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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.

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THE GENERAL BOARD
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APO 408

DISPLACED PERSONS, REFUGEES, AND RECOVERED
ALLIED MILITARY PERSONNEL

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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.

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by national origins and by sex. Estimates of the total impressed labor force ranged from 6,000,000 to 14,000,000. How many had been "liquidated", how many had died under the lash, how many had been moved from the occupied territories into GERMANY, were matters of conjecture.

5. Displaced Persons and Refugees. Hand in hand with the problems foreseen in connection with slave labor went those of civilians driven out of their communities by the impact of combat. Whereas the former were largely displaced persons, that is, persons outside their own countries because of the war, the latter were refugees, persons within their own countries but removed from their homes because of the war. Though similar in many respects, this difference in status required differences in their handling. Refugees could in most instances be easily billeted with their fellow-nationals, whereas displaced persons could not.

6. Displaced Persons and Refugees alike might be either of Allied nationality or of enemy, ex-enemy, or co-belligerent nationality. The latter classes included individuals who had been loyal to the Allied cause or had been persecuted and mistreated by their own governments because of race, religion, color, or previous political activities.

7. Stateless Persons. As soon as repatriation or resettlement was considered, a further class of individuals came into being--those who had no governmental allegiance--due to the fact that their own national government, whether Allied or enemy, no longer existed. They imposed problems not common to other groups and had to be considered in planning.

8. Borderline Cases. Operations developed still another class of individuals, calling for differing treatment: individuals native to areas close to international frontiers, who did not know to which group they belonged. Typical of these were residents of the EUPEN (K-7928)-MALLEMEDI (K-7806) area, many of whom had lived under German, then Belgian, then German, and yet again Belgian authority. Their problems were exceedingly difficult and each individual had to be considered as a special case.

9. Effect of These Classifications. It appears that recognition of these various classes was necessary from the beginning. Justice and the announced objectives of the Allied governments both demanded that appropriate treatment be given to the various groups, and that their administration be coordinated. The effect on planning, however, was to make it exceedingly complicated. Moreover, arbitrary decisions could not be reached since each national government had a specific and proper interest in its own nationals, and expressed it freely. Forty-seven nationalities were represented among the displaced persons found in the 12 Army Group area of Germany--an indication of the polyglot nature of the problem, and of the international implications involved.

CHAPTER 2

PRE-OPERATIONAL PLANNING FOR DISPLACED PERSONS

10. Effect of Long-range Planning. The effect of long-range planning was to insure that among the personnel recruited for

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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 (SHAEP). 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 1944,² 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

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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. Improvisation 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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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 Luxembourgish 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.

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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.

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PART THREE

DISPLACED PERSONS OPERATIONS IN GERMANY

CHAPTER 1

PRIOR PLANNING

29. Cabinet and War Department. The problem of displaced persons in GERMANY was of such magnitude as to cause grave concern at the highest governmental levels. Within the US Cabinet, plans for handling these unfortunates were being considered as early as 29 October 1942.

30. SHAEF Long-range Plans.

a. Long-range planning with respect to the displaced persons problem culminated in the Outline Plan for Refugees and Displaced Persons (in liberated territories), dated 4 June 1944.¹ The policy of the Supreme Commander was set forth as follows:

- (1) To prevent any hindrance to military operations which might be occasioned by massing or uncontrolled movement.
- (2) To prevent and control outbreaks of disease among refugees and displaced persons which might threaten the health of the military forces.
- (3) To relieve, as far as practicable, conditions of destitution among refugees and displaced persons.
- (4) To set up an organization to effect the rapid and orderly repatriation of refugees and displaced persons, which could be handed over, in due course, to the appropriate civilian authorities.

b. The responsibility of Commanding Generals of army groups towards refugees and displaced persons (in liberated territories) was directed to be discharged normally through Allied national authorities concerned. Thus it may be said that within liberated territories, the objective of displaced persons/refugee operations was to free the armies, insofar as possible, from the handicap of civilian movements. The control, care, and movement of these civilians was made the responsibility of the Allied national authorities, subject to supervision by military commanders.

c. The Outline Plan for Refugees and Displaced Persons¹ indicated that negotiations were then under way towards concluding agreements with the USSR in the matter of repatriating Soviet nationals, and also the part to be played by the USSR in the return of the United Nations personnel uncovered by the advancing Red armies. Further, mention is made of an agreement, then apparently in the discussion phase, between the Supreme Commander, AEF, and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).

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d. The Outline Plan¹ may be summarized as follows:

- (1) It prescribed operations in liberated territories.
- (2) Responsibility for care, control, and repatriation was placed in the hands of national authorities concerned.
- (3) Reference is made to agreements, then in a formative stage, with the Soviet government, and with UNRRA.
- (4) Armies were, insofar as possible, freed from displaced persons/refugee problems.

