feature of the

¹⁶⁵ “Minutes of Meeting No 2 – Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems,” 18 January 1951, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.*

military's reticence to create French-speaking units. It had to be overcome in the First World War to create the 22^e Bataillon, and it was once more raised by some, including the Chief of the General Staff G.G. Simonds, to impede efforts at bilingualism.¹⁶⁷ However, the committee was confident that creating French-speaking units would do no such thing, particularly if other measures aimed at promoting bilingualism amongst both linguistic groups were implemented. Key to avoiding this very real danger, was to improve exchanges between linguistic groups and promote bilingualism in French and English units.¹⁶⁸

A copy of a draft version of the committee's report annotated by the chairman highlights the committee's belief that the improvement of the condition of francophones also rested on an improvement in education. In fact, they felt that most unpleasantness between both linguistic groups derived primarily from a lack of cultural understanding and ignorance of the other. They observed that :

The work of the school will be largely ~~negative~~ *wasted* [Bernatchez's annotation] if the personnel of corps schools and the various units are not sufficiently aware of the difficulties which face French speaking recruits when transferred for further training. In many instances they will find themselves in an English speaking environment. It would be wise not to leave them to their own devices but to encourage them and make them feel at the outset that they are wanted and are part of their new unit. Much of the ostracism of one ethnic group by the other is caused by prejudice and ignorance of the other fellow. Some indoctrination tending towards a better understanding of one ethnic group by the other might profitably be given to key personnel of corps schools and units who will come into contact with these recruits.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Pariseau and Bernier, *Le spectre d'une armée bicéphale*.

¹⁶⁸ "Minutes of Meeting No 4 – Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems," 26 January 1951, RG24, National Defence, Vol. 19,042, LAC.

¹⁶⁹ "Draft report, annotated – Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems," May 1951, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

This was also, in part, a proposal to reverse the unfortunate trend that saw French-speaking recruits being sent for specialised training to corps schools located in English Canada ‘drop out’ in disproportionate numbers. The evidence gathered by the committee suggested that this was due, amongst other things, to a poor welcome by their English-speaking colleagues and to lacking support for, and understanding of, francophones and their needs, including their need to be able to work to an extent in their own language and the ability to receive training in French.¹⁷⁰

Again, this demonstrates a recognition that bilingualism and the improvement of recruitment of francophones was not the sole purview of French Canadians. English Canadians, as the majority, had a key role to play in creating an environment where both groups could co-exist and work effectively. A note from Bernatchez appended to the draft, reinforced the idea that English Canadians, too, had to improve their bilingualism by requesting the following addition to the report: “Further, it is the aim of this paper to suggest a mechanism whereby it will be possible to teach English-speaking NCOs, instructors and officers French in order to meet the requirements for a bilingual cadre in Corps, Units, and Schools.”¹⁷¹ This further undermines the idea, prevalent in the historiography, that bilingualism only meant French Canadians learning English.

When the committee reported to the Chief of the General Staff on its findings and recommendations, the Minister, Brooke Claxton, promptly requested a copy, which was sent to him along with comments by the CGS, Lieutenant-General Guy Granville Simonds on September 24, 1951. Although the experiences of the Royal 22^e Régiment in Korea were not a key part of the report, it did note that the problems it had uncovered

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁷¹ “Appended note to the draft report, annotated – Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems,” May 1951, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

had plagued recruitment in that unit for the Korean War. The impediments to francophone recruitment in the World Wars were still there in the early 1950s. The first conclusion laid the foundational principle in the light of which the following recommendations ought to be understood. It affirmed that:

The Committee is of the opinion that the operational language of the Canadian Army above unit level must be English. Within a combatant unit, the French language can be used for all purposes as long as the majority of officers and all signallers are bilingual for liaison and for communication with higher or flank units or formations.

It saw this conclusion as a question of efficiency and effectiveness in combat. Confusion in language, mistakes in translations, indeed the very time required to translate communications could all have dramatic consequences in a military operation. English, the mother language of a majority of the members of Canada's military, would thus be used to ensure swift communication and avoid costly errors.¹⁷²

The report's second conclusion recognized that there was a dramatic shortage of "bilingual instructors and French-speaking Canadians in all Corps of the Active Force, except the RCIC [Royal Canadian Infantry Corps]," a major deficiency for mobilization in wartime, and an impediment to further recruitment of francophones. The Korean War had made this even more obvious, as francophones were in dramatically short supplies in these sectors. While this may not have constituted a dramatic problem in peacetime, in wartime this led to costly delays and inefficiencies. Other conclusions stressed the need for better record keeping of the linguistic abilities of recruits, improved availability of French-language training material, and the development of policies regarding French-language instruction. Conclusion 9 asserted: "It is essential that tradesmen be trained in

¹⁷² "Lieutenant-General G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff to Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence – Conclusions and Recommendations of the Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems" 24 September 1951, Vol. 94, MG32 B5, Brooke Claxton Papers, LAC.

their trade in French in order to ensure that they can assume their tasks in the Army in the shortest possible time. Tradesmen, as a rule do not need to be completely bilingual.”¹⁷³ In the committee’s opinion, then, providing functional, and not linguistic, instruction in French did not constitute a delay or an unnecessary waste of time because recruits would have to learn English anyway, or because translation and training instructors was expensive and time consuming. Rather, it was a way to ensure that the largest number of tradesmen would be available for service in the shortest possible amount of time. Finally, the committee determined that a broader re-evaluation of the character of the Army in peacetime, particularly regarding the linguistic question, was necessary in order to make military service more attractive to young men from Québec – a necessary step in any future mobilization effort. Unfortunately, it was too late to make changes for the Korean War. Nonetheless, the war had demonstrated the committee’s conclusion by showing that lack of bilingualism impeded rapid mobilization, and also by showing that a wider war against the communists was a distinct possibility that ought not be ignored.¹⁷⁴

Many of the other recommendations concerned training and its deficiencies with respect to the French language. The report suggested that where the number of francophones unable to undergo training in English was sufficient, they ought to be grouped together and taught in French. Where the numbers did not warrant such a course of action, bilingual instructors must be made available to offer coaching outside of class to ensure their success. This pre-supposed a significant increase in the number of bilingual instructors. Specifically, the report suggested that the Royal Canadian School

¹⁷³ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.*

of Infantry maintain 30% of bilingual instructors, and that the other corps schools be made to maintain a 15% proportion. Additionally, the committee called for all training documents to be translated according to urgency. This provision also entailed finding ways to make films available in French.

The report, however, added the following important caveat:

Having regard to the fact that the operational language of the Army at higher levels must be English and that it is in the interest of French-speaking personnel to become bilingual as fully and as soon as possible, all French-speaking personnel should take their instruction in English whenever they know enough English to absorb the instruction.¹⁷⁵

This recommendation could be taken, and possibly has been taken, as a demonstration that bilingualism was only required of French Canadians. But such an assessment ignores many other documents that contributed to its elaboration. While it is true that according to the report *they* were the only ones who would *have* to learn another language, increased bilingualism, the stated objective of the report, was to be achieved by anglophones as well. The distinction, then, lies in the importance of bilingualism to both groups. While francophones outside of the infantry were essentially required to learn English, anglophones were merely strongly encouraged, through monetary incentives and fast-tracked promotion, to learn French. In consequence, it appears somewhat inaccurate to claim that bilingualism was solely the affair of francophones, as Jean-Yves Gravel and Jean Pariseau & Serge Bernier have.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, it is important to note that in this regard the Department of National Defence was in fact ahead of the rest of the Civil Service where francophones had to learn English without the inverse

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ Pariseau and Bernier, for instance, write that “Par exemple, le lecteur attentif notera que le bilinguisme est l’apanage des seuls francophones et qu’en conséquence, ne transparaît pas le besoin de faire porter une partie du poids du bilinguisme par des anglophones.” See, Pariseau and Bernier, *Le spectre d’une armée bicéphale*, 241; and Gravel, “La fondation du Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean,” 258.

being true. In 1967, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism would reveal that the Canadian federal public service was essentially unilingually English-speaking and that bilingualism in it meant that francophones had to learn English.¹⁷⁷

Marcel Chaput, in his 1961 book *Pourquoi je suis séparatiste*, made English dominance of the civil service one of his main arguments. He wrote: “Pour la majorité des travailleurs canadiens-français, et même au Québec, l’anglais est la langue de travail et de pensée. Le français? Langue de traduction, langue de famille, langue de folklore.”¹⁷⁸

Even Pierre Trudeau, commenting on the situation of the French language in the federal government when he first came to Ottawa in 1949 as a Civil Servant, wrote that: “Unilingualism in Ottawa was not confined to the Hill: everywhere in the city it was English Only. If you wanted to speak French, you could go to Hull.”¹⁷⁹

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Royal 22^e Régiment, as the sole francophone element of the Active Force, was at the heart of these new plans for better integration of bilingualism and French-speaking personnel. The committee recommended that English-speaking training at the R22^eR be maintained. However, it also recommended an exchange or cross-posting program between it and the English-speaking units. Under this scheme, anglophone personnel would be sent to the R22^eR to further their French-language skills, and vice versa. It also recommended that bilingual NCOs from the R22^eR be transferred to other corps, if possible, to increase the Francophone presence. This last objective was also to be achieved by determining a “proper allotment of French-speaking recruits” for all corps so as to ensure an adequate representation and

¹⁷⁷ Canada, *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*, Book III, Vol. 3a, (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer for Canada, 1969), 111.

¹⁷⁸ Marcel Chaput, *Pourquoi je suis séparatiste* (Montréal: Les Éditions du Jour, 1961), 37.

¹⁷⁹ Pierre Elliott Trudeau, *Memoirs* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1993), 119.

improve contacts between and French and English elements. This, the committee stressed, ought to be normal Adjutant-General routine.¹⁸⁰ During the Korean War, however, the Vandoos were absolutely unable to provide trained NCOs for this scheme as they were in particularly stark shortage. The Royal 22^e Régiment simply could not afford to lose any trained NCO to other units only to improve their francophone presence.

To improve recruitment amongst francophones, and particularly amongst the Québécois, the members recommended the fostering of better relationships with Québec schools in order for them to promote the armed forces as good career choices. For the committee, Québec universities constituted an untapped source of French-speaking, and often bilingual, officers, NCOs, and instructors. Further, they underscored a need to appeal to Québec in a culturally-specific fashion, citing the need to avoid inept recruitment campaigns of decades past, where posters made in English, by anglophones, for English Canadians were simply translated into French. Bernatchez and his committee colleagues were adamant that the Canadian military hire a special public relations representative for the Province of Québec, who would be tasked with appealing to the sensibilities of the Québec public in any recruitment initiative.¹⁸¹ As had been raised at the first meeting of the committee that the Catholic Church could probably be counted upon to promote enlistment in any future war with the atheistic communists.¹⁸²

In September 1950, the Minister of National Defence, Brooke Claxton, who was aware of the committee's work inquired to the Chief of the General Staff about the

¹⁸⁰ "Lieutenant-General G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff to Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence – Conclusions and Recommendations of the Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems."

¹⁸¹ *ibid.*

¹⁸² Unfortunately the minutes are silent as to who raised that point. "Minutes of Meeting No 1 – Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems."

study's progress, and specifically about statistics on French-Canadian representation in the military. As part of his research on the situation of French Canadians in the Canadian Forces, Bernatchez had commissioned a survey of their representation in the various corps, the results of which were included in the CGS's answer to the minister. It showed that:

Only 12.3% of the army personnel are French-speaking Canadians. This is considered inadequate representation considering that approximately 30% of the Canadian population is French-speaking [...] The representation is very low in most corps other than the RCIC and is particularly low in the RCAC, RCA, RCE, RC Sigs and RCEME.¹⁸³

In the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps they represented 6.1% of the personnel, while in the Royal Canadian Artillery and the Royal Canadian Engineers they accounted for 6.8% and 9.4%, respectively. These numbers were far from the desired proportion of 30%. Worse still, the survey revealed that many schools did not have the resources to offer instruction in French and that others could not even provide one instructor with a sufficient knowledge of French to provide coaching to francophone recruits. If the committee's plans were to be implemented, the Canadian military would have to find or train more bilingual instructors. Not only that, it would have to find a large number of officers to remedy the generalized shortage of bilingual officers the survey found in all corps, save the infantry. Recruitment amongst francophones would have to be improved if this situation was to be reversed. Indeed, the Canadian Forces could not rely on its officer cadets attending either Royal Military College, in Kingston, or Royal Roads Military College (RRMC), in Esquimalt, since: "The records show that up until now

¹⁸³ "Lieutenant-General G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff to Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence – Paper No 1, Summary of the Present Situation Concerning French-Speaking and Bilingual Personnel in the Canadian Army" 24 September 1951, Vol. 94, MG32 B5, Brooke Claxton Papers, LAC.

19.3% of the total enlistment since 1947 and 18.1% of the present officer cadets are French-speaking Canadians. These proportions are at their lowest in the RC Sigs.”¹⁸⁴

The case of the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals (RCCS or sometimes RC Sigs) was particularly problematic in the light of the committee’s conclusion. The survey showed that 12 of the 178 officers, or 6.7%, of the RCCS were Francophones, and 137 of the, 1,561 soldiers of other ranks, or 8.8%, had French as their mother tongue. In total, 8.6% of Canadian signallers were francophone. As such, one of the trades that most needed bilingual and francophone men was also one of those where bilingual skills were the most important.¹⁸⁵ This problem wasn’t easily solved. Recruitment of francophones in all trades was impaired by the lack of bilingual and French-language training material. Training manuals were not translated, there was a generalized shortage of bilingual instructors, and training films, purchased from the British and Americans, were all in English. Translations were not produced as a matter of course, but produced on demand, usually by francophone officers and not professional translators. The Canadian military had not invested in translation of training material for the trades because the low level of enrolment amongst francophones in those corps did not justify the expense. Yet enrolment was low because one needed to speak English to undergo training. The committee was determined that this vicious circle whereby recruitment was low because material for training in French wasn’t available because recruitment wasn’t high enough had to be stopped.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ “Annexure 3, Appendix ‘A’ – French Canadian Representation-CDN Army, Officers and Other Ranks by Corps as at 8 Sep 50,” 15 December 1950, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

¹⁸⁶ “Lieutenant-General G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff to Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence – Conclusions and Recommendations of the Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems.”

The package sent to Minister Claxton also included a revealing analysis of the impediments to recruitment in Québec. A document entitled “Some factors considered to be deterrent to the enlistment of French Speaking Canadians in the Canadian Army,” explained that francophones perceived that they had a “language handicap” upon entering the military, that is to say that they knew the Army as an English institution, which made promotion contingent on learning English. This was not necessarily easy for every recruit. The French Canadian man, the report added was

clannish and very deep rooted in family and regional life, hence the reluctance to join a corps where the prospects of service means service outside of the Province of Quebec for the major part of his career.

It also asserted that the Army suffered from a poor image, being in the eyes of many French-Canadian families a place for moral reform of problematic youth, where the danger of assimilation to the English-speaking and Protestant majority was ever present. This document served to underscore the Army’s need to improve its public relations in the province and to undergo an information campaign. However, the “misconceptions” it found amongst the francophones were not all unfounded. Indeed, advancement for francophones still relied on the mastery of English, a skill which would be even more fundamental to anyone seeking a career somewhere other than the infantry.¹⁸⁷

As stated above, some scholars have claimed that Brooke Claxton was, along with the Chief of the General Staff, one of those who resisted further bilingualism in the Canadian Army, albeit in a much less extreme fashion.¹⁸⁸ This assessment is based on his declarations in the Commons in response to Léon Balcer, a Progressive Conservative

¹⁸⁷ “Lieutenant-General G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff to Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence – Paper No 4 - Some factors considered to be deterrent to the enlistment of French Speaking Canadians in the Canadian Army” 24 September 1951, Vol. 94, MG32 B5, Brooke Claxton Papers, LAC.

¹⁸⁸ Pariseau and Bernier, *Le spectre d’une armée bicéphale*, 160, and 167; Gravel, “La fondation du Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean,” 260, 270, and 274-275.

Member of Parliament from Québec, and his campaign for better representation for Francophones in the Canadian military.¹⁸⁹ This may be attributed to Claxton's comments on 10 Mai 1950, where he appeared non-committal in the Commons, stressing that competence should be the main consideration in promotion, though bilingualism should be considered an advantage. Regarding Balcer's demand that some ships in the Royal Canadian Navy be made French-speaking, and that a French-language military college be established, Claxton maintained:

That has been considered, and we do not exclude it at all. At present, however, the cost of the other two colleges is very considerable indeed, and we are most happy to have the proportion of twenty-five per cent of French-speaking students mixed in with the English-speaking students at Kingston and Royal Roads.¹⁹⁰

The record demonstrates that, contrary to what one may gather from his statements in the Commons, Brooke Claxton was actively working to make the Canadian military a more bilingual place. Indeed, he may very well have been one of the driving forces behind many initiatives designed to reach this objective.

Claxton was born in 1898 in a prominent Montréal English-speaking family. His father, a lawyer, was by no means a francophile but was nonetheless bilingual, a useful skill in the Québec justice system.¹⁹¹ The future Minister of National Defence served with the 3rd Battalion, Victoria Rifles, and then with the 244th Overseas Battalion during the First World War. Wishing above all to go to Europe, he abandoned his commission as lieutenant and enlisted in the Siege Artillery Draft (McGill University), and eventually served with 10th Canadian Siege Battery, 3rd Brigade, where he earned a

¹⁸⁹ David J. Bercuson, *True Patriot: The Life of Brooke Claxton, 1898-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 228-9.

¹⁹⁰ Canada, House of Commons, "May 10th 1951," 21st Parliament, 4th Session, *Debates of the House of Commons*, 2883.

¹⁹¹ Bercuson, *True Patriot*, 13-14.

Distinguished Conduct Medal, one of the highest decorations for gallantry, second only to the Victoria Cross. He ended the war as acting battery sergeant major. Upon his return he completed his law studies at McGill University.¹⁹² Himself being able to speak French, albeit not in a perfectly bilingual fashion, he was convinced that the future of Canada lay in improving French-English relations and promoting bilingualism. In the late 1920s, he joined the Canadian League, an organization dedicated to preserving national unity through increased bilingualism and the removal of unjust measures such as Ontario's Regulation 17.¹⁹³ He was elected to the House of Commons in 1940, and assumed the position of Minister of National Defence in 1946. In that capacity he tried to effect measures to bring the proportion of French Canadians in the military from 12% to 30%, primarily by trying to bolster enrolment at military colleges. His biographer, David Bercuson, identifies him as an early advocate of a French-language version of the Royal Military College, but stiff opposition from military leaders, Simonds in particular, saw him temporarily abandon this plan.¹⁹⁴ Neither Gravel nor Pariseau and Bernier mention this advocacy that dates back to the early 1940s, preferring instead to concentrate on his 1950s public hesitancy.

