POLES APART:

Language and Cultural Barriers Pertaining to the Polish Army’s 1st Armoured Division in Normandy, August 1944.

by

Robert Schuman Williams

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Program in History

in conformity with the requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Queen’s University

Kingston, Ontario, Canada

(May, 2017)

Copyright ©Robert Schuman Williams, 2017
Abstract

This thesis is a study of the effects language and culture on military operations using the experience of the 1st Polish Armoured Division under command of the II Canadian Corps in North Western Europe in August 1944. The challenges in multinational operations have been, and remain, understanding both allies and the environment in which one is going to be conducting operations. Rapid mutually intelligible communication is a key factor to mission success, whether during high tempo operations or while conducting deliberate planning and administrative work with non-English speaking allies.

This dissertation begins with background material on the cultural and linguistic effects on multinational military operations, examining literature on the diaspora Polish communities and what has been said about the Polish and Canadian armies’ performances in North-West Europe in August 1944. This is followed by a description of the Pigeau-McCann common intent factors that will be used as a framework to highlight what could be done to overcome the effects of language and culture on the employment of military units and formations. Particular emphasis is placed on the effects of culture on leadership in both interpersonal and staff interactions, using the Pigeau-McCann Balanced Command Envelope (BCE) as a subsidiary model to help describe the effect that two commanders, Maczek and Simonds, had on the achievement of common intent.

Despite the linguistic and cultural challenges encountered, the 1st Polish Armoured Division fared well in combat and could possibly have done better had more emphasis been placed on bridging the gaps caused by linguistic and cultural differences, joint training, common understanding of the use of liaison teams and liaison officers and emphasis on concise written directions. These conclusions remain relevant in making more effective today’s multinational and, more often than not, multi-lingual military coalitions. There are valuable lessons that have been identified from the past; the time to learn from them is before commitment to operations.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my committee members for their flexibility and generosity in the giving of their time and patience to helping make this dissertation better and for coaching me along the journey towards the destination of a doctoral degree: Dr. Allan English, Dr. Ana Siljak, and Dr. Tanya Grodzinski. Without the incredible support, patient encouragement and friendly advice of my supervisor at Queen’s University Dr. Allan English, this project would not likely have come to fruition.

They patient staff at the Library and Archives Canada (LAC), British National Archives at Kew, and the help of the wonderful people at the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum (PISM) in London, under the guidance of the Keeper of Archives Dr. Andrzej Suchcitz have been amazingly supportive and selfless in their assistance to me. Drs. Rob Engen and Claire Cookson-Hills have been most welcoming to me at Queen’s and unfailingly encouraging to me since I began this quest, listening and encouraging at all times.

My friends, family, colleagues and brothers-in-arms in Canada and Poland have given me outstanding support and encouragement. Thanks to every one of you. I particularly would like to recognize the late Dr. Jerzy Dobrowolski for his inspiration, encouragement and friendship. He continually encouraged me on this quest. I miss him and dedicate this thesis to the many Poles for fought for their freedom and ours and made Canada their home in the aftermath of the Second World War.

None of this work would have been possible without the selfless and unfailing support of the woman who has been with me throughout this project and supported my work because it was important to me to tell the story. I can never thank you enough, Rhonda Kellett, love of my life.

Robert Williams

May 2017
Statement of Originality

I hereby certify that all of the work described within this thesis is the original work of the author. Any published (or unpublished) ideas and / or techniques from the work of others are fully acknowledged with the standard referencing practices.

Robert Schuman Williams

May, 2017
# Table of Contents

Abstract .................................................................................................................................................. ii
Acknowledgement ................................................................................................................................. iii
Statement of Originality ............................................................................................................................ iv
Table of Contents ....................................................................................................................................... v
List of Figures .............................................................................................................................................. vi
Chapter 1 Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 1
Chapter 2 Historiography/Literature Review ............................................................................................. 26
Chapter 3 How to Overcome Cultural and Linguistic Challenges ............................................................... 56
Chapter 4 The Western Polish Diaspora: Possible Source of Interpreters .................................................. 90
Chapter 5 Experiences of the Poles Prior to Coming under II Canadian Corps ........................................... 129
Chapter 6 The Challenges of Intercultural Command ............................................................................. 152
Chapter 7 Preparing for the Fight ............................................................................................................. 191
Chapter 8 Commitment to Battle ............................................................................................................. 224
Chapter 9 Conclusion ............................................................................................................................... 249
Bibliography .............................................................................................................................................. 265
Appendix A II Canadian Corps Order of Battle (ORBAT) August 1944 ..................................................... 282
Appendix B 1st Polish Armoured Division (Pierwsza Dywizja Pancerna) .................................................... 284
Appendix C Liaison Unit Directive (21 A Grp/1987/G (Sp) 8 June 44) ......................................................... 286
Appendix D No. 4 Liaison Headquarters, War Establishment .................................................................... 287
Appendix E Nominal Roll of Officers 4 Liaison HQ (Armd) ..................................................................... 289
Appendix F General List of Polish Personnel (Liaison) (6 September 1944) .............................................. 290
Appendix G Placement Shared Common Intent ....................................................................................... 292
Appendix H Polish Liaison Personnel in Operations Area 14 December 1944 ........................................ 293
Appendix I Polish Language Studies ........................................................................................................ 294
List of Figures

Figure 3.1 Shared Intent (Explicit/Implicit) .................................................................67

Figure 6.1 CAR/BCE (Theory) ..................................................................................166

Figure 6.2 CAR/BCE (Maczek/Simonds) .................................................................182

Figure 7.1 Map of Falaise Gap..................................................................................226

Figure 8.1 Placement – Pigeau-McCann Common Intent Factors .............................254
Chapter 1 Introduction

War is chaotic and despite leaders’ best laid plans confusion usually prevails. The participants are often tired, rarely fully informed as to enemy intentions, and in order to maintain momentum or operational tempo in battle they are forced to make difficult choices as a result of successes and failures, both those of their enemies. Needless to say, in the confusion that prevails, time and resources are also rarely in adequate supply. If, into this mixture of competing factors is added the various cultural backgrounds and primary languages of allies, limited or non-existent capabilities in the operating language of superior headquarters and neighbouring allied military formations and units, clear communication of operational intent and reporting of combat results becomes even more of a challenge if not an impossibility. Mistakes are going to happen as a result of misunderstandings and therefore additional attention must be paid to minimize how language and cultural differences can affect negatively communications.

When one is building an international and possibly multi-lingual coalition, the challenges that military leaders and their staffs face will require more effort to overcome than would be the case in a unilingual, monoculture force. The goal in a coalition should be to maximize the potential of having the additional allied military manpower and equipment to use when and where required. The most effective commanders are leaders that are comfortable in the cultures involved, understand the importance of a culture’s
unique nuances, and are aware of how cultural differences can alter perceptions.\textsuperscript{1}

Therefore the importance of cultural understanding cannot and should not be overlooked by alliances in the building and deployment of coalition military forces.

A fairly recent vignette that occurred when I was deployed to Afghanistan in 2004 while serving in the Canadian Army will serve to highlight this point. I was working late one night when a Polish Major reported to me at the ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) Headquarters in the capital city of Kabul. He said “good evening” in English, and I welcomed him into what then served as my office. I inquired in English how he was. The answer was “good evening.” After several more questions, with the same response from him, I switched to Polish and asked him how he and his soldiers were. In the course of the conversation it became apparent that his English was virtually non-existent. For the duration of his deployment we communicated in Polish. It was indeed fortuitous for him that I happened to speak Polish, but it was not the way for a coalition to operate effectively, that is, by chance. Unlikely that such an encounter was unique, it made me wonder about similar experiences the Poles might have had when were under Canadian command in North-West France some sixty years earlier in 1944.

In the final weeks of the Second World War the following little known chance encounter took place. On the 12\textsuperscript{th} of April 1945 soldiers of General Maczek’s 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division advancing eastward from the Netherlands into Germany after a long journey fraught with many problems, not the least of which was fighting a determined German opponent, reached the German-run Prisoner of War (POW) Camp VIB at Oberlangen in Northern Germany. The gist of what occurred when they reached the camp

\textsuperscript{1} James C Bradford, \textit{The Military and Conflict between Cultures: Soldiers at the Interface} (College Station: Texas A & M Press, 1997), 231-232.
is captured below in the following exchange between the soon to be liberated AK combatants and the members of the 1st Polish Armoured Division who encountered them.

English? French? Americans? Canadians? Who are you? They yelled at us. Poles – young lady! 1st Armoured Division, dear! Added Witkowski. Poles! O My God, Poles, and we are here with the Home Army (AK), from the Uprising, from Warsaw, and you gentlemen are Poles? It is as miracle – said the young lady and ran towards us. We fell in on the large muster area between the barracks.2

Only after several minutes of mis-understandings, likely owing to the British uniforms worn by the members of the Polish Armoured Division personnel on the one hand and the total surprise at finding Polish Prisoners of War on the other hand, were the two groups finally able to identify one another’s national origins and to piece together how fate had brought them together. Upon the camp’s liberation, members of the division were astounded to discover that it confined 1,728 Polish women, female combatants, members of the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa-AK) taken captive at the end of the ill-fated 63 day Warsaw Uprising in October 1944, and treated by the Germans as POWs.3 While an incredible story in itself and potentially the subject of a future Polish historical movie, the point here is that there was a communication’s challenge resulting in a misunderstanding even when both groups spoke the same language and when it was a

3 Róza Bednorz, Jeńcy Wojenni w Niewoli Wehrmacht [POWs in Wehrmacht Captivity] (Opole: Centralne Muzeum Jeńców Wojennych w Łambinowicach Opolu, 1985), 41.
non-confrontational meeting, the prison camp guards having already fled or decided not to fight.  

So how does a commander ensure that all members in a military coalition understand and interpret his orders in the same way, especially when communications difficulties are exacerbated and further complicated by language and culture? This concept is captured in the Pigeau-McCann theory of common intent. In essence, what did a commander say to their subordinates or communicate to them in writing (explicit) and what was left unsaid or unwritten (implicit)? According to Pigeau and McCann:

The smooth functioning of a military organization, particularly during operations, depends upon its members correctly inferring not only the commander’s intent but also one another’s intent, especially in unanticipated situations for which plans have not been prepared.  

So, if you are a stranger from another culture, capturing implicit understanding of what your commander intends you to do is virtually impossible and understanding his explicit intent is complicated if you don’t speak the language of your commander and even more so when the commander has a preference for giving verbal orders as opposed to providing written direction. By means of the Pigeau-McCann common intent theory this thesis will analyze the effects on military operations that can result when cultural and language differences have not been considered, in particular during periods of combat, 

---

4 HQ 4 Liaison HQ SITREP 131131B APR 1945, April 13, 1945. LAC Ottawa, RG-24-G-3-1-a, Vol 10942, file 245 P1.013 (D5). The summary in the operations log for the unit was somewhat less than emotional when it factually stated that “elements of 2 Polish Armoured Regiment freed a camp of approx. 1,700 Polish women in area 6173 providing protection for the camp and taking about 30 guards PW  

where time is often in short supply and communications are difficult even when radios are working and allied military forces speak the same language. I will challenge the idea that valuable lessons are actually “learned” in wartime, and will highlight the need to prepare to fight as part of a coalition, including creating, properly manning, and practicing of effective liaison elements before actual combat is joined.

**The Search for Answers**

The effect of culture and language in multi-national and multi-lingual military coalitions and alliances has intensified in recent years, and there is a growing interest in the impact of language and culture upon military operations. I intend to introduce and highlight the value of my project as a study of cultural and linguistic challenges encountered in wartime and how they contributed to outcomes on the battlefield. In contrast to previous decades, a number of militaries are themselves now examining this issue and seeking solutions not just internally from lessons learned through experience, but also in various academic fora across a number of seemingly disparate disciplines.

After almost five years at war, during which the allies had assembled and trained a massive seaborne invasion force, was the force then disembarked on the beaches of Normandy, France on the 6th of June 1944 (D-Day). General Maczek’s 1st Polish Armoured Division was to join this invasion force in France on the 1st of August and subsequently became part of the II Canadian Corps. As a case study I intend to focus on the liaison aspect of two military operations that Maczek’s division took part in North-Western France in August 1944. I intend to situate the discussion by providing essential background information on these challenges presented to and experienced by the Poles in
various allied coalitions prior to the August 1944 combat operations. In essence, as part of this massive allied force prepared for the invasion of the continent, were they able to correctly interpret their superior commander’s aim and objective to allow for the possibility of success?

Polish General Stanisław Kopaniński, as Commander of the Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade under British 8th Army Command in North Africa in 1942/1943, had already identified the significance that a shortage of linguistically qualified officers meant:

Whilst under British command, the language problem seemed to me a particularly annoying one. Owing to the lack of knowledge of English, I had to take my Adjutant, who knew the language. 6

As part of my thesis I will explain whether his observation was recognized or a solution developed to overcome this shortcoming by the time that Maczek’s division was deployed in August 1944.

British Professor Paul Kennedy has stated that: “the success, on the front line, of Allied coalition warfare had depended to a considerable degree upon a proper command structure with a multinational staff, an integrated and efficient supply system, and – an incalculable bonus – a common language that was used both in headquarters and along the front. By the end of World War II, therefore, military coalitions seemed natural: they

seemed to have proved themselves.’” That would be fine for the most part, but what about those allies whose mother tongue was not English and, although perhaps even multi-lingual, did not possess English in their linguistic competency inventory? Couple this with a lack of familiarity with the Anglo-Canadian way of waging war and conducting varying types of military operations other than combat, and the challenges are amplified.

If as George Bernard Shaw has often been quoted as saying, “England and America are two countries separated by a common language,” Canadian and British armed forces both using English as the language of operations and having been trained in a very similar fashion and often in the same military academies, advanced colleges and various training schools could yet still have misunderstandings. If we accept this premise, what was it like for the Polish military forces under Allied (British or Canadian command)?

According to historian Paul Kennedy: “If historians are allowed to draw any lessons from the past, then we might fairly conclude that coalition warfare requires much more than any single nation’s campaign, substantial doses of tolerance, understanding, and flexibility. Those characteristics provide the oil to keep the parts moving smoothly and to avoid what Clausewitz termed the ‘frictions’ which could slow down and possibly ruin a wartime campaign.” According to Clausewitz, “Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult. The difficulties accumulate and end by producing a

9 Kennedy, 15.
kind of friction that is inconceivable unless one has experienced war.” 10 So, how much
tolerance, flexibility, and understanding was provided to the Poles by the other members
of the coalition forces in the North West Europe campaign who were overwhelmingly
native English speakers sharing the same if not very similar cultural background and
military training and experience? No doubt there was friction, but how did it impact
operations and what was done to mitigate its effects?

The Poles - The Second World War Begins

I begin by setting the scene by explaining how the Anglo-American allies came to
have Poland as one of its allies and how the Poles came to be formed into a fighting force
of a variety of types of units under Canadian and by extension British command. Poland
was invaded by a massive and very well-equipped German army and air force on the 1st
of September 1939. A generation after the end of the First World War which resulted in
the rebirth of a modern independent Poland on the 11th of November 1918, the world was
at war again. With few exceptions, weapons used by the Polish Army (Wojska Polska)
were not as modern or as lethal, as those fielded by the German Army (Wehrmacht). On
the 17th of September 1939, the Soviet Union invaded Poland from the East and occupied
a swath of Poland that had been previously delineated and agreed upon with their then
ally, Nazi Germany. Although the Poles may have been surprised by the Soviet Union’s
actions given the existence of their mutual non-aggression Pact of 1932, the Russian

invasion of Eastern Poland was part of the 1939 German-Soviet Non-Aggression Secret Protocol. 11

Despite being outnumbered and standing alone, the Poles courageously managed to continue to fight their German and Russian aggressors until the Polish government’s eventual surrender on the 6th of October 1939. At this time, the last major Polish fighting elements under General Franciszek Kleeberg commanding the Polish Operations Group “Polesie” in South Eastern Poland capitulated to the Germans, after battling both German and Soviet forces who had entered into the fray in accordance with the German Soviet Non-Aggression Pact.

Although the fight against the German invaders continued to be waged by a very large and well organized but poorly equipped Polish Home Army (AK) for the duration of the war in Poland, many of her soldiers managed to escape or elude German captivity and to transit through Rumania and Hungary to fight on in what became known as the Polish Armed Forces in the West (Polski Sił Zachodni-PSZ). The future Commander of the 1st Polish Armoured Division Colonel Stanisław Maczek had already commanded an armoured cavalry brigade in the September 1939 campaign under command of the Army Group Krakow (Cracow). After Poland’s capitulation, he escaped to Hungary, as did many of his countrymen (in total 50,000 Poles. 40,000 soldiers, including 5,400 officers, the rest were civilians.) 12

Maczek eventually arrived in France on the 21st of October 1939 to continue the fight against Nazi Germany. Promoted to General Brygady (Major-General in British and Canadian forces) on the 15th of November 1939, he was tasked to form a Polish Armoured Division to fight alongside and under command of the French Army. Fortunately Maczek spoke French and had a number of well-placed senior military acquaintances in the French Army. By the time of the German invasion of France in June 1940, he had organized the 10th Mechanized Cavalry Brigade (10ème Brigade de cavalerie blindée) whose numbers had been augmented by Polish immigrants already living in France and fought valiantly while the French retreated, in some cases without a fight. His brigade suffered 75 per cent casualties. Upon the French capitulation to Germany, “Maczek reported to the French military authorities, and much as happened before in Hungary, felt sure that the French under German pressure would intern the Poles. He therefore decided that he must travel further and perceived that the United Kingdom was the place to go. Taking his fate into his own hands, Maczek left France under a false name, since the Germans were looking for him.” Along with many of his Polish compatriots he arrived in the United Kingdom by a very circuitous route in late 1940 to continue the fight against Nazi Germany.

---

13 Ibid., 165.
15 Ibid., 169.
16 Ibid., 166. The Polish Military Mission in Paris had already begun the mobilisation of Polish immigrants.
In the United Kingdom to carry on the struggle against the Germans, Maczek and his soldiers faced a population that had had little contact with the Polish people and even less knowledge of the Polish Army’s performance in the September campaign. Prior to Maczek’s arrival, the assumed backwardness of the Poles and their perceived suicidal use of cavalry was already a prevalent misconception in the United Kingdom. What was the origin and source of this perception?

According to British historian Norman Davies, “every popular history of the 1939 campaign paints the picture of brave but foolish Polish Uhlans (Polish lightly armed cavalry) charging the German panzers (tanks). It even happens to contain grain of truth. In one or two places, isolated squadrons of Polish cavalry found themselves surprised by tanks, and despite their orders to the contrary, did try to fight their way out in the traditional fashion. Short of surrender, it was the only thing that cavalrymen could do. Yet it is quite unreasonable to accept such incidents as evidence for the mad courage, or for the technical incompetence, of the Polish Army as a whole.”

The myth of the Polish cavalry charges against German armoured vehicles, which persists to this day, was born during the 1939 September campaign (Kampania Wrzesniowa).

Once started, it was difficult for the Poles to rid themselves of its shadow. This despite the fact that there is only one chronicled instance of such an attack occurring, and that incorrectly reported. So, the Polish military forces in the West, in particular the armoured forces, successor to the cavalry, were already labouring under a negative reputation as to their capabilities and professionalism. As professional military officers and proud patriots they were anxious to prove their worth: “to shake off any lingering

reputation as hippomaniacs (*cavalry fanatics*) and embrace from the outset of their third start in combat against the Wehrmacht the most modern methods of making war.”

The Polish Army in the West is born

The fall of Poland in October 1939 to the then allied Soviet and German forces did not by any means imply that the struggle for Poland was over. A Polish Government-in-Exile (*Polski Rząd na Uchodźstwie*) initially formed in France after the fall of Poland was subsequently moved to London, United Kingdom just prior to the fall of France in June 1940. It consisted of a President, Prime Minister, a cabinet, and other ministries typical of a ruling government, including a Ministry of Defence and all the branches of an armed force (army, navy and air force).

The strategic goal of this Polish Government-in-Exile was to return to Poland as the government in place after the defeat of Nazi Germany and the ultimate liberation of Poland. The Polish Armed Forces in the West (*PSZ*) together with their leadership were intended to be the nucleus for the post war Polish national armed forces. On the 23rd of January, 1940, General Władysław Śikorski, Polish Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the PSZ made the following declaration of Polish War Policy: "the recreation of the Polish Army in its greatest size is the most important and essential goal of the Government.”

As welcome as the new Polish allies were at that time, the problem however in 1940 for Prime Minister Churchill was not a lack of soldiers, but rather a shortage of armaments, since the bulk of British armoured vehicles were lost in France and Belgium as a consequence of combat with German forces and abandoned during the eventual evacuation through Dunkirk.\textsuperscript{23} The Polish military presence in the United Kingdom was growing, large numbers of military personnel having been evacuated from the European continent during the allied withdrawal as part of what became known as the “Miracle of Dunkirk.” On the 17\textsuperscript{th} of June 1940 the Polish President (of the Government-in-Exile) Raczkiewicz and General Śikorski made “desperate appeals” to the British to evacuate the Polish Army.\textsuperscript{24} As a result of their appeals approximately 22,500 Polish men were evacuated from the Channel ports. Owing to a shortage of military hardware, much of it abandoned during the withdrawal from Dunkirk, equipping of the Polish armoured forces with tanks and other fighting vehicles did not proceed as quickly as the Polish Government-in-Exile would have liked. As the British army was also being re-equipped, the Poles were shown no preference.

This organization of new military units and armed forces occurred at a time when the United Kingdom, and by extension the British Empire, stood alone in being undefeated by the Germans. The United States entered the war against Nazi Germany on the 11\textsuperscript{th} of December 1941. Although the Poles were to raise the largest non-Commonwealth forces to fight under British command, they did not represent the only nation to provide forces. Belgium, Czechoslovakia, the Netherlands, Norway, and France

\textsuperscript{24} David G. Williamson, \textit{Poland Betrayed: the Nazi-Soviet Invasion of 1939} (London: Pen and Sword Military, 2009), 150.
were also raising and providing forces. These would be governed by the Allied Forces Act of 1940.  

Polish forces that were formed and in some cases re-formed in both the United Kingdom and France in 1939 and 1940 were also committed to the allied military expeditions in both Norway and France in 1940. After the eventual surrender of both of these countries, the Polish forces that could escape or be evacuated to the United Kingdom were yet again reformed, reconstituted and restructured. Nazi Germany’s invasion of the Soviet Union on the 22nd of June 1941 changed the geopolitical situation in Europe.

The United Kingdom and its allies, which included the Polish Government-in-Exile found themselves now allied with the Soviet Union, a country that had jointly invaded a sovereign Poland less than two years before with then ally Nazi Germany. Although not specifically the subject of this thesis, the political issue of recognition of the Polish Government-in-Exile and its treatment by the British, American, and Soviet allies is an issue which was to have major impact on the treatment of their Polish allies and postwar Polish history.

On the 12th of July 1941, a British-Soviet Cooperation Pact in the war against Germany was signed. On the 18th of July 1941 a similar Pact was signed between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government signed Pacts with major as well as minor allies, amongst which were fellow Slavs, leaving Śikorski, despite any

---

valid reservations that he might have had, with little room for maneuver.\(^{26}\) A Polish-Soviet military cooperation treaty was therefore signed in London on the 30\(^{th}\) of July 1941 in the presence of Sir Stafford Cripps, British ambassador to Moscow, between General Śikorski and Ivan Majski, Soviet Ambassador to the United Kingdom. While the signing of this treaty allowed for the freeing and ultimate evacuation of Polish Prisoners of War (POW) from the Soviet Union, it had a cost, politically dividing the Polish community in exile.\(^{27}\) Most important to General Władysław Anders, the senior Polish officer in Soviet captivity was the stipulation that a Polish Army would be organized as soon as possible on the territory of the U.S.S.R., and that this Army would become part of the Armed Forces of the Sovereign Polish Republic.\(^{28}\)

The Polish-Soviet cooperation treaty dealt with, amongst other things, the issue of Polish POWs held by the Soviet Union and the fate of thousands of Polish civilians who had been exiled to the far reaches of the Soviet Union. These soldiers and other military aged males would provide a welcome pool of potential recruits for the Polish Armed Forces in Exile. By September 1941 the antecedent of the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division had already been formed in the United Kingdom and on the 13\(^{th}\) of November 1941 was renamed the 10\(^{th}\) Cavalry Brigade (10. Brygada Kawalerii Pancernej)

In his letter to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill requesting support for the formation of an armoured division, Śikorski also asked for help with the Polish efforts to obtain the consent of the Government of the U.S.S.R. and to evacuate at least eight

\(^{26}\) MacGilvray, *PRU*, 91.


thousand soldiers to Great Britain and two thousand to Egypt.\textsuperscript{29} Unfortunately for the Poles, the developing relationship of the Western Allies with the Soviet Union and potential future allied strategies was also to have a strong impact on future Polish military plans. A “Memorandum from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (C.I.G.S.) General Dill on the Evacuation of Polish Forces from Russia” stated that:

> It is believed that the total number of Poles who might eventually become available in Russia is 120-150,000, and that it is reasonable to suppose that, providing full Russian co-operation support is assured, some 100,000 of these might be withdrawn by degrees into the area selected for their re-organization and re-equipment.\textsuperscript{30}

He further elaborated that it would be better not to fully inform the Russians of the final destination of the Polish evacuees beyond the initial destination of Persia where they were to be formed into a fighting force to join the allies in the struggle against Nazi Germany.\textsuperscript{31} During the early stages of the Soviet Union’s new role of ally with the West, and certainly before the United States entered the war following the Imperial Japanese Navy’s attack on Pearl Harbor, the United Kingdom was endeavouring not to alienate their new ally the Soviet Union while at the same time make best use of the military potential of their Polish ally. Given the Polish and Russian historical antipathy, balancing of these two relationships was to be a political minefield for any British government and one through which Prime Minister Churchill was attempting to navigate successfully.

\textsuperscript{29} Letter from General Śikorski to Prime Minister Winston Churchill. October 28, 1941, file CIGS/BM/15/4925. National Archives Kew, WO 216/, File 38026, 2A.

\textsuperscript{30} Memorandum from Chief of the Imperial General Staff (C.I.G.S.) General Dill to the War Office, November 9, 1941, file CIGS/BM/15/4925. National Archives Kew, WO 216/, File 38026, 2A.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 3.
The Polish military personnel who were recruited from the evacuees to Persia and those with military experience who escaped via a variety of European countries were meanwhile motivated to continue the fight against the Nazi German aggressor, their ultimate goal being a return to a liberated independent Poland. By the time of cessation of hostilities in 1945, Polish army units were ultimately formed in both the Middle East and North Africa (II Polish Corps comprising the 3rd (Dywizja Strzelców Karpackich - DSK) and 5th (Kresowa Dywizja Piechota- KDP) Infantry Divisions and an armoured brigade) while in the United Kingdom, Polish I Corps comprising the 1st Polish Armoured Division (Dywizja Pancerna) and the 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade (Samodzielna Brygada Spadochronowa).

All of these well trained and highly motivated units engaged in combat alongside of their British, American, and Canadian allies and acquitted themselves honourably in North Africa, Italy and North-West Europe. In the North African Desert campaign, when referring the Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade, (Samodzielna Brygada Strzelców Karpackich – SBSK) it was said that “the Poles were regarded with some awe by their companions. They were charming and polite; but their deadly hatred for the Germans, of whom they killed as many as possible as often as they could, was in sharp contrast to the complete indifference they showed for the Italians.” The desire to settle scores with the Germans and to return to liberate the Polish homeland was certainly evident, but

32 “Between 24 March and 5 April 1942, a total of 44,000 Polish soldiers and civilians were taken by train and ship from Central Asia to Iran.” Norman Davies, Trail of Hope: The Anders Army: An Odyssey Across Three Continents (London: Osprey, 2015), 162.


34 Artemis Cooper, Cairo in the War 1939-1945 (London: John Murray Publishers, 1989), 146.
despite this, General Maczek continued to demand the conduct of a ‘clean war’ and there was no sign that the Poles behaved similarly to its comrades-in-arms.”

1st Polish Armoured Division

Discussion on the formation and equipping of a Polish Armoured Division and the British insistence on the control of such a unit led to a series of correspondence between British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and the Polish Commander-in-Chief General Władysław Śikorski. As Commander of all Polish forces in the West (PSZ), Śikorski wanted to achieve the formation of a Polish Mechanized Corps (composed of one armoured division and at least one mechanized brigade). The intent of Śikorski’s October 1941 letter to C.I.G.S. General Dill was also communicated to both the Prime Minister of Britain Winston Churchill and the Chief of the Defence Staff General Alan Brooke.

Śikorski was politically astute enough to ensure that he covered both the military and political aspects of the Polish contribution to the allied war effort while at the same time making sure that the Dill gave the request the attention that he, Śikorski, wanted it to receive. His letter to the British Prime Minister further emphasized that the Polish Army Corps in Scotland should, within the shortest period of time, attain the strength of one armoured division and one or two mechanized brigades of infantry and should acquire full capacity for independent action. In February 1942, Major-General Stanisław Maczek was given a formal order from his then Polish Commander in Chief General

35 Evan McGilvray, SIH, 237.
37 Ibid.
Śikorski to rebuild and command the 10th Cavalry Brigade, which would eventually be expanded to become the 1st Polish Armoured Division.

The formation of a mechanized cavalry brigade, eventually expanded to an armoured division, began in earnest. Its tactical symbol would be the winged hussar of historical and emotional significance to all Poles from the 16th century elite cavalry of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Maczek, as commander of the 1st Polish Armoured Division, was entrusted with the bulk of the Polish military forces not assigned to the Polish II Corps in the Italian theatre of operations.

Shortages in personnel were to plague Maczek in the manning of this new division. The replacement pool from which to make up combat losses was finite; the loss of each soldier was to him even more than any other western commanders, a personal burden. The plan was that after the landing in France they would recruit Poles from amongst the captured German POWs who had fought in the German Army (Wehrmacht). The lack of a reserve to use as casualty replacements was a recurring concern and constraint to all Polish commanders in the West, regardless in which geographical location they were deployed to fight.

With approval given to create an armoured formation, Maczek once again began the formation of Polish national fighting units, resulting in the full-fledged Polish manned and British equipped 1st Polish Armoured Division consisting of approximately 15,000 men. By the time of the division’s arrival in France in August 1944, the Poles had also already fought alongside the British in Africa as part of the British 8th Army and the Polish II Corps under Anders had taken Monte Cassino in Italy in May 1944.

---

The placement of 1st Polish Armoured Division under Canadian command also coincided with the start of the AK-led Warsaw Uprising (Powstanie Warszawskie) on the 1st of August 1944, a fact which would have weighed heavily on the minds of the Poles, many of whom would have had relatives in the capital city of Poland and whose liberation was their ultimate goal. All of these factors would most certainly have been driving the Poles onwards in their zeal to exact revenge on the German invaders and return home to Poland.

The Canadians

A sovereign Canada declared war on Hitler’s Germany on the 10th of September 1939, when the beleaguered Polish nation had already been fighting for its survival. Over the course of the next four years, from 1939 to 1943, the rapidly expanded Canadian Army was to acquire very limited actual battle experience other than that gained in Dieppe, France in August 1942 and in the Sicily and Italian mainland campaigns of 1943/44. The experience that was obtained was, however, put to good use. By the time the 1st Canadian Army was fielded in the North-West Europe campaign from June 1944 until the end of the war in Europe in May 1945, her commanders were able to successfully fight and maneuver corps, divisions, brigades and battalions against very experienced and often-times fanatical Nazi German armed forces.

When the 1st Polish Armoured Division joined Simonds’ II Canadian Corps, the 1st Canadian Army, its parent headquarters consisted of two Canadian Corps (I and II) and one British Corps (I). The 1st Canadian Army in North-West Europe during the final phases of the war comprised the largest field army ever under the control of a Canadian
general. The II Canadian Corps under Simonds’ command was comprised of the following maneuver formations: two Canadian infantry divisions (2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd}), one Canadian armoured division (4\textsuperscript{th}), the 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division and one Canadian independent armoured brigade (2\textsuperscript{nd}), altogether approximately 100,000 soldiers and more than 10,000 vehicles.\(^{39}\) The approximately 15,000 Poles represented a minority in II Canadian Corps. The war establishment for the 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division consisted of 885 officers, 15,210 soldiers, 381 tanks, 473 guns (not counting the guns on the tanks) and 4,050 vehicles.\(^{40}\)

**Canadians in the (NW Europe Campaign) June to August 1944 and the Poles**

The Headquarters of II Canadian Corps disembarked in Normandy, France on the 1\textsuperscript{st} of July 1944, with the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Canadian Division placed under command upon their arrival at the end of the first week of July in the Carpiquet area, and the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Canadian Division also placed under command after the crossing of the Orne River. II Canadian Corps in turn came under command of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} British Army.

Canadian Lieutenant-General Guy Simonds was named as General Officer Commanding (GOC) of II Canadian Corps in late January 1944. Aged 41 at the time, he was touted as the youngest Corps Commander in the Empire.”\(^{41}\) Simonds was known to be a solitary command figure who tended to be overly directive or in modern parlance, a

\(^{39}\) Chris Ellis and Peter Chamberlain, *Handbook on the British Army* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1975. Estimates based on approximately 15,000 for an armoured division, 17,500 for an infantry division, 5,000 for an armoured brigade, as well approximating the totals for all other supporting elements in a Corps.

\(^{40}\) Stanislaw Maczek, *Od Podwody do Czoła* [From the Cart to the Tank] (Londyn: Veritas, 1984), 143.

micro-manager.\textsuperscript{42} Under Simonds’ command for Operation TOTALIZE, the breakouts from Caen southwards towards Falaise, were amongst others, Major-Generals Maczek and Kitching, both in command of untried armoured divisions.\textsuperscript{43}

Following the large scale allied invasion of Normandy, France on D-Day the 6\textsuperscript{th} of June, 1944 and the successful post-invasion consolidation and build-up of forces on the European continent, on the 1\textsuperscript{st} of August 1944 the 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division landed at Normandy, in the vicinity of Caen and was assigned to the II Canadian Corps. The 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division’s first operation to be as part of Operation TOTALIZE on the 8\textsuperscript{th} of August 1944. Corps Commander Lieutenant-General Guy Simonds met Maczek and his staff for the first time on the 4\textsuperscript{th} of August, 1944.\textsuperscript{44}

Unlike its Anglo-Saxon allies, the Polish Armed Forces in the West (PSZ) did not have the manpower replacement pools from which to draw their reinforcements for battle casualties. General Kazimierz Sos\-ńkowski, the successor to General Władysław Śikorski as Commander-in-Chief of the PSZ, asserted that losses would be made up when certain areas of Northern France, with large numbers of Poles living in the area, were liberated.\textsuperscript{45}

The stage was set with Maczek’s 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division on the European continent in August 1944 under command of Simonds’ II Canadian Corps. Undermanned, under equipped, still being created whilst working to disprove stereotypes as to their effectiveness, operating in a foreign language with allies who likely could never

\textsuperscript{44} Evan McGilvray, \textit{Black Devils March (BDM): A Doomed Odyssey} (Trowbridge, Wiltshire: Helion and Coy, 2005), 15.
\textsuperscript{45} McGilvray, \textit{BDM}, 9.
understand their desire to fight the Germans, or their method of warfare, how did they succeed and overcome these cultural and linguistic challenges? According to their Commanding General Maczek, despite differences in supply and the linguistic difficulties, they gave as a good an account as many British military units.46

Outline, Methodology, and Sources

In order to examine the experience of the 1st Polish Armoured Division under Maczek through the lens of cultural and linguistic challenges, this thesis will be divided into two parts. The first part of this dissertation, chapters two and three, involve largely background material on the cultural and linguistic impacts on multi-national military operations, examining literature on the diaspora Polish communities and what is said about their effects on the Polish and Canadian armies’ performances in North-West Europe in August 1944. Chapter 3 will describe the Pigeau-McCann common intent factors that I will use as a framework to explain what could and should have been done to overcome the effects of language and culture on the employment of military units and formations.

In the second part of this dissertation, I will examine the experiences of the Poles in different theatres of operations, the recruitment of Poles resident in Canada into the Canadian and or Polish Armies, and the performance of the 1st Polish Armoured Division whilst under command of the II Canadian Corps, evaluating the effectiveness of its liaison element. Chapter 4 will cover the source of Polish language speakers and examine in detail all of the challenges encountered in both the United Kingdom and Canada,

46 Maczek, Od Podwody do Czoła, 145.
including almost non-existent potential pre-war recruiting base in the UK, conscription of Poles in Canada by the Polish Government-in-Exile, the efforts by the Canadian Army to source Polish speakers and why such a seemingly plentiful resource, given Canada’s large diaspora Polish population, might not have been readily obtainable or suitable for employment in the interpreter role. Chapter 5 will examine relevant experiences of the Poles in different theatres of military operations to include France, North Africa and Italy, prior to being placed under command of the II Canadian Corps, and what lessons related to common intent were identified and applied, and whether they were “learned.”

Chapter 6 will examine the performance of the 1st Polish Armoured Division within the II Canadian Corps, with particular emphasis on the effects of culture on leadership interpersonal and staff interactions, using the Pigeau-McCann Balanced Command Envelope (BCE) as a subsidiary model to help describe the effect that the two commanders in question, Maczek and Simonds, had on the achievement of common intent. Chapter 7 will focus on the preparations and exercising of the division prior to commitment to battle. Chapter 8 will describe incidents where misunderstandings, that could have been avoided, occurred. Finally, Chapter 9 will summarize my conclusions covering what I have learned that could be applicable in today’s modern warfare and will conclude with an aftermath on the fate of the 1st Polish Armoured Division.

There are many challenges in analyzing complex phenomena such as linguistic ability, usefulness of liaison in combat and working in military coalitions, where one or more of the participating countries do not possess English as a native or secondary language. Amongst the challenges is distilling honest impressions from often sterile military staff writing, and ensuring that when strong language is being used, it is taken in
context. Terse comments in daily military unit operational logs captured in the heat of battle or shortly thereafter after often convey only facts and not emotion. Anecdotes and personal remembrances will often capture nuances, but could have been written well after the actual events. My analysis will be a balanced distillation of all these sources.

Another challenge in my research is the availability of relevant documents that have survived. The Polish Army in the West (PSZ) did not return to Poland at the end of the war and its members were scattered around the globe. Despite the best efforts of the Polish diaspora community to preserve its history, some material has been lost forever. I have completed extensive research at LAC (Library and Archives Canada) and have found some very valuable documents which I believe advance my argument. I have also received a number of relevant files from the UK National Archives in Kew. Dr Andrzej Suchcitz at the PISM (Polish Institute Sikorski Museum) (Archives of the Polish Army in Exile) in London has provided access to a trove of Polish language source material.

In addition to these sources, a number of personal papers, accounts, and individual stories have been used to add a human face to an otherwise impersonal study. Large secondary literatures in both the English and Polish languages surrounding the campaigns, commanders, and staffs in question were also consulted and are discussed in their individual chapters. I have been fortunate to have a network of enthusiastic Poles and Polish Canadians who are finding books and materials that may be of interest to me; among these individuals is the incumbent Polish Military Attaché to Canada and several of his predecessors.
Chapter 2 Historiography/Literature Review

Since my dissertation combines research from a number of disciplines, my literature review will, by design, be sub-divided into a number of categories. This chapter in its entirety will situate my dissertation within the existing historiographies of cultural and linguistic effects on multi-national military operations, Polish diaspora communities in the West, and the performances of both the Canadian Army’s II Corps and the 1st Polish Armoured Division in North-West Europe in August 1944, from both the Polish and Canadian perspectives.

Although Polish and Canadian Second World War military histories have been described in a wide variety of written narrative types and groupings, I intend to structure my literature review using the four broad thematic categories mentioned above. The categorization that follows begins with an examination of culture in general and military cultural issues specifically, moving to an examination of the Polish diaspora communities and then both Polish and Canadian perspectives on military operations in Northwest Europe in 1944.

Cultural and Linguistic Influences

Before beginning a study of the cultural and linguistic effects on military operations, I believe that it is useful to provide an overall examination of the relevant historiography of culture, and more specifically a subculture known as the military culture that will provide foundation definitions for the purpose of my dissertation.
Culture

Culture as an area of study cuts across and involves many individual academic and social science disciplines. Given that my focus is on the particular effect of culture and language on the attainment of common intent and its impact on the outcome of military operations, it is essential at this stage to provide what my thesis will use for a working definition of culture. It is necessary to describe what I mean when I speak in the context of intercultural interactions when two culturally and linguistically different nation’s military forces operating together.

For the analysis of cross-cultural contact, “culture” has been defined in two ways by Richard Brislin: “(a) the actual unfamiliar people with whom an individual interacts, or, (b) as a more abstract concept, focusing on people’s characteristic behavior, ideas and values.”¹ To this end, much effort is demanded when interacting with people who are not familiar with the same ways of doing things, who stumble in an unfamiliar language and who may seem ill at ease in one’s company. It is therefore usually easier not to go through the discomfort which stems from reaching out to people from different backgrounds and, instead, to stick with one’s own group. ² For the two major groups that my study focuses on, Canadian English speakers and native Polish speakers, I intend to use Carol Morris Petillo’s broad definition of culture that she has described in James Bradford’s book:

Culture will be defined as that mix of experiences, perceptions, and myths which derive from the history, both real and psychic,

² Ibid., 42.
of a group, and which results in a common, often unarticulated worldview.⁵

George Stocking’s Race, Culture and Evolution, Essays in the History of Anthropology treats the historical change over time of the term of “race.” He further describes how the original categorization, definition, and understanding of the word has changed and gone out of use. This series of essays in the history of anthropology helps to describe an evolution of the study. Stocking book does provide some good foundational work in the late 19th century, dealing with Polish peasants, the issues of likeness, consanguinity, and the framing of possible influences.

Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942), one of the world’s outstanding ethnologists and anthropologists, contribution of Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays provides a very useful source for the situation of the military as a culture in my dissertation. He classifies the military as belonging to the category of a profession, which he describes as “an organization of human being according to their specializations, destined to promote their common interests and personal competencies.”⁴

Well known anthropologist Ruth Benedict’s Patterns of Culture states that “all over the world, since the beginning of human history, it can be shown that peoples have been able to adopt the culture of peoples of another blood.”⁵ Throughout this work she provides much detail and practical examples that allows for an understanding of the background foundational cultural concepts. These are described in the introduction to her

---

³ Bradford, The Military and Conflict between Cultures, 184.
⁴ Bronislaw Malinowski, Une Théorie Scientifique de la culture (et autres essais) [ A Scientific Theory of Culture (and other essays)] (Paris: Francois Maspero, 1968) 57.
book by anthropologist Franz Boas who states that “the problem of cultural life presents itself often as that of the interrelation between the various aspects of culture.” Benedict deftly weaves together the interrelation between various aspects of cultural life, in order to help explain the makeup of a particular culture. Benedict’s book is limited, however, in that her studies focus only on aboriginal peoples in North America.

John Beattie’s *Other Cultures: Aims, Methods and Achievements in Social Anthropology* provides some background on the methodologies used in social anthropology. The material Beattie covers on the study of the cultural aspect is useful as background for the study of culture and languages and their effects on organizations.

According to Beattie:

Social anthropologists study peoples’ customs, social institutions, and values, and the way in which they are interrelated. They carry out their investigations mainly in the context of living communities, and their central, though not their only, interest is in systems of social relations.

This oft-cited book is related, if even just peripherally, to the impacts of culture, intercultural- relations and language(s). It provides a theoretical foundation on the influence of culture and definitions that could be used to allow for a common understanding of terminologies. It does however fall short in not covering in detail the impacts of language on social anthropology, other than in an insightful recognition by Beattie of “why in anthropological fieldwork a sound knowledge of the language of the

---

6 Benedict, x.
community being studied is indispensable, for a people’s categories of thought and the forms of their languages are inextricably bound together.”

Military Culture

My thesis will more closely rely on the discussion and specific description of “military culture.” The military as a profession has a separate culture that has its own code of conduct, lifestyle and a language that is unique. To that end, “correctly interpreting an aim, purpose or objective – that is, correctly inferring intent – is a fundamental concept in military thought.” When combining different training, philosophies, experiences, and leadership styles of various militaries the challenge of achieving a shared common intent becomes even more difficult when the added factors of national cultures and language are taken into account.

The study of the military as a culture already has a fairly rich historiography with Huntington and Janowitz dealing with military professionalism and more recently Dutch author Geert Hofstede’s *Culture’s Consequences*. Although Canadian literature on this subject is not rich, what is available is useful. Allan English’s *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective*, and Steven Harris’ *Canadian Brass: the Making of a Professional Army*, are both helpful in supporting my explanations of the influence of various aspects of military culture when describing linguistic and cultural challenges.

8 Ibid., 31.
This thesis goes one step further with an ally speaking a different language and whose soldiers come from a different cultural background.

When addressing a topic as complex and multi-faceted as the cultural and linguistic aspects of military coalition operations, historians can benefit from reviewing the body of secondary literature that already exists, first from a military culture perspective in general and then more specifically looking at the issues of cultural and linguistic influences. My literature survey indicates that to date this subject has been dealt in a somewhat haphazard manner, including during military symposia sponsored by various interested or potentially affected countries, or by the Western military alliance North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as a multi-national and multilingual alliance.

Academic interest to date has been primarily sociological, anthropological, and historical. Debate in a variety of military and non-military journals has made scant reference to the overall issue and when doing so, the literature has for the most part proven to have been more descriptive than prescriptive. Richard Brislin’s *Cross-Cultural Encounters*, is a very useful work in that it captures a number of practical concepts which can ultimately be sued to allow for a better understanding when different cultures interact.11 James C. Bradford’s collection of essays entitled *The Military and Conflict between Cultures: Soldiers at the Interface* while covering several thousand years of history in various parts of the world speaks primarily to the theme of cross-cultural military relations, whether it is while military forces are operating in a foreign environment, or as part of a multi-lingual coalition. This collection, authored by a variety

of contemporary American scholars, provides some useful insights as to how the issues of cross-cultural relations have either been dealt with or not over time.\textsuperscript{12}

Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann’s \textit{Establishing Common Intent: The Key to Coordinated Action} provides the unique perspective and precise phraseology that I intend to use as a common thread throughout the narrative of my thesis. The three factors that they have described as influencing a commander’s estimate of the correct balance between explicit and implicit intent, those of knowledge, reasoning ability and commitment are themes that I will return to at various stages throughout the narrative.\textsuperscript{13} I have also found that Pigeau-McCann’s \textit{Balanced Command Envelope (BCE)} criteria is useful a subsidiary model in my analysis of a commander’s ability to influence the establishment and fostering of common intent.\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Multi-Ethnic Aspect of Military Organisations}

Although there have been a number of post Second World War works touching peripherally on the issues of culture and language related to multi-ethnic military forces, none of them deal with the subject of integration of an ally possessing unique linguistic and cultural background into a military. What I will describe next is the relevant literature that deals at least peripherally with the issues of language and culture.

The most useful literature on the subject looks at the late period of the Austro-Hungarian Habsburg Empire (1848-1918) and examines the multi-ethnic aspect of a

\textsuperscript{12} James C Bradford, \textit{The Military and Conflict between Cultures: Soldiers at the Interface} (College Station: Texas A & M Press, 1997).
\textsuperscript{13} Pigeau and McCann, \textit{Establishing Common Intent}, 97.
\textsuperscript{14} Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann. “Re-conceptualizing Command and Control.” \textit{Canadian Military Journal}, Volume 3(1), (Spring 2002): 55-63. Balanced Command Envelope (BCE) will be explained and elaborated upon when Maczek and Simonds are compared.
military composed of subject peoples who possessed at least eleven different mother tongues. Noteworthy among these pioneers of multi-ethnic (poly-ethnic) studies are István Deák, Béla Király and Nándor Dreisziger. Their works, published in the 1980s, are valuable because of their access to and usage of original language sources in Vienna, Budapest and other smaller archives throughout Eastern and Central Europe. Since a number of senior Polish officers had previously served in Austro-Hungarian military units during the First World War, this work was helpful in characterizing the multi-ethnic and multilingual environment in which Polish General Maczek and his peers were accustomed to working in their formative days as junior military officers. 15

Béla Király and Nándor Dreisziger’s social science monographs published by Columbia University Press (CUP) as East Central European Society in World War started what was to be the opening up of the Habsburg files to the non-Hungarian/ non-German speakers. This very detailed and wide ranging series of monographs provide instructive insights into the emergence of nationalistic sentiments. Particularly insightful in one of the monographs is the issue of casualty replacements required after the huge losses suffered by the Habsburg Army during the latter stages of the First World War, 1916-1918, which “raised the question of changing group identities in the military.” 16 This is an issue that the Polish military faced during the Second World War and merits being explored and analyzed in the light of any noticeable changes in combat results.