31. SHAFF Administrative Memorandum No. 39.²

a. The displaced persons problem in GERMANY differed greatly from that within liberated territories. Where there were thousands of political prisoners, slave laborers, and prisoners of war in the western European nations, there were millions inside GERMANY, to whom the populations of FRANCE, BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG, and THE NETHERLANDS were sympathetic. The return of these people to their homelands offered threats to the security of the armed forces and menaced the health of many nations throughout the world. Displaced persons, once GERMANY had been penetrated, were a major military objective.

b. A detailed memorandum, "Displaced Persons and Refugees in Germany", was issued by SHAFF, 18 November 1944.² Its provisions differ in many respects from those of the "Outline Plan",¹ and included:

- (1) The liberation, care, and repatriation of United Nations displaced persons was announced as a major allied objective. All available resources at the disposal of military commanders were to be employed to accomplish this objective as a direct military responsibility. As soon as military conditions would permit, UNRRA was to be requested by the Supreme Commander to undertake this responsibility.
- (2) The control and repatriation of enemy and ex-enemy displaced persons was to be a responsibility of the German authorities, acting under the direction of Allied Military Government authorities. UNRRA could not, under its existing charter,³ assume responsibility for these persons in GERMANY.
- (3) In general, the details of the Supreme Commander's policy, enunciated in the "Outline Plan",¹ were reiterated. To these details was added the directive that "the German authorities make provision as necessary for the maintenance, care, and disposition of enemy or ex-enemy displaced persons and refugees".
- (4) Operational Phases: Displaced persons/refugee work, inside GERMANY, was divided into two

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phases: The first period included that in which the advance was opposed by hostile action. The second phase included the period after Military Government had been imposed on GERMANY, in whole or in part. During the opposed advance, Military Government detachments assigned to displaced persons work were to be stationed at assigned locations as they were uncovered in GERMANY; normal military chain of command was to be employed together with G-5 technical channels. After imposition of Military Government, military district commanders were to relieve advancing armies, to as great an extent and as rapidly as possible, of displaced persons operations. The operations were then to proceed through the displaced persons executive (DPX).

- (5) DPX: The displaced persons executive consisted of: (a) the staff and executive personnel from headquarters staffs at SHAEF and subordinate units; (b) Military Government detachments assigned to DPX work; (c) combat and service personnel detailed by commanders to administer processing centers for United Nations displaced persons; (d) WAC personnel, designated at times and in areas deemed suitable by commanders; (e) displaced persons staff officers of the Control Commission (British) and the US Group Control Council (attached); (f) UNRRA personnel, under certain provisions. It provided that the technical channel could be used for communications between DPX, SHAEF, and DPX of subordinate units.
- (6) International Administration of Displaced Persons and Refugees: During the period of combat operations SHAEF assumed over-all administrative control of the care, control, and repatriation of displaced persons and control of refugees. Chief liaison officers for allied governments concerned formed part of SHAEF, to advise and assist in this administration. The allied governments, represented by FRANCE, NORWAY, THE NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG, YUGOSLAVIA, POLAND, and DENMARK, expressed their readiness to cooperate with SHAEF, and with other allied governments concerned, in the care, control, and repatriation of displaced persons, with utmost expediency.⁴ GREECE and CZECHOSLOVAKIA informally expressed a similar intention. An attempt was being made to coordinate displaced persons activities with the USSR. Arrangements for the repatriation of displaced persons from processing centers in GERMANY to reception centers in their own countries, and repatriation of German displaced persons from assembly centers in allied countries to areas which were a responsibility of SHAEF in GERMANY, were to be made through the SHAEF Missions to the Governments concerned or in the event of no such Mission, to the government itself.

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- (7) Responsibility for United Nations displaced persons, as vested in military district commanders after Military Government was imposed, included their care, control, movement, feeding, protection, registration, health, safeguarding of property, and opportunity to serve with either the armed forces of their own countries or with labor battalions. The repatriation movements out of military districts were a further responsibility imposed. The payment of wages, care, shelter and medical attention, was made a German responsibility, and priority over the needs of the German population was directed.
- (8) Upon invitation of SCAMF UNRRA was authorized by the United Nations to undertake the care, relief, and repatriation of United Nations displaced persons. The care of German displaced persons and refugees was not included. UNRRA staff officers were to be integrated with other staffs working on displaced persons problems. Specialist personnel, both administrative and operations, were available to military commanders on call through command channels. In short, UNRRA was preparing to handle the entire field of displaced persons/refugees operations as applied to United Nations nationals.
- (9) Allied liaison officers were made available for attachment to military commanders, on call, to assist in carrying out the repatriation mission. Subject to the military commander's decisions, they were authorized to carry out the wishes of their own governments in regard to care, control and repatriation of their nationals. It must be noted that, as directed, the work of these liaison officers was not to be limited to their own nations.
- (10) Processing centers, assembly centers, and border control stations were set up and their functions listed.
- (11) Procedure for dealing with special classes of displaced persons was instituted. These classes included persons claiming United Nations prisoner-of-war or civilian-internee status; members of an enemy para-military or of a collaborationist organization captured while not in uniform; United Nations nationals demobilized from enemy military or para-military organizations; non-interned British and US displaced persons requiring assistance or documentation; neutral displaced persons, stateless persons, and persons persecuted because of race, religion or activities in favor of United Nations.
- (12) Details for the repatriation movement were prescribed, as were the report and returns required.

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- (13) Suggested tables or plans for organization of centers were attached, with other appendices.

