

002

RESTRICTED
REPORT

OF

THE GENERAL BOARD
UNITED STATES FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER

DISPLACED PERSONS, REFUGEES,
AND RECOVERED
ALLIED MILITARY PERSONNEL

G-5 SECTION **STUDY NUMBER 35**

RESTRICTED

002

~~RESTRICTED~~
THE GENERAL BOARD

THE GENERAL BOARD

United States Forces, European Theater

DISPLACED PERSONS, REFUGEES AND
RECOVERED ALLIED MILITARY PERSONNEL

MISSION: Prepare report and recommendations concerning policies, staff responsibilities, and operational activities of Civil Affairs and Military Government in connection with the care, control and repatriation of displaced persons, refugees, and recovered Allied military personnel.

The General Board was established by General Order 128, Headquarters European Theater of Operations, US Army, dated 17 June 1945 as amended by General Orders 182, dated 7 August 1945 and General Orders 312, dated 20 November 1945, Headquarters United States Forces, European Theater, to prepare a factual analysis of the strategy, tactics and administration employed by the United States Forces in the European Theater.

File: R383.7/2 TGBSY

Study Number 35

Restricted

1
ct
THE GENERAL BOARD
UNITED STATES FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER
APO 408

DISPLACED PERSONS, REFUGEES, AND RECOVERED
ALLIED MILITARY PERSONNEL

Prepared by:

Brigadier General C. E. Ryan, GSC	Chief, G-5 Section
Colonel Walker R. Goodrich, GSC	G-5 Section
Colonel William A. Brewer, Inf	G-5 Section
Lieutenant Colonel Robert M. Cheal, Inf	G-5 Section
Lieutenant Colonel Carlton F. Small, GSC	G-5 Section
Lieutenant Colonel Wilbur E. Kemerer, AUS	G-5 Section
Mr. William M. Baker	G-5 Section

Principal consultants:

Colonel William A. Brewer, Inf, 0209586, Chief, Economics and Displaced Persons Branch, G-5 Section, The General Board, USFET.
Colonel C. I. Dennis, AC of S, G-5, Forward Echelon, Communications Zone, ETOUSA; later AC of S, G-5, Normandy Base Section.
Colonel Rex G. Hardy, Displaced Persons Branch, G-5 Section, Communications Zone, ETOUSA.
Colonel O. F. Kotick, Chief of PWX Branch, G-1 Section, Hq 12 Army Group.
Lieutenant Colonel Joseph K. Carson, GSC, 0159101, formerly Executive Officer, Displaced Persons Branch, G-5 Section, Hq 12 Army Group.
Lieutenant Colonel Robert M. Cheal, RA, 018613, Economics and Displaced Persons Branch, G-5 Section, The General Board, USFET.
Lieutenant Colonel John L. Donovan, Jr., AUS, 0506212, formerly Displaced Persons Officer, G-5 Section, Seine Section, Communications Zone, ETOUSA.
Lieutenant Colonel Milton H. Richman, JAG, 0361120, Commanding Officer, Detachment 1-390, 3d Military Government Regiment.
Major George W. Davis, AUS, 0200818, Displaced Persons and German Refugees Officer, G-5 Section, Hq Third US Army.
Major Arthur W. Garnett, AUS, 0535640, Chief of Processing Center Section, CDPX, USFET.
Captain George E. Berthelon, AUS, 0533954, Military Government Officer (Public Welfare), F2B, Munich Detachment.
Mr. Alvin R. Gayler, Director, UNRRA, US Zone.
Mrs. Floretta Pomroy, Executive Assistant to the Director, UNRRA, US Zone.
Miss J. Tomkinson, Administrative Assistant, Voluntary Agency Branch, UNRRA Headquarters for Germany.

and

completed questionnaires received from 67 officers who had staff or operational experience in work with displaced persons and refugees, including Brigadier General Stanley R. Mickelsen, Chief, Displaced Persons Division, U.S. Forces, European Theater of Operations.

