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SUPREME HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE
PX Branch, G-1 Division (PW-1)

18 April 1945

WORTNIGHTLY BULLETIN NO. 8

Current Planning for Evacuation
Of Allied Prisoners of War

TO: Distribution as given below.

Herewith a copy of the above-quoted bulletin.

For the A.C. of S., G-1:

R. H. S. Venables
R. H. S. VENABLES,
Brigadier,
DPW.

Incl: As stated above.

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18 APR 1945
USA

PART IPLANNINGSECTION I - Current Planning for Evacuation of United Nations PW.1. General Information:a. PWK Information Room:

A PWK Information Room has been established at SHAEF (Fwd). Its main objects are:

- (1) To centralize all information concerning United Nations' PW at camps still in enemy hands.
- (2) To recommend action to G-3, Supreme Headquarters, AEF, for the relief of such PW.

b. There is a PWK Officer on duty in the Information Room at all times. The telephone numbers are Forward 4217, 4219 and Red Line 39.

2. Disposal of General Officers:

a. Army Groups have been instructed by Cable to take the following action when United Nations' General Officers are uncovered:

- (1) Report names and nationalities by cable to SHAEF (FWD), G-1, PWK.
- (2) The following will be evacuated without delay by air: French and Russians to Paris; Belgians to Brussels. ETA and Airfields must be notified in advance in order that reception arrangements can be made.
- (3) Polish, Dutch, Yugoslav and Italian will be held pending disposal instructions from Supreme Headquarters, AEF.

3. French:a. Evacuation of French Prisoners of War by Air:

During the period 9 April 1945 to 14 April 1945 approximately 12,000 French ex-Prisoners of War were evacuated to France from Germany by air. Continued evacuation by air will be dependent on the number of French PWs uncovered, the available air transport, and the speed with which PW can be processed in the forward areas.

36 727. Reception Centers:

The following are the revised daily intake capacities for returning Frenchmen at all border reception centers now established by the French Government:

LILLE	1,000
VALENCIENNES	1,000
MAURUUGE	1,000
JEUMONT	500
HIRSON	300
LONGUYON	2,000
REVICNY	3,000
HULHOUSE	3,000
EVILH	1,000
DIEPPE	500
MARSEILLE	1,500
LILLE (Secondary)	500*
VALENCIENNES (Secondary)	500*
JEUMONT (Secondary)	250*
PONTAHLIER	200*
ATTREWASSE	200*

In arranging movement preference should be given to the first eleven (11) centers, others to be used only in case of emergency. Attention is invited to Cable Reference S-84694, dated 11 April 1945, this Headquarters, to Com Zone, 6th, 12th, and 21st Army Groups, pertaining to French Border Reception Centers.

c. Medical Centers:

The following are the daily intake capacities of medical centers for sick and wounded Frenchmen:

LILLE	100
LYON	150
AIX LES BAINS	100
ATTRECY	100

The center at THIONVILLE has been temporarily closed pending completion of expansion.

4. Belgium:

a. Evacuation of Belgian Prisoners of War:

Necessary arrangements are presently being made between CATOR and PWK Branch, G-1, for the evacuation of Belgian Prisoners of War by air to LIEGE.

b. Reception Centers:

The daily intake capacity of reception centers for Belgian PWs and DPAs are as follows:

BRUSSELS	1,000
LIEGE	500
VERVIERS	500

5. Polish:

a. Evacuation of Polish Prisoners of War:

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Plans are being formulated for the evacuation of Polish Prisoners of War pending availability of air transport and reception facilities.

b. Reception Centers:

The following information has been transmitted to all Army Groups and Com Zons:

- (1) No further evacuation of recovered Polish Prisoners of War to Polish Assembly Centers at PARIS, AVIGNON, or LILLE can be accepted. Recovered Polish Prisoners of War will be maintained under "stay put" policy.
- (2) Further instructions as available, pertaining to recovered Polish Prisoners of War, will be issued to this Headquarters.

SECTION II - Current planning for DP/US Prisoners of War Casualty Lists

6. The following numbers of Br/US Prisoners of War have been evacuated by Air and Sea:

	<u>From 21st Army</u>	<u>12th</u>	<u>6th</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
British	252	9030	174	9456
US	-	5727	-	5727

7. Official alphabetical lists of U. S. Prisoners of War have been prepared by PWIB, SCUSA, and are available for distribution to Army Groups upon request. Requests should be submitted to AAG 3, PWX, SSMF (FID).