32. Army Group Planning.

a. Twelfth Army Group. Operations in GERMANY, pertaining to displaced persons and refugees, were the subject of a planning program of the G-5 Section, 12 Army Group, prior to receipt of SHAEF Administrative Memorandum No. 39.² Based on the "TALISMAN" plan,⁵ of SHAEF 12 Army Group published Operational Instructions No. 5, 30 September 1944.⁶ This was later coordinated with SHAEF Memorandum No. 39, by amendment to the 12 Army Group Instructions.

b. Sixth Army Group. Sixth Army Group planned for displaced persons operations in GERMANY prior to 3 December 1944. Operational Memorandum No. 2, Hq 6 Army Group, dated 3 December 1944,⁷ generally prescribed the procedure to be followed in handling displaced persons in terms similar to those of SHAEF Administrative Memorandum No. 39.²

33. Army Level Planning. Third US Army. The provisions of SHAEF "Outline Plan" I and of Administrative Memorandum No. 39,² were incorporated in army plans.^{8,9}

CHAPTER 2

OPERATIONS IN GERMANY

34. Operational Background. Events prior to the invasion of GERMANY assisted in clarifying the displaced persons/refugee situation to some extent. No longer was the problem of these exiles left solely to Military Government detachments. The problem was accepted as a major military objective, and all means at the disposal of military commanders were directed towards its solution. The ARDENNES counter-offensive presented the threat of a large-scale exodus; machinery was set up to control this movement. The capture of TRIER (L2129) by the Third US Army gave practical experience to displaced persons teams in the mobilization of resources; collection and assembling of displaced persons and ex-prisoners of war; segregation into national groups; shelter, clothing, feeding, preservation of health, and registering individuals; and other important details of evacuation.

35. Movement Across Frontiers. SHAEF had directed a "standfast" policy prior to the invasion of GERMANY. Under this policy no uncontrolled movement was to be permitted. Western Europeans, British and US nationals were to be collected and returned to the country of origin with all dispatch. Eastern Europeans (Latvians, Lithuanians, Poles, and Soviet citizens) were to be collected, held in assembly centers, and under an agreement yet to be made with the USSR, to cross Soviet lines for repatriation. The presence of these Eastern Europeans in army areas was a threat to military operations. Pending SHAEF decision, army group commanders and army commanders invoked operational necessity in order to clear forward areas of these persons. During the period in which the German frontier was wholly or in part within divisional areas, they were cared for in corps and army areas. But with the advance of army rear boundaries across the frontier, eastern European displaced persons could be moved into liberated territories only as a military commitment, and not a responsibility of the government of the country concerned.¹⁰

36. Difficulties Encountered.

a. Housing. Combat troops were given priority on all facilities and until army rear boundaries cleared the frontier (approximately 10 March 1945) little in the way of shelter for displaced persons could be made available. Caserne Kemmel, at TRIER (L-2129), and Caserne Lutzow, at BRAND, near AACHEN (K-8242), became sorting centers to which displaced persons were transferred and segregated. Similarly, ALSDORF (K-8955), north of AACHEN, was used as a displaced persons sorting center.

b. Communications. The prescribed method of reporting numbers of displaced persons involved too great a time lag for figures obtained to be useful in planning within 12 Army Group. A telephone net was established, by which populations of camps and estimates of displaced persons in army, corps, and division areas were reported. Although these reports were often estimated or only approximated, they were of material assistance in further planning.

c. French Border Control Plan. Many authorities prior to D-Day and until December 1944, believed Germany would surrender without a fight on German soil. Based on this assumption, the French believed there would be a great deal of road movement by DP's, and very little rail movement. Accordingly, the French border reception stations were placed at frequent intervals from left to right. In December it became evident that GERMANY must be conquered within the confines of the Reich, and that DP evacuation must of necessity follow rail-lines. A change in the French plan was recommended, to place the centers in depth from front to rear. The revision was made in March 1945 and the French authorities established automatic daily reception quotas. The French made no distinction between recovered Allied military personnel (RAMP) and DP's. The daily quota of each camp was reported to agencies interested in repatriating former prisoners of war as well as units charged with care and control of displaced persons. Confusion resulted. A camp with a reception capacity of 5,000 persons a day would often receive 10,000 - 5,000, DP's together with 5,000 RAMP. It finally devolved upon 12 Army Group to coordinate these simultaneous movements for the entire US Zone of GERMANY.

37. German Frontier to the Rhine. Estimates of slave labor in the Rhineland, as of September 1944, indicated there were 640,000 displaced persons in that area. Intelligence reports indicated large-scale movements of these people to the East. An estimate made on 19 January 1945 led higher headquarters to believe 150,000 displaced persons would be encountered before the Rhine was crossed. This figure was surprisingly accurate. Control of these individuals was difficult. During this period, the insufficiency of trained personnel became apparent. Repeated requests had been made to SHAEF for additional personnel, including UNRRA personnel. By 15 March a total of 7 UNRRA teams came forward. The movements of Eastern Europeans into FRANCE continued to be an acute problem. It was foreseen that huge numbers of Soviet citizens, Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, and nationals of Eastern Europe, pouring into FRANCE could not be absorbed. On 12 March 1945 a further westward movement of these Eastern Europeans was stopped, and the armies were faced with the problem of controlling, feeding and housing the greatest mass movement of history. Trained workers in the forward areas cleared persons from combat zones; workers in rear areas screened, and disinfected them and arranged for repatriation. Inspection of 23 camps in

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12 Army Group area in March 1945 showed two excellent camps, one unsatisfactory, and the rest as satisfactory or fair. The following steps were taken to remedy this condition:

- a. Additional personnel was requisitioned.
- b. Improvement of methods with respect to sanitation, orderliness, cleanliness and feeding.
- c. Assistance to the mobile labor service, in recruiting Eastern Europeans for mobile labor battalions.
- d. Expediting the recruiting of Poles for the Polish armed forces.
- e. Steps were taken to improve the supply situation.