Prior to their research and that of several other like-minded scholars, which used Hungarian language and other smaller archives, there was no available and/or accessible evidence of the cultural and linguistic challenges faced by the Habsburg officer corps and the efforts made in an attempt to overcome them, thereby eventually rendering command, control and loyalty of the forces more effective. The unique access to Hungarian language material is however a potential double-edged sword since we only know what has been translated or already accessed from archival material.

More recent work has emerged with Nándor Dreisziger’s *Ethnic Armies: Polyethnic Armed Forces from the Time of the Habsburgs to the Age of the Superpowers*. This work provides a number of original essays on the subject of what he terms poly-ethnic military challenges, including but not limited to the Austro-Hungarian Empire’s Army. “Poly-ethnicity or the ethnic factor in armed forces has been, and still is, a neglected subject in the literature of military affairs.” \(^{17}\) His somewhat less than subtle rallying cry should be viewed as a still valid and perhaps increasingly relevant reminder of the work to be done that would include all those often-times disparate academic disciplines related to language and culture, something that my thesis intends to achieve.\(^{18}\)

István Deák’s *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848-1918*, provides an incredibly detailed insight into the previously little known efforts made to establish a truly functioning multi-ethnic army where minority language barriers could have rendered successful military operations


\(^{18}\) “In conclusion it might be asked to what extent the experiences of other polyethnic armed forces are instructive for Canada’s armed forces. Canadians may possibly draw some important lessons from the broader comparative histories of other polyethnic armed forces.” Ibid., 16.
difficult if not impossible. Deák’s examination of the approximately 1200 military personnel files of two junior officer cohorts of the Habsburg army from the 1870 and 1900 intakes has opened a treasure trove of very detailed military service records; files that are not as sterile or bereft of flavour as today’s service files tend to be. Two important conclusions drawn by Deák are relevant to the dissertation topic, when he states that: “there is much to be learned from the history of an armed force, which, by dint of its lack of a cohesive ideology, its confusion of languages and cultures, and its inadequate war readiness, appeared to be doomed at the outbreak of the First World War, yet which fought on to the bitter end.”\textsuperscript{19} The second relevant conclusion that I have drawn from Deak’s studies is that “it would be important to know in what ways nationality has influence service in armed forces, although such concrete questions cannot lead to concrete answers, in part because of the uncertainty of all ethnic statistics, and in part because of the army’s official disinterest in the matter.”\textsuperscript{20} That there is indeed something to be learned from further study in this focus area by contemporary scholars is a motivating factor for my dissertation.

Following on the seminal issues raised by István Deák and his Hungarian colleagues, Coops and Szvircsev Tresch as editors of \textit{Cultural Challenges in Military Operations} carry on the discussion of culture and language as it affects the often linguistically unique, new North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states. Useful points of reference for further study are provided in the papers on lessons identified during military operations, inter-cultural and intra-cultural challenges in

\textsuperscript{19} István Deák, \textit{Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Corps, 1848-1918} (New York, 1990), 223.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 178. Chapter 10. Religion, Nationality, Advanced Training, and Career, highlights these important subjects.
organizations and educational and leadership aspects. This compendium represents insights from three different perspectives: theoretical, observed and first-hand experience. The inclusion of works by military psychologists and sociologists in this collection serves to highlight the attention beginning to be paid to the issues of culture and language in NATO. Relevant to my dissertation is an interesting conclusion by one of the contributors, Hungarian Ferenc Molnar, a faculty advisor at NATO Defense College Rome, when he states that “recognition of the rather soft (e.g. cultural, historical) elements of certain national militaries would also seemingly improve effectiveness of complex missions far more than would forcing nations to sign up to war.”

The NATO Research and Technology Organisation (RTO) Technical Report “Multinational Military Operations and Intercultural Factors,” concludes that since: “there is evidence to suggest that subtle differences in the organizational and national cultures of all countries that contribute personnel to missions can have an impact on the overall effectiveness of the multinational force there exists, a requirement to consider and integrate the intercultural issues and factors that surround and influence multinational military collaboration, particularly at the operational level of command.”21 This dissertation builds upon this conclusion by using the case study of Maczek’s 1st Polish Armoured Division in August 1944.

Recent military publications have included *Operational Culture for the Warfighter: Principles and Applications* by Marine Corps University Press, Quantico, a

planning tool and aid for the soldier, produced by the American military to explain why
so-called “foundational features of culture” can and do present challenges for military
operations in various culture settings. Intended as a practical handbook for US Marines, it
was produced to fill a gap in Professional Military Education (PME) identified or
rediscovered during the Iraq and Afghanistan deployments post 2001. A review by
University of Kansas Professor Adrian R. Lewis describes it as “an effort to get Marines
and service members to think critically and comprehensively about the cultural aspects of
American military operations in foreign countries in order to facilitate mission
accomplishment.”

Whilst identifying some key points and offering suggestions, it is
written for the soldier to help him think about how best to address cultural issues before
he is immersed in operations where unaddressed or misunderstood cultural issues are
having an impact on military operations. The US Army/US Marine Corps

Counterinsurgency Field Manual (FM-34) initially produced in 2003 in the aftermath of
the Iraq War has several references to culture and language. Amongst the many sections
dealing with what best to do to win a counterinsurgency campaign, the manual states that
cultural knowledge is essential to waging a successful counterinsurgency. It also
emphasizes that in a foreign culture the proper use of linguistic support to deployed
forces is important. Although the issues are not dealt with in any detail, the mention of
these two important subjects in this manual should cause the reader to at least consider
them in the planning phase of operations.

22 Barak A. Salmoni and Paula Holmes-Eber, Operational Culture for the Warfighter: Principles and
25 A. Abbe, L.M.Gulick, and J.L.Herman, Cross-Cultural Competence in Army Leaders: A Conceptual and
Empirical Foundation (Arlington, VA: United States Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social
Sciences, 2007).
Although a body of literature on military culture exists, there is little available on the subject of cultural and linguistic influences and their effects on military performance, my thesis focus related to the achievement of common intent. I have therefore deemed that additional primary research would be necessary for relevant sources that would prove useful in supporting my thesis.

**Polish Diaspora Communities**

In order to better understand to what degree, if at all, ex-patriot Poles, that is those in the diaspora might have been able to help fill in the void when it came to interpreters and liaison officers between the Polish and non-Polish military units, it is essential to describe the composition of these communities in both the United Kingdom and in Canada. Without an understanding of this community’s makeup in the 1930s with respect to its size and the education levels possessed by and the opportunities afforded to its members, a critical part of my thesis would have remained unsupported. This section involves quantifying the availability of qualified bilingual Polish-English speakers capable of providing the rapid and accurate translation from one language to the other under high intensity combat conditions where communications channels could be and often were disrupted. When it comes to the Polish diaspora community, the subject of adaptation of Poles to living in the United Kingdom has been dealt with by a small number of academics, who for the most part have links to the Polish community. Although the body of research is not large, there was value obtained from examining it to be able to characterize the size of the community and determine its demographic composition.
Peter Stachura has edited two collections of essays on the subject of the Polish community in the United Kingdom that provide valuable background information. Both *Poland between the Wars, 1918-1939* and *The Poles in Britain 1940-2000: From Betrayal to Assimilation* provide very useful background material on the Polish expatriate community and the challenges that it has faced with integration into mainstream English life, dealing with the issue of acquired language competency, particularly at the adult level, albeit focusing on the post-Second World War period, so therefore useful as background information but not directly relevant to the thesis topic.24

By far the most comprehensive resource available was *The Formation of the Polish Community in Great Britain 1939-1950* co-authored by Keith Sword, Norman Davies and Jan Ciechanowski.25 This is a rich reference source, the chapter on Anglo-Polish liaison providing a very valuable outline in the depiction of Poles and Polish in both pre and wartime United Kingdom. Keith Sword’s *Śikorski – Soldier and Statesman* provides both detailed biographical detail on the Polish wartime leader of the Polish Government-in-Exile and on the challenges faced in being both unknown in London and unable to speak English in circumstances where time was in short supply. His book also provides some background information on the status of Poles in war-time United Kingdom useful for post-war comparative analogies.26

25 “At the outbreak of war in September 1939, the Polish community in Britain can hardly be described as a major force either in British society or in British consciousness.” Sword, Keith with Norman Davies, and Jan Ciechanowski. *The Formation of the Polish Community in Great Britain, 1939-1950*. (London: School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, 1989), 18.
Polish historian and sociologist Jerzy Zubrzycki has produced two works, replete with historical data on migrations, and perspective on the topic of adjustment issues of the Poles in the United Kingdom.\textsuperscript{27} His \textit{Polish Immigrants in Britain: a Study of Adjustment} provides valuable insights on the principal centres of Polish permanent emigration, that is where large groups of Poles could be found world-wide, i.e., the United States, France and Brazil. Although comprehensive, his book does not cover Polish immigration to Canada.\textsuperscript{28}

Although these various secondary sources provide a fair amount of reference material as to the size and composition of the Polish diaspora and have dealt with some of the adaptation issues experienced by immigrants, none of them have dealt with the issue of the provision of linguistic or liaison support to the United Kingdom-based Polish Armed Forces in the West. The PISM Archives in London was a great source of potentially relevant Polish primary source material on the Polish Army in the West collected in the aftermath of the Second World War. When examined together with the previously cited secondary references this material has provided a greater understanding of the setting in which the 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division was created and trained, and in particular when and how differing methods of the creation and employment of liaison personnel and units were trialed.

\footnote{28 Zubrzycki, \textit{Polish Immigrants in Britain}, Appendix A, 195.}
Poles in Canada

While there has been some work carried out on the demographics of the Polish community in Canada, there has been no specific academic work done on adjustment challenges of immigrant Poles to life in Canada either for the interwar period or the post-Second World War. The difference is their adaptations to Canada lies in the fact that the bulk of the post Second World War Polish immigrants who came to Canada settled in cities in contrast to the initial immigration waves who settled on the Canadian prairies or in mining communities. Although a number of memoirs and self-published biographies are available, often but not exclusively published in the Polish language, they represent the status of the discussion to date. Description of the Polish population from which interpreters and liaison staffs could have been recruited and the competition for such sought after resources has therefore been derived from the analysis of relevant archival primary source material, primarily liaison reports, situation reports (SITREPs), message logs and official correspondence held in Records Group (RG) 24 at Library and Archives Canada.  

Canadian and Allied Perspective on the Poles’ Performance

Wars are fought then later often refought in the various books and memoirs that are published in their aftermath. This has been the case for most of the Second World

---

29 Library and Archives Canada, (RG 24). Very useful files include, but are not limited to:
No.4 Liaison HQ Reports, Instructions, Correspondance etc., 1942/07/21-1943/12. ISUMs 1 Pol Armd Div 18/20 Apr 1945, No. 4 Liaison HQ – AEF/45/1 Pol Armd Div/L/F 1945/04/18-1945/04/20.
SITREPs 1 Pol Armd Div 2 Jan/9 May 45 from No. 4 Liaison HQ – AEF/45/1 Pol Armd Div/C/H Doc III, 1945/01/02 - 1945/05/09. Message Log of the 4th Cdn Armd Div, 19 Jan to 23 Feb 1945.
Polish Army in Canada 1941 to 1947. 21st Army Grp/17456/ 20 Sept 44.
Enlistment of Polish Volunteers in Canada 1940/ 44. Details of files in bibliography.
War battles in which the English speaking allies took part. The existent body of literature has principally dealt with the performance of these English speaking allies, their commanders, the quality of their equipment and the histories of a variety of units. Participant memoirs have also been published from varying perspectives and with differing motivations. Dealing with British and Canadian units, this substantial historiography does not however represent a complete picture of Polish-Canadian military interactions during the Second World War. An in-depth assessment of the Polish performance in August 1944, available in the English language audience in the West, has been lacking.

After the Second World War, the history and therefore the awareness of the performance of the Polish Army in the West to the non-Polish population was limited to say the least and until fairly recently received scant if any mention in English language publications, be they official military accounts or privately authored. Up until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Western literature of campaigns and commanders either ignored the Polish efforts or simply commented negatively upon them. A memorable comment by Canadian Major-General Kitching, Commander of the 4th Canadian Armoured Division, who fought alongside of Maczek in the August 1944 operations, quoted in his memoirs, “to hell with them. They have run out of food and ammunition because of the inefficiency of their organization; our people have been fighting just as hard but we have managed to keep up our supply system.”\(^{30}\) This oft quoted comment has not until the last ten years been examined in any further detail.

\(^{30}\) Kitching, *Mud and Green Fields*, 226.
Comprehensive analyses and critiques of leadership styles and decisions taken by field commanders tend to be a more recent development in the field of military history. A very useful summary of this type covering all Canadian Army General Officers of the rank Major General and above is Jack Granatstein’s *The Generals: The Canadian Army’s Senior Commanders in the Second World War.* These accounts tend to provide background biographical material and are useful directions for further research. In particular, a look at the reason why a decision was taken rather than an examination of the consequences of a particular decision can allow the reader to better understand operational decisions. Useful background material on both Generals Simonds and Kitching has been extracted from this book. John English’s *Failure in High Command - the Canadian Army in the Normandy Campaign* is a very valuable volume that also contributes to this genre. These two sources will provide excellent background material for framing the basis of both the military situations and the command relationships in which Simonds and Maczek found themselves in 1944.

II Canadian Corps Commander Lieutenant-General Simonds died in 1974 before he could write an autobiography. His death has left a gap in Canadian military history with respect to the views of the superior Commander on the cultural and linguistic challenges faced on the integration and employment of the 1st Polish Armoured Division. Piecing together what might have been his thoughts and analysis after post-battle time for

---

32 “It might have been better had Simonds committed the 3rd Division supported by the 2nd Armoured Brigade to the “second break in” rather than the Poles. This would have at least alleviated communications difficulties due to language and seen two additional infantry brigades in action.” John A. English, *Failure in High Command: The Canadian Army in the Normandy Campaign* (Ottawa: Golden Dog Press, 1995), 290.
reflection is the challenge for all historians. Simonds’ biographer Dominick Graham provides a fairly good summary and some possible directions as to further in-depth research, but relies upon anecdotes of others and documents that Simonds signed in order to piece together his views on interaction with Maczek in particular and with the Polish forces in general. Historians need to decipher whether Simonds authored them or had his Corps staff draft them for his signature, the latter being more likely. There is unfortunately, and perhaps not surprisingly, nothing on the subject of the cultural and linguistic challenges that Simonds and his staff must have encountered in working with the Poles.  

Well known Canadian historian Terry Copp whose focus of research has been on Canadian Army participation in the Normandy Campaign of 1944 has authored a number of very detailed and valuable books and articles. His *Fields of Fire: the Canadians in Normandy* and *Cinderella Army: The Canadians in Northwest Europe, 1944-1945* provide excellent description and analysis of the campaign and the Canadian participants but little detail on the Polish 1st Armoured Division and merely a mention of the liaison function. Two articles authored by him and published in the Canadian *Legion Magazine* “Our Polish Comrades” and “Reassessing Operation TOTALIZE” provide some more information on the Poles and gives them some overdue credit for their participation and mentions the topic of liaison by way of how the Poles used it. Copp’s book *Guy Simonds and the Art of Command* is a helpful addition to the understanding of Simonds

---


as a commander. Despite giving some credit to the 1st Polish Armoured Division under Simonds’ command, none of Copp’s impressive volume of literature on the North-West Europe campaign delves into the cultural and linguistic issues.³⁵

Campaign critiques are thoroughly researched summaries providing potentially useful insights into the how and why of campaigning, comparing and contrasting command styles of specific senior commanding generals. Martin Blumenson’s The Battle of the Generals, Daniel Dancocks’ D-Day Dodgers, John English’s Patton’s Peers- the Forgotten Allied Field Commanders of the Western Front, 1944-45 and Failure in High Command as well as John Keegan’s Six Armies in Normandy represent some of the best critical coverage of this era.³⁶ These sources have provided sound analysis of the results of the operations in which both generals took part, but not dealt with the effects of cultural and linguistic challenges, the subject of my thesis.

Canadian academic work in more recent years has included valuable assessment of tank tactics by Roman Jarymowycz in both his doctoral dissertation, The Quest for Operational Manouevre in The Normandy Campaign, and articles, including Canadian Armour in Normandy: Operation Totalize and the Quest for Operational Manouevre.³⁷ These works have been followed by Joanna Mirek’s academic work in the same area, her

---

contribution however making use of Polish language archives and secondary sources.\(^{38}\) Despite the fact that Angelo Caravaggio’s doctoral dissertation on 4\(^{th}\) Canadian Armoured Division Commander General Kitching and article in the journal \textit{Canadian Military History} has added great value to the subject of Maczek’s peer divisional commander 4\(^{th}\) Canadian Division Commander George Kitching, they have not added to the subject of my focus.\(^{39}\)

More often than not, official histories have been written in a very sterile style, endeavouring to cover long periods of time and complex issues. Typically they contain only the barest of details of the type captured in a unit or formation’s War Diary (the daily log of operational and administrative activity for a military formation) not always written immediately after the events. Official histories also run the danger of being highly politicized depending upon how they are edited and who has funded their publication. The timing of the publication will also limit or determine access to sources. As an example, C.P. Stacey’s \textit{The Canadian Army 1939-1945} and \textit{The Official History of the Canadian Army in World War II} were both written without the benefit of the then still closely guarded and highly classified ULTRA Signals Intelligence source material.\(^{40}\) Knowledge of this access, including the kind and level of detail on enemy dispositions and intentions which it provided have since caused what may have been previously considered brilliant strategic moves to have been viewed more as the result of well-


informed commanders with ULTRA access. Tim Cook’s book Clio’s Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars describe one reason for the lack of Canadian historiography as due to the fact that “senior Canadian generals were for the most part too busy with new responsibilities to capture their experiences on paper.”41 Cook’s perspective on official military historian C.P. Stacey as influencing Commanding Officers and war diarists and as a result playing a role in the shaping of narratives for the eventual official history not only sheds new light on the objectivity of Stacey’s works, but importantly for my dissertation could explain the lack of any detailed description of the performance of the 1st Polish Armoured Division while under Simonds’ command.42

The historiography of the Polish Army’s performance in the North-West European campaign available in the English language has been, as I have stated early, limited. Evan McGilvray in his book Black Devils March: A Doomed Odyssey describes: “Maczék and his abilities as one of the many unknowns of the Second World War.”43 The last ten years however has seen the emergence of a number of other operational level critiques including Brian A. Reid’s No Holding Back: Operation Totalize, Normandy, August 1944 and Stephen Hart’s Colossal Cracks: Montgomery’s 21st Army Group in Northwest Europe 1944-45.44 Although these works provide useful background material and some potential directions for further research, they do not provide any insights into my area of study. Robert Engen’s books Canadian under Fire: Infantry Effectiveness in the Second World War and his most recent work Strangers in Arms: Combat Motivation

42 Ibid., 101.
43 McGilvray, BDM, 2.
in the Canadian Army 1943-1945, are both useful to my dissertation in different ways. His first book helps to describe the aspect of Canadian performance while his second book in particular provides insightful analogous material for what happens when strangers are going to war, my dissertation exploring the situation when the strangers speak a different language and come from a very different cultural background.

Because my research has shown that there is not a large body of English language literature from a Canadian or other allies’ perspective on the Poles’ performance in battle let alone the subject of the cultural and linguistic challenges encountered, I deemed that primary sources would prove essential in supporting my thesis. I therefore have relied heavily on all available primary sources.

Polish Perspective on Their Performance

So, if analysis related to my thesis topic not available to a western audience in the English language, what about in Polish? Given the immediate post war history of the Government-in-Exile in London and the post war Communist government in Poland, archival records are varied, scattered and oftentimes incomplete. According to the Keeper of the Archives at the PISM in London and scholar, Dr Andrzej Suchcitz:

The wartime archives of the Polish government and, to a lesser degree, of the Armed Forces are held by three institutions: the PISM in London, the Archives of

Contemporary Records in Warsaw and the Hoover Institute in Stanford, California. The archives at PISM form the bulk of the collection.\(^{46}\)

Suchcitz also captures part of the challenge and the limitations on the researcher of and offers a ray of hope at the same time when he states that “although much was destroyed during the evacuation from France in June, 1940, there is a core of papers on the history of the Polish army in France, its organization, build up and combat record.”\(^{47}\)

The PISM does possess a number of documents related to a variety of Polish wartime units as well as a large collection of unit histories and war diaries. An essential key to unlocking this trove of historical records is at least a working knowledge of the Polish language, in particular military terminology.

The availability of comprehensive Second World War Polish war diaries and official summaries is, however, far from complete. Even rarer are any form of timely operational research and analysis of the various battles. The exception seems to be Colonel Kazimierz Dworak’s *Doświadczenia i Wnioski z Działania 1 Polskiej Dywizji Pancernej (okres 7 sierpień do 9 listopad 1944)* (Experiences and Conclusions from the Operations of the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division, period August 7\(^{th}\) to November 9\(^{th}\), 1944).\(^{48}\) As an experienced and war college-qualified senior cavalry officer, Dworak was eminently positioned to critically analyze the results of the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division. As a cautionary note, he was also often closely associated with Maczek being his Deputy.

\(^{47}\) Ibid., 104.
\(^{48}\) Colonel Kazimierz Dworak, *Doświadczenia i wnioski z działań 1 polskiej Dywizji Pancernej (okres 7 sierpień do 9 listopad 1944)* [Experience and Suggestions from the Activities of the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division, August 7 to November 9, 1944]. BELLONIA, r27, (Londyn, 1945).
Commander for two years at both Brigade level and for three years at the Divisional level in the 1st Polish Armoured Division. This personal relationship must be borne in mind in examining Dworak’s works. The search for any other operational analyses by Polish, Canadian and British sources was a challenge.

On a positive note, when it comes to accuracy of memory, autobiographies and memoirs of Polish participants were usually produced fairly soon after the war. Major-General Stanisław Maczek’s *Od podwody do czolgi* (From the Cart to the Tank) falls into this category as does fellow Polish divisional commander Major-General Klemens Rudnicki’s *Na Polskim Szlaku: Wspomnienia z Lat 1939-1947* (On the Polish Trail: Memoirs from 1939-1947). To note, although Maczek’s autobiography has been published in French, neither of these two Polish commanders’ autobiographies has been translated and published in English.

Zbigniew Mierzwinski’s *Generałowie II Rzeczypospolitnej* (Generals of the Second Republic) published in a post-Communist Poland is an extensive compendium of the Polish Army generals throughout the 1918 to 1945 period, providing all of the necessary basic biographical information which can help lead to other research sources, such as classmates on military courses, fellow staff and commanding officers. It is similar to Granatstein’s *The Generals*, in that it is complete in its listings of Polish general officers for the Second World War, but different in that it provides no assessment of their leadership abilities. Author Jerzy Majka’s Polish language book *General Stanisław* 

---


Maczek provides a short introductory work of approximately one hundred pages meant to inform new generations of Poles of who Maczek was and provides an overview of his career.\textsuperscript{51} It is not intended to be nor should it be taken as a critical study of his leadership or armoured tactics and does not deal with cultural or linguistic challenges.

Modern day Polish academic historian, university professor Piotr Potomski, has written extensively in various Polish language academic journals and non-academic popular magazines on Polish military history with a Polish-language biography and compendium of battles that Maczek took part in, titled General Broni Stanislaw Wladyslaw Maczek (Cavalry General Stanislaw Wladyslaw Maczek) published in 2008 and a shorter English language edition in 2012.\textsuperscript{52} The fact that he had access to much archival material that has been unavailable to either Polish or English language scholars until this century makes this book useful to my dissertation, although he does not deal with the cultural and linguistic challenges in any depth.

Besides the books on Maczek in Polish mentioned above, two books in English on the overall efforts of the Poles in World War II that include chapters on the 1st Polish Armoured Division have been published fairly recently: Halina Kochanski’s The Eagle Unbowed and Kevin Koskodan’s No Greater Ally\textsuperscript{53} Although both of these books represent useful summaries, neither book does more than mention the language and

\textsuperscript{51} Jerzy Majka, General Stanislaw Maczek (Rzeszów, Poland: Libra, 2005).
cultural issue faced by the Poles without any analysis of its impact.\footnote{“Despite the huge historiography of the Second World War, the history of Poland and the Poles during this period remains largely unknown. The whole history of the Polish experience continues to be obscure and is often misunderstood largely because it has been treated in part, and not as a whole.” Kochanski,xxiv. “Certainly there were linguistic and cultural difficulties but for the most part each side accepted the quirks of the other.” Koskodan, 58.} This thesis is meant to fill in that gap.

An important source of background information comes from Colonel Franciszek Skibiński who was a prolific writer and chronicler of the exploits of Polish cavalry at war. He was a former senior officer in the 1st Polish Armoured Division who served as Maczek’s Chief of Staff (COS) on several occasions in Poland, France, and in the North-West Europe campaign. He was also Deputy Division Commander and for a period of several days during the Falaise Gap operations Commander of the 10th Armoured Cavalry Brigade, one of the subordinate formations of the 1st Polish Armoured Division.\footnote{Returning to Communist controlled Poland after the war Skibinski was sentenced to death in 1952 as a consequence of fabricated conspiracy charges, not uncommon for returning senior army officers who served under other than Russian controlled militaries. His sentence was commuted and he was subsequently rehabilitated in 1956 and continued to serve in the post-war Polish Army (Wojska Polska).} As already mentioned in my comments on Dworak, it must be borne in mind that as a senior officer Skibinski worked for Maczek in both subordinate command and staff positions in the Second World War. Besides being involved personally in the battles, has a certain loyalty to his division commander that could have blinded him to some of Maczek’s shortcomings or lack of success. Skibiński admits in his book \textit{Pierwsza Pancerna} [First Armoured] published in Poland in 1966 that he describes the fight of the 1st Polish Armoured Division as he saw it.\footnote{Franciszek Skibiński, \textit{Pierwsza Pancerna} [First Armoured] (Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1966), 6.} Major Tadeusz Wysocki’s \textit{1 Polska Dywizja Pancerna 1939-1947: Geneza i Dzieje} [1st Polish Armoured Division 1939-1947: Origins and History] provides much factual information about the division including some useful
material about the liaison staffs and intelligence support from higher formations.\textsuperscript{57}

Although at one point Maczek’s Chief of Staff, Wysocki is very objective is his treatment of various aspects of the division’s organization and operations through the North-West Europe campaign.\textsuperscript{58}

The broad-brush treatment of very complex issues in official histories can be a good starting point for further research, but must be supplemented by other research. Unfortunately, owing to the post Second World War fate of Poland, many documents disappeared, some forever, some to emerge in the hands of veterans in the West and some in various archival holdings in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Poland. These can regrettably be incomplete owing to the ravages of time or editing to preserve a positive memory or simply to save precious storage space.

**Conclusions on Available Relevant Sources**

My research has shown that there is not much English or Polish language literature on the linguistic and cultural challenges encountered by the Polish military serving with the Canadian Army in the Second World War. Virtually no secondary source material dealing with my focus area except a few anecdotal snippets or vignettes buried in unit histories or campaign/battle descriptions in either Polish or English material could be found. Therefore, more research was needed for primary sources that could prove useful in supporting my thesis work.

\textsuperscript{57} Tadeusz A. Wysocki, *1 Polska Dywizja Pancerna 1939-1947: Geneza i Dzieje* [1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division: Origins and Activities] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Bellona, 1994).

\textsuperscript{58} “For the whole of its existence within the British forces it was accompanied by the British Liaison Mission. In my opinion (Wysocki) those several officers were helpful in surmounting language difficulties.” Wysocki, 103.
With that goal in mind I resorted to primary source material on recruiting and training, operational orders and reports on the 1st Polish Armoured Division from the Canadian LAC (Library and Archives Canada) and at the Canadian Department of National Defence’s Directorate of History and Heritage. The British National Archives at Kew was a valuable source of material on liaison activities of 21st Army Group and 4 Liaison HQ and aspects of the training of Polish officers in the United Kingdom. The Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum (PISM) in London, England contained a wealth of information where knowledge of the Polish language proved essential. I also had access to material, both in English and in Polish that I was able to locate that was held in private holdings in Canada.

Despite all my research, I realized that gaps were inevitable in research material for a variety of reasons. The exigencies and tempo of combat operations and manpower shortages meant that important facts or lessons were sometimes not captured accurately if at all. What documentation that remained after the Second World War and the dispersion of the Polish participants and demobilization of large portions of the massive Canadian and British militaries meant that files and articles invaluable to today’s researcher would be misfiled or lost forever. Many participants never had the opportunity or took the time to record their experiences or views. This lack of a historiography related to my area of focus has reinforced to me a need to describe this unexplored area of research since the challenges of language and culture experienced by the 1st Polish Armoured Division have not been previously dealt with, except in passing, and not at all in dealing with their impact on the attainment of common intent. This dissertation intends to address that gap.
What follows is a description and analysis of findings linking the problem of overcoming cultural and linguistic challenges to the Pigeau-McCann concept of Common Intent. This theoretical concept will be the basis by which I will frame my study and analyze the problems associated with cultural and linguistic misunderstandings. The Pigeau-McCann framework is emphasized here because it is one of the leading empirically-based models of command and control (C2).59

In choosing and then applying a model within historical study it is essential to continually re-examine the appropriateness of the model to the problem. Is the model able to explain historical observations? Since models are based upon assumptions and therefore provide approximations, they are perhaps better suited for illustrative or visualisation purposes in historical study. In any model however, the accuracy of predicted outcomes is based upon the validity of these assumptions. When the empirical data consists of historical facts, opinions and observations, the assessment will be based on available sources and inherently somewhat subjective in nature. In using the Pigeau-McCann models, I will need to take all of these factors into considerations.

Chapter 3 How to Overcome Cultural and Linguistic Challenges: Ensuring That Common Intent is Established

This chapter will include an examination of military culture in general and multinational coalition operations in order to demonstrate the effects that language and culture can and do have on the deployment of established military units and formations, as opposed to ad hoc formations thrown together just before taking to the field of battle. More specifically, how does a commander establish and ensure that his operational intent is understood by those who must implement plans in such multi-national and multilingual military coalitions to achieve coordinated action? I propose to use the Pigeau-McCann theoretical concept of common intent to allow for situating and analyzing of the cultural and linguistic problems experienced while the 1st Polish Armoured Division was under command of the II Canadian Corps during the Second World War’s North-West Europe campaign (1944-1945).

This chapter begins with a description of the Pigeau-McCann concept of establishing common intent, followed by an analysis of relevant research from Polish military experiences in other Western theatres of operation during the Second World War. This material will provide a foreshadowing for some of the challenges that were to be met in 1944. I will then elaborate on possible ways to overcome such cultural challenges by describing the function and employment of liaison officers and liaison staffs and the use of interpreters. The chapter will end with an explanation of the particular challenges that the Polish language presented to non-Poles and of the necessity of understanding the uniqueness of Polish cultural influences in order to appreciate who

1 Pigeau and McCann, *Establishing Common Intent*, 86.
the Poles are. Conclusions at the end of this chapter will provide the assessment criteria against which I will evaluate the difficulties that were encountered by both the 1st Polish Armoured Division and II Canadian Corps in the establishment and maintenance of common intent during August 1944 combat operations in Northwest Europe.

Although the planning for and the conduct of military operations may seem like a simple undertaking, it is not. Military commanders are frequently called upon to make difficult choices on the battlefield to ensure operational success. All of the parties affected will then be required to act in accordance with the decision made by their superior commander. To that end, in cross-cultural situations, organizational policy decisions frequently have to be made which favour the values of one interest group over another. ²

I will begin with the question of how humans interact and understand each other, particularly in a military context. In today’s coalition operations findings related to both culture and language may appear to be similar from that which was experienced over seventy years ago by the Poles under Canadian command:

Military personnel from different countries may bring diverse styles of communicating and understanding communications to their interactions, which can lead to problems. In addition to misunderstandings, other communication problems can include inability or unwillingness to share information, the stress and increased cognitive effort of communicating in a second language, degraded perceptions of one’s ability based on language fluency and being overlooked for assignments due to lack of language fluency. ³

---

² Brislin, *Cross-Cultural Encounters*, 256.
Before coming to the interaction of Poles and Canadians it is necessary to describe who the Poles were, where expatriate populations were to be found, and what contact British and Canadians would have had with Poles prior to the Second World War., that is how familiar the English-speaking allies were with their new Polish brothers-in-arms.

To do so, I first intend examine what it meant at that point in history to be a Pole. I will continue the narrative by looking at what linguistic resources were potentially available within the ranks of the 1st Polish Armoured Division. This will be followed by an examination and summary of background information on the Polish populations in Canada and the United Kingdom in the 1930s and will highlight the competition for interpreter resources amongst them, including that of the Polish Government-in-Exile legally conscripting Polish nationals residing in Canada and eventually Canadians (British subjects) of Polish descent. In defining the magnitude of the potential pool of Polish language speakers suitable for employment in either liaison or interpreter roles, I will also describe where non-Poles might have studied Polish and assess how well available Poles might have been able to speak both Polish and English. Effective mutual communications is the basis for being able to establish common intent between English speaking superior headquarters and the Polish fighting forces under command was a key ingredient for operational success. To answer the question of how to best establish common intent between commanders from different backgrounds, i.e., Maczek and Simonds, as well as Maczek and his peer English speaking divisional commanders within II Canadian Corps, I intend to conclude with who was available to assist in this undertaking.
In the 1930s and earlier, the experience of native English speakers with either Poles or of Poland would most likely have been via contact with Polish immigrants who may or may not have been able to communicate effectively, if at all, in English. Without the mass media and social networks of today, opinions and understanding of what Poland represented and who the Poles were, would have been for the most part based on little evidence or personal contact and stereotypes. In order to outline what this means, I need to begin by describing what would it have meant to be Polish, that is, who would have considered themselves a Pole in 1944?

Co znacze byc Polakiem? What does it mean to be a Pole?

Someone living in Canada or Western Europe in the 1930s, who knew where Poland was and possessed knowledge of at least a smattering of the country’s tragic history of occupations, would be aware that there is the language associated with being a Pole, Polish, a western Slavic language written in a non-Cyrillic script. To describe the meaning of an interwar sense of Polishness or Polszczyzna, I intend to begin by briefly situating the context of modern Poland, i.e., Poland in the 1930s. An understanding as to who the Poles were will provide the necessary context for the determination of whether there would have been an ability to effectively translate or interpret from Polish into another foreign language, preferably English, for their new western military allies.

Poland was reborn as a sovereign independent country in November 1918, the Russian Empire having occupied Poland for over 120 years and dominated her throughout Polish history. The population of Poland at that time was made up of approximately two thirds Polish ethnic origin, the remainder a mix of primarily ethnic
Ukrainian, Belorussian and Jewish - none of which were represented by independent nations – as well as a small German speaking minority.\(^4\) Within the territory of this newly independent Poland, there were and still are a number of different dialects of Polish spoken, some versions difficult for a speaker of modern standard Polish to understand. As well, in post-1918 Poland, not all ethnic Poles were resident in the newly drawn or redrawn boundaries.

Holding an officer’s commission in the Polish army in the 1930s would have likely been a result of good social connections and almost certainly represented a middle or upper class origin. This social standing was because of the Polish army’s role in establishing and defending their newly independent sovereign nation, and the fact that the army had played an important role in the liberation of the Polish homeland from all aggressors and oppressors in the period 1918 to 1921. Regular army officers were respected and would typically remain on a formal basis with their soldiers. Officers would be addressed formally by their soldiers, although the same officers could use a familiar form of address for the younger soldiers, comparable to the \textit{tu} form in French.

Poles, whose homeland was wedged between Germany and the newly created Soviet Union, saw themselves as Europeans and were more interested in and attached to the West than the East. Economic ties and travel to other parts of Europe were fairly common at that time., though non-Poles rarely travelled to Poland. Polish society in the 1930s remained relatively stratified. The Polish minor nobility population known as the \textit{Szlachta}, although often poor was extremely patriotic, highly cultured and usually well

\(^4\) Peter D. Stachura, \textit{Poland, 1918-1945: An Interpretive and Documentary History of the Second Republic} (Routledge, 2004), 79.
Well-educated Poles were often multi-lingual, with French and German being the most popular western foreign languages studied.

Polishness or Polszczyzna could perhaps best be understood as being an attachment to a language, a culture and a homeland. This sentiment endured despite the fact that the boundaries and sovereign status of that Polish homeland had been continually changing over its history. Therefore, Poland’s future was seemingly in a perpetual state of uncertainly. The Polish national anthem Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła (Poland hasn’t perished yet) could be viewed as indicative of the pragmatic attitude towards their country’s fate that many Poles likely felt.

Although various waves of Polish emigrants had left 1930s Polish territory in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, they were for the most part from the peasant or rural classes seeking a better life, and therefore typically not well educated, rarely schooled beyond a very basic formal elementary education. Secondary and post-secondary education was something that their families would have been unable to afford for their children, even if they were able to obtain placements at institutions of higher learning. Ethnic Poles who had previously emigrated from a land where they were in the majority, by virtue of leaving, might not likely have felt the same sentiments as those who remained. If an emigrant left before the latest war of Polish independence (1918-1921), from a land not included within the current Polish geographical boundaries, and spoke a language or dialect different from formally educated Poles, they may not have felt any attachment to a newly independent Poland other than perhaps one of a sentimental nature.

---

They may well have preserved their culture and traditions in the diaspora and passed on their language to their children, but would they be have been willing or able to return to Poland to fight and possibly give their lives to redeem or to ensure her freedom? Would they have encouraged their children who grew up in a non-Polish speaking country and might have spoken some Polish to go to Europe in order to liberate what was to most of them a foreign country known only through family stories based on oral tradition?

Before delving into the issue of who might have been able to fulfill the role of interpreter, it is essential to understand the requirement. To prepare for their deployment as part of this coalition the Poles were required to operate in coalition alongside of these same non-Polish-speaking soldiers at first in military training exercises and ultimately with these same or other non-Polish speaking soldiers in combat conditions. In all of these scenarios, rapid communications were essential for success and in many cases survival. To maximize the chances of operational success, all members of the coalition should have been able to fully understand all aspects, both stated and inferred, of their superior commander’s intent. But could the Poles have understood their English-speaking superior’s direction in operations in August 1944, and against what criteria could this ability to actually understand common intent be assessed?

Poles in the 1st Polish Armoured Division

The 1st Polish Armoured Division was formed, trained and put through its paces during practical military exercises in the United Kingdom for almost two years prior to embarking in Normandy in late July 1944. In early August 1944, it was subordinated for military operational purposes to the command of II Canadian Corps, a formation whose
lingua franca was English, with British and English-speaking Canadian officers and soldiers making up the bulk of its manpower within the Corps Headquarters and other divisional size formations.

In the two years prior to this time, it was either known or could have been assumed by the allies that the 1st Polish Armoured Division would fight under British or Canadian command. Thus, the requirement for a linguistically competent liaison element to ensure smoothness and clarity of communications was not something that surprised the English-speaking allies at the last moment. So, the questions raised would have most likely been: where would such a liaison element be employed, how would it be structured, and where would its “qualified” personnel come from?

The older generation of Polish officers consisted of those who had served in the Austro-Hungarian or Russian armies or in the various Polish military forces formed in exile during the First World War and the ensuing Polish-Soviet War (1918-1921), including The Polish Legions recruited primarily in Europe, and Polish General Jozef Haller’s forces formed in France and recruited from amongst other places the United States and Canada. During this period recruits for the Polish forces represented those of Polish descent returning to fight for an independent Poland. Given the Polish geographical location and geopolitical interaction, English language competency for a Pole who had never traveled was understandably absent and few people learned to speak English.⁶ For most of the Polish population travel to English speaking countries was simply not something that was done.

---

In the interwar years, senior Polish officers may also have attended Staff College in France (École Supérieure de Guerre) where the course was conducted in French.\(^7\) Potential Polish candidates had to pass a French exam prior to their acceptance.\(^8\) As an alternative they may have attended the Polish equivalent Wyższa Szkoła Wojenna (WSW) in Warsaw, Poland, where the newly founded academy was heavily staffed with serving French Army officers, where the course would be conducted in Polish with lectures and discussions at times being in French, German and Russian.\(^9\) Every second day of the course syllabus included lessons in foreign languages that included French, German and Russian.\(^10\) English language instruction was not included as part of the curriculum. Once again the emphasis was on French as the default second language for Polish officers, where classes were conducted with assistance of a translator. This knowledge of or at least familiarity with the French language was something which was to prove to be very useful in the 1940 campaign in France where the 10th Polish Mechanized Brigade fought under General Maczek’s command.\(^11\)

Within the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division’s ranks, Poles who spoke English well would have been rare indeed particularly amongst those Polish veterans of the 1939 September campaign who succeeded in joining the formation in the United Kingdom. So, if recently displaced Polish military veterans were not capable of fulfilling the requirement for employment in roles requiring a competency in English what about Poles

\(^{7}\) Kopański, Wspomnienia, 186. General Zając, Brigadier Kopański and Major Zimnal and Maliszewski had all attended the French War College. (Wyższa Szkoła Wojenna. École Supérieure de guerre)


\(^{9}\) Potomski, GBSWM, 82.

\(^{10}\) Chocianowicz, W 50-lecie Powstania Wyższej Szkoły Wojennej w Warszawie, 191.

\(^{11}\) Potomski, GBSWM, 81.
from the diaspora populations in the West? This topic will be explored in the next chapter.

Having established what capabilities the Polish military forces potentially possessed when it came to being able to communicate in English, I now turn to the theoretical model that I intend to use to assess what level of understanding could have been achieved.

**Pigeau-McCann: Establishing Common Intent**\(^\text{12}\)

As a framework through which to analyze the Poles under Canadian command in the Second World War, I will use Pigeau-McCann’s *common intent factors* to assess how a commander can influence subordinates and to determine the balance between how he can ensure that both his explicit and implicit intent is understood. Although not developed specifically with multi-lingual command problems in mind, I believe that the model is, nonetheless, useful. Carol McCann and Ross Pigeau were Defence Scientists in the Canadian Department of National Defence (DND) who focused on the study of the concept of command. Before using these assessment criteria in my dissertation, I must however explain what Pigeau-McCann mean by these three intent factors: shared knowledge; comparable reasoning; and finally, shared commitment and motivation.

Examining the Polish and Canadian forces through the lenses of the three intent factors should provide an indication of where potential misunderstandings may have been likely to have occurred. Any great variance between the two nations against any of the

factors should raise a flag as to an area that would have needed greater consideration in both training and combat.

The first of the Pigeau-McCann common intent factors is described as *Shared Knowledge*. In essence, if a commander is not confident that his explicit intent has been understood, that is, if he is not confident that his subordinates have understood what is that he wants them to do, then he must take the time and explain his intent more fully. However, if a commander is not confident that his subordinates share the same principles for acceptable behaviour, this task will prove to be much more difficult.13

The second of the common intent factors is called *Comparable Reasoning Ability*. According to Pigeau-McCann, “shared knowledge of the commander’s objective as well as shared knowledge of the acceptable solution space is not sufficient for coordinated action.”14 The commander must also be aware of the reasoning abilities that existed among the diverse members in his coalition, and what he must do to accommodate them.

The third and final of the common intent factors is described as *Shared Commitment and Motivation*. According to Pigeau-McCann this means: “How much effort must a commander expend towards maximizing the motivation and level of commitment of his subordinates?”15 A commander should endeavor to motivate his subordinates as he is explaining his intent. This is essential when soldiers are tired, hungry and particularly when they have experienced defeat and seen comrades and friends killed or wounded. A sense of hopelessness or despondency could imply grudging acceptance of a task or worse. Conveying one’s intent is not simply explaining a concept

---

14 Ibid., 98.
15 Ibid., 100.
of operations or a plan, but is the best opportunity to motivate and invigorate, or, dependent upon the audience and conditions, re-invigorate subordinates and allies. This effort is essential to ensuring that all the members of a coalition or alliance are equally committed to working together and supporting one another in the achievement of common objective. A graphical depiction of shared intent when considering implicit and explicit intent is represented in Figure 3.1 and Pigeau-McCann description of the chart included in the footnote below.  

![Figure 3.1 Pigeau-McCann Common Intent*](image)

*Allan English (editor). *The Operational Art: Canadian Perspectives, Leadership and Command*. Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006. Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann. Chapter 4 Establishing Common Intent, 104, Figure 4.4

16 According to Pigeau-McCann: “from the left side of the figure, where shared explicit intent dominates over shared implicit intent, to the right of the figure, common intent becomes greater due to the greater overlap between commander and subordinates on the three intent factors (knowledge, reasoning ability and commitment). They hypothesize that there is a central segment of this figure that represents an optimal area where organizations, in this case commanders, should reside.” Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann. *Chapter 4, Establishing Common Intent*, 103. “There are of course also other factors that can influence where a military or commander could be situated, such as society’s willingness to tolerate casualties that may influence the level of autonomy that commanders are given to make choices.” Ibid.
When applied to the Second World War experience of Maczek and Simonds, though Maczek was able to receive, understand and then discuss plans from his superior commander, he admitted that his lack of linguistic competency in English was a limiting factor.\textsuperscript{17} Important for the purpose of my dissertation would be how his lack of English language ability would have limited him in his understanding of commander’s intent. How would having to work through interpreters have inhibited his complete understanding of orders and his ability to provide feedback as to his ability to carry them out? Although a novice at commanding the untried 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division in combat operations, Maczek knew and did not lose sight of what he had to do in order to motivate his soldiers. “Simonds noticed that the Poles were different from the Canadian and British soldiers under his command, and he realized that they could not be controlled in the same ways he controlled British and Canadian troops.”\textsuperscript{18} I will therefore describe how this difference in military cultures would have affected the communication of common intent making it more difficult.

Although I will conduct an examination of the leadership of the two commanders, Maczek and Simonds, against the Pigeau-McCann \textit{Balanced Command Envelope (BCE)} model in Chapter 6 in order to compare the two generals’ reasoning abilities, it is necessary here to point out that they did not have access to the same data. In the case of Simonds and Maczek, the former had access to Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) ULTRA information.\textsuperscript{19} This advantage was unique for the Corps- level Commander and the dissemination of ULTRA intelligence to the 1\textsuperscript{st} Canadian Army and below was very

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} Potomski, \textit{(GBSWM)}, 208, Kitching, 210.
\item \textsuperscript{18} McGilvray, \textit{BDM}, 15.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Frederick W. Winterbottom, \textit{The Ultra Secret} (Toronto: Harper and Row, 1974), 124. General Simonds was put in the picture at (General) Crerar’s request.
\end{itemize}
According to British General Alexander in Tunisia in 1943 on the subject of ULTRA intercepts:

The knowledge not only of the enemy’s precise strength and disposition but also how, when and where he intends to carry out his operations has brought a new dimension into the prosecution of the war.21

Because of ULTRA access, Simonds knew what the German activities and intentions were and yet had to give the right orders to his subordinate commanders, including Maczek, without giving away the fact that he, Simonds, had an advantage in that he knew more about his adversary’s intent. Owing to restrictions on who could have access to ULTRA signals intelligence, Simonds was not permitted to share the details of this knowledge with Maczek. In accordance with the Pigeua-McCann common intent factor of shared knowledge there was already an imbalance between the two commanders of which only Simonds was aware.

