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UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
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HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

Serial: 0395

11 February 1946

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From: Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas.

To: Chief of Naval Operations.

Subject: Report of Surrender and Occupation of Japan.

Reference: (a) Cincpac confidential ltr. A6-5, serial 0396, dated 11 February 1946.

Enclosures: (See Table of Contents following.)

1. The subject report is forwarded herewith.
2. Reference (a) contains most of the source materials on which this report is based.
3. The operations described herein include brief mention of the activities of Army forces under CinCAPPac, inasmuch as all forces involved were closely integrated under a common plan. It is not intended, however, that this report should cover in much detail the operations of Occupation Forces, especially after completion of the landing phases.
4. This report is CONFIDENTIAL, and shall be safeguarded in accordance with the provisions of Article 76, U.S. Navy Regulations, 1920.

J. H. Towers
J. H. TOWERS.

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Evacuation of Prisoners of War from Central and Northern Honshu.

Even before the formal surrender ceremony, Commander THIRD Fleet had assigned Commodore R.W. Simpson the mission of liberating, evacuating, and extending medical care to Allied prisoners of war in Japan within the THIRD Fleet area of responsibility. Task Group 30.6 was established, Commodore Simpson commanding, for the purpose of effectuating this mission, although the primary responsibility for the evacuation of prisoners of war rested with the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers and his representative, the Commanding General EIGHTH Army.

In the period between TG 30.6's inception on 15 August and the beginning of actual evacuation operations on the 29th, Commodore Simpson organized and trained special medical units, portable communication units, and minor landing forces; while making use of the detailed information of P.O.W. camps acquired from carrier searches, photographic coverage, and other intelligence sources to prepare extensive plans for execution when the time came.

It was assumed in drawing up these plans that the Japanese would not dare to oppose the liberation and medical assistance operations, as they would be well aware that their treatment of Allied prisoners of war would in any case be one of the sore points in our post-war attitude toward their wartime leaders.

The plan of operation was to make minor amphibious landings with medical parties, which would proceed to prisoner of war camps to extend immediate medical care, and begin the evacuation to hospital ships of the most seriously ill. Then would come the turn of the ambulatory P.O.W.s. Landings were not to be made in force, however, as the forces were neither available nor authorized to penetrate to those P.O.W. camps beyond the areas of occupation, prior to the formal surrender. Therefore, if organized resistance in strength were encountered, the minor amphibious landing forces would of necessity withdraw.

At 1130 on 29 August, CTG 30.6 in SAN JUAN (CL), with BENEVOLENCE (AH) in company, entered Tokyo Bay. At 1300, Commander THIRD Fleet ordered Commodore Simpson to proceed with the emergency evacuation of Allied prisoners of war in the Tokyo Bay waterfront area; whereupon CTG 30.6 in SAN JUAN, accompanied by GOSSELIN (APD), LANSLOWNE (DD), and BENEVOLENCE, proceeded toward the northern part of Tokyo Bay and anchored about four miles east of Omori. Commodore Simpson embarked with a medical and evacuation party in LCVPs of GOSSELIN and, with the assistance of air guidance by TBMs from COWPENS (CVL), proceeded to the Omori Camp No. 8, which was known to be the Tokyo Headquarters Camp.

The appearance of the landing craft in the channel off the camp produced an indescribable scene of jubilation and emotion on the part of hundreds of prisoners of war, who streamed out of the camp and climbed up over the piling. Some even began to swim out to meet the landing craft.

After encountering some difficulty in making himself heard, Commodore Simpson assured the prisoners that more boats would be forthcoming soon, and that they should stand by patiently for an orderly evacuation, since the liberation party planned to extend medical assistance first to those who were ill, then to those less in need of immediate assistance.

The Japanese camp commander protested that he was not authorized to turn the prisoners over to the task unit and that he must await word from headquarters that

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the formal surrender had taken place. He was informed, however, that the task unit had come to evacuate the men to the hospital ship, and that the cooperation of the Japanese was not requested but required.