PART II
REPORT OF CAPTURED DOCUMENTS AS OF 31 APRIL 1945

PRISONERS

(a) The total of Prisoners of War reported recovered is currently 117,027 made up as follows:

	21 A. Co	17 A. Co	6 A. Co	TOTAL
British	92	4,091	1,076	6,059
U.S.	3	5,274	709	6,726
Russian	4,832	15,479	1,644	21,175
Belgian	33	194	159	306
Yugoslav	947	713	3,512	5,192
Polish	39	3,142	102	3,203
Italian	4,002	1,157	269	5,728
French	193	11,311	799	12,703
Others	761	1,169	3,096	5,326
Not broken down into Nationalities	15,500	34,909	500	50,909
TOTALS	25,642	79,479	11,006	117,027

(b) The following installations have been reported to this HQ by field forces, as overrun:

CAMP INSTALLATIONS					
XII	VI	IX	XIII	X	XI
Stalag F	Stalag K	Stalag C	Stalag C	Stalag C	Offlag 79
Offlag B	Offlag C	Stalag A	Offlag B	Hospital C	
Stalag A	Stalag C/Z	Offlag W/H			
	Offlag A	Stalag B			
		Hogtl)			
	Stalag F	Dulagluft			
	Offlag B				
	Stalag J				

86

730

c. Oflag 79 was reported as overrun on 12 April, containing 2,014 officers, including 57 U.S. and 412 ORs/EM mostly BRITISH. A days supply of German rations was on hand. There were few sick and good medical care was not available. (The figures quoted are NOT included in the totals in para 1).

d. Owing to the rapidity of the advance on the Western Front it has become exceedingly difficult to obtain quick and even accurate information on PW recovered, and it will inevitably be some little time before a detailed picture is available. It is not thought that the Germans were able to or endeavored to evacuate many PW, and it is known that where camps were evacuated, their inmates were often picked up subsequently by our advancing troops. The total (currently reported) of 117,027 PW recovered is considered to be far below the numbers actually liberated.

PART III

MOVEMENTS OF PRISONERS OF WAR

SECTION I.

1. a. Information is very inadequate since old sources are drying up and no fresh ones have been tapped. The number of PW reported on the Western front is 150,000 (April 18, round figures). The number of PW in Greater GERMANY (excluding Austria) as known by PWI STAFFS on March 15 1945 was approximately 2,000,000. Even doubling the number recovered (as many recovered have not yet been reported, (see part II of bulletin) there are still 1,700,000 to be accounted for. (excluding the thousands who did come from the East). The combined holding capacity as known to SHANF on March 15, 1945, of the main camps not yet overrun was at the outside 100,000.

b. From what information is available it seems now concentration areas are being formed at HANNOVER (estimated 100,000 PW in the area); Altengraben (estimated 145,000); Nuremberg (estimated 100,000); Ingolstadt and possibly Augsburg. Nuremberg concentration (estimated 120,000) which was forming, is already dissolving to the South. In the center, round Leipzig and Oschatz, many new Southerly moves are reported. This area was part of one of the original three large concentration areas for PW from the East.

c. Details of moves are given in para 3 below.

2. It is impossible to assess what is the purpose of this attempt to retain PW up to the last. The recent moves into the Altengraben area brought PW nearer the Allied Armies. But in the south the moves appear to be made with the idea of eventually taking PW into the Alpenstellung. An OKW order, dated February 1945, stated that PW were under no circumstances to be allowed to fall into the enemy's hands when being evacuated; therefore PW guards and administrative staff would not be used for locality defense. Whatever the intention (to use PW as hostages or to massacre them in the end), it seems that in the NORTH and CENTRE PW will continue to be recovered piecemeal, largely in their present areas. Temporarily the food situation may be difficult in these areas. But in the South, for those PW now in Wehrkreise XIII & VII the threat may be grave.

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3. Stalag II E Reported to have moved 500 km. Presumably it has gone south.
- Stalag II C Reported at Seefeld near ~~BRUNNEN~~, Wk III. Probably now moved to ALTENGRABOW, Stalag XI A.
- Oflag II A (Prenzlau) Reported to have arrived in UPPER BAVARIA (at Oflag 80 which is not identifiable.)
- Hospital (Werden, Wk III) 350 Allied sick arrived there from Stalag II B.
- Mehrkreis IV Many detailed and considerable southerly moves are reported taking place. It is probably intended to take PW into Bohemia.
- Oflag IV C (Colditz) 6,000 French Officers reported arrived here from Oflag IV D, Thierhaupten. This camp now overrun.
- Lazaret IV B (Zeithain) 3,000 Br/US and French are reported to have arrived there.
- Mehrkreis V It is rumored FRIEDRICHSHAGEN may be made a collecting point for PW.
- Oflag V A Moved to Oflag VII B, Eichstatt.
- Das-Laz (Freising, Wk VII) A large influx from Hungary is reported.
- Mehrkreis VII A column of Allied PW (approx. 25,000) is marching from Mehrkreis VI and XIII to Mehrkreis VII. PW from Wk XIII are joining in the move. They are all destined for Ingolstadt, DILLINGEN, Neuburg area.
- Hoozburg (Wk VII) Some PW from here going to Augsburg.
- Marlag Miles Nord Westertinke RAF & French PW evacuated from here.
- Stalag X B (Sandbostel) Reported that Oflag II D has arrived there and 1,160 Yugoslav officers from Stalag II B.
- Stalag XI A (Altengrabow) Camps in the Berlin area (presumably Stalags III A, B, C and D are reported to have arrived there. (Less those overrun by Russians and those fallen out en route). Perhaps also Stalag II B.
- 36 733
- Stalag 357 (Gerbke, Wk XI) Stated to be evacuating. Since overrun.
- Stalag XII F Scheduled to arrive somewhere between Ingolstadt and Dillingen.