The two commanders’ motivations were seemingly at odds: return home (the Canadians) versus fighting for the eventual liberation of one’s homeland (the Poles). One of Simonds’ subordinates and Maczek’s peers in II Canadian Corps, 4th Canadian Armoured Division Commander Major-General Kitching was fired because of his

apparent lack of support for Poles. Whereas the Poles under Maczek saw the North-West Europe campaign as a stepping stone to their final goal of liberating their homeland Poland, the allies’ goal was to defeat Nazi Germany. The liberation of Poland was not part of the Western allies’ agenda, a country whose post-war future they left reasonably vague, never discussed or failed to make very clear to the Poles until very late in the war.

Whatever the case may have been, the motivation of the Poles in comparison to their English-speaking allies was therefore not equal: defeating Germany, their shared motivation with the allies was not their only motivation; they also harboured the goal of being able to liberate Poland, by then already liberated by the Russians, versus to cause Germany to surrender unconditionally so that Canadian and British soldiers could simply go home. With the limited number of soldiers available for casualty replacements, the Poles could not have been blamed if at times they had been more risk averse where casualties were anticipated to be higher. Preserving combat power for the liberation of Poland, regardless of how unrealistic that goal might have been, would have made sense if that was the Polish soldier’s understanding of his Polish commander’s intent.

Throughout my dissertation, I intend to refer to these three common intent themes and expand upon such questions as the ones that I have briefly raised here. My analysis is meant to allow me to determine the degree of common intent that was achieved. I will restate here, that, according to Pigeau-McCann, a commander can take full advantage of the potential for common intent that resides in one’s subordinates by taking into consideration and devoting time and energy to all three factors affecting intent. 22

22 Pigeau and McCann, Establishing Common Intent, 105.
Strategic Level Interaction

At the strategic levels of decision making, where military commanders and politicians interact with one another as well as with their peers from other nations, issues can often be worked through or at least differences clarified in face to face encounters between the most senior leaders or commanders. What British Field-Marshal Alan Brooke experienced when meeting with Polish Commander-in-Chief General Władysław Śikorski in December 1940, typifies the challenge. According to an Alan Brooke diary entry: “In periods with Śikorski maintaining conversation in French with him, it was very interesting in parts but [it was] very exhausting. We were given a Polish lunch where I had to say a few words with a Polish interpreter.”23 Despite this linguistic barrier, in February 1940, Alan Brooke, when referring to Śikorski wrote, “the more I see of him, the more I like him.”24 This positive assessment was likely more as a consequence of politeness rather than any actual understanding of each other’s characters, Alan Brooke being sympathetic with an ally in a difficult position. In this particular case they had the luxury of getting to know each other through intermediaries where the talk was general and time was on their side, not the case on a battlefield where developing situations more often than not meant time was in very short supply and details were more important than political or social banter.

On the 4th of July 1943 the military transport aircraft carrying Śikorski, his daughter Zofia Leśniowska, who worked as his Adjutant, Chief of Staff General Tadeusz Klimecki and a number of other staff officers, both Polish and English, crashed into the

24 Ibid., 128.
sea on takeoff from Gibraltar, killing all passengers.\textsuperscript{25} His replacement as Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces was General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, who held the post from July 1943 to September 1944. Although he spoke French, he was unknown to Churchill. After the loss of Śikorski, Major-General Sir Collin Gubbins, former member of the British Military Mission in Poland and then Head of the Special Operations Executive (SOE) said:

> Like many senior Polish officers, who had felt at home in Paris, spoken fluent French and were familiar with French military procedure, Śikorski had been shattered by the fall of France and had never entirely succeeded in acclimatizing himself to the British way of life.\textsuperscript{26}

In his discussions with senior Polish officers, Churchill commented that although the conversations were conducted in French, the Polish had strong accents, and because he had no ability in Polish that French was the default language. According to Polish General Kopański, while the conversations took place in French, which the Prime Minister knew “not badly”, his accent however was very obviously English, whereas General Anders’ was – heavily Wisla accented (central Polish).\textsuperscript{27}

During his inspection of the 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division in March 1944, British 21\textsuperscript{st} Army Group Commander General Montgomery was of the opinion that he knew best how to use the forces at his disposal and did not want to defer to allies’ points of view:

\textsuperscript{25} Halik Kochanski, \textit{The Eagle Unbowed: Poland and the Poles in the Second World War} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 344. The only survivor of the flight was the Czech pilot Eduard Prchal. Despite two separate investigation commissions that were conducted by the Poles in the months immediately after the crash, the Poles remained unsatisfied as to the cause of the crash. Conspiracy theories persist until this day as to the causes of the crash, including possible sabotage, the latest version by Tadeusz A. Kisielewski published in 2012, entitled \textit{Po Zamachu: Uprowadzenie Córki Generała Śikorskiego I Śmierć Adjutanta.}[After The Attempt: the Kidnapping of the Daughter of General Śikorski and the Death of his Adjutant].

\textsuperscript{26} Peter Wilkinson, \textit{Gubbins and the SOE} (London: Pen and Sword, 1993), 128.

\textsuperscript{27} Kopański, \textit{Wspomnienia}, 204.
“The point was, Monty complained to his friend Major-General Frank Simpson (Director of Military Operations at the War Office), that to be dictated to by nations who have been under the heel of Germany as to how their forces should be used is by my way of thinking, quite wrong.”

Without understanding how the Poles operated, he was seemingly dismissing any intentions that the Poles might have had with respect to the employment of their forces. He further fell into the stereotyping of the Polish soldier when he commented to C.I.G.S. Field Marshal Alan Brooke on the 8\textsuperscript{th} of August 1944, the first day of combat for the Poles in the North-West Europe campaign, that: “so far the Poles have not displayed that dash we expected, and have been sticky.”

Did Montgomery really understand enough about his new allies in order to know how to work with the Poles to get the best out of them? During an inspection of the 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division in Kelso, Scotland in March 1944, he had asked Maczek whether the Poles spoke German or Russian at home in Poland! Was he following stereotypes and did he dismiss the Poles without waiting to see them perform on the battlefield? Reaction from his Polish audience was not surprising, they were greatly annoyed.

In perhaps attempting to lessen the blow that this gaff had caused, Montgomery was to write the next day that what he was referring to was that he had met many soldiers who had previously fought against him in as part of the German \textit{Afrika}

---

29 Ibid., 766.
*Korps* under the command of legendary German General Erwin Rommel.\(^{33}\) It is highly unlikely that the excuse made up for this public blunder.

Churchill had something to add to this discussion, when he recollected that Polish Commander-in-Chief Šikorski had remarked on the slowness of the transfer to the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division of recruits from amongst the prisoners taken in Northern Africa, that of Poles who were considered *Volksliste* (ethnic Poles from the German majority area Silesia in prewar Poland) and had fought in the Wehrmacht. These Poles were treated the same as all personnel in Prisoner of War (POW) camps that were under the control of the Americans, so they were waiting for the answer from the American hierarchy as to their fate.\(^{34}\) The Polish urgent need for these recruits to fill out the ranks of the units being mobilized in the United Kingdom was not being understood.

When it came to the Common Intent factor of *shared commitment/motivation*, as has been demonstrated, the Poles were motivated to fill their ranks and get on with the fight. They also did not trust the Russians, and seemed at pains to work in a coalition where their English-speaking allies either could not or did not take the time to understand the Polish point of view.

**Tactical Level Interaction**

At the tactical level, that is where soldiers of different nations will be interacting with allied forces on the battlefield, such difficulties in identifying who your allies are could have disastrous consequences. Major Cassidy of the Canadian Army’s Algonquin Regiment, although it had a number of Polish speaking Canadians in the unit, noted later

\(^{33}\) Ibid., 187.
\(^{34}\) Ibid., 168.
that during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944: “the stories of Germans who had impersonated American officers and men in the Ardennes had been passed on to all of us: and the Poles were particularly suspicious and that the language difficulty made matters worse as far as liaison went, often with fatal consequences.”35 If the Poles, because of their accented English, were mistaken for Germans by units that should have been able differentiate between a German and a Polish accent, it did not bode well for units without Polish speakers who after already working with the Polish allies since August 1944. As shall be described later in Chapter 8, the potential for English-speaking allies to fail to discriminate between those who were Polish allies and those who were not could result in misunderstanding at a minimum and potential fratricide at a worst case.

The challenges presented by language and culture related to such seemingly obvious topics as the provision and cooking of food were important issues that needed to be handled properly. When the Polish forces were first forming military units in Scotland in 1940, according to the future commander of the 1st Polish Airborne Brigade General Stanisław Sosabowski, the food was so bad that despite the fact that British Army cooks were provided: “after a few days, the troops were almost on hunger strike. I asked if we could have the raw rations. We were not ungrateful, but my men could not stomach British food cooked in the British style.”36

Food, both in terms of quality and quantity can be and is a significant morale issue for soldiers, irrespective of their nationality. The daily and long term physical

35 Major G.L. Cassidy, Warpath: The Story of the Algonquin Regiment 1939-1945 (Cobalt, ON: Highway Bookshop, 1990), 222. The Algonquin Regiment was part of the 10th Canadian Infantry Brigade/4th Canadian Armoured Division in August 1944 and so would be fighting alongside of the 1st Polish Armoured Division.
36 Kochanski, The Eagle Unbowed, 225.
demands of being a soldier requires a large amount of energy and results in the
expenditure of a considerable number of calories. Soldiers have to eat, and while engaged
in combat will take whatever they can get in the form of sustenance. While in garrison
soldiers will want to have a say when it comes to their diets. Polish food preferences were
another part of their culture that was not initially considered in their integration into the
British forces. While dietary issues could be best and quickly dealt with by the Poles
cooking for their own forces, how best to overcome the language problems?

All of the forces in a coalition need to be able to communicate with and
understand each other. The formation of liaison units and employment of liaison officers
was one possible method to do so. If soldiers interacting with and meant to be supporting
their allied peers cannot communicate or understand common intent equally, the
consequences in combat could spell failure or disaster at worst.

Liaison Function

In order to ensure coordination between a Headquarters and its subordinate
military formations, as well as cooperation between flanking formations, or supporting
and supported units, Liaison Officers are often employed, and in some cases liaison units
could be and were created and deployed in a support role in military operations. I intend
to describe what a liaison element is meant to do and what it actually does. In the context
of Montgomery’s 21st Army Group it is necessary for clarity to discriminate between the
use of Liaison officers by its Commander General Montgomery and what the official
British Army Liaison units were intended to do. The British created liaison units to work
as an interface for non-English speaking units. One of the tasks that they were assigned
was to ensure translation of orders into the particular language of the supported nation. How this worked in practice will be examined in Chapter 7.37

Montgomery used carefully chosen officers to report back to him on what they saw as the situation on the ground at his various subordinate formations which they had visited. As such, they were not likely welcome and would certainly have been viewed with a certain amount of suspicion.38 What could have been very damaging to both an effective chain of command and the trust element between a superior commander and his subordinate commanders and staffs was seen as another of Montgomery’s unique ways of doing business. As a result: “few commanders took this unique system amiss because their presence (the liaison officers) was tangible evidence of Monty’s relentless desire to keep in closest contact with his fighting Commanders,”39 They were not seen by all as Monty’s spies, but rather one of his ways of being kept informed as to the situations in which units found themselves.

While all of these well intended officers likely did their best to keep Montgomery informed of the most recent developments on the ground, a parallel system had already been envisioned, designed and implemented by the British Army, that of British Liaison Missions. I will next turn to what the liaison mission’s role was meant be vis-à-vis

37 “Liaison became particularly important and more formalized when the larger Polish formations were sent into battle overseas, first in North Africa, later with the Second Corps in Italy, and with the 1st Polish Armoured Division in Normandy. On each of these occasions British Liaison Missions were sent out to report on the progress and problems of their Polish allies.” Sword and Davies, The Formation of the Polish Community in Great Britain, 147.
38 “Monty’s deliberate use of a carefully chosen team of young personal liaison; his eyes and ears. They were a particular and characteristic method of Monty’s – this liaison business….This was of the essence – he (Monty) wanted to know, if he could what the situation was two hours ago in a certain Corps Headquarters.” (Major Paul Rodgers). Hamilton, Monty: Master of the Battlefield, 748.
39 Ibid., 749.
interpretation and translation to ensure the establishment and maintenance of clear common intent.

Interpreters – Is the Message Understood?

In all military operations, being able to effectively communicate operational intent and accurately describe evolving operational scenario to subordinates, superiors and allies, is essential to allow for the achievement of mission success. Thus, rapid mutually intelligible communication is essential whether under high pressure high tempo operations or while conducting deliberate planning and administrative work with non-English speaking allies.

So how does a nation whose military forces uses English as the common language of operation in a multinational, multilingual coalition build the conditions to permit the operational success of an effective plan, in this case with native Polish speakers? In theory, the employment of interpreters at varying levels within liaison teams and their integration into units and formations may be able to accomplish parts of the desired goal of quick comprehension and the transmission of salient relevant operational facts allowing for an in-depth understanding. However, the choice, training and use of interpreters should be done with careful consideration and deliberation of the criteria for selection and employment of these often scarce human resources.

When it comes to the selection and employment of interpreters, according to the modern day United States Marine Corps (USMC) Counter-Insurgency Manual, the ideal criteria would be that:

All interpreters must meet a basic set of criteria. They should be native speakers. All interpreters should
speak English fluently and be able to translate correctly. Interpreters should be reliable, loyal, and compatible with the military personnel. Their gender, age, race, and ethnicity must be compatible with the target audience.\textsuperscript{40}

By way of a retrospective viewpoint, today’s guidelines would seem like very reasonable and useful criteria to apply for interpreter selection and employment. British Field Service Regulations (FSR), the doctrine for organization and employment of forces in operations during the Second World War emphasize clarity in communications and include short sections on the importance of liaison officers, but do not say anything about language and command.\textsuperscript{41}

Given plenty of lead time and a large pool of qualified personnel from which to choose, an effectively functioning method of communication for the delivery of all necessary orders and situational reports to ensure a uniform comprehensive understanding of a military commander’s intent to all coalition members should be both feasible and achievable.

Unfortunately, time is more often than not in short supply during periods and under conditions of warfare. To further complicate this potential for comprehensive mutual understanding, some smaller countries’ national languages are not widely spoken by non-native speakers to the desired degree. Often there are only a small number of

\textsuperscript{40} USMC Counter-Insurgency Manual, MCWP No. 3-33.5 update 2007, 337.
minimally qualified interpreters for languages that are very different from English, and belong to a completely separate language group, e.g., Polish, a Western Slavic language.

**Cultural Differences amongst Brothers-in-Arms**

Although language difficulty was a major barrier to be overcome, it was not the only one. Although it may seem to be somewhat obvious that Polish culture is different from Canadian culture, the issue that I consider important is how these differences might have manifested themselves as problems or impediments to establishing common intent, in particular when it came to Poles working in a military collation with non-Poles against a common foe. Poles, like many other groups, have a sense of identity, whether it is called ethnicity or in its extreme form nationalism since:

> Although people have had identities deriving from religion, birthplace, language, and so on for as long as humans have had culture, they began to see themselves as members of vast ethnic groups, opposed to other groups, only during the modern period of colonization and state building.\(^{42}\)

In particular, I will examine how Poles functioned, how they thought differently, how their combat motivation differed, and how they interacted with one another. What sort of team could they have built? For instance, when it came to the officer cadre in the pre-war Polish Army: “it was virtually the exclusive preserve of the educated ethnic Polish middle class and landed gentry (*Szlachta*)”\(^{43}\)

---


The Canadian Army officer corps, on the other hand, included a number of officers who had been commissioned from the ranks, particularly during the rapid expansion in of its size that had been required in the Second World War. Commissioning from the ranks, other than battlefield commissions in the field, was more the exception than the rule in the Polish military.

Accepting the premise that Canadians and Poles are different, what does that mean in practical terms, when they work together? For the purposes of my work I will employ the term ‘ethnicity’ when examining differences, “although in the interwar years, the employment of ethnic, nativist and racist labels occasioned little public comment and the term race was casually employed by social commentators of every stripe.”44 To define ethnicity I will use the following:

a notion of exclusivity in a group, based around a cluster of symbols such as a language, religion or historical memory, vehemently opposing and in turn opposed by neighbours with similar ideas of identity expressed with corresponding fervour.45

Canadian and British soldiers were to discover that the Poles had quite different temperaments and ways of doing things. In order to understand the uniqueness of the Polish culture from the perspective of a human cultural heritage, it is assumed that it is not biologically transmitted.46 It is learned. From the Polish point of view we see that: “To the average Pole Britain was a mystery. While many Poles were fluent in French and had been to France before the war, few Poles had ever been to Britain and even fewer

46 Benedict, Patterns of Culture, 10.
spoke the language. All of what they knew consisted of folklore and stereotypes: a stuffy people living in a dreary place, cold and damp in both climate and society.\(^{47}\) These Polish soldiers, newly arrived in the United Kingdom, did not know the British people from personal experiences and, because of the geographical distances involved, had even less likelihood to have known any Canadians.

On the other hand, to the average British citizen in wartime United Kingdom, the Poles were a curiosity, and so it happened that:

In virtually all places, Polish troops were welcomed warmly by the local population. Certainly there were linguistic and cultural difficulties, but for the most part each side accepted the quirks of the other and many strong friendships were forged. To the British, the Poles seemed to have an old-world charm and chivalry and it became quiet fashionable for young English women to be seen keeping company with Polish soldiers or airmen. More importantly, it would not be long before the Poles discovered that these new-found friends and allies had the will and determination to stand and fight in the face of the enemy.\(^{48}\)

Although the Poles and British allies would have difficulty communicating, an understanding of sorts would be forged based on the common goal of defeating the German aggressors. Prior to the United States and the Soviet Union entering the war against the Germans in 1941, these new found friends were all the United Kingdom had besides her Commonwealth contingents for the provision of military units at this time. According to Sir Frank Roberts, who worked in the British Foreign Office and was its Head of the Central Department responsible for Anglo-Polish affairs at the war’s end: “In


\(^{48}\) Koskodan, \textit{No Greater Ally}, 58.
1939 Poland was very much an unknown quantity in this country [United Kingdom]. Polish links with the west had been above all with France and, because of the Polish emigration, with the United States.”

In referring to the training of the Polish forces in Scotland, many of whom would eventually be employed in the ill-fated Operation MARKET GARDEN, it was noted that: “As welcome and appreciated as they had been the Poles found there were cultural and procedural barriers with the British society and Scottish civil authorities.” Despite this barrier, as welcome allies, “the Poles were well received by the Scots, who regarded these strangers from a distant and unknown country, speaking an incomprehensible language with a combination of intense curiosity and admiration.”

By way of foreshadowing of historical and cultural background influencing the motivation and commitment intent of the allies: “After 1941, with the Soviet Union on the Allied side, criticism of the Russians by the Poles was no longer welcome, the Western Allies simply failed to understand Polish misgivings.” Ensuring that all members of the coalition are working together for the common cause would seem to have been fractured or eroded at this point in the war.

The Royal Air Force (RAF) who was to benefit by having Polish pilots and other aircrew under its command for the last five years of the Second World War including the iconic Battle of Britain in 1940, was facing its own linguistic challenges when it came to the keen Polish airmen. In order to overcome shortcomings and render the Polish

49 Stachura, *Poland Between the Wars*, 9.
50 Koskodan, 1 *No Greater Ally*, 53.Operation MARKET GARDEN (17 to 25 September 1944).
52 Ibid., 59.
volunteers, many already experienced aircrew, ready to take to the skies over the United
Kingdom and fight alongside of their English speaking allies: “were forced to undergo a
three-week-long intensive course in the English language, specifically designed to give
them the necessary vocabulary for air operations.”

One very simple yet practical method of demonstrating sufficient linguistic
competency in order to perform the required task of flying in formation and following the
commands of an English speaking flight leader was devised by Royal Air Force (RAF)
Group Captain Stanley Vincent who: “put the Polish fighter pilots on bicycles with radios
strapped to their backs and headphones, and sent them peddling around the airfield in
formation so that the Poles soon learnt the English commands.”

By way of reciprocation in the communication between Polish and English
speaking aircrew, RAF fighter pilot Squadron-Leader Ronald Kellett, who was the first
Commanding Officer of the Polish 303 (Kościuszko) Squadron which would later achieve
later fame during the Battle of Britain, “flew with an English-Polish glossary strapped to
his knee.” The Royal Air Force was forced to make do with a minimal amount of
English language training and gimmicks of sorts to allow for the acquisition of a
sufficient English language competency in order for its non-English speaking aircrew to
perform the complex job of flying fighter aircraft and operate within a formation where
the language of operation would be a version of the English language.

Although the Poles were not the only non-English speaking aircrew to fly under
command of the RAF, they represented approximately 10% of the total: “Of the

53 Kochanski, The Eagle Unbowed, 220.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid.
approximately 1,500 RAF pilots who took part in the Battle of Britain, over 150 of them were Polish. This was the largest contingent of foreign pilots fighting with the British against the Germans.\(^{56}\) The next largest contingents in terms contributing nations were New Zealand, followed by Canada, and so no language issues were experienced here. Given that not all of the Poles flew in homogeneous Polish-manned squadrons, this made their language comprehension doubly important in the heat of aerial combat. Their determination could certainly be seen as early proof of the Polish shared commitment with their British allies in the defeat of their common foe, Nazi Germany and a foreshadowing of the linguistic challenges that could and were to be faced in the subordination of Polish speaking army formations under British and Canadian command.

**What about Religion?**

The importance of the linguistic challenges faced by both the Poles and their allies should by now be seen as fairly evident. Overcoming the communications’ issues would have presented enough of a challenge. Understanding the Poles and what is important to them speaks to other aspects of the Polish culture. While the population of today’s Poland (2015) consists primarily of a native-Polish speaking and Roman Catholic by declared religious affiliation, with some sources claiming as high as 95% of the population, it wasn’t always so.\(^{57}\) Prior to the Second World War, Poland was a mixture of nationalities


\(^{57}\) “Poland vies with Ireland and Spain for the title of most Catholic nation. Ninety-five percent of Poles are baptized Roman Catholics, and the majority is practicing ones.” Davies, *God’s Playground: Volume II*, 622.
and religions; the largest minorities represented by other Slavic groups, Germans and Jews.58

The national minorities, resident in Poland, often practiced their own religious beliefs other than Catholicism, and in some cases possessed a minimal competence or lack of competence in the Polish language. Although the demographic distribution in pre-war Poland could and would provide much material for a full study, for the purposes of my dissertation suffice it to say that the Polish population was neither homogeneous in its Polish language ability nor in its particular religious faith affiliations. As in any population, there would of course be exceptions to stereotypes or rules. Poles with German surnames didn’t necessarily consider themselves Germans nor speak German, and depending upon where the particularly Jewish populations lived, they either used Polish or Yiddish as their primary language.

For the Polish soldiers in the West, whether they were based in the United Kingdom or deployed in North West Europe on operations, the military chaplaincy (in Polish (duszpasterstwo) was an essential part of the military hierarchy, providing spiritual advice and independent counselling to the soldiers of the various military units to which they ministered. The Poles were fairly fortunate in that they had a number of Catholic priests in their ranks, but that did not fulfill all of the spiritual requirements because of the religious diversity of the recruits.

58 “The 1931 census figures reveal that out of the total population of Poland of 31,915,900, there were 22,102,723 Poles, 4,441,000 Ukrainians, 2,822,501 Jews, 989,900 Byelorussians, 741,000 Germans and 707,100 ‘locals’ (those with little sense of national identity).” Kochanski, The Eagle Unbowed, 27.
A July 1944 letter from the Liaison Officer of the 21st Army Group to the Senior British Liaison Officer spelled out the issue as it pertained to the 1st Polish Armoured Division when it came to religious services for the non-Catholic soldiers:

1. For the Jewish soldiers a rabbi is proposed. There is a special application made in this matter to the War Office by the Polish G.H.Q.

2. As there are only very few/about 40 Protestants in the Armoured Division, there is no possibility of attaching to it a special Protestant padre. Their religious service could perhaps be secured by the Protestant padres from some of the nearest British units.

3. As there are no orthodox chaplains available at present - the visitation of the orthodox soldiers by Bishop Sawa - Chief Orthodox Chaplain to Polish Forces could be secured, when the military situations will allow it.59

The Polish Army recognized that its soldiers fought for Poland and as such spiritual succor was part of the Polish Armed Forces’ philosophy. The importance of the spiritual aspect of the military chaplaincy was reinforced in another letter to superior headquarters when augmentation of one Roman Catholic chaplain was sought for the Polish Reinforcement Holding Unit (RHU), the military organization responsible for providing additional manpower for the Polish military units in the form of either new recruits or casualties who were deemed fit to return to duty, i.e., back to their original units or to new units. The justification provided in the request was: “The assistance of a chaplain to the GC (General Commanding – Maczek), not only in the performance of

59 Letter from Polish Liaison Section to the Commander of the 21st Army Group Chief Liaison Officer Colonel Jerzy Krubski to 21st Army Group Senior Liaison Officer Brigadier Peto, 11 July 1944, PISM, A.XII.43/2 cz 1, 91.
purely ecclesiastical duties, but also in the general maintenance of morale and welfare of
the men in transit appears very necessary.\textsuperscript{60}

To the Poles the military chaplaincy was an important aspect of their military. Although their English-speaking allies also had military chaplains in their armies, navies and air forces, they may not have placed as high a priority on their employment as the
Poles did, in particular given that the post war fate of the Polish soldier in the west was so
uncertain. General Maczek’s need for such an augmentee and the value that the Poles
placed on religion in the form of field worship, although certainly not unique to the
Polish Army, was something that may not have been fully understood or been
underestimated by non-Poles. Such a spiritual need’s importance is amplified particularly
when the Poles were so far from home, participating in combat and facing a very
uncertain future at best when it came to return or not to post-war Poland in whatever form
that was going to take. Understanding one’s Polish allies was going to amount to more
than merely translating orders and directives from Polish into English and vice versa.

By way of foreshadowing, any imbalance in the Pigeau-McCann Common Intent
factors of shared knowledge, comparable reasoning ability, and shared
commitment/motivation can play a significant role in the ability or inability of
establishing and maintaining a shared common intent throughout a coalition. When the
Poles were under Canadian command and ultimately deployed in combat conditions, any
unresolved or unidentified imbalance in common intent could impact their effectiveness
and thus their overall performance. The Poles’ ability to understand Simonds’ intent and

\textsuperscript{60} Letter from Polish Colonel M, Sulislawski Polish Military Mission at the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces (SCAEF) to the Polish Liaison Section at the 21\textsuperscript{st} Army Group, 9 September 1944, file number 719/Tjn/Org/44, PISM, A.XII.41/3.
therefore to adapt to evolving combat scenarios in accordance with their superior commander’s implied intent is what will determine their overall effectiveness in achievement of his goals.

When it comes to balancing explicit and implicit intent, one of Pigeau-McCann’s questions that relates to the amount of effort required to ensure a common understanding bears repeating here: “How much effort should a commander expend in making his intent explicit in order for him to have confidence that his implicit intent is understood by subordinates?”

When attempts are made by commanders and their staffs to communicate intent, such efforts are complicated by language difficulties, physical separation, i.e., a lack of body language cues from either party to aid in comprehension and lack of time based on operational tempo, it should not be surprising that mistakes are made.

Simply put, Polish soldiers were different from their British and Canadians peers as I will explain later, the Poles were to have no time to get to know peer commanders or staff officers in the North-West Europe campaign in August 1944, so went into combat alongside of strangers who spoke a different language. What can and should have been done to minimize mistakes based on misunderstandings of both language and culture is what I will describe in the next chapters. Innovation as to the identification of already bilingual officers and soldiers, the conduct of rudimentary language training and the possible use of liaison teams represent possible options. Flexibility and patience were going to be required by all parties, including the commanders, in order to allow for the clear communication of commander’s intent through both written and verbal orders.

Chapter 4 The Western Polish Diaspora: Possible Source of Interpreters

Poles in Canada in the 1930s

When many “emigrant Poles” reached their final destinations they were not automatically made citizens, if in fact such a status existed at their various new homelands at the time of their arrival. For example, Canadian citizenship as such did not exist until the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1946, prior to which most persons of British ancestry and those born in Canada were considered British subjects.¹ There were of course many exceptions and rules governing the Citizenship Act’s application, all of which were likely unknown to many residents in Canada, native born or not. Many persons arriving in Canada as immigrants may not have been aware of the complexities of the immigration bureaucracy or even the requirement to consider their actual nationality status. The majority of Polish emigrants to Canada during the pre-Second World War period simply got on with their new lives by joining a burgeoning farming or mining community. For many persons in the first immigration waves, this usually meant associating with the same ethnic group to which they belonged, who were often their sponsor.² Some of these new Canadians were to be unknowingly adversely affected later on when it came to their nationality status during both the First, and for the purpose of my thesis, the Second World War.

² “Workers settled in the industrial centres of eastern Canada where the small developing Polish communities assisted the new immigrants in adjusting to Canadian life. Gradually Polish stores, boarding houses, mutual aid societies and other formal associations developed and became the first building blocks of the organized Polish community in Canada.” “Archival Sources for the Study of Polish Canadians,” accessed February 19, 2014, www.biblioteka.info/archive.htm.
Canadian society, including the military, was in the 1930s still dominated by those of predominantly British origin and governed by the elite of British descent. During this period in Canadian history and earlier, ethnic minorities including a very large and long resident population of French Canadians were typically unlikely members of many virtually closed professions. The Canadian Army was modelled after the British Army and Canada’s reserve forces known as the militia were seen as representing membership in a higher social status for the officers, particularly in Canada’s major cities. Where the Canadian Army differed from the British Army was in the degree of familiarity of its officers with their soldiers, something perhaps unusual for British officers and perhaps incomprehensible for pre-war Polish officers. This would not imply that they didn’t care for their soldiers, but that they remained somewhat distant or aloof by comparison. A country of immigrants though Canada might well have been, the multicultural Canada of today was not something that politicians of that era were aspiring to create.

This degree of anglophilia in Canada would also have meant that the study of other than classical languages (Greek and Latin) would have been rare. Knowledge of foreign languages resulting from one’s ethnic origins may have been something that was kept hidden rather than seen as an asset. For example, family names were frequently anglicized, either by immigration officials endeavouring to capture their spelling or by the owner in an attempt to fit into the English dominated Canadian society of the 1930s. With all of this background to be considered in describing the potential pools of available

---

candidates, where could you have found Polish language speakers capable of interpreting for their unilingual English speaking brothers-in-arms and who were they?

If not specifically selected for employment as military interpreters, where could you at least find those residents of Canada and the United Kingdom possessing foreign language skills? According to British historian and recognized Polish history expert Norman Davies, one of the many problems with statistical information on the Polish emigration was that official records in the nineteenth century usually mentioned emigrants’ citizenship, but not their nationality. Although immigrants may have spoken Polish as their native language, if they had been born and resided in a country or Empire that existed prior to Polish independence in 1918, their records would have indicated their country of origin which could be the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Russian Empire or Germany. They would have been considered nationals of these empires or countries. These records rarely mentioned the variety of languages that the immigrants would have spoken let alone specified their particular geographical origin more precisely than perhaps somewhere within the territory Austro-Hungarian or Russian Empires.

Immigration and Customs officials at the time in Canada and the United Kingdom would have been predominantly English speaking with little or no ability in the variety and multitude of foreign languages with which they were confronted on a daily basis, let alone interest in the correct spelling of foreign village names. It would have helped if they could have read a Latin script version of any sort of identification document replete with mysterious accents and diacritical marks frequent in the Western and Southern Slavic languages, but this ability was rare if not non-existent. This challenge of accurately

\[4\] Davies, *God’s Playground: Volume II*, 278.
identifying the exact geographical origin of newcomers to Canada and capturing a language competency inventory would have been further complicated by the inability to confirm the degree of literacy in any languages claimed by the immigrant populations. Who actually speaks Polish and whether they were identified in either the UK or Canada as possessing such a competency remains difficult to determine with any precision. More specifically for the purposes of this thesis, who else would have been competing for those same scarce resources?

Describing the potential pools of military aged Polish-speaking recruits in the western Polish diaspora in Canada and the United Kingdom is not a simple task. The availability of census data prior to the Second World War is one of the major challenges in trying to determine the size of the pool of potential foreign language speakers, regardless of the specific language, in this case Polish. This shortage of data applies to both Canada and the United Kingdom, the focus countries of Polish immigrants for the purposes of my study. 5 Given this challenge the question must then be posed as to approximately how many Poles were there in Canada and the United Kingdom prior to the Second World War and how can these figures be estimated?

5 “When it comes to Poles in Canada, gaining access to Canadian census records presents several additional challenges, both in what data is available and what information such census data might contain. In Canada, census returns after 1921 are in the custody of Statistics Canada, a federal government agency. The Statistics Act and the Act to Amend the Statistics Act does not permit the disclosure of personal information from post-1921 census returns. Under the legislation, the records will be opened for public use and transferred to Library and Archives Canada 92 calendar years after the taking of a census.” LAC Canada Site, accessed November 5, 2014, http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca.
Poles in Canada

Because of the shortage of available data and the Canadian census release issues cited above, an estimate of an estimate of the number of Poles in Canada comes from an article describing the various waves of Polish immigration to Canada: “In 1901 there were less than 6,300 people of Polish descent in Canada. By the end of the first decade of this century (i.e., 1910) the Polish community numbered 33,700 – a five-fold increase.”\(^6\) In describing the waves of Polish immigration to Canada, the period 1890 to 1914) is known as the first wave of Polish immigration. The second wave occurred after the First World War, mainly in the years 1921-1931. The third wave occurred after the Second World War, from 1946-1961.\(^7\) The post Solidarity (Solidarność) movement of immigrants from 1980 – 1989 could be called the fourth wave.

Polish immigration to Canada in the 20th century interwar years (1918 to 1939) was to be affected by policies in the United States which capped the quota for Poles at 5,892, at a time when the numbers desirous of emigrating were much larger.\(^8\) This limitation helps to explain the large influx of Polish immigrants to Canada during the decade 1921-1931 (the second wave).\(^9\) By 1939, tentative figures suggest that some 250,000 Poles had settled permanently in Canada and some 1.5 million in the USA.\(^10\) In


\(^7\) Ibid., 1.

\(^8\) The United States Immigration Act of 1924 (The Johnson-Reed Act) reduced the annual total immigration quota from 358,000 to 164,000. In addition the Act reduced the immigration limit from 3 percent to 2 percent of each foreign born group living in the United States based on the 1890 census. As a result, the quota (1924-25) for the number of Poles was capped at 5,892 persons. “The Immigration Act of 1924,” accessed November 25, 2014, [http://www.upa.pdx.edu/IMS/currentprojects/TAHv3/Contents/PDFs/Immigration_Act_1924.pdf](http://www.upa.pdx.edu/IMS/currentprojects/TAHv3/Contents/PDFs/Immigration_Act_1924.pdf).

\(^9\) Kogler, *Demographic Profile of the Polish Community in Canada*, 1.

the 1941 census for Canada, approximately 155,000 persons in Ontario and the Canadian prairies identified themselves as being of Polish origin. This of course in no way implied any knowledge of nor fluency in the Polish language among these persons, nor the ability to effectively interpret between Polish and English, let alone translate written text, more specifically military commanders’ operational orders, operational intent or direction. All we can say is that these census survey respondents either were born in Poland or felt a strong enough emotional attachment to their parents’ homeland to declare themselves to be of Polish heritage.

Canada was, up to that time, encouraging the settling of its sparsely populated prairies provinces (Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba) with immigrants ready and willing to farm the land. Most first wave Polish immigrants to Canada were seeking potentially free or cheaply available land to continue doing what they had done in Poland for generations, subsistence farming as their means of livelihood. In essence, “Immigration abroad provided for the only opportunity for improvement to the more industrious and resourceful young men and women of the Polish countryside.” Therefore many Polish immigrants were farmers and not likely to be highly educated and rarely, if ever, formally educated in English, or for that matter written Polish.

First generation Polish-Canadians, that is those born of one or both Polish parents, may have been able to speak the Polish language, but did not likely possess the depth of linguistic or vocabulary knowledge or competency to effectively translate subjects requiring particular vocabulary such as that surrounding mechanized warfare and a commander’s operational intent. They may have been able to speak a dialect or slang that

---

11 Kogler, *Demographic Profile of the Polish Community in Canada*, 2.
12 Ibid., 2.
would be misunderstood or ridiculed or a version of the Polish language that was archaic and that had not continued to evolve as would have been the case when formally studied in a native language setting as opposed to a competence acquired by word of mouth from one’s parents. In particular, for those offspring of Polish immigrants, first generation Polish-Canadians, who did not speak a very grammatical form of the Polish language and whose writing skills were likely limited if they possessed any, it would have been extremely optimistic to expect that they would ever achieve a very high standard of both English and Polish competency. They may not have been able to translate written documents accurately, if at all, as this example shows:

In America, children of immigrants often speak their parents’ language quite fluently because they live partly in this language, but on closer examination, you find that they do not speak the language perfectly. English is their dominant language, and they have not mastered the subtler aspects of their parents’ language. They possess what is known as heritage language. Heritage language speakers often make mistakes in subtleties like idiom, case markers, and gender, especially when they do not have clear equivalents in their dominant language.

These first generation Polish-Canadians are also unlikely to have had a military background, be it national regular army or reserve army service. Given the virtual exclusivity of officers’ commissions in both Canada and the UK in the 1930s to Anglophones, becoming an officer was an avenue that would have been difficult if not impossible for most of Polish descent to attain. Given that the use of military personnel

---

13 Sword, Davies and Ciechanowski, *The Formation of the Polish Community in Great Britain*, 392.
for interpreting roles was not something for which the Canadian Army had identified particular billets in its Wartime Establishment (WE), an individual seeking such employment in such a niche capacity could have been seen as making a career limiting decision were they already a permanent force officer or considering making a career of the military in the post-World War I period.

The Challenge - Finding Interpreters in the Canadian Army

The challenge of native English speaking officers being able to effectively communicate with non-native English speaking soldiers or those possessing no English language ability was something that should have been second nature to the British given their experience with non-English speaking units as part of the multilingual and multinational British Empire, for example the British Viceroy’s Army in India until Indian independence in 1947. The plethora of languages spoken by Indian recruits required a practical solution to allow for effective communication, and the solution became the evolution and use of Urdu as a lingua franca.  

15 “The communications problem in an Army where the recruits spoke more than a dozen languages and dialects and officers still another language had been solved when a common language called Urdu was evolved. It was a mixture of Hindi and Persian. Each Indian recruit and each British officer had to learn this language of the Army. Recruits often had to learn the language of the regiment in addition to Urdu when it differed from their Mother tongue. Words of command, given in English had to be learned as well. Drill books had English on one page and the vernacular on the opposite.” Byron Farwell, Armies of the Raj, (New York: W.W. Norton and Coy, 1989), 176. “In the Viceroy’s Army in India during their first year at units; young officers were expected to become acclimatized and to pass the Lower Standard Urdu Examination. Few officers learned to speak it with any fluency until they joined their Regiments and were required to work in the language. Invariably the officers came to speak in the uncultured accents of their peasant soldiers. Few could muster the proper grammar and intonation of the educated Indian class. Gurkha officers had also to learn Gurkhal, the working language of Gurkha Regiments.” Farwell, 98.
The same issue should also have been more than familiar to Canadians given our multinational population, albeit at that period in history our population was still predominantly of British origin and English speaking. The Canadian Army was still for the most part dominated by English speaking officers who with rare exception were likely to be unilingual.\(^{16}\)

What therefore, if anything, was the Canadian Army doing during the Second World War with respect to identifying and employing interpreters in general, and Polish speaking ones in particular? While the correspondence file at Library and Archives Canada is not a thick one, it does contain enough material to piece together the efforts that were being made to identify those individuals possessing potentially useful foreign language skills together with the uncertainty of what to do with them when such qualified individuals were found. Competition between the Canadian and other allied militaries recruiting in Canada for those possessing required language competencies whether for employment as translators (reading and translating from English to Polish or Polish to English) or as interpreters (listening and simultaneously interpreting into another language) was fierce. However, identifying and shepherding of these scarce resources was seemingly haphazard at best.

These competing potential clients for interpretation or translation services included the covert communications intercept service, various propaganda broadcast services, and military intelligence organisations for interrogation and exploitation of captured enemy personnel (Prisoners of War and detainees). The client list could as well be broadened to include reconnaissance elements such as airborne and special operating

forces, more specifically those military personnel first in contact with the enemy and often times sent to operate behind enemy lines, in situations where local and belligerent languages capability could mean the difference between mission success or failure.

One potential client for the employment of those military personnel with foreign language skills was the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals (R.C.C.S.) the Canadian Army organisation responsible for providing communications between Canadian Army formations, units and appropriate headquarters both whilst in garrison (not deployed) and while deployed on military operations. The R.C.C.S. was also responsible for the radio intercept service (Y service) which was tasked to conduct the interception of enemy communications and deciphering (rendering them into readable language) as required. In some cases various communications were transmitted “in the clear” (non-enciphered) owing to time constraints, lack of technical means to encipher or lax security on the behalf of those transmitting the messages. In any of the above-mentioned cases, the communications were often in the language of the belligerent parties. During the Second World War, these languages would primarily have been German, Italian, and Japanese followed by any of the countries who were allies, if only temporarily, with these three Axis powers. e.g., Hungarian, Rumanian and Bulgarian languages, to name but a few.

In December 1942 a secret memorandum was sent to the Assistant Deputy Adjutant General (Army) (ADAG (A)) from the Canadian Military Headquarters (C.M.H.Q.) in London, UK, in response to a previous (unlocated) request dated the 25th of November 1942 from the ADAG (A), stating that the names of personnel submitted for possible consideration of employment of translation skills were mainly German speaking
and that a search of the files was continuing. The attached list included a number of candidates with varying degrees of linguistic skills and motivations together with short assessments of their potentials for employment. Two of the persons listed possessed native fluency in Polish as well as in other European languages. One had a very common anglicized name and so it would be difficult to determine his eventual fate while the other ended up serving in the Polish Army. As previously mentioned, the R.C.C.S. was looking for German linguists, so their focus was on this enemy’s language. All other foreign languages, whilst being perhaps of interest to someone, were of little interest to those, such as military intelligence, who wished to employ German linguists.

Next, I will turn to three specific cases in order to highlight the kinds of challenges of those persons possessing linguistic qualifications trying to find employment for their skills or those searching for linguistically qualified persons in an organization seemingly unprepared or ill-equipped to handle individual cases. The first example is from a potential future recruit for the Canadian Army who posed an insightful query as to

19 Memorandum from the Chief of the General Staff to the Minister of National Defence, April 21, 1941, file HQ.C.8594 FD. Memorandum, from A/D.M.O. and I. to D.A.G. (M), April 25, 1941, file H.Q.C. 8594, F.D.6. Letter from Adjutant-General Major-General B.W. Browne to Colonel Arciszewski, Chief of the Polish Military Mission, April 30, 1941, file C.8594 (MGR). LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-2, Volume 12342, File/dossier 4/Interpreters Reel C-5329, Volume 1. It is somewhat ironic that the first mention of a Canadian Intelligence Officer working with the Poles (in 1941), had to do with a request from the Polish Military Mission in London, UK requesting the services of a Canadian Major H.G. Scott who had travelled extensively in Europe and had spent some time in Poland, to be appointed as the Canadian Liaison Officer to the Mission. Although he was a Canadian Military intelligence officer, the Poles were to employ him as a General Staff Officer in a liaison role. He would be performing general administrative duties, working outside of his military specialty of intelligence. The Poles apparently valued his familiarity with Polish culture and likely linguistic skills. Although his employment with the Poles came three years prior to the subordination of the 1st Polish Armoured Division to the II Canadian Corps, these same skills, as we shall see, could have been used later to better effect.
the requirement for linguistic abilities in the Canadian military when he sent a letter in January 1943 to the C.M.H.Q. in London “to ascertain whether the Canadian Forces offer a career for anyone who has an aptitude for modern languages and will soon have to join up.” The particular individual possessed French and German language competencies up to Scholarship standard at Cambridge University, together with a grounding in Russian. The answer he received while honest in addressing the fact that he was underage for recruitment did not answer his specific question as to whether there was a career or a need for those possessing abilities in modern languages, but rather suggested that when he reached the age of 19 he should apply again. The reply concluded with the customary bureaucratic assurance that his application would then be given full consideration, and offered a disclaimer that no assurance could be given at that time that it would be accepted. No answer to this question as to whether there was a Canadian Army identified requirement for personnel qualified in modern languages, at least to the knowledge of those military personnel at the London, England based C.M.H.Q. was forthcoming. It is not known what became of this particular keen applicant when he reached the required age for enlisting in the Canadian Army.

In the second example, the Deputy Adjutant General of the Canadian Army sent correspondence in February 1943 to the C.M.H.Q. offering for employment as interpreters the services of two experienced British subjects (aged between 40 and 50) who spoke a variety of Slavic languages, including Polish, for employment in the Near

East or Balkans where Polish units and Yugoslav personnel were scattered. The request was forwarded to the Under Secretary of State at the War Office later in February 1943 in order to solicit any interest. Several more letters were exchanged between these same correspondents over the next few months endeavouring to answer the questions as to their specific degree of fluency in particular languages, medical fitness for service, whether these candidates should be commissioned, their citizenship and such related questions. It is not known if their linguistic talents were ever used, the correspondence never indicating an urgent or pressing identified operational need by either the British or Canadian militaries.

The third and last example concerns a March 1943 query looking for foreign-language speaking personnel in C.M.H.Q and therefore sought the names of men in the London area who were believed to have foreign language qualifications in connection with a proposed broadcast. It is not known what became of this particular request, but the language ability was again highlighted and the question as to who to turn in the search re-emphasized.

---

The problem with the three abovementioned requests seems to be that the question of interpreter employment had never been previously asked, a requirement for interpreter skills not identified or that the whole subject was simply given a low priority. As a consequence, potentially valuable human resources were ignored, resulting in a potential a loss for liaison elements interfacing with Canadian and Polish military formations and units.

Another somewhat obvious employment of those military personnel possessing foreign language competencies would have seemed to be in Military Intelligence (MI) activities, be they the interrogation of enemy Prisoners of War (PoWs) or the exploitation of captured enemy documentation and equipment with its associated operational manuals or, in the case of communications equipment, the code books necessary to unlock the mystery of enemy enciphered traffic.

Correspondence on the subject of interpreters reveals that the Canadian Army was not oblivious to the requirement for interpreters despite the examples mentioned above being asked late in the war, but somehow in this large organisation focussed on expansion to meet the needs of combat, from evidence examined it appears to have been overlooked. At the end of July 1943, 1st Canadian Army Commander Lieutenant-General Andrew McNaughton asked whether “anything is being done to ensure that linguists are made available for Intelligence training and work”26 McNaughton further inquired about the principal Axis members’ languages to see if steps had been taken for sources of German, Italian and Japanese speakers. Because this would seem fairly late in the war to

26 Letter from HQ First Cdn Army to Senior Officer CMHQ (Attn: BGS), July 29, 1943, file No. 53-1-1/Int. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-2, Volume 12342, reel T-17944.
be asking the question, when the war had already been ongoing for four years, its priority and importance should be seen as fairly low.

The existence of the No.1 Cdn (Canadian) Interpreters Pool was however revealed in a response letter of November 1944, to a specific request from the Deputy Adjutant General (DAG). The dismal state of any official recognition inside the Canadian Army of the requirement for interpreters is I believe best summed up by the response stating that owing to the speed of the advance through France and Belgium its usefulness had come to an end and that it was disbanded. The disappointing conclusion went on to state that “there is therefore no official posting for any sort of interpreter with the Cdn (Canadian) Army at the present time.”

Although the letter goes on to say that personnel with language skills might be useful for MI (Military Intelligence) if they were reliable and possibly for Psychological Warfare work, it does portray the haphazard state of official requests for the formation of interpreter pools even at this very late stage in the war.

A later letter when dealing with the particular case of an individual recommended as being qualified in several languages reiterated that there were no WE (Wartime Establishment), actual authorized positions identified within a military organisation) for officers as interpreters alone and further stated that:

Although a recommendation for employment as an interpreter is unlikely to be implemented, this does not however mean that officers with language qualifications are of no value, as the HQ is continually being asked to combine this qualification with some other duties, the

present stress being on German speaking personnel.28

The letter went on to state that “the normal practice in a foreign country is to seek out and rely upon civilians who are able to speak both languages.”29 Even if that were to have proven to be practical for some European countries, the Canadian Army was only deployed in France, and Belgium and the Netherlands at this time. This was at least tacit recognition that officers with foreign language qualifications were of some value, but the question remained - just where and when to employ them?