Restricted

Restricted

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBJECT	PAGE
<u>Part One: General</u>	1
Chapter 1: The Displaced Persons Problem	1
Chapter 2: Pre-operational Planning for Displaced Persons	2
Chapter 3: Operations in France, D-Day to Ardennes Campaign (D Plus 193)	4
<u>Part Two: Refugee Activities in a Retirement (Ardennes Campaign)</u>	9
Chapter 1: Narrative Account	9
Chapter 2: Return of Refugees after Liberation	10
Chapter 3: Displaced Persons in a Refugee Retirement	11
<u>Part Three: Displaced Persons Operations in Germany</u>	12
Chapter 1: Prior Planning	12
Chapter 2: Operations in Germany	16
<u>Part Four: Enemy Refugees</u>	26
Chapter 1: General	26
Chapter 2: Prior Planning	26
Chapter 3: Extent of the Problem	28
Chapter 4: Operations with Refugees	29
<u>Part Five: Repatriation</u>	32
Chapter 1: Nature of the Problem and Planning Assumptions	32
Chapter 2: Planning for Repatriation	33
Chapter 3: Repatriation Operations	36
Chapter 4: Evaluation of Results Obtained	41
<u>Part Six: Welfare of Civilian Populations</u>	44
Chapter 1: General	44
Chapter 2: Civilian Welfare in Liberated Territory	44
Chapter 3: Civilian Welfare in Germany	45
Chapter 4: American Red Cross--Civilian War Relief	48
<u>Part Seven: The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in Connection with Refugees and Displaced Persons</u>	49
Chapter 1: Planning	49
Chapter 2: Operations	51
Chapter 3: Evaluation	52
<u>Part Eight: Recovered Allied Military Personnel In Relation to Displaced Persons</u>	54
Chapter 1: Planning	54
Chapter 2: Operations	55
<u>Part Nine: Conclusions and Recommendations</u>	58

Restricted

Table of Contents, Contd.

SUBJECT:	PAGE
Chapter 1: Conclusions	58
Chapter 2: Recommendations	61

Appendices:

1. Administrative Memorandum Number 39, SHAEF, 18 November 1944.
2. Administrative Memorandum Number 39, SHAEF, (Revised - 16 April 1945).
3. Voluntary Agency Agreements with UNRRA.
4. Letters, SHAEF, pertaining to Red Cross Activities in connection with Displaced Persons.
5. Agreements recommended by UNRRA and approved by SHAEF or CD PX.
6. Report of UNRRA teams called forward to 10 July 1945.

Restricted

THEATER GENERAL BOARD
UNITED STATES FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER
APO 408

DISPLACED PERSONS, REFUGEES, AND
RECOVERED ALLIED MILITARY PERSONNEL

PART ONE

GENERAL

CHAPTER 1

THE DISPLACED PERSONS PROBLEM

1. German Slave Labor Policy. A logical outgrowth of the German theory of the super-race, was the conclusion that members of other so-called "inferior" peoples could and should be exploited on a slave basis. The subjugation of minorities in Germany prior to the outbreak of war on 2 September 1939, is significant in that it provided the Nazi party with an experimental laboratory, in which to test its theories of labor exploitation. Such notorious concentration camps as BUCHENWALD and DACHAU were the product, not of war-time needs for impressed labor, but of the pre-war days of 1933 and 1934. It should be noted that the German policy which produced the displaced persons problem was one inherent in the core of Nazism. This fact conditioned both the magnitude of the problem and the difficulty of handling individuals who had lived under it.

2. Displaced Persons the Spoils of War. The commencement of military operations by Germany in 1939 saw immediate execution of the policy indicated in Par 1. Millions of persons fell into German hands and they, without exception, were treated and regarded as property, a part of the spoils of war. This policy continued to be pursued in unoccupied portions of Germany, virtually up to the moment of occupation or surrender.

3. Liberation: Assumptions and Reality. Implicit in the planning for care and control of displaced persons was the assumption that the individuals would be tractable, grateful and powerless, after their domination for from two to five years as the objects of German slave policies. They were none of these things. Their intractability took the form of what was referred to repeatedly by officers in contact with them as "Liberation Complex". This involved revenge, hunger, and exultation, which three qualities combined to make displaced persons, when newly liberated, a problem as to behavior and conduct, as well as for care, feeding, disinfection, registration, and repatriation. During the combat phase, this problem assumed critical proportions at times.