38. The Rhine Crossing. The Rhine was crossed at REMAGEN (F-6620) 7 March 1945. A bridge-head of less than 15 square miles was established, and within this confine were found 3,500 displaced persons. This figure indicated a density that could be expected in future operations. Large numbers of DP's were uncovered by the other armies bridging the river and moving deeper into GERMANY. The Displaced Persons Branch, G-5 Section, SHAEF, reported in the weekly summary dated 24 March 1945, 11 that approximately 115,000 displaced persons were uncovered in GERMANY since 3 March. 72,000 were held in GERMANY, 43,000 returned to FRANCE, BELGIUM, THE NETHERLANDS, and LUXEMBOURG.

39. Operations Beyond the Rhine. Prior to the envelopment of the Ruhr pocket, many displaced persons had been evacuated by the Germans to the East and South. Army commanders, complying with SHAEF Administrative Memorandum 39,² detailed combat troops to temporary duty caring for and controlling displaced persons.

40. Personnel. The increasing numbers of displaced persons encountered, coupled with the lengthening repatriation lines, called for more and more trained personnel. Repeated requests were made for UNRRA teams, but that organization was unable to furnish the numbers asked. By 20 April 1945 some 50 "Spearhead" teams were operating for UNRRA. These teams were functioning with 55% authorized personnel, usually with two captured vehicles. The maintenance of these vehicles was difficult, as spare parts were not available. The personnel shortage was met, in part, by the use of recovered Allied military personnel. 12 Army Group permitted former prisoners of war to be employed in staffing displaced persons centers, where such employment would not unduly delay their evacuation. Many were recruited by UNRRA further to assist that organization to accomplish its mission. Allied liaison officers were called forward with some reluctance by military commanders. The hesitation of these commanders in availing their commands of such potentialities was caused in part by the erroneous belief that liaison officers were permitted to work only with nationals of their own country. In the main, control over DP's was exercised by local military commanders utilizing their own forces.

41. DP Centers. Prior plans for DP centers were not adequate. Center populations of 2,000 - 3,000 inhabitants had been expected. In practice these populations usually ran to figures above 10,000, and in one case to approximately 40,000. In most cases these shelters were Wehrmacht casernes. Due to aerial bombardment or the effect of artillery fire these casernes were

often partly destroyed. Newly liberated persons looted, robbed, murdered, and in some cases destroyed their own shelter. Generally, the water systems of communities had been partially destroyed, causing sanitation to become a major problem. Meals, while nourishing and adequate, tended to become monotonous. Two daily servings was the usual rule in newly opened camps, each serving consisting of a stew made of pulses, meat and vegetables, usually augmented by locally baked bread. Two thousand calories daily were prescribed, and the burden of furnishing food items fell on the local German government. Only in cases where the resources were inadequate to furnish this supply were the military commanders permitted to divert army food stores to DP use. Recovered Allied military personnel were authorized 3600 calories a day.

42. Lengthening Repatriation Lines. Advances lengthened the lines of repatriation. Third US Army pushed South-East into Bavaria. The rail loading-points were thrust forward to WURZBURG (O-5835), and again to MERENBURG (O-4200). A rail trip of five to six days from loading point to French reception centers was involved, with attendant discomforts, inadequate sanitary facilities, crowded conditions, food and water problems. Similarly, the problems of security guards, medical attendants, train crews and control personnel were more difficult. The First US Army moved into Thuringia, advancing its loading-points to ERFURT and LEIPZIG (E-2515). Later the Ninth US Army forced its way through and beyond BRAUNSCHWEIG. Ninth Army DP evacuation then proceeded along the line MUNSTER (A-9373)-LIEGE (K-5829), with trans-shipment of French repatriates to VALENCIENNES (J-0103).

43. Motor Transport Units. During advance into GERMANY military transport was required for military needs. Trucks were needed to carry DP's to rail-heads, and supplies to DP centers. The French authorities answered this problem in part by furnishing some fifty truck companies. The French companies transported approximately 40,000 persons per day. The use of these motor units was coordinated by G-5 in consultation with the French.

44. Concentration Camps. Serious problems were encountered in concentration camps.

a. The Handbook for Military Government in Germany, December 1944,¹² states as follows:

- (1) Paragraph 425, "Military Government public safety officers will be responsible for the control of the following agencies: ...d. Concentration camps--until dissolved."
- (2) Paragraph 480: "After the initial seizure of such a camp and under arrangements to be made by the military commander, an administrative group to include, whenever possible, a Military Government public safety officer and a representative of CIC will take over and supervise the administration of the camp. Guards and other necessary personnel may be drawn from troop units or from indigenous non-Nazi sources, depending on the situation."
- (3) Paragraph 482: "The Allied officer in charge will also arrange for the rapid processing of the detainees by a board under his chairmanship, composed of three or more officers, to include

a Military Government public safety officer, a member with legal experience, a member of Counter-Intelligence Branch (if possible), and a medical officer (if possible)".

b. However, the same publication, "Handbook for Military Government in Germany," SHAEF, December 1944, in Chapter VIII, 12 specified that inmates of concentration camps should be, if under restraint by the German authorities on racial, political, or religious grounds, treated as United Nations displaced persons, and in Pars 710c, 711, and 727, gave directions for their care and administration.

c. The uncoordinated directions caused some confusion initially, when the first concentration camps were uncovered; however, The Commanding General, 12 Army Group, invoked the authority of Par 2 of the same Handbook¹² and directed that responsibility for concentration camps should be with DPX at all echelons. Excerpts from the Weekly Report, Displaced Persons Branch, G-5 Section, SHAEF,¹³ portray the situations found in some of the concentration camps and the efforts made to alleviate them.

d. Buchenwald---liberated 13 April 1945.