A post-war report (July 1945) authored by the Canadian Intelligence Corps (C Int C) staff that was deployed as part of the 1st Canadian Army Intelligence organizations in Northwest Europe provided an assessment and a reminder as to the usefulness of linguists when it stated:

Linguists are very hard to come by and our experience was that the only way to get a sufficient supply of first rate linguists was to be in the position of having authority to take all who came as reinforcements.30

Though not specifically identified or provided for in unit or Headquarters Wartime Establishments (WE) i.e. organisational charts, the identification of linguists was at the war’s conclusion determined to be a good idea. The citation above implied the requirement to screen for foreign language skills upon a recruit’s enrollment in to the military with the Canadian Intelligence Corps then having the priority to retain qualified

---

28 Letter from Deputy Adjutant General at C.M.H.Q., London, UK to the Secretary, Overseas Offrs Survey & Classification Board File, November 17, 1944, para 4. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-2, Volume 12342, reel T-17944 File No. 4/Interpreters/1/2.
29 Ibid., paragraph 3.
30 First Canadian Army Final Intelligence Report Volume 1. Part 1 Operational Intelligence, Section 1 Intelligence in the Canadian Army, July 1945, file Number 42-1-0/ Int, signed by Colonel P.E.R. Wright, GS Int, 1st Cdn Army, copy in my possession, 18.
candidates. Given the shortage of infantry soldiers in British and Canadian fighting units during the latter stages of the war, it is unlikely that such an idea could have been implemented even if it had been approved. The above mentioned post-war report concluded that:

> Officers and other ranks of the Permanent Force should be encouraged to become expert linguists in the languages of possible enemies and powerful friends and should, at the same time, visit these countries. This could be arranged by the provision of suitable appointments on the staffs of our embassies, legations and trade commissions. However it is done, the knowledge must be secured.\(^{31}\)

Long before the Canadian Army was asking questions about linguistic support or entertaining requests for those offering their language skills for employment, the Polish Army was already targeting for recruitment a potential future pool of interpreters that the Canadian military had yet to consider, Polish nationals resident in Canada.

**Competition for Polish Speakers - Foreign Recruitment in Canada**

In order to bolster the ranks of the Polish Army-in-Exile, Brigadier-General Bronisław Duch, a future divisional Commander in General Anders’ II Polish Corps was sent to Canada by the Commander in Chief of the Polish Army General Śikorski in March 1941. His task was to organize support for the expected eventual volunteers from the North American continent. Given that, at this time, the United States was not yet at war with Nazi Germany, the Polish recruiters would be based in Canada.\(^{32}\) Although

\(^{31}\) Ibid., 19.
\(^{32}\) Extract from the Order of the Commander- in- Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, April 28, 1941, 2. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1, Reel C-5329 (Volume 1, 10). To achieve his goal of
potential Polish recruits in the United States were encouraged to join, as will be seen later, the results were to be disappointing. Another senior Polish officer, Colonel Arciszewski was responsible for the administration aspect of the recruiting campaign, including screening, cooperation with the Canadian military, to include medical examinations of potential recruits, payments for services, loans of equipment as well as any and all other logistical related aspects. Both Duch and Arciszewski were to cooperate with their Canadian counterparts in all aspects of this recruiting and training endeavour.

The entire Polish Military Mission, consisting of Brigadier-General Duch and approximately 30 officers and 60 other ranks, were expected to arrive from the United Kingdom in July 1941 in Canada at Windsor, Ontario in order to take over command of a Polish Training Centre (Owen Sound Camp) established at Owen Sound. In 1941, visits of dignitaries and administration of the Polish Army Training Centre aside, recruiting of soldiers for the Polish Government-in-Exile’s army was about to begin in earnest. In order to understand some of the challenges that Duch and Arciszewski were about to face at that particular time, it is necessary to first explain the circumstances surrounding the situations that they faced vis-a-vis sources of recruits and the rules governing who they were allowed to recruit or conscript in Canada. As is often the case in bureaucratic

---

recruiting much needed Polish military manpower, Duch was to be “responsible for the organizing, schooling and military training of the units under his command, and he was directly responsible to General Sikorski. For garrison and administration purposes he was to be under command of the Chief of the General Staff of the Canadian Army via the respective District Commanders (Canadian Army administrative Headquarters based on a regional geographical delineation).

Ibid., 1.

activities, the rules and policies, both Canadian and Polish, affecting their recruitment campaign were not straightforward. For example, whose country had first right of selection, was it the country of one’s origin or country of one’s residence?

Citizen of Which Country?

The Little Known “Rules” Governing the Recruitment of Poles in Canada

After the early successful German Army campaigns of the Second World War, many European countries were overrun and their national governments and heads of states evacuated or new governments-in-exile were formed. Each country was to determine its form of government-in-exile and locate it in either the United Kingdom or Canada, sometimes with diplomatic and military representations in both locations. What this meant to Canada was that a number of countries, initially to include Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, and Poland,35 and later to include Czechoslovakia and representatives of the Free French forces were to carry out recruiting in Canada.36 The senior Canadian military legal advisor, the Judge Advocate General (JAG) provided clarification and guidance in March 1940 to the Canadian National Defence Headquarters citing the Foreign Enlistment Act, 1937, which provided a legal basis for foreign recruiting activity on Canadian soil in stating that: “the provisions of this section (i.e. forcible inducement to enlist in the armed forces of a foreign state being a federal offence under the Act) shall not apply to the action of foreign consular or diplomatic officers or

35 MSR Adjutant-General Department of National Defence – Army, Ottawa, Ontario to all District Commanders, March 12,1941, file H.Q.S. 8746 F.D.1, para 1. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1, Reel C-5329 (Volume 1, 37).

36 Polish Army in Canada (Ottawa, Ontario to Adjutant-General, Department of National Defence, February 26, 1942, file No. 54-27-3-54 FD.12 (D.ofM.1), para 1. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1-a, Box 2066 (Volume 2, 96).
agents in enlisting persons who are nationals of the countries which they represent, and who are not Canadian nationals.”

The door was thus open for recruiting or even conscription to be conducted by the proper agents. The issue of the use of Canadian government and military facilities was raised but not yet clarified: could the facilities of the government of Canada could be used to the extent already suggested by the Polish Consul General? The previously mentioned Polish Training Centre was to have looked after these issues. This declaration followed on the delivery by the Consul General of Poland, Mr. Podoski, of the intent of the Polish order in council to conscript its citizens in Canada which further asked that it is to be carried out, “not only with the knowledge but, if possible, the cooperation of the proper authorities of the Dominion.”

When it came to those military aged Polish-speaking males resident in Canada, there was therefore competition for their service as soldiers in both the Canadian and Polish Armies. The question as to which nation (Canada or the Polish Government-in-Exile representing a sovereign Poland) had first right of refusal or acceptance of a particular recruit was not as simple as it might seem. Based upon what was meant by citizenship at this time in Canadian history, i.e., pre 1947, the fate of individuals and their families was determined, at times, with a somewhat unexpected result. Prior to the Canadian Citizenship Act of 1946, Canadians were described as being either “British

37 Letter from the Judge Advocate General Department of National Defence to the Director of Organisation, Ottawa, Ontario, March 7, 1940, file H.Q. S. 6615-4-1 Chapter 38 which covered such an eventuality or possibility and paragraph 11. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1, Reel C-5329 (Volume 1, 344).
38 Ibid. last paragraph.
39 Letter from the Office of the Under Secretary of State for External Affairs to the Acting Deputy Minister of National Defence, Ottawa, Ontario, April 11, 1940, first paragraph. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1, Reel C-5329 (Volume 1, 342).
subjects” or “aliens.” In order to better understand what this would have meant in practice, it is necessary to describe by means of an example what this meant to Polish immigrants, then resident in Canada.

If a husband was a British subject, his Polish born wife would automatically become a British subject upon their marriage. If a husband was naturalized as a British subject, i.e., of Polish birth, requiring three years of residence in Canada and an application to the government of Canada, his wife would need to apply to become a British subject and obtain what was called a Series H certificate. If however the husband was an alien (Polish born in this instance) his wife, if a British subject, ceased to be a British subject upon marriage and acquired her husband’s alien status. If she was already an alien, there would have been no change in status. If the Polish born husband was naturalized as a British subject, the wife was automatically naturalized if included on her husband’s application. If not included on his application she could apply to retain British subject status and be issued a Series I certificate. Children were required to apply separately when they reached adulthood.41

Whether all of those affected Poles and non-Poles, in the case of marriage to a Pole, understood these rules and applied for naturalization status or were even aware of these rules is beyond the scope of this thesis. The result of these various categorisations and conditions did however affect the potential pool of available Polish speaking candidates in many ways, not the least of which was permission to re-enter Canada upon


41 Ibid., same site.
the cessation of hostilities dependent upon what citizenship status an individual possessed. In consideration of the need for more Polish soldiers to fill the ranks of the Polish Army, all of those factors that could potentially impact individuals in the post-war period would appear to have taken a secondary consideration. The decision taken by the Polish Government-in-Exile and accepted by Canada was that Poland could recruit for the Polish Forces in the West (PSZ) in Canada. Certain conditions would then be established with respect to the recruiting of foreign armed forces in Canada. The competition for recruits and as a consequence, potential future interpreters, was about to intensify.

**Recruiting Efforts in Canada: The Game is on**

Canadian Military Recruiting Offices were initially provided with the requisite criteria for the recruiting of Poles in a Field Directive of March 1941 which detailed the extent of the cooperation and the guidelines to be followed. This directive covered recruiting in Canada carried out for the armed forces of Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway and Poland through their accredited representatives in Canada. Two paragraphs are of particular relevance here since they specified limitations in effect at this time, in that:

Paragraph 2(a) Canadian nationals and British subjects will not be permitted to enlist in the armed forces of the countries mentioned.

---

42 MSR Adjutant-General Department of National Defence – Army, Ottawa, Ontario, to all District Commanders, March 12, 1941, file H.Q.S. 8746 F.D.1. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1, Reel C-5329 (*Volume 1, 37*).
Paragraph 2(b) That the authorities of the foreign governments mentioned agree not to accept for enlistment persons who are regarded by the Canadian government as working in essential occupations.\(^{43}\)

This second paragraph was ill-defined at best and the interpretation of to whom it applied was to continue to change over time. The earliest official Polish government correspondence questioning of this particular paragraph was to appear in a letter dated the 22\(^{nd}\) of March 1941 which contained a list of questions posed by Colonel Arciszewski, Chief of the Polish Military Mission, and forwarded to Canadian National Defence Headquarters:. His questions included this one: “What is the precise meaning of the words “essential occupations?”\(^{44}\) A reply to this specific question, has not been found, whether one was forthcoming or not. At the same time that this query was being raised there were other changes occurring in regard to Poles already serving in the Canadian Army.

At this time (March 1941), the Adjutant General Department of the Canadian National Defence Headquarters stated that if a Polish national was serving in the Canadian Army and “they desire to serve in the Armed forces of their own country, there was no objection to their discharge from the Canadian Army.”\(^{45}\) A number of stipulations did however apply, including that the person had to actually join the forces of their country of origin. If the applicant was acceptable to the country concerned he would then

\(^{43}\) Ibid., paragraph 2.
\(^{44}\) Department of National Defence – HQ Memorandum, Ottawa, Ontario, March 22, 1941. Memorandum is not signed and has no file number. Para 2. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1, Reel C-5329 (Volume 1, 199).
\(^{45}\) MSR Adjutant-General Department of National Defence – Army, Ottawa, Ontario, to all District Commanders, March 12, 1941, file H.Q.S. 8746 F.D. 1, para 4. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1, Reel C-5329 (Volume 1, 37).
be discharged from the Canadian military for the purpose of enlistment in another force. If not accepted by the other county’s military recruiters, he was not discharged from the Canadian Forces. To further complicate this issue, the Poles had also established a number of specific recruiting criteria, spelled out in an April 1940 letter which stated that all male Polish citizens born between the years 1890 and 1922 residing outside the territory of Poland and that of her enemies would be conscripted.46

As a result of this condition and these criteria, the Poles continued their recruiting efforts in Canada and the non-naturalized Polish born children of Polish aliens would have been subject to the registration. Additional recruiting limitations were spelled out on a case by case basis, such as one candidate who was: “rejected since he was married with a child”47 and another candidate “cannot be considered a candidate for the Polish Armed Forces, since he is past the age limit.”48 More changes to the recruiting process and its criteria were however soon to come.

Regulations governing recruiting in Canada for the Armed forces of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, The Netherlands, Norway, and Poland were changed in 1942. These rules were described in a February 1942 letter which clarified who was permitted to join the Forces of their country of origin as Canadian naturalized ex-nationals of these countries and persons possessing dual nationality (i.e., Canadian and that of one of these countries), who have retained association in respect to speech, family, friends, and

46 Letter from Office of the Under Secretary of State for External Affairs to the Acting Deputy Minister of National Defence, Ottawa, Ontario, April 11, 1940. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1, Reel C-5329 (Volume 1, 342).
47 Polish Legation, Military Attaché, Ottawa, Ontario to Adjutant-General, Department of National Defence, August 21, 1942. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1-a, Box 2066, Polish Army in Canada (Volume 3, 37), file No.572/42.
48 Polish Legation, Military Attaché, Ottawa, Ontario to Adjutant-General, Department of National Defence, May 4, 1942. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1-a, Box 2066, Polish Army in Canada (Volume 3, 37), file No.304/42.
sympathies who would serve the common cause more efficiently in the Forces of that country rather than in the Canadian Forces. Further, Polish nationals would not be accepted for enlistment in the Canadian Forces until individual applications were referred to Polish Army-in-Exile Headquarters.\(^49\)

Although joining the Polish or Canadian Army was to have been an individual choice to a certain extent, specific provisos or conditions would determine whether the Polish or Canadian military had first right of refusal. If the Polish Government-in-Exile recruiters did not accept a particular candidate he was to be referred back to the Canadian Army. An interesting question that was raised in March 1941 and that did not appear to receive an answer was the question of Polish soldiers’ eventual return to Canada or not. The question being posed was:

\[
\text{What will be the position be with regards to the possible re-admission into Canada, after the war, of Polish nationals now residing in Canada who will proceed overseas with the Polish Armed Forces, regardless of any immigration legislation which may then be in force?}^{50}
\]

There were to be many cases of so-called “lost” Canadians affected by this proviso, and although both poignant and tragic, this subject is not the focus of my dissertation.\(^51\)

\(^{49}\) D.of M.I.1, Ottawa, Ontario to Adjutant-General, Department of National Defence, February 26, 1942, para 1. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1-a, Box 2066, Polish Army in Canada, (Volume 2, 96), file No. 54-27-3-54 FD.12

\(^{50}\) Department of National Defence – HQ Memorandum, Ottawa, Ontario, March 22, 1941. Memorandum is not signed and has no file number, para 9. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1, Reel C-5329 (Volume 1, 199).

\(^{51}\) “Bill C-37, which received Royal Assent on the 17\(^{th}\) of April 2008, amended the Citizenship Act to give Canadian citizenship to those who lost or never had it due to certain provisions in existing or former legislation. As of the 21\(^{st}\) of October 2009 here were 81 cases of individuals whose citizenship cases still
The direction to Canadian Army Recruiting officers was fairly unambiguous when they were told “recruiting officers should refrain from endeavouring to persuade such persons (those already in the Canadian Army) to so enlist when they have been called up by their own national authorities.” The choice was an individual one and it was clearly understood that the Canadians while they were cooperating with their Polish allies would be losing already trained soldiers were the Canadian recruiters to have been overly zealous in their encouragement efforts. Polish nationals were also cognizant of the fact that in making their decision as to which army to join, there could be post-war consequences, should they hope to return to Poland. One Polish national in making the decision to opt for the Canadian Army signed a declaration before a Canadian Recruiting Officer clearly stating his understanding of the possible consequences of his decision:

I sign this statement knowing that I am liable to prosecution under Polish Law for failure to serve in the Polish Armed Forces, should I return to Poland at the conclusion of the war.

As if the recruitment of Poles resident in Canada was not complicated enough, another category of potential recruits, that of Ukrainians, was added to the mix. Given the presence of a large Ukrainian speaking population resident within post 1918 Poland’s geographical boundaries, these so-called “Polish citizens” were also to be considered as

---

52 Adjutant-General Department of National Defence – Army, Ottawa, Ontario, to all District Commanders, March 12, 1941, para 5. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1, Reel C-5329 (Volume 1, 37), file H.Q.S. 8746 F.D. 1. MSR.

53 Vice Adjutant-General of the Canadian Army, Department of National Defence to the Head of the National Selective Service, Department of Labour, Ottawa, Ontario, April 3, 1944. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1-a, Box 2067, Polish Army in Canada (Volume 6, 187), file No. H.Q.54-27-3-54 FD 38.
being a potential pool for Polish Army recruiting efforts. The changing national boundaries and the rebirth of a modern sovereign Poland in 1918 could be interpreted by recruiters to mean that immigrants who left the Russian Empire prior to 1918 but whose native village was included within the territory of pre-1939 Poland could be considered as being liable for recruitment or possibly conscription even if they now lived in Canada.

Earlier cases, such as a the query from an individual via his lawyer in Winnipeg who wanted to know what the Canadian government official stance was when it came to the authority that the Polish Recruiting Centre had in conscripting Canadian citizens of Ukrainian descent into the Polish Army only served to complicate the issue of recruitment of foreign nationals even further:

Ukrainians who came to Canada from the western Ukraine (now within the geographical boundaries of present day Poland) who have not been able to get Canadian naturalization papers are very much averse to being recruited into the Polish Army. I think that they are right in taking the position that they cannot be conscripted into the Polish Army and, as far as voluntary recruiting is concerned, they would rather serve in the Canadian Army.  

Such cases were to have been dealt with on a case by case basis. One case where an individual stated he was of Ukrainian origin, the Polish Military Mission had no objections to his enlistment in the Canadian Army. However it was clear that the Polish recruiters wanted to have a say on all potential recruits even though some Polish nationals

54 Letter from Lawyer in Winnipeg to Minster of National War Services, Ottawa, Ontario, October 30, 1941. Italics are my emphasis. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1-a, Box 2066, Polish Army in Canada (Volume I, 13).
of Ukrainian origin might not be willing to serve in the Polish Armed Forces. Each case would still have been referred to NDHQ, so that it could be taken up with the Polish Military authorities in Canada.\textsuperscript{55}

Questions involving geographical boundaries of what constituted Poland or Western Ukraine, what groups fell under what country’s jurisdiction with respect to citizenship or in the case of recruiting or conscription, only served to complicate matters. Canadian recruiting officers could not be expected to make the decision as to where a particular village was located and what that meant with regard to admissibility for service in the Polish Army. Not surprisingly, the recruiters referred each case to a higher authority seeking clarification from those who had to render decisions. However, the higher authorities in the military hierarchy themselves often were little better informed as to the intricacies of the historical and geographical criteria that were being considered by the Poles in attempting to meet their need for more soldiers. The net result of all of this obfuscation, intentional or not, was delays and likely a certain amount of mutual distrust being engendered between the Poles and the Canadian military involved with the recruiting issue.

The Polish Army-in-Exile, cut off from its native soil and therefore from a large potential manpower pool from which to draw, needed every recruit that it could find and was frustrated by the seemingly endless bureaucratic delays that thwarted its efforts. Frustration at the bureaucracy that caused time delays and may have resulted in the loss of potential recruits was certainly evident in the Polish Legation in Canada, when Polish

\textsuperscript{55} Adjutant-General of the Canadian Army, Department of National Defence to the District Officer Commanding, Military District No. 13, Calgary, Alberta, April 29, 1942. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1-a, Box 2066, Polish Army in Canada (Volume 3, 276), file No. H.Q.54-27-3-54 (A.N.2).
Military Attaché Lieutenant-Colonel Janusz Iliński concluded after he had argued the logic for a particular request that “the Polish Government has tried, since the beginning of the present hostilities, to secure the right to enforce the conscription of their citizens residing in Canada.”\textsuperscript{56} The National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA) enacted by the Canadian parliament and given royal assent on the 21\textsuperscript{st} of June 1940 complicated the recruiting of foreign nationals issue even further, particularly with the frequent changes to the classes of men compelled to engage in essential employment in stated industries or in stated occupations and therefore exempted from conscription. There were to be seven changes to the NRMA in 1943 alone.\textsuperscript{57} Bureaucratic procedures and processes were thus thwarting and delaying the best efforts of the Polish military recruiters in Canada to get more Poles into uniform as quickly as they could. The recruiting challenges were soon to become even more difficult.

Despite these bureaucratic hurdles, there were still some incentives for Poles to join the Polish Army. One such encouragement was the issue of a one year leave of absence from service which came to light when the issue of National Selective Service was raised. If Polish nationals were working in an essential war industry and had the concurrence of both the Canadian Department of National Defence and the Department of Labour they could apply for this temporary exemption.\textsuperscript{58} To say that a complicated system was in place when it came to the rules of recruitment would certainly have been

\textsuperscript{56} Polish Military Attaché, Polish Legation in Canada letter to Adjutant-General, Department of National Defence, Ottawa, February 17, 1943. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1-a, Box 2067, Polish Army in Canada \textit{(Volume 4, 61)} File No. 62/43.


\textsuperscript{58} Recruiting Office, Kamloops, B.C., April 22, 1942. LAC, Ottawa, RG-24-C-1-a, Box 2066, Polish Army in Canada \textit{(Volume 3, 272)}, file No. R-6-7.
an understatement. The Poles were ambitious and aggressive in their recruiting efforts to fill in the gaps from casualties encountered, expected casualties, shortfalls in the desired growth of units and the building of standing national armed forces for an eventual free Poland. As a consequence of all the confusion that surrounded such procedures and the unknown post war fate that awaited recruits of the Polish Army it is quite likely that some potential recruits preferred to opt for service in the Canadian Army and either conceal or not advertise their ability in the Polish language.

Results of Polish Recruiting in Canada: The Pool from which to draw was small

Throughout the almost nine-month duration of General Duch’s recruiting mission, Canada was to provide a mere 609 volunteers for the Polish Army, included in this total eight were from Japan. Faced with only a trickle of recruits as compared to the expectations of some of the larger estimates, General Duch closed the mission in Canada in May of 1942 and returned to London, England. This total number of recruits would have included any Polish recruits who crossed the border from the United States into Canada in order to join the Polish Army.

So even if a large number of native Polish speakers did reside in diaspora populations, when Polish Commander-in-Chief General Śikorski tried to recruit Poles from both North and South America, in order to liberate the homeland, he was to discover that there was not a great interest in the fate of Poland and her people. 59 The results for the recruiting missions that had been set up in Canada, Brazil and Argentina from 1941 to 1943 yielded a total of 2,290 Polish emigrants who volunteered to serve in Polish military

59 Evan McGilvray, SIH, 145.
forces under British Command. The notion of recruiting of Canadians of Polish descent by the Polish Army in Exile, a good idea from the romantic and patriotic point of view, was to be met with disappointment. But what about the potential for recruiting Poles in the United Kingdom?

**What about Poles in the United Kingdom?**

Exact immigration figures for Poles moving to the United Kingdom are difficult to determine since Polish immigrants could have come from the Austro-Hungarian or the Russian Empires or could even have been classified as Jewish immigrants. In the United Kingdom, according to historian and sociologist Jerzy Zubrzycki “when it comes to the estimation of how many Poles were actually resident in the country, the answer is imprecise. The total number of Poles residing in Great Britain in 1870 was probably not more than 1,500.” Unfortunately interwar figures are unavailable since the 1921 census records are bound by a 100-year release rule and the 1931 records were they to be released earlier, were destroyed in a fire in 1942, and ironically not a consequence of military activity.

What information on the scale of the Polish diaspora population in the United Kingdom at this time that is readily available to the public at large indicates a rather small Polish population prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. In the years

---

61 Ibid., 38.
63 “The declaration of the sovereign Polish Republic in 1918 led to the establishment of an embassy and various other fora for cooperation, such as the Anglo-Polish club, which was founded in 1932. At this time
following the First World War, a very small number of Poles emigrated to the United Kingdom (758 persons in the years 1919-1931, as compared to over 522,500 Poles who emigrated to France in the same period). Therefore, assuming that the numbers of Poles in the United Kingdom may have amounted to a mere several thousand and working with this rough estimate, who were they and would they have been able to provide a pool of qualified interpreters, if they had not already been enlisted in the Polish Army in the West? According to British author Robert Winder:

They made clothes in London, dug coal in Lanarkshire and worked in the salt works in Cheshire. They built a new Polish Roman Catholic Church on Devonia Road, Islington. These were neither strong nor ancient ties, however, and there was little infrastructure to support what was about to arrive.

This small group of Poles arrived in their new country, built a small community, and took what work they could get or were deemed qualified to perform. Little is known either of their academic qualifications or of their literacy - let alone their linguistic qualifications. It can be surmised that for the most part they represented a working class and were not diploma bearing academics. This small pre-Second World War Polish diaspora in Britain would unlikely have been able to provide more than a handful of qualified individuals capable of interpreting or translating to the competency level required to allow for employment as part of an effectively functioning liaison element.

there were approximately 5,000 Poles in Britain.” Robert Winder. Bloody Foreigners: The Story of Immigration to Britain (London: Abacus Books, 2013), 318.


65 Winder, Bloody Foreigners, 318.
As to the potential for finding bilingual native Polish speakers in any of the British colonies, an informative series of correspondence in 1936 and 1937 between the Polish Embassy in London and the British Foreign Office outlined the possibilities of emigration to British colonies for Poles seeking such opportunities. Given the increased immigration to British controlled Palestine at this time, many Polish emigrants were likely Polish Jews seeking a better life than they could aspire to in a pre-war Poland.66

A relevant addendum to this aspect of colonial activity is the story of the dispatch of surplus Polish Army officers to British colonies in West Africa who amounted to almost three hundred officers in Britain’s Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF), a colonial military force consisting of white British officers and black African soldiers.67 Before leaving for Africa a number of Polish officers were assigned at least briefly to British Regiments to observe and learn what they could about being “British” officers. 68 Although this program allowed a number of British officers to be freed up for duties elsewhere, the results should have been somewhat of a foreshadowing of the lack of

66 Letter from Mr. F. Ashton-Gwatkin (Foreign Office) to the Foreign Secretary, December 30, 1936. National Archives Kew, CO 323/1436/10 Immigration, Polish Emigration to the British Colonies, file C9285/6703/55. Initial questions on Polish immigration to the British Colonies in Africa were raised in a meeting held on the 30th of December 1936 between Mr. Zygmunt Merdinger, Commercial Counsellor of the Polish Embassy in London, and Mr. F. Ashton-Gwatkin at the British Foreign Office. Letter from Mr. F. Ashton-Gwatkin (Foreign Office) to Mr. Zygmunt Merdinger, Polish Commercial Consul at the Polish Embassy in London, February 27, 1937. National Archives Kew, CO 323/1436/10 Immigration, Polish Emigration to the British Colonies, file C1319/765/55. Beyond the requirement of a visa, there exist no restrictions on alien immigrants which are not equally applicable to British subjects, therefore, “open to any Polish national who has definite prospects of employment or other means of subsistence to enter such territories.”


68 “As it was the practice at the time, British officers could volunteer for temporary service in Africa. In peacetime service outside of the United Kingdom was seen as a bit of an adventure after which the officers would return to their parent Regiment or Corps. The war changed all of that, and it was suggested by Churchill that the Poles might be able to fill in behind the British thereby freeing up British officers for service elsewhere. It was seen that in order to do their job, that is be effective officers in the RWAFF, Polish officers needed to understand English culture and language, the British military system, and African culture. The selected Polish officers also received little preparation prior to their departure for West Africa.” Healy, 280/283.
preparedness for service by those military personnel from a different culture and speaking another mother tongue other than English. With little or no competency in the language these Polish military officers were expected to be able to use English as a working language. How well they performed can be gleaned from several sources. Prime Minister Churchill commented that approximately four hundred Polish officers were sent as proposed to the Western African Division and that they had served with high credit.\textsuperscript{69}

It seems clear that no special assistance would be given to the Polish emigration applicants. I can find no mention of other large scale pre-1939 Polish emigration schemes to British current or former colonies other than to Canada. In the Second World War, this would mean that no pool of Polish speaking interpreters or liaison officers could likely be provided from any of the British colonies, with the exception of Canada, and as already mentioned at least 600 potential interpreters had already enlisted in the Polish Army.

Polish Government-in-Exile Army in the UK

According to author Robert Winder, when Poland fell in 1939, “a new Government-in-Exile landed in London, bringing some three thousand officials and loyalists with it, settling in South Kensington and Earl’s Court, an area which soon became known as Little Poland.”\textsuperscript{70} This large number of émigrés was augmented with the fall of France in June 1940. Polish military aged personnel arrived in the United Kingdom by whichever means that they could. The Battle of Britain (1940) and the legendary

\textsuperscript{69} Winston Churchill, \textit{The Grand Alliance}, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), 686. “Despite numerous obstacles, including unfamiliarity with the language and customs of the RWAFF, the Poles succeeded in fulfilling their duty, thereby contributing in some measure to the defeat of the axis.” Healy, 293.

\textsuperscript{70} Winder, 318.
exploits of the Polish fighter pilots is the earliest instance of the Poles assisting in the defence of Britain. They were prepared to continue the fight, and fight they did, despite the perceived lack of urgency of their British hosts in getting on with the defeat of Nazi Germany. In fact, “prior to the arrival of the first large group of Polish soldiers in the early summer of 1940, it is doubtful whether most people in Great Britain had any views at all about Poland and its inhabitants.”\textsuperscript{71}

The introduction of military conscription in Great Britain in October 1939 meant that Polish male citizens resident in the United Kingdom could be drafted into the Polish Army. In the end result a total of 1,780 men were registered.\textsuperscript{72} When British military conscription was introduced, some Polish nationals in Britain were faced with a conflict of interest between their desire to serve in the British forces and their duty to report to the Polish authorities.\textsuperscript{73} Questions not surprisingly arose as to under what circumstances and conditions which Polish personnel could be transferred into British service. Three groups of Polish citizens were particularly affected – military experts, surplus officers and Polish Jews.\textsuperscript{74}

The eventual transfer of Polish officers to British units came about in 1940-41, by the combination of an excess of officers among the newly evacuated Polish Forces, and a drastic shortage of trained officers on the British side. As a consequence, few Poles were available in the United Kingdom to fulfil liaison functions requiring interpreter proficiency level Polish language skills, most transferees having previously been sent to

\textsuperscript{71} Zubrzycki, \textit{Polish Immigrants in Britain}, 80.
\textsuperscript{72} Sword, Davies and Ciechanowski, \textit{The Formation of the Polish Community in Great Britain 1939-1950}, 51.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., 43.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
serve in British colonial units where it was suggested by Churchill that the Poles might be able to fill in behind the British thereby freeing up British officers for service elsewhere, as previously mentioned. The number of Polish native speakers available in the United Kingdom for employment as interpreters should therefore I believe be considered as negligible. I will now turn to the topic of the availability of non-Poles who had studied Polish who could be used in liaison and interpreting roles.

Where do non-Poles Study Polish?

If you could not find or recruit sufficient numbers of native Polish speakers for required liaison staff or interpreters, where could a native English speaker have studied Polish in a formal academic environment in order to have acquired sufficient proficiency to perform the demanding tasks, described earlier, in a timely and accurate fashion? From research, summarized in Appendix I, it would appear that the study of Polish at the major universities in the United Kingdom in the 1930s would have likely been limited to one-on-one teaching with qualified professors. I can find no evidence of formal university level courses in the Polish language in the interwar period of the 1930s. I therefore conclude that the number of British subjects who formally learned Polish as a foreign language would have likely been very small, reducing the pool of possible interpreters even further.

Judging from the records related to inter-war language studies that I have been able to access, it seems that, much like the situation in the United Kingdom, Polish language programs were non-existent at institutes of higher learning in Canada in the

75 Ibid., 43. More detail in Healy’s The Polish White Infusion (The Polish Review (1999) 44 #3), 283.
1930s, despite the larger Polish diaspora population. This lack of Polish language programs would make sense when one considers the following factors in combination: the fact that pre-World War II Polish immigrants came to Canada to farm in rural communities where Polish was perhaps the lingua franca and younger immigrants worked to acquire English language, not Polish language skills. Finally, for the majority, post-secondary education was also likely unaffordable.

Prior to the Second World War, the Polish language was not a subject that was offered at post-secondary educational institutes in Canada and the United Kingdom. As a consequence, those non-Poles who acquired any degree of fluency in Polish had either acquired the knowledge informally through personal interest or family links, or through having lived in Poland as result of business ventures, diplomatic posting or military exchanges, be they training or Military Attaché posting. In any case, these individuals would have had to be identified on a case by case basis or the individual have come forward to volunteer their services. If you could have found bilingual native Polish speakers in the United Kingdom during the Second World War, their level of proficiency in the two languages would have been difficult to gauge owing to an absence of a standard Polish language assessment scale.

Even some seemingly well qualified individuals, such as Lieutenant-Colonel Roland Sword, British Military Attaché in Warsaw from 1938 to 1939 were not further employed to make best use of their foreign language skills.76 Despite his demonstrated affinity for foreign languages and the fact that “his dispatches from Warsaw showed that

76 “It was during his earlier regimental postings to India (1924-1930) that Sword took up languages becoming a First Class interpreter in French and English and where he began studying Russian.” Andrzej Suchcitz and Elizabeth Turnbull (Edited). The Diary and Dispatches of a Military Attaché in Warsaw 1938-1939 Edward Roland Sword (London: Polish Cultural Foundation, 2001), 13.
he had quickly managed to gauge the political and military situation in Poland, with a rare, for a British officer, understanding of the country and its Armed Forces,” he was not to be used in a liaison role despite his suitability. Despite the high regard with which Colonel Sword was held, was the treatment in this particular case a result of a competition for resources or an opportunity missed?

How Large was the Pool?

Personnel potentially available for use as interpreters or in the liaison role

As has already been seen, the Polish Army wanted citizens of Polish descent to serve in its forces, thereby reducing the number of potentially bilingual Polish speakers that the British and Canadian armies could have drawn upon to employ as interpreters. Those Polish officers who spoke English well were rare indeed. The language skill level of liaison and interpreters would have been hard to gauge, enthusiasm and dedication not being enough to compensate for any lack of vocabulary or ability to rapidly transmit orders in both languages.

This lack of capability of the Polish and Canadian allies to be able to clearly communicate and to be able to explain one another their points of views, or elaborate on plans in the dynamic environment of warfare in the August 1944 period would therefore be limiting on their achievement of a shared common intent. The Pigeau-McCann common intent factors of comparable reasoning ability and shared knowledge would not be maximized. The question that I will turn to now is where this limited number of qualified personnel was employed to help in the best operational utilization of the 1st

77 Ibid., 30.
Polish Armoured Division under command of the II Canadian Corps, and how they performed.
Chapter 5  Experiences of the Poles Prior to coming under II Canadian Corps

Since the Polish military had previously operated in various coalitions it is important at this point in my thesis to describe, using the Pigeau-McCann Common Intent factors, any progress made towards the achievement of shared common intent when assessed using the three common intent factors previously described in Chapter 3, the factors of shared knowledge, comparable reasoning ability and shared commitment/motivation. Differing motivation, access to different information and different interpretation of a tactical situation as a result of training will all have an effect on the achievement of common intent. A description of how the Poles performed when subordinated under other non-Polish allies will be used to portray their adaptability.

My aim is now to highlight some of the Polish military’s experiences of working with non-Polish allies, either French or English speaking, prior to their being placed under Canadian command in the summer of 1944. I will do so by means of relevant background about how the Polish military’s ability to integrate linguistically and culturally with their allies evolved. The purpose of this background is to identify a number of factors, not the least of which are the shortage of time and the availability of military personnel to either provide or receive training, return on the investment in liaison personnel and units and perhaps even skepticism as to the utility of the concept of liaison teams or units during wartime. Though often accomplished through trial and error, the earlier experiences of the Poles will help foreshadow some of the initiatives that were to be undertaken to help clarify the passage and comprehension of military orders, the military method of describing and delivering a military commander’s intent.
The rebirth of an independent Poland in the aftermath of the First World War placed her in the unenviable position, both geographically and politically, of being located between two historical belligerents, Germany and Russia. As a newly independent nation, beset with a multitude of challenges, Poland needed reliable allies whose promises of military assistance would either prevent attacks against her or help her military in defending against actual belligerent activity when it occurred. However, owing to various land disputes, Poland had alienated both Czechoslovakia and Lithuania. As a consequence, in the 1920s, Poland’s only effective ally was France with which she signed a defensive alliance in 1921.¹ Until an agreement with Great Britain was concluded in 1939, interbellum Poland with all of its internal political strife, ethnic minority issues and economic woes, which included the global economic depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s, remained extremely vulnerable and almost alone.

During the earlier stages of the Second World War, that is prior to the 1st Polish Armoured Division being placed under Canadian command in the summer of 1944, Polish military personnel had previously been under command of the French and the British in different military theaters of operations. These Polish forces were either as part of various reformed, remnant or newly created military formations and units in the aftermath of the September 1939 German invasion of Poland. The military cooperation and voluntary subordination of Polish Army units began with the French Army in 1939, was followed by the British Army in the Middle East in 1941 to 1943, Italy in 1944 and eventually with the British and Canadian armies in North-West Europe in 1944 to 1945.

¹ Williamson, Poland Betrayed, 7.
This chapter will examine this early military cooperation, and identify what potential lessons could be derived from each experience and possibly applied in subsequent operations including under new or existing command subordinations. The chapter will begin with the French and Polish history of cooperation prior to the outbreak of the Second World War followed by the beginning of British and Polish military cooperation initiatives. This section will be structured in a chronological fashion with the Poles under French command in 1939 to 1940, the Poles under British command in both the Middle East and subsequently in the Italian campaign. This narrative will be accompanied by a description of some of the efforts made by the British to make up for the language barriers encountered by the Poles and the British staff in working with them. This chapter will conclude with a summary of some problem areas that had been identified and what had been done to address them prior to the Canadian Army’s experience with the members of the 1st Polish Armoured Division in August 1944.

**French Military Cooperation Interwar Years (1918-1939)**

Prior to the Second World War, the French and Polish militaries had a history of military co-operation following the re-emergence of an independent Poland on the 11th of November 1918. A formal Franco-Polish Alliance was signed on the 19th of February 1921. A secret military pact, which was signed two days later, clarified that the agreement was meant to deal with threats specifically from Germany and the Soviet Union. In the event of aggression against Poland, the French had agreed to keep the communication lines open, and keep Germany in check, but was not required to send
troops or to declare war.\(^2\) What exactly “keeping Germany in check” meant was not further specified.

A French Military Mission, known as *Mission militaire française en Pologne* (*MMFP*), consisting of some fifteen hundred French officers, was established at the end of the First World War in Western Europe, and with 400 of them in Poland as military advisers attached to various Polish military units. The mission was responsible for the training, provision of equipment and general needs of the Polish Army.\(^3\) One of its members was Captain Charles de Gaulle, who as is known, later rose to both national and international prominence as the wartime leader of the French forces in exile during the 1940-1944 German occupation of France and later as President of France. This early experience of the later French military leader with the Poles and the Polish Army is important and will be referred to later.

Since in 1920 the French Army was no longer involved in hostilities and was on the side of the victorious allies, the French could afford to provide a fairly large cadre to provide training aid during the Polish-Soviet War (1919-1921) and to create a strong Polish Army who would become a valuable ally against Germany.\(^4\) The French Army helped to reorganize the newly formed Polish Army, which was using a variety of training manuals, organizational structures and various types of equipment that the Poles had inherited or acquired upon Polish independence from the Russian Empire in 1918.\(^5\)

\(^3\) Lieutenant-General Adrian Carton de Wiart, *Happy Odyssey* (London: Alden Press, 1950), 102. Exact details of what types and numbers of equipment were not further specified.
\(^5\) Ibid.
Other than the presence of the French Army officers of the MMFP, the alliance itself was fairly inactive during the interwar years. With war clouds on the horizon in 1939, a new military agreement, the Kasprzycki-Gamelin Convention, named after the Polish Minister of War General Tadeusz Kasprzycki and the Commander of the French Army Maurice Gamelin, was signed on the 19th of May 1939. Since it was a military-to-military rather than a state-to-state agreement, it was dependent upon both signing and ratification. The eventual ratification belatedly came on the 4th of September 1939, the German offensive into Poland having begun four days earlier! With Poland soon defeated and the Germans poised to attack France, the late ratification of the (Kasprzycki-Gamelin) Convention did not permit the fielding of any military contingent by the French Army into Poland, even if the French government had intended to send one. What the Convention did however allow for was the basis for the re-creation of the Polish Army in France.

British Military Cooperation Interwar Years (1918-1939)

At the same time that the French Military Mission (MMFP) was based in Poland, there was a parallel British undertaking, albeit not of the same order of magnitude with regards to the numbers of personnel, and employed primarily in an advisory role. Retired from the British Army after the First World War and recalled to the colours soon after the outbreak of hostilities in 1939, General Adrian Carton de Wiart was appointed as Head of the British Military Mission in Warsaw in the early 1920s. He was described as a

---

7 Ibid.
colourful character that had earlier retired to live in Poland and had excellent contacts within the Polish military leadership. His reports were described as being authoritative and well informed.\(^8\) Despite the presence of their military mission, the British, in a similar vein to the French, also did not send any military forces to assist the beleaguered Polish nation during the September 1939 campaign.

While the final stages of German victory in Poland were being concluded in the September 1939 campaign, the new Polish cabinet-in-exile was meeting in Paris on the 2\(^{nd}\) of October 1939. On the 5\(^{th}\) of October Polish President Raczkiewicz sent a message to the Polish people in which he stated “I believe profoundly that the heroic contributions of Poland to the Anglo-French coalition war will not be in vain… It will result in final victory.”\(^9\) From this public statement the genesis of the reformed Polish Army under French command was begun.

**French Military Cooperation 1939/1940**

The formation of Polish national military units in France was the result of the 1921 Franco-Polish Alliance. Placed under French command, the subordination of Polish units brought its own challenges when it came to liaison staffs, training of the soldiers, equipping of Polish units with available military weaponry, and the mutual clarification of operational intent. Fortunately for both the French and Polish armies, pre-war cooperation and military exchanges between France and Poland were able to provide some relief at the senior officer levels in the form of common military staff training and

---

9 Williamson, *Poland Betrayed*, 144.
doctrine. The French Army efforts as standardizing training and input into the Warsaw based Polish Higher Military Academy (Wyższa Szkoła Wojenna - WSW) curriculum was to pay at least some dividends in the 1940 German campaign in France. Although Polish military actions in France resulted in little more than heroic but somewhat futile delaying actions against the German Army until the final French defeat in June of that same year, this should not overshadow the fact that the Polish army had been capable of operating at all. Given the short time with which the Poles in France had to organize and re-equip themselves into a fighting force and operate alongside of the French Army during the German invasion of France, it would seem that some of the challenges of linguistic and cultural misunderstandings had been overcome.

For those of the Polish forces who had escaped captivity and had managed to reach the Middle East, their ability to converse in French was an asset that could be put to use. General Stanisław Kopański, the Commander of the Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade (Samodzielna Brygada Strzelców Karpackich - SB) was one such qualified senior officer. According to Kopański: “I had recently spent almost two years 1927-1929, studying at the renowned École Supérieure de Guerre in Paris, and educated to a significant degree in a sea of French culture, and knowing the language well together with the human psyche, I did not at all feel completely like a stranger there.”¹⁰ The French-Polish military interwar cooperation had resulted in a pool of senior Polish Army officers who spoke French and had contacts amongst serving French officers and familiarity with current French Army doctrine and training.

¹⁰ Kopański, Wspomnienia, 78.
According to Kopański, there were also linguistically qualified (i.e., Polish speaking) French officers who were attached to a French-Polish mission in the West, including Reserve Military Engineer Captain des Graviers (see footnote), Head of the French-Polish Mission in the East who had spent several years in Poland and spoke Polish not badly. Kopański was pleased that he would help in their future work.\(^{11}\) This exchange of Liaison Officers was reciprocated by the Polish military as related by General Kopański: “The French-Polish mission left an assembly station behind in Beirut (Lebanon), as well as an information officer (Head of intelligence), Brigade Major Michniewicz.”\(^{12}\)

Although a number of Polish Army officers and soldiers had managed to escape to France from Poland by means of a number of routes, they would not represent the only source for the membership of the Polish Army being raised on French soil. The Poles would turn to the existing Polish diaspora population in France to augment its numbers. Communications by the Poles with their French hosts were for the most part facilitated through the use of French, this linguistic capability provided by Polish officers who spoke French.

The defeat of France in June of 1940, forced those members of the Polish forces in France who wanted to continue the fight against Germany to be on the move yet again. It was the goal of these patriotic Poles to eventually be able to link up with their Polish compatriots in either the United Kingdom or with Polish military forces attached to French or British armed forces stationed in the Middle East. It was at this point in the Second World War that the necessity for the Poles to be able to effectively communicate

\(^{11}\) Ibid., 88. First name not provided and I have been unable to uncover it.
\(^{12}\) Ibid., 94.
in English in order to operate in coalition was raised. To see how this activity had been progressing, it is necessary to examine what was happening in at this time the United Kingdom.

British Military Cooperation

During the period between 1940 and 1945 in the United Kingdom, junior and middle level army officers (Lieutenants, Captains, and Majors) were trained in a variety of military schools where emphasis had been placed on a sound understanding of British military processes. The language of instruction was English for those Poles and other allied nationalities who attended the courses, with the understanding and desire that they would pass on this knowledge to their non-English speaking countrymen either formally or informally. For Polish military personnel in the United Kingdom this meant that for the most part that any rudimentary English language training was minimal at best, but was not however completely neglected. It was organized for two hours a week during duty hours by Polish officer instructors.\textsuperscript{13} Despite these efforts, the time spent and material covered would likely have provided little benefit to the Polish soldiers when it came to operating as part of an armoured division in coalition warfare where the ability to operate proficiently in English was to prove to be critical. So, equipped with at best a minimum of English language ability, how did the Poles fare in the early stages of their cooperation with British military forces? Their experiences in the North African military theatre of operations provide a good starting point for the narrative.

\textsuperscript{13} Potomski, \textit{GBSWM}, 219.
North African Campaign

As already mentioned, the German defeat and occupation of France in June of 1940 required members of the Polish Armed Forces in France that had evaded capture by the Germans or internment in Switzerland to travel often great distances to be able to link up with their Polish military compatriots in either the United Kingdom or the Middle East.

In the Middle East, the Polish Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade (SBSK) was formed in Syria (a French protectorate at the time), where many Polish soldiers had fled from Romania. This Polish-manned brigade had formed part of the French Army in the Middle East, was trained and equipped by the French and by the time of the French defeat consisted of approximately 4,000 men. After the French surrender in June 1940, to the surprise of the British Army, the Carpathian Brigade moved from Syria to Palestine. “The British although grateful to receive a fully armed Brigade, were somewhat surprised by their arrival and unsure what to do with them.” As far as fighting in the North African desert campaign, at that point in time Poland was not at war with Italy and it was seen as “politically impossible for the Poles to take to the field against the Vichy French in Syria.” This problem would be solved when the Polish brigade would later be moved to North Africa to fight the Germans under Rommel.

At the British War Cabinet Chiefs of Staff Committee meeting in April 1941, it was reported that Polish Commander-in-Chief General Śikorski had written to the British Prime Minister saying that he wanted to send a Polish Military Mission to British General

---

16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
Wavell’s H.Q. in North Africa consisting of General Bohusz Szyszko and three other Polish officers.\(^\text{18}\) Prime Minister Churchill is referred to as having asked the Chiefs of Staff to advise him on this proposal.\(^\text{19}\) The ensuing correspondence in the form of a telegram dispatched to the Commander-in-Chief, Middle East resulted in the establishment of a Polish Military Mission.\(^\text{20}\)

As it turned out with the changing fortunes of war, which at this period in history was most certainly not in the Allies’ favour, the brigade commanded by General Kopański was deployed to North Africa rather than Greece as initially proposed. The German defeat of British, Australian and New Zealand military forces on mainland Greece, followed by their defeat on the island of Crete and their subsequent evacuation to Egypt in late May 1941, resulted in a change to the destination of Polish national military units and recruits for her fighting forces.

The Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade was to fight as part of 9\(^\text{th}\) Australian Division at Tobruk and ultimately was to join the remainder of the Middle East based Polish Army then establishing the Polish II Corps in Iraq.\(^\text{21}\) The arrival of the Polish Brigade to join the Australian division in the North African Campaign in August of 1941 caused what was described as a stir amongst the other allied troops. Cultural differences

\(^{18}\) “After becoming President of the Polish Government-in-Exile Władysław Raczkiewicz appointed Sikorski as Prime Minister and then on the 7\(^\text{th}\) of November 1939 as Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army. The establishment of a Polish government in exile was possible because the Polish constitution took into account the needs and possibilities of wartime and contained no prescription which would render impossible the existence and functioning of the state authority outside the frontiers of the country. After much discussion Raczkiewicz, former President of the Polish Senate, was chosen as president.” Kochanski, The Eagle Unbowed, 91-92.

\(^{19}\) 123\(^\text{rd}\) Meeting of War Cabinet, 101\(^\text{st}\) to 140\(^\text{th}\) Meeting, Volume X, 126, para 2, National Archives Kew CAB 79-10.

\(^{20}\) 123\(^\text{rd}\) Meeting of War Cabinet, 101\(^\text{st}\) to 140\(^\text{th}\) Meeting, Volume X, 133, Annex I. National Archives Kew CAB 79-10.

\(^{21}\) Hempel, Poland in World War II, 61.
between the Poles and their allies were exposed when the Poles were seen to be saluting officers and adhering to all customs of military protocol even in the front lines. The Poles were seen as “invariably sticklers for courtesy, carrying the politeness into the front line.” The same observer noted that the Poles possessed no politeness when it came to the Germans: “if they see an Italian working party of fifty, they ignore it; but one German shaking out his blanket brings three rounds of gun-fire.” Their motivation to defeat the Germans was clear to all Poles and obvious to their Australian compatriots. The Poles for their part considered themselves well received by the Australians: “on the whole, the Australians relationship to us was most sincere.”

Following their experience with the French Army, and now having to begin anew with the British and her English speaking British Commonwealth allies, the Poles were encountering in 1941 and 1942 the same or larger cultural and linguistic hurdles that they had worked at overcoming in 1939-40. As a start, according to their Brigade Commander General Kopański: “I asked the head of the British Mission at the Brigade, Major Sholto Douglas, if any sort of collection organization (a liaison mission or unit), which coordinated a common allied effort existed. He declared that such a unit did not.”

Kopański, comfortable in speaking and operating in French, was now forced to attempt to work in English, a language with which he had little familiarity or knowledge.

______________________________

22 Wilmot, Desert Siege, 283.
23 Ibid.
25 Kopański, Wspomnienia, 112.
During military operations in Gazala, conventions on the radio meetings for the preparation and passage of orders with Commander of the 5th New Zealand Brigade were simplified by Captain Potter (an officer from the British Mission at the NZ Brigade).\footnote{Ibid., 158.} For example, this was done in the provision of artillery support to army units, in order to avoid shelling one’s own troops and to ensure that identified enemy targets were shelled, it was essential to have clarity in communicating precise targeting information.\footnote{Required artillery information would be the precise geographical location of the target, type and number of munitions to be used, timing of the shelling and coordination with Forward Observation Officers (FOO).} The accurate communication of precise details meant that forces needed to be able to correct artillery fire in location from forward artillery observation points, thereby avoiding potentially disastrous immediate consequences from incorrectly aimed (wrong target location or wrong target) artillery fire. To assist in this objective, for operations in North Africa involving Polish forces under British command, the Head of Mission (British Mission) at the Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade Major Sholto Douglas was shifted to be as close to the battle as possible in order to be with Polish battalion commander Lieutenant-Colonel Gliwicz and British Liaison Officer Major Holt at a new observation point which was within range of belligerent artillery fire.\footnote{Kopański, \textit{Wspomnienia}, 170.} Though no further information has been found on how this arrangement worked in practice, the fact of it being addressed is a positive step in overcoming some of the barriers causing misunderstandings. The requirement to have virtually simultaneous interpretation to clarify operational messages in the heat of a battle was apparently identified and implemented, with Liaison Officers in locations where tactical or operational misunderstandings could have unfortunate consequences.
Kopański, operating under a superior British Commander and therefore as part of a Headquarters where English was the language of operations, recognized the significance and impact that the shortage of linguistically qualified officers meant, and so when he found qualified candidates, they were coveted:

Owing to the lack of knowledge of English, I had to take my Adjutant, who knew the language. I took with me Aspirant Stanisław Orlowski, who came from France to Syria as a volunteer. He had an excellent knowledge of French, since he was raised in France as well as having a very good knowledge of English, which was the language of his mother, an American.  

From a superior British military headquarters’ point of view, the concept of British training teams to assist in the employment of their non-English speaking allies was more than likely born out of frustration. It was an idea that seemed to take hold at least in this period in the North African campaign and was improved upon. According to Kopański: “The British allotted a small educational unit to the division (Training Team), who in my opinion had been transferred as the latest experiment and the progress of the British Army.”  

As a senior Polish officer under British command in North Africa Brigade Commander Kopański recognized his personal shortcomings when it came to English language proficiency but yet was too busy to be able to devote the required time and effort towards the acquisition of those essential English language skills that would have rendered him more effective. Kopański recorded that the business of war did not provide the luxury of time to learn English since in order to acquire at least some knowledge of

\[29\] Ibid., 101.
\[30\] Ibid., 223.
English he needed lessons which unfortunately were not possible at the end of a long work day.³¹ On meeting one of his former French colleagues, Kopaniński was to remark that he was pleased when his colleague from the École Superieure de Guerre, General de Lattre de Tassigny, was sent from France to London in October 1943.³² He could communicate with French General de Tassigny without the aid of an interpreter and could exchange ideas freely; a vital requirement in ensuring that operational intent is understood without time or intent being lost. The senior Polish commander under British command realized that he was hampered by his lack of English language skills, so what was being done to assist the Polish allies in their comprehension? Language training was being conducted, but how much was required, what it consisted of and how widespread it was, are the questions that I intend to examine next.

Language Instructors in the British Army

In order to identify what was being done by the British Army to improve upon a shortage and in some cases a lack of English language abilities amongst the Poles, I intend to begin by putting the subject into perspective when it comes to the scale of the problem faced. By describing the potential total population of Polish soldiers who spoke little or no English, but yet was expected to effectively operate in an English-language dominated military environment, is where I intend to begin.

The next major commitment of Polish forces under allied command after the deployment of Kopaniński’s Carpathian Brigade in North Africa was in Italy in 1944. Prior to its embarkation to Italy in 1944, the Polish II Corps under Lieutenant-General

³¹ Ibid., 247.
³² Ibid., 247.
Władysław Anders had been formed and trained under the British organization known as PAIFORCE (Persia and Iraq Forces). To assist the Polish military forces to function in an operational environment where superior intent and orders were issued in English, at least some language training had been conducted. According to the PAIFORCE War Diary of July 1943, there were a total of 1,600 Poles undergoing English language instruction.\(^{33}\) This figure represents approximately 3 percent of potential Polish II Corps population of approximately 50,000 all ranks. The British Army Instruction Pool handling this student population consisted of 43 personnel: 3 Officers, 7 Warrant Officers and 33 Sergeants.\(^{34}\)

A good sense of who the students were and what priority was given to their training can be pieced together from what fragmentary archival files have been located. At no time does it appear that having Polish as a language competency was a requirement for the British Army Sergeant Instructors. The instructors’ role was to teach the rudiments of the English language to their Polish allies so that sufficient linguistic competency could be acquired to allow for effective communications in the relaying and understanding of whatever task they were assigned that required interaction with non-Poles. It is unlikely that the above mentioned “rudiments” was able to provide any depth of language acquisition that would have allowed for interpreting a commander’s implicit intent.

By way of illustration, in January of 1944, a Special Course for Officer Interpreters was to be held at the Polish Army Training Center (PATC) where two of the

\(^{33}\) English Language Instruction Pool for the Polish Forces - PAIFORCE War Diary July 1943, National Archives Kew, WO 169-14683.

\(^{34}\) English Language Instruction Pool for the Polish Forces - PAIFORCE War Establishment (WE) PAIC/1134/1. Approval confirmation letter 3096/G (SD) 1B signed by Major W. Story to 26 BJU, April 14, 1943. National Archives Kew, WO 169-14683.
seven Sergeant Instructors attached to this unit were to devote their time exclusively to this work. Regrettably no names of the Polish candidates have been located to allow for tracing their subsequent employment in order to assess their usefulness in their roles. During the move of the Polish II Corps from Palestine to Egypt in January 1944, it was reported that their language instructors, now numbering 34, moved with them. At a minimum, this would have provided the Poles some continuity in training and familiarity of the British Army instructors with either the same students or at least with the similar pedagogic and administrative challenges that they would have faced with a Polish training audience population.

When the Polish forces entered Iraq, they became part of the British 10th Army commanded by General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson. Significantly, to assist in the II Polish Corps’ transition of working with British forces, 26 British Liaison Unit (26 BLU) commanded by Brigadier Way, and later by Brigadier Firth, supervised the Polish forces organization. The formation of this liaison unit was a result of British experiences to date with non-English allied militaries. A post-war memorandum from June 1946 describes the BLU’s impact while attached to the Polish II Corps in Italy. They were: “the media through which orders from British HQs to the Polish formations were explained and interpreted. Many of these British officers became friends with and trusted

35 English Language Instruction Pool for Polish Forces, PAIFORCE War Diary, January 1944, National Archives Kew, WO 170-3827.
36 English Language Instruction Pool for Polish Forces, PAIFORCE War Diary, January 1944, National Archives Kew, WO 170-3827.
by the Poles.”\textsuperscript{38} The value of the Language Instructors’ contribution was further emphasized by the English Language Instruction Pool for Polish Forces War Diary entry which stated both the practical limitations of liaison elements and the value of personal interaction in establishing mutual trust and understanding: “these Sergeants are therefore the only British soldiers with whom the Poles have direct and continuous contact.”\textsuperscript{39}

II Polish Corps consisting of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Carpathian Rifles Division (\textit{Dywizja Strzelcow Karpackich – DSK}), the 5\textsuperscript{th} Kresowy Infantry Division (\textit{Kresowa Dywizja Piechota – KDP}) and the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Polish Armoured Brigade represented the largest Polish military combat formation to come under British command at any time during the war when it became part of the British 8\textsuperscript{th} Army in the Italian Campaign of 1944 under operational command of a British Commander (Lieutenant-General Oliver Leese). “By April 1944, there were 50,000 Polish military in Italy.”\textsuperscript{40}

II Polish Corps Commander General Władysław Anders met his new British superior in February 1944 at General Oliver Leese’s headquarters in Caserta, Italy. Not surprisingly, communications were through languages other than English or Polish. Fortunately, Anders spoke French, since as a more junior officer, chosen for his potential to achieve the highest command positions, he was sent to Paris to study at the \textit{École}

\textsuperscript{38} Future of 26 BLU from Lieutenant-Colonel John Tappin GSC, Chief of Section , Allied Force Headquarters, Liaison Section to Chief of General Staff , June 12, 1946. National Archives Kew, WO 204-5611, File 320 (26 BLU).
\textsuperscript{39} English Language Instruction Pool for Polish Forces, PAIFORCE War Diary May 1944, May 31, 1944, National Archives Kew, WO 170-3827.
\textsuperscript{40} Kochanski, \textit{The Eagle Unbowed}, 467.
Supérieure de Guerre graduating in 1923. The two generals were obliged to converse in French, a language in which Anders was fluent but Leese spoke badly.

An appreciation of the effectiveness of the British Army PAIFORCE Language Instruction Pool, although limited in its numbers and as a consequence what it could achieve, was expressed in a letter of appreciation from the 4th Rifle Battalion Commander Lieutenant Colonel Fanslau to the Officer Commanding the 26 BLU on the performance of Sergeant Moore, a highly-valued instructor who somehow acquired a knowledge of Polish:

Thanks to his intelligence he has achieved not only his first aim which was to make us speak English but also he has explained and taught us the military vocabulary which will be very useful to us in future. By his exactness, punctuality and adherence to duty and through his good will and with his personal interest in our Polish Affairs, by his quick knowledge of the Polish Language he has proved his worth in every respect.

Although further War Diary entries do not contain totals for the numbers of students attending courses or the number of hours of lectures delivered, the Polish enthusiasm for English language training was captured in various vignettes. These include an unidentified Polish General described as taking a personal interest in the teaching of English, a class for interpreters concentrating on military vocabulary training including students attending a pre-Staff College course, and significantly that classes

---

were continued and examinations conducted until the last possible moment prior to the 1st Polish Armoured Division’s deployment to the European continent.\(^{44}\)

In May 1944 II Polish Corps was about to engage in the battle for Monte Cassino, where three allied attempts to take the objective had already failed. Given that the Poles were perennially short of soldiers and reinforcements, the fact that any of the Polish soldiers and officers was available, or made sure they made themselves available to attend classes and then often at the end of a long day of training speaks to the importance that the Poles placed on acquiring competency in English. The Poles appreciated that their ability to understand orders and accurately communicate both requirements and results to their superior headquarters was paramount to mission success in this, the first commitment of the II Polish Corps to combat. It should be inferred that while they were very busy, any spare time would be put to use for honing acquired language skills when it was stated that: “classes have suffered owing to recent moves, but time has been found for conversation.”\(^{45}\)

In wartime, flexibility and adaptability are essential traits that were displayed by the deployment of the PAIFORCE language instructors with the Polish II Corps to assist in surmounting any challenges in communications between the Poles and their British allies during upcoming combat operations. During the May 1944 Battle of Monte Cassino some of these British instructors were able to be of assistance in the Signal Offices at II Polish Corps HQ and at Divisional and Brigade HQs where accuracy of communications

\(^{44}\) English Language Instruction Pool for Polish Forces, PAIFORCE War Diary, May 1944. Appendix III. National Archives Kew, WO 170-3827.

\(^{45}\) Ibid., Appendix III, 2 Polish Corps Base entry.
was and is vital. Fortunately the language instructors were able to provide a vital service. However, the fact that they were required to do so speaks to the perhaps still dismal state of English language comprehension amongst the members of II Polish Corps.

As will happen when time and resources are often in short supply, a commander must decide where his priority of effort lies in the preparation of his forces for combat operations. In the choice between honing language skills versus weapons skills, the latter will likely win out. Since there are only so many hours in the day to conduct training, and much of military training involves physical exertion, at some point a soldier is simply too tired to effectively learn new skills, particularly in a classroom. As a result of the lack of time for language training, course attendees would also for the most part be transient populations. For any potential Polish student, other exigencies of war such as their employment as casualty replacement took priority on their availability for English lessons. Motivation of the attendees for the training amongst attendees also varied; some were employed in liaison functions while others may have been looking towards the future and post war employment. I have been unable to determine how course participants were selected, if there were any volunteers included in the student population or if all were attending to fulfil liaison billets where English language comprehension was deemed to be essential.

Further use for such a liaison element was to be found in the post war United Kingdom based Polish Resettlement Corps where skills possessed by the British officers who made up the 26 BLU were to be in demand: “their function is to be advisory, and to

---

46 English Language Instruction Pool for Polish Forces, PAIFORCE War Diary, May 1944, May 31, 1944, National Archives Kew, WO 170-3827.
interpret British military law and regulations to the Poles.”47 The true value of its usefulness in assisting the Poles to overcome cultural as well as linguistic challenges in a new location and unfamiliar surroundings was clearly understood and stated in the same memorandum’s conclusion when the Poles would need the advice and counsel of the officers and NCOs of 26 BLU, leaning on those British officers whom they knew and also that British Commands would find these officers’ knowledge of the Poles invaluable.48

When activities are examined in light of the Pigeau-McCann common intent factors, it can be assessed that some progress was made towards the establishment of common intent. Rudimentary and piecemeal language training was conducted, giving the Poles some additional ability to understand and share knowledge. Experience with allies also allowed for an understanding of each other’s reasoning abilities and predictable behaviours in similar circumstances.

As has already been mentioned, to allow for a more effective integration of Anders’ forces into an operational environment where orders are issued in English, some formal language instruction was conducted. As will be seen in the next chapter, the efforts put towards language instruction in the 1st Polish Armoured Division would seem to have been less intense, both in terms of time and formalization. Whether as a consequence of resources available or prioritization, the lesson learned in Italy was seemingly not applied.

This narrative will now focus on the story of the Polish forces that were training in the United Kingdom under British command and eventually under command of II

47 Ibid., paragraph 2.
48 Ibid., paragraph 4.
Canadian Corps. It begins with a description of the efforts that were made by the British and Canadians in overcoming cultural and linguistic hurdles to allow for more effective employment of the primarily non-English speaking members of the 1st Polish Armoured Division. The issues and the challenges faced in the identification, employment and training of selected personnel for language training will be highlighted.
Chapter 6 The Challenges of Intercultural Command:

The Poles Come Under Command of II Canadian Corps:

As described in Chapter 3, according to Pigeau and McCann, “Common intent is achieved when there is a single shared objective, together with a clear understanding of how that objective can be attained.”\(^1\) It will be recalled that the common intent factors of shared knowledge, comparable reasoning ability and shared commitment/motivation when considered in aggregate will impact the degree of attainment and fostering of a shared common intent. It is necessary to examine what was done in II Canadian Corps in 1944 to make sure that there was clear understanding of Corps Commander Simonds’ operational objectives for all of its subordinate formations including the Poles of the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division. As emphasized by Pigeau-McCann, “How much effort must a commander expend to ensure that the implied connotations of the objective are understood by subordinates?”\(^2\) This question becomes particularly important when a commander is not familiar with the capabilities of his subordinates.

The first part of this chapter will introduce the two national commanding generals, and examine the relationship that existed between them and how it might have impacted operations, focusing in particular on cultural and linguistic difficulties. I will use the Pigeau-McCann CAR (Competency, Authority and Responsibility) model in order to examine both of these general officers’ strengths and weaknesses in a systematic way. Such an analysis will allow me to determine how they should have been able to work

\(^1\) Pigeau and McCann, *Establishing Common Intent*, 102.
\(^2\) Ibid., 96.
together focusing on what challenges they would have faced based on cultural and linguistic differences.

Since commander’s intent begins with and emanates from a commander, I will then compare the two senior national Commanders (Simonds—Corps Commander and Maczek—Divisional Commander) using the Pigeau-McCann CAR model. I will preface my comparison by describing the CAR factors before providing a comparison summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the two protagonist commanders in this narrative. To answer the question of how to best establish common intent between commanders from different backgrounds, i.e., Maczek and Simonds, as well as Maczek and his peer English speaking Divisional Commanders within II Canadian Corps, I will conclude with which of the two commanders was theoretically better suited to succeed in this undertaking considering how his particular strengths could have been better focused to achieve the goal of established and understood common intent.

Analysis of the two Commanders will be followed by how their supporting liaison unit was organized and of what it consisted. An overall summary of the liaison function, to include comments on those personnel possessing some degree of competency in the practical use of both the English and Polish languages in the 1st Polish Armoured Division and No. 4 Liaison Headquarters will then follow. This is essential background in the understanding of the challenges faced by liaison elements and the daunting task they faced in endeavouring to be the conduit of all operational information, specifically of support of commander’s intent, for the integration of a non-English speaking military formation into English speaking military chain of command.
Although perhaps easy to say in retrospect, the decision to subordinate the 1st Polish Armoured Division to the II Canadian Corps, based on the earlier experiences of liaison elements in France and other operational theatres, was bound to create challenges. That being said, what was to be done to alleviate misunderstanding and the resultant frictions leading to confusion, possible mission failure and unnecessary casualties? Based upon the previous experiences during the earlier part of the Second World War with the British Army and Polish Army units operating together in the Middle East and the Italian campaign, a liaison mission, to be attached to the 1st Polish Armoured, was created by the British Army. This unit was to be called No. 4 Liaison HQ, Polish Forces (Armoured), in effect as of the 10th of June 1944. A description of this liaison unit’s antecedents will help to understand its role and some of the logic behind its composition.

To help ensure the clarity of commander’s intent, the creation of adequately resourced and linguistically qualified liaison staffs should have been required to assist in the smooth communication of his message. At this point in the war (August 1944), given the shortages of infantry soldiers that were being felt in the ranks of both the Canadian and British armies, the competition for the resources to ensure that the War Establishment (WE) of such units would have been given careful scrutiny and was likely subject to continual review.

So, who were the officers and soldiers who formed No. 4 British Liaison Mission (Brytyjska Misja Łącznikowa) in 1944? Where did they come from and how were they selected? At the time of the German invasion of France, the activities of a similarly

---

3 WE (War Establishment) XIV/1233/1 effective in ACIs July 19, 1944, effective date June 10, 1944. PISM File A.XII.43/2 cz 1, 190-193.
4 War Establishment (WE) is the personnel or manpower assigned to a particular unit specifying rank and particular military specialty or trade required for the incumbent in each position.
named but different 4 Military Liaison Mission had been almost completely confined to its clandestine role of supporting the Poles in Poland, and indeed the Czechs in Czechoslovakia. The original 4 Military Mission which had served as the main organ for liaison with the British Army when the Polish forces had been based in France was replaced in November 1940 by the British Liaison Headquarters (Ln HQ) in Scotland.\(^5\) Although some confusion resulted when the liaison HQ attached to the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division was also numbered 4 Liaison Headquarters, its roles and activities were different.

I will now examine what was done to facilitate the essential communications between the Poles and their English speaking superiors and peers and vice versa and the source of the liaison unit’s personnel, specifically related to the Common Intent factors of shared knowledge and comparable reasoning ability. Many of the military liaison officers appointed at an early stage in the war to earlier military mission were subsequently considered by the War Office to be well-qualified to keep the lines of communication open. For instance, one of these was Major Bryson, War Office Liaison to Polish Colonel Mitkiewicz and to the Military Attaché’s office during 1940. Bryson was later attached to the Polish forces in the Middle East (1942-43). I have found no record of Bryson’s ever having been part of 4 Liaison Headquarters. Since he was apparently seen as an effective liaison, this was an opportunity missed.

\(^5\) Sword, Davies and Ciechanowski, *The Formation of the Polish Community in Great Britain 1939-1950*, 47. Letter signed by Brigadier Christopher Peto, CLO (Chief Liaison Officer) at 21\(^{st}\) Army Group HQ to amongst others 4 LHQ and the Polish Mission to 21 Army Group, September 20, 1944. PISM A.XII.41/2 21 AGp/17456/.
Mitkiewicz’s observation on Bryson draws attention to the dual role of Liaison Officers – facilitating communication between two parties, while at the same time using their privileged position in one camp to communicate intelligence and appraisals of their hosts back to their masters. These being specific individual cases, who were the members of the 4 BML and how did their choice and employment help or hinder its effectiveness in communicating commander’s common intent?

**Genesis of the 4th UK Liaison Mission (BML) (Brytyjska Misja Łącznikowa)**

Effective liaison presented one of the principal challenges to the British and Polish authorities from the outset of their wartime alliance. Language skills proved seriously deficient on both sides: few Poles spoke English and virtually no British officials knew Polish. The British military had therefore created a number of non-standard, role specific liaison missions in an attempt to simplify the passage of information. According to Polish Professor Piotr Potomski, it was to aid in improving the efficiency of communications and mutual understanding through the employment of a British or Polish Liaison Officer that such positions were established since for the Poles:

> Up to this point barriers at the regimental level consisted of insufficient knowledge of the English language amongst soldiers, whereas senior ranking officers possessed a slightly higher level of language proficiency, albeit far from perfect, from which flowed the orders and reports through the English Liaison Mission which lengthened the chain of command and did not allow for direct, free and rapid exchange of information between allied fire-power commanders.⁶

---

The Polish Armed Forces in the West (PSZ) was required by their superior headquarters to maintain permanent liaison with the British Command, with British units for training and technical purposes, and with the local authorities in areas where Polish units were stationed. Liaison became even more important and more formally structured when larger Polish formations were sent into battle overseas, first in North Africa, later with the Second Polish Corps in Italy under command of the British 8th Army, and eventually with the 1st Polish Armoured Division in the North West Europe Campaign. On each of these occasions British Liaison Missions were dispatched to report on both the progress and the problems encountered by their Polish allies.

When it came to the deployment of the 1st Polish Armoured Division, the Polish military authorized the establishment of two liaison missions on the 26th of April 1944. The first of these was the Polish Military Mission to Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Force (SCAEF), in Polish (Polska Misja Wojskowa przy SCAEF), to American General Eisenhower. The second was the Polish Liaison Mission to the Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C), 21st Army Group (Oficer Łącznikowy N.W. Przy D-ey 21 Grupy Armii) to British General Montgomery.7 These small sections were never to number more than eight personnel and dealt with purely Polish matters of the Polish Armoured Division, that is, all questions concerning the personnel, discipline and military welfare that were to be referred to General Sosnicki.8

8 Letter from Polish Colonel Jerzy Krubski Commander of the Polish Liaison Section at 21st Army Group to British Brigadier Christopher Peto, Senior Liaison Officer at 21st Army Group, London, July 14, 1944. PISM File A.XII.43/2 Cz. Listing of Polish liaison personnel attached at Appendix F.
Correspondence from the 21st Army Group (Montgomery’s HQ) on the subject of liaison sections was sent to all subordinate allied armies, including the 1st Canadian Army commanded by General Crerar (the superior Headquarters for General Simonds’ II Canadian Corps), on the 8th of June 1944. Since the original intent of the liaison mission to the 1st Polish Armoured Division was reasonably clear from this directive (21 A Grp/1987/G (Sp) 8 Jun 44), it is considered necessary to cite the relevant text in full in Appendix C. Important to note from this directive is paragraph 5 where it stated:

Direct orders of an operational nature, if written, should be forwarded in duplicate to the British Liaison Headquarters, one copy being addressed to the Commander of the Allied contingent and the other to the officer commanding the British Liaison Headquarters. The outer envelope will in all cases be addressed to the British Liaison Headquarters. Direct orders of an operational nature transmitted by wireless, telephone, or Liaison officers, will be passed through the British Liaison Headquarters.9

How much work this would entail based on the volume and type of correspondence that was to be addressed will be discussed later.

The purpose of the various liaison Headquarters was to ensure that all correspondence was routed through them before going to their respective national military units. Their role was to ensure that the messages passed were understood. While not specifically stating a requirement to translate verbatim all of this correspondence, the implication was that as a minimum their intent was to have been made clear. How

9 Letter from 21st Army Group to 1st Canadian Army, June 8, 1944. LAC RG 24 Vol. 10604 File 215C1 (D86) 21 A Grp/1987/G (Sp).
successfully this requirement was accomplished and how the role of such liaison units was carried out, in particular No. 4 Ln HQ Armd will now be examined.

**Command Relationships**

Despite the best planning prior to military operations, military commanders are forced to respond to changing circumstances and employ the resources that they have been provided. Despite all the confusion that can occur on a battlefield, the objectives or goals that a commander intends to achieve must be clear. To enable operational success, all members of the coalition must have been able to fully understand all aspects, both stated and inferred, of their superior commander’s intent. How well could the two commanders have understood each other, and as described earlier in Chapter 3, what degree of mutual comprehension could Simonds and Maczek have achieved?

Senior officers are sometimes required to work with or be subordinated to other senior officers. A military officer does not rise to the upper echelons of his profession, that is become a general, without being self-confident and being able to make tough decisions based on information at his disposal at that point in time. In wartime there is little or no margin for error and time is usually in short supply. That said, there is a time to lead and a time to follow direction, even for the most senior of officers. Effective command relationships must therefore be built and fostered. To that end, senior military commanders should be able to interact effectively with peer commanders as well as to garner the necessary support from staffs at all levels to ensure that the best conditions
exist to allow for operational success, regardless of what challenges are being faced. A commander’s staffs exist to support the effective running of his unit.  

As Commander of II Canadian Corps, Lieutenant-General Simonds was responsible for an organisation of approximately 100,000 personnel and thousands of armoured fighting and transport vehicles. An army corps level organisation was and is meant to be flexible to expand and contract in size that is to gain and lose formations and units according to the requirement to complete a particular assigned military task.

Simonds would be subordinate to an Army Commander, in this case of the 1st Canadian Army (under command of Canadian Army General Crerar), who had under his command three Corps comprising approximately a quarter of a million military personnel.  

According to army organisational doctrine, Simonds’ II Canadian Corps would consist of a number of divisions (usually two or more) and supporting elements such as artillery, combat engineers, communications personnel (signals), medical, mobile repair and supply units (electrical mechanical engineers and logistics) as well as intelligence, military police and many other specialist services required to support a modern mechanized army deployed on operations. As already mentioned, Simonds had under his command two Canadian infantry divisions, one Canadian armoured division, one British infantry division and one Polish Armoured Division, as well as a number of independent Brigades and artillery, engineer and other support elements. The 1st Polish

---

10 “The function of the staff was to provide the commander and his subordinate commanders with the information, recommendations and coordination required for them to make informed and timely decisions.” Kevin L. Smith, *The Bold and the Restless: Leadership and Staff Experience*, US Marine Corps Gazette 90 (May 2006), 59.

11 Colonel C.P. Stacey, *The Canadian Army 1939-1945: An Official Historical Summary* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1948), 49. In referring to the Canadian Army strength, At 31 May, 1944, on the eve of the invasion of Normandy it was 251,000.

12 “It was understood that every corps should be capable of controlling either infantry or armoured divisions.” Stacey, *The Canadian Army*, 42.
Armoured Division was the only non-English speaking division under Simonds’ command.\(^{13}\)

**Pigeau-McCann Dimensions of Command**

It will be recalled from the introduction to Common Intent factors in Chapter 3 that Pigeau and McCann were defence scientists who devoted a significant part of their careers to the study of the human dimension of military command. As pioneers in the field of human factors in military command, they found the composite term command and control as defined in military documents to be verbose, descriptive and lacking in conceptual guidance.\(^{14}\) In their analysis of this important, but rarely studied dimension of human behaviour, they defined command as “the creative expression of human will necessary to accomplish the mission”\(^{15}\) and control as “those structures and processes devised by command to enable it and to manage risk.”\(^{16}\)

In order to address the many and varied factors and characteristics that should be considered when examining command and commanders, Pigeau and McCann devised a model comprising a series of assessing criteria that they called the CAR model that incorporates the three factors of Competency, Authority and Responsibility (CAR).\(^{17}\) Their three dimensional Balanced Command Envelope (BCE) is used to graphically

\(^{13}\) Stacey, *Victory Campaign*, 208.

\(^{14}\) The NATO definition of Command and Control is: “The exercise of authority and direction by a designated commander over assigned forces in the accomplishment of the force’s mission. The functions of command and control are performed through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities and procedures which are employed by a commander in planning, directing, coordinating and controlling forces in the accomplishment of his mission.” (NATO, 1988) Carol McCann and Ross Pigeau, “Clarifying the Concepts of Control and Command.” Abstract, on-line, 2000, 1.


\(^{16}\) Ibid., 56.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 57.
depict the interrelationship between these three factors. As a subsidiary model, the CAR model will aid in analysis of the attainment of shared common intent. Prior to examining and comparing the two General Officer commanders (Maczek and Simonds), I intend to summarize what skills, abilities and other traits are considered and evaluated against each of the three factors.

The skills and abilities necessary for a commander to succeed have been further sub-divided by Pigeau and McCann into four competencies: physical, intellectual, emotional and interpersonal. “The importance of physical and intellectual competency for command is well acknowledged. Most militaries establish physical and intellectual aptitude testing at recruitment. They follow this with extensive physical and intellectual development during basic training, and subsequently in specialist courses and at staff colleges.”18 Physical competency is however, not limited to mere brute physical strength or agility or speed: “It involves sophisticated sensory motor skills, good health, agility and endurance.”19 In other words, mental agility and endurance are essential to survive and prosper during long periods of high stress.

The often vague definition of missions and tasks and the feeling of isolation that can accompany those in command, render emotional resilience essential for the maintenance of a proper balance and perspective. “Interpersonal competency is essential for interacting effectively with one’s subordinates, peers, superiors, the media and other government organizations.”20 Well-developed social skills, especially verbal and written are key components in this competency. According to the model, “The physical,

18 Ibid., 58.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
intellectual, emotional and interpersonal are classes of competencies that play a significant part in delineating command capability.”\(^{21}\) Even if a commander is qualified to hold a particular post, operating in a foreign language environment puts him at a distinct disadvantage, causing delays at meetings while interpretation occurs or more importantly, the inability to make a point, clarify one superior commander’s intent and provide alternative solutions to proffered plans.

The authority dimension is defined as “the degree to which a commander is empowered to act, the scope of his power and the resources available for enacting his or her will.”\(^{22}\) This dimension is further subdivided into the legal and personal authorities, the former is assigned and the latter is earned through personal credibility. “Legal authority is the power to act as assigned by a formal agency outside the military, typically a government. Militaries have the authority to enforce obedience among their members and, more importantly, they can knowingly place their members in harm’s way if the operational needs of the mission demand it.”\(^{23}\)

Unlike legal authority, personal authority is earned over time based on reputation, experience and character, and is often acquired through personal example.\(^{24}\) Personal authority varies according to observed ability, courage and integrity and ethical behaviour. From the perspective of subordinates, how a commander has fared in command of his soldiers and, from their point of view, “looked after them” will determine the degree of the personal authority that a particular commander has garnered at any point in time. Personal authority is something that needs to be earned and

\(^{21}\) Ibid.  
\(^{22}\) Ibid.  
\(^{23}\) Ibid., 59.  
\(^{24}\) Ibid.
continually nurtured and should never be assumed or taken for granted. Maczek was well known and revered by his soldiers, while Simonds was more known by reputation than personal interaction. Their ratings in the authority dimension could therefore be expected to be different.

The third dimension of the CAR model is that of responsibility meaning “the degree to which an individual accepts the legal and moral liability commensurate with command.”25 This dimension is subdivided into two components, those of extrinsic and intrinsic responsibility. “Extrinsic responsibility is the degree to which an individual feels accountable both up (to superiors) and down (to followers).”26 Intrinsic responsibility, on the other hand, is “the degree of self-generated obligation that one feels towards the military mission,”27 a function of the resolve and motivation that one brings to bear on a problem or situation. How committed is the commander to his mission and the welfare of his personnel? What is his motivation and how can he use this to motivate his subordinates? Of all of the components in the CAR model, it is the most fundamental, without which very little could be accomplished.28 Whereas both generals have assigned legal responsibilities, I will also assess the effect that the pressure of being the national leader had on Maczek.

25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid., 60.
28 Ibid.
The Balanced Command Envelope (BCE)

The analysis and summation of the three CAR dimensions can be used to describe what Pigeau and McCann have hypothesized as placement is a command space; the idea of a three dimensional Balanced Command Envelope (BCE). The CAR model allows one to map out the entire space of command capability as well as situate individual members within this three dimensional space. By way of illustration, a high level of responsibility without the requisite high levels of authority can result in an ineffectual command owing to lack of a clear legal mandate, assigned resources and so on. When little authority is assigned or earned by an individual commander, minimal command capability is the result. The permutations and combinations are numerous, ranging from potentially ineffectual, to the other extreme of dangerous and abusive or toxic. “Balanced command is the desired state since responsibility is the only mechanism by which militaries can guarantee that their extreme power will be exercised safely and properly.”

A three-dimensional representational model is at Figure 6.1.

---

29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
When compared against the Pigeau-McCann CAR model it should be expected that both Maczek and Simonds as senior General Officers in command positions should exhibit high levels of capabilities and demonstrate the maturity and judgment expected at the divisional level of command for Maczek and at the Corps level in the case of Simonds. However, despite what one might expect, the theory may show that some different assumptions should have been expected. Therefore, I intend to assess both Generals Maczek and Simonds against the CAR criteria, offering a comparison of both leaders at the conclusion of each dimension category.
The Two Commanders in August 1944

At noon on the 29th of June 1944, the tactical headquarters of Simonds’ II Canadian Corps had begun operating at Camilly, France. On the 5th of August, 1944 the 1st Polish Armoured Division with Maczek as its Commander joined II Canadian Corps as part of the 1st Canadian Army. At that point in time Simonds had been involved in offensive combat operations in France for approximately a month, II Canadian Corps having taken over Caen Sector on the 11th of July 1944 with the 2nd and 3rd Canadian Infantry Divisions and the 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade under command. Simonds’ Corps also took part in Operation GOODWOOD beginning on the morning of 18th of July 1944 followed by Operation SPRING commencing on the 25th of July 1944. Operation SPRING, meant to conceal from the enemy the direction of the allied main effort and delay the movement of German armoured reserves to the neighbouring American Army sector, was to be the last offensive operations involving II Canadian Corps prior to Maczek’s division coming under Simonds’ command.

Supreme Allied Commander American General Dwight D. Eisenhower considered GOODWOOD “essentially a failure”. Montgomery’s intention by the end of Operations GOODWOOD and ATLANTIC (the Canadian portion of GOODWOOD) was to shatter German confidence and to force the Germans to concentrate their armoured forces east of the Orne River The attainment of Montgomery’s desired objectives was considered unlikely and as it turned out, except for Canadian operations at Dieppe on the

32 Potomski, GBSWM, 235.
33 Stacey, The Canadian Army 1939-1945, 198-203.
34 Stacey, Victory Campaign, 177.
35 Ibid., 179.
19th of August 1942, the 25th of July 1944 was the Canadian Army’s costliest day of operations in the Second World War.\textsuperscript{36} Canadian Historian John English perhaps best sums up Simonds reaction with “by any measurement “SPRING” was an unmitigated tactical debacle and Simonds was deeply upset about it.”\textsuperscript{37} So, prior to Maczek’s arrival, the Canadians under Simonds had suffered heavy casualties and Simonds confidence was likely somewhat shaken. How much Maczek was able to understand of Simonds state of mind is not known.

So who were the two generals? Beginning with Simonds, from what has been recorded by Maczek, the Commander of the II (Canadian) Corps, General Simonds made a favourable impression on him when they met briefly on the 4th of August 1944: “The Canadian general impressed him with his youth, energy and despite his young age, considerable leadership experience.”\textsuperscript{38} I will now briefly describe these two commanders, where they came from and what various experiences and strengths they brought with them in August 1944.

Canadian General Guy Granville Simonds was born in 1903 and so was too young to have served in the First World War. He attended the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario, graduated in 1925 and secured a regular commission in the Royal Canadian Artillery. Prior to the Second World War, his military service, besides Staff College in the United Kingdom, was limited to service inside of Canada. His combat experience prior to August 1944 consisted of almost three months in both Sicily and the Italian mainland in 1943 while Commander of the 1st Canadian Infantry Division and

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 186.
\textsuperscript{37} John English, \textit{Failure in High Command}, 249.
\textsuperscript{38} Potomski, \textit{LGSM}, 63.
approximately a month in France before Operation TOTALIZE while Commander of II Canadian Corps.\textsuperscript{39} The spelling of Maczek’s name by Simonds may be a sign of how well he tried to get to know his Polish ally or simply perceived as Anglo-Saxon arrogance when the Poles noted that: “the Canadian commander, General Guy Simonds couldn’t be troubled to even verify the correct spelling of Maczek’s name when in a letter he wrote “Metchek”. “\textsuperscript{40}

Simonds was a physically active 41 year-old in August 1944. Educated at Collegiate School in Victoria, British Columbia, Simonds entered Ashbury College in Ottawa in 1919, and completed two years before taking the entrance exam to RMC (The Royal Military College of Canada, in Kingston, Ontario).\textsuperscript{41} He received the Sword of Honour marking him as top cadet, and was second academically in his graduation year, receiving the Governor General’s Silver Medal for Academic Excellence in his RMC graduating class. While at RMC and afterwards he participated in sports and equestrian activities. Even before his time at RMC, it was observed that: “He played all games well, without having to train for them particularly and that Guy rode well and was already good at judging horses.”\textsuperscript{42} He remained physically active and should have been well physically prepared for the challenge of high command. He later attended the British Army Staff College at Camberley, England and received an excellent course report: “At the end of the second year it appeared that Guy had emerged as one of the outstanding men on the course.”\textsuperscript{43} He also met there, either as DS (Directing Staff – military course instructors)

\textsuperscript{39} Granatstein, 158-162.  
\textsuperscript{40} McGilvray, \textit{SIH}, 202.  
\textsuperscript{41} Graham, \textit{The Price of Command}, 16.  
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 14.  
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 43.
or fellow students, many of the men with whom he was to work with in the Second World War. Simonds organized his time and effort economically and proved a shrewd manager of the system as he found it.

His skills were used to great effect as a staff officer both before and after he had command of the II Canadian Corps. From his interwar years, which saw him contributing articles to military journals, he was seen to be innovative and original. Simonds had completed a number of key staff jobs at the Brigade and Division level and had limited time in command appointments of artillery units at the battalion and brigade level. As previously mentioned, as Commander of the 1st Canadian Infantry Division he had several months of field experience in both the 1943 Sicily campaign during the allied campaign Operation HUSKY and later on the Italian mainland. Simonds demonstrated that he possessed the physical and intellectual aspects of the competency dimension to be able to perform the role of a Division Commander and with this successful command experience in Sicily should have ready to perform well at the Corps level.

Although Simonds was an experienced army officer who considered mission success to be paramount, he had however, no actual combat experience prior to his service in the Canadian Army during the Second World War. His years of soldiering matured him as a junior officer and he rose rapidly during wartime to the General Officer ranks. “At Ashbury College he was nicknamed the ‘Count’, always neat and tidy, unlike a school boy and always in control of himself and the situation” and “he was not popular nor did he seek popularity.” Simonds was described as a loner, who although it may

---

44 Ibid., 26.
46 Ibid.
have made him resourceful and likely strengthened his character; it made him difficult to approach.  

Simonds also had no experience in commanding foreign soldiers. Although he was an Anglophone, as already mentioned, to his credit possessed a fair amount of French from his school days. He transitioned fairly easily from being in the Canadian Army to working under command of the British Army, although this may well have been more as a combination of his time at Camberley Staff College in the United Kingdom (1936 to 1937) and the virtual parroting of the British Army in all respects by the Canadian Army of the era. Kitching was a senior staff officer in the 1st Canadian Division when Simonds was its Commander. He was asked by Simonds to be Chief of Staff for II Canadian Corps when Simonds was chosen as commander and Kitching was promoted to command the 4th Canadian Armoured Division as part of II Canadian Corps under Simonds. Few could have known Simonds better than General George Kitching, who said of him, “Guy kept all his subordinates at arm’s length.”

Polish General Stanisław Maczek saw service in the First World War as a junior officer in the Austro-Hungarian Army. After the November 1918 Armistice ending the Great War and the resulting rebirth of a modern sovereign Poland on the same day, he served in the Polish Army in both the Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Soviet campaigns between 1918 and 1921. After successfully filling a number of command and staff positions

47 Ibid., 15.
48 Ibid., 26-28.
49 Kitching, 177-193.
50 “I was close to Simonds in the way soldiers are to each other. I had great confidence in him, he was an outstanding commander and although he was aloof and distant with some people he was always kind and considerate with me. I was told by a mutual friend that I bore a resemblance to Guy’s brother who was killed while a test pilot in the 1930s. Perhaps that was part of his regard for me. I thoroughly enjoyed his company.” Graham, The Price of Command, 2. Kitching, Mud and Green Fields, 227.
appointments, based on his reputation as a leader and combined with his innovative mobile warfare philosophy, he was nominated as the Commander of the 10th Cavalry Brigade, the first mechanized unit in the Polish Army.\(^{51}\) He commanded this brigade in the September 1939 campaign under command of the Army Group Cracow. After the Polish defeat and his escape to France he was promoted to Brigadier General on the 15\(^{th}\) of November 1939 and he was tasked to form a Polish Armoured Division to fight alongside of and under command of the French Army. By the time of the German invasion of France in June 1940, he had formed the 10\(^{th}\) Mechanized Cavalry Brigade\(^{52}\) (10\(^{ème}\) Brigade de cavalerie blindé) and fought valiantly while the French retreated, his brigade suffering 75 per cent casualties.\(^{53}\) Along with many of his Polish countrymen he subsequently arrived in the United Kingdom by a very circuitous route. He then began the formation of Polish national fighting units, culminating in the authorization of a Polish manned and British equipped 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division on the 26\(^{th}\) of February 1942.\(^{54}\)

Maczek was a solidly built 52 year-old General Officer who as it turned out lived to the ripe old age of 102 years.\(^{55}\) While serving in the Austro-Hungarian Army First World War as a junior officer, he was wounded in 1917, spending three months recovering. He was an energetic individual who preferred a Spartan soldier’s lifestyle and simple accommodations.\(^{56}\) He studied philosophy at the University of Lwów (then in Poland) from 1910 to 1914. Maczek attended a Reserve Officer’s training course during

\(^{51}\) Mierzwiński, Generalowie II Rzeczypospolitej, 168.
\(^{52}\) Mierzwiński, 168.
\(^{53}\) Koskodan, No Greater Ally, 54.
\(^{55}\) McGilvray, BDM, 113.
\(^{56}\) Wysocki, Geneza i Dzieje, 13.
the war and subsequently was assigned as an instructor on similar leadership courses, and attended the *Wyższa Szkoła Wojenna* (Higher War College) in Warsaw from 1923-1924, roughly equivalent to the British Staff Colleges in Camberley, UK and Quetta, Pakistan. His favourable course report, he finished 5th in his class, provides the opinion held by his instructors as to his potential:

Outstanding. Great virtues with high moral values. Very energetic and full of initiative. An officer with deep military knowledge and frontline experience. Independent, quick and confident in decision making as well as in implementation.\(^{57}\)

In 1938, based on his reputation as a leader and his innovative mobile warfare philosophy demonstrated in interbellum military exercises, he was appointed as the Commander of the 10th Mechanized Cavalry Brigade.\(^{58}\) Maczek possessed the physical and intellectual aspects of the competence dimension necessary to command an armoured division in battle. His having more command combat experience and in particular more command experience with armoured forces than Simonds would rank him slightly higher in this aspect of the competency dimension at the divisional command level.

Although new at commanding the 1st Polish Armoured Division, Maczek knew his soldiers well and understood what he had to do in order to motivate them: “Simonds noticed that the Poles were different to the Canadian and British soldiers under his command and realized that they could not be controlled in the same ways he controlled British and Canadian troops.”\(^{59}\) A British officer, Major M.A. Thomas, a Liaison Officer

---


\(^{59}\) McGilvray, *BDM*, 15.
in the North West Europe campaign who was able to observe General Maczek over time has recorded his opinion on the Polish Commander: “Maczek was a natural-born commander, rather than a staff officer, with a strong personality, great sense of humour, intelligence, and a man of great vision, a certain craftiness and unusual courage.”

Prior to joining II Canadian Corps Maczek already had experience in being the senior foreign officer in another country’s military organization, having had command of his reformed cavalry brigade (with armoured vehicles, no longer horses) during the France campaign of 1940 and working with the British Army in Scotland while he built and trained the 1st Polish Armoured Division. He was accustomed to improvisation and standing his ground, voicing objections when he felt that it was required. Although his ability to express himself in English was far from fluent, he certainly made his point. After his first speech in English in Scotland in March 1941, he was not sure how it been received. His son, at that time a preschooler in Scotland, when asked said loudly that he thought it had been great. However to his mother he said that that daddy spoke very badly in English, something he did not likely intend to voice. Maczek had to admit that he was right.

In the 1st Polish Armoured Division, command was executed by radio communications and patrols of liaison officers who physically delivered orders and reports. Maczek also provided advice and encouragement to his subordinate commanders by means of radio communications when he could not be physically present.

---

60 Potomski, LGSM, 85.
61 Maczek, 133.
62 Potomski, LGSM, 73.
with them.\textsuperscript{63} Though not explicitly stated, it is reasonable to assume that all communications were in Polish.