The Bernatchez Report reignited Claxton's desire to reform the armed forces' appeal to French Canadians. A letter to the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee clearly outlined Claxton's commitment to enact change:

We must certainly do something to meet the cry about French-speaking officers.

While exaggerated, there is a good deal of truth in the current charges about the position of French-speaking officers and the handicap

¹⁹² *ibid.* 22, and 38.

¹⁹³ *ibid.* 62.

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.* 182-183.

French-speaking candidates have to face in any of the existing methods of qualifying officers.

We have got to do something to meet this.

[...]

...I would be glad if this problem could be tackled energetically at once...¹⁹⁵

This time, however, a sustained political and media campaign for the establishment of a French-language military college, spearheaded by Balcer and journalists at *Le Devoir* and *L'Action catholique*, gave Claxton the means to extract further concessions on Simonds's part.¹⁹⁶ Although as Minister of National Defence Brooke Claxton was his superior, Simonds had a great influence on the military apparatus as CGS and could cause political problems for the minister. For instance, regarding the establishment of a French-language college, Simonds had this to say:

...we must resist the desire of a few to create a French-speaking Army separate from the English Army within our national forces, though this is obviously the desire of some extremists. They feel a most important step in towards the creation of separatism within the Army would be the establishment of a French-speaking service college detached from our general system of service training if it is our objective to work towards a higher understanding of national unity, I believe such a step would be fatal.¹⁹⁷

The CGS, then, justified his opposition to a French-language college to the Minister through an appeal to preserve national unity by imposing English as the main language of communication.

The correspondence between the two men on the subject of Bernatchez's report clearly establish the Chief of the General Staff as the main obstacle to bilingualism in the armed forces in the early 1950s. Born in England in 1903, in a British military

¹⁹⁵ "Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence to the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee," 3 July 1951, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

¹⁹⁶ Bercuson, *True Patriot*, 228-229.

¹⁹⁷ "Lieutenant-General G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff, to the Minister of National Defence, HQTS 1435-2 TD 6 (CGS)," 5 March 1952, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

family that emigrated to Canada in 1911, Simonds was not particularly sympathetic to the aspirations of francophones. He was educated at the Royal Military College, from which he graduated in 1925, and at the Staff College at Camberley, in England, where he took a staff course between 1936 and 1937.¹⁹⁸ These formational years in England strongly influenced his vision that the Army was a British institution and ought to remain so.¹⁹⁹ His biographer, Dominick Graham, wrote that before the Second World War, when Simonds was teaching at RMC, he often:

disagreed with his commandant [General Henry Crerar] [...] by taking a British and European view of tactics and strategy in his lectures and articles, contrary to the policy of the Canadian government, which had avoided committing itself to imperial strategies, let alone another land campaign in Continental Europe.²⁰⁰

When the Second World War broke out, he even considered joining the British Army, and throughout the war he remained close to British officers who felt that he was an ally of theirs.²⁰¹ Guy Simonds was a thoroughly British officer, who loved the British way and was committed to maintaining it. In light of this, his reticence to bilingualism can be understood as an attempt to maintain the British character of the Canadian military. Most of the scholarly work on Simonds is, understandably, concerned with his war record as a corps commander in the Second World War. Much less attention is devoted to his tenure as Chief of the General Staff.²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ Graham, *Price of Command*, 25.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid.* 27.

²⁰⁰ *ibid.* 36.

²⁰¹ *ibid.* 44, and 49.

²⁰² See: Dominick Graham, *The Price of Command* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1993); Lieutenant-Colonel Roman Jarymowycz, "General Guy Simonds: The Commander as Tragic Hero," in Lieutenant-Colonel Bernd Horn and Stephen Harris (eds.), *Warrior Chiefs: Perspectives on Senior Canadian Military Leaders* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2001): 107-142; J.L. Granatstein, *The Generals: The Canadian Army's Senior Commanders in the Second World War* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005); Terry Copp, *Guy Simonds and the Art of Command* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); and Douglas E. Delaney, *Corps Commanders: Five British and Canadian Generals at War, 1939-45* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011).

In his comments on the report that he sent to Claxton along with the report itself, he stressed the measures the department had taken to improve the teaching of English to French Canadians. For him, the most important recommendation was that which called for the establishment of an all-arms training facility at Valcartier. On the subject of instruction in French, the lieutenant-general believed that recruits ought to receive basic-training in French, and then be taught English. He wrote: “In this way the trained soldier will learn English and should then be capable of bilingual instruction.”²⁰³ For Simonds, the key to a better welcome for French Canadians in the Army lay in the assimilation of these men within the English-speaking majority and mindset. The Army did not have to adapt to meet the expectations of francophones, they had to adapt to the way the Army worked. That meant learning English, and agreeing to work and live in English.

The Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice-Admiral Edmond Rollo Mainguy, was equally reticent to additional measures. In an answer to a ministerial inquiry on the position of francophones in his service, he noted that: “There has been established the Basic Training School for French-speaking Recruits, the object of which is to impart to those persons in need thereof: (i) an oral and written knowledge of the English language and Naval terms...”²⁰⁴ The Army’s response to the minister’s query posed a truly extraordinary assessment of the position of francophones in its ranks. The document in question is unfortunately unsigned, although a similar document produced by the Navy was signed by the Chief of Naval Personnel.²⁰⁵ Since each service produced a similar memo in answer to the minister, it can be assumed that the Chief of Army Personnel

²⁰³ “G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff to Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence,” 24 September 1951, Vol. 94, MG32 B5, Brooke Claxton Papers, LAC.

²⁰⁴ “Chief of the Naval Staff to the Secretary, Personnel Committee – Memorandum: Canadians Whose Mother-Tongue is French,” 11 October 1951, Vol. 94, MG32 B5, Brooke Claxton Papers, LAC.

²⁰⁵ His handwriting, however, is undecipherable, and as such he could not be identified with any precision.

signed it. It claimed that: “The opportunities within the Army for Canadians whose mother-tongue is French are equal to those of the English speaking Canadian.” However, since English was the official language of the service for the purposes of efficiency, the Army believed that “among French speaking Canadian soldiers, those who attain the greatest level of proficiency in the use of the English language must inevitably achieve greater success in the Army, as against those who do not become fluent in English.” The army did note, however, that a francophone recruit could serve in any unit that he wished and was not confined to French-language units. While this was true, one must keep in mind that service with an English-language unit required a prior knowledge of that language. Nonetheless, the Army was adamant it was working to improve the number of French instructors and to translate manuals. New manuals were henceforth translated upon publication.²⁰⁶ The Army, then, agreed with the parts of the Bernatchez report that related to the training of francophones, but rejected all the other recommendations that sought to improve recruitment and bilingualism.

The Korean War, however, would delay some of the department’s plans. From the outset, recruitment of reinforcements had been particularly difficult, and even more so in French Canada. Indeed, the Canadian Army was forced to send the 1st battalions, which were to replace the 2nd battalions as part of the 1952 rotation, to the Far East while they remained under strength. Conveniently, there were a number of men who had been dispatched to Korea after the 2nd battalions had arrived, and who consequently had remaining months to serve as part of their 18-months terms of enlistment. These men,

²⁰⁶ “Notes on the Improvement of the Position of French Speaking Personnel,” 12 October 1951, Vol. 94, MG32 B5, Brooke Claxton Papers, LAC.

then, were to compensate for the missing personnel while the Army trained reinforcements.²⁰⁷

Yet, for the Royal 22^e Régiment, the situation was much worse, and the French character of the unit precluded, to a large extent, recruitment in provinces other than Québec, Ontario, and New Brunswick. In a memorandum to the Vice Chief of the General Staff dated 10 February 1951, the Adjutant-General, Major-General W.H.S. Macklin, expressed his agreement with the cross-posting scheme for NCOs as a means to develop bilingualism in the Canadian military. Unfortunately, he admitted, this would not be immediately possible in the light of the Korean situation. While posting anglophones to the 22^e was possible, the difficulty the army experienced in recruiting NCOs for service with the 3rd battalion – which would eventually relieve the 2nd – meant the reverse was not.²⁰⁸ Macklin commented on another related proposal in May of the same year, asking the VCGS how he was meant to prioritise the posting of bilingual instructors to schools “when I have not got any subalterns to reinforce the Royal 22^e Battalion [sic] in Korea?”²⁰⁹ Naturally, the department had to fill the requirements of the war effort before it could begin to implement its plans to improve the conditions of francophones. Bilingual men who could effect the change that was desired were prevented from doing so in the immediate because they had to be sent to Korea to bolster the ranks of the Royal 22^e Régiment. The Army could not use them to improve its bilingualism because it could not easily fill the ranks of the Vandoos with unilingual anglophone recruits. Bilingual English- and French-Canadians had to be sent to Korea.

²⁰⁷ Wood, 177.

²⁰⁸ “Major-General W.H.S. Macklin, Adjutant-General, to V.C.G.S., Memorandum HQTS 1435-2 (VAG), Bilingual Problems – Canadian Army,” 10 February 1951, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁰⁹ “Major-General W.H.S. Macklin, Adjutant-General, to V.C.G.S., Memorandum - Bilingual Instruction,” 8 May 1951, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

Therefore, the Korean War can be understood as an impediment to change as well as a catalyst for change. It showed the problems that had to be solved, but it put the remedy on hold because of mobilization requirements.

A year later, Major-General Bernatchez, by then General Officer Commanding, Québec Command, reiterated the army's recruitment woes in Québec. He wrote :

Since coming to this Command I have been struck most forcibly with the difficulties experienced by the Canadian Army in securing French-speaking recruits. This was never better exemplified than in our efforts to bring 1 R22eR up to an effective strength so that they will be able to rotate with 2 R22eR in Korea. I feel that encouraging more French-speaking Canadians to join the Canadian Army, both Active and Reserve, is one of my most important immediate tasks as GOC Quebec Command.²¹⁰

To do so, he suggested a large promotional campaign designed by and for Québec. Central to this idea was the creation of recruitment material written in French first rather than using the translated English material. But Bernatchez also wanted to appeal to the province's educational and social institutions such as classical colleges, high schools, and fraternal societies. He also envisioned a series of talks to be given by prominent individuals and veterans to encourage young men to enlist, and to reassure their families.²¹¹ In a matter of days, Simonds sent Bernatchez's demands to the Minister with his full support.²¹²

While Claxton agreed with Bernatchez's observations, he did not think the proposals that were submitted to him dealt with the core of the issue. For him, the root of the problem was that francophones felt that they were not given a fair treatment in the

²¹⁰ "Major-General J.P.E. Bernatchez, General Officer Commanding, Quebec Command, to V.C.G.S., Recruiting – French-speaking personnel," 8 February 1952, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²¹¹ *ibid.*

²¹² "Lieutenant-General G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff, to the Minister of National Defence," 14 February 1952, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

armed forces because of their ethnicity and mother language. If the Army was to recruit more French Canadians, it had to demonstrate that its professed equality of opportunity was truly a reality and that francophones could expect to be treated with respect. As such, he set out a policy agenda briefly outlining key reforms that he wanted to see implemented:

We should make it plain that:

- (a) The possession of French is a plain military asset leading, other things being equal, to accelerated promotion.
- (b) Every French-speaking soldier in the armed forces is entitled to be dealt with in the French tongue as regards such matters as trials, examinations for promotion, trades qualification, etc.
- (c) The language of instruction in units predominantly French should ordinarily be French.
- (d) In units which are predominantly French and which are parading alone, the language of command should be French.
- (e) All orders, correspondence, communications etc. to French speaking personnel should be French and in the parts of Quebec, Eastern Ontario and New Brunswick where French predominates, all orders, etc. should be issued automatically in both French and English.
[...]²¹³

In this brief memorandum to the Chief of the General Staff, Brooke Claxton suggested making the Canadian Army just short of an officially bilingual institution. While the Department would not be officially bilingual, it would have to be bilingual in most official interactions with francophones. At the very least, francophones ought to be able to communicate, receive training, work, and be led in their own language. His position was distinctly influenced by a letter he had received a few weeks earlier from La Fédération des Chambres de commerce des jeunes de la Province de Québec, which complained of the little regard for the French language in the military and called for

²¹³ “Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence to the Chief of the General Staff,” 29 February 1952, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

“words of command” to be given in the soldier’s main language and for the establishment of a French-language military academy.²¹⁴

Simonds’s opposition to further concessions to the francophone minority in the Canadian military is made quite obvious by his answer to the minister. While he claimed to support making any practical reform to improve relations with francophones, he was determined to avoid the Canadian military becoming a bilingual institution. With specific respect to Claxton’s proposals, Simonds indicated his disagreement with measures (b), (c), (d), and (e). He justified his stance by stating that the army had done all that was in its power to “[meet] the desires of the French-speaking Canadians.” The core of his argument rested on his belief that conducting bilingual military operations was simply not possible. As evidence of this, he mentioned the NATO conference of 1951 where the organization’s two official languages, English and French, made things inefficient in his eyes. Furthermore, the February 1952 Speech from the Throne, given in both languages, had confirmed his opinion on bilingualism. He wrote: “The slowing effect of having to do everything in two languages I think impressed itself on everyone present. [...] Time is the essence of the successful conduct of operations in war.”²¹⁵ Clearly, the CGS was disconnected from the French-Canadian population, which was beginning to advocate strongly in favour of official bilingualism and an equal status in the government apparatus.²¹⁶ While French Canadians were agitating for more bilingualism, Simonds was making the case for less of it.

²¹⁴ “Jean Vallée, Technical Advisor to The Honourable Brooke Claxton, M.P., Minister of National Defence,” 9 February 1952, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²¹⁵ “Lieutenant-General G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff, to the Minister of National Defence, HQTS 1435-2 TD 6 (CGS),” 5 March 1952, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²¹⁶ Pierre Elliott Trudeau, *Memoirs*, 65, 122-124.

While he reiterated his belief in “making every concession we can to the feelings of the French-speaking Canadians on this subject of bilingualism,” he nonetheless made it quite clear that, in his opinion, every possible concession had already been made. For him, the documents suggest, making the Army a more bilingual institution was not a moral imperative deriving from the bi-cultural nature of Canada, but a political annoyance aimed at appeasing complaining Québécois. Emphasising the point that reasonable francophones would understand that all concessions had already been made, he wrote:

I am convinced that moderate French-speaking Canadians appreciate we are doing what we can to tackle this problem in a practical way, but unfortunately a few extremists are more vociferous than the vast majority of moderate people.²¹⁷

That he allowed the use of French orders on ceremonial occasions in Québec, he maintained, was proof of his accommodating of French Canadians! Any further compromise, he cautioned, would confer upon the military a handicap that would negatively affect its ability to prosecute a war. He did, however, acknowledge that some countries had bilingual armies, but dismissed them by saying that he knew of none that had “established an outstanding military record for itself.” Simonds concluded his letter with an interesting statement that serves to emphasise his argument about the operational necessity of a unilingual army:

The day may come when the preponderance of those serving in the Canadian Army may be of French-speaking origin. If and when that day comes, I suggest that the Canadian Army might make French its language for all purposes instead of English, but I feel duty-bound to recommend against a bilingual system...²¹⁸

²¹⁷ “Lieutenant-General G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff, to the Minister of National Defence, HQTS 1435-2 TD 6 (CGS),” 5 March 1952, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²¹⁸ *ibid.*

Furthermore, he was vehemently opposed to any plan to establish a French-language staff college, which he feared could lead to the emergence of two armies. A school operating on a bilingual basis, however, would be acceptable. According to the Chief of Staff, national unity demanded that such a school not serve the sole purpose of teaching English to French-Canadians, but also teach mathematics, science, and general instruction. Moreover, the school ought to teach francophones the English language, but also teach French to the English Canadians.²¹⁹ This idea reflected a pattern of thinking that had emerged out of the Bernatchez inquiry. Many English-speaking commanders, believed that the better integration of francophones to the Canadian military necessitated the involvement, and education, of anglophones. Major-General Macklin, in a memorandum to Bernatchez, expressed his belief that English-speakers had a role to play:

I think that one of the main elements of our problem is that our English speaking officers and NCOs don't make much effort to meet the French speaking soldier part way. I am sure that this often results in the French speaking soldier professing no knowledge of English whereas they are in fact partly bilingual. I know a case in fact where a soldier who had done extremely well in English instruction at St. John [i.e. Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu], completely lost his English speaking ability during the train ride to Kingston. A few kind words in French on arrival would probably have prevented the necessity of returning this particular man to the Province of Quebec.²²⁰

When the Korean War erupted in 1950, then, the Department of National Defence had already undertaken to make itself more welcoming and attractive to the French-speaking minority initiating a study of the cause of its lack of appeal to francophones. The experience of the two previous wars had left many convinced that

²¹⁹ *ibid.*

²²⁰ "Major-General W.H.S. Macklin, Adjutant-General, to V.C.G.S., Memorandum - Bilingual Instruction."

national unity demanded that French Canadians serve in a proportion closer to their percentage of the Canadian population. The Canadian military knew that reforms and changes were needed if it was to achieve the goal of better French-Canadian representation. The Bernatchez Report showed that one of the keys to solving this problem was increasing bilingualism in the Canadian forces and ensuring that francophones had, and were perceived by their peers to have, the possibility of advancement. Many high-ranking officers in the department²²¹ seemed to agree with him, and suggested a variety of possible measures to improve relations with the linguistic minority. However, many also recognized that asking francophones to bear the full weight of improved bilingualism was unfair, and ultimately did not serve the objective of making the military a friendlier place for them. Quite simply, anglophones had to contribute to the advancement of bilingualism by learning French, interacting with their francophone brethren, and learning more about their country's French culture.

It is important to note that these initiatives fell far short of institutional official bilingualism, although this would not be official government policy until 1969, a policy recommended by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.²²² This would have entailed expenses, delays, and training that could have led to resistance from anglophones. Rather, the course of action that was selected sought to promote and encourage the learning and exercise of the other language through incentives. This non-coercive bilingualism meant that those anglophones who did not want, or did not have the means, to learn French could carry on without facing any type of barrier to

²²¹ Amongst them were the committee members, Colonel F.A. Clift, Colonel J.S. Ross, and Lieutenant-Colonel G.M.C. Sprung, along with Colonel R.L. Purves (Director, Royal Canadian Armoured Corps), Colonel L.G. Clarke (Director, Royal Canadian Artillery), Brigadier J.W. Bishop (Acting Adjutant-General), and Major-General W.H.S. Macklin (Adjutant-General).