Stalag Luft III Stated to contain 1,600 British, 5,500 US, many others;
(New Camp nationalities unknown.
Nürnberg Lager-
master W. XIII)

Wehrkreis XIII Most cars from here going to Ingolstadt area. At
Altdorf near Nürnberg, thousands of PW are reported
marching.

Offiz 73 Enroute to Moosburg.
(Nürnberg)

Stalag XVII A Stated to be evacuated.
(Kaisersteinbruch,
Austria).

4. Reports on the several hundred thousand PW involved in the moves from the east indicate that as many as 80% may be gravely ill when recovered. It is probable that those on the march today will be in an even worse condition. The medical problem, in this case, may be vast. Even if the percentage is small, the problem will be large. Significant extracts from reports on the march from the East are given in Part III, Section II.

SECTION II Extract Reports on Camp Movements:

1. Extract from an official report on one of the emergency motor relief convoys:

"Before KALISZKA, the convoy ran into several thousand Russians on the march, and dying of exhaustion. The road was lined with corpses".

"The columns were strung out over very great distances, (the second column stretched out right across the protectorate and probably as far as the boundary of Silesia) and it was necessary to undertake a wide exploration in the lorries or motor cars, in order to find Prisoners of War who were scattered by groups or companies in numerous towns, little villages, hamlets and isolated farms. It was only possible to distribute at night as the men were marching during the day. A lorry would be given to the man of confidence who undertook distribution to the commanders and handed over receipts afterwards".

"All are dying of hunger and exhaustion. The Russians are in the worst state of all, covered with vermin, their feet covered with blood, attacked by dysentery; some of them have been marching for two months. The men are desperate, and relief arrived at the last moment."

2. The following official reports must be read bearing in mind that they are typical one or two reports on each subject only have been included, but such experiences were reported by 99% of those who were evacuated from the East.

a. Conditions on the march:

"Officers were forced to march with swollen, blistered, frost-bitten and infected feet, attacks of nausea and diarrhoea and in a general state of exhaustion."

"Men were dying in the gutters of their towns as we passed through."

b. Freight Car Travel:

"Failure to allow the POW adequate drinking water, and the fact that they were not allowed sufficient time outside the freight-cars to answer the call of nature."

"The freight car allotted to the doctor as a hospital car was in some parts several inches deep with wet horse manure."

c. Billeting

"The first night prisoners were compelled to sleep in the open, lying 2 feet deep in the snow. Afterwards they were primitively accommodated in barns etc."

36 735 "After marching since the previous night and after standing waiting in the streets in zero weather for three hours, seventeen hundred officers were herded into a church of 300 pews. Officers were forced to crowd into narrow pews, and were forced to use the altar. Although all available floor space was used, few if any of the officers were able to lie down, so cramped were the quarters. Lack of heat, latrine facilities, and food were acute. Those not near the doors could not press through the crowd to relieve themselves."

"No arrangements were made beforehand to find sleeping quarters for the men, we just had to march on and on till we came to a farm."

d. Feeding

"For the first four days and nights of the march, no German food was provided. During the next two and a half days one half a loaf of bread, a small block of margarine and a half cup of barley were issued per man."

e. Behaviour of German Guards

"They continued to smoke British and American cigarettes and to eat Red Cross tins when the prisoners had run out of their reserve long ago, but never did they give anything to the starving prisoners, not even to the sick."

"En route to Hauerstein, we saw civilians and German soldiers carrying Red Cross parcels."

"No attempt was made to provide any sort of treatment or first aid for the sick. In one instance one man of my party was so sick and weak he could hardly walk. The German Underofficer in charge of my party would not allow me to put him on the cart we had with us for the transport of the guards kit. He also would not allow us to leave him behind, with the result that for 14 days he had to be helped and carried along by his comrades. Then for three days I was allowed to put him on the wagon until one night a guard thrashed him with a stick and threw him off the wagon where he was left to lie in the mud until some of his comrades picked him up and carried him to the next barn. I have seen many other sick men who were beaten by the guards and forced to carry on until they dropped unconscious on the road."