Maczek’s advanced military education at the recently founded Higher War College (WSW) in Warsaw where a number of French officers were on staff, and his command of a brigade under French command, would indicate that he possessed a competency in French. Foreign language skills were valued at the WSW which was in Maczek’s favour since he displayed exceptional linguistic abilities.\textsuperscript{64} He admits to knowing French and German from his school days and military college courses and having a competency in both Russian and Ukrainian from his First World War service.\textsuperscript{65} Although he was able to receive, understand and then discuss plans from Simonds, his superior commander, Maczek admitted that his lack of linguistic competency in English was a limiting factor.\textsuperscript{66} From this I assess that when the two generals were alone together, Simonds and Maczek were forced to communicate in French. Later in life Maczek reflected on the fact that despite the variety of languages that he possessed a competency in, his self-assessed competency level of English was fairly rudimentary, not one that he would count as being fluent when it came to writing and speaking.\textsuperscript{67}

\textbf{Comparison of Simonds and Maczek}

In assessing Simonds and Maczek against the Pigeau-McCann CAR competency criteria I conclude that there would have been challenges when they worked together. In

\textsuperscript{63}\textit{Ibid.}, 75.
\textsuperscript{64}\textit{Ibid.}, 9.
\textsuperscript{65}Potomski, \textit{GBSWM}, 86.
\textsuperscript{67}Potomski, \textit{GBSWM}, 342.
the physical criterion, although there was an age gap between of almost twelve years between them, both were fit and toughened from lives of soldiering. Intellectually both had relevant combat experience and the requisite military education to perform their roles. They did differ however in their viewpoints as to how best to tactically employ armoured forces; on a narrow front for Simonds and wide front for Maczek. Simonds as the superior commander could and did direct their usage. The consequences of such directed command decisions could be disastrous.

It was however, in the emotional and interpersonal competencies where their differences would have had the greatest impact on their relationship, directly affecting their ability to work together. Maczek was a very experienced officer who as a father figure with a national responsibility could and would put the welfare of his soldiers as his top priority. An experienced commander, Maczek was hampered by his linguistic ability in communicating with Simonds who as a loner and somewhat of an introvert was more apt to direct rather than consult when it came to mission planning and execution. Emotionally two quite different general officers, with a language barrier exacerbating their different personalities, communication and understanding of common intent were to prove to be difficult.

By way of example, on the 9th of August 1944 one of the Canadian armoured regiments under command of Major-General Kitching (the 4th Canadian Armoured Division commander, also under Simonds command) the British Columbia Dragoons (BCD) lost 47 out of their 55 tanks and were back in action as a regiment four days later. The other two armoured regiments in the Armoured Brigade had also lost over twenty

68 Ibid., 236.
tanks each in their first days of battle. Maczek’s fears about Simonds’ desired tactics were realized when the 2nd Polish Tank Regiment lost 26 out of 36 Sherman tanks within a few minutes. After an initial shock, the Polish Armoured Division changed tactics. Losses continued, but not on such a scale. The Poles did learn from this experience which was the bitter experience of others. It appears that the lessons learned at great expense on the employment of tanks were not shared from this first blooding of the untried divisions. Although seemingly unable to communicate his thoughts to Simonds, or convince him of the flaws in his use of tanks, Maczek’s opinion on tactics was vindicated, but at what cost!

From the interpersonal criterion, it would seem that Simonds would have been more apt to be a better senior staff officer, carrying out plans while being original, inventive and questioning a commander’s intent or concepts prior to implementation. Maczek on the other hand was very experienced and accustomed to taking independent action and was not shy about voicing objections when the well-being of his personnel and the success of the mission were at stake. Simonds was schooled in military systems (British and Canadian Armies) that caused him to respect and obey his superiors, while Maczek was brought up in a system that made him confident enough to question the direction of superior commanders, when it was not in the best interests of both soldiers’ well-being and mission success. The linguistic gap that existed between the two commanders was obvious, neither spoke the other’s language well, and in Simonds case

69 Kitching, 218.
70 McGilvray, *BDM*, 22.
not at all. In order to communicate a modicum of French was their lingua franca, unless they used interpreters, complete mutual comprehension was therefore going to be a challenge at best, if not an impossibility.

Responsible to 1st Canadian Army Commander General Crerar, Simonds’ legal command authority was clear. Crerar also allowed Simonds a certain amount of flexibility to react to the rapidly changing situations on the battlefield and plan accordingly. With the experience that he had acquired in Sicily and Italy, and his rapid advancement in rank to Corps Commander, he also had personal credibility, but more by reputation than by first hand interaction with his soldiers. Therefore Simonds, by virtue of his directive command style, could undermine, intentionally or not, Maczek’s personal authority.

Operating as commander of the sole Polish formation within the II Canadian Corps, Maczek was entrusted by the Polish Commander-in-Chief with the bulk of the Polish military forces not assigned to the II Polish Corps under General Anders in Italy. He was revered by soldiers and known to them as Baca (Head Shepherd). He was their father figure, the Shepherd of the displaced Poles in Exile, and for the most of his soldiers, the most senior Pole that they would regularly see and with whom they could identify. The challenges of the Polish Government-in-Exile were not something that the average soldier was concerned with nor would they have known the political figures as well as their commanding general; who shared their hardships, in training and in combat. Maczek’s personal authority was ensured through his example not just his reputation. His soldiers fought for Poland by doing their best for him, and he was very conscious of this

72 McGilvray, BDM, 2.
weight of national responsibility as he maintained national links to the Polish
Government-in-exile based in London. As Maczek stated “The Polish soldier fights for
the freedom of other nations, but dies only for Poland.” His personal and legal
authorities were as a consequence both very strong.

Both Simonds and Maczek possessed the requisite legal authority entrusted to
senior commanders in the conduct of warfare. As well as his already powerful personal
authority, Maczek was given command of his division by the Commander-in-Chief of the
Polish Forces-in-Exile General Władysław Śniadecki. His national responsibility was to
steward the limited resources available to him to ensure their proper use as part of the
allied forces under British command. His unquestioned personal authority as Commander
of the Polish division, enriched by his virtual hero status, was seemingly without limit.
Simonds on the other hand was to live in the shadow of a domineering 21\textsuperscript{st} Army Group
Commander, Field Marshal Montgomery, whom he greatly admired. Although he
possessed the rank of Lieutenant-General and held the appointment of Corps
Commander, Simonds on the other hand was fairly unknown to the rank and file in the
formations and units that were subordinated to his II Canadian Corps. His soldiers had
little if any personal attachment to him and knew of him more through reputation than
any actual personal experience. Polish soldiers would do what Maczek ordered because
they knew that he had their interests at heart. Allied soldiers would do what Simonds
ordered because he was their legally appointed commander. I have therefore rated
Maczek stronger in the authority criterion.

---

\textsuperscript{73} Anthony Beevor, \textit{D-Day: The Battle for Normandy} (New York: Viking, 2009), 472.
\textsuperscript{74} Graham, \textit{The Price of Command}, 240.
Simonds was responsible for and fully accepted the command of II Canadian Corps within the 1st Canadian Army. His entire command responsibility was within the Canadian military and Canadian national chain of command and he felt responsible for all of his personnel.\textsuperscript{75} He had taken over command of II Canadian Corps in January 1944 and his first battle experience as its commander was in the month of July 1944, just prior to Operation TOTALIZE in August 1944.

Maczek as the commander of the only Polish armoured division under allied command in the North-West Europe campaign shouldered the responsibility for its success and its fate. There were limited casualty replacements available, losses often being made good from German POWs of Polish descent who had been conscripted into the German army (\textit{Wehrmacht}). He would also have been cognizant that the performance of his division could well have an impact on the recovery of the Polish homeland in post-Second World War era when the victors divided Europe into zones of occupation and spheres of influence. His extrinsic responsibility towards both the mission and his soldiers was of the highest order surpassing his intrinsic responsibility which would be rated very high.

Both Generals understood the importance of their missions. Both of their extrinsic responsibilities as commanders of formations should be considered as high. Maczek had no Polish military superior in his operational chain of command and therefore had the unqualified support of his soldiers and the responsibility for their fate and the performance of his division. His soldiers would do what he wanted them to do, because they trusted him without reservation, many either having fought with him in the

\textsuperscript{75} Kitching, 200.
September 1939 campaign and other battles, or were well aware of and respected him as a first-rate leader. His ability to motivate his soldiers would derive from both personal and command authority. I assess that he clearly surpassed Simonds when it came to both the extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of responsibility.

**Placement on the Balanced Command Envelope (BCE)**

When assessed using the Pigeau-McCann CAR criteria and placed in the BCE command space both commanders were well positioned in the range of balanced command to successfully perform their roles. Maczek ranked higher in both responsibility and personal authority which allowed him, or perhaps motivated him to achieve success, when faced with very difficult tactical circumstances. His greater experience in mechanized warfare prior to the North-West Europe campaign would also have given him a slight edge in the overall aggregate command competency criterion. He had practical experience in knowing what can and cannot work in combat conditions. Overall, Maczek had greater strengths in all three of the command competencies, notably demonstrating greater potential for divisional command than Simonds, as well as having deeper personal motivation and far greater intrinsic responsibility. His extrinsic responsibility as the leader of the Polish forces under command of II Canadian Corps, a powerful motivator in itself, far outweighed that of Simonds a Canadian commander subordinated to a fellow Canadian (General Crerar, Commander of the 1st Canadian Army) and British Field-Marshal Montgomery Commander of the 21st Army Group. Therefore, according to the CAR, Maczek should have performed better, and possibly would have, had he not been hampered by a language barrier. Figure 6.2 represents a
graphical depiction of where I would place both Maczek and Simonds using the Pigeau-McCann BCE criteria.

Figure 6.2 CAR (BCE) Diagram Maczek (M) /Simonds (S) comparison*

* Re-conceptualizing Command and Control, Pigeau and McCann, p.61
Figure 3 – The Balanced Command Envelope. Canadian Military Journal, Spring 2002.

The Pigeau-McCann CAR (BCE) has proven to be a very useful objective framework within which to compare the potential to succeed as a divisional commander (Major-General Maczek) subordinated under a Corps Commander (Lieutenant-General Simonds) during combat operations. The assessment of some of those otherwise intangible factors related to command, such as the value of personal motivation, the power of national authority and the fact that personal relationships can and should be trumped by the operational imperative is a valuable exercise. While the British and Canadian systems may have had less flexibility when it came to raising concerns or questioning a superior’s plans, the Polish way of waging war, influenced by French
instructional cadre at both of their national staff colleges (Warsaw and Paris) encouraged as well as made it Maczek’s responsibility as a commander to speak up, regardless if Simonds encouraged or allowed him to do so. “Stanisław Maczek being a modern armoured officer was receiving operational plans from General Guy Simonds that restricted and limited his initiative. In this type of situation these two commanders could not have been able to understand each other and not only on account of the language barrier.”\(^{76}\) The differing national philosophies of both command and training were demonstrated in Maczek’s ability to question Simonds plan and adapt accordingly, but owing to his being hampered in his ability to communicate specifically why he disagreed were diluted. This critical aspect of the competency criterion would have a great impact on the establishment of common intent.

According to Professor Potomski: “Maczek stood out among other higher commanders with his ability to accurately interpret trends in the development of the art of war as he predicted that a quick armoured and motorized army, able to perform deep maneuvers, would play a crucial role in the war.”\(^{77}\) Maczek possessed all of the command qualities and the motivation necessary to succeed in his role. His challenge as Commander of the 1st Polish Armoured Division was to ensure that he understood Simonds’ intent and that he could translate this superior direction into clear orders that his officers and soldiers could understand and implement. This understanding would have been further complicated by the expectation, often implicit, of how to exploit operational success and react when unable to achieve objectives assigned by his superior commander either on time or at all.

\(^{76}\) Potomski, *GBSWM*, 234.
\(^{77}\) Potomski, *LGSM*, 5.
As clearly demonstrated in the previous analysis of Corps Commander Simonds against the Pigeau-McCann CAR criteria, I have concluded that Simonds would have likely been somewhat impatient in trying to communicate his intent to Polish General Maczek. Simonds’ impatience would have been exacerbated by cultural and linguistic misunderstandings or lack of understanding would have complicated the clear communication and reception of commander’s intent. It is unlikely that Simonds would have been able to spend the necessary time and effort to fully explain his intent to Maczek. In the September 1944 changes to the role of No. 4 Liaison Headquarters, that is the removal of its Commander as the interface between Simonds and Maczek, demonstrated Simonds’ desire to minimize as much as possible any potential lack of clarity. Face to face meetings between the two commanders would have removed the middle man, but given the language barrier there still would have been no guarantee of understood common intent. Although, based on previous experience working in multinational coalitions, Maczek was possibly more adaptable than Simonds in finding ways to overcome linguistic and cultural hurdles in order to clarify his superior’s intent.

Whereas Maczek was revered by his soldiers and held in esteem as a father figure, Simonds was seen as a loner who was not so approachable, if not actually feared. Would his other formation commanders and not just the Poles have felt comfortable in asking questions to confirm that they understood his intent? According to Anthony Caravaggio whose doctoral dissertation work has focused the subject of 4th Canadian Armoured Division Commander George Kitching: “it is clear from the literature is that Kitching, as a divisional commander, lacked the latitude to change a Simonds’ plan once it had been
issued, even when it involved movement within his own divisional boundaries. “78 This situation existed when Simonds and Kitching actually knew one another well. 79 Maczek and Simonds on the other hand did not have the opportunity or the time to gain any degree of familiarity with or understanding as to how each other worked. They were strangers just prior to the commencement of operations in August 1944.

Although Maczek’s motivation, training and experience would have positioned him very well to be able to accomplish the missions assigned to him by Simonds, how could Simonds have really understood Maczek’s determination and motivation to continue fighting though Germany and onward to Poland? Did Simonds make it clear to Maczek that such an objective was not feasible, if in fact he had ever considered it? Maczek was the national Polish leader in the field, whereas Simonds had as his superior 1st Canadian Army Commander Crerar above him to deal with the Canadian government on national issues.

In a multicultural setting, Maczek, being multi-lingual was experienced in working in a second language other than his primary native language. He was certainly adaptable and a survivor. Prior to operations in August 1944, Simonds had no experience with non-English speaking allies under his command. How Maczek’s greater combat experience and lack of English language skills would prove to be a detriment to his division when under command of an impatient and less experienced Corps Commander is what I intend to demonstrate next.

79 Graham, 156. Kitching had been in Corps Headquarters staff when Simonds was a Brigadier General Staff in 1943.
Despite Maczek’s motivation for mission success and his desire to continue the fight through Germany to Poland, the fact that he was subordinated to Simonds would mean that his motivation would be limited in order to conform to his superior commander’s intent. Maczek had to adhere to and follow Simonds’ commander’s intent and often very detailed directions, seldom written, something which may not always have been clear to him. Accepting written or verbal orders in a static Headquarters environment and whilst on military maneuvers (exercises) in the United Kingdom where the consequence of errors related to miscomprehension was minimal was to prove much different than actually implementing such orders during combat conditions, especially when the intent was blurred or unclear.

Communication of clear common intent would be aided through simplicity in plans. Although Simonds was a disciple of Montgomery, in at least one aspect, which was to impact working with the Poles, he differed:

Montgomery placed great emphasis on the need for simplicity in the planning of military operations. Plans had to remain simple, because the more complicated the plan, the greater the chance that things could go wrong. Simplicity was important because Montgomery wanted all the soldiers participating to fully understand their own individual part in the operation. Simonds however created elaborate and detailed plans, like Operation TOTALIZE, a very complicated Corps plan that as it turned out did not allow for a successful attack through the depth of German defences and necessitated the development and implementation of a subsequent plan, Operation TRACTABLE.

Despite and differences or misgivings that either of them might have had, Maczek and Simonds were embarking on combat operations as commander and subordinate on the 8\textsuperscript{th} of August 1944. Any communications between them would be through an interpreter or possible directly using limited French, while they were in face to face meetings or by means of No. 4 Liaison Unit when they were physically disparate. They had no time to actually get to know one other and each other’s staffs, so were strangers on the battlefield. Having recently concluded a costly participation in Operation SPRING, Simonds as already mentioned may well have had his confidence shaken and would most certainly be looking to repair any damage to his II Corps’ reputation.

Using the CAR model has allowed for a theoretical framing of where both commanders, Maczek and Simonds, were going to be challenged in their ability to communicate intent. Reliance on meetings to deliver verbal orders instead of written direction, personal communications through rudimentary French or via Liaison officers with varying degrees of both Polish and English language abilities, and impatience to get on with the fight were key identified shortcomings that were to affect the attainment of a well understood Common intent, particularly when as they impacted shared knowledge and comparable reasoning ability factors.

Having assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the two senior commanders, and identified potential difficulties in command interaction, and described the composition and roles of No.4 Liaison HQ, I will now turn to the staffs and subordinates of the two commanders and their preparedness and ability to work together in overcoming linguistic and cultural hurdles so as to be able to ensure that commander’s
common intent is established and remains clear. With a better understanding of who the commanders were, I return to the liaison element that was intended to support them.

1st Polish Armoured Division and II Canadian Corps Staff

Before I endeavour to answer this question and others involving the ability to both understand and communicate superior commander’s common intent throughout II Canadian Corps and in particular to its non-English subordinates, I need to describe how the Poles were to have worked within Simonds’ Corps, how military staffs interact at the various hierarchical levels (chain of command) and what functions they must be able to perform in order to effectively support the planning and conduct of combat operations. I intend to examine the staff relationship that existed between the 1st Polish Armoured Division staff and their Canadian superiors at II Canadian Corps level and determine if it was a functional relationship, allowing for an effective working relationship.

As part of Simonds’ II Corps, the 1st Polish Armoured Division fought alongside the 4th Canadian Armoured Division and was often in contact with the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division, the 51st (UK) Highland Division and the 49th (UK) Division. (Order of Battle [ORBAT] of the 1st Polish Armoured Division is at Appendix A). The only other non-English speaking unit in the Corps was the Canadian 4th Medium Artillery Regiment, a French-speaking unit. More will be said later about the use of some of its personnel in support of the Poles to better ensure the accurate communication of requested artillery support.
The selection of qualified liaison officers to allow for the smooth passage of information and orders from higher Headquarters (in descending order from the 21st Army Group to the 1st Canadian Army to the II Canadian Corps) to unique maneuver formations such as the 1st Polish Armoured Division, would not have been easy. The ability to effectively communicate common intent was dependent upon the availability of a pool of linguistically qualified officers who understood how both Polish and British (or Canadian) military units were equipped, trained, functioned and were then able to pass precise orders to their superior (non-Polish), subordinate (Polish) and flanking or peer units (non-Polish).

How this liaison element was structured and was whether its make-up was sufficient and flexible enough to allow it to perform effectively is what I will now describe. In particular I will look at the 1st Polish Armoured Division’s interaction with No. 4 Liaison HQ (British): how this particular liaison element was organized, how it was employed, how effective it was and whether it was created and implemented in time to fulfill the role for which it was intended. Understanding how Polish Staff officers may have interacted with their Canadian opposite numbers will be an essential part of this discussion. These are the questions that I need to answer in order to determine what effect staff relationships had on how the 1st Polish Armoured Division performed its role and what effect cultural and linguistic challenges had on these operational outcomes.

It will be recalled that the original role of the liaison elements operating inside of the 21st Army Group and by extension II Canadian Corps was to maintain contact between headquarters of British formations and Allied contingents through the British Liaison Headquarters attached to each Allied contingent. All correspondence, routine
orders and messages from British formation Headquarters were to be passed via the liaison team who was charged with ensuring that the implications of the correspondence were fully understood by those non-English speaking formations and units. The British Liaison Headquarters were similarly responsible for passing back all correspondence, messages and reports, both operational and non-operational from the Allied contingent to the Headquarters of the British formation under whose command the Allied contingent had been placed. This could amount to quite a volume of work.

One source for determining how this role was to be accomplished and the kinds of activities that the liaison personnel performed can be found in No. 4 Liaison Headquarters Weekly Progress reports. These weekly progress reports covering the period from January 1944 to the end of August 1944 provide relevant clues and insights on the linguistic and culturally related problems that were encountered in the period prior to the 1st Polish Armoured Division’s deployment to Normandy. This preparation phase will be the subject of the next chapter.

---

81 Letter from Chief of Staff (COS) 21st Army Group, signed by Lieutenant-Colonel L.F. Heard, to HQs 1st Canadian Army et al, June 8, 1944. LAC RG 24, Vol. 10604 File 215C1 (D86) 21 A Grp/1987/G (SD) 8 June 44.
Chapter 7 Preparing for the Fight

In order to determine whether new or untested military units are ready to be committed to combat operations, western militaries have created, and will likely continue to create, exercise scenarios that will attempt to simulate actual battle conditions in order to test a unit’s operational readiness. These exercises or maneuvers, as they have sometimes been called, could take the form of a staff paper exercise to go through procedures that staff officers will be expected to follow, or a practical exercise with a unit’s soldiers and vehicles maneuvering over terrain. The closer the exercise location comes to replicating or simulating the actual intended future area of military operations, the more beneficial it will be to the units being exercised. Military exercises also allow the various senior commanders and staff officers to develop a degree of familiarity in working with one another in a simulated scenario where the exercise could be halted if things were going awry, a luxury that real combat operations would obviously not permit.

The complexity of an exercise would of course be dependent upon the amount of time available prior to the battle, the availability of the units, the availability of an exercise area, sufficient fuel, rations, and ammunition as well as additional experienced staff to be able to run the exercises and grade the performance of the exercise participants or in military parlance “umpire” them. As well as allowing the units to practice already acquired tactical fighting skills, an exercise also provides its participants with an opportunity to see how well a liaison function could work, and as a result make any adjustments in its role, composition or subordination before it was committed to support units and headquarters during actual combat. All allied military forces in the United Kingdom at this time were training for war. As they progressed in their training they were
to be evaluated whilst practicing acquired skills. No allied units were exempt from evaluations as their readiness for combat.

Prior to their commitment to battle, Canadian formations together with their headquarters were participants in a number of military exercises. Conducted from the 4th to the 12th of March 1943, Exercise SPARTAN was one of the largest exercises ever held in the United Kingdom with a total of ten divisions participating, three of which were Canadian (2nd and 3rd Canadian Infantry Divisions and 5th Canadian Armoured Division). Importantly when it came to the future operations in North-West Europe in August 1944, the 4th Canadian Armoured Division was still completing training and mobilization and so was not a participant and the 1st Polish Armoured Division was not assigned a specific role, so it was also absent. The future Commander of the 1st Canadian Army, General Crerar was one of two Corps Commanders and Lieutenant-General Simonds was not in command of the II Canadian Corps at that time and so played no role in the exercise. Exercise SPARTAN revealed 1st Canadian Army Commander McNaughton’s serious limitations as a field commander.¹ His performance was to spell the beginning of the end of McNaughton’s tenure as Commander of the 1st Canadian Army and by the end of 1943 he had been replaced by Crerar.²

¹ John English, *Failure in High Command*, 310.
² “Exercise SPARTAN involving two armies and five corps, proved to be a turning point for Crerar and Montgomery. The praise for Crerar’s performance as Commander of 1st Corps was a sharp contrast to the opinions forwarded on McNaughton’s handling of the 1st Canadian Army. McNaughton’s poor showing was the last straw for those who harboured doubts about his capacity to handle the army in operations. Crerar on the other hand showed an appreciation of the need for flexibility in planning to obtain 1st Canadian Corps objectives and the required forward advance of his Corps despite initial disadvantages imposed by Ex SPARTAN suggest that he had a firm grip on the operational use of infantry and artillery to ensure effective fire and movement.” Paul Douglas Dickson, *A Thorough Canadian General: A Biography of General H.D.G. Crerar* (Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 2008, 217/218.)
The rapid wartime expansion of the Canadian Army had seen senior officers move rapidly through the ranks and for most part not remain in any command or staff appointment for long durations of time. In assessing the performance of the units and headquarters of II Canadian Corps it was noted in an after-exercise report that it is necessary to recall that this headquarters was organized only in the middle of January, 1943, that is, less than six weeks before the beginning of the preliminary moves of this exercise. This fact undoubtedly placed this headquarters at a considerable disadvantage.³

Several criticisms of the commanders being exercised were detailed during Exercise SPARTAN: one being “the handling of armoured forces as one of the least satisfactory aspects of the operations, a subject which requires much greater study and practice.”⁴ Significantly for my topic, a criticism of the strong tendency to hold conferences as a means of which to issue orders was highlighted. This desire by the senior commanders would repeatedly take senior military commanders away from their units when they should have been leading them:

The desire to hold conferences must be closely watched to ensure that commanders are not too hampered in commanding their own formations by too frequent attendance at conferences. As an example of this, an attack on the GERMAN side on 8 March by one brigade was the subject of an Army Commander’s conference at 1100 hours, a Corps and Divisional Commanders’ conference and a final Army Commander’s conference at 1600 hours. The attack in question was finally cancelled.⁵

⁴ Ibid., Paragraph 17, page 2, Annex.
⁵ Ibid., Paragraph 27 referring to paragraph 57.
The tendency of Canadian Army commanders, including Simonds to have conferences and issue orders verbally would be something that would have made comprehension by Maczek and his staff more difficult.\textsuperscript{6} When written orders were produced, they could at least be re-examined and their meaning interpreted or clarified by a staff, which was not the case with verbal orders since they were based on the secondary interpretation of notes taken at a meeting by someone who may or may not have captured or understood all the pertinent details. As cited above, the Canadian tendency for the use of verbal orders, if not corrected, would hinder its non-English allies’ ability to more accurately ensure and communicate well understood common intent, in particular the inferred intent obtained from analyzing the text of a written operational order.

A subsequent major military exercise (Exercise LINK) involving the II Canadian Corps Headquarters and other subordinate formations (divisions) and units (battalions and independent companies and squadrons) including the 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division and the 61\textsuperscript{st} (UK) Infantry Division, as well as a number of artillery units and staffs was held from the 13\textsuperscript{th} to the 18\textsuperscript{th} of September 1943 in East Anglia the United Kingdom. The setting of East Anglia was designed to represent the North-East corner of Sicily and the exercise would involve operations similar to those in that theatre.\textsuperscript{7} Operation HUSKY, which had involved the 1\textsuperscript{st} Canadian Infantry Division as part of the allied forces assaulting German occupied Sicily had recently been concluded. Lessons identified from these actual combat experiences added realism to the exercise scenario in Exercise LINK.

\textsuperscript{6} Hart, Colossal Cracks, 126.
\textsuperscript{7} HQ First Cdn Army, Exercise “Link” Preliminary Instructions, August 14, 1943, paragraph 2. LAC Ottawa, RG 24 Vol. 10728 File 219C1.009 (D80), file Number 60-5-26/Trg.
The exercise scenario was designed to see how various formations and units worked together, how the superior staffs worked to support the subordinate units, and how the unit staffs worked with both peer unit and superior staffs. The results of the exercise were used by the umpires and observers to identify where there was potential for improvements in both staffing and operational procedures. It was essential that all of these shortcomings be corrected and procedures be streamlined before military units and headquarters staffs were considered ready to be committed to combat operations. The various headquarters and unit participants would, upon passing a so-called confirmation exercise, be declared operationally ready (Op Ready) either immediately or upon the implementation of any number of required changes. These changes would involve such matters as staff procedures, commander’s use of tactics and interoperability with neighbouring units, to name but a few. Failure of a confirmation exercise could and did have career consequences for unit commanders and officers occupying key staff appointments. General McNaughton’s performance as 1st Canadian Corps Commander during Exercise SPARTAN was, as previously mentioned, the impetus for his eventual removal from command.8

This entire pre-combat evaluation by means of an exercise was not unique to either the Canadian or British forces. Other nations, both allies and belligerents, conducted such evaluations in varying formats, dependent on the amount of time and resources available. The intent of the evaluation was to ensure that so-called green or untested units would only be committed to combat when operational situations were so

8 Dickson, 218. SPARTAN was the catalyst for destroying McNaughton’s position.
desperate that there was no time to essentially practice (exercise) together or to rehearse the conduct of a particular plan in preparation for its eventual execution.

In an Administration Instruction (Admin Instr) dated the 4th of September 1943 for Exercise LINK, the exercise direction re-affirmed that the overall exercise objectives were twofold: “to train for war on the continent and to practice support (sup) arrangements in the field.” Detailed Exercise Instructions, which had been issued earlier stated that the object of the exercise was: “to practice HQ II Canadian Corps, 61st Infantry Division and the 1st Polish Armoured Division in a full scale exercise with soldiers against a controlled enemy involving various phases of battle and including the organization of support with live [artillery] firing by RA (Royal Artillery) units; and to try out the draft establishment of Liaison HQs with certain allied contingents.” Besides the above stated objectives of the exercise, there was recognition in the exercise administration instructions that owing to the inclusion of the 1st Polish Armoured Division in the order of battle some unique accommodations would have to be made to allow for the greatest chance of success on the path to preparation for its engagement in combat, for example bridging and demolitions were to be in both English and Polish, with the exact text specified. This proviso would allow for better mutual understanding during the exercise, and was intended to ensure effective future practices essential in actual combat.

---

10 Eastern Command Exercise ‘Link” General Exercise Instructions, Part I- General, Index 1, undated, 1. LAC Ottawa, RG 24 Vol. 10728 File 219C1.009 (D80).
11 Ibid., 9.
It can be deduced from the administrative instructions that even if an effective multilingual liaison team were part of, or attached to the 1st Polish Armoured Division, every operator of every vehicle could not be counted upon to possess enough English to read road signs, despite efforts at rudimentary English language lessons. Equally important, under the stress of real combat conditions, while tired and possibly under enemy fire, soldiers might forget or confuse any acquired secondary language skills. As well, the soldiers who escaped from Poland to Britain were mainly officers.\(^\text{12}\) As a consequence the Poles would likely have been older than their Canadian and British counterparts at the various rank levels, so a reversion to the use of Polish whilst experiencing the stressful conditions of combat would have been quite understandable.

Additionally, the same administration instructions specifically addressed to the 1st Polish Armoured Division’s unique position when it came to the challenge of foreign languages, even in an exercise context:

All HQs will give a copy of all out messages, orders, instructions, etc. and telephone messages to the Senior British Umpire. These will be interpreted by an English-speaking Polish officer or NCO at each HQ….Where possible three copies of a brief outline in English of Brigade orders will be sent to Divisional Senior Umpire who will send on two copies to Corps Senior Umpire who will send on one copy to control.\(^\text{13}\)

During this large-scale exercise in 1943, there was recognition that the understanding of a commander’s direction by all units under his command was important. At a minimum, the Polish officers and soldiers as part of Maczek’s staff and those

\(^{12}\) Koehanski, 225.

\(^{13}\) Eastern Command, Exercise ‘Link” General Exercise Instructions, Part I- General, Index 1, undated, 11.
commanding the subordinate units of the 1st Polish Armoured Division were required to be able to communicate to their English speaking superiors and peers concerning what their part of the operation was to be and how they intended to conduct themselves, adding essential details such as precise geographical locations of both their units and belligerent forces, accurate passwords to both ensure their success and avoid possible fratricide (so-called friendly fire casualties today).

Of note, Appendix C to Index 1 of the Administration Instruction titled *Method of Working with 1 Polish Armd Div* was devoted entirely to the issue of working with the non-English speaking allies. In paragraph 1 of Appendix C, the role of 4 Liaison Armd, the interface between the Poles and their Headquarters was described as follows:

(a) To interpret orders issued to 1 Polish Armd Div by 2 Cdn Corps and to assist in interpretation for HQ 2 Cdn Corps and any flanking or subordinate British forces concerned, of all orders, instructions, messages etc. initiated by 1 Polish Armd Div.

(b) To act as remembrancers (*aide-memoire or reference*) for Staff or HQ 1 Polish Armd Div so as to ensure smooth working and the proper application of Staff Duties as between HQ 2 Cdn Corps and 1 Polish Armd Div.14

The full page [legal size] Appendix was very specific as to the roles to be played by No. 4 Liaison Armoured Detachment and directed that the liaison element was to be established with the 1st Polish Armoured Division for the duration of the exercise. The stated intention at this time was to have all communications, written and verbal, pass through the liaison staff. This would include the communications of all flanking (other

---

14 Ibid., Appendix C to Index 1.
peer divisions), subordinate (brigades, regiments and battalions) and superior (Corps, Army and Army Group) level headquarters and military units.

It will be seen how this goal was not achieved during the exercise, something that should be taken as a foreshadowing of how military operations would be affected during the conduct of actual combat. It will be recalled that military exercises were meant to simulate actual combat scenarios in order to identify and correct errors in procedures, tactics and communications with the goal of reducing errors that could result in mission failure and high casualty figures. In order to assist with the non-English speakers, the Liaison section for the Umpire’s staff, those who would evaluate the exercise in its entirety, consisted of six English-speaking Polish officers.\textsuperscript{15}

After the conduct of a military exercise or a military operation, time permitting, a review is typically held, that is an analysis and summary of how the exercise or operation was conducted, whether its objectives were achieved and whether there were any suggestions for improvements in organizational structures, daily routines, effectiveness of communications and similar processes and procedures. This retrospective analysis results in a document that is produced and distributed widely in order to allow for improvements in how units and formations perform in actual combat conditions. Such a document is known today as an after action report (AAR). For Exercise LINK, the report produced was titled Director’s Notes with Points of General Interest from the EXERCISE. This very detailed report included a number of recommendations and specified some particular areas of concern. Amongst the sections of the report I highlight areas that are related to cultural or linguistic challenges.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., Index 7.
One particular important area where misunderstandings occurred during Exercise LINK was that in the “passing of the Polish Armoured Division through the Gap [The Stanford Gap, a geographical feature in the exercise area], when, and upon what orders, the Polish Artillery reverted to command of the Polish Armoured Division was not clear, since no reference was made to this important point in any of the orders which were issued in writing. This was a matter which required careful co-ordination and explicit orders.”\textsuperscript{16} In this instance the Poles likely knew that either from previous experience or training that they would react in a particular way. It had either not occurred to the Poles prior to the exercise or they were unable to explain their way of operating to their allies. Although the consequences of such actions during this exercise resulted in confusion and not casualties, such unexpected and uncommunicated behavior could, if not corrected, have dire consequences during their future combat employment.

In warfare artillery fire is controlled and coordinated at the highest headquarters level in order to ensure the proper assignment of priorities in the allocation of this scarce resource, and that there is no duplication of effort when it comes to different artillery units inadvertently aiming at the same target. An apparent unauthorized re-subordination of artillery was a lesson that was better learned on an exercise than on operations. How and why this particular event happened is undetermined. The fact that it was documented as having occurred I would suggest was meant to remind both the Poles and the II Canadian Corps staff to be cognizant of the possibility of such events reoccurring in the future. It turned out that the staff officers of the 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division had not

\textsuperscript{16} Eastern Command, Exercise “Link” Director’s Notes. (undated) Part II – Points of General Interest Arising from the EXERCISE, 5. LAC Ottawa, RG 24 Vol. 10728 File 219C1.009 (D80).
clearly explained to the Polish Artillery unit under its command the 1st Army Commander’s requirement for centralized control of artillery. \(^{17}\)

In the ever-dynamic environment of the battlefield, operational orders and changes to orders (be they verbal or written) from a superior headquarters to its subordinate formations are a superior commander’s direction, a clear statement of his intent, and therefore meant to be followed closely wherever possible. Transmission of these orders and changes to orders to all subordinate units are the responsibility of the higher headquarters. Orders must first be received and then be understood, acknowledged and then carried out. The fact that passage of orders did not occur in an exercise scenario can be a result of all or one of these steps breaking down either because of technical or procedural problems. Assuming that the message was received, was it understood? Was confusion caused by misunderstanding of language and culture, in this case, the Polish way of waging war?

Several important points were also highlighted by the armoured experts, those proficient in the efficient use and employment of tanks and all armoured vehicles. Given that the exercise was conducted in the United Kingdom and that the exercise participants had to balance scenario reality with concern for local property damage, the comment from the Director’s notes is understandable: “The most important lesson learnt was the failure to exploit fully the cross-country capacity of tracked vehicles. This doubtless, is largely due to the laudable desire to avoid damage, but the necessity for moving across

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 7.
country must be driven home down to individual drivers.” 18 This was certainly a very useful comment giving some justification for the observed use of armoured vehicles, but the conclusion of the paragraph sums up succinctly just why military exercises are conducted: Wrong lessons learnt under peace conditions are difficult to eradicate in war and will often result in unnecessary casualties.19

The enthusiasm for the Poles to get on with the war, a recurring theme that was often not fully understood by their British and Canadian allies, was echoed in the conclusion to this Appendix:

The Poles are so keen and work at such high pressure that one cannot help feeling that while their efficiency may be unimpaired for the period of an exercise, serious consequences might result from a prolonged series of actions unless every opportunity is taken of rest.20

We have seen that the use of a liaison team to allow for communications between the Poles and their superior headquarters was tried in scripted exercises conducted in the United Kingdom prior to their actual commitment to battle in France during August 1944. Although military exercises can never replicate actual combat conditions, some useful observations that would have allowed for a smoother flow of communications between Poles and their English-speaking allies have been recorded. I will now describe what lessons were learned and put to use to improve the effectiveness of such a team.

18 Eastern Command, Exercise “Link” Director’s Notes, Part II – Points of General Interest Arising from the EXERCISE. Appendix B, Royal Armoured Corps Notes, undated, 1. LAC Ottawa, RG 24 Vol. 10728 File 219C1.009 (D80).
19 Ibid., 1.
20 Ibid., 3.
For one thing, the issue of the amount of work that the 4 Liaison Armd was capable of handling and might have been tasked to do in the future was highlighted in some concluding remarks to the Director’s Notes. When it came to the subject of Corps Administrative Orders:

There was too much paper, although it is appreciated that if the Corps had included Canadian Divisions instead of British and Polish, much of the matter which was dealt with in detail would have been covered by normal practice and by standing Administrative Instructions. The heavy work of translating many of these instructions into Polish, a few days before the exercise would have been lightened had copies of the Corps Standing Administrative Instructions been sent to each division as soon as the composition of the Corps was decided upon. This would have enabled divisional headquarters to have digested them before the Corps Commander’s plan was issued and the Administrative plan could have been substantially reduced.\(^\text{21}\)

This critical observation speaks to one of the greatest challenges in modern warfare, that of rapid clear and concise communication. That the Poles were ready and willing to fight the Germans was a given. But before actually arriving on the European continent to face the German Army once again, they had to ensure that all of these procedural documents were translated into Polish, figure out what they actually meant, and then train or retrain their soldiers in Canadian procedures. The mobilization order for the 1\(^\text{st}\) Polish Armoured Division was one such production.\(^\text{22}\) Just how much of an effort

---

\(^{21}\) Eastern Command, Exercise “Link” Director’s Notes, Part II – Points of General Interest Arising from the EXERCISE, 13.

\(^{22}\) 4 Liaison (Polish) War Diary: January, Apr-Dec 1944. Progress Report for the week ending March 27, 1944, Mobilisation Order, March 18, 1944. (no.79/Mob) 6430/9/AG5 received at 10:00 20 March 44.
this amounted to is difficult to say, although a 1st of May 1944 entry in the weekly
progress reports cites the overuse of Intelligence staff in translation duties is indicative of
the scarcity of such resources.23

The volume of often very detailed administrative and operational instructions and
orders that were produced by II Canadian Corps presented a challenge to the non-English
speaking Pole. The operational details contained within these tomes needed to be
translated and their intent clear before their contact with the enemy. The Poles therefore
needed to ensure clarity of all communications from English into Polish. One way that
their English speaking allies could certainly have helped their Polish allies would have
been by enforcing brevity of communications. This subject would come back to haunt the
allies during the conduct of later combat operations.

Exercise LINK was able to highlight some of the potential challenges that were
likely to be faced in the employment of the 1st Polish Armoured Division under British
and by extension Canadian command. Regrettably, despite any identified shortcomings
and recommendations or changes made as a result of the exercise, they would only be
viewed from any report that General Simonds might have read. Simonds was not able to
exercise the 1st Polish Armoured Division before it came under his command in August
1944, and as previously mentioned, had not been involved in Exercise LINK in any role.
Although it is not known for certain whether he read any reports on Exercise LINK, I
would think it a reasonable assumption that Simonds or members of his staff did.

23 4 Liaison (Polish) War Diary Jan, Apr-Dec 1944. Progress Report for the week ending May 1, 1944,
paragraph 5(b). National Archives Kew, WO 171/3465. “Div Int Staff is having difficulty in confining
itself to purely Int duties, a tendency being prevalent to use them for translation duties.”
From further comments on leadership style, one must wonder if the following extract from the same Exercise Director’s notes was criticism or a compliment when it was stated: “the Commander Polish Armoured Division was not to be deflected from his object, quite rightly continued his advance with the main mass of his division.” Maczek and his soldiers were well motivated, but was his motivation of a level that was equal to the Canadians or greater? What problems could result from such an imbalance in motivation has been previously examined. The Poles in their enthusiasm to defeat the Germans could and did get out of step with neighbouring allied formations, causing serious exposure of the resulting unprotected flanks of military units. They also used up ammunition and fuel at such a rate that the allied logistical system was unable to cope with the resultant resupply requirements.

Besides the various military exercises that I have described above, No. 4 Liaison Headquarters’ War Diary refers to a number of smaller exercises that were conducted in 1944 prior to the 1st Polish Armoured Division’s arrival on the European continent and subsequent commitment to battle. These exercises are relevant to my dissertation in that they were related to the topic of communications, essential in combat and vital in the maintenance of a commonly understood shared intent. These liaison unit war diary entries will be included in a chronological sequence in order to demonstrate how each exercise was meant to build upon lessons learned in preceding ones.

On the 4th of March 1944 the ability to have direct communications between the 1st Polish Armoured Division and 21st AG [Army Group], or other formation under
whose command the Division is placed, was achieved.\(^{24}\) It goes without saying that it was preferable have confidence in the ability to achieve such an important capability and have practice using it before it was actually required. Since at this time the eventual subordination of the Polish division was unknown, it was simply a proof of the technical ability to conduct two-way communications. This achievement of direct communications meant no more that it was technically feasible to be able to do so.

On the 25\(^{th}\) of May 1944 Exercise ANTICLOCK was held by No. 4 Liaison HQ. The intent of this particular exercise was to practice wireless [radio] communications within the Liaison element.\(^{25}\) Whereas this may seem like a fairly limited objective, making sure that all members of a liaison element know how to communicate with one another using wireless [radio] is crucial, particularly when one considers that the various individual liaison officers of the unit would often be dispersed or attached to units of the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division. Such a seemingly simple exercise would confirm a basic but essential skill required by all liaison staff for communicating intent, relaying enemy dispositions and confirming the understanding of received commander’s direction.

Another wireless communications exercise was conducted from the 31\(^{st}\) of May to the 1\(^{st}\) of June 1944. Exercise WISŁA included both HQ 4 Liaison Armd and the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division Staff Officers.\(^{26}\) This exercise was intended to confirm that those Polish staff officers who would interpret Simonds’ intent, both direct and inferred, and then further disseminate those orders received from II Canadian Corps to the various

staff elements of the 1st Polish Armoured Division on behalf of the Polish divisional commander General Maczek were able to effect communications. Once again, the exercise confirmation meant that wireless communications could be achieved.

On the 8th and 9th of June 1944 Exercise CAMEL was conducted in the Rear Divisional and Administration area of the 1st Polish Armoured Division, the locations where the Polish staff officers would be employed during combat. No. 4 Liaison HQ staff attended the exercise in order to be able to see and understand the layout the divisional rear HQ and administration area.27 Understanding how the Polish divisional staff worked in the field on this exercise would have enabled No. 4 Liaison staff to better envision Polish staff working conditions in combat. Equally important in the setup they would have seen were the communications facilities which the Poles would be using. The skills and lessons learned in the previous two wireless exercises were being built upon.

Finally, during the period from the 21st to the 25th of June 1944 Exercise KESTREL was held with both the 1st Polish Armoured Division and No. 4 Ln HQ participating at full strength.28 This would have been the last formal large scale training prior to both units’ deployment to France. Many senior Polish and allied visitors were present, signifying the important political value of this Polish armoured contribution to the fight against the Germans. Although no post-exercise reports have been located, given the presence of senior visitors it would seem to have been more of a showcase event and this exercise perhaps a mere formality rather than a venue to learn additional skills or

make any procedural changes before the 1st Polish Armoured Division’s imminent dispatch to France.

An analysis of military training exercises conducted prior to combat operations is evidence that the personnel involved understood the value of being able to communicate with each other. Since I can find no further details on the exercises I am unable to comment on the quality of language interpretation demonstrated or on other issues related to misunderstandings as a result of language or cultural issues.

What the Liaison Element Looked Like

Although the previously cited directive on the establishment and roles of a liaison unit sounds reasonably clear, behind its simplicity were a number of challenges. Given the hierarchical nature of military organizations and the requirement to properly lead and manage large and often geographically disparate military forces, structures and organizational charts are an essential aspect of military culture and bureaucracy. Given the mobile and transitional nature of modern warfare, coupled with changes in personnel due to promotions, posting or casualties, the question of who reports to whom and what roles every organization and each of its members or staff plays, needs to be clear to all who use or would wish to avail themselves of its services.

No. 4 Liaison Headquarters, on the other hand, was designed to be the interface between the Poles of the 1st Polish Armoured Division and II Canadian Corps. This liaison unit was the means by which the Poles and Canadians could communicate with one other and pass on orders, situation and intelligence reports and any other operationally related correspondence and communications.
No. 4 Liaison Headquarters (4 Ln HQ) completed its mobilization on the 1\textsuperscript{st} of April 1944.\textsuperscript{29} The unit had however existed in some form prior to that, there being mention of its existence as No. 4 Ln during Exercise LINK in September 1943. As well, detailed weekly progress reports were produced as early as January 1944.\textsuperscript{30} The Wartime Establishment (WE) detailing the structure, manning levels and the major equipment holdings for 4 Liaison Headquarters was published on the 10\textsuperscript{th} of June 1944. With an approved Wartime Establishment, the British Army would now be required to assign personnel to the unit. The liaison unit was to have been comprised of 185 personnel, including a total of three interpreters.\textsuperscript{31} Until September 1944, the WE for the HQ 4 Liaison Armoured consisted of 35 officers, 150 other ranks, 43 vehicles and 21 motorcycles.\textsuperscript{32} The largest part of this contingent was composed of Royal Signals (British Army communications) personnel necessary for wireless communications purposes, that is the method to pass on commander’s intent to subordinate formations and units either in garrison or deployed. The liaison unit was commanded by a senior Army officer in the rank of Colonel. Upon promotion to Brigadier and assignment to 21\textsuperscript{st} Army Group liaison duties, the incumbent Colonel G.H.M. Peto handed over command to Colonel J.M. Anstice, who remained in command of 4 Ln HQ until the 10\textsuperscript{th} of October 1944.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{29} 4 Liaison (Polish) War Diary, entry April 1, 1944. National Archives Kew, WO 171/3465.
\textsuperscript{31} No. 4 Liaison Headquarters, Polish Forces, 21 Army Group (Armoured Portion) War Establishment. PISM. A.XII.43/2 cz 1, 190. Notified in A.C.I.s July 19, 1944, effective June 10, 1944.
\textsuperscript{32} Included as Appendix D (No. 4 Ln HQ WE (War Establishment)).
\textsuperscript{33} 4 Liaison (Polish) War Diary, entries May 3, and October 10, 1944. National Archives Kew, WO 171/3465.
The War Diary for No. 4 Liaison HQ notes that on the 4th of August 1944, the 1st Polish Armoured Division was placed under command of II Canadian Corps and liaison was established with opposite numbers in in HQ II Canadian Corps. One Canadian officer who was assigned to the 1st Polish Armoured Division during the allied operations in August 1944 was French Canadian Artillery Captain Pierre Sévigny, employed as a Forward Observation Officer. Sévigny was from the 4th Medium Regiment (RCA) the only francophone artillery regiment in II Canadian Corps. This assignment began a long, and according to Sévigny, beneficial relationship between the Poles and the French-speaking Canadian artillery officers. As many more Polish officers were fluent in French than in English, this grouping of French-speaking Canadian officers with the Poles, would seem to have been a logical choice. To the Polish officers it certainly was. Once again, according to Sévigny, who had previously trained with the Poles in Scotland: “since their second language (the Poles) was French, particularly so with the soldiers, they requested a French-speaking officer who could communicate with English-speaking senior artillery officers at Canadian Army Headquarters when massive fire was needed.”