²²² *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*, 330.

promotions. Francophones, though, would still need to learn English in order to become officers, even if they wanted to become officers in the Vandoos. Nevertheless, the Canadian forces made it clear that knowledge of the French language was an asset when considering future promotion, and for instructors, bilingualism also meant higher pay. The Department of National Defence, moreover, put in place programs to allow those who so wished to learn French through cross-appointments, course offerings, and immersion programs. In short, for the men charged with examining “bilingual problems” in the Canadian Armed Forces, bilingualism concerned the English-speaking and the French-speaking soldiers. In that respect, the Canadian military can be seen as avant-garde, especially when compared to the Canadian Civil Service, which remained until 1969 resolutely unilingual. When the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was published, it revealed the realities of the Civil Service, and its lack of action to solve the problem. By then, the Canadian Armed Forces, on their part, had been aware of the problem, and working to solve it, for almost two decades. The institution most often associated with rigidity, traditionalism, and backwardness, was in fact significantly ahead of other government institutions. This might be attributable, to a significant extent to the unique position of the Canadian military, and especially the Canadian Army. The Royal 22^e Régiment, which constituted almost a third of the infantry, acted as a sort of internal lobby. Whereas francophones were scattered throughout the federal civil service, the Vandoos were grouped in one coherent and distinct unit, which operated primarily in French internally on a day to day basis and whose members could make a career entirely in French. Moreover, they were located in Québec, in a French-speaking city, and had their own regimental and institutional history and symbols. Therefore, whereas initiative to demand a greater place for

francophones in the civil service had to rely on scattered individuals without a clear organizational structure, the Vandoos constituted an organized, structure, and concentrated pressure group that could effect change if it brought its weight to bear on the administration.

The Korean War itself played an important role in the development of these schemes. It acted as both a catalyst for change, and an impediment to implementation. Demobilization following the Second World War had left the Canadian Forces utterly unprepared to face an armed conflict, and unable to recruit and train a sufficient number of men in a timely fashion. At the time where the Royal 22^e Régiment was asked to raise a special battalion for service in Korea, and subsequently two more, none of the new plans had been put in place. As such, the recruitment drive was faced with the same problems which had plagued the two earlier wars, meaning poor promotional material, a poor image for the armed forces in Québec, and general lack of interest. While recruitment was difficult everywhere in the country, as will be shown in the next chapter, numbers of volunteers in Québec were particularly low, and recruitment especially difficult.²²³ Both the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the Vandoos went overseas under-strength, and all had to be reinforced by English-speaking personnel.²²⁴ In fact, the Army sent a number of anglophones with varying levels of bilingualism to serve with the French-speaking unit.²²⁵ The Canadian Army tried a preliminary version of its immersion and cross-appointment scheme by sending 16 officers to Québec City to undergo intensive French training at Université Laval. For six weeks the use of English

²²³ Wood, 162-163.

²²⁴ Wood, 177, and 203; “Nominal Roll – 3rd Battalion Royal 22e Régiment,” April-May 1953, Nominal Rolls – Korea, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, Citadelle de Québec.

²²⁵ Frank Jefferies, Telephone interview with *The Memory Project*, Historica Canada, September 20 2011.

was entirely prohibited and these men had to interact with each other and everybody else entirely in French, regardless of their actual ability. They were then sent to train with the 22^e Régiment in Valcartier, where again everything was in French.²²⁶ In this way the Army solved two issues, compensating for the lack of officers at the 22^e and testing the worth of such intensive language programs. One of those 16 officers, Frank Jefferies, thought that though the timeline was much too narrow, they nonetheless arrived in Korea with a knowledge and competence in French that allowed them to command the French-Canadian soldiers of the Vandoos without too much hardship.²²⁷ To the high-level officers of the Department of National Defence, the Korean War highlighted vividly the need to improve the fate of francophones amongst its ranks if such a situation was to be avoided in the future.²²⁸ In this respect, the Korean War acted as a wake-up call. The problems were real, persistent, and had to be eliminated.

²²⁶ *ibid.*

²²⁷ *ibid.*

²²⁸ “Major-General J.P.E. Bernatchez, General Officer Commanding, Quebec Command, to V.C.G.S., Recruiting – French-speaking personnel.”

Chapter 3

“Moé l’histoire de français pi d’anglais moé ça m’rentre pas dans tête pantoute”²²⁹:

French Canadians, English Canadians and Linguistic Duality in Korea

The Korean War has played an important, and routinely overlooked, role in the progress of bilingualism in the Canadian Army. This forgotten conflict began at a time when the Department of National Defence was examining its relationship with French Canadians in order to improve the image of the Canadian Forces in French Canada. This chapter will demonstrate how the Korean conflict showed that French Canadians and English Canadians could work together in the context of a military operation in an effective, professional, and cordial manner. Moreover, it demonstrates that it was possible to give a greater place to the French language, thus improving the morale of francophones, without compromising military operations. It also showed that the observations made by Bernatchez’s Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems in the Canadian Army were correct when they reoccurred and had the impact that they were said to have on recruitment amongst francophones. The nature of the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade as a bilingual entity, not in its functioning but in the make up of its manpower, proved that it was possible to integrate both linguistic groups in a coherent and functional fashion, without jeopardizing operations. The Canadians who fought in Korea also demonstrated that they could overcome the political tensions that affected both of their communities in Canada, in order to work together and maintain often very close and good relationships.

²²⁹ Jean-Guy Amesse, a soldier who served with 3R22eR, commenting on linguistic debates in Québec after the Korean War. In his interview, he said he did not mind using English or French depending who he was talking to, during and after the war, and that he saw bilingualism as an advantage, not a threat. Jean-Guy Amesse, Telephone interview with *The Memory Project*, Historica Canada, July 10 2011.

The war showed that, Canadians of both linguistic groups could get along and work together to achieve a greater common end.

The haphazard recruitment of men that followed Prime Minister St-Laurent's announcement of the creation of the Special Force caused headaches for recruitment depots across the country and that of the Royal 22^e Régiment was no exception. Recruiting officers were thoroughly unprepared for the enthusiasm generated by the new military commitment and for the flow of young men eager to enlist.²³⁰ On August 12, 1950, 18 men showed up at the Québec recruiting office of the Royal 22^e Régiment and these numbers would increase with every passing day so that, by September 25, 1,600 officers and men had enlisted to join a battalion that had been ascribed a limit of 1,500 men. As a consequence, the early days of the new unit were characterised by equipment shortages, inadequate housing, and poor organization.²³¹ On August 11, as the battalion was organising, it reported having: "only one vehicle, namely a jeep, which does not even function properly."²³²

The new units raised for the purpose of the Special Force were designated as second battalions of the three permanent infantry regiments of the Canadian Army. As such, the Royal 22^e Régiment had to set up a 2nd Battalion (2R22^eR) distinct from its regular force 1st Battalion (1R22^eR), where professional soldiers served. Still without an officially designated Commanding Officer, the 2R22^eR had to begin training at the regiment's base in Valcartier, Québec. Fortunately, officers and NCOs of the 1R22^eR assisted Lieutenant J.S. Boire, then the only officer officially posted to the second

²³⁰ Wood, 29-31; and Bercuson *Blood on the Hills*, 42.

²³¹ Castonguay, 30-31,

²³² "War Diary of 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Valcartier," 11 August 1950, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

battalion, to organise a training syllabus and helped with the training of the new recruits.²³³ It wasn't until August 14 that Lieutenant-Colonel Jacques A. Dextraze, a 32 year-old veteran of the Second World War who had earned two Distinguished Service Orders and recently returned to active service, was chosen to command the new unit.²³⁴ In addition, the new battalion had to wait until September 13 before six officers arrived to take command of companies "A" to "E" and the Headquarters company.²³⁵

The 2R22^eR finally left Valcartier on November 11, headed for Fort Lewis, an American military base in the state of Washington, some 75 kilometres south of Seattle. This base was selected to concentrate the Canadian Special Force and have it train as a complete army brigade. Given the Americans' use of Seattle as a port of embarkation for Korea, this location seemed a logical choice for the Canadians as well.²³⁶ After a five-day trans-Canadian voyage, the unit finally arrived at Fort Lewis on November 16.²³⁷

Available evidence suggests that there was relatively little tension between the French-Canadian and English-Canadian infantry elements of the 25th Brigade in Korea. This can be explained to some extent by the limited opportunities for contact between the two groups. While they did work together as part of the same formation, the units of the RCR, PPCLI, and R22^eR generally operated separately in the field, as battalions usually do during military operations. Moreover, most of the interactions between these regiments were conducted by officers and signalmen. Officers of the Royal 22^e

²³³ "War Diary of 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Valcartier," 10 and 19 August 1950, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²³⁴ Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépôt*, 32, and "War Diary of 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Valcartier," 14 August 1950, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²³⁵ "War Diary of 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Valcartier," 13 September 1950, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²³⁶ Wood, p.45.

²³⁷ "War Diary of 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, En déplacement," 11-16 November 1950, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

Régiment, as we have seen, had to have a mastery of the English language, the Army's official language above unit-level. The same was also true of signallers, all of whom had to be bilingual to work with the Vandoos.

This being said, problems in translation or communications were much more frequent in interactions with tradesmen of various service units. As shown in Chapter 2, the Canadian Army was facing a general shortage of bilingual and francophone tradesmen of every kind, in large part because training was unavailable in French. In Korea, the 25th Brigade was faced with general shortages of tradesmen, which made the absence of French-speaking elements even more conspicuous. Unlike other infantry units, trades units, such as Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps (RCOC), the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (RCASC), or the Corps of Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RCEME), are in much more frequent contact with soldiers, to which they provide various services. From delivering ammunition and supplies, to fixing jeeps and trucks, providing pay, building roads, distributing mail, or treating wounds, these logistical trades were a crucial element of the war effort and they worked in tandem with the infantry. As we shall see, the lack of French-speakers amongst these units became the source of headaches and management problems affecting the Royal 22^e Régiment.²³⁸

At Fort Lewis, the 25th Brigade faced an example of the bilingual challenges ahead. From January to March 1951, the Brigade was training at the American base. Brigadier John M. Rockingham was determined to use the unit's training time there to cull its ranks of unsuitable elements. In the rush to recruit volunteers that had followed

²³⁸ "War Diary of No 2 Administrative Unit, Fort Lewis," 12 February 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

the Government's creation of the Special Force, many unfit men had found their way amongst the ranks of the 25th Brigade. Part of this filtration scheme relied on personnel interviews conducted by the No.2 Administrative Unit's Personnel Selection Officer (PSO). This unit was responsible for all administrative matters and oversaw, amongst other things, the historical section attached to the Brigade. By January 15, however, Captain Carson, the PSO, had amassed a substantial backlog of incomplete interviews. As the unit's diarist noted "he, not being bi-lingual is limited in his scope," meaning that he could not conduct selection interviews with the unilingual francophones of the R22^cR. As a consequence, Lieutenant-Colonel T.H. Carlisle, the unit's Commanding Officer, requested of Army Headquarters for a French-speaking PSO to be despatched to Fort Lewis to solve this problem.²³⁹ The news that the request had been granted reached the unit four days later, and on January 22 Captain L. Constantineau from No. 4 Personnel Depot, Montréal, arrived at the camp.²⁴⁰

Constantineau was not only to assist Carson, as the diarist originally thought. Rather, he was to replace Carson as PSO for the 25th Brigade until such time as the selection interviews were completed. Captain Carson was recalled to Ottawa.²⁴¹ On January 25, the diarist noted that "Capt Constantineau took over all PSO duties, and being bi-lingual, should be able to assume all such duties unaided."²⁴² By March 4, the interviews were completed and Constantineau departed the Brigade which had now had

²³⁹ "War Diary of No 2 Administrative Unit, Fort Lewis," 15 January 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁴⁰ "War Diary of No 2 Administrative Unit, Fort Lewis," 19 and 22 January 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁴¹ "War Diary of No 2 Administrative Unit, Fort Lewis," 22 January 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁴² "War Diary of No 2 Administrative Unit, Fort Lewis," 25 January 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

its first experience of the pressing need for bilingual tradesmen.²⁴³ This episode showed that the Brigade was aware that having a number of bilingual officers was useful, and indeed an operational advantage. They could accomplish their task in both languages and service the two linguistic elements of Canadian deployments. It also suggest that the Department was beginning to understand that this could result in efficiencies, perhaps even savings, as only one officer was needed. The Canadian experience in the Korean War, showed the benefits of improved bilingualism, and also demonstrated the impracticality of imposing the English language as the main language.

Nonetheless, the War Diaries of the various Canadian units of the Special Force that trained in Fort Lewis identify very few tensions of a personal nature between the English-speaking and French-speaking elements of the Brigade. Nor, indeed, do written and audio testimonies from various soldiers. Instead, sources reveal a sense of mutual respect and cooperation. For instance, the Vandoo War Diarist wrote of a December 13 training exercise with the 2nd Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery (2RCHA):

Tous ont pratiqué la façon de diriger le feu des pièces d'artillerie (25 pdr) sur un point déterminé et y faire eux-même [sic] leurs corrections. Tous ont aimé grandement cet exercice, qui à l'action nous sera d'une grande utilité. Était à notre disposition la Batterie "Fox" Commandé [sic] par le major F.F.O. Leask. L'accueil de nos frères du R.C.H.A. fut des plus chaleureux.²⁴⁴

Both of these Canadian units seem to have maintained good relations throughout the war, and even beyond. After the war, in April 1953, Lieutenant Colonel J.A.A.G. Vallée of 2R22^eR went to Fort Osborne Barrack, in Winnipeg, to give Major Leask of "F"

²⁴³ "War Diary of No 2 Administrative Unit, Fort Lewis," 4 March 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁴⁴ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Fort Lewis," 13 December 1950, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

Battery, 2RCHA, a captured Russian rifle with a plaque as a token of appreciation and friendship between both units. The journal of the Amicale du Royal 22^e Régiment, in an article entitled “Camaraderie qui a duré,” wrote at length about the close cooperation between the two units, and the sincere friendship that evolved between their gunners and infantrymen.²⁴⁵ Men who used their leave to visit Western Canadian towns also reported good relations with their English-speaking hosts. The 2R22^eR diarist wrote that: “Tous ont été enchantés de l’accueil qu’ils ont eu dans nos villes de l’Ouest Canadien.”²⁴⁶ The warm welcome they received in Western Canada had a positive impact on morale, and shows that, beyond politics, Canadians could entertain positive and mature cross-cultural contact, and that some measure of goodwill extended beyond the limited world of the military.

Throughout training at Fort Lewis, Brigadier Rockingham attracted the respect of the French-speaking members of the formation by demonstrating interest in French-Canadian culture and by using the French language in their presence. For instance, during the New Year’s celebrations of January 1, 1951, at Fort Lewis, Brigadier Rockingham visited the men of the Vandoos to partake in the celebrations and sang with them in French, a gesture that pleased the men.²⁴⁷ Twelve days later, the Brigadier once more paid a visit to the Royal 22^e Régiment, at this time in the midst of a field exercise. This time, he was accompanied by the Seaforth Highlanders, from Vancouver, who gave a bagpipe concert to the Vandoos. In exchange, and at the Brigadier’s request, the

²⁴⁵ Major George Guimond, “Camaraderie qui a duré,” *Revue de l’Amicale du 22e* 6, no. 12, (April 1952): 5.

²⁴⁶ “War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Fort Lewis,” 26 March 1951, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁴⁷ “War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Fort Lewis,” 1 January 1951, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

Vandoos offered their guests a selection of the most popular French songs.²⁴⁸ Similarly, on 15 April, 1951, the Governor General, His Excellency Field Marshal the Right Honourable the Viscount Alexander of Tunis, upon his visit to the Canadian brigade before they left Fort Lewis for the Far East, addressed his men in both English and French. Both the Royal 22^e Régiment's and the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery's War Diarists praised this attention to both of Canada's linguistic groups.²⁴⁹

On April 19, 1951, the men of the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade had finally completed their stay at Fort Lewis, and embarked on *USS Marine Adder*, the American troopship that would take them from Seattle to Pusan. The 15-day trans-Pacific voyage unfolded without incident, save the occasional seasickness and a few over-enthusiastic harmonica players.²⁵⁰ Upon landing in Korea, however, some Vandoos expressed bitterness at the quality of the accommodations that had been provided to them aboard ship, especially when contrasted with the ones allocated to their colleagues from the Royal Canadian Regiment. The diarist noted: "On peut se servir de la fable de Lafontaine[sic] 'Le chêne et le roseau', et dire: 'Le hazard[sic] evers[sic] nous semble bien injuste – le moindre vent qui d'aventure fait rider la face de l'eau nous oblige à courber la tête.'" ²⁵¹ While accommodation for some of the 22^e might have been worse than that of some of the RCR, this comment seems overstated as most soldiers

²⁴⁸ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Fort Lewis," 13 January 1951, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁴⁹ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Fort Lewis," 15 April 1951, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.; and "War Diary of the 2nd Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, Fort Lewis," 15 April 1951, Vol. 18,272, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁵⁰ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, *USS Marine Adder*," 19 April-4 Mai 1951, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁵¹ This is actually a re-writing of the famous fable by Jean de La Fontaine. It combines lines 4-6 "Le moindre vent qui d'aventure; Fait rider la face de l'eau; Vous oblige à baisser la tête" and line 17 "La nature envers vous me semble bien injuste." Jean de La fontaine, *Fables* (Paris: Folio Classique-Gallimard, 1668[1991]), p.74-75.; "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Pusan," 5 Mai 1951, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

notwithstanding language reported being equally miserable on a voyage marked by seasickness, heat, and boredom.