Commander A.L. Maher, former gunnery officer on the cruiser HOUSTON (sunk in the Battle of the Java Sea), was found to be the senior prisoner of war present, and was requested to assemble the men in the P.O.W. compound for evacuation and instructions from CTG 30.6. A portable communications unit was set up in the prison yard, and information concerning the progress of the mission was relayed to the THIRD Fleet flagship. From Commander Maher and other P.O.W.s it was learned that there were many seriously ill at another camp known euphemistically as Shinagawa Hospital, in the near vicinity. Although Commodore Simpson desired to evacuate the inmates from this hospital as soon as possible, the fact that its exact location and approach by boat were not known determined him to remove 18 litter cases and approximately 125 ambulatory cases from the Omori Camp at once, meantime obtaining information regarding the hospital.

Commodore Boone, medical officer of ComTHIRDFleet, and a group of officers whose task it was to ascertain the water approach to the Shinagawa Hospital, were directed to commandeered trucks and automobiles for the purpose of locating the camp. Upon this party's return, they reported that Shinagawa Hospital was "an indescribable hell hole of filth, disease, and death."

CTG 30.6 ordered an immediate evacuation of Shinagawa, assigning landing craft and four LCVPs from REEVES (APD) to bring back the patients from this place. By daybreak on the 30th, this evacuation, together with that of the remaining prisoners of the Omori Camp, was completed, making a total of 707 persons freed. All of these men were taken aboard BENEVOLENCE and passed through the procedure prepared in anticipation of their arrival. This process involved a bath, medical examination, the issuing of clean clothes and food, the filling out of a mimeographed questionnaire of basic information (particularly, instances of atrocities), then either to bed in the hospital ship, or, if ambulatory, immediate transfer to an APD alongside the hospital ship for billeting.

During the night of the 30th, information of additional camps having been obtained from the released P.O.W.s, CTG 30.6 divided the landing craft into two units. One of these evacuated Kawasaki Camp No. 1, the Kawasaki Bunsho Camp, and Tokyo Sub-Camp No. 3--all in the adjoining area. The other unit evacuated the prisoners of war from the Sumidagawa Camp deep in the Tokyo Bay inner channels the same day. A contact unit was also maintained at Omori Headquarters, and prisoners of war from an inland camp came to Omori and were evacuated from that point. The transfer of these prisoners to BENEVOLENCE was completed at 2130 on the 30th, bringing the total of those liberated to 1496. Searches which were extended into the Tokyo waterfront area on 1 September resulted in the liberation of 22 civilians.

Joint Army-Navy Evacuation Plan--As a result of a conference held at ComGen-EIGHTH Army Headquarters at Yokohama on September 1st, Admiral Halsey agreed to coordinate his P.O.W. evacuation operations with those of the EIGHTH Army Recovered Personnel Officer. The result of this conference was the promulgation on September 2nd of a memorandum by the EIGHTH Army which divided the camps into four groups: East Honshu, West Honshu, North Honshu, and Hokkaido. To accomplish the evacuation of these areas, the following measures were taken: (a) One task unit of TG 30.6 was assigned to liberate all personnel of the camps within each group and evacuate them

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to the Tokyo area, there to await orders of ComGenEIGHTH Army. (b) All recovered personnel would be processed aboard ship as soon as practicable. (c) Liaison officers of the EIGHTH Army (G-1 Section), Surgeon's Section, and representatives of the International Red Cross, Swedish and Swiss Legations would be aboard the flagship of each of the four task unit commanders. (d) EIGHTH Army medical teams would be aboard the hospital or evacuation ships of each unit to screen medically all evacuated personnel and to furnish medical care and treatment enroute. Evacuees requiring hospital care would be off-loaded at Yokohama and transferred to the U.S.A. Hospital Ship MARIGOLD for additional hospitalization and appropriate disposition. (e) Ambulatory patients desiring air transportation and not requiring hospital care would be off-loaded at Yokohama and transferred to Atsugi Airfield by the EIGHTH Army. Those not desiring air transportation would remain aboard ship, awaiting orders of the Commanding General EIGHTH Army. (f) The Japanese Government would be required to furnish transportation from the camps to the designated evacuation points on the coast, under the direction and supervision of officers of the U.S. Army and Navy. Limited motor transport would be loaded in an amphibious ship of each task unit to assist in the operation. (g) Air protection and reconnaissance would be provided by the THIRD Fleet during the operation.