4. Intelligence Available to Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force. At the time of the approval of the first appreciation of Plan OVERLORD¹(Note), the intelligence available as to the nature and extent of the displaced persons problem was meager. Gross numbers could only be estimated by the claims of Governments in Exile. Some of these claims were deliberately exaggerated in order to lead the German authorities to believe they had exhausted the supply of slave labor or to cover the activities of underground resistance groups and patriotic activities. Even less trustworthy were the data as to locations both

¹(Note): Refers to the bibliography, which is located at the end of each Part.

-1-

Restricted

Restricted

Civil Affairs/Military Government were a representative selection of welfare and executive personnel, chosen to conduct displaced persons and refugee operations. Qualified individuals in federal, state, and municipal welfare organizations were included, as well as officers who handled the evacuation of the Japanese on the West Coast, participants in the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps Project.^{2,3,4}

11. Planning under Operation OVERLORD. Upon the approval of the first appreciation of Plan OVERLORD,¹ a basic plan was evolved and issued by Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF). 21 Army Group and 1 United States Army Group each prepared a detailed plan and appreciation of the extent of the problem in the respective areas. The evaluation of 1 United States Army Group was issued 27 March 1944,⁵ and covered the extent to which the problem of refugees and displaced persons was likely to affect military operations within the United States Zone during the period D to D plus 90.

12. Detail of 1 United States Army Group Appreciation. The appreciation prepared by 1 United States Army Group considered the normal populations of the area of initial lodgment and reviewed what was known about the evacuation of civil populations by the Germans. The conclusion was drawn that largely the evacuated persons had been sent to rural communes, and accordingly were not concentrated within a small area. It also noted what was known about collective camps for evacuated children, who numbered between 100,000 and 200,000, and the number of Organization Todt workers in the area. It then proceeded to the following conclusions:

"a. Displaced Persons.....

- "(1) The evacuated persons have been moved to a considerable distance from their homes, hence in most cases cannot expect to return except when furnished transportation.
- "(2) In most cases many of the displaced persons have already been absent from their homes for several months and have probably become partially adapted to local living conditions.
- "(3) A large part of the coast area and port cities have been completely evacuated. In order to obtain local laborers for assistance to military operations, it will be necessary to return evacuees to the port cities and coastal areas.
- "(4) It is difficult to estimate how many of the displaced persons will attempt to return home. Judging on the basis of experience in Italy, the Germans will encourage the return of as many displaced persons as possible in order to clog transport and supply routes. This movement is likely to increase in volume as the operation progresses and the advance uncovers a large number of the displaced persons.

"b. Refugees. Undoubtedly, a considerable proportion of the inhabitants of urban centers will either attempt to

Restricted

flee or will be forced into our lines by the Germans. On the basis of experience in ITALY, it is believed that plans should be made to handle at least 500 such refugees in each Corps area each day and in case cities having a population of 5,000 or more are being uncovered, it is believed that plans should be made to handle at least 10% of the population of such cities as refugees."

13. Further Planning Prior to D-Day. The following excerpt from the After Action Report, 12 Army Group,⁶ indicates the further planning that was engaged in prior to D-Day:

"Before invasion, complete plans for the control and care of refugees and displaced persons had been developed and forwarded to the various Armies. Many conferences were held with members of the Army Staffs to discuss and refine the detailed plans. The staff of First US Army was assisted in the preparation of plans for the initial stages of the Normandy landings. Plans for the establishment of refugee camps were completed, personnel for the operation of these camps were instructed and briefed, and the initial stocks of supplies and equipment for them were included in the lift for the period ending D plus 14. While it was believed that a large part of the coastal area had been evacuated, plans were made for the use of landing craft for the evacuation to ENGLAND of civilians at the rate of 2,000 per day in case the Germans forced large numbers into the beachhead area." (Par 2, Section X, After Action Report, G-5 Section, Headquarters 12 Army Group).