- (1) Survivors---20,000 (31 nationalities).
- (2) German ration---600 to 700 calories daily.
- (3) Daily death rate under Germans---200 (60 to 80 executed).
- (4) Average adult weight on liberation---60 to 80 pounds.
- (5) Estimated death toll, all causes, 1937-1945---54,235.

Buchenwald survivors were cared for and repatriated by a "D" type Military Government detachment. Inmates even after liberation died at the rate of 20 a day. A complete evacuation hospital was ordered to the scene in an attempt to lower this appalling death rate and to carry out a health program to a point where all inmates could stand the repatriation journey. Among the problems of the officials controlling this liberated concentration camp were the daily visits of hordes of visitors accredited and non-accredited from higher headquarters and national governments. Many cases were reported of former inmates being removed from this camp without authority, transported by private means and dying while enroute to their destinations. The provisions of paragraph 2a, Handbook for Military Government in Germany, dated 1 September 1944,¹⁴ were invoked by the Commanding General, 12 Army Group, in a TWX to Commanding Generals, First, Third, Ninth, and Fifteenth US Armies, dated 25 April 1945.¹⁵ Instructions were given that no individuals or agencies were to visit liberated concentration camps without the approval of army commanders.

e. Mauthausen Concentration Camp (V-9080). As reported by the French doctor, Professor Marshal, compared to Mauthausen, Buchenwald was a health resort. He states that according to reliable notes made by intellectual inmates, 183,000 persons were killed in the years 1941-1945. He describes a sample daily menu as follows: breakfast---ersatz coffee; midday---one

litre of thin soup; supper---a small slice of sausage and a small piece of black bread.

45. The YALTA Agreement.

a. An agreement between the USSR on the one hand, and the United States and Great Britain on the other, was concluded at YALTA, SSR of Crimea, 11 February 1945.¹⁶ Included in the terms of this agreement were high-level plans for the care and exchange of displaced nationals of the countries concerned. Countless numbers of Soviet displaced persons and prisoners of war had been the object of United States care almost from D-Day. In broad general terms that part of the Yalta Agreement¹⁶ pertaining to displaced persons/former prisoners of war stated that nationals of countries concerned would be humanely treated and returned to the control of the interested power as rapidly as military operations permitted. Prior to the surrender of GERMANY, exchanges of nationals were made under provisions of this agreement. The Russian drive from the VISTULA to the ODER, in January 1945, liberated thousands of American, French, British, Belgian, Dutch, and Norwegian prisoners of war. At the same time, slave-laborers from the western European nations were uncovered in the same sectors. Collection centers were established at such places as REMBARTOW and LUBLIN, in POLAND, BREST-LITOVSK, and ODESSA in USSR. Liberated allied personnel were forwarded to ODESSA, shipped in British ships across the BLACK SEA, through the BOSPHORUS and DARDANELLES, to MALTA. There certain British soldiers were disembarked to join units still in AFRICA. These vessels proceeded to MARSEILLES (T-4258) and NAPLES, where French, British, and American soldiers again came under military control and where civilians were cared for by UNRRA. Returning ships carried members of the Russian and Polish armed forces, many wearing captured German uniforms, to ODESSA to rejoin their units.

b. The YALTA Agreement substantially gave to liberated Soviet citizens the scale of maintenance and allowances normally provided for recovered Allied military personnel. Difficulties were encountered. Supply plans had not made provision for such allowances. Some of the materials called for under supplementary directives of ETOUSA under the YALTA Agreement, such as red cloth material for distinctive insignia, were not available in the Theater. But more serious than these were evidences of jealousy on the part of displaced persons who had lower scales of maintenance and fewer allowances. In effect, the YALTA Agreement had operated to create a special class of persons, whose handling accordingly became difficult.

46. Summary DP Operations in GERMANY 8 May 1945. Daily Situation Report Number 8, issued by the Displaced Persons Branch, G-5 Section, SHAEF¹⁷ shows the following condition of operations on V-E Day:

<u>ARMY GROUP</u>	<u>IN CAMPS</u>	<u>OTHERS ESTIMATED</u>
12	1,166,527	862,600
6	91,346	200,000
Total in US Zone	1,257,873	1,062,600

	<u>REPATRIATES BY NATIONALITY</u> (Not included in the above)	
	<u>12 Army Group</u> (Prior to V-E Day)	<u>6 Army Group</u>
French	194,343	125,000
Belgians	54,375	***

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Dutch	41,598	***
Luxembourgeois	1,159	***
Totals	291,475	125,000

Approximately 50,000 French and several thousand Belgians had been repatriated by air and approximately 25,000 Eastern Europeans had been brought temporarily into France and Belgium.