Evacuations Carried Out by TG 30.6 under the EIGHTH Army Plan—On September 3rd, an officer of the Staff of CTG 30.6 flew to Niigata (on the west coast of Honshu) in company with an officer of the EIGHTH Army Headquarters, arranging for the evacuation of seven prisoners of war camps in that area. The P.O.W.s were to be evacuated by rail to Yokohama in seven special trains for reception aboard ship at that port. The camps and the numbers of prisoners released were as follows:

Tokyo Camp 5B---Niigata	688
Tokyo Camp 15B---Niigata	314
Tokyo Camp 16B---Kanose	288
Tokyo Camp 4B---Naoetsu	698
Tokyo Camp 13B---Aomi	530
Tokyo Camp 3B---Nagaoka	197
Tokyo Camp 3B---Branch Nagaoka	98
Totals	2,813

Meantime, TU 30.6.9 (Captain Heneberger) remained in Tokyo Bay to receive and to arrange for the onward passage of any repatriates who might be evacuated from other areas.

The same day, 3 September, TU 30.6.1 (Captain G.H. Bahm), with CTG 30.6 in company with SAN JUAN, proceeded to the vicinity of Hamamatsu, arriving at daylight on the 4th. The first detachment of boats to leave the line of departure was led by Commodore Simpson, who found that the depth of water at the beaches was not as great as shown on the available charts, a discrepancy making evacuation over the beaches unfeasible. He took one boat over the bar, however, and obtained local Japanese pilots to guide the remainder of the landing craft through the unmarked channel to the railroad station at Arai, where prisoners from the Hamamatsu area could be evacuated.

Beach parties and communication teams having been established ashore, prisoners of war were transported by rail to Arai, where they were taken aboard the hospital ship RESCUE for processing. Able-bodied repatriates were then transferred to

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destroyers and APDs for further transportation to Tokyo. The following camps were evacuated on 4, 6, and 7 September:

NAGOYA No. 2	273	4 September
NAGOYA No. 5	295	4 September
HIROSI	21 (Dutch int.)	4 September
MITSUHIMA	306	4 September
NAGOYA No. 8	287	6 September
NAGOYA No. 9	346	6 September
NAGOYA No. 11	142	6 September
NAGOYA No. 6	281	7 September
NAGOYA No. 10	292	7 September
NAGOYA No. 3	313	7 September
TSURUGA OSOKA Area	2	7 September
TOTAL	<u>2,558</u>	

The same day, 7 September, reports were received that 152 prisoners at Nagoya Camp No. 7 had been evacuated by air, and 606 P.O.W.s at Nagoya No. 1 had been evacuated by rail to Yokohama.

Because of transportation difficulties, the Japanese were unable to evacuate Nagoya Camp No. 4 until September 9th, at which time 283 prisoners were received and processed aboard SAN JUAN, BARR (APD), and WANTUCK (APD) prior to removal to Tokyo Bay. With the discharge of these repatriates in Tokyo Bay, the total persons evacuated in the Hamamatsu operation came to 2841.

On 11 September, an entrance channel having been swept by TU 35.8.5 (Captain G.K. Carmichael), Task Units 30.6.1, 30.6.2, and 30.6.3 arrived at Shiogama (near Sendai, in northern Honshu) and consolidated into one unit--TU 30.6.1 (Captain G.H. Bahm). Commodore Simpson landed at Shiogama for the purpose of confirming train schedules for the various camp evacuations. At 1600, the evacuation began with the arrival of 179 civilians from Fukushima, trucks and ambulances being used to transport the evacuees from the railroad station to the landing, a distance of about two miles.