35 Chris Ellis and Peter Chamberlain, Handbook on the British Army 1943 (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1975). (Original edition, published 1943 as TM 30-410), 37, para 34, d. (1) Artillery Liaison is maintained by Forward Observation, or Observing Officers (FOOs) who keep in touch with forward units, and by an artillery officer at the headquarters of the supported unit.
Although this was a very practical and useful method of clarifying language issues, there were simply not enough of such linguistically qualified Canadian officers to be employed at the all levels in the units of the 1st Polish Armoured Division. This shortcoming was further complicated by the fact that even if the Poles had spoken French, amongst Canadian Army officers at that time, according to Canadian historian Jack Granatstein: “14 % of officers were French speaking, most very junior, and of 4,090 francophone officers in February 1944, only 1,339 were overseas.” Since the requisite linguistic abilities were apparently not present amongst the various staffs: Polish, British and Canadian, I will now turn to what efforts were made to train the liaison elements to fill in this capability gap.

Progress Report(s) on English Language Training for the Poles

There are two entries in No. 4 Liaison HQ Weekly Progress Reports that refer to language training, English language for the Poles and Polish language for the members of No. 4 Liaison HQ. Since these are the only records that I was able to locate I will cite them in full and then extrapolate from them a potential total number of qualified non-native English speakers available, while at the same time caveating my estimates as to what their English-language competency could have meant.

The 4 Liaison HQ Weekly Progress Report for the 24\textsuperscript{th} of January 1944\textsuperscript{40}

**English**

A six-week course for 24 staff and Regimental officers at the Polish Military Bureau, Edinburgh began 7 January 1944. Intensive instruction of three groups of 20 officers each awaiting indefinite attachment to the British Army.

Cambs [Cambridge] University English, 152 tested, 69 Certificate of Proficiency, 28 Lower.\textsuperscript{41}

In addition to the Officers’ Polish classes, OR’s [other ranks] Polish classes have begun.

The Weekly Progress Report for the 3\textsuperscript{rd} of April 1944\textsuperscript{42}

**English**

The 12\textsuperscript{th} six-week course for staff and ROs [Regimental Officers] at the Polish Military Bureau ended 31 March 44, 24 officers. 24/25 March 55 proficiency, 33 lower certificates. Seven lessons on British Military correspondence and message writing ended.

Although I have been unable to locate any references to the actual number of graduates of the referenced English language courses, from the entries it is known that

\textsuperscript{40} 4 Liaison (Polish) Progress Reports for Week ending 24 January 1944. National Archives Kew, WO 171/3465.

\textsuperscript{41} “Cambridge English: First,” last modified August 30, 2015, accessed September 29, 2015, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambridge_English:_First. Cambridge University introduced the Lower Certificate in English (LCE), the second English language exam developed for speakers of other languages. The LCE represented a more elementary standard than the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE). The requirement for the LCE came as a result of the arrival of thousands of refugees from Europe into the UK. The LCE was used both during and after the war.

\textsuperscript{42} 4 Liaison (Polish) Progress Reports for Week ending April 3, 1944. National Archives Kew, WO 171/3465.
there were at least twelve serials each having up to 24 officers as students. From these facts I estimate that the maximum number of Polish officers who may have completed the six-week English course to be 288 graduates. This figure refers to those students who achieved some level of English language competency. This figure also assumes that all of the officer attendees passed, none of the students were recoursed (attended twice) and that all serials of the six-week course were conducted with 24 attendees. In addition to this figure should be added a total of 60 officers who were attached to the British Army as cited in the 24th of January 1944 entry. Their employment after the language course is unknown. Adding together the above estimates, a total of approximately 350 Polish officers having achieved some level of English language competency would therefore represent a maximum figure. The number of British officers and other ranks (ORs) who acquired any degree of competency in Polish as a result of the classes mentioned in the same weekly report entry is unknown.

The two previously cited Weekly Progress Report entries also refer to the numbers of individuals taking the University Cambridge proficiency and lower certificate exams (LCEs) in English together with an unknown number of students receiving lessons on British military correspondence. From these entries, it can be ascertained that efforts were being made to teach English to Polish Officers and that Polish servicemen were qualifying for proficiency certificates in English. What assessed level of ability this assigned them when it came to performing a liaison or interpreter function and where were they actually employed is unknown.

43 University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate LCE certificate index-number 582 awarded to Kazimierz Samulski in December 1947. The exam tested dictation reading and conversation, translation from and into English and English composition and language.
At the time of its embarkation to France in August 1944, the 1st Polish Armoured Division consisted of approximately 15,000 all ranks. Even if all of the Polish officers who attended the above-mentioned English course were able to function in English and were all assigned to the division, this would represent a ratio of one course graduate possessing some competency in English to approximately 50 other soldiers. It must be understood that this number is a rough estimate to be used solely for illustrative purposes since it does not take into accounting casualties, liaison officers detached, Poles in the division who already spoke English, self-taught or formally trained on courses other than those already mentioned, or any other English-speakers having joined the division. Based on the above mentioned approximate figures, I conclude that the number of English-speaking Poles who could have performed the role of simultaneous interpretation from Polish into English, and English into Polish, would not have been sufficient numbers to allow for widespread dispersal throughout the 1st Polish Armoured Division, that is to sub-units in contact with or alongside of unilingual English-speaking formations.  

Since I have been unable to determine who exactly these students were, I can only speculate as to whether they were they preparing for liaison jobs, attending more advanced courses, focusing their efforts on interoperability with their English-speaking allies or preparing for their potential fate in the post-war period. Most importantly for the purpose of my dissertation was whether this basic or rudimentary English instruction was sufficient to perform the roles to which the candidates were to be assigned. Based on the

---

44 “Linguist Support. Category 1 linguists should be used for basic interpretation for activities such as patrols, base entrance coverage, open source intelligence coverage and civil military operations. Commanders should plan for 30 to 40 for an Infantry Battalion. Referring to Appendix B. There were 12 battalion size units and divisional and brigade headquarters as well as a number smaller sized units in the 1st Polish Armoured Division, so based on this logie, a total of 360 to 480 interpreters would have been required for the units alone in order to adhere to present day identified requirements.” United States Army Field Manual FM-3-24 Counterinsurgency, Appendix C.
ratios and estimates calculated previously, flanking or neighbouring allied military formations were going to face a challenge in communicating with the Poles of the 1st Polish Armoured Division owing to an insufficient number of personnel possessing language competency to meet the needs.

Even if there had been sufficient numbers of qualified English speakers in the ranks of the 1st Polish Armoured Division, the military jargon rich environment would have further complicated communications and likely reduced the effectiveness of those Poles who had undertaken formal English language instruction. Although conversational English courses may have provided enough of a basis for social pleasantries during face to face interactions, warfare is never pleasant and quite often neither conducted nor directed in a face to face fashion that is superiors speaking directly to their subordinates. As previously stated, militaries represent a unique environment replete with their own lexicons, not the least of which is often an overuse of acronyms and cryptic slang, so I will now turn to what was done to minimize this additional linguistic challenge.

In the heavily jargon laced environment of the British and Canadian Armies, each combat arm (artillery, infantry and armoured) and specialty service arm (Engineers, Signals, etc.) possessed its own seemingly indecipherable lexicon. Explanations were deemed necessary to clarify actual meaning to even the non-military English speaker. For example, a particular artillery point of semantic accuracy that was to be clarified in December 1944 when the Poles were under command of II Canadian Corps was the precise meaning of the artillery term “stonk”: The letter circulated to the maneuver formations of the II Canadian Corps specified that by way of clarification “stonk” was defined as:
A specific form of artillery fire, consisting of a linear concentration brought down by one or more regiments, each regiment covering a front of 525 yards. It is pointed out that certain targets, for example a straight line of hedge or road, may call for a STONK, but this is the exception rather than the rule.\textsuperscript{45}

If the Polish or any other non-English speaking military members of the Canadian Corps were confused before the clarification letter was sent out to their respective units, one can only but wonder if it helped, whether they stopped using the term or it was used albeit erroneously for any future massive artillery bombardment. Given the lack of sufficient time for all aspects of training, much of the essential jargon would by necessity have to be learned on the job, a far from ideal situation. Adaptation and hoping for the best was a weak platform on which to rely for success.

One innovative solution available was of the kind reported by Polish soldier Aleksander Topolski on the previous experience of Polish soldiers of Anders’ II Polish Corps. Having landed in Italy in 1944 the Poles found themselves in a trilingual environment where they had to learn the English terminology and jargon of the British 8\textsuperscript{th} Army to which they now belonged as well as some of the Italian dialect of the local inhabitants:

In time we all started using English words. Even the lowly foot messenger, former village boys with little formal education, found it easier and faster to blurt out Dec-ay-Kew (abbreviation of Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General) in English than to recite \textit{Pierwszy Zastępca Kwatermistrza Kwatery Głównej} in Polish. In the Polish language we lacked the knowledge of acronyms and shortened forms.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{45} 4 Canadian Armoured Division BGS 1 Corps, file 125/G, sent to 1 Pol Armd Div and 4 Armd Liaison HQ as well as the other English speaking units in the Canadian Corps, December 19, 1944. LAC Ottawa, RG 24 Vol. 10943-File 249. C4 (D22) Ops RCA.
In joining II Canadian Corps in Normandy, the Poles who had studied English would have had to adapt to the Canadian jargon as well as the widespread use of acronyms, something unfamiliar to most Polish military personnel at that time.

**Composition of the BML (Brytyjska Misja Łącznikowa)**

No. 4 Liaison Headquarters was responsible for liaison with all Polish land forces (Army personnel) in the United Kingdom and consisted of two parts, the Armoured (Armd) and Non-Armoured (Non Armd). The major United Kingdom-based Polish military formations under its liaison responsibility were the 1st Polish Armoured Division as well as the 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade (*Samodzielna Brygada Spadochronowa*), a homogeneous Polish unit that was to be used in Operation MARKET GARDEN at Arnhem in late September 1944.47

The liaison function suffered a loss before the 1st Polish Armoured Division had even deployed to France when the Chief of Staff Colonel J. Levittoux, and British Liaison Officer, Major Wills, were killed by a small calibre bomb.48 Both had been attached to the 11th British Armoured Division in France on the 21st of July 1944.49 They had likely been sent to France as observers in order to gain some experience with

---

47 4 Liaison (Polish), Progress Report for the Week ending June 19, 1944. National Archives Kew, WO 171/3465. Instructions have been received in 21 AG (Army Group) letter 21 A Gp/17456/10/LAC(G) of 13 June 44 that the non-Armed portion of HQ 4 Liaison will no longer be responsible to the Comd of HQ 4 Liaison Armd and in future HQ- 4 Ln Non-Armld will be a separate entity.
deployed armoured formations before the 1st Polish Armoured Division deployed to the continent.\textsuperscript{50} The loss of these very experienced and highly valued officers, occupying the key positions that they did, coming so close to the division’s deployment, would have impacted future operational/liaison staff efficiency.

According to the Nominal Roll of Officers of the 4 Ln HQ Armd as of late April 1944, there were three officers who were listed as interpreters included in the total of approximately thirty officers,\textsuperscript{51} Temporary/Major H. Lloyd-Johnes, RA (Royal Artillery); Temporary/Major G.G, Peters, Intelligence Corps; and Temporary/Capt R.W. McLaren General List.\textsuperscript{52} I have been unable to determine how well they spoke Polish to assess their effectiveness in the role of interpreters, but have been able to find some evidence from the Polish point of view and a mention of Polish courses held for the members of the 4 Ln HQ.\textsuperscript{53} According to Major Tadeusz Wysocki, an officer in the 1st Polish Armoured Division:

\begin{quote}
In the opinion of at least several officers, it (the liaison element) was of use owing to the language difficulties in contacts with British commanders in various urgent issues. There could be issues related to the interpretation of orders, cooperation and coordination with neighbouring British, Canadian or American units, issues related to supplies, the transport of prisoners and so on.\textsuperscript{54}
\end{quote}

The Mission underwent many changes: in the first phase of the fight, it had one Major, three Captains and one

\textsuperscript{50} HQ 4 Ln Armd War Diary entry July 21, 1944. National Archives Kew, WO 171/3465.
\textsuperscript{51} Included as Appendix E, Nominal Roll of Officers 4 Ln HQ, April 22, 1944.
\textsuperscript{52} 4 Liaison (Polish) War Diary entry August 26, 1944. National Archives Kew, WO 171/3465. Captain R.W. McLaren was transferred to LAC 21 A Gp to be employed as an interpreter.
Lieutenant. They mastered the Polish language to varying levels, mainly they spoke it very badly, but however understood it well, and wrote it just a little better. One of them was married to a Polish Jew, spoke German excellently and Polish badly with a strong Wilno accent, revealing the fact that he spent a number of years in that area before the war.\textsuperscript{55}

The liaison unit was stood up and ready to assist in the communication of essential operational information. Just how well it was able to accomplish its intended role will be described next.

**Comments on Liaison Function**

In military organizations, operations staffs serve the requirements of their commander in ensuring that his intent is clearly communicated to subordinate formations. The number of liaison officers, some of whom represented national Polish issues while others dealt with operational issues at the Army Group, Army, Corps or Divisional level was likely very confusing to all concerned. Although in hindsight it may be easier to understand the liaison structure put in place, an explanation is nonetheless required. (Diagram included at Appendix H).

In the case of the 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division, an eight-person Polish liaison detachment was employed at 21\textsuperscript{st} Army Group to deal with Polish national issues. Another eight-person Polish Liaison detachment was also employed its superior headquarters, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF). A number of individual Contact Officers were employed at various peer superior formations

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 103.

219
(list attached at Appendix F). These Polish personnel were situated so as to be able to look after Polish national issues such as coordinating the recruiting of replacement soldiers from ethnic Polish soldiers who had been conscripted into the German Army (Wehrmacht) and subsequently captured by the advancing allied forces.

With only a few Polish-speaking British officers in the liaison unit it was not surprising that shortfalls were identified by allied personnel during combat. The problem in dealing with units (regiments or battalions) and sub-units (companies, squadrons or batteries) obtaining little or no information on account of linguistic misunderstandings once an operation had been launched was highlighted by the British 79th Armoured Division in August 1944. During the early stages of Operation TOTALIZE when the 1st Polish Armoured Division was under Canadian command the British found that there was: “the requirement for an interpreter officer to travel in the British sub unit commander’s tank so that all information could be interpreted and be made use of directly and quickly.”

Confusion during combat was difficult enough without the amplifying effect of language barriers at the tactical level where there was no time for reflection. Immediate action or reaction was the norm in order to survive and have any chance of accomplishing assigned objectives or exploiting discovered weaknesses.

Since 1940, a number of allied officers at various rank levels and during various stages in the war had stated that it was important to have the ability to rapidly communicate across the language barrier. Only in the First Canadian Army Final Intelligence Report published in late 1945 was it recorded how intelligence organisations

56 Letter to the British 21st Army Group from the Commander of the 79th Armoured Division (a subordinate formation), August 13, 1944. LAC Ottawa, RG 24 Vol 10604 79 AD.1/8.G.
functioned in the 1st Canadian Army during the Second World War. No suggestions or recommendations were offered as to how to deal with such issues in post war period, nor was any further thought given to the subject of interoperability when it comes to language difficulties amongst allies. Perhaps even more surprising is the absence in the above mentioned post-war summary was any mention of either translator or interpreter requirements for such obvious tasks as the exploitation of captured enemy documents and interrogation or debriefing of enemy prisoners of war.

During the course of its employment No. 4 Ln Headquarters Liaison elements were reduced in size and its duties redefined. A summary of a meeting that was held in September 1944 to consider a reduction of the War Establishment (WE) for No. 4 Ln HQ, that is the total manpower allotted to its organization, provides some insight into changes made as a consequence of its first deployment during combat operations in August 1944. Present at the meeting were Brigadier Peto (British), HQ 21st Army Group, Lieutenant-Colonel Rothschild (Canadian) II Canadian Corps, Lieutenant-Colonel Stankiewicz (Polish) 1st Polish Armoured Division and Colonel John Anstice (British) HQ 4 Liaison Armd. As a consequence of that meeting, one important recommendation affecting the future of the liaison unit was the role of the liaison unit commander. Whereas previously the Commander (HQ 4 Armd Ln) had worked with the Commander of the 1st Polish Armoured Division, it was found that in operations that the Corps Commander Simonds preferred to deal directly with Maczek and that any assistance was

57 First Canadian Army Final Intelligence Report Volume 1. Part 1 Operational Intelligence, Section 1. Intelligence in the Canadian Army. (File Number 42-1-0/ Int July 1945 signed by Colonel P.E.R. Wright, GS Int, 1st Cdn Army, copy in my possession, 1.
59 Ibid.
not required from the Commander, 4 Liaison. The reasoning behind this recommendation being that since the Liaison Unit Commander did not speak Polish in any case, he could add little value. As will be described later, Simonds did possess a fair amount of French, so he and Maczek would have been able to communicate to some extent without an interpreter. Whether they could have expressed or debated complex issues using this medium of communications remains unconfirmed, but unlikely. One has to wonder whether the conclusion that led to this decision was that if there were going to be language or cultural misunderstandings, it was better to have them directly between the two Generals instead of adding an additional level of non-comprehension by using an intermediary. In this respect, the liaison unit would seem to have failed in its task to provide effective communication between the two commanders. Though possibly not the only reason, lack of linguistic abilities undoubtedly played an important role in this decision.

As a consequence of this recommendation the rank of the Commander 4 Liaison HQ was to be reduced to the level of a G1 (Lieutenant-Colonel) and would work with the 1st Polish Armoured Division and II Canadian Corps staff rather than with directly with the GOC (General Officer Commanding), Maczek. Another result of this same meeting was that No. 4 Liaison HQ’s War Establishment (WE) was also reduced in number to 23 officers, 93 other ranks, 32 vehicles and 10 motorcycles. On the 10th of October 1944 Lieutenant-Colonel R.B. Shepherd assumed command from Colonel Anstice.

60 Letter from Brigadier Peto, Chief Liaison Officer (CLO) 21st Army Group to 4 Liaison HQ et al, September 20, 1944. LAC Ottawa, RG 24 Vol 10604 21 A Grp/17456/20 Sept 44. Para 3.
Despite what were likely their best efforts to work as part of the 1st Polish Armoured Division team, General Maczek in speaking on the subject of Liaison Officers perhaps best sums up the effectiveness of their Anglo-Saxon colleagues when the Poles of his division heard news of the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising on the 1st of August 1944: “They (the liaison staff) were sympathetic people, positively inclined towards the Poles and on the whole were very useful to the Division.”

The British liaison personnel did their best within their means and were appreciated by the Poles for what they able to do. If recorded, my research has not uncovered how the Poles actually viewed their effectiveness.

With all that was occurring in their homeland, the Poles could have been understandably excused for being frustrated and emotionally distracted. The Poles assigned to the II Canadian Corps were none the less fully committed to undertake combat operations in August 1944. The various militaries (British, Canadian and Polish) therefore simply had to make this operational relationship work. The pressure to succeed, as in any hierarchical organization, was to be felt particularly by its commanders. So were they prepared to operate effectively together? Their challenge as commanders is how they would have been able to communicate and to ensure that orders were understood and in the case of Maczek, passed on to his Polish-speaking units.

The next chapter will focus on the 1st Polish Armoured Division during Operations TOTALIZE and TRACTABLE and as a result of linguistic and cultural challenges, how well orders were communicated and understood.

Wysocki, Geneza i Dzieje, 104. After five years of German occupation a Polish Underground Army was attempting to liberate the capital of Poland. The Polish insurgents were poorly armed and inadequately trained, facing a heavily armed German military opponent.
Chapter 8 Commitment to Battle

The focus of this chapter will be the Canadian and Polish abilities to interact with each other and to translate common intent into clear direction; that is not misinterpreting or losing both the stated and inferred intent of its originator, their Corps commander. To describe the consequences of miscommunication, this chapter will follow the combat experience of the 1st Polish Armoured Division in August 1944 by means of a systematic analysis of a selection of vignettes that are related to the subject of misunderstandings resulting in operational mishaps or the potential for fratricide.

Allied armies comprised of primarily, but not exclusively British, American and Canadian military forces had begun the liberation of France on the 6th of June 1944 (D-Day) in Normandy. The overall plan for the allied campaign had been to land an American Army on the right and a British Army on the left, capture local bridgeheads (retain a presence on the land) and control enough geographical area in order to assemble the large military forces deemed sufficient to capture the Cherbourg Peninsula. After capturing the port of Cherbourg the next step was to capture the Brittany Peninsula and then head eastwards towards the Seine River.¹

From the D-Day landings until the beginning of Operation TOTALIZE on the 8th of August 1944 the allied armies had experienced some battlefield successes, heavy manpower losses and were progressing more slowly than desired. On a positive note, the Normandy bridgehead had been successfully established. Nevertheless, follow on fighting, in particular the battles in the Caen area had, after eighteen days of fighting,

resulted in the German forces still holding the high ground west and south of Caen.² Both
the allies and the Germans had suffered heavy casualties and in the words of historian
Terry Copp: “Normandy had become a battle of attrition and Montgomery was doing his
best to ensure that it was the enemy who collapsed first.”³ Canadian operations on the last
day of Operation GOODWOOD had been marked by heavy casualties to infantry
battalions, at a time when infantry was a scarce resource in 21st Army Group.⁴

This was the tactical situation at the time the 1st Polish Armoured Division arrived
on the continent on the 31st of July. Canadian units were tired and Simonds was
determined to exploit the existing situation no matter how tired they were.⁵ Simonds
needed a success in battle. Maczek while under Simonds’ command needed to preserve
manpower for possible future operations further east.⁶ It is unlikely that the two
commanders understood each other’s unstated strategic goals that are implicit intent.

² Copp, Fields of Fire: The Canadian Army in Normandy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003),
106.
³ Ibid., 135.
⁴ Ibid., 180. Operation GOODWOOD was the British battle for CAEN in Normandy, that took place
between 18/20 July in 1944. The Canadian portion of Operation GOODWOOD, Operation ATLANTIC
was to capture the part of CAEN south of the ORNE River. The overall result of the battle was that British
control was extended east of CAEN.
⁵ Ibid., 189.
⁶ Wysocki, 105-106. Extract from Rozkaz Dowódcy Dywizji. (Division Commander’s Order, August
6, 1944). English copy obtained from Simonds’ family.
Figure 7.1 Map of Falaise Gap


By the time that the 1st Polish Armoured Division came under command of the II Canadian Corps on the 4th of August 1944, plans for the conduct of Operation TOTALIZE were already entering their final stages.7 Corps Commander Simonds was convinced that the task of capturing Falaise could be accomplished if he had sufficient forces, and with that in mind he had asked for an additional armoured division as well as an additional infantry division. In response he received the British 51st (Highland)

Division and the 33rd British Armoured Brigade, as well as the 1st Polish Armoured Division.  

Montgomery’s direction for Operation TOTALIZE, which was to have begun no later than the 8th of August 1944, consisted of three goals:

(a) To break through the enemy positions to the south and southeast of CAEN.

(b) To gain such ground in the direction of FALAISE as would cut off the enemy facing the Second British Army, and render their withdrawal difficult, if not impossible.

(c) To destroy equipment and personnel as preliminary to possible wide exploitation of success.  

II Canadian Corps Commander General Simonds’ mission, derived from this superior commander’s intent, involved three major problems areas: “how to achieve surprise; how to neutralize the enemy’s defensive fire; and how to effect a deep penetration of infantry beyond the enemy’s screen of mortars and machine-guns.”

How well this intent was communicated to its non-English participants is what I will examine next. Significantly it came to light after the battle that the enemy had captured the II Canadian Corps Operations Order which outlined the entire plan. The enemy had in their possession a written description of II Canadian Corps’ direction to its subordinate divisions and as a consequence the German adversaries would have

---

8 Ibid., paragraph 12.
10 Ibid., paragraph 34.
11 Ibid., page 17, paragraph 75.
understood what the Canadian command intent was meant to have been, including the Corps Commander’s stated objectives. Barring any linguistic challenges the Germans may have faced, Simonds’ common intent was now reasonably clear to them. So who understood the intent better, the Germans or the Poles of the 1st Polish Armoured Division?

Poles under Canadian Command

The familiarity of commanders and staffs with their subordinates and one another, when combined with common training, are keys to building effective working relationships. It was not however, until the 31st of July 1944 that II Canadian Corps was to come under command of the 1st Canadian Army, a mere eight days prior to Operation TOTALIZE. Becoming familiar with new levels of staffs, each other and the integration of the Poles to under command of II Canadian Corps in such a short period of time would have been difficult enough tasks without the additional linguistic and cultural challenges and hurdles. All of these factors were now to be exacerbated by the time constraint of having only one week before being committed to combat.

Maczek and his Allied Peers and Subordinates: Other Divisions in II Corps

So how did Maczek and his staff fare in this virtually English only operating environment with his flanking units? When the 1st Polish and 4th Canadian Armoured Divisions in Simonds’ II Canadian Corps assembled on the start line in order to execute their part of the plan for Operation TOTALIZE it should be recalled that: “These units had landed in Normandy only a few days earlier, and had not had an opportunity to
rehearse the plan, as had the veterans spearheading the assault.¹² No time was available to get to know each other or achieve familiarity with each other’s procedures. The net result of this unfortunate lack of time meant that two fresh untried armoured divisions, who were intended to support one another, were virtual strangers, coupled with the fact that neither spoke the other’s language.

Given the rather disadvantageous starting situation that the Poles under Maczek faced, I intend now to describe the linguistic operational environment in which Maczek found himself, in order to determine whether his peers were simply too busy trying to succeed without having to support him or whether they were they impatient or frustrated with a “foreign” general officer whose training, experience and viewpoints differed from theirs. I also intend to show that Maczek’s peers could never have quite understood the Polish hatred of the Germans, their desire to fight through the Germans and continue the fight throughout the liberation of the Polish homeland, no matter what the cost was an issue that crosses both the cultural and emotional spectrums.

Commitment to Battle

Maczek’s peer armoured division commander in II Canadian Corps, Major-General George Kitching, Commander of the untried 4th Canadian Armoured Division alongside of whom his division was deployed, was familiar with operating in a foreign environment, having served in both Singapore (two years) and India (four years) in the interbellum period and possessed at least a basic knowledge of French from his British

---

¹² Whitaker, Victory at Falaise, 117. Author and veteran of the Normandy campaign Canadian Lieutenant-Colonel Denis Whitaker.
Given Maczek’s weak English ability, the two generals should have been able to communicate in at least simple French. Since the two armoured divisions were to be deployed side by side, they were therefore required to mutually support and protect one another during combat operations in August 1944. A common understanding of their superior commander’s as well as each other’s intent was essential to allow for the most effective mutual cooperation when they were fighting alongside of each other, and therefore would be expected to provide support to each other when, where and as required. Clear communication of their superior’s intent to their respective subordinate units would have been essential to help ensure that all of their particular formation’s units could be a position to assist their opposite numbers.

Compounding any problems encountered due to language and cultural misunderstandings was the actual geographical area in which the battles were to be fought. According to author and veteran of the battles Denis Whitaker: “The allies had no conception of the ruggedness of the country, nor had they the appropriate equipment or special training to assure them hope of success in this close quarter fighting.” The Allies had not factored in the difficulty of mounting offensive operations in the countryside known as bocage. In this difficult terrain, the large-scale armoured operations that the

---

13 “Knowledge of French being a requirement for graduation when he passed through RMA Sandhurst in 1929. Kitching assumed command of the 4th Canadian Armoured Division in February 1944 and commanded the division in the battle of Normandy.” Kitching, Stacey introduction, p.i.
14 Whitaker, Victory at Falaise, 23.
15 Robert & Collins. Super-Senior. Grand Dictionnaire Francais-Anglais. Harper-Collins Publishers, 105. Bocage is defined as farmland criss-crossed by hedges and trees. The reality faced by the soldiers was as described by Denis Whitaker “Bocage: enclosed small patches of green pasture and apple orchards. A single fallow mile might have as many as 4,000 of these small enclosed fields, each surrounded by imposing, impenetrable hedgerows, steep high banks covered with thickly entwined hedges, branches sometimes reaching a height of twenty feet.” Whitaker, Victory in Falaise, 22.
allies had trained for on the plains of England would not work.\textsuperscript{16} The challenges of conducting military operations in this terrain were to add to the frustrations that any language and cultural barriers had already created in the achievement of common intent.

For the period of both Operations TOTALIZE and TRACTABLE (8\textsuperscript{th} to the 21\textsuperscript{st} of August 1944), the Canadian Army unit and headquarters references to the Poles and interactions with Canadian units are unfortunately fairly sparse.\textsuperscript{17} Given the conditions under which the war diaries were typically written, either during periods of intense combat in which case entries would be brief and to the point or after the action in which case non-enemy interactions may not have been considered important enough to merit an entry in the war diary, I believe that it is reasonable to assume that the entries by no means represent a complete account of all the Polish-Canadian encounters on the battlefield. Nonetheless, unit war diaries provide us with a flavour for the kind of incidents that occurred which could be directly linked to a lack of misunderstanding owing to language difficulties.

It may be understandable that mistakes were made at the start of military operations, where members of the units involved were nervous and unfamiliar with one another. Mistakes would also continue to be made while they acquired familiarity. The various war diary entries will be included in a chronological sequence in order to demonstrate the kinds of problems encountered because of different language and culture that resulted in unclear common intent.

\textsuperscript{16} Whitaker, \textit{Victory at Falaise}, 24.
\textsuperscript{17} The Order of Battle for the II Canadian Corps is attached at Appendix A. Unit subordination within a particular division or brigade is cited in the relevant footnotes.
Communications effectiveness was not only reduced by misunderstandings caused by language differences, but were also impeded by deviations from standard radio operating procedures. When it came to inter-unit communications in the middle of the combat operations the Poles were cited for a security breach on the 8th of August 1944 (the first day of operations for the Polish 1st Armoured Division leading to the Falaise Gap victory) as a result of using plain language (non-enciphered) communications, albeit in Polish, when sending a situation report (SITREP). Since the ability to communicate directly from one unit to another was not possible, the Polish message was relayed by the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division to the II Canadian Corps HQ. What was revealed in the message’s text were Polish casualties, an estimation of the size of the enemy (German) forces facing the Poles and an estimate of the level of the German operational commitment to the fight (first or second echelons).\(^{18}\) German soldiers able to understand Polish would have now had a clear indication of their effectiveness against their Polish foes. It would seem that at this particular time in the battle while under combat conditions and stress, only rudimentary communications capabilities were available, at best.

Although in the heat of battle on the Poles’ first day this kind of mistake is certainly understandable, it begs the questions: did the Poles had the capability to properly encipher the radio traffic; or whether the information was believed to have a time perishability given the tempo of operations and so information was sometimes sent in plain language, that is not enciphered, as the previously cited examples attest.

It is not clear whether this mistake was caused by the Poles or the liaison element. The possible shortage of experienced liaison staff that was co-located with the reporting

---

unit may also have been the cause of the error, or at least contributed to it. Lastly, one has to ask whether the practice of enciphering and then sending radio traffic was exercised during any of the training exercises conducted previously in the United Kingdom. This combination of these factors could and possibly did have serious consequences for the Poles. Luck is not meant to be a consideration in the planning of operations.

A disastrous misunderstanding occurred as a result of erroneous reception or transmission of geographical coordinates for an assigned geographical position at which Polish soldiers were supposed to be located. On the 9th of August 1944 the 28th Canadian Armoured Regiment (British Columbia Regiment BCR or Worthington Force), [part of Kitching’s 4th Canadian Armoured Division], with the Poles on their east flank, found itself on the 140 heights [height in meters used as a reference point] reporting to superior headquarters by wireless that they were located in the map quadrant 0946.19 This reference placed them at Height 195, nearly six kilometers from their actual location. This error resulted in the Worthington Force remaining unlocated. The accurate reporting of the unit’s actual location was further delayed even after the 28th CAR senior non-commissioned officer Regimental Sergeant Major Jay contacted elements of the 1st Polish Armoured Division.20 The unit’s (28th CAR) actual location was not passed on to higher headquarters, possibly as a consequence of units with poor or no radio communications capability, further eroded by language difficulties. As a result, Worthington Force continued to be lost in Normandy. “What is not clear is why word of the battlegroup’s

19 Potomski, GBSWM, 249.
location was not relayed to army headquarters.”

A Wednesday 9th of August 1944 unit war diary entry for another Canadian unit, the Algonquin Regiment, part of the 4th Canadian Armoured Division records: “At approximately 1755 hours a tank threat could be seen approaching the position from La Croix. This turned out to be the Polish Division who did not know of our predicament [location and current tactical situation with respect to the Germans].” This appears to be yet another case of near mistaken identity, even though it was still daylight when the encounter occurred. Although it is not clear from this citation whether language was the key issue, it was very likely a contributing factor, given that this meeting occurred shortly after the start of Operation TOTALIZE.

A war diary entry for Sunday the 13th of August 1944 for the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, a party of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division describes the unexpected results of a patrol when:

A Lieutenant detailed to take a patrol to a Chateau which he found occupied by a tp [troop] of Polish tanks. They were as surprised as he was when contact was made and what might have led to firing on one another ended up as quiet a joke in the Bn.

21 Ibid., 20.
22 LCMSDS Algonquin Regt/10th Inf Bde/4th Cdn Armd Div. Unit War Diary, entry for Wednesday August 9, 1944.
23 LCMSDS Royal Winnipeg Rifles/ 7 Inf Bde/3 Cdn Inf Div. Unit War Diary, entry for Sunday August 13, 1944.
That this chance encounter did not result in a mishap of friendly fire can be attributed to good luck rather than planning. Although no other details of this incident have been located, this particular Canadian Lieutenant was unaware of the presence of his Polish allies. Whether this occurred as a consequence of a lack of communications as to these particular Polish locations, a misunderstanding of common objective(s) by the Poles, the Canadians or both, or that the Poles although highly motivated, were deficient in their overall understanding of common intent, the potential for dire unintended consequences was once again fortuitously avoided.

Yet another potential misunderstanding or misinterpretation of a superior commander’s orders is recorded in the unit war diary entry for Thursday the 17th of August 1944 when the 22nd Armd Regt (Canadian Grenadier Guards) reported that:

a LO [Liaison Officer] from the 10th Polish Armd Bde was met at L’Homme-Coutiboeul. He said he expected us to cross the River Dives there and proceed down to Mandeville (2732)... Major Hamilton went back to Bde to check, since these orders seemed to conflict with the Poles’ plans.24

Liaison officers ideally were chosen for their employment to be able to communicate between neighboring allied military units, be they English-speaking or otherwise. For lack of any further evidence related to this incident it is not possible to say whether the particular Polish liaison officer was responsible for the miscommunication of the information or whether he passed on exactly what the higher Polish headquarters, in

this case the 10th Brigade as part of the 1st Polish Armoured Division, had understood their orders to be. After over a week of combat, it seemed that misunderstandings were continuing to impact operations. This should not be surprising given the challenges in confirming explicit intent and the resulting misinterpretation or non-interpretation of implicit intent facing the Poles.

Another example of how accuracy of communications was to play an important role in this operational theatre occurred when, according to Polish Captain Walewicz while trying to clarify directions on the night of the 18th of August 1944 when the French guide had misunderstood the Polish pronunciation of their objective Chambois: “We were given the order to secure Chambois, but we were led instead to les Champeux. It was unbelievable.” Although such a mistake could have occurred in a Canadian unit, it would have been less likely. It would have been far easier for the Canadians to have re-checked geographical coordinates if there was any confusion. I infer that owing to their stronger motivation, the Poles would have been more likely to not do so and simply push on.

As it turned out, the Poles ended up penetrating well behind enemy lines and came upon the headquarters of the German 2nd SS Panzer Division with the 2 Armoured Regiment commanded by Colonel Stanisław Koszutski having arrived in Champeux both unintentionally and fortuitously. “The unexpected arrival of the Polish tanks in Champeux threw the Germans into such confusion that their counter-attack was delayed for forty-eight hours allowing time for the British and Canadians to bring sufficient force

---

25 Whitaker, _Victory at Falaise_, 216.
forward to meet the counter-attack.”26 This misunderstanding could well have had disastrous results for the Polish 2nd Armoured Regiment, either its loss by capture or death, when unexpectedly facing overwhelming numbers of the enemy at night. An ensuing firefight resulted in the Poles capturing the command post. Luck was once again on their side.

Two further war diary entries were recorded by the Canadian Grenadier Guards late in Operation TRACTABLE. The entry for Sunday the 20th of August 1944 cites: “evidently the Polish Division had become isolated whilst closing the mouth of the pocket and our Division was to reopen their line of communication”27 In this case the Canadian soldiers were reacting to what they understood the situation to have been. With no further details on this encounter recorded in the war diary, the Canadians appeared to have found the Poles in a predicament and whether they sought direction from a higher headquarters or simply reacted and did what was required in order to extricate their Polish allies from their predicament is unknown.

In either case the successful results were spelled out in a unit war diary entry for Monday the 21st of August 1944:

the Poles had no supplies for three days; they had several hundred wounded who had not been evacuated, about 7 POW (Prisoners of War) lay loosely guarded in a field….. The Poles cried with joy when we arrived and from what they said I doubt they will ever forget this day and the help we gave them.28

26 Maule, Caen, 162.
In addition to the Canadian war diaries, a number of insightful vignettes from the 1st Polish Armoured Division describing the conditions under which they were operating paint an interesting assessment of their allies. Lieutenant-Colonel Marian Borzysławski, Commander of the 2nd Motorized Artillery Regiment (*Pułk Artylerii Motorowej*) relates: “What was happening with Canadians on our left flank, we had no idea. We had no communications with them, and could only hear the noise of their movements.”

Although communications procedures were practiced during pre-deployment exercises, the 4th Canadian Armoured Division was not part of these series of exercises. As a consequence, the two untried divisions had no experience in communicating with one another. This inability to communicate with each other placed an even greater reliance on the understanding of their commander’s intent. A combination of no method of communications, no liaison elements deployed and the confusion resulting from the dynamic nature of offensive military operations could have spelled any number of disastrous scenarios amongst which was fratricide resulting from not knowing where exactly where your allies are located.

Lack of communication and miscommunications was exacerbated by differing tactics resulting from experience and previous training. The same Polish Battalion Commander in commenting on his British allies, the Hampshire Regiment from the British 49th Infantry Division: “they had dug in as if to defeat a German offensive and in the middle of the battalion grouped the anti-tank unit. We thought that the British had

gone mad.”

The Poles in trying to understand their allies were also trying to pass on lessons they had learned or adapted since according to another Polish officer: “our Army followed a course of instruction in our training centres as well as in English ones.”

It is possible that the British soldiers either did not understand what the Poles were getting at or were simply not interested in what the Poles had to say.

As the operations progressed, changes to commander’s orders were still being sent from the superior headquarters. In particular, the importance of sealing off the enemy pocket was emphasized in orders received by the Chief of Staff, 1st Canadian Army, Brigadier Churchill Mann, in a telephone message from Montgomery at 1445 hours on the 17th of August 1944:

> It is absolutely essential that both the Armoured Divisions of 2 Cdn Corps, i.e. 4 Cdn Armd Div and 1 Pol Armd Div, close the gap between First Cdn Army and Third U.S. Army. 1 Pol Armd Div must thrust on past TRUN to CHAMBOIS 4051 at all costs, and as quickly as possible.

Although Montgomery’s direction was now very clear to II Canadian Corps from its two levels of Headquarters, at the 21st Army Group and the 1st Canadian Army, was this degree of clarity achieved at the divisional level? At a minimum, at least the message to move as quickly as possible was:

> So rapid had their advance and so continuous and exhaustive their engagement with the enemy that more than once Polish

30 Ibid., 38.
units found themselves short of petrol and ammunition and had been forced into temporary immobility until supplies could with difficulties reach them.\textsuperscript{33}

On the 17\textsuperscript{th} of August, when the Poles received orders to push on to Chambois, they were nearly five miles ahead of their neighbours in the 4\textsuperscript{th} Canadian Armoured Division and knowing that they were in for a tough fight, the Poles reorganized and fought until support arrived.\textsuperscript{34} Although the Poles were eventually able to get refueled and resupplied by the Americans in the 1\textsuperscript{st} US Army’s V Corps, time was lost in the communications of the reason as to the requirement and the negotiations that took place on the Chambois/Mont Ormel Road.\textsuperscript{35} The consequence of these delays and misunderstandings meant that allied forces were not in the correct location with the requisite forces to complete their assigned objectives. The net result was that the enemy had more time to save additional forces from eventual encirclement and destruction.

The Falaise Gap was finally closed and in the morning of the 22\textsuperscript{nd} of August, fighting had ceased in the area. Success had been achieved. As a result of the intense fighting, Polish casualties were high.\textsuperscript{36} So how did the liaison function actually work during these operations? During the initial stages of military operations in August 1944, that is during Operation TOTALIZE, Maczek in the heat of battle, in commenting on Liaison Officers and in frustration was to say, “I don’t need Liaison Officers, I need more ammunition!” \textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 24, paragraph 101. II Canadian Corps Ops Log, August 19, 1944.
\textsuperscript{35} Whitaker, \textit{Victory at Falaise}, 246.
\textsuperscript{36} “By the night of August 18, Polish fatalities totaled 263, while Canadian fatalities totaled 284.” Roman Jarzymowycz, \textit{Tank Tactics: from Normandy to Lorraine} (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 2001), 195.
\textsuperscript{37} Potomski, \textit{GBSWM}, 267.
From what Canadian regimental war diary entries say about the interactions and at times chance encounters with the Poles, there were a number of misunderstandings which could have resulted in fratricide. At this point one has to wonder that, given the damage to allied relations as a consequence, were any instances of fratricide not recorded, either intentionally, because the Poles were mistaken for Germans or by virtue of no participants having survived a particular fratricidal encounter. A good understanding of common intent at the lowest tactical unit level may be difficult to gauge but the fog of war exacerbated by lack of familiarity with one other, coupled with language difficulties would certainly have contributed to the potential of such disastrous encounters on the battlefield occurring.

To assess the effectiveness of the liaison function, post Falaise Gap (Operation TRACTABLE) meetings, particularly one that was held on the 19th of September 1944 and chaired by British Brigadier Peto, Senior Liaison Officer from 21st Army Group, were held with the stated requirement that: “attendees should be of senior rank and prepared to give their views as to what is required by the Poles in the way of British assistance to ensure smooth liaison.”

As mentioned in Chapter 6, as a result of this meeting, the liaison function was to be reduced in scale and its subordination changed. Despite the language barrier, Simonds wanted direct access to Maczek. As a consequence, an important recommendation affecting the future of the liaison unit was: that whereas previously the Commander (HQ 4 Armd Ln) had worked with the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the 1st Polish Armd Group.

---

38 Memorandum from Colonel Anstice Comd HQ 4 Liaison Armd to HQ 2 Cdn Corps (Attention Chief of Staff), Subject WE (War Establishment) 4 Liaison Armd, September 17, 1944. LAC Ottawa, RG 24 Vol. 10942-File 245. P.016 (D1) file 4LNHQ/ARMD/4/3.
Armoured Division, it was found that in operations that the Corps Commander Simonds preferred to deal directly with Maczek and that any assistance was not required from the Commander, 4 Liaison HQ since he did not speak Polish in any case, and therefore could add little value.\textsuperscript{39}

\textbf{Results of their First Combat}

The experiences of units from the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Canadian Infantry Division, 4\textsuperscript{th} Canadian Armoured Division and the 49\textsuperscript{st} (UK) Infantry Division are indicative of the communications challenges and issues faced by the Poles in this their first combat operations under Canadian command. Since the two armoured divisions were deployed alongside of one another (on each other’s flanks) it is not surprising that most of the Polish contacts involve combat units subordinated to Kitching’s 4\textsuperscript{th} Canadian Armoured Division. Given the confusion of war and the unlikelihood of whether all incidents of interactions, good, bad or indifferent were recorded for posterity, it would be reasonable to assume that more such similar events occurred. The cited examples are therefore to be seen as indicative of the confusion, frustration and in some case, despair felt by the participants.

Although communications procedures were practiced during military exercises conducted in the United Kingdom, it is not clear exactly to what tactical level this was attempted or what results were actually achieved. Since the 1\textsuperscript{st} Polish Armoured Division was to join the II Canadian Corps on the 5\textsuperscript{th} of August 1944, just prior to Operation TOTALIZE, there was no time for Polish units to practice communications with their...

\textsuperscript{39} 4 Liaison (Polish) War Diary: January, Apr-Dec 1944, entries for April 1, 1944 and September 19, 1944. National Archives Kew, WO 171/3465.
neighbouring Canadian peers in the units of Kitching’s 4th Canadian Armoured Division. As well, the new GOC 4th Division, who lacked armoured experience, never managed to exercise his formation as a whole before its eventual commitment to battle. The two mutually supporting allied armoured divisions, whose primary languages were different and ability to communicate with each other was limited at best, entered combat as strangers. Under conditions where soldiers are tired and in extremely stressful circumstance, this would only have exacerbated the misunderstandings, with frustrated directives sent out by radio being generally ignored. As Operations TOTALIZE and TRACTABLE progressed, more experience and increasing familiarity would have been acquired by the Poles through necessity and more frequent interactions with their allied Canadian units.

Given the lack of time from the subordination of the 1st Polish Armoured Division under II Canadian Corps to their deployment, i.e., several days (5th to 8th August), how clear could commander’s intent actually have been made to the Polish soldier on the ground? Orders received by Divisional Commander Maczek would have had to be translated into Polish and then tasks assigned to subordinate brigades who would in turn assign them to their subordinate battalions and eventually to their companies. All of this staff work requires energy, accuracy and time to coordinate. Translation of orders would have provided the literal explicit intent, the inferred intent either unclear or, in the worst case, lost entirely. While these battle procedures were being conducted there were operational changes from superior headquarters i.e., II Canadian Corps, based upon the

40 John English, *Failure in High Command*, 185.
dynamic situation on the battlefield. These amendments to orders needed to be understood and communicated to subordinate units and of course and more importantly, units would have to prepare for the upcoming combat and move to the location of the battle. Time constraints, the stress of combat and the continuing flow of orders meant that when communications means [wireless radio] worked they were still hampered by the difficult terrain of Normandy that affected radio wave propagation and as a result both transmission and reception. It should therefore come as no surprise that mistakes were made. These geographical conditions, exacerbated by different languages, neighbouring units who were strangers and the first experience for the 1st Polish Armoured Division in combat would have made a difficult situation untenable at best. The combination of all of these factors would have retrospectively meant that the use of two untried armoured divisions supporting one another was far from ideal.

Simonds’ plan, designed to achieve his assigned objectives, was very complex. He had intended to use a variety of novel, untried ideas including the use of heavy bomber aircraft to provide close air support to allied ground forces, the movement of tanks at night and the pioneering the use of half-track armoured vehicles as armoured personnel carriers in order to quickly move protected infantry into battle.42 His ambitious plan was divided into three phases, break-in, break-through, and exploitation. In Phase One, the break-in phase, the element of surprise helped to ensure that the enemy was caught off guard. Phase Two of the operation, the break-through phase, was where the 1st Polish Armoured Division and its neighbour to the left, the 4th Canadian Armoured Division, were to experience their debut in combat.

To summarize their performance during Operation TOTALIZE, both of the untried armoured divisions (4th Canadian and 1st Polish) encountered heavy opposition, made limited progress and were consequently unable to complete their assigned roles as part of Phase Two: “The failure of the armoured divisions (in their first major engagement) to get forward rapidly on the afternoon of the 8th of August had given the enemy time to bring back elements of his SS formations to strengthen his defences in the rear.”

By the 11th of August 1944, the allied offensive had ground to a halt.