47. The Halle Plan. Reference has been made to arrangements between the Supreme Commander, AEF, and accredited representatives of the USSR, for the repatriation of Eastern European nationals liberated in Western Europe, and for a similar movement of US and British personnel, from the area of Russian operations. The Yalta Agreement¹⁶ planned for such repatriation on a Foreign Office-State Department level. Operational details were still to be decided. The problem of repatriating an estimated 1,500,000 Soviet citizens in the French, British, and US zones called for a working plan. Accordingly, a conference between representatives of the Soviet High Command and SCAEF convened at HALLE (D-9438), GERMANY, 16 May 1945, and a plan was adopted which called for the delivery of repatriates at 11 points from WISMAR (T-4695) on the north to PLAUEN (K-1220) near the Czechoslovakian border, and for two such exchange points in Austria. Ten such points were actually established. 1,500,000 Soviet citizens were estimated to be present in the ETO and 300,000 US, British, and Western European nationals were in the theater of Soviet operations. Under the terms of this plan, transfer of individuals proceeded by rail, motor and air. The following tables indicate the status of DP operations on 9 May 1945:

NATIONALITY BREAKDOWN OF DISPLACED PERSONS ON HAND

IN GERMANY IN 12 ARMY GROUP AS OF 9 MAY

Table I		<u>WESTERN EUROPEANS</u>			
	<u>French</u>	<u>Belgians</u>	<u>Dutch</u>	<u>Lux'ois</u>	
<u>In Camps</u>					
1 US Army	18,613	4,619	1,798	94	
3 US Army	25,000	2,000	1,500	400	
9 US Army	21,853	11,728	9,465	300	
15 US Army	3,189	2,347	2,524	287	
Subtotals	68,655	20,694	15,287	1,081	
<u>Outside of Camps</u>					
1 US Army	90,000	30,000	30,000	500	
3 US Army	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,000	
9 US Army	50,000	10,000	5,000	200	
15 US Army	1,500	1,000	500	100	
Subtotals	161,500	43,000	37,500	1,800	
TOTALS	230,155	63,694	52,787	2,881	
<u>In Camps</u>		<u>Outside of Camps</u>			
1 US Army	25,124	1 US Army	150,500		
3 US Army	28,900	3 US Army	7,000		
9 US Army	43,346	9 US Army	65,200		
15 US Army	8,347	15 US Army	3,100		
Subtotal	105,717	Subtotal	225,800		

NATIONALITY BREAKDOWN OF DISPLACED PERSONS ON HAND IN GERMANY IN 12 ARMY GROUP AS OF 9 MAY
OTHER THAN WESTERN EUROPEANS

Table II

	<u>Russians</u>	<u>Poles</u>	<u>Yugoslavs</u>	<u>Czechs</u>	<u>Greeks</u>	<u>Other Allied</u>	<u>Italians</u>	<u>Bulgarians</u>	<u>Other Ex-Enemy</u>
<u>In Camps</u>									
1 US Army	52,352	15,564	1,042	1,112	191	163,653	8,349	125	33
3 US Army	40,000	18,200	800	500	400	3,200	5,900	100	100
9 US Army	280,165	116,364	4,000	3,000	250	28,862	31,962	1,000	—
15 US Army	189,640	47,490	2,607	425	155	1,438	41,695	136	—
Subtotals	562,157	197,618	8,449	5,037	996	197,153	87,906	1,361	133
<u>Outside of Camps</u>									
1 US Army	200,000	100,000	50,000	30,000	5,000	50,000	20,000	10,000	5,000
3 US Army	25,000	10,500	200	200	100	5,000	1,000	100	1,000
9 US Army	50,000	20,000	5,000	1,000	500	10,000	5,000	1,000	—
15 US Army	7,000	2,000	500	500	100	2,500	500	100	—
Subtotals	282,000	132,500	55,700	31,700	5,700	67,500	26,500	11,200	6,000
TOTALS	844,157	330,118	64,149	36,737	6,696	264,653	114,406	12,561	6,133

In Camps

1 US Army	242,421
3 US Army	69,200
9 US Army	465,603
15 US Army	283,586
Subtotal	1,060,810

Outside of Camps

1 US Army	470,000
3 US Army	43,100
9 US Army	92,500
15 US Army	13,200
Subtotal	618,800

TOTALS, TABLES I AND II

<u>In Camps</u>		<u>Outside of Camps</u>	
1 US Army	267,545	1 US Army	620,500
3 US Army	98,100	3 US Army	43,100
9 US Army	508,949	9 US Army	157,700
15 US Army	291,333	15 US Army	16,300
Subtotal	1,166,527	Subtotal	862,600

TOTAL, 12 ARMY GROUP

In Camps	1,166,527
Outside of Camps	844,600
GRAND TOTAL	2,011,127

48. Post Surrender Operations. Although hostilities ceased 8 May 1945, the vast problem of transporting Eastern European displaced persons into Soviet controlled areas and the reception of British, US, and Western European nationals still remained. Situation Report Number 27, Displaced Persons Branch, SHAEF, 10 July 1945,¹⁸ summarizes displaced persons activities as follows:

CONDITION ON 10 JULY 1945

<u>ARMY GROUPS</u>	<u>IN CAMPS</u>	<u>OTHERS ESTIMATED</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
12	1,088,048	37,320	1,125,368
6	117,237	-	117,237*
Total US Zone	1,205,275	37,320	1,242,605

* Does not include Seventh US Army area Eastbound Europeans in 6 and 12 Army Group Zones:

<u>IN CAMPS</u>	<u>OTHERS ESTIMATED</u>
381,381	19,950

The following comparison indicates the speed with which DPs were repatriated following VE-Day:

	<u>IN CAMPS</u>	<u>OTHERS ESTIMATED</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
May 8	1,257,873	1,062,600	2,320,473
July 10	1,205,275	37,320	1,242,605
Differences representing repatriations in the period.	52,598	1,025,280	1,077,868

Analysis of the figures quoted above reveal the following significant facts:

- a. In the period 8 May 1945 to 10 July 1945, over 1,000,000 displaced persons were cleared from the area of US operations.
- b. During the same period, over 52,000 individuals had been cleared from displaced persons camps.
- c. An estimated 1,000,000 displaced persons had been collected, cared for in camps, and to a large extent had been started toward repatriation.
- d. Altogether in the US Zone, some 4,200,000 displaced persons had been handled; some 2,700,000 had been repatriated by 10 July 1945; and some 550,000 had been turned over in place to British, French, and USSR forces as the latter moved into their permanent zones.¹⁹

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PART FOUR

ENEMY REFUGEES

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL

49. Definition. Enemy refugees are defined as "enemy civilians within their own country, who are--

- a. Temporarily homeless because of military operations;
- b. At some distance from their homes because of reasons related to the war."¹

50. Responsibility. German authorities were charged with the responsibility for enemy refugees. It was intended that Allied forces would play only a supervisory role. It was necessary, however, at times for Allied forces to participate actively in operational activities.

CHAPTER 2

PRIOR PLANNING

51. The SHAEF Outline Plan for refugees and displaced persons (all operations) was published 3 June 1944.

a. The plan provided for the control, care, and disposition of refugees and displaced persons in the SCAEF area of responsibility, so as--

- (1) To eliminate or reduce interference with military operations.
- (2) To permit a smooth transfer of responsibility from military authorities to civilian agencies at the earliest practicable date.

b. It was to be a Civil Affairs/Military Government responsibility "to supervise indigenous authorities in the control of refugees".

c. Provisions were made for surrender terms which would require German authorities to issue standstill instructions to refugees and submit lists of concentration camp inmates. German authorities were to be responsible for the care of Allied displaced persons. Food and supplies were to be provided by the Germans in order to insure that rations for Allied displaced persons were at least equal in caloric value to those of German "civilians".

52. Collapse. The plan² considered the possibility of a German collapse. It was recognized that central and local government might break down. In such a case, detachments would be sent forward with escort in advance of the main body of troops to "organize and supervise indigenous authorities in the control of refugees." It was considered desirable to assist refugees in moving to their homes as soon as the military situation permitted. Military commanders were to specify routes for use by refugees in order to prevent interference with military traffic.

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53. Opposed Advance.

a. Military commanders were to specify routes for use by refugees in order to prevent interference with military traffic. In the early stages and in the absence of responsible local authorities military commanders were to be prepared to direct and control refugees by utilizing combat troops.

b. In later stages, control of refugees was to be a joint responsibility of the Provost Marshal and of Civil Affairs/Military Government detachments in division and corps zones. In army zones and Com Z it was to be primarily a responsibility of Civil Affairs/Military Government. Military commanders were held responsible for posting signs for the guidance of refugees.

c. Collecting points and transit points were to be organized to facilitate the canalization of refugees' movements. Groups were to be organized at collecting points and sent rearward with military escorts if necessary. It was declared a Military Government responsibility to instruct local German authorities to set up information bureaux in each town or city where large numbers of refugees were found. Refugees moving from one zone into another would be temporarily housed and given food and medical care while enroute. Prior clearance would be obtained from the military commander into whose zone they were to be moved.

d. Provisions were made for the supply and transportation of refugees.

54. 12 Army Group Plan.

a. The prior planning of 12 Army Group for refugee operations was included in G-5 Operational Instructions Number 5, published 30 September 1944³ and Operational Instructions Number 13, published 20 April 1945.⁴

b. The plan of 12 Army Group directed that "German authorities will be directed to provide for the control and care of refugees." German authorities were, in addition, to provide for the nationals of ITALY, and other ex-enemy or co-belligerent countries who were captured in GERMANY.

c. The intention of the policy was:³

- (1) To prevent any hindrance to military operations which might be occasioned by massing or uncontrolled movement of refugees.
- (2) To prevent and control outbreaks of disease among refugees, which might threaten the health of the military forces.
- (3) To relieve, as far as practicable, conditions of destitution among refugees.

55. 6 Army Group Planning.⁵ Relief of German refugees was to be entirely a matter for German authorities and the army group commander was to insure that the German authorities provided for the maintenance, care, and disposition of enemy or ex-enemy displaced persons and refugees. Otherwise, the policy was substantially the same as that of 12 Army Group.

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56. Further SHAEF Planning.

a. The publication of Administrative Memorandum Number 39, on 18 November 1944,⁶ presented a detailed plan for Allied operations with reference to refugees in Germany.

b. Specific responsibility of the German authorities toward German refugees, as well as toward enemy, ex-enemy, and co-belligerent displaced persons, were set forth. The Germans were directed:

- (1) To provide and pay for all goods, facilities, and services required.
- (2) To take all necessary measures as directed by military commanders for refugee control.
- (3) To produce, on demand, lists of these persons in internment and concentration camps, and lists of the places of confinement of political prisoners, and their locations.
- (4) To set up assembly and reception centers as directed.
- (5) To disseminate stand-fast orders as instructed by military commanders.
- (6) Where necessary, to establish accommodation facilities separate from assembly centers for United Nations displaced persons. Wherever possible refugees were to be billeted on the German population.