A few days after their arrival in Korea, Brigadier Rockingham addressed the men of the Royal 22^e Régiment, and once more talked to them in their mother tongue. Although the 22^e's diarist does not offer an appreciation of the speech, the 25th Canadian Brigade's Historical Officer did note that: "As usual his talk in French made a big hit with the troops."²⁵² Rockingham was also accompanied by Major-General James H. Cassel, the British commander of the British Commonwealth Division which would become the 1st Commonwealth Division two months later, who expressed his pride in having the Royal 22^e Régiment as part of his formation.²⁵³ After a few days of training near Pusan, the second battalion began its drive to the front through the Korean towns of Taegu, Taejon, and Suwon. The unit finally entered active service after a few days in reserve on May 25, and the very same day suffered its first combat casualty – one soldier wounded.²⁵⁴ Four days later, on May 29, the 2R22^eR crossed the notorious 38th parallel.²⁵⁵ After a brief and uneventful stint with the 28th British Commonwealth Brigade between June 11 and 18, the Vandoos reintegrated the 25th Canadian Brigade. They spent the month of June patrolling, engaging in minor skirmishes with the enemy, and getting used to the Korean environment, topography, and fauna, particularly the

²⁵² "War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, Pusan," 22 Mai 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁵³ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Pusan," 22 Mai 1951, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁵⁴ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 25 Mai 1951, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁵⁵ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 29 Mai 1951, Vol. 18,356, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

large rat and mosquito populations. The month of July was similarly uneventful, aside from a move, heavy rains, and rather more fierce engagements with the enemy.²⁵⁶

The end of July, however, was notable for a key event, namely the creation of the 1st Commonwealth Division. The creation of a joint Commonwealth formation for service in Korea had been the object of discussions from the outset of the war. All Commonwealth governments believed that the next global conflict would be between the West and the Soviet Union, and would probably unfold in Europe and the Middle East. As a consequence, none of these countries wanted to jeopardize collective security with an over-commitment of troops to the conflict in Korea, which was not of major geostrategic value. However, the United States Government had informed its partners that any useful contribution to the war effort would have to come in the form of a brigade or higher formation. One solution to this problem, as advocated to the British by New Zealand and Australian officials, would be to create a Commonwealth force in collaboration with the British. These three countries agreed to form a joint force composed of a British brigade, an Australian battalion, and a New Zealand artillery field regiment.²⁵⁷

In Canada, the matter was more controversial. While elements of the press were advocating Canada's participation in the Commonwealth formation, the Cabinet was less enthusiastic.²⁵⁸ Canada's main preoccupation was primarily about nomenclature, since the desirability of the joint force from a military standpoint was rather obvious. A joint Commonwealth force was the only logical option, since no other army, save the Belgian

²⁵⁶ Castonguay p.53; and "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," June-July 1951, Vol. 18,357, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁵⁷ Grey, *The Commonwealth Armies*, 88-91.

²⁵⁸ Wood, 117; and Grey, 92.

Army, was modelled on the British system. Integration within any other military formation would certainly have caused problems of inter-operability.²⁵⁹ However, in keeping with the St-Laurent Government's commitment to internationalism and multilateralism, the Cabinet wanted to underscore the United Nations nature of Canada's military commitment rather than that of a Commonwealth which was reinventing itself. Ottawa suggested that the name "1st (Commonwealth) Division, United Nations Forces," be used.²⁶⁰ Australian historian Jeffrey Grey has tidily summarized the Canadian position as such: "The government was in favour of grouping Commonwealth forces, but opposed to identifying them as Commonwealth."²⁶¹ British opposition to the Canadian idea centred on the possibility that a division branded as "United Nations" would lead to foreign nations demanding that their troops join the formation. Interestingly, they mentioned language, along with training, equipment, and doctrine, as a main reason not to include foreign troops within a Commonwealth formation.²⁶² They had conveniently forgotten the inclusion of a French-speaking battalion in the Canadian brigade.

As the military situation degenerated after the Chinese entry into the war in November 1950, discussions of nomenclature resumed in January 1951, and Canada eventually set aside its reservations and agreed to the scheme.²⁶³ The new formation was put under the command of a British officer, Major-General Cassels, and contained troops from the four countries of the United Kingdom, the three Dominions of Canada,

²⁵⁹ Grey, 93.

²⁶⁰ Wood, 117.

²⁶¹ Grey, 93.

²⁶² *ibid.* 95.

²⁶³ *ibid.* 101.

Australia, and New Zealand, and India – which was an independent republic.²⁶⁴ The Belgian and Luxembourgier Battalion was also initially attached to the division.²⁶⁵ The Division also relied on American support especially for major medical services, which were provided at American Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals (MASH)²⁶⁶ and US Army Casualty Evacuation Hospitals. Casualties would then be transferred back to the Commonwealth to be treated at the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces' General Hospital, in Kure, Japan.²⁶⁷ Although the Commonwealth nations had joined forces, the prosecution of the Korean War remained very much an international endeavour.

This incorporation of Canadian troops within the new 1st Commonwealth Division brought in some changes at Canadian Brigade Headquarters. Only entirely Canadian administrative matters, namely discipline, promotion, and transfer, fell under Brigadier Rockingham's exclusive purview. Other matters were now under the control of Headquarters 1st Commonwealth Division. Rockingham also had exclusive authority over the three Canadian infantry battalions and the armoured squadron, while other units now fell under Commonwealth command.²⁶⁸ Although the integration of Commonwealth forces within the 1st Commonwealth Division was not devoid of errors,

²⁶⁴ At formation, the Order of Battle included: 8th Royal Irish Hussars; "C" Squadron, Lord Strathcona's Horse; 2nd Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery; 16th Field Regiment, Royal New Zealand Artillery; 45th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery; 170th Light Battery, Royal Artillery; 11th (Sphinx) Light Anti-Aircraft Battery (Royal Artillery); 28th Field Engineer Regiment, Royal Engineers; 57th Independent Field Squadron, Royal Canadian Engineers; 64th Field Park Squadron, Royal Engineers; 25th Canadian Field Ambulance, Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps; 26th Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps; 60th Indian (Para.) Field Ambulance, Indian Medical Corps; 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade (2nd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment, 2nd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, 2nd Battalion Royal 22e Régiment); 28th British Commonwealth Infantry Brigade (1st Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers, 1st Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry, 3rd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment); and 29th British Infantry Brigade (1st Battalion Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, 1st Battalion The Gloucestershire Regiment, 1st Battalion The Royal Ulster Rifles). See: Barclay, 84-85.

²⁶⁵ *ibid.* 86.

²⁶⁶ A Norwegian Mobile Army Surgical Hospital also supported the Division. *ibid.* 87.

²⁶⁷ *ibid.* 87.

²⁶⁸ Wood, 119.

tensions, or misunderstandings, most scholars agree that, overall, the project was successful.²⁶⁹

In late July, personal tensions arose between Rockingham and Cassels over what the Canadian brigadier saw as a lack of regard for his terms of reference – that is the orders and directives on how his troops were to be used that had been given to him by the Canadian government – on the part of the British major-general.²⁷⁰ Soon enough, however, a mutual understanding evolved, partly over the two commanders' shared difficulty in making the Americans understand the Commonwealth Division's position. Indeed, Cassels wrote in a periodic report that:

My main trouble during this period was to convince I Corps [the overarching American formation] that, though we were more than ready to do anything that was required we did like to know the reason behind it. [...] I pointed out that we worked differently to them, and that it was impossible to expect that we could suddenly change our ways to conform to the American procedure.²⁷¹

In the light of this, Canadians found themselves in the useful position of understanding, and sharing, both cultures. As North Americans of British heritage, Canadians – especially English Canadians – knew both the American and British ways of life. Militarily, Canadian forces operated under the British standard out of tradition, but worked in close partnership with the Americans out of geographical necessity. This afforded them the ability to serve as intermediaries, able to explain to both sides of a disagreement the position of the other. The Canadian Historical Officer aptly

²⁶⁹ See Grey, *The Commonwealth Armies and the Korean War*; Barclay, *The First Commonwealth Division*; and Wood, 119.

²⁷⁰ "War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, in the Field," 25 July 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁷¹ Quoted in Wood, 120.

summarized this reality when he wrote: “The Canadian seems to understand the British viewpoint, and has a knack for selling it to the American.”²⁷²

After an uneventful month of August spent in reserve, the Royal 22^e Régiment returned to action on September 8 as part of a major offensive, operation “Minden”, aimed at lengthening the “Wyoming” line across the Imjin and advancing into the hill on the south side of the Sami-ch’on valley.²⁷³ On September 12, the Vandoos launched their first major assault from their position on Hill 172 towards enemy hills.²⁷⁴ They reached their objective, a few hills further and dug in until the September 27, when another assault was launched. By the end of the following day, the objective had been reached.²⁷⁵ Operation “Minden” had cost the 2R22eR three killed in action, one accidental death, and fourteen wounded, including one officer.²⁷⁶

The offensive to extend the UN-controlled zone was soon followed by another operation, named “Commando,” the purpose of which was to establish a new front line. The new “Jamestown” line would overlook the Sami-ch’on valley and face Chinese positions on Hills 156 and 166. The Vandoos relieved the Royal Ulster Rifles, who had done most of the fighting, on the new positions on October 5.²⁷⁷ The remainder of the month was uneventful until October 23, when “D” Company, 2R22eR, was called upon to take part in Operation “Pepper Pot” to capture Hill 166, and push the UN line across the valley. At 0930 hours the company was reporting heavy mortar fire, which prevented the men from making progress. As a result, the CO ordered the Sherman tanks of “C”

²⁷² “War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, in the Field,” 28 July 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁷³ Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépot du Royal 22e Régiment*, 62; Wood, 130.

²⁷⁴ Wood, 126-127.

²⁷⁵ Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépot du Royal 22e Régiment*, 63-64.

²⁷⁶ “War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field,” September 1951, Vol. 18,357, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁷⁷ Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépot du Royal 22e Régiment*, 65; Wood, 132.

Squadron, Lord Strathcona's Horse (LHS), as well as the entire divisional artillery, to fire in support of the infantry units. Eventually, in the face of fierce resistance, Dextraze ordered a tactical retreat supported by a smokescreen provided by the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery. Though the operation ultimately failed, costing one dead and six wounded, it nevertheless showed how well the different Canadian units could work together. The Voodoo War Diarist commended the accurate and effective strikes of the artillery, writing that they did a "wonderful job, no shorts, everything is falling on target."²⁷⁸ His counterpart from the Lord Strathcona's Horse showed similar enthusiasm for the accurate communications between all units noting that: "Wireless communication was excellent".²⁷⁹ This certainly proved that language and cultural difference constituted no impediment to battlefield success. Communications between the Royal 22^e Régiment and other units had been conducted in English by bilingual Voodoo officers and signallers, but internal chatter was in French, without negative consequence on the battlefield. It also demonstrated vividly that the different cultural backgrounds of the Canadian soldiers presented no barrier to effective collaboration.

On November 22 and 26, the 2nd battalion was involved in what was perhaps its largest battle on the occasion of the Chinese assault on their position between Hills 355 and 227. The Voodoos had been tasked to hold the position between the 1PPCLI (Hill 227) and the 2nd Battalion, 7th U.S. Infantry Regiment (Hill 355). On November 22, the enemy began a large artillery attack on United Nations positions, presaging an infantry offensive that began at 1628 hours. The French Canadians were able to defend against a

²⁷⁸ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 23 October 1951, Vol. 18,357, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁷⁹ "War Diary of "C" Squadron Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadian) (2 Armoured Regiment) RCAC, in the Field," June-July 1951, Vol. 18,364, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

first wave of Chinese infantry through accurate fire from their mortars and machine guns, and good use of grenades. Meanwhile, the Americans had withdrawn and the PPCLI had lost hill 227 to the attackers, resulting in the encirclement of the 22^e's positions.²⁸⁰ But Dextraze had been quite clear with his men that he expected them to act in “a typical ‘Vandoos’ manner – no withdrawal, no platoons overrun, and no panic.”²⁸¹ When an American radio operator mistakenly broadcast “Collapse, collapse. This is collapse. Over.” on the battalion’s radio, the men of the 22^e heard their CO’s irritated answer: “Collapse, sit down, stand up, do what you goddamn want, but for God’s sake, get off my battalion net.”²⁸² The message was clear.

As expected of them by their CO, the men of the Royal 22^e Régiment held, one company even recapturing Hill 227 before being forced to retreat, until November 26 when the Americans were able to expel the Chinese from Hill 355.²⁸³ Instrumental to the Vandoos’ ability to hold their position was the battalion’s mortar company that fired thousands of rounds. In fact, so intense was the firing that the company almost completely depleted its ammunition store. On November 24 alone, the unit fired over 3,000 rounds of 81mm mortar, heating the barrels of their weapons to a translucent white. The next morning revealed that they had narrowly avoided complete disaster and

²⁸⁰ “War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field,” 22-23 November 1951, Vol. 18,357, RG24, National Defence, LAC; and Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépot du Royal 22e Régiment*, 68-70; and Wood, 153-154.

²⁸¹ The exact words that Dextraze used are not clear as different writers, including Wood, Bernier, and the Historical Officer, reported a slightly different formulation. This quote comes from Wood as it is the most succinct version. Wood, 153.

²⁸² Lieutenant-colonel J. Charles Forbes, *Fantassin : Pour mon pays, la gloire et... des prunes* (Québec: Septentrion, 1994), 304.

²⁸³ Bercuson, *Blood on the Hills*, 158-159.

had irremediably damaged the barrels.²⁸⁴ The next day, the Canadian Historical Officer reported that:

The Brigadier returned from visiting the units at dinner time. He said the mortar positions of the 2R22eR was almost inaccessible with empty ammunition boxes scattered around and that the mortars had become so hot the barrels were transparent, and the bombs could be seen being thrown in the barrel. They had fired over 10,000 rounds in less than 24 hours...²⁸⁵

According to Captain Charles Forbes, who commanded that company during the Battle of Hill 355, the disbelief of the American Ordnance officer tasked with bringing the replacement weapons was soon replaced with awe as he crossed the casing-strewn area. Forbes reports that he said “You guys are fantastic, in all my career I’ve never heard of anyone burning 81mm mortars.”²⁸⁶

For the Royal 22^e Régiment the Battle of Hill 355 was probably the most important engagement of the Korean War, albeit a costly one that left them with 16 dead, 44 wounded, and 3 missing, believed dead. It certainly was a brilliant demonstration of defensive combat, one that historian David Bercuson called “one of the finest defensive actions in the history of the Canadian army.”²⁸⁷ However, it also demonstrated the effectiveness in combat of the 25th Brigade. An examination of the communications log for that battle shows how the various elements of the formation were in constant and effective communication with each other and Brigade HQ. The Vandoos bore the brunt of the assault but PPCLI mortars remained available to support Dextraze’s men throughout their valiant stand. Though it was engaged in fierce combat,

²⁸⁴ Wood, 158.

²⁸⁵ “War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, in the Field,” 25 November 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁸⁶ Forbes, *Fantassion*, 316-318.

²⁸⁷ Bercuson, *Blood on the Hills*, 160.

the 22^e was able to relay key information and observation to the American 7th infantry, and to the artillery, which allowed them to develop a better plan to recapture Hill 355. While, as per Canadian Army guidelines, all communication above unit-level was conducted in English, this battle shows that the different cultures of the various Canadian units, to say nothing of the American one, were no impediment to the proper functioning of the 25th Brigade as a coherent force.²⁸⁸ It also served to increase respect between different Canadian units, and concomitantly decreased their regard for the Americans. It must be noted, however, that this might have been largely due to the previous experience of similar action in the Second World War that many men of the 2R22^eR had. It is less likely to have been the result of reforms begun in 1950; these would mostly affect the 1R22^eR and the 3R22^eR. After the battle, the Historical Officer wrote that Canadians had lost a lot of respect for their American colleagues, as they perceived them as eager to flee danger – a sentiment that was particularly strong amongst the Vandoos. One man from “D” Company, 2R22^eR even quipped that the Americans went down the hill “so fast their cigarettes looked like tracer bullets!”²⁸⁹ As for Canadians, there was a new sense of comradeship built out of the close cooperation in combat. For instance, Lieutenant T.D. Smith of First Troop, “C” Squadron, LHS took to referring to the Vandoos, whose excellent communication procedures had allowed the tanks to place accurate shots on the enemy throughout the engagement, as “his little

²⁸⁸ “HQ 25 Cdn Inf Bde Log, in War Diary of the Second Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, in the Field,” 22-25 November 1951, Vol. 18,273, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁸⁹ “War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, in the Field,” 25 November and 1 December 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

friends.” Though this remark might have contained some measure of English-Canadian paternalism, the two units did maintain excellent relations from then on.²⁹⁰

The month of November 1951 was also notable for a controversy that arose in the media and the House of Commons about French Canadians in Korea, and the Royal 22^e Régiment in particular. On November 5, 1951, Paul-Edmond Gagnon, an independent MP for Chicoutimi, rose in the House of Commons to ask the government to give him assurances that the francophone elements of the 27th Brigade, then being readied for NATO service in Europe, would be treated in a fairer manner than he suggested had been the case with the French Canadians in Korea whom he claimed were given the toughest assignments:

Je voudrais aussi recevoir l’assurance que les soldats de ma province n’auront pas à subir les ennuis et les risques d’une affectation spéciale, ainsi que la chose se pratique actuellement en Corée, où les Canadiens français sont choisis pour les postes de combats les plus exposés et les corvées les plus ennuyeuses.²⁹¹

Naturally, this serious accusation was not well received on the government benches, where Jean Lesage, then the Liberal MP for Montmagny-L’Islet and Parliamentary Assistant to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, rose to ask him to provide the source of his information on this “accusation excessivement grave de conséquences.”²⁹² Gagnon refused to provide Lesage with the source of his allegations, preferring instead to assure the House that they were true and received from soldiers returning from Korea. Lesage, still unconvinced, dared the member opposite to reveal the source of his claim or withdraw his comments, without success. The next day, the Minister of National

²⁹⁰ “War Diary of “C” Squadron Lord Strathcona’s Horse (Royal Canadian) (2 Armoured Regiment) RCAC, in the Field,” 28 November 1951, Vol. 18,364, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁹¹ Canada, House of Commons, “November 5th 1951,” 21st Parliament, 5th Session, Vol. 1, *Debates of the House of Commons*, 771.

²⁹² *ibid.* 772.

Defence, Brooke Claxton, forcefully denied the accusations, but Gagnon was undeterred and criticised the Minister for the speed with which he had refuted his claims.²⁹³ For him, this made it unlikely that Claxton would have conducted a proper investigation. Claxton responded by quoting Dextraze who had told Bill Boss, the Canadian Press's war reporter in Korea, that Gagnon's allegations were "a damn lie." Moreover, the Minister continued, the Vandoos had actually lost fewer men than had the English-speaking regiments.²⁹⁴ Still the Member for Chicoutimi refused to apologize or withdraw his comments.