As a result of not having achieved the intended objectives of Operation TOTALIZE, a follow-up offensive named Operation TRACTABLE was mounted between the 14th and the 21st of August 1944 where:

It was intended that the operation should lead to the domination of the roads running east out of FALAISE, and so prevent the further escape of German troops caught between our forces in the north and those of the Americans pushing northward from ARGENTAN towards FALAISE.

From the War Diary entries examined it becomes increasingly evident that unreliable communications means and the difficult terrain were not the only factors to blame for misunderstandings between the Poles and the Canadians during training and later in actual combat conditions. Failure to achieve a common intent should be blamed on a number of issues, all affecting the Pigeau-McCann common intent factors.

The Polish language barrier was a significant impediment to the understanding of implicit intent from written orders and both explicit and implicit intents from verbal orders, i.e., the Pigeau-McCann shared knowledge factor. The Polish desire to defeat the

---

43 DHH. Canadian Military Headquarters Report No. 146, 15, paragraph 66.
44 Ibid., page 17, paragraph 73.
Germans and continue on to Poland, whether a realistic goal or not, meant that despite a
finite pool of manpower for casualty replacement, the desire to continue the battle march
to Poland (marsz bojowy do Polski) meant that coordination with the neighbouring 4th
Canadian Armoured Division put them out of step, thereby exposing their unprotected
flanks to German attacks.

The soldiers of the 1st Polish Armoured Division and the 4th Canadian Armoured
Division had not exercised together and in fact had only met just prior to joining battle.
Neither formation understood how their new allies operated. The two division
commanders did not know each other and whereas Simonds knew Kitching, neither of
them knew Maczek. The No. 4 Liaison HQ did not have any greater understanding of the
Poles than the rest of the Canadian or British units in II Canadian Corps, so could
therefore could not have offered any insight as to how the Poles reasoned, i.e., the
Pigeau-McCann comparability in reasoning factor.

Strangers in a high-pressure combat situation, who may or may not have
understood superior direction, and perhaps been unable to communicate with ease or at
all with their allies even when radio communications functioned well, is not a recipe for
success. Common intent and mutual understanding was learned the hard way. After a rest
and reconstitution period the 1st Polish Armoured Division continued to serve in North-
West Europe, other than a short stint under British command, placed under II Canadian
Corps for the duration of the war, albeit at a reduced operational tempo when compared
to August 1944.
Aftermath

With the surrender of the Germans in May 1945, the Poles were no longer required in uniform. War torn Britain was seemingly anxious to be done with the Poles. Maczek described the situation as xenophobic. 45 To allow for the transition from uniform of the Polish military forces in the West, the Polish Resettlement and Rehabilitation Corps (Polski Korpus Przysposobienia i Rozmieszczzenia - PKPR) was created in 1945. The establishment of the PKPR was intended to help Polish soldiers being released from military service to adjust to their new lives in the West: 46 Thanks to this decision, the Poles could remain in the United Kingdom, after having been released from military service. As reinforced by British Minister of Foreign Affairs Ernest Bevin, such provisos should already have been set in place much earlier since the Poles were former British soldiers.

When it came to demobilizing soldiers and officers, the Poles were hampered by three factors: their weak knowledge of the English language and unfamiliarity with British work procedures for granting equivalencies for higher education certificates/diplomas. The United Kingdom’s post-war labour market to which demobilized British officers and workers from a reduced colonial administrative staff were also returning was also not favourable at that time. 47 This competition for the small number of available jobs would have been a challenge for even the most qualified of Polish applicants. As a consequence, Poles took what jobs they could find. Ironically the

45 Potomski, GBSWM, 335.
46 MacGilvray, SII, 308.
47 Potomski, GBSWM, 341.
26 BLU (British Liaison Unit) liaison personnel from Anders II Polish Corps in Italy were identified in the post-war period as being useful for the Polish Resettlement Corps.

In the aftermath of war, the function of liaison grew, if anything, more necessary than it had been during wartime. With tens of thousands of Polish servicemen to demobilize and resettle, a sizeable British advisory staff to the Polish Resettlement Corps, headed by Major General M.W.M. MacLeod and his deputy Brigadier G.M.O. Davy was created. 48

Despite being permitted to settle in the United Kingdom and her dominions and colonies, the great triumph of the allies over the Germans was to prove a hollow victory in many ways for the Poles. There was to be no public recognition in the West of their major contribution to the allied cause according to the Commander of II Polish Corps General Anders. When the Victory Parade was held on the 8th of June 1946 in London, the Polish forces, who had been the first to fight the Germans and who even in the worst days had never deserted their allies, were not invited to take part. 49 The Poles were to be unrecognized for their contributions to victory.

The next chapter will summarize what lessons can be taken from the experience of Maczek and Simonds that could have been applied to make cooperation in future coalition operations more effective.

49 Anders, An Army in Exile, 299. With the Soviet Union, who was supporting a Poland based communist government, as an ally of both Britain and the United States; it would not have been politically expedient to have the Poles in the West on parade. As it turned out, an invitation was extended to twenty-five airmen from amongst those Polish airmen who had so big a share in the Battle of Britain. These airmen declined since they did not wish to represent the Polish forces at a ceremony from which the navy and the army had been excluded.
Chapter 9 Conclusion: Poles Apart

In order to make the best use of available resources, a military commander needs to ensure that his directions to subordinates are clearly understood: more specifically what objectives he wants subordinate commanders to achieve and what flexibility they have when required to react to unanticipated circumstances. Given the complexity and dynamic nature of combat operations, a military commander should continually refine and clearly communicate this intent to subordinates, peers and superiors since the establishment of common intent in command and control (C2) is not an end in itself but rather a means to an end, specifically, to co-ordinate action in military operations.¹

On the subject of language barriers, Colonel C.P. Stacey, the official historian for the Canadian Army was to conclude in 1948 that:

Even between the French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians, with the formidable barrier of language to surmount, the comradeship of the battlefield materially improved an understanding which had been notoriously far from perfect.²

Although Stacey’s views are likely more related more to the notion of what it means to be a Canadian, it is worthwhile noting that the Poles and other non-English speaking allies did not merit even a mention when it came to language barriers. The subject of communications between non-English speaking allies and its impact on operational effectiveness was simply not covered. As a result of my research, a number of issues affecting the establishment and fostering of common intent, both during training

¹ Pigeau and McCann, Establishing Common Intent, 86.
² Stacey, The Canadian Army 1939-1945, 327.
and later in combat operations, have been identified. Most importantly, although not the only impediment to clear mutual understanding, the language barrier was not successfully overcome as a consequence of insufficient effort, lack of time and a shortage of qualified personnel.

This thesis has been an investigation of the importance of effective cooperation and liaison between culturally and linguistically diverse army units with the goal of achieving a common mutual understanding. With that goal in mind, I have used the Pigeau-McCann concept of establishing common intent to situate and analyze problems encountered linked to cultural and linguistic barriers while the 1st Polish Armoured Division was under the command of II Canadian Corps in August 1944. By using the common intent factors as a framework, I have assessed to what degree a commander is able influence subordinates in order to see how well his explicit and implicit intent is understood. To deepen the understanding of common intent between two commanders, I have also used the Pigeau-McCann CAR criteria to rate Generals Simonds and Maczek on the factors related to command, of particular interest to my thesis. Both commanders being assessed as having strong personal motivation coupled with the power of national authority provides relevant deductions that would justify a maximum rating in the common intent factor of shared commitment and motivation. Examination by means of both the CAR and common intent criteria has resulted in the identification of a number of issues that viewed in aggregate had an impact upon the performance of the Poles while under Canadian command. Because of the multinational and multilingual operational environment in which the Poles found themselves, the Pigeau-McCann concept of common intent has proven to be a useful framework in studying the barriers of language.
and culture, and their effect on the establishment and fostering of a shared commander’s common intent.

During the Second World War the consequences of some decisions have rightly or wrongly been blamed on a shortage or lack of time. When time seemed to be in greater supply in the two years from its formation to the 1st Polish Armoured Division’s embarkation in France, the priority of where to place effort and resources in the division’s preparation for combat played a significant role in what degree of mutual understanding, and in particular, common intent, was later achieved. Despite the almost five years of Britain and her English-speaking allies working with their Polish allies, by the war’s conclusion, there was still a requirement to conduct conversations in French, the only common language available in some circumstances. Although this is perhaps not surprising since Polish is not a language spoken widely throughout the world, this language barrier had an effect on the performance of the Poles when under Canadian command.

To be fair, from available evidence at least some efforts appear to have been made to provide at least basic language training to the Poles and to identify qualified personnel for employment in liaison duties. The British PAIFORCE (Persia and Iraq Forces) created a Language Instruction cadre that provided rudimentary English language instruction to a number of the Poles of Anders’ Italy-based II Polish Corps. There is however no evidence of a similar effort for Maczek’s United Kingdom-based 1st Polish Armoured Division. In hindsight, despite the best of efforts and perhaps exacerbated by other factors such as time and the availability of qualified instructors, language training
for both the Poles and their English-speaking allies was insufficient and uncoordinated, therefore ad hoc at best.

The ability to be able to effectively communicate with non-native English speakers or those possessing no English language ability was something that should have been second nature to the British given their experience with non-English speaking units as part of the British Army in India and more than familiar to Canadians given our multinational population, albeit at that time still predominantly of British origin and English speaking. As has been emphasized in this thesis, efforts at overcoming this challenge were insufficient.

It could perhaps be argued that Polish Army recruiting efforts conducted in Canada in 1941 and 1942 which resulted in the loss of 609 Polish speaking soldiers, some of whom could have been potential interpreters, may have exacerbated the problem of interpreter availability. However, overcoming the language barrier between the Poles and their English-speaking allies, appears to not to have been given a high enough priority by the British and Canadian military authorities. The challenge of realizing the full potential of allied combat forces, despite a language barrier, was something underestimated by the Commander of II Canadian Corps.

The most significant factor limiting the establishment of clear intent would seem to have been the language barrier, i.e., the Pigeau-McCann common intent factor of *shared knowledge*. In all military operations, overcoming any language barrier within which allied armed forces are faced, being able to effectively communicate operational intent and accurately describe evolving operational scenario to subordinates, superiors, and allies, is essential to allow the closest cooperation possible and the establishment of
trust between what are strangers in arms. Although the ability to translate from one language into another does provide the literal explicit operational intent, there is no assurance that the implicit intent is not lost in translation. By the end of the war, when the need for linguistically qualified personnel should have been readily apparent, the chance identification and employment of a fluent Polish-speaking British citizen to fill a requirement at the highest level of government, indicates that efforts to bridge language barriers still remained rather haphazard.³

Further exacerbating the above-mentioned language barriers encountered were cultural misunderstandings between the Poles and their English-speaking allies. Were these a result of impatience, ignorance, or xenophobia, i.e., the shared knowledge factor? In the case of pre-Second World War Poland, military cooperation with the French Army in the interwar years was widespread, but it was non-existent when it came to the British Army., i.e., the comparable reasoning factor. The Polish hatred of both Russia and Germany, the Polish method of waging war and Polish pride, perhaps construed as arrogance, were all subjects whose study would have allowed her English speaking-allies to better understand their Polish allies, i.e. both the comparable reasoning and motivation factors. Instead, they remained strangers. After five years of the Poles having been in the United Kingdom, not enough effort was made by their English-speaking allies towards an understanding of their Polish comrades-in-arms when examined in light of the Pigeau-

³ “George Leggett, son of a British business man who was Honorary Vice-Consul in Warsaw, was from his childhood bilingual in Polish and English and had spent five academic terms in Cambridge studying languages. Only in June 1945 was he seconded to the War Cabinet Offices to act as an Administrative Interpreter (in Russian) at the Potsdam Conference. However, because of his command of the Polish language he was catapulted into the center of events when the Polish delegation arrived, interpreting for Churchill and Eden, then (after the 1945 General Election) for Atlee and Bevin.” Churchill Archives Centre Cambridge, “The Janus: The Papers of George Leggett. Synopsis.” Accessed September 29, 2015, http://janus.lib.cam.ac.uk/.
McCann common intent factors. When Maczek and Simonds are assessed against the three common intent criteria factors, the levels of commonality that the Poles and the Canadians could have achieved is depicted in Figure 8.1 (The full range of possible placements against the Pigeau-McCann common intent factors is in Appendix G)

![Figure 8.1 Placement Pigeau-McCann Common Intent Factors](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shared Knowledge</th>
<th>Comparable Reasoning Ability</th>
<th>Shared Commitment and Motivation</th>
<th>Impact on C2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Good potential for common intent if guiding principles for appropriate action exist (means more effort needed for explicating objective); if shared guiding principles do not exist, unacceptable solutions are a possibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Dangerous common intent; overzealousness may lead to uncoordinated chaos with high potential for unacceptable solutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the employment of No. 4 Liaison HQ element with the 1st Polish Armoured Division in 1944, time had run out when it came to new ideas. According to a report from late May 1944 on the subject of British military courses being offered to the Poles, cancellations for course attendees were occurring at the last moment, the blame placed on: “the extremely inefficient organization at that (Polish) HQ in this respect.” Whether the Polish staff officers responsible for the training coordination really were poorly

---

organized or whether there were other requirements that took precedence cannot be stated with any certainty from the available evidence. Given the imminent deployment of the Polish division into combat operations, it would be a reasonable assumption that last minute preparation for battle English language skills would have been given a lower priority than battle skills. Although there were very rudimentary, and by times ad hoc, efforts to teach Polish soldiers enough English to do the job prior to deploying to the continent, the focus of their training was on military skills, rather than a better or more effective means of two-way communication, i.e., the motivation was to get on with the fight.

By the time of the 1st Polish Armoured Division’s commitment to battle in August 1944, there was a shortage of infantrymen in most militaries, the tempo of operations had increased and the allied strategy employed to end the conflict seemed to have been one of brute force preceded by massive aerial and artillery bombardments. The allies were tired of war. So, at this late date in the war, the motivation factor was uneven between the Poles and their English-speaking allies.

In the buildup of their own forces required to defeat the Germans, how much time and effort could the British and Canadians have applied towards training to ensure that lessons learned on exercises were understood and implemented? Although some divisional level training was conducted in the United Kingdom prior to the deployment of the 1st Polish Armoured Division, including a series titled Exercise LINK held in 1943, it was insufficient, i.e., the allies did not understand each other’s reasoning ability sufficiently to be able to determine if comparable reasoning ability existed between them. Since it was not included as part of the initial allied assault force on the European
continent during Operation OVERLORD, the 1st Polish Armoured Division would also unlikely have been given priority for the use of scarce divisional size training or maneuver areas.

In operations the 1st Polish Armoured Division could have been placed alongside an experienced armoured division in a mentorship-like capacity, but it was not. The 4th Canadian Armoured Division alongside of whom the Poles were deployed in August 1944, was also taking part in its first combat engagement. According to Simonds’ biographer, when discussing later military operations involving Polish and other nationalities forces under Simonds’ command: “the campaign in the Scheldt (Netherlands 1944/1945) marked Simonds as an international soldier to be trusted with British, Polish, Czech and American as well as Canadian soldiers.” For Simonds and the Poles any lessons of how to work effectively together despite communications barriers were to be learned from battlefield experiences and casualties rather than pre-war military exercises and training, a consequence of not enough time or sufficient resources having been devoted.

As a consequence of the performance of the 4th Canadian Armoured Division, its Commander General Kitching was relieved by Simonds. According to Kitching:

Perhaps he had too much confidence in me, perhaps he thought I could swing armoured divisions around in the enclosed countryside of Normandy in the same way that they had been swung around in the desert when he was visiting 8th Army. He (Simonds) told me that he was unsatisfied with my performance and that I must go.  

---

5 Graham, The Price of Command, 190.
6 Kitching, 218.
Could it be that Kitching never understood Simonds intent or that Simonds was simply incapable of clearly communicating it? Kitching bore Simonds no grudge, the two remained friends and Simonds was recorded as being upset by the sacking.\(^7\) Did Simonds feel bad about his friend’s removal or perhaps realize that his implicit intent was not as clear as he had believed? As to the second armoured division in II Canadian Corps, Maczek’s 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division, losses in equipment and personnel were such as to require the division to go into reserve.\(^8\) Even if Maczek and Kitching had understood Simonds’ explicit intent, the logic behind some of Simonds’ decisions would have escaped them. Simonds’ access to ULTRA communications intercepts provided him with an insight that he was not able to share, despite any language barrier. “The veil of official secrecy which had hidden ULTRA was lifted in October 1977 when some 25,000 of these signals, covering the period November 1943 to August 1944, were placed in the Public Record Office (PRO)”\(^9\) With access to ULTRA, a recipient: “obtained a fairly complete insight into the way their minds worked, of the attitudes of the various generals towards Hitler and the reasons behind their various appreciations.”\(^10\)

By 1944, five years of warfare would have had an exhausting effect on its participants. There is no evidence as to specifically why the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division was subordinated to the II Canadian Corps except for the mere fact that Simonds had requested an additional armoured division and that the 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division was at that point in time unassigned a particular role. There was little regard as to where it

---

\(^7\) Graham, 167.
\(^8\) Potomski, \textit{GBSWM}, 272. “Total losses 2,097 from which: 446 killed (including 37 officers), 1501 wounded (including 92 officers) and 150 missing (including 5 officers).” Stanislaw Maczek. “The 1\(^{st}\) Polish Armoured Division in Normandy” \textit{Canadian Military History}. Vol. 15, No. 2 (Spring 2006), 70.
\(^10\) Winterbottom, \textit{The Ultra Secret}, 189.
could best be used or attention paid to its unique requirements in order to accommodate
the Poles in the II Canadian Corps structure. Although the Poles were under British and
Canadian command and fought alongside of English speaking units, despite the different
tanks each division fielded, they may in retrospect have been better employed in combat
alongside of the Free French Army, also under allied command. Besides their common
command and staff training and the fact that many Poles spoke French, there were also
some cultural similarities between the French and the Poles: “The French had always
demonstrated a particular understanding when it came to the Poles. Natural affinities
were similar: a vivacious spirit, a taste for the social life, for conversation, for the
exchange of general ideas, a tendency to be critical.”\textsuperscript{11} There is however no evidence that
co-locating the Poles and the Free French was ever considered an option. Examined
against the three Pigeau-McCann common intent factors of shared knowledge,
comparable reasoning ability and motivation would have indicated that it might have
been a good idea to do so. Although never stated, perhaps the various non-English
speaking allied forces dispersed across the English-speaking allied units were distributed
in order that they could be better controlled.

The plethora of liaison elements that operated between the various formations and
Headquarters, some of which represented national Polish issues and others who dealt with
operational issues, was also very confusing. Which specific liaison elements one should
interact with at army, corps or divisional level was often unclear. Despite the British
Army’s best efforts, there was also a shortage of Polish language interpreters on the No. 4
Liaison HQ team. The total interpreter strength consisted of three British officers. Even if

\textsuperscript{11} Gouin, \textit{Par la bouche de nos canons}, 73.
these officers were first rate interpreters, capable of simultaneous interpretation, three
officers simply could not have been everywhere they needed to be.

No. 4 Liaison HQ had as its stated role, the relaying of information and the
provision of an interface between the Poles and her English-speaking superiors and allies.
From the evidence examined, the training and exercising was inadequate. During the
course of its employment with the 1st Polish Armoured Division, No. 4 Liaison
Headquarters was reduced in size and its duties redefined after its combat debut in
August 1944. What this liaison unit was meant to do and how interaction was meant to
occur between II Canadian Corps and the 1st Polish Armoured Division was not well
understood or adequately exercised by those who this unit was intended to support.
Although the liaison unit was mandated to translate all outgoing correspondence, given
the volume of work that this would have entailed for the small linguistically qualified
personnel, it is considered likely that important non-operational message traffic may have
received a lower priority when it came to translation.

Liaison teams, though well intended, were ill-equipped to perform their role by
virtue of a lack of sufficient numbers of linguistically qualified personnel coupled with
the non-familiarity of staffs and commanders as to how best to employ them. Although a
decentralization the liaison function which would have seen linguistically qualified
liaison officers employed at the unit level may have worked more effectively, the paucity
of this valuable human resource would not have made this option viable. These above-
mentioned factors combined to ensure that communications between the Polish and
English-speaking allies were rudimentary at best, even when there were no technical
difficulties. Clear common intent would have been very difficult if not impossible to
achieve between the Poles and Canadians and vice versa in August 1944 since the three common intent factors would have been rated weak at best, i.e., shared knowledge - insufficient Polish speakers, comparable reasoning abilities - minimal interaction with the Poles prior to the commencement of combat and motivation- staff officers versus combat soldiers.

**Lessons Learned Still Applicable for Today**

Despite over seventy years having passed since Operations TOTALIZE and TRACTABLE, there are useful lessons that can be learned from the 1st Polish Armoured Division’s experiences while under Canadian command. The situation in Canada during the Second World War was not as it is today in a country that espouses multiculturalism as opposed to cultural assimilation. The competing challenges in multinational operations have been, and remain, understanding both ones’ allies and the cultural environment in which a military is going to be conducting military or humanitarian relief operations:

> Establishing common intent can be one of the greatest challenges in joint and integrated operations where the differences in national and organizational cultures are frequently barriers to its creation.\(^\text{12}\)

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, personal experience with the Poles in Afghanistan in 2004 has anecdotally shown that insufficient effort was devoted to the issue of the language barrier. As recently as 2016 the Canadian Minister of National

Defence announced Canada’s intention to command and contribute to a Latvia-based multinational Battle Group including Polish soldiers, so the issue continues to need attention.¹³

So, the question of what takes priority when it comes to the allocation of precious resources is one that is left up to a commander to decide. Communicating common intent is not easy at the best of times and: “A leader must constantly restate any message he feels is important, and do so in the clearest possible terms. It serves to inform new members and remind veterans.”¹⁴ Even when there is a common language of operation, there are unstated nuance and implied inferences that can be missed without the appropriate attention being paid to overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers. According to Pigeau-McCann: “The concept of intent includes an explicit portion that contains the stated objective (as well as all of its elaborations) and an implicit portion that remains unexpressed for reasons of expediency but nonetheless is assumed to be understood.”¹⁵ The challenge of the establishment of common intent was not something that was overcome in the Second World War and has not been solved today. Reinforcement of common intent is an ongoing effort that requires continual attention to ensure the best clarity possible, and must never be assumed. In the words of General Stanley McChrystal:

> The military coalition was an immense organization, and there was a constant risk of misunderstanding the directive at


¹⁵ Pigeau and McCann, Establishing Common Intent, 91.
the lowest levels, where the fight and these decisions were the most difficult. This was especially true since many Lieutenants and Sergeants never directly read the directions that top level commanders, like me, put out; they often received the guidance secondhand [or worse].

In this thesis I have identified a number of lessons from the experiences of the Poles and Canadians from August 1944 that are both relevant and applicable to aiding in the establishment of common intent in today’s military coalition operations. Rapid mutually intelligible communication is a key factor to consider whether under high tempo operations or while conducting deliberate planning and administrative work with all allies. When it comes to non-English speaking allies, clarity of communications, explicit and implicit, is absolutely essential.

Identification of linguistic and cultural barriers between coalition allies should be done early in the planning process prior to operations. As much time as possible should be devoted to any and all efforts aimed at reducing or eliminating the barriers of language or culture such as the identification of qualified liaison personnel, language training and the translation and practicing of existing operational procedures to name but a few. The decision of where to deploy linguistically diverse coalition partners should not be left to chance. An informed-decision taken after consideration and analysis of such important differences as language and culture criteria, though no guarantee of operational success, will aid in the more effective conduct of coalition operations.

———

16 McChrystal, 312. General Stanley McChrystal was a Senior American Army officer and in 2010 Commander of the Afghanistan-based multi-national coalition International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).
Identifying nations that can already communicate with one another through means of a common language and have previous experience in training or on operations is an important option to consider in partner selection and deployment when time is either unavailable or limited for the building of a coalition. Commanders can aid in communicating implicit intent by creating opportunities to increase familiarity, mutual understanding and build trust. Comprehensive joint training and familiarity building events need to be planned and executed. Operational training needs to be much more than somewhat ad hoc with lessons previously identified not ignored, either intentionally or inadvertently.

General McChrystal, multinational coalition commander in Afghanistan in 2010, captures today what was paid insufficient attention over seventy years ago, when he concludes that each uniform represents a different culture, work ethic, language experience level, and historical perspective. As a result, forging an ad hoc multinational force into a cohesive team is always challenging. The ability to work effectively with military partners on operations can be improved through overcoming linguistic and cultural misunderstandings with one’s coalition partners.

On the battlefield, a commander cannot always be either physically present with or available on the end of a radio or telephone or iPhone to be able to confirm or reconfirm what he requires his subordinate unit commanders to achieve. To that end, ensuring clarity of commander’s intent should be established at every possible opportunity. Barriers that prevent or hinder this understanding such as different languages and cultural backgrounds need to be overcome as much as possible before the chaos of

17 McChrystal. 296.
warfare takes over and renders them insurmountable. How a commander can achieve this goal and how much effort must be applied towards this endeavour remain command decisions.

Despite the time he spent in the United Kingdom organizing and training the 1st Polish Armoured Division, Maczek and his men were not familiar with Simonds and the Canadians of II Canadian Corps and neither group had the time to develop more than an initial acquaintance with one another prior to being committed to combat operations. During The Second World War, the allies simply did not devote enough effort to the understanding of their Polish ally. Maczek’s soldiers were still strangers after all these years, remaining Poles apart.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Canadian Forces School of Military Intelligence (CFSMI) Kingston, Ontario

First Canadian Army Final Intelligence Report Volume 1. Part 1 Operational Intelligence, Section 1 Intelligence in the Canadian Army (File Number 42-1-0/ Int July 1945 signed by Colonel P.E.R. Wright, GS Int, 1st Cdn Army, copy in my possession.

Directorate of History and Heritage (DHH) Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)  


Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies (LCMSDS).

War Diary for July and August 1944 for 2nd Canadian Infantry Division, 3rd Canadian Infantry Division, 4th Canadian Armoured Division, 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade. Elements of II Canadian Corps, accessed August 1, 2015,  
http://canadianmilitaryhistory.ca/normandy.

Library and Archives Canada (LAC)  http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca

Library and Archives Canada, RG 24, 21st Army Grp/1987/G (Sp) 8 Jun 44. RG 24 Vol. 10604, file 215C1 (D86).
Library and Archives Canada, RG 24, 21st Army Grp/17456/ 20 Sept 44. RG 24 Vol. 10604.


Library and Archives Canada, RG 24, Exercise “Link”. RG 24 Vol. 10728, file 219C1.009 (D80).

Library and Archives Canada, RG 24, No.4 Liaison HQ Reports, Instructions, Correspondence etc., 1942/07/21-1943/12. RG24-G-3-1-a.

Library and Archives Canada, RG 24, ISUMs 1 Pol Armd Div 18/20 Apr 1945 from No. 4 Liaison HQ – AEF/45/1 Pol Armd Div/L/F 1945/04/18-1945/04/20. RG 24-G-3-1-a., Inventory 17043, Vol. 10942.

Library and Archives Canada, RG 24, SITREPs 1 Pol Armd Div 2 Jan/9 May 45 from No. 4 Liaison HQ – AEF/45/1 Pol Armd Div/C/H Doc III 1945/01/02-1945/05/09. RG 24-G-3-1-a. Inventory 17043, Vol. 10942.


Library and Archives Canada, RG 24, Message Log 4 Cdn Armd Div 19 Jan/23 Feb 45 including memo re Belgian Fus Bde HQ and responsibilities of Liaison HQs. RG24-G-3-1-a.

Library and Archives Canada, RG 24, Polish Army in Canada, 1941-1947. RG24-C-1-a. Enlistment of Polish Volunteers in Canada 1940-44. RG24-C-1. Boxes 2066-2068

Library and Archives Canada, RG 76, Admission of 4,000 former Polish soldiers for agricultural work in Canada 1946, Lists. RG76-I-A-1.

Library and Archives Canada, MG 26, Immigration – Polish 1935. MG26-K, R 11336 -3169-7-E

Library and Archives Canada, RG-24-C-2, Volume 12342, File/dossier 4/Interpreters/1/2.

National Archives (PRO) (Kew, Richmond, Surrey)
http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/


21st Army Group, Canadian Forces, 1 Polish Division. WO 216/ File 38026.
British Liaison Personnel attached to the Polish Army in Italy: Proposed employment in UK. WO 204/5611

Dispatch of Polish Military Mission to Middle East 05 April 1941. CAB 79/10/23.

English Language Instructor Pool for Polish Forces. WO 169/14683 and WO 170/3827.

France: Recruitment of former Polish POWs into Polish National Army AUG 1944. WO 204/5701.

France: Recruitment of Polish Women into the ATS 01 Jan 45 – 31 March 45. WO 204/5705.


Liaison with Polish Forces: British Military Mission to Poland, later No. 4 (Bridge) Military Mission and then No 4 (Gubbins) Military Mission. September 1939 to November 1940. WO 193/831.

Minutes of Meetings with French and Polish Liaison Officers. November 1943 to April 1944. WO 204/10275.

Polish Forces: Monthly Liaison Reports. WO 204/5591.


SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces), 21st Army Group, LNOs Polish. WO 229/31/8.

The Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum (PISM) (Prince’s Gate, London)
Archiwum Instytutu Polskiego i Muzeum im. Gen. Władysława Śikorskiego w Londynie (IPMS)
http://pism.co.uk/

A.XII.21 Chief of Administration of the Polish Armed Forces.

A.XII.39 Chief of Armoured Forces – General Staff.

A.XII.41 Polish Liaison Officer at HQ 21st Army Group.

A.IV.1/1A Polish Army in France, Subgroup 1 III (Operations) Bureau PGS, file 1A - papers of the Chief of General Staff, 1939-1940.
A.IV.1/1B Polish Army in France, Subgroup 1 III (Operations) Bureau PGS, file 1B - correspondence with the Allies and matters pertaining allied commands, 1939-1940.

A.XII.45/1A. Subgroup 45: Deputy Chief of General Staff for General Matters. File 1: Correspondence pertaining Polish Liaison Mission at SHAEF, 2nd Rifle Division in Switzerland, Military Intelligence 1945 - 1946.


C.72 War Diary of the 8th Rifle Battalion, 1st Armoured Division, 1.XII.1944 to 28.II.1945.

SECONDARY SOURCES


--. Royal Military College of Canada (RMC) Year Book, The Log, 1925.

--. 50th Anniversary Program at the Liberation of Oberlangen. Stalag VIC. 12 kwieten 1945 – Uwolnienie (program)


Dworak, Colonel Kazimierz. *Doświadczenia i wnioski z działań 1 polskiej Dywizji Pancernej (okres 7 sierpień do 9 listopad 1944)* [Experience and Suggestions from the Activities of the 1st Polish Armoured Division, August 7 to November 9, 1944]. BELLONIA, r27, Londyn, 1945.


272


Appendix A

II Canadian Corps Order of Battle (ORBAT) August 1944

Divisions

2nd Canadian Infantry Division
3rd Canadian Infantry Division
4th Canadian (Armoured) Division
1st Polish Armoured Division, August 1944 to May 1945
15th (Scottish) Infantry Division, January to March, 1945
51st (Highland) Infantry Division, August 1944

Brigades

2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade
33rd Armoured Brigade, August 1944, Operation TOTALIZE
Royal Netherlands Motorized Infantry Brigade, August 1944

Corps Troops

II Canadian Corps Defence Company (Prince Edward Island Light Horse)
18th Armoured Car Regiment (12th Manitoba Dragoons)
6th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA)
6th Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery (RCA)
2nd Survey Regiment, RCA
8th Field Park Company, Royal Canadian Engineers (RCE)
29th, 30th and 31st Field Companies, RCE
2nd Drilling Company, RCE
II Canadian Corps Headquarters Signals, Royal Canadian Corps of Signals
No. 2 Corps Troops Company, Royal Canadian Army Service Corps (RCASC)
II Canadian Corps Transport Company, RCASC
No. 33 and 34 Transport Companies, RCASC
No. 2 Motor Ambulance Company, RCASC
No. 2 Headquarters Corps Car Company, RCASC
No. 2 and 3 Casualty Clearing Stations, Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps (RCAMC)
No. 6 Field Dressing Section, RCAMC
No. 8 Field Hygiene Section, RCAMC
Dental Companies, Canadian Dental Corps (CDC)
No. 12 Base Dental Company, CDC
No. 2 Corps and Army Troops Sub-Park, Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps (RCOC)
II Corps Troops Workshop, Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RCEME)
Recovery Companies, RCEME
No. 13 Provost Company, Canadian Provost Corps (C Pro C)
Attached First Canadian Army Troops

No. 2 Army Group Royal Canadian Artillery
19th Army Field Regiment, RCA
3rd Medium Regiment, RCA
4th Medium Regiment, RCA
7th Medium Regiment, RCA

"E" Squadron, 25th Canadian Armoured Delivery Regiment (The Elgin Regiment),
Canadian Armoured Corps
Appendix B

1st Polish Armoured Division (Pierwsza Dywizja Pancerna)

Brigades/Regiments

10th Armoured Cavalry Brigade (10 Brygada Kawalerii Pancernej)

- 1st Polish Armoured Regiment (1 Pułk Pancerny)
- 2nd Polish Armoured Regiment (2 Pułk Pancerny)
- 24th Polish Lancers Regiment (24 Pułk Ułanów im. Hetmana Żółkiewskiego)
- 10th Polish Dragoons Regiment (10 Pułk Dragonów)

3rd Polish Infantry Brigade (3 Brygada Piechoty)

- 1st Polish Highland Battalion (1 Battalion Strzelców Podhalańskich)
- 8th Polish Rifle Battalion (8 Battalion Strzelców)
- 9th Polish Rifle Battalion (9 Battalion Strzelców flandryjskich)

1st Polish Independent HMG Squadron (Samodzielny Szwadron CKM.)

Divisional Artillery (Artyleria dywizyjna)

- 1st Polish Motorized Artillery Regiment (1 Pułk Artylerii Motorowej)
- 2nd Polish Motorized Artillery Regiment (2 Pułk Artylerii Motorowej)
- 1st Polish Anti-Tank Regiment (1 Pułk Artylerii Przeciwpancernej)
- 1st Polish Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment (1 Pułk Artylerii Przeciwlotniczej Lekkiej)

Other Units

- 10th Polish Mounted Rifle Regiment (10 Pułk Strzelców Konnych)
- HQ, Military Police,
- Engineers (Śaperzy Dywizyjni)
- Signals (1 Batalion Łączności)
- Repair Workshops (Oddziały Warsztatowo-Naprawcze)
- Workshops (Oddziały Warsztatowe)
- Medical (Oddziały Sanitarne)
- Traffic Control (1 Szwadron Regulacji Ruchu)
- Supply Park (1 Park Materiałowy)
- Tank Transport (1 Szwadron Czołgów Zapasowych)
- Obóz Uzupełnień 1 Dywizji Pancernej
- Administration, military court, chaplaincy, reserve squadrons,
Numbers

885 - officers and non-commissioned officers.
15,210 - other ranks (other enlisted soldiers)
381 - tanks (mostly M4 Shermans)
473 - artillery pieces (mostly motorized) [citation needed]
4,050 - motor cars, trucks, utility vehicles, artillery carriers.

*Wysocki Book (Compendium)
Appendix C

Liaison Unit Directive (21 A Grp/1987/G (Sp) 8 Jun 44)\(^1\)

1. Each Allied Contingent under Command C-in-C 21 Army Group is provided with a British Liaison HQ whose functions are set out below. Liaison HQs are allotted as follows:

   No. 2 Liaison HQ               Belgian Contingent
   No. 4 Liaison HQ (Armd)       Polish Armd Div
   No. 20 Liaison HQ              French Demi Bde
   No. 22 Liaison HQ              Czech Contingent
   No. 23 Liaison HQ              R. Netherlands Contingent

2. Contact between headquarters of British formations and Allied contingents will be through the British Liaison Headquarters attached to each Allied contingent.

3. Correspondence, routine orders and messages from British formation Headquarters which have allied contingents under command will be addressed to the British Liaison Headquarters. They are responsible for passing the necessary matter to the Allied contingent commander and ensuring that the implications are fully understood.

4. British Liaison Headquarters are responsible for passing back all correspondence, messages and reports, both operational and non-operational from the Allied contingent to the Headquarters of the British formation under whose command the Allied contingent has been placed.

5. Direct orders of an operational nature, if written, should be forwarded in duplicate to the British Liaison Headquarters, one copy being addressed to the Commander of the Allied contingent and the other to the officer commanding the British Liaison Headquarters. The outer envelope will in all cases be addressed to the British Liaison Headquarters. Direct orders of an operational nature transmitted by wireless, telephone, or Liaison officers, will be passed through the British Liaison Headquarters.

---

\(^1\) LAC RG 24, Vol. 10604 File 215C1 (D86) 21 A Grp/1987/G (Sp) 8 Jun 44.
Appendix D

No. 4 Liaison Headquarters, Polish Forces, 21 Army Group (Armoured Portion)
War Establishment XIV/1233/1

(Brytyjska Misja Łącznikowa)

Notified in A.C.Is, 19th July, 1944
Effective date 10th June, 1944

Wartime Establishment (i) Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Offrs</th>
<th>WO1</th>
<th>WO2</th>
<th>SSgt</th>
<th>Sgt</th>
<th>Cpl</th>
<th>L/Cpl</th>
<th>Pte</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comd (Col)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Staff (GS) Branch</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOS2 (Ops)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSO3 (Op/Int/Air)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreters (Maj/Capt)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison (Lt)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attached to GS Staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO RA(Maj)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO RA(Capt)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO RE(Maj)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO RSig (Maj)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjutant and Quarter-Master General (AQMG)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAQMG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Capt</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks etc</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RASC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R Sig</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RASC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAOC</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REME</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camp Staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All duties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wartime Establishment (ii) Transport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motor-cycles</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Solo)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-cwt, 4 x 4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-seater, 4 x 2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-seater, 4 x 2 (one fitted for wireless)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-seater, 4 x 4 fitted for wireless</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trucks, 15-cwt, 4 x 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.S.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wireless</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorries, 3-ton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 x 2, G.S.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 x 4, G.S.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trailers, 15-cwt, 2-wheeled, water, 180 gallon</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scout Cars</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armoured command Vehicles</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

79/W.E./9330 (S.D. 3)

*PISM A.XII.43/2 cz 1 (p. 190-194)
Appendix E

Nominal Roll of Officers 4 Liaison HQ (Armd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Corps/Regt</th>
<th>Appointment</th>
<th>Date in Appt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colonel</td>
<td>Peto, CHM</td>
<td>Late RAC</td>
<td>Comd</td>
<td>1-12-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Major</td>
<td>Wills, W</td>
<td>RSF</td>
<td>GSO2(Ops)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capt</td>
<td>Howe, FJ</td>
<td>RTR</td>
<td>GSO3(O)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Scott-Moncrieff, DC</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td>GSO3(O)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Valli, VF</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>GSO3(O)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Gimson, AC</td>
<td>Int Corps</td>
<td>GSO3(I)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Major</td>
<td>Lloyd-Johnes, H</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Intptr</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Major</td>
<td>Peters, GG</td>
<td>Int Corps</td>
<td>Intptr</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>McLaren, RW</td>
<td>Gen List</td>
<td></td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieut</td>
<td>Watney, JD</td>
<td>RAC</td>
<td>LO(RAC)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieut</td>
<td>Kenyon, FH</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>LO(RA)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieut</td>
<td>Peters, HJD</td>
<td>KRRC</td>
<td>LO(INF)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Major</td>
<td>Coffey, TVH</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>SORA(Maj)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Barron, EI</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>SORA(Capt)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Major</td>
<td>Dixon, PMS</td>
<td>R Sigs</td>
<td>SO(R Sigs)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Major</td>
<td>Russell, GS</td>
<td>L&amp;B Horse</td>
<td>DAB &amp;GMG</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>White, FLY</td>
<td>Int Corps</td>
<td>Staff Capt</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Mills, AH</td>
<td>R Sigs</td>
<td>Sigs Offr</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Watkins, KED</td>
<td>R Sigs</td>
<td>Cipher Offr</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Major</td>
<td>Fox, SEG</td>
<td>RASC</td>
<td>DADST</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Marsh, PH</td>
<td>RASC</td>
<td>Capt RASC</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Langford-Brooke, EW</td>
<td>RASC</td>
<td>Capt RASC</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Major</td>
<td>Fyfe, DR</td>
<td>RAOC</td>
<td>DADOS</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Sexton, W</td>
<td>RAOC</td>
<td>DDA Class</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Major</td>
<td>Easton, NG</td>
<td>REME</td>
<td>DADME</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Everitt, D</td>
<td>REME</td>
<td>Capt EME</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Dennard, RKF</td>
<td>REME</td>
<td>Capt EME</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>George, JM</td>
<td>REME</td>
<td>Capt EME(W)</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Capt</td>
<td>Smailes, RT</td>
<td>RA</td>
<td>ADMON Offr</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T/Major</td>
<td>Kerr, J</td>
<td>RAMC</td>
<td>DADMS</td>
<td>18-1-44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Field Return of Officers for week ending 22 April 1944
Army Form W.3008 (Revised)
The National Archives at Kew WO 171/3465 4 Liaison (Polish) War Diary Jan, Apr-Dec 1944.
Appendix F

General List of Polish Personnel (Liaison) (6 September 1944)

Polish Military Mission to SHAEF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Mission</td>
<td>MGen Kazimierz Schally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer Army Affairs</td>
<td>LCol Janusz Iliński</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer Air Force Affairs</td>
<td>Group Capt Adam Kropiński</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer Army Affairs Assistant</td>
<td>Major Edmund Galinat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>Major Katten Czapski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk (1) / Batmen (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total personnel</td>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Polish Liaison Section to C-in-C 21 Army Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liaison Officer</td>
<td>Colonel Jerzy Krubski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Liaison Officer</td>
<td>LCol Antoni Grudziński</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpreter</td>
<td>Lt Stanislaw Tyszkiewicz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk (1) / Batmen (2) / Offr Mess Rep (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total personnel</td>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact Officers to 21 Army Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chief Contact Officer</td>
<td>Major Włodzimierz Dąbrowski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Major Stanisław Faczema (sp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Capt Stanisław Zacharowicz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Capt Stefan Mollner (sp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Capt Franciszek Wylegała</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>1st Lt Stanisław Malecz-Korzenkowski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks (2) / Batmen (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total personnel</td>
<td>(12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Polish Liaison Section to C-in-C Central Group of Armies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liaison Officer</td>
<td>Wing Commander Andrzej Chramiec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Liaison Officer</td>
<td>Major Mieczysław Poniatowski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk (1) / Batman (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total personnel</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contact Officers to Central Group of Armies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chief Contact Officer</th>
<th>Major Jozef Olender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Major Zygmunt Szpotamski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Major Stefan Zukstynski (sp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Capt Stanisław Sielski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Capt Antoni Majka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Capt Leon Pacak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Capt Jerzy Cielecki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>1st Lt Jan Łuczkiewicz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>1st Lt Stanisław</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>2nd Lt Stanisław</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks (3) /Batmen (6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total personnel</td>
<td>(19)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Polish Liaison Personnel as of 6 September 1944. (51)

Source

Polska Misja Wojskowa przy SHAEF, L.dz 827/5/44, Londyn, dnia 6.IX.1944

PISM A.XII.43/2 cz 1, str 185, 186
### Appendix G

**Pigeau McCann Placement Shared Common Intent**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shared Knowledge</th>
<th>Comparable Reasoning Ability</th>
<th>Shared Commitment and Motivation</th>
<th>Impact on C2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Greatest potential for establishing common intent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Wasted Potential for common intent (leadership issue?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Some potential for common intent; will need to rely on very detailed plans and explanations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Poor potential for common intent; leadership and detailed plans required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Good potential for common intent if guiding principles for appropriate action exist (means more effort needed for explicating objective); if shared guiding principles do not exist, unacceptable solutions are a possibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Little potential for common intent; leadership and very detailed, explicit intent are required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>Dangerous common intent; overzealousness may lead to uncoordinated chaos with high potential for unacceptable solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>Least potential for establishing common intent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 A Method for Diagnosing the Potential for Achieving Common Intent Among Subordinates.

(p.106)
Appendix I

Polish Language Studies

In a June 2014, as a result of recent immigration of large numbers of Poles, Polish was cited as being the second most spoken language in the United Kingdom with some 16,000 children attending Polish Saturday Schools.¹ Today’s numbers of those studying the Polish language are of orders of magnitude greater than those in the 1930s, given the tiny pre-war Polish population in the United Kingdom.

Polish was not a popular language to study for the non-Pole and was not one of the European languages that were typically offered on the curriculum at post-secondary institutions in Canada or the United Kingdom prior to the Second World War. So, in the 1930s in pre-war Great Britain and Canada, where would you have studied Polish, if you had ever thought about it? The situation was so dire that Professor Joseph-Andrew Teslar’s *A New Polish Grammar*, published in 1940 was heralded by Professor William John Rose, the Director of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) at the University of London: “as welcome a rain in April. At long last, the English student has a proper guide to the grammar and speech of the Polish nation, the study of which is still in its infancy among us.”² In order to better understand the situation with respect to the study of Polish in the 1930s, a survey of post-secondary Slavic language course offerings in both the United Kingdom and Canada is necessary.

---

² Teslar, i.
In the 1930s at Oxford, the only place to study languages was to be enrolled in the Honour School of Modern languages. This was a specialized three-year course which was based on a highly selective system of secondary education and competitive examinations. The candidate was expected to be reasonably at home in his language or languages at the start of the university career. The only source of information about the Honour School’s content in the 1930s is the equivalent edition of the Examination Regulations (known as Examination Statutes). The main subjects offered were French, German, Italian and Spanish. No trace of Russian or Polish language course offerings has been found. At Cambridge although a lectureship and assistant lectureship in Slavonic Studies were established during the 1930s, the Department of Slavonic Studies was not established until 1948. The coverage of activities listed on the on-line archives relate mainly to Russian language courses provided to the British armed forces. No record of Polish language course offerings has been found. In 1939 Cambridge University did however create a process by which English language competency could be tested. This process allowed for Poles to be assigned an assessed level of competency in English, thereby possibly aid in the selection of linguistically talented personnel for particular assignments. The University College London the School of Slavonic and East European

4 Oxford Assistant Keeper of the Archives, e-mail message to the author, September 28, 2015.
6 “Cambridge University introduced the Lower Certificate in English (LCE) the second English language exam developed for speakers of other languages. The LCE represented a more elementary standard than the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE). The requirement for the LCE came as a result of the arrival of thousands of refugees from Europe into the UK. The LCE was used both during and after the war.” “Cambridge English: First,” last modified August 30, 2015, accessed September 29, 2015, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambridge_English:_First. University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate LCE certificate index-number 582 awarded to Kazimierz Samulski December 1947. The exam tested dictation reading and conversation, translation from and into English and English composition and language.
Studies (SSEES) was founded in 1915, though it would appear from available sources that Russian was the focus for British military personnel, both pre, during and post-Second World War.7

The situation with regards to the status of Polish language studies at university in Canada prior to the Second World War was similar to that found in the United Kingdom. A survey of University of Toronto course calendars for the interwar period lists Greek, German, French, Italian, Spanish and Hebrew as the consistent course offerings.8 There is no mention of Polish or any other Slavic language for that matter. Queen’s University Archives has no evidence that Polish was ever offered at any point in the university’s history, with Latin, Hebrew. Spanish, Italian, French and German being the foreign language courses offered in the 1930s.9 I could find no mention of Polish at University of Alberta for the same period, the modern language courses offered being French, German and Spanish, with Greek and Latin offered as classical languages.10 At McGill University in Montreal, in 1943 a group of refugee Polish academics founded the Canadian section of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America (PIASA). The Wanda Stachiewicz Polish Library was located at the University and has to date amassed some 45,000

8 University of Toronto Archives and Records Management Services, accessed September 24-25, 2015, http://utarms.library.utoronto.ca/digitized-archives-print-material.
9 Queen’s University Public Service and Private Records Archivist, e-mail message to author, September 30, 2015.
items. However, I could find no record of Polish language offered as a course of study at McGill during the interwar period.¹²