57. Organization of Command.

a. Military district commanders were to relieve the advancing fighting forces as quickly as possible of the "supervision, control, and administration" of refugees.

b. Military Government detachments at Regierungsbezirke were to submit weekly returns to military district headquarters, showing the numbers of refugees to be returned to their homes by public transport and the areas to which they were to be returned.

58. SHAEF Handbooks. Two SHAEF handbooks were published in December 1944; the first was the Handbook for the Military Government of Germany, Prior to Defeat or Surrender;⁷ the second was the Handbook Governing Policy and Procedure for the Military Occupation of Germany;⁸ both were dated December 1944. In general, these handbooks repeated the provisions of Administrative Memorandum Number 39, SHAEF.⁶

CHAPTER 3

EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

59. Numbers of German Civilians. During the winter of 1944-45 the number of German refugees uncovered was relatively small. Many German civilians moved eastward into territory still controlled by the German army.

60. Origin of German Refugees.

a. There were two general classifications of German refugees:

- (1) Those who had been moved from their homes by German authorities to suit the convenience of the German government and
- (2) Those who had moved of their own accord.

b. The first category included German civilians who had been moved from their homes by German authorities to work in factories and other installations. Another and far larger group was evacuated from bombed-out cities. A third group consisting of officials and members of the Nazi Party was evacuated to escape the advancing Allied armies.

c. The second category included refugees who had moved after their homes had been destroyed as a result of military operations. A second group fled in the face of the advancing Allied armies.

CHAPTER 4

OPERATIONS WITH REFUGEES

61. Beginning of Operations. Military Government operations were begun usually within a few days after a city or village was taken. Difficulty was encountered initially in working through local German authorities as in many instances they had become refugees or, being Nazi Party members, had fled. Officials experienced difficulty, at first, in exercising authority and, as a result, orders affecting refugees were posted and enforced in many cases by Military Government personnel.

62. Travel of Refugees.

a. German refugees were at first ordered to stand fast and were allowed out of buildings for only one hour during the day. Later the time was lengthened, and they were allowed to travel within a radius of six kilometers.

b. During the month of June 1945, the travel radius was increased to 25 kilometers and road blocks were established at important points to regulate travel. At that time extensive travel began. A great deal of the travel took place in violation of stand-fast orders, with the Germans infiltrating between road blocks. Other refugees were authorized to travel by Military Government for compassionate reasons.

c. The Germans travelled in all directions except into the Russian Zone. However, two main streams of travel gradually became discernable.

- (1) One stream moved in a generally southwesterly direction from BERLIN and from other cities and villages in the zones of the Ninth and First US Armies.
- (2) Another stream moved in a southerly direction from devastated cities such as BREMEN and HAMBURG, as well as other cities and towns in the industrial Ruhr.

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d. Refugee travel was unorganized and uncontrolled. This was due to an acute lack of transportation facilities. Displaced persons had priority over German refugees in the use of vehicles. The Germans moved in any type of vehicle they could find. Tens of thousands moved on foot, with their personal belongings carried on packs on their backs and in little four-wheel carts.

63. US Army Personnel Engaged in Refugee Operations. Refugee operations were a function of the public welfare officer, in Military Government detachments. There was no other US Army personnel engaged in public welfare in the large cities. In the smaller cities and towns the public welfare officer was usually responsible for public health and, in many instances, had other duties as well.

64. Refugee Welfare.

a. German refugees were adequately cared for by the German populace in small communities. In many communities school buildings were used for emergency housing, although thousands were housed in private homes. The German populace had accumulated stocks of food which in general were sufficient.

b. German Welfare Agencies. The German Red Cross and other general relief agencies had largely collapsed by the time Military Government was established. There were innumerable National Socialist Volkswohlfart, (NSV) welfare workers, however, who were conducting a sort of organized care for women and children. Military Government officers took over existing structures and continued this care working through local burgermeisters. Officials of the NSV resigned or were removed, and acceptable local organizations provided personnel to handle refugees. In Bavaria considerable use was made of the Bavarian Red Cross and a Catholic organization, The Caritas-verhand. In the city of MUNICH (Y-8556) an appeal was made through the churches to the rural communities for food and clothing to care for refugees passing through that city. This appeal was highly successful.

65. Policy and Method in Handling of German Refugees. Military Government officers placed as much responsibility as possible on the German people for their own care and control. When refugees came into a town the Burgermeister was directed to provide food and shelter for them, which he generally did. Military Government officers supervised the distribution of food and medical supplies. In only a very few instances was any food supplied by American forces.

66. Attitude of Refugees. German refugees were found to be cooperative and easily managed.

67. Persecuted Refugees. A special group of German refugees, designated as "victims of nazi persecution and the Nuremberg laws", was considered as United Nations displaced persons.

68. Problems. Three main problems were evident throughout operations with German refugees.

a. A shortage of Military Government personnel, especially interpreters.

b. A shortage of transportation, which resulted from the fact that much civilian transportation had been destroyed or taken over by allied military forces, and that both army personnel and allied displaced persons had priority.

c. A lack of covered accommodations.

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