This episode is an important example of the postwar opinion of the military that was prevalent amongst certain prominent French-Canadians. After the two dramatic conscription crises that had nearly torn the country apart, animosity towards the military was high amongst this group. Moreover, the *débâcle* at Dieppe had reinforced the idea that French Canadians were given the worst tasks – never mind the larger number of English Canadians who had died on the beaches as well. Moreover, this perspective was built upon the view that French Canadians did not have an equal opportunity to succeed in a postwar Canadian society still dominated by the English elites. This resentment, which it must be said was not entirely unfounded, culminated in the *Révolution tranquille*. Thus for people like Gagnon, it would simply be expected that French Canadians serving in the military – a suspicious group in and of themselves – would automatically be given the worst tasks. Yet this perspective was wholly disconnected from the reality at the front.

²⁹³ Canada, House of Commons, "November 6th 1951," 21st Parliament, 5th Session, Vol. 1, *Debates of the House of Commons*, 772-3, and 778.

²⁹⁴ Canada, House of Commons, "November 15th 1951," 21st Parliament, 5th Session, Vol. 1, *Debates of the House of Commons*, 1102-1103.

The minister, however, wanted to be certain that such claims, widely circulated in the Québec press, did not contain a kernel of truth. As such, the government arranged for two clergymen, Roman Catholic Mgr Maurice Roy, Archbishop of Québec and Bishop Ordinary to the Canadian Armed Forces, and Reverend Norman D. Kennedy, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, to visit the troops in Korea from the end of October to mid November. The official purpose of the visit was to bring a touch of home to soldiers and bring them spiritual guidance. The unofficial, and main, purpose of the two churchmen's presence in Korea was to report to the Minister on the morale of the troops. They also came back to Canada with over 600 letters to mail to the soldier's families and friends.

Of course, this was more of a public relations exercise than a serious inquiry into the allegations, which would have had to be conducted by the military. However, French Canada's low regard and trust in the military could have meant that the conclusions of such an inquiry would not have been accepted. Instead, by relying on the credibility and influence of the Province's most senior Catholic official, the minister was able to effectively undermine the accusations. The entire Québec press was sure to welcome Mgr Roy upon his return and to raise the question of the morale of the troops. Hence, Claxton used Mgr Roy's visit to Korea to both dispel Gagnon's accusations and show that the government cared for the morale of the troops by organising the visit of a prominent member of French Canadian society. Gagnon lost this debate, and the government's image was bolstered.

The reports confirmed that morale on the front line was good, and that the grievances aired by Gagnon were unfounded. Mgr Roy, himself a former Chaplain to the Royal 22^e Régiment during the Second World War, praised the discipline and

cleanliness of the troops he had met, commenting that “The morale of the Forces seemed to be excellent.”²⁹⁵ He had previously made similar comments to the press upon his return to Canada, saying then that the men were in “good spirits,” though wisely refusing to comment on Gagnon’s specific allegations.²⁹⁶

In Korea, Paul-Edmond Gagnon’s comments were met with anger and ridicule by the 22^e. The battalion’s CO, Jacques Dextraze, had told the Historical Officer that there was not a grain of truth in the matter – comments that the latter also relayed to Ottawa.²⁹⁷ In December, when Dextraze was ordered to go back to Canada to attend Staff College, Gagnon’s declaration was still the object of scorn. On the occasion of a farewell luncheon at Brigade Headquarters, Vandoo officers turned the entire affair into a joke. The Historical Officer, who was in attendance, recorded:

A skit had been arranged for the occasion to saterize[sic] the charge in the House that the Vandoos were always given the dirtiest jobs, so Bob Bérubé and Paul Brown acted as waiters complete with signs saying ‘2R22eR Officers Doing Menial Tasks.’ The antics of the GIII²⁹⁸ kept everyone in a continual state of hysterics, and it was with great difficulty that the meal was finally completed.²⁹⁹

Dextraze’s sentiments were shared by the rank and file of the Royal 22^e Régiment. In an article published in *La Presse*, Georges Langlois wrote about his conversations with francophones who had returned from service in Korea. They told him that there was indeed a certain rivalry between the three Canadian infantry regiments regarding to

²⁹⁵ “Mgr Maurice Roy, Archbishop of Québec and Bishop Ordinary to the Canadian Armed Forces, to Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence,” 22 December 1951, Vol. 94, MG32 B5, Brooke Claxton Papers, LAC.

²⁹⁶ Frank Lowe, “Reports Koreans Mistreated by Canadians Declared False,” 22 November 1951, Montreal Daily Star, Vol. 94, MG32 B5, Brooke Claxton Papers, LAC.

²⁹⁷ “War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, in the Field,” 30 October 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

²⁹⁸ The War Diarist here refers to the Canadian Army designation of General Staff Officer (GSO), of which there are three grades. These officers’ tasks relate to the administration and logistics of a unit. Here, GIII means GSOIII which corresponds to the rank of Captain.

²⁹⁹ “War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, in the Field,” 17 December 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

which one was the hardest, the most exposed, the most aggressive, and which of them were the toughest. Though, as the journalist explained, this was mostly a question of pride in hardship, not a source of complaint. Simply put, each unit wanted to be the best. But more importantly for Langlois, every Canadian soldier wanted the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade as a whole to be the best formation in Korea. Regarding the controversy itself, soldiers expressed nothing but contempt towards Paul-Edmond Gagnon:

C'est pourquoi si l'on aborde avec eux la fameuse question de savoir quel régiment occupe 'la position la plus exposée', chacun soutiendra que c'est lui. Au début, ils ne savaient pas s'ils devaient rire ou se fâcher de ce qui s'était dit à ce sujet à la Chambre des Communes, Mais ils ont pris parti d'en rire. J'ai cependant causé avec un certain nombre de soldats du 22e qui, eux, ne prenaient pas l'affaire en riant, mais égrenaient les jurons les plus sonores jamais entendus à la seule mention de cette affaire. Il y en a même qui ont juré une haine profonde au député qui a provoqué le débat là-dessus. Aumôniers et officiers s'accordent pour trouver cette intervention déplorable, ceux des autres régiments comme ceux du Royal 22e Régiment. J'ai entendu sur cette affaire, de la part d'officiers comme de simples soldats, des propos que la bienséance m'empêche de rapporter ici.³⁰⁰

The Royal 22^e Régiment's deployment to Korea was drawn into the Canadian political struggle over language, identity, and culture. Its service was interpreted and used as an example of the oppression of francophones at the hands of anglophones with no evidence that this was the case. Some Québec nationalists tried to recuperate the Korean War for their political purpose without ensuring that the situation they denounced was real. Evidence suggests that there was in fact very little tension or animosity between Canadians of both linguistic groups in Korea. Rather, it shows that collaboration and cooperation informed exchanges between anglophones and francophones. Both groups also demonstrated a willingness to learn more and pay tribute

³⁰⁰ Quoted in Vennat, 97.

to each other's cultures in the field. War and shared hardship has a habit of bringing people together at the front that is not always reflective of domestic relationships.

This nationalist critique of the Canadian Armed forces played an unfortunate role in the development of bilingual policies in the Canadian military. While it stemmed from a traditional opposition to British imperialism, it failed to recognize the different nature of the Korean War. Too often, French-Canadian soldiers were regarded with scorn, or disdain, as "vendus" who served the federal apparatus through its most English of institutions, the military. But the Korean War was not a war for British imperialism. Rather, it was a war that stemmed from the St. Laurent government's commitment to internationalism and to collective security through the United Nations and NATO. Moreover, this antagonism failed to recognize that some of these francophone soldiers were working to make the military a more welcoming place for their fellow citizens. Unfortunately, this nationalist critique of the military was recuperated by individuals such as Simonds, to justify their lack of action on the French-language file.³⁰¹

The month of January began with the visit of the Minister of National Defence, Brooke Claxton, and the Minister of Veterans' Affairs, Hughes Lapointe, who met the troops and talked to them. Brooke Claxton made sure to speak French – in "broken but understandable French" according to the War Diarist – to the francophone troops and answered their questions.³⁰² This practice of showing some regard to the French language was also demonstrated during the visit of the Chief of the General Staff, G.G. Simonds, who was in Korea to bestow awards upon soldiers who had distinguished

³⁰¹ "Lieutenant-General G.G. Simonds, Chief of the General Staff, to the Minister of National Defence, HQTS 1435-2 TD 6 (CGS)," 5 March 1952, Vol. 19,042, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

³⁰² "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22^e Régiment, in the Field," 1 January 1952, Vol. 18,358, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

themselves at Hill 355. For instance, Major Liboiron's citation, written in English, was translated into French at the request of Simonds.³⁰³ In so doing the Army looked like it was willing to accommodate and make itself more accepting of francophones. However, as we have seen, this particular event also fits within Simonds's preference for allowing French speakers to use their language only in ceremonial and non-combat matters. An awards ceremony, for him, was one of the rare moments where using French to please francophones was acceptable.

The 2nd Battalion spent the months of January and February in reserve along with 1PPCLI, its arch-rival in the occasional hockey games held at the "Imjin Gardens," the divisional skating rink built on the frozen Imjin River.³⁰⁴ The unit's main activities in early 1952 were patrolling, training, and joint exercises.³⁰⁵ During the months of March and April, 2R22^eR was back in the field, but saw little action apart from the continuous patrolling, the punctual exchange of artillery shells with the enemy, and infrequent gun fights with enemy patrols.³⁰⁶ On 23 April, 1952, 2R22^eR left the front line for Britannia Camp, the rear base for the Commonwealth Division. Four days later the regiment left for Seoul, and reached Pusan on April 28. Finally, on April 30, the 2nd Battalion of the Royal 22^e Régiment boarded the American troopship that would take it to Kure, Japan, to rest for a time before heading back home to Canada.³⁰⁷

³⁰³ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 24 January 1952, Vol. 18,358, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

³⁰⁴ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 4 February 1952, Vol. 18,358, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

³⁰⁵ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," January-February 1952, Vol. 18,358, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

³⁰⁶ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," March-April 1952, Vol. 18,358, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

³⁰⁷ "War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 28-29 April 1952, Vol. 18,358, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

Meanwhile, in Canada the first battalions had been preparing for the 1952 rotation since the month of January. Unlike their colleagues from the second battalions, these were professional soldiers, not volunteers especially recruited for the Korean operation. The entry of the Chinese into the conflict since the creation of the Special Force – but, one must note, before the Canadians arrived in Korea – had altered a conflict on the verge of ending into a static stalemate. While both sides argued endlessly at Panmunjom over the details of an armistice, the fighting continued on a muted scale. Canada simply had to rotate its men who had enlisted on 18-month contracts. At first, the government had intended to create second battalions for service in Korea, with third ones serving as overflow for volunteers and a source of reinforcements through the conflict. The first battalions, the Active Force, were to remain in Canada, train recruits, and ensure the protection of the country in the tense Cold War environment. Now, the second battalions had to be relieved, and the third were not up to strength or to an acceptable standard of training. Accordingly, the first battalions had to go, much to their pleasure. Indeed, many of the men had been disgruntled to learn that they, the professionals, would have to sit out a war while the amateurs fought abroad. These comments were not entirely fair, however, since many of the men who had enlisted in the second battalions were Second World War veterans with combat experience.³⁰⁸

Both 1R22^cR and 1RCR, however, sailed from Canada at half strength each having only two rifle companies. Their numbers would be supplemented by the men from their predecessor units who had arrived in Korea later as reinforcements, and who still had some months left to serve before the end of their 18 months. Not only were these units under strength, but they also received much less training, and none at all as

³⁰⁸ Wood, 24-26; Johnston, 255-256.

an entire brigade.³⁰⁹ While it is true that, as H.F. Wood has argued, the first battalions necessitated less training by virtue of their being permanent soldiers, the various elements of the brigade could have used some joint training.³¹⁰ In fact, as William Johnston has demonstrated more recently, the famed “spit and polish” that the professionals were said to bring to the conflict, was rather overstated. Moreover, the leftover elements of the second battalions would eventually leave Korea, making the first battalions under strength once more. In the end, they could not even train in Korea, as within one week of their arrival 1RCR and 1R22^eR were sent to positions on the front line.

After three months of training at Valcartier the 1st Battalion of the Royal 22^e Régiment finally boarded the train that would take it from Valcartier to the West on March 23, 1952.³¹¹ The 1R22^eR arrived at Seattle on March 28. The same day, the men boarded *USS General W.M. Black*, an American troopship that they shared with 1RCR.³¹² The unit’s chaplain (or padre), Captain Gérard Fortin, in his many letters to his parents noted that some tension existed between the members of the RCR and R22^eR whilst aboard ship, a fact that he attributed to the anglophone unit’s CO, Lieutenant-Colonel P.R. Bingham.³¹³ He wrote:

Les RCR ont un espèce de gagé comme commandant qui leur impose toutes sortes de caprices comme lois. Ainsi tous les officiers du régiment doivent porter la moustache. Au Canada tous devaient avoir un chien ou un cheval. Ils devaient être constamment brillants des bottines à la badge

³⁰⁹ Johnston, 257-258.

³¹⁰ Wood, 177.

³¹¹ “War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, Valcartier,” 23 March 1952, *Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR*, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³¹² “War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in Transit,” 23-29 March 1952, *Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR*, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³¹³ The Royal Canadian Regiment’s regimental history mentions that he “insisted upon a high degree of ‘spit and polish.’ ” Col. Bernd Horn, *Establishing a Legacy: The History of the Royal Canadian Regiment, 1883-1953* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2008), 228.

de leur casquette; les shinés du RCR! Ils ajoutent ceci ou cela à l'uniforme. Ils font rire d'eux autres par tout le monde aussi. C'est encore eux qui ont apporté leur uniforme bleu en Corée!

Nous en avions avec nous sur le bateau. Qu'ils étaient fatigués! Dans nos petites chambres voilà que les batmen de nos officiers entraînent tous les matins pour shiner les brass de ces messieurs. On avait d'avance peine à bouger et il arrivait trois ou quatre privées en plus.

Ils avaient deux grandes plaques de bois 'The Finest Regiment in Canada, Royal Canadian Regiment' Les 22 en ont pris une et l'on jetée à l'eau. L'autre a été transportée dans la chambre du Major Klenavic leur 2 i/c commandant en second. Il y en a un qui me le montre avec fierté et je lui dit 'Yeah The finest regiment, but the Vandoos are the strongest regiment. That's what's worth at war! [sic]',³¹⁴

The men of the 1R22^eR finally arrived at the port of Inchon on April 20, where they were immediately transported to Britannia Camp. After a short stay, they reached the positions along the Sami-ch'on that they would occupy for the next two months on April 24. Luckily for them, the months of May and June were uneventful and allowed them to improve the defences and comfort of their area, and get used to patrolling in Korea.³¹⁵

Although, relations might not have been the warmest with the 1RCR, men reported feeling welcome by other units. The Royal Canadian Regiment had an elitist air of superiority that was not well received by other regiments. One must note that this was not necessarily due to language, since relations between the R22^eR and the PPCLI were very good, and those between the PPCLI and RCR were similarly cool. Captain Fortin wrote to his parents about the 1st Commonwealth Division:

Cette division, 1st Com. Div., comme on dit ici est reconnue par les [A]nglais les [A]méricains et les [J]aponais, les [C]oréens aussi comme la meilleure. Sincèrement notre Brigade occupe une place d'honneur dans la Division ce qui fâche bien les [A]ustraliens. Il va sans dire que le

³¹⁴ "Lettre du 15 juin 1952," 15 June 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³¹⁵ "War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, at Sea and in the Field," April-June 1952, Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

22 est fameux ici comme ailleurs. Un [A]nglais me disait qu'ils font des choses que d'autres n'oseraient pas.³¹⁶

For the 1R22^eR, as for the 2R22^eR before, relations seemed particularly good with the gunners of the First Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, as reported by Padre Fortin. In the beginning of 1952, the Canadian Chaplain Corps faced shortages of catholic chaplains, meaning that not enough were available to provide each Canadian unit in Korea with its own. As a result, the artillery did not have a chaplain in May 1952. To solve the problem, the Brigade Chaplain, Padre Coulombe, decided that each infantry chaplain would also have to provide services to the artillery battery assigned to his infantry battalion. For Fortin, that meant “B” Battery of First Regiment, RCHA. In his letters, he had nothing but praise for the staunchly Catholic CO, Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew R.L. McNaughton, the son of the famed Second World War Canadian General Andrew G.L. McNaughton. When the French-Canadian padre visited his gunners, McNaughton insisted to act as altar server. In discussions with artillery officers, Fortin confirmed the close rapport between the two units. He told his parents that:

Un officier me disait que chez les artilleurs c'est considéré comme un honneur que de venir faire service au 22 ou d'aller en patrouille avec les 22. Ils estiment beaucoup notre unité. Ils vont même jusqu'à dire 'donnez-nous mille autres vingt deux et on finit cette guerre.'³¹⁷

These good relations between English-speaking gunners and French-speaking infantrymen led their commanders to develop an exchange plan, along the lines of what Bernatchez's committee had proposed. On June 17, 8 NCOs and men from 1R22^eR were sent to “B” Battery, 1RCHA, and 8 gunners from that unit joined the Vandoos for a

³¹⁶ “Lettre du 30 avril 1952,” 30 April 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³¹⁷ “Lettre du 19 mai 1952,” 19 May 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

period of one week. For that week, gunners became riflemen and joined Voodoo soldiers in patrolling and discharging any other task. Correspondingly, infantrymen worked the cannons with their artillery colleagues. The two units' COs intended this exercise to build confidence in each other amongst their men and to demonstrate to them the importance of good relations and collaboration. Gunners would understand the realities of the infantry, and infantrymen would understand the challenges of the artillery. The Voodoo War Diarist explained what Lieutenant Colonels Trudeau and McNaughton were looking to accomplish:

L'échange qui est dû à l'initiative du Bn et de la Bty, a pour but de mieux faire connaître les tâches des soldats d'infanterie et d'artillerie et par conséquent, de mieux faire apprécier la nécessité d'une coopération absolue entre les deux armes.³¹⁸

Perhaps unknowingly, then, the two Commanding Officers had put in place a system somewhat like the one that the Department of National Defence had begun to devise two years previously. They had set up, of their own accord, a program of exchange where men would serve with another unit to familiarize themselves with another operational, and in this case linguistic, culture. While in Korea this served an operational purpose in improving appreciation for the needs of both sides, this could nonetheless lay the foundation for further exchanges after the war. These would then serve as linguistic and cultural immersion that could lead to a united army that had a better respect for cultural differences in its ranks. Once more, officers in the field were far ahead of the high-ranking officers in the Department of National Defence in terms of promoting an environment that was respectful of both cultures.