The detailed plan was contained in Annex No. 2, Joint Administrative Plan, Operation OVERLORD, 19 April 1944.⁷ This in turn was based on an earlier plan, the Civil Affairs Annex, Operation RANKIN C, 1 March 1944.⁸

14. Appraisal. These plans made the most of the meager intelligence available as to the presence of displaced persons and the probable movements of refugees in the areas to be uncovered in NORMANDY. They provided facilities, personnel, and supplies for a reasonable number of displaced persons or refugees. They also provided an emergency means for the evacuation of abnormally large numbers to ENGLAND, in case such numbers were thrust upon us in a narrow beachhead. They did not clarify the status to be accorded to members of the Organization Todt, the German labor organization.

CHAPTER 3

OPERATIONS IN FRANCE, D DAY TO ARDENNES CAMPAIGN (D PLUS 193)

15. Displaced Persons Operations, D to D Plus 45.

a. The bulk of the operations during this period involved French refugees rather than displaced persons. As had been forecast, portions of the population in the area occupied prior to D plus 45 had been evacuated. Within a few days after capture of each town, the civil population began filtering back and on an average, towns had from 25 to 30 per cent of their normal population by the tenth day after liberation. The immediate problems were food, housing, and health. As the operations took place in summertime, it had been expected that shelter would not be a major problem. The continuous rains following D-Day, however, made shelter an early problem. Improvement of shelter from ruined buildings was hampered by the

extensive booby-trapping engaged in by the Germans. Few relief supplies were available, but French local authorities appointed by Civil Affairs, utilized indigenous supplies to feed the civil population and also distributed the limited imported supplies.

b. The displaced persons uncovered included former members of the Organization Todt, who were treated as prisoners of war. Plans for the evacuation of displaced persons and refugees to ENGLAND were not invoked. No large-scale attempt was detected, on the part of the Germans, to push large numbers of civilians through the lines to embarrass our effort.

c. A large number of French refugees were rapidly absorbed into normal civilian community life. Towns were placed "off limits" to military personnel, a move which had, among others, the effect of conserving the limited food supplies available for civilians.

d. Fortunately, few problems in public health arose. Exposure to the elements resulted in some temporary illnesses, but no epidemics were reported.

e. During this period, two displaced persons camps were opened, one in the vicinity of CHERBOURG and one in the vicinity of ST. MERE EGLISE (T-3697). These camps accommodated both displaced persons and refugees and were operated by First US Army. As the advance progressed further to the south, it was necessary to open successive displaced persons centers, and as rapidly as possible refugees were dispersed and absorbed into the civilian population.

16. Displaced Persons Operations, D Plus 45 to D Plus 81
(Liberation of PARIS).

a. The advance of Third US Army was so rapid during this period that civilian populations were overrun without evacuation, and towns and cities were found more fully populated as the advance progressed. The liberation of RENNES found an estimated 50 per cent of the population (80,000) in the city; of LAVAL (J-6946), an estimated 70 per cent; of LE MANS (K-4137), an estimated 60 per cent. As order was restored in these cities, more of the population returned.

b. The Third US Army employed one Civil Affairs "D" detachment to map and post acceptable secondary routes for the movement of civilian refugees. This project, begun at AVRANCHES, was continued throughout Third US Army zone until the network of roads allocated for civilian travel reached the vicinity of the German frontier.

c. Few displaced persons (as distinct from refugees) were encountered; and the rapid revitalization of the French local government enabled the French in most cases to assume responsibility for displaced persons who were liberated.

d. A special situation was encountered in BRITTANY, especially at BREST (V-9599) and at NANTES (O-0564). During a series of brief armistices civilians were transferred from German held territory to US controlled territory. These transfers of population assumed major proportions and in early September 20,000 such refugees were evacuated from BREST (U-9599). These refugees were accommodated in the towns and villages of the surrounding area. Altogether, before the fall of BRITTANY ports, approximately 300,000 such refugees were brought out and were accommodated mainly by the French.