"A number of the men suffered from wounds that were afflicted by German guards on the march. One was assaulted by German guards on February 2, 1945, and received a severe injury to his left shoulder, from a rifle butt, because he fainted on the march. This is a typical situation."

f. Condition of PW

"There have entered Stalag II A a large number of POW suffering from various illnesses which they had contracted on the road during their evacuation from other Stalags. These men underwent extreme hardships suffering from lack of food, shelter and water. Many of them have been on the road from 15 to 30 days walking and staggering over terrain under conditions unsuitable for man."

"70% suffering from trench feet in various stages of infection, 15% suffering from severe bronchitis and pneumonia, the remainder of the group were suffering from gastritis, acute appendicitis, and infected wounds. The majority of the group suffered from dysentery as well as their other ailments. This is a typical situation."

"On the 21st of February I entered Stalag II A and was found to be in a state of complete exhaustion, with infected trench foot and suffering from malnutrition, severe diarrhoea, with blood in the stools and numerous abscesses scattered over my body."

SECTION III YKCA Relief measures.

1. The "Aide aux Prisonniers de Guerre - YKCA" has recently provided the following notes which are of general interest:

a. Offices:

- (1) YKCA Offices have been shifted. The new locations are:
- (a) Northern Area - Lubock.
 - (b) Southern Area - Ravensburg or Biberach.

2. Staff:

In addition to Office Staff, there are nine full-time secretaries visiting camps. Mr. LUNDIN, a Swede, is the Director.

All members of the staff have credentials both from the War Prisoners Aid of the YKCA and from the German Military Authorities. Some of them have been serving in GERMANY since 1940 and therefore know the areas and camps which they have been serving and many of the PW intimately.

3. Equipment:

There are ten 5-ton trucks with six trailers and seven smaller cars which will run on either charcoal or gasoline. These vehicles are marked "Kriegsgefangenenhilfe YKCA" -- some fly a small Swedish flag.

4. Future Instructions to the Staff:

The entire staff has been instructed to stand by the PW until the end, and then to render to the Allied Military Authorities any material or personal help which will benefit the PW.

5. Secretaries:

A list of secretaries by areas is given below:

a. Northern Area: Office address - LUBOCK

Mr. LUNDIN, Swede, Director for total work in Germany.

Magnus CARLSON, Swede:
Wehrkreise served: VI and X (Stalag II-E)

Gunnar CELANDER, Swede:
Wehrkreise IX and XI
(Stalags IV-B, IV-D, IV-F, IV-G, III-A, Oflag VIII and IV-C).

Mrs. CHRISTIANSEN, Dane:
Formerly serving Wehrkreise II and III,
to be reassigned as the situation changes.

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b. Southern Area: Office address - RIMMERSBURG or BIEDRACH.

Othmar LINDS, Austrian:

For 25 years the Y. M. C. A. secretary,
Assistant Director.

Erik H. BERG, Swede:

Wahkreise VII, XVII and XVIII.

Henry SOBERBERG, Swede:

Formerly Wahkreise VIII and IX, now
reassigned to Wahkreise V, XII and XIII.

Two additional Swede to be sent to the Southern
area.

c. Russian Zone: H. ZUBER, Swiss:

Formerly responsible for Wahkreise I and
II. He chose to remain in Danzig with the
Prisoners of War. We have received no word
from him since the Russian advance.

PART IV

DISTRIBUTION OF PW DETACHMENTS AND OFFICERS (CALLED FORWARD)

	Pr/US Liaison Detachments	British Contact	Services and Recon- sion Liaison Off	U.S. Contact	U.S. Staging Camp Personnel	Belgian	Dutch	French	Polish	Russian	Yugoslav
SHAF (Main)			8			2	4	5	2	2	1
SHAF (Main) await- ing call to Army Gps	5 2-A 3-B	2	1	5	21			2			3
21 Army Group, HQ.		1	10	2						3	
2nd Army	1-A	6				7	2	3	3		7
1st Canadian Army	1-A	6				8	2	3			
12th Army Group, HQ.	1-A	9		1				1		2	
1st U.S. Army	1-A 1-B	2		4				3			1
3rd U.S. Army				3				1			
7th U.S. Army		4		4							
9th U.S. Army				6							
1st French Army		4						1			
6th Army Gp HQ. (Sedan)		1	9	2					2	1	1
Com Zone (Honnay) Recp (Epinal) Cps		3	13								
LE HAVRE Transit Camp			3								
TOTALS	10 2-A 4-B	39	52	27	21	17	8	19	7	8	

Note: This Summary does not include personnel at Supreme Headquarters (Paris) or United Nations personnel earmarked by National Authorities.