³¹⁸ "War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 17 June 1952, Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

In July 1952, two months after their arrival in Korea, the Vandoos were headed for their first month in reserve. The month was spent training and perfecting their combat techniques. While most exercises were successful, linguistic differences did cause a few incidents. On July 4, the 1R22^eR was to conduct exercise “Beaver”, during which the men would leave their positions and reach a point on Hill 355 by truck – a position held by The Welch Regiment.³¹⁹ Unfortunately, the driver of the first truck in the Vadoo convoy did not speak English, and thus failed to explain to a Welsh Guard that the convoy was part of an exercise. After some time spent arguing unsuccessfully in two different languages, the entire convoy was forced to turn back. The unit War Diarist did note, however, that the whole incident proved the mobility of the unit, and thus could not be considered a total failure!³²⁰

The 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade Signal Troop, Royal Canadian Corps of Signals, for its part, received some good news on July 23, 1952. A new signals officer, Lieutenant Ramsey M. Withers arrived from the Royal Military College. Signallers had been short on staff since the beginning of the war, and the shortage was particularly problematic when it came to bilingual signallers. As we have seen, signallers attached to the Vandoos in Korea had to be bilingual. Indeed, all communications within the Royal 22^e Régiment usually occurred in French, but communications with flanking units, or Brigade, Division, and Corps Headquarters had to be in English. Moreover, in 1952 signals training was only offered in English in Canada, and thus any francophone man hoping to serve as a signaller with the Vandoos had to be bilingual, if only to receive

³¹⁹ NB: “The Welch Regiment” uses the archaic spelling of the word “Welsh” in its name for historical and traditional reasons.

³²⁰ “War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field,” 4 July 1952, *Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR*, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

training. For months now, 25 Signal Troop had been forced to send its Major, the only bilingual man around, to serve with the Vandoos, a task well below his rank which also deprived the troop of leadership.³²¹

One of the solutions was to take bilingual signallers or men training at the Canadian School of Signals and send them to work with the Vandoos. Lieutenant Ramsey M. Withers, later General and Chief of the Defence Staff, was one of those. He had spent his childhood between Ontario and Québec because his father, an electrical engineer, worked on Hydro dams in the two provinces. This way, he had learned French in Québec schools. Later, while he was training to become a signals officer at Royal Roads Military College in Esquimalt, he was exempted from the mandatory French course and sent to learn Spanish with his francophone colleagues instead. He did not expect to serve with a francophone unit but upon graduation he was sent to 1R22eR in Korea because of his linguistic abilities, much to the relief of the 25 Signal Troop War Diarist.³²² The army, then, was aware that forcing unilingual signallers on the Vandoos was ridiculous from both a cultural and operational standpoint. As such, they had to find men who could work in both languages. However, the fact that there were no francophones available for this, since they could not be trained in their own language in the first place, was still problematic.

Another solution was to funnel bilingual men who showed up at a recruitment depot to work in signalling for the Vandoos. Sergeant Bill Manning was one of them. Born in Sorel, downriver from Montréal, from a father from New Brunswick and a Nova

³²¹ “War Diary of 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade Signal Troop, Royal Canadian Signals, in the Field,” 23 July 1952, Vol. 18,296, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

³²² *ibid.* and Ramsay M. Withers, Telephone interview with *The Memory Project*, Historica Canada, November 26, 2012.

Scotian mother, he grew up in a francophone community where he became bilingual as a matter of course. He enlisted at the age of 17 in Montreal after his father told him to get a job. Asked if he was bilingual he answered in the affirmative and was sent to work with the R22^eR's military intelligence. In the Korean War he was transferred to 2R22^eR's signals where he was in charge of writing the war diary of the unit³²³ and other signalling tasks. Others like him ended up serving as signallers without them enlisting specifically for that task simply because they could speak both languages. Recruiting English-Quebeckers was an easy and rapid solution to the shortage of bilingual men. Much like French Canadians living outside of Québec, Anglo-Quebeckers sometimes had to learn the language of the majority, especially when they lived outside of the big urban centres of Montreal, Québec, and Trois-Rivières.³²⁴

In Korea, bilingual signallers did not only apply their skills to military communications. They were also called upon to tour the villages that would be shelled in order to evacuate the civilians. Their language skills were particularly useful since one could usually find a Korean that could understand English relatively well, or in rare cases French. They were also called upon to liaise with other UN troops in English, and give a report in French to the men of the Vandoos. Bill Manning, for instance, was often sent to Brigade, Division, or Corps HQ in order to exchange intelligence with American, British, Australian, or Canadian colleagues. Having fully bilingual men like him prevented errors in translation that could be costly. But, they could not always prevent

³²³ The R22^eR War Diaries are inconsistent in terms of language used. Only 1R22^eR's War Diary is written exclusively in French. That of 2R22^eR is written in English between August 10-19, 1950; French between August 20-21, 1950; English between 22 August and 31 October, 1950; French between 1 November 1950 and May 1951; and English between June 1, 1951 and 30 April, 1952, which coincides with Manning's time with the unit. 3R22^eR's War Diary is almost exclusively written in English, except between September 1953 and April 1954.

³²⁴ Bill Manning, Interview with *The Memory Project*, Historica Canada, April 25, 2012.

mistakes, especially those stemming from the incomprehension of the French nature of the Vandoos by other non-Canadian units. Some Americans were somewhat baffled to learn that the R22^eR was made up of *French* Canadians. One silly incident deserves note.³²⁵

Ramsey Withers remembered talking with a commander of the 3rd American Division and trying to advise him against a particular deception scheme. The plan was to replace an American battalion with the 1R22^eR in order to deploy it elsewhere without the Chinese noticing. The Canadians would be provided with American helmets and vehicles to create a sense that UN troops were not as numerous as they were in order to draw a Chinese attack. All that the Canadians would have to do is use American terminology and signalling procedure on the radio and telephones to keep the illusion. Withers tried unsuccessfully to make him understand that this would not work because the Vandoos communicated in French internally and could not communicate effectively entirely in English. And so the operation was put in place. Within 24 hours of the R22^eR's arrival at its new position, the Chinese had erected large banners that read "Vandoos! Welcome Back!"³²⁶ William Henry Pope, an English-speaking officer of the Royal 22^e Régiment from a Québec City family, recalled this event in his memoirs:

So that the enemy would not know that it was facing either of us, it was forbidden to speak French on the Wireless. Well, the corporal had spoken to me in French. 'Why?' I asked him. 'I didn't have time to find the English words,' the corporal replied. Then he added, 'but I spoke with an English accent!'³²⁷

Needless to say, such a subterfuge was not attempted again.

³²⁵ *ibid.*; and Withers, Interview.

³²⁶ Withers, Interview.

³²⁷ William Henry Pope and David Bercuson, *Leading from the Front : The War Memoirs of Harry Pope* (Waterloo, Ontario : The Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies, 2002), 155.

Still, it showed that Canadian English speakers, and especially those serving in the Royal 22^e Régiment, were aware that the French nature of that regiment called for specific accommodation in wartime. The men were French speaking and attempting to pretend that they were not was absurd. The 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade was well aware of this reality and ensured that linguistic differences were accepted, respected, and did not become operational problems. To an extent, the British, too, were willing to accommodate this reality since most of their senior officers could speak French and understood the Canadian, and French Canadian, position. The Americans, however, were brutally culturally insensitive, and rarely demonstrated that they were aware that some Canadians spoke French, and of what that might entail. While interoperability was not an issue in the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade, or the 1st Commonwealth Division, it certainly was with American formations. In fairness, this problem was not unique to the Royal 22^e Régiment – though language differences exacerbated it – since most Canadian, Commonwealth, and indeed international units, had interoperability issues with the Americans at some point. It would seem however, that these were particularly acute in the 1st Commonwealth Division.³²⁸

While the month of July was calm for the men in reserve, Québec was in the midst of its 24th General Election, which saw Maurice Duplessis's Union Nationale government returned to power. While Duplessis had previously demonstrated interest in the Royal 22^e Régiment, offering a "Fleurdelisé" flag to the 2nd Battalion to take with them to Korea, the province had not bothered to make arrangements for the Québécois soldiers in Korea to vote in the 1952 election. The men were not particularly impressed

³²⁸ Commonwealth forces, and particularly British officers seemed to entertain significant animosity towards the Americans. "War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, in the Field," 28 July 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

by this decision. Gérard Fortin reported to his parents that: “Je vous assure que nos hommes, officiers et soldats, sont froissés qu’on ne les ait pas fait voter. ‘Voilà comment on s’intéresse à nous autres’ disent-ils.”³²⁹

Thankfully, Canadian soldiers would get to vote in the 22nd Canadian Federal Election held on August 10, 1953. Still, political parties did not seem particularly eager to court the military vote. Only the Progressive Conservative party sent information leaflets about its platform to the front. Even then, though, the PC’s document entitled “A 16 Point Pledge for Canada” contained no mention of Korea. Its sole reference to National Defence mentioned the Progressive Conservatives’ intention to cut Defence spending in order to reduce the waste uncovered in audits conducted in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Moreover, no French version of the PC manifesto was sent to the Brigade.³³⁰

The month of August was split between reserve and a return to the front lines. The month was notable for one death, which had a certain impact on the English-speaking elements of the unit. On August 19, 1952, Lieutenant Arthur Graham Herman was killed by enemy artillery. Herman is interesting in that he was an Anglophone infantryman who had specifically requested to serve with the Royal 22^e Régiment, rather than being assigned there by virtue of his knowledge of French. Son of a Nova Scotian Baptist pastor,³³¹ he was born in Moncton, New Brunswick.³³² In a letter to the Commander of the Royal Canadian School of Infantry at Camp Borden, Ontario, he

³²⁹ “Lettre du 24 juillet 1952,” 24 Juillet 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³³⁰ “A 16 Point Pledge for Canada, General Election Manifesto of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada,” 31 July 1953, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, Library and Archives Canada.

³³¹ “Rev. A. K. Herman à Lt. Col. L.F. Trudeau”, 25 septembre 1952, FPA29, Fond Arthur Herman, Centre d’archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³³² “Carte Funéraire”, FPA29, Fond Arthur Herman, Centre d’archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

asked to be attached to the 1st Battalion, Royal 22^e Régiment, upon graduation. Aware of the linguistic barrier, he wrote: “While I realize that I am not French speaking by birth, I am able to converse in that language.” Not entirely bilingual, he nevertheless expressed his “sincere desire to serve and fight with a French speaking unit.” Service in the Vandoos, for him, constituted a unique opportunity to improve his level of fluency in the French language, a useful skill for those aiming for a long career in the Canadian Armed Forces in the second half of the 20th century.³³³

The few anglophones who served with this French-Canadian unit in Korea understandably developed a special relationship with each other. When one died, the small English-speaking community in the unit felt a particular sense of loss. Ramsey Withers remembered that this death was the one that took the biggest toll on him in his entire military career, one that still affected him well into retirement. He recalled that one evening, Herman, who commanded a section, and he were headed to Company Headquarters, from where Withers would then head to Battalion Headquarters, when the enemy started shelling positions held by Herman’s men. Concerned, he told Withers to carry on without him, that he would go back to his men, and that they would see each other soon. He was hit by an enemy shell on his way to his men. When Withers finally reached Battalion Headquarter, a colleague looked at him and said “Your friend’s gone.”³³⁴ For him, and other anglophones in the unit, this loss was particularly painful. In a postwar interview, Withers explained that no other death had had such an impact on him. No francophone soldier has mentioned Herman in an interview or otherwise that I have examined. It seems that there might have been a different approach to mourning

³³³ “Lt. A.G. Herman à Commandant, The Royal Canadian School of Infantry, Camp Borden,” 4 février 1952, FPA29, Fond Arthur Herman, Centre d’archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³³⁴ Withers, Interview.

and loss, which might have been influenced by the different type of comradeship that could develop between anglophones and francophones.

The next sojourn on the front line was much more difficult for the Royal 22^e Régiment. Heavy shelling was a frequent occurrence in September and October of 1952, resulting in many injuries and a few deaths. Between September 5 and 6, “B” and “C” Companies suffered hits from more than 400 enemy shells. From 16 to 25 October of the same year, the 1R22^eR suffered seven dead, and twenty-five wounded. Such losses were particularly harmful to the Royal 22^e Régiment, which had left Canada already under-strength. The calculation then was that men who had come to Korea as reinforcement to the second battalions, and who still had a number of months of service left on their terms of enlistment would bolster the numbers of the first battalions. By the time that their service in Korea would come to an end, the expectation was that the units would have had enough time to train reinforcements. However, as is often the case in military matters, theory did not meet practice. The Royal 22^e Régiment had not been able to send enough men to the 1R22^eR to replace the combined losses to injuries, death, and rotation. In addition, it had to prepare a third battalion in Canada for the 1953 rotation, an impossible task if all trained men were automatically funnelled to the front line.³³⁵

As a result, by mid October, when 43 men returned to Canada at the end of their eighteen months, the 1R22^eR only had 38 officers and 638 NCOs and soldiers, out of a desirable strength of 960. By November 1, when the regiment was once more put in reserve, it had lost 74 men in three months.³³⁶ This state of affairs deeply annoyed Padre Gérard Fortin, who blamed the antimilitary bias of French-Canadian intellectual and

³³⁵ Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépôt du Royal 22e Régiment*, 101.

³³⁶ *ibid.* 101-102.

religious elites for the poor recruitment of French Canadians. For him, those in Québec who would equate military service with being pro-British or imperialist

...ne raisonnent pas comme membres d'un pays indépendant qui prend ses décisions et les exécute. C'est en agissant en indépendants que nous le deviendrons et que nous serons ainsi reconnus. Je sais bien que nous ne le sommes pas encore tout à fait vis à vis Albion.³³⁷

Unknowingly, Fortin has reached the same conclusion that Bernatchez and his committee had, namely that recruitment would be improved by having more French-Canadian units. However, he knew that this would be impossible so long as attitudes towards the military did not change in Québec. He wrote:

De plus nous n'avons qu'un régiment canadien-français et qu'est-ce qui arrive on y compte huit officiers de langue anglaise et depuis que nous sommes ici le I Bataillon n'a jamais été au complet et ne le sera pas. Nous devrions être 960 nous sommes à peine 750. Ce qui veut dire plus de travail pour chacun, plus de piquage, plus de pelletage, plus de garde jour et nuit, etc. etc. Et ces gars-là qui se fendent en quatre à cause de ceux qui ne veulent pas venir en partie à cause de la mentalité, reviennent au pays et vous savez comment on les regarde.³³⁸

While the Vandoos were in reserve, Padre Gérard Fortin waged a war of his own against military administration and the 1st Commonwealth Division concerning French-language reading material. As historian Brent Byron Watson has shown, reading material was in very short supply of Canadian soldiers throughout the Korean War. When magazines and newspapers did reach the Far East, they did so weeks after publication. Books, moreover, were particularly rare. As he correctly notes, publications in French were “practically non-existent.”³³⁹ In fact, the Canadian military never sent French novels to its soldiers. Rather, the 22^e had to wait for the Red Cross to send a

³³⁷ “Lettre du 21 novembre 1952,” 21 November 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³³⁸ *ibid.*

³³⁹ Watson, 153.

shipment of 50,000 French-language novels to Korea. However, the 1st Commonwealth Division being an international endeavour, the 25th Canadian Brigade did not control the entirety of its supply chain. For instance, the divisional warehouse in Kure, Japan, was under Australian command. Perhaps understandably, Australians did not see a use for French novels in Korea, and thus stored them without sending them to the Royal 22^e Régiment.³⁴⁰

Nonetheless, Fortin was determined to get these books his men so badly wanted. He wrote many letters to COs of all superior formations, and even sent an officer who was in Japan on leave to enquire directly at the Australian warehouse, but to no avail. By December 1, he had all but given up but hoped that the 3R22^eR might benefit from the books.³⁴¹ All the while, he was also attempting to obtain liturgical material in French. The Amicale du Royal 22^e Régiment, the association of former and current members of the Royal 22^e Régiment, had arranged for French-language New Testaments to be sent to Korea, but like the books these were held up somewhere in Japan. Four months after they were shipped from Québec City, the unit had still not received them, though they had received mass booklets from the Army.³⁴²

When the Commander of the Chaplain Corps sent a message to all Catholic chaplains asking them to contribute to a gift for Mgr Roy's "Jubilé Sacerdotal," Fortin aired his grievance. While he responded that he would be happy to contribute, it would be appreciated if biblical leaflets sent to Roy's chaplains were also available in French.