Restricted

17. Displaced Persons Operations from D Plus 81 to D Plus 193.

a. The advance of First US Army through northern FRANCE and BELGIUM largely paralleled the experiences of Third US Army. Larger and larger percentages of normal populations were encountered in the cities; and the local governmental authority accepted responsibility for refugees and displaced persons as they were liberated, in the main.

b. With the slowing down of the advance, there arose the problem of returning refugees to their towns and villages. Beginning at approximately 15 October 1944, this retrograde movement of the civilian population began to assume major proportions. In general, the armies regulated the movement to accord with security and traffic restrictions.

c. Tactical units reported villages to which the civilian populations might return. The French department and regional officials procured for each village a cadre of acceptable civilians, screened both by the French authorities and by the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC). Such a cadre usually included a mayor, selected artisans, and some cattle tenders. They were instructed to choose the least damaged house in the village and make such emergency repairs as would make it livable, round up and care for the cattle, and then proceed to repair other houses, beginning with the least damaged. In general, cadres were furnished for ten to fifteen towns per day by this means, without interrupting military traffic or hindering tactical operations.

d. After the crossing of the MEUSE River, displaced persons (as distinct from refugees) began to be encountered in large numbers. They included Soviet citizens and Poles who had been held as forced labor, particularly in connection with the mines of eastern FRANCE and BELGIUM. The arrival of units of the French Mission Militaire Liaison Administratif (MMLA) in early September 1944 considerably augmented the forces available for running camps. Each of the armies established a comprehensive system of collection, with suitable services operating from collection points to camps. Displaced persons were directed to the collecting points by military police and were then transferred to the camps. Armies decentralized to corps the function of operating, supplying, and supervising these camps. As the winter set in, a continual flow of displaced persons separated itself from the civilian population and the intake of the camps continued to mount steadily.

e. As populations in displaced persons centers increased, it became apparent that it would be necessary to arrange for large scale movements to the west of the MEUSE. Several factors were considered. Among them were:

- (1) Continued increase in the number of displaced persons.
- (2) Exhaustion of local food resources.
- (3) Continued difficulty in securing acceptable accommodations.

f. Accordingly, the movement of large numbers of displaced persons into the Communications Zone was arranged. Some movements were by rail, others by motor. There was some sorting by nationality in connection with the movements.

Restricted

18. Functioning of Displaced Persons Centers. Available buildings at displaced persons centers were almost without exception badly damaged, and materials for their repair were in acute shortage. Food-stuffs were exceedingly limited. The arrival of imported Civil Affairs stocks was at best uncertain. The weather was severe, making indoor accommodation necessary. Fuel was critically short and many of the buildings did not have operable heating plants. Displaced persons cut wood for fuel. Both the members of the MMLA teams (feminine) and the field staff of the American Red Cross assisted Civil Affairs detachments in the operation of the camps; in some cases MMLA teams ran a number of camps under the supervision of a single Civil Affairs detachment. Thus, at one period there were 15 camps in the vicinity of HAYANGE (U-7389) and ERROUVILLE (U-6792) under the direction of a single Civil Affairs detachment assisted by four teams of the MMLA. Recreation and school programs were organized in the camps. Certain camps became "transit centers", notably the one at VERVIERS (K-6632), BELGIUM, and the one at VERDUN (U-2865).

19. Organization and Conduct of Movements. The organization of displaced persons movements into the Communications Zone proved to be a difficult problem. Neither the detachments nor the transportation authorities had had experience in movements of this sort. The first movements by train comprising 6,000 Soviet citizens from Third US Army area involved many unexpected details. The experience gained in this and other movements proved to be invaluable in organizing the mass movements which characterized the repatriation program from GERMANY. In December 1944, 40 telephone calls were involved in each movement of a train of 1,000 to 1,500 displaced persons. Such details as containers for water enroute, distribution of food, provision of blankets, the arrangement for medical and nursing service, and securing of train facilities, originally had to be dealt with one by one. Soon, however, they became routine and a standing procedure was adopted.