At dawn on the 12th, HMAS WARRAMUNGA (DL) was loaded with 171 of the repatriates received the preceding day, and departed for Tokyo Bay. The same day, 283 prisoners were recovered from Sendai No. 7, 336 from Sendai No. 8, and 245 from Sendai No. 3, for a total of 864 persons.

On 13 September, 279 persons were evacuated from Sendai No. 10, 293 from Sendai No. 9, and 187 from Sendai No. 11, totalling 878 repatriates. The final day of operations at Shiogama yielded the greatest number of prisoners to be discovered at one camp, when 544 men were recovered from Sendai Camp No. 36. With that, the ships of the task unit remaining (after the departure of several others for Tokyo Bay) got underway for Kamaishi (farther north along the east Honshu coast) for further evacuation.

Upon arriving at Kamaishi, the task unit resumed the now-familiar procedure. Sendai Camps Nos. 4 and 5 were cleared of 598 prisoners of war. A labor camp nearby containing 167 Chinese was also evacuated, and all but seven of these, who were hospitalized, were loaded into LSMs and carried back to Tokyo Bay.

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Air reconnaissance provided on 16 September by CTG 38.2 failed to locate any prisoners of war between Latitudes 39° 20' N. and 40° 50' N., within five miles of the coast line; so the remaining ships of TU 30.6.1 returned to Tokyo on the 17th.

Having evacuated 7598 prisoners of war and believing that no more remained to be evacuated in the central or northern areas of Honshu, Commander THIRD Fleet ordered the task group dissolved as of 0000 (GCT) on 19 September.

The success of the operation had been aided materially by the assistance rendered by members of the Swedish Legation, the Swiss Legation, and the International Red Cross in arranging train schedules, furnishing information on the location of camps, the composition of their occupants, and their general condition.

Notwithstanding the fact that the greater part of the released prisoners of war and civilian internees were British, the over-all plan for evacuation consisted in transporting the P.O.W.s from Japan, Formosa, and China to Manila by whatever means were available. From there, after the necessary rehabilitation, they were to be transhipped to their ultimate destinations. No arrangements were provided in Manila for civilian internees, however. All U.S. Navy repatriates, an equivalent number of recovered U.S. Army personnel, and some Canadians were taken to Guam for rehabilitation and transshipment to the United States.

The United States assumed responsibility for the evacuation of all ex-prisoners of war from Japan to either Manila or Guam, and from Guam to the United States, using both U.S. ships and aircraft; but the transshipment of British ex-prisoners of war (except Canadians) from Manila to their destinations was a British responsibility. Although this was the plan, in practice British hospital ships, aircraft carriers, escort carriers, and many other vessels actually took an active part in the transportation of British repatriates from Japan, Formosa, and China (including Hong Kong) to Manila.

The problem of distributing British repatriates from Manila to their destinations was complicated by the large number of destinations involved and the scarcity of British shipping available. As a result, Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, Commander-in-Chief, British Pacific Fleet, made available for the purpose all CVs and AHs within his command. In the case of British CVs going to America, he also offered transportation to U.S. evacuees. Some ex-P.O.W.s and internees were also flown to Australia by the RAAF. In order to expedite matters further, on 27 September Admiral Fraser also requested the ACNB (Australian Commonwealth Navy Board) to assist in this evacuation of British subjects by sending some Australian cruisers to Manila.

Continuation of Amphibious and Ground Operations in the Tokyo Bay Area.

Meantime, while these P.O.W. rescue and demilitarization operations were going on, the major echelons were engaged in putting more troops ashore and in expanding the occupied areas held by the troops already ashore.

At 1200 on 2 September, the situation of the Fleet Landing Force (TG 31.3) was as follows: the Fleet Naval Landing Force (TU 31.3.3) was engaged in garrisoning and providing for the internal security of the eastern half of the Yokosuka Navy Yard, the Fleet Marine Landing Force (TU 31.3.2) had a similar mission in the entire Yokosuka Airfield area, and the British Landing Force (TU