³⁴⁰ "Lettre du 8 novembre 1952," 8 November 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³⁴¹ "Lettre du 1 décembre 1952," 1 December 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³⁴² "Lettre du 8 novembre 1952," 8 November 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

All those that they had thus far received were in English, which was not particularly useful for his purposes. Somewhat cheekily, he told his parents:

Comme de bonne ma lettre était en français. Avant mon premier rapport j'ai consulté Padre Coulombe à savoir si je devais ou pouvais le faire en notre langue. C'est préférable en anglais parce que parait-il il peut être montré comme référence ou argument ou tout autre à des officiers supérieurs trop imbéciles pour lire le français.³⁴³

Fortin grew increasingly frustrated at the 1st Commonwealth Division's inability to send the Royal 22^e Régiment the books and New Testaments. In a letter he expressed his frustration:

Je vous dis que c'est enrageant de dépendre de tout le monde comme c'est notre situation ici. Nous avons déjà assez de trouble comme [C]anadiens-français avec les [C]anadiens et il faut en plus que tout ce qui vient du Canada passe par les [A]ustraliens! Alors imaginez quand es-ce qu'on s'occupe de ce qu'il y a de français dans les envois canadiens? Quand est-ce que notre pays sera conduit par des [C]anadiens, à l'esprit canadien, à la mentalité canadienne, au cœur canadien? Par des [C]anadiens qui sont fiers de ce titre, qui ont souci de l'honneur du pays et de ses enfants? [...] Un bon jour que je serai plus fâché[sic] j'écrirai au Colonel Triquet et lui demanderai de rapporter la chose à Ottawa – ou si je pouvais le faire à un député.³⁴⁴

Fortin was exasperated at the lack of regard for French Canadians demonstrated by Ottawa in not providing them with the French-language material that they required. Now that such materials had been sent they were held up in Japan by yet more anglophone bureaucracy. He finally received the long-awaited New Testaments just in time for Christmas, on December 17, 1952. He and his men were very pleased and commented

³⁴³ "Lettre du 18 novembre 1952," 18 November 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³⁴⁴ "Lettre du 8 novembre 1952," 8 November 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

positively on the appearance of the books, with their Vandoo cap badge on the cover, nice paper, and a foreword from Mgr Roy.³⁴⁵

The holiday season of 1952, however, was also a source of disappointment for the French Canadians of the 25th Canadian Brigade. As is often the case, the Brigade received a number of packages from the homeland that contained gifts for soldiers. Individuals and organisations from Toronto, Winnipeg, Halifax, Vancouver and many other places in Canada, sent soldiers writing material, chocolate, candy, socks, candles, card games, and other items – all small things that made life on the front that much more bearable. Sadly, no such boxes came from French-speaking organizations and private individuals in the Province of Québec – other than family members, of course. Fortin noted that the French Canadians were hurt by this apparent lack of regard for their service in Korea amongst their fellow francophones. He wrote: “Rien du Québec. Vraiment cela a affecté un peu notre orgueil national ou mieux racial.”³⁴⁶ Not even Québec newspapers seemed to care about them. He noted that from time to time they would receive shipments of magazines and newspapers from *Maclean's*, the *Toronto Star*, the *Winnipeg Free Press*, and other English-language publications – but “... jamais rien en français; rien venant de nos quotidiens du Québec.” The only access to francophone newspapers came through parcels sent by the families of soldiers, and these copies were widely circulated in the unit.³⁴⁷

After a difficult autumn and comparatively calm winter, the entire 1st Commonwealth Division was put on reserve for the months of February and March

³⁴⁵ “Lettre du 17 décembre 1952,” 17 December 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³⁴⁶ “Lettre du 6 janvier 1952,” 6 January 1953, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

1953. That meant that the Canadians would spend two of their last three months in the Far East on reserve, and not at the front. As is usually the case in reserve, most of the men's time was spent training. However, on the initiative of Captain Pope the Vandoos planned a joint exercise with the tanks of "B" Squadron, Lord Strathcona's Horse, to take place on March 5. Pope's "C" Company would train with 1st Troop of "B" Squadron, in order to improve how both units could work together. The LHS War Diarist was most impressed with the results of the exercise. He wrote:

1st Troop spent the afternoon working with a company of the R22eR. The Van Doos and Strathconas are gaining a lot of confidence in one another through their training together. It is hoped that the other Bns in the Bde will follow the R22eR's example and ask for troops to train with them.³⁴⁸

Such joint training exercises were essential in creating a proper *esprit de corps* where all elements of the 25th Brigade shared a sense of joint purpose. Moreover, units who trained together in such a fashion developed a confidence and respect for one another that could bridge cultural differences.

In April 1953, the war was not over yet for the 1R22^eR. Although they would leave by the end of the month, they were nonetheless asked to go back to the front one last time. This time, however, they would take over positions previously held by the Bataillon Français de l'ONU, the French unit in Korea that served in the 23rd US Regiment. The French CO, Lieutenant Colonel de Germiny, met with his French-Canadian counterpart, Lieutenant Colonel Louis Frémont Trudeau, on April 1 to discuss the move.³⁴⁹ On April 6, two days before the move, five French officers dined at the

³⁴⁸ "War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 5 March 1953, Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.; And "War Diary of 'B' Squadron Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) (2 Armoured Regiment) RCAC, in the Field," 5 March 1953, Vol. 18264, RG24, National Defence, Library and Archives Canada.

³⁴⁹ "War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 1 April 1953, Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

Vandoos officers' mess. It had taken some arguing on the part of the R22^eR leadership to get the Americans to agree to this since most such dinners were held with officers of formations higher than the battalion-level, and the invitation was extended to the French battalion, not the American Regiment. Eventually, they relented and representatives of the two francophone units were able to share a meal. Afterwards, the unit organised a screening of a French movie, "La Belle et la Bête," which had been brought by their comrades from France, much to the pleasure of the Vandoos who usually only had access to English-language movies.³⁵⁰

The unit finally left the field on April 20, and proceeded to participate in a number of ceremonies marking the rotation. On April 23, the British commander of the Division, General Michael West, joined the Vandoos and decorated a number of men who had distinguished themselves in the field. He then addressed the men in French to congratulate and thank them for their service, a gesture that was much appreciated amongst the men of the 22^e. He then joined the new brigade commander, Brigadier General Jean-Victor Allard, a francophone from Trois-Rivières who had commanded the Royal 22^e Régiment in the Second World War, for a drink at the mess.³⁵¹ The next day, the men finally embarked on their journey back home. They stopped for a few days in Kure, Japan, to rest and enjoy free time in the country. The unit War Diarist noted that the Commonwealth base in Kure offered two movie screenings every night, one in English, and one in French. While it might seem odd that movies were available in French in Japan and not Korea, one must remember that the British managed the camp

³⁵⁰ "War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 6 April 1953, Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³⁵¹ "War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 23 April 1953, Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

in Kure, not the Canadians.³⁵² The Canadian government, unlike other Commonwealth governments, was in charge of providing its own supplies to the troops. This derived from the fact that Canada could use British-issued material in some respect, and American supplies in other areas due to its geographical location. Entertainment and movies, for instance, came from the United States, while food rations were British. Evidence would suggest that the Americans did not have French-language movies, while the British did, although the reason why that was the case is unclear.

They finally boarded ship on May 1, 1953.³⁵³ However, not all men got to go back to Canada on May 1. Those who had come as reinforcement had to complete their time in Korea, usually by joining the 3R22^eR. Some had specific skills which were better used elsewhere. For instance, a number of bilingual men were sent to the 1st Commonwealth Division Battle School at Haramura, Japan, to train incoming Commonwealth units. Ramsey Withers, for instance, was sent there on March 1, 1953, to train incoming signallers. The school allowed Commonwealth troops to undergo live-ammunition training and to get used to East Asian weather and customs before heading to Korea. This way, the culture shock was reduced, and combat effectiveness improved. All the Commonwealth troops had to go through this school, whether they were Canadian, British, New Zealander, or Australian. Bilingual men, then, were particularly useful in that they could train both the English-speaking and the few French-speaking troops who passed through. Though not all units stayed for the same length of time – some spent a month, others a week – it was very useful to have men who could address

³⁵² “War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field,” 28 April 1953, Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³⁵³ “War Diary of the 1st Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field,” 1 May 1953, Journaux de Combat du 1R22eR, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

soldiers in both English and French and offer quality training in both of these languages.³⁵⁴

When the 3R22^cR finally reached Korea in April 1953, it had been training in Canada for almost three years. As the Korean War dragged on, it became essential to send the first battalions to the front, the third ones having been consistently cannibalised to send men to Korea. However, by the autumn of 1952, it seemed clear that the third battalions themselves would have to go to Korea as well. That is partly why the 3R22^cR stopped sending men to reinforce the 2R22^cR, which deteriorated that unit's manpower situation further. Unfortunately, there was no choice. Recruitment had been low in French-Canada, and as such the 3rd Battalion was itself under strength by about 100 men.³⁵⁵ Had it sent trained men to Korea, it would have found itself headed for Korea, dramatically short on men, and with the men that it did have badly undertrained – a catastrophe in the making. Instead, it started to retain its men and embarked on a steady training regimen at Valcartier in the winter and at Wainwright, Alberta, in the summer with the other Canadian units that would rotate in the spring of 1953.

The 3rd Battalion, Royal 22^e Régiment, spent its first weeks in Korea training with other Commonwealth units. Here again, Canadian units worked together. On April 23, for instance, "B" Squadron, Lord Strathcona's Horse, sent a Lance Corporal to give tent instruction to the men of 3R22^cR. Much to the unit's – and the LSH War Diarist's – surprise, however, the NCO was able to give the entire training in French. Nobody in the armoured unit had known that this man from Alberta could speak French, and they were rather astonished, and pleased, to find out. The Vandoos, too, were pleasantly surprised

³⁵⁴ Withers, Interview.

³⁵⁵ "Nominal Roll, April 1953," Nominal Rolls – Korea, Archives du Royal 22^e Régiment, Citadelle de Québec.

to receive training in their mother tongue. All of this only served to improve relations between these two units that, as we have seen, were rather good already.³⁵⁶

With the exception of the Armistice, the most notable event in the 3R22^eR's stint in Korea was without a doubt the coronation of the new sovereign. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, who would go on to rule over the Imperial and Commonwealth realms longer than any other British monarch, had her official coronation ceremony on June 2, 1953. The event was the occasion of true celebrations across the Commonwealth, but also amongst the men of the 1st Commonwealth Division. The Royal 22^e Régiment itself had a special relationship with the Monarch. Since February 18, 1938, the Regiment's Colonel-in-Chief, had been His Majesty King George VI, a source of great pride for the only permanent francophone infantry regiment in Canada. Upon the King's death, Queen Elizabeth II inherited the position of Colonel-in-Chief – a position she holds to this day. King George VI had a close relationship with the French-speaking unit and stayed at the Citadelle, in Québec, during the Royal tour of 1939. From April 12 to April 21, 1940, moreover, the Royal 22^e Régiment became the first non-English-speaking regiment to hold guard at Buckingham Palace. On that occasion, orders were given to sentries in French – something that, BBC journalists noted, probably had not happened since Norman days.³⁵⁷

On the occasion of Her Majesty's coronation, the *Crown News*, the 1st Commonwealth Division's journal, published a special edition. Its 12 pages contained a message from the new Queen, and congratulatory messages from each of the

³⁵⁶ “War Diary of ‘B’ Squadron Lord Strathcona’s Horse (Royal Canadian) (2 Armoured Regiment) RCAC, in the Field,” 23 April 1953, Vol. 18264, RG24, National Defence, Library and Archives Canada.

³⁵⁷ BBC, “French Canadians as King’s Guard (1940),” *British Pathé* (Accessed 27 September 2015).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAB9B2ROcWw>

Commonwealth realms represented in the formation. The journal also contained a list of coronation honours and awards, and a description of the coronation ceremony including its symbols, route, and seating pattern at Westminster Abbey. The most interesting part of this paper is the article that appeared on the final page, entitled “La Reine et les Canadiens-Français.” This article, written entirely in French, praised the response to the coronation in Québec, saying:

Nul [sic] part ailleurs, ce concert spontané n’a plus de force que dans la vieille Province de Québec littéralement [sic] parsemée de clochers, qui furent en quelque sorte la pierre angulaire de la survivance du français en Amérique.³⁵⁸

The author went on to associate the Queen with national unity. For him, she symbolized a united Canada within a united empire. The author wrote:

La Souveraine du Royaume-Uni et du Canada, Elizabeth II, est pour les Canadiens de langue française, avant tout un symbole d’unité, caractérisé au sein de l’Empire britannique, par le Commonwealth, et au Canada, par la fusion de deux nationalités distinctes qui ont fait de ce pays une grande puissance mondiale.³⁵⁹

The *Crown News*, was well aware of the sensibility of French-Canadians, and ensured that there would be a francophone element to its coverage. Private Henri Proletti was hired to translate the paper into French, and to contribute French-language articles for the benefit of francophone troops, and possibly anglophone soldiers who could read French. French was also a feature of Commonwealth radio coverage in Korea. *Crown Radio*, the broadcasting arm of *Crown News*, made sure to broadcast in French from time to time, to the pleasure of Francophones. Most of the station’s Canadian content was produced in both languages in recognition of the French-Canadian part of the

³⁵⁸ “The Crown News: The Coronation of HM Elizabeth II, 2 June 1953,” 2 June 1953, Vol. 18434, RG24, National Defence, Library and Archives Canada.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

Canadian contingent.³⁶⁰ Naturally, when Canadians founded their own radio station after the armistice, *Radio Maple Leaf*, they had to include a French element to their programming. In 1954, *La Presse* reported that a number of francophones had been hired by the station to produce French-language content for the men. Amongst them was Proletti, whose previous experience for *Crown News* and bilingualism made him a great addition, was recruited to serve as DJ and host of a French-language show.³⁶¹

Radio Maple Leaf operated in a somewhat bilingual fashion in that some of its content was in French, some in English, without it being necessarily translated. Other broadcasts were bilingual with every other line being said in French. The Historical Officer noted, however, that the French-language text was not a translation of the English, but rather new content. The whole constituted a coherent text, which only bilingual men fully could understand! Unilinguals, English-speaking or French-speaking, were left to fend for themselves. Soldiers listening to the station, regardless of their mother tongue, were thus exposed to the other main language of their country; the Brigade had two linguistic groups, and both were entitled to their share of the broadcasts. Bilingualism was most evident in entertainment, where operational needs did not dictate the use of one language. For instance, on July 1, 1953, Brigadier Allard had decided that the formation would have a sports day in honour of Dominion Day, which he had renamed Canada Day – an unabashed demonstration of Canadian nationalism.³⁶²

The program for that day's events was entirely bilingual, which shows that under

³⁶⁰ "War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, Japan," 10-12 May 1953, Vol. 18434, RG24, National Defence, Library and Archives Canada.

³⁶¹ Vennat, Pierre, p. 178

³⁶² Allard had long advocated for Dominion Day to be renamed Canada Day, and used his power in Korea to effect the change. His memoirs mention that he received positive responses to reports of this action from English- and French-Canadian newspapers. He was, however, chastised by Simonds. Jean V. Allard avec Serge Bernier, *Mémoires du Général Jean V. Allard* (Boucherville: Éditions de Mortagne, 1985), 285.

Allard's command, the 25th Canadian Brigade had put in place a system akin to that which Claxton was advocating back home. That is to say that English was used for operational efficiency, but that official interactions between the administration and the soldiers was conducted in the soldiers' mother tongue.³⁶³ According to Jean-Victor Allard, the station was praised by Americans, Turks, and Belgians who appreciated its content.³⁶⁴

During his time as brigadier, Allard increased the level of bilingualism in most matters which were not operational, and faced no backlash from English Canadians as a result. This testifies to the impressive goodwill amongst Canadian troops that gave a greater place to the French language outside of the battlefield. While, at the time, it was not possible to use French as much as English in battle, soldiers showed that imposing English for the sake of keeping the Army British, like Simonds wanted, was unnecessary. Moreover, the use of French could improve the morale of French Canadians without affecting that of English Canadians. There was truly no negative aspect to bilingualism and improved relations.

Talks of an upcoming armistice had begun almost simultaneously with the Korean War. General MacArthur had promised to bring the boys back home for Christmas in 1950, and politicians ever since had made similarly vain promises. When peace negotiations had begun in Panmunjom, hopes of an end to the war were reignited, only once more to be crushed. As the peace-process dragged on and on, and the military situation settled into a bitter stalemate, men began to prepare for a long, drawn-out war of patrols. It is not surprising then that, when the news that an armistice might have been

³⁶³ "War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, in the Field," 1 July 1953, Vol. 18434, RG24, National Defence, Library and Archives Canada.

³⁶⁴ Allard, *Mémoires*, 273.

signed reached the Royal 22^e Régiment on July 26, it was met with a fair amount of scepticism. When the reports were officially confirmed the following day, the War Diarist reported that the men received the news with both disbelief and indifference, thinking it unlikely that the ceasefire would last. The armistice came into effect on July 28, and the still incredulous Vandoos were ordered to halt their fighting activities and to hold their line.³⁶⁵ Although their war over, the 3R22^eR would stay in Korea until April 1954. Like the two regiments that had preceded it there would stay in Korea for an entire year. This time, however, they would be tasked with monitoring the cease-fire and ensuring compliance with the terms of the truce.³⁶⁶

Ultimately, the Korean War cost the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade a total of 516 men killed out of a total of 21,940 Canadians who served with the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade.³⁶⁷ This numbers, however, includes the men who died because of various accidents. In total, 309 men were killed in action, died of wounds, or missing and presumed dead.³⁶⁸ The Royal 22^e Régiment lost 110 men killed, including 5 officers and 22 NCOs out of a total of 3,463 men who served with the unit. Additionally, the Regiment suffered 185 men wounded in action, meaning that its total losses in Korea are 289 killed and wounded, or 8% of its total manpower.³⁶⁹ The 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade's casualty ratio for the entire war was 7.1%, indicating that the R22^eR did not suffer a highest percentage of losses than other Canadian units. In comparison, the PPCLI lost 107 men killed, and 429 wounded, out of a total manpower of 3,800, and the

³⁶⁵ "War Diary of the 3rd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," 26-28 July 1953, Journaux de Combat du 3R22eR, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³⁶⁶ "War Diary of the 3rd Battalion, Royal 22e Régiment, in the Field," July 1953-April 1954, Journaux de Combat du 3R22eR, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³⁶⁷ Wood, 257-256.

³⁶⁸ Bercuson, *Blood on the Hills*, 220.

³⁶⁹ Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépôt du Royal 22e Régiment : Vingt ans d'histoire, 1945-1965*.

RCR lost 149 men killed.³⁷⁰ The men of the 22^e were awarded 34 individual Commonwealth awards,³⁷¹ 3 individual American decorations, and 2 Belgian medals.³⁷² The Royal 22^e Régiment as a whole was granted the “Corée 1951-53” Battle Honour.

³⁷⁰ David J. Bercuson, *The Patricias: The Proud History of a Fighting Regiment* (Toronto: Stoddart, 2001), 273; and Col. Bernd Horn, *Establishing a Legacy: The History of the Royal Canadian Regiment, 1883-1953* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2008). It was not possible to confirm how many men served with the RCR in Korea.

³⁷¹ Canada would not have its own distinct honours system until 1967.

³⁷² Captain J.R.P.P. Yelle and Lieutenant J.F.O. Plouffe were awarded the American Distinguished Flying Cross, and Captain L.R. Drapeau was awarded the American Air Medal. Lieutenant J. Gagné was made Chevalier de l'Ordre de Léopold II avec palme, and Corporal R. Portelance was awarded the Décoration militaire 2e classe avec palme.

Conclusion

Je me souviens de la guerre oubliée: Why the Korean War Matters

It emerges from the study of the Royal 22e Régiment's experience in the Korean War that the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade operated in a surprisingly harmonious and collaborative fashion throughout the conflict. Despite, what some journalists and politicians might have told French Canadians in Canada, I have found no evidence of significant tension, disagreement, discrimination, or otherwise different treatment of francophones in the Canadian Brigade. To the extent that francophones were mistreated in Korea, it was arguably due to the Department of National Defence's lack of concern for their need for French-language printed material. Perhaps most significantly, however, is their fellow French Canadians' lack of regard and concern for their well being at the front. Canadian soldiers, French-speaking or English-speaking, seemed to have gotten along with each other well, and the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade seems to have gone a long way to ensure that French Canadians were respected in their cultural specificity. Officers of both linguistic groups tried to meet each other halfway. Francophones used the English language for operational matters out of a concern for expediency, efficiency, and coherence – although they were also forced to do so by military regulations. A common language had to be used for inter-unit communication for primarily practical reasons. On the other hand, anglophones made clear efforts to use French when possible in non-operational contexts. In ceremonial events, dinners, and other non-combat related events, anglophones seem to have made a specific effort to underscore and celebrate the French element of their formation. The same was true of British commanders, most of whom seem to have possessed some knowledge of the

French language, and who spoke to the men of the 22^e in their own language whenever visiting.