20. Condition at End of Period. At the end of the period cited, there were approximately 14,000 displaced persons in the zone of the armies comprising 6 and 12 Army Groups. These were mostly accommodated in camps. Substantially all of the refugees, approximating 1,000,000, had been absorbed in their own communities. Six thousand displaced persons had been moved from the area east of the MEUSE River into Communications Zone (Com Z). The displaced persons were receiving the allocated 2,000 calories a day and were sheltered in buildings with as much comfort as the circumstances and accommodations available permitted. Special programs were in operation for dealing with the sick, aged, and orphans. Most of the displaced persons had been dusted with DDT powder. No cases of typhus had been encountered, although upon the fall of METZ (U-8659) it was discovered that there had been typhus among displaced persons in that city as recently as July 1944.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PART ONE

1. Joint Operations Plan - US Forces for Operation "Overlord" (Revised 8 May 1944).
2. Memorandum from Provost Marshal General to Undersecretary of War on War Department policies on the preparation of Military Government (undated, but believed to have been issued about 1 October 1942).

RESTRICTED

3. "Article Z, Draft No. 2" of a proposed charter for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, transmitted by Colonel Jesse L. Miller, Associate Director, The School of Military Government, on 19 August 1942, to Mr. H. H. Neff, Special Assistant to Undersecretary of War, and later submitted to the Honorable Dean G. Acheson, then Assistant Secretary of State, by the Honorable Robert P. Patterson, then Undersecretary of War.
4. Memorandum of 16 February 1943 from the Provost Marshal General to the Secretary of the General Staff referring to a conference held on 15 February 1943 with representatives of the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation.
5. Detailed plan for and appreciation of the Operation "Overlord", issued by 1 United States Army Group, 27 March 1944 (Reference: Memorandum, Registry No. T-718, file 353.7, Hq 1 US Army Group, 27 March 1944).
6. "After Action Report of Civil Affairs/Military Government in 'Overlord' and 'Eclipse' Operations 1944-45", G-5 Section, Hq 12 Army Group.
7. Annex 2 to Joint Administrative Plan for Operation "Overlord", 19 April 1944.
8. Civil Affairs Annex, Operation "Rankin C", 1 March 1944.
9. ETO-SOP No. 62, "Continental Movements of Personnel", 19 May 1945, as amended.

Restricted

PART TWO

REFUGEE ACTIVITIES IN A RETIREMENT (ARDENNES CAMPAIGN)

CHAPTER 1

NARRATIVE ACCOUNT

21. Action in Corps and Armies.

a. After 16 December 1944, Corps G-5 staffs took prompt action on the subject of refugees. Civil Affairs detachments were given emergency evacuation instructions. Certain routes were made available for refugee movements; Military Police prevented movement by civilians on the main roads. Some of the first towns overrun were so quickly captured by the Germans that there was little opportunity for evacuation. In others, a proportion of the population elected to remain. Civil Affairs detachments were among the last to leave before the arrival of the Germans, and one such detachment was overrun and captured.

b. Army G-5 staffs also acted promptly. Through their liaison officers and through SHAEF Missions, national authorities of BELGIUM and LUXEMBOURG were asked to issue emergency proclamations urging civilians not to evacuate unnecessarily, and to stay off military routes. These requests were promptly complied with. Army staffs arranged accommodations and transportation for evacuees. All available accommodation immediately behind forward areas was utilized before refugees were sent to areas further in the rear. This policy had the effect of creating a progressively larger refugee mass comparatively close to forward positions. Unquestionably it was based in part on the estimate of the situation which indicated that the German advance could be stopped; the limited road-net and heavy winter conditions also influenced the decision.

c. Emergency arrangements were made for feeding refugees as they evacuated. The number was increasing with each westward move but supply lines were being progressively shortened.

d. Civil officials and members of the Belgian and Luxembourg Resistance Movement who had carried on activities against the Germans were evacuated wherever possible.

22. Action at Army Group Headquarters.

a. Army group initiated arrangements by which clearance was secured from SHAEF for the movement across national frontiers into FRANCE, if necessary, of 25,000 refugees from BELGIUM and LUXEMBOURG. It was arranged that this number could be moved without further notice to SHAEF or to the French government, as an emergency measure, if necessary. At the same time, arrangements were made with Oise Section, Com Z, to accept 25,000 refugees on short notice.

b. Preparations were made for the rapid clearance, if necessary, of up to 300,000 such refugees and a plan was agreed upon with Oise Section, Com Z, for the reception and billeting of this number of refugees in cities and towns along rail routes in FRANCE, should a mass evacuation become a necessity.

Restricted

Restricted

c. Estimates were made based upon the assumption that when division rear boundary reached a political subdivision, it would then be necessary to evacuate the personnel of that subdivision. This was in effect a phased schedule of movements. Refugees would initially be moved only from one political subdivision to the next, in order to avoid widespread dispersion.

d. There was virtually no movement of refugees from LUXEMBOURG or BELGIUM into FRANCE, except those who had bona fide relatives in areas near the frontier and who could consequently be accommodated without official action.

e. The phasing system of planned evacuations operated well. National authorities listed all available accommodations in each political subdivision. At the peak there were covered accommodations available for less than 1400 individuals in unoccupied LUXEMBOURG. The next move to the rear of division rear boundaries would have sent approximately 20,000 refugees into FRANCE. Fortunately, this move was not necessary.

23. Action at SHAEF. SHAEF requested the French government to authorize the movement of refugees into FRANCE. Since these requests received prompt action, SHAEF prepared additional plans for the dispersal of refugees laterally into other army group areas as well as to the rear.

24. Action at Hq Communications Zone, ETOUSA.

a. Upon advice by army group as to the situation, Hq Com Z immediately authorized direct communication with Oise Section and empowered Oise Section to make commitments for emergency care and reception of refugees directly with army groups.

b. At the same time, Hq Com Z contacted other base sections and arranged, if necessary, for the distribution of refugees throughout FRANCE by billeting in cities and towns along rail routes and a further dispersal by truck movements. Com Z advised army group that it could accommodate 500,000 if considered operationally necessary by army group, on comparatively short notice. At the same time, AC of S, G-5, of Com Z advised that all facilities of Advance Section, Com Z, (ADSEC) were available both for the evacuation of refugees to the rear for lateral transportation between army groups and for the establishment of emergency clothing and distributing centers at designated localities.

CHAPTER 2

RETURN OF REFUGEES AFTER LIBERATION

25. Narrative. Upon the assumption of the offensive by the allied armies, it was deemed desirable to return refugees to their homes as rapidly as possible. The questions which arose were largely those of security; and a line was established to the west of which refugee movements were permitted. This line was advanced progressively, until the area embraced all of the overrun territory. Generally, the line was established at or near corps rear boundary. As had been done in LORRAINE, cadres were organized and returned to the villages in advance of the bulk of the population. Such few cattle as remained in the area were rounded up and given care. Emergency food supplies were distributed on a very meagre ration and a limited quantity of materials for repairs and reconstruction were made available.

Restricted

26. Transfer to National Authorities. Shortly after 1 March 1945, army rear boundaries cleared the German frontier, and the area responsibility passed to Com Z. Almost immediately upon the completion of this transfer, authority and responsibility for refugee activity in the area were transferred to the national authorities.

CHAPTER 3

DISPLACED PERSONS IN A REFUGEE RETIREMENT

27. Statement of Problem. At the time of the German advance into the ARDENNES there were approximately 4500 Western European displaced persons in the area, mostly at LUXEMBOURG CITY (P-8414) and ESCH (P-73-Q-1). They had been clothed with US Class "X" uniforms and were employed as laborers by ADSEC. At the time of the German attack it was felt that their presence in these uniforms constituted a security threat as they could be used as "cover" for enemy agents operating in the area.

28. Action Taken. Accordingly, arrangements were made for the prompt but orderly movement of these displaced persons into FRANCE. This move was made under difficult weather conditions and involved in the case of those at LUXEMBOURG CITY (P-8414), a truck haul of approximately 20 miles. One of the trains was attacked by German aeroplanes while leaving the area and casualties were sustained. Experience gained in this operation indicated the importance of adequate medical and nursing care on all movements of displaced persons.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PART TWO

1. Administrative Memorandum No. 39, SHAEF, Sub: "Displaced Persons and refugees in Germany," 18 November 1944.
2. "After Action Report of Civil Affairs/Military Government in 'OVERLORD' and 'ECLIPSE' Operations 1944-45", G-5 Section, Hq 12 Army Group.