In Korea, old animosities between anglophones and francophones had no demonstrable consequence on relations between English-speaking and French-speaking units, and vice versa. Their primary concern was to achieve the tasks given to them in an efficient and safe manner, which required close collaboration. I have found no evidence that the ethnic tensions that were displayed in some of the political discourse in Canada had any expression or consequence in the 25th Canadian Brigade. Soldiers seemed to have approached each other with an open mind. The only tensions between units that seemed to have been evident were between Canadians and units of other countries. Canadians were not particularly keen on the British, nor were they close to the Australians. The Canadian Historical Officer even remarked that Canadians preferred the Japanese to their Commonwealth colleagues.³⁷³ But most of all, Canadians were united in their lack of regard for the Americans.³⁷⁴ Although French and English Canadians had a different culture, they remained citizens of the same country, and as a result possessed a shared culture – one that was demonstrably different from that of the Americans, British, or any other country.

One of the main problems that affected the Royal 22^e Régiment in Korea, and that arguably made their lives harder and their war more difficult than their English-

³⁷³ “War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, Japan,” 20 March 1953, Vol. 18434, RG24, National Defence, Library and Archives Canada.; “War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, Pusan,” 25 July 1951, Vol. 18434, RG24, National Defence, Library and Archives Canada.; “Lettre du 8 novembre 1952,” 8 November 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.; and “Lettre du 4 décembre 1952,” 4 December 1952, FPA23, Correspondance du Capitaine Gérard Fortin, Archives du Royal 22e Régiment, La Citadelle, Québec.

³⁷⁴ “War Diary of No.25 Canadian Field Historical Detachment, Japan,” 28 July 1951, Vol. 18,434, RG24, National Defence, LAC.

speaking colleagues, was the chronic shortages of manpower that plagued it from the beginning of the war until the end. This was not born out of any desire by the Department of National defence to keep the French units weak, but rather out of a stark ineptitude at recruiting francophones. The recruitment problems and deficiencies that had been revealed by the Bernatchez report with respect to First and Second World Wars, once more manifested themselves. The Canadian Army's lack of action in implementing Bernatchez's recommendations resulted in a repetition of the same mistakes, that is a failure to make military service appealing to young French-Canadian men. In addition, francophones were again fewest in the trades, as had been highlighted by Bernatchez. While this had a relatively minor consequence on the Korean War, due to the lack of movement in the war and the relatively small scale of the conflict, it did lead to some delays and inefficiencies that might have been altogether avoided had a number of tradesmen been bilingual or francophone.

In effect, the Korean War served to demonstrate the validity of the Committee on the Study of Bilingual Problems' observations. Three successive and very different wars had faced broadly similar challenges regarding French-Canadian participation, thus showing that the problems were structural, not circumstantial, and had to be addressed. In addition, the war demonstrated vividly that language did not constitute and impediment to the effective prosecution of war, nor did it foster tensions. Linguistic differences were recognized, celebrated, and accepted as a reality. Accommodations for the minority language were made when possible and practical, and the right of the minority group to operate and function in its own language was broadly recognized and accepted. In exchange, the francophones accepted that during operations with other

units, English had to be used by those involved in above-unit decision-making for operational reasons.

No doubt many Canadians are unaware that the Korean War happened, and even fewer can explain the reasons why Canadians fought there. And presumably a smaller proportion of French Canadians, still know of a war in which their fellow francophones fought. It is a thoroughly “Forgotten War,” a small war fought in a far away land for unclear reasons; an oddity of sorts. Some would perhaps even say a mistake. In Québec, where military history itself is generally forgotten, the Korean War is even more starkly absent from the historical consciousness. But for the men who fought on the Korean hills, the war was very real and had lasting impacts, positive and negative, on their lives. South Koreans, too, remember the destruction of their country, and the foreigners who came to their help and allowed them to build one of the most modern societies in the world.

The purpose of this thesis has been to challenge this idea that the Korean War was inconsequential and of little importance in Canadian history. Rather, I have tried to show that the Korean War was a watershed moment in the evolution of Canada’s defence establishment. This forgotten conflict was a turning point for francophones in the Canadian military and gave traction to a movement towards increased bilingualism that would lay the groundwork for the implementation in the military of official bilingualism through the *Official Languages Act*. Before the Korean War, French Canadians could not really feel at home in the Canadian Forces, or at least not outside of the one francophone unit, the Royal 22^e Régiment. Some high-ranking francophone officers, who had made a career in English, had been advocating for more bilingualism in the Forces after the Second World War. Change seemed afoot when J.P.E. Bernatchez

produced his report. Perhaps there was hope that the Canadian military would change and make itself more welcoming of francophones.

In the immediate wake of the Bernatchez report, however, few things changed despite the Minister of National Defence's eagerness to improve his Department's image amongst French Canadians. Until the Korean War, powerful, and respected, English-speaking officers were reluctant to change the way their organization worked. While they professed to understand the aspirations of French Canadians, they did the strictest minimum to create effective, lasting, and constructive change. Indeed, I would suggest that people like Guy Simonds did everything they could to appear willing to accommodate francophones, while effectively doing nothing to facilitate it structurally. And they might have succeeded in keeping the Canadian Forces a predominantly English-language institution were it not for a peculiar diplomatic crisis in a small, poor Asian country.

As I have sought to show, the Canadian military was aware of the impediments it placed on recruiting French Canadians, and its lack of effort to make military service appealing to them. Bernatchez's report simply officially outlined what people had observed since the South African War. Yet, senior officers were intent to do nothing, preferring to blame francophones rather than themselves. But the Korean War forced change by highlighting the problems pointed out by Bernatchez. Again, francophones were reluctant to join because the Army was, and was seen as, an English institution. Again, unilingual francophones could serve in the infantry and almost nowhere else. Again, francophones were underrepresented in the trades. Again, manpower shortages plagued francophone units. Again recruitment efforts in Québec were a complete shambles. Again, the military could not find enough qualified francophone officers to

fulfil the needs of French-speaking units. Again, instructors able to train troops in French were insufficient. Things had to change.

Reforms came too late to affect the recruitment effort and the men who fought in the Korean War, but by highlighting the problems that francophone officers had identified long ago to a Department that was now officially and formally aware of the problems that they had previously preferred to ignore, the Korean War began a process that would lead to lasting change. The Canadian military had to modernize and make itself more welcoming to French Canadians. Francophones had to be given a fair chance, and had to be offered training in their own language. Before the conflict, problems were known, but now they were manifest, obvious, and undeniable. This was especially urgent since the Korean War had demonstrated the diplomatic uncertainty of the Cold War environment. Another war seemed eminently probable, and French-Canadian manpower would be needed.

One of the most immediate consequences of this conflict was the creation of the Collège Militaire Royal de Saint-Jean. As we have seen, military training other than basic training was virtually unavailable to francophones, or at least to francophones without a sufficient understanding of English. The Department of National Defence had tried to justify this by stating the lack of demand for French language training, as demonstrated by the low number of francophones enrolled in these courses. Evidence, however, had shown this to be rather absurd; since the low enrolment was likely due to the fact the few francophones were proficient enough in English to undergo training. Nonetheless, the Chiefs of Staff remained opposed to creating a French military college to complement the Royal Military College, in Kingston, and Royal Roads, in Esquimalt.

Rather, they preferred to devise various schemes to teach English to francophones in order not to split the forces along “ethnic lines.”³⁷⁵

Francophones had been badly under-represented at the Canadian military colleges. In 1952, for instance, only 2 recruits at Royal Roads were francophones and 10 at the Royal Military College.³⁷⁶ This led a group of French Canadians to advocate tirelessly for a French-language military college, amongst whom was Conservative MP Léon Balcer, a Royal Canadian Navy Officer during the Second World War and future Minister.³⁷⁷ He did receive considerable support from colleagues in the House of Commons, anglophone and francophone, along with members of the press in Québec and elsewhere. Balcer initiated the debate in the House of Commons on May 9, 1951, and continued to advocate for the issue in the following years. This followed nearly two decades of advocacy in favour of a French-language military college on the part of various French-Canadian veterans and journalists. Pressure mounted steadily on the Minister of National Defence to change the government’s position of opposition to the project, which was based primarily on budgetary constraints. Journalists at *Le Devoir*, *Le Droit* and *L’Action*, along with the English *Montreal Star*, *The Gazette*, and *The Quebec Chronicle*, supported the plan that seemed eminently sensible and in the interest of national unity, and heavily attacked the Minister who consistently rejected the project in the House of Commons.³⁷⁸ On April 25, 1952, *The Quebec Chronicle* reported that the

³⁷⁵ Gravel, “La fondation du Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean,” 266.

³⁷⁶ Richard Arthur Preston, *Canada’s RMC: A History of the Royal Military College* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press for The Royal Military College Club of Canada, 1969), 344.

³⁷⁷ Castonguay, *Le Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean*, 21.

³⁷⁸ Gravel, “La fondation du Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean,” 268-9.

issue was splitting the Liberal Caucus, whose Quebec members were agitating for the college.³⁷⁹

Little known, however, is the fact that since 1952, correspondence between Defence Minister Brooke Claxton and the Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant-General Simonds, showed that the Minister was pushing for the creation of such a military college. His archives contain all the news clippings on the issue of the French school and a number of letters to the CGS in which he tried to see if such a plan would be acceptable.³⁸⁰ In November 1951, Jean-Victor Allard himself had written a memorandum with Ernest Côté, a friend and former Vandoos, to Simonds about French training, which had gone unanswered. Côté had forwarded it to Jean Lesage, then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of State for External Affairs, however, who had returned it with some comments, which hinted at the government's plans to open a college. Allard, who then opposed the idea of a French military college because he felt French-Canadian officer-cadets had to learn and compete with their English-Canadian peers,³⁸¹ proposed a military academy that would teach English to francophones starting in grade 10 and put them in a position to be accepted at RMC. Lesage's answer highlighted three problems: it was a bad idea to waste resources on such young men who could not know what they wanted to do yet; Québec would complain that the military was trying to anglicise francophones; and that Allard's desire to prepare pupils for acceptance to RMC did not work since there was an alternate option at Royal Roads. For Allard, this suggested that the government intended to go ahead with the third military

³⁷⁹ "Quebec Liberals Revolt Over Question of Military College," *Québec Chronicle*, April 25 1952 found in Vol. 100, MG32 B5, Claxton Papers, LAC.

³⁸⁰ Vol. 100, MG32 B5, Claxton Papers, LAC.

³⁸¹ He admits in his memoirs that he was wrong on this issue. Allard, 248.

college.³⁸² The problem lay in convincing officials at the Department of National Defence.

The recruitment problems that plagued the Royal 22^e Régiment along with the appalling shortages of bilingual men provided all the evidence the minister required to force Simonds to accept the new college. The Korean War made it evident that all the small steps that had been taken to help francophones receiving instruction in English and to provide more bilingual instructors did not work to the extent needed. Although, technically, a francophone who was not fully fluent in English could receive trades training with some assistance, recruits were not coming forward. Moreover, as we have seen, bilingual men were funnelled to the Korean War to join the Royal 22^e Régiment in a number of capacities. What the Korean War demonstrated was that a patchwork solution such as the one Simonds had preferred simply could not work. If francophones were to enlist, then they needed to be able to receive training and to work in their own language. Sending francophones to study and work in English Canada at either RMC or Royal Roads was not a sustainable and permanent solution. There needed to be a French military college, and Simonds and his staff could no longer deny it.

On June 12, 1952, Brooke Claxton rose in the House of Commons to announce the creation of a French military college in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, a city with a long military history.³⁸³ He had given orders that the institution be built by the fall, and dismissed his officers who claimed the timeline was too short. The discussions then turned to the name it ought to be given, with the two preferred suggestions being “Royal De Salaberry College” and “Royal d’Iberville College.” In the end, however, they settled

³⁸² *ibid.* 249.

³⁸³ Castonguay, *Les Bataillons et le Dépôt du Royal 22e Régiment*, 28; and Preston, *Canada’s RMC*, 345.

on Collège Militaire de St-Jean, and the Governor General, The Right Honourable Vincent Massey, asked the Queen for the right to use the appellation “Royal.” The college would henceforth be known as Le Collège Militaire Royal de St-Jean.³⁸⁴ There francophones would receive training in French, but would also learn English. When their skills in that language were strong enough, all training would be provided in English. However, the same was true for anglophones who registered at St-Jean, albeit the languages were reversed. The Department of National Defence explained in a press release that “Emphasis [would] be placed on teaching languages other than the mother tongue to both English and French speaking students.”³⁸⁵

By August 1952, the Department of National Defence was able to report that it had received 1,200 enquiries and more than 220 “firm applications,” forcing them to increase the number of men they were planning to admit from 100 to 125.³⁸⁶ On September 19, the Canadian Armed Forces reported that they had received a total of 1,350 applications, interviewed 400 candidates, and had retained 125. Of those, 80 were French Canadians, and 45 were English Canadians. Recruits came from each province, except Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, and included one French citizen, the son of the French Ambassador to Canada.³⁸⁷ The college was managed by francophones and located in French Canada, and its curriculum focused on language, meaning that the English-speaking recruits would need to learn French. This was in line with what Bernatchez had proposed to make the Canadian military progressively more bilingual by

³⁸⁴ Preston, 345-6.

³⁸⁵ “Press Release,” July 21, 1952, Vol. 100, MG32 B5, Claxton Papers, LAC.

³⁸⁶ “Press Release,” August 18, 1952, Vol. 100, MG32 B5, Claxton Papers, LAC.

³⁸⁷ The Canadian military historian Desmond Morton was one of the anglophones to study at CMR in its early days.

encouraging English-speakers to learn French.³⁸⁸ CMR was not only a school to train francophones in their language and to make the Canadian military more welcoming; it was also a key tool in the drive towards increased bilingualism in the Canadian Forces. Indeed, it trained and created a group of young officers from both linguistic groups that were able to communicate with each other in both English and French. These young men would rise through the ranks of the Canadian military apparatus and would mould the institution into one that was more understanding of Canada's cultural duality and respectful of the two cultures in which they had been educated. CMR was not only essential to improve recruitment amongst francophones; it was also a fundamental element in the promotion of bilingualism in the Canadian Armed Forces, and constituted a precursor for the Federal Government. But crucial in the argument that led to the creation of this college was the Korean War, which made it clear that the previous system was broken and that the creation of a francophone college was imperative. By 1969, these changes had already made an impact. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism reported that, although the proportion of bilingual officers in the Armed Forces was 7%, the proportion of officer-cadets was 23%. The future officers currently being trained were already much more bilingual and able to operate in both languages.³⁸⁹

The Korean War also affected the development of bilingualism in the Armed Forces by affecting the careers of a number of officers that would play an important role in the future of the Canadian military. When in the late sixties Paul Hellyer, then Minister of National Defence, wanted to enact his scheme for the unification of the

³⁸⁸ "Press Release," September 19, 1952, Vol. 100, MG32 B5, Claxton Papers, LAC.

³⁸⁹ *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*, 329.

Canadian Armed Forces, he needed to find a new Chief of the Defence Staff that would support his plan. His choice settled on Lieutenant-General Jean-Victor Allard, who became the first francophone to hold the position. Hellyer rightfully felt that, as a francophone, Allard would have less of an emotional attachment to British traditions and the “Royal” connection, which he wanted to do away with.³⁹⁰ Allard, on his part, had long wanted to transform the Canadian forces into a bilingual institution that would give francophones their rightful place. Supporting unification allowed him to reach a position that gave him the power to promote French in the armed forces. The government was happy to support his objective since it reflected well upon it, at a time of increased francophone nationalism, and since it was well inscribed into Prime Minister Pearson’s general tendency to move away from the British connection in favour of a new Canadian nationalism. Moreover, the 1968 *Official Languages Act* forced all government departments to enact official bilingualism.³⁹¹ Jacques Dextraze also served as Chief of the Defence Staff between 1972-1977, as did Ramsey Withers between 1980-1983. All these men had served in the Korean War and all of them had a knowledge and understanding of English- and French-Canadian cultures.

I have attempted to show that the Korean War and its era were essential in setting in motion a process of gradual bilingualism of the Canadian Armed Forces. In many way, I would suggest, it constituted the spark that was needed. The Department of National Defence, senior officers, francophone soldiers and officers, and the Minister all knew of the problems and challenges that faced francophones in the defence establishment. They also all had ideas and plans that could have been implemented to

³⁹⁰ David P. Burke, “Hellyer and Landymore: The Unification of the Canadian Armed Forces and an Admiral’s Revolt.” *American Review of Canadian Studies*, VIII (Autumn 1978): 7.

³⁹¹ Pierre Trudeau, *Memoirs*, 123-126

remedy this situation. Or, at least “des pistes de solutions.” But there was no incentive, political, operational, or personal to do anything about it; there was nothing forcing anyone to expend resources and energy on solving this problem. The Korean War, by laying the problems bare and making them obvious for all to see provided the incentive to do something. But it also demonstrated that there was plenty of goodwill amongst the men and junior officers who proved that they could work together and get along remarkably well regardless of the language that they had learned at birth. It provided the impetus, and suggested that the solution could be relatively painless.

The process that began with the Korean War forced the military, and especially the Canadian Army, to modernize and accommodate those it had never really bothered to accommodate. It brought changes that made careers in the military viable options for young francophones who had not learned English on their own. Francophones could finally call the Canadian Army home, and in time they would be able to call the Canadian Armed Forces and eventually the Canadian government home. The military was now welcoming of francophones and put in place a system that would allow them to be trained and work in their own language, while also learning English. Anglophones were now encouraged to learn French, and were told it would improve their career prospects. But perhaps more importantly, the Canadian Armed Forces no longer had the problems it had in recruiting French Canadians. If one is to understand the evolution of official bilingualism in the Canadian Armed Forces, then one must understand that the Korean War played a pivotal role in this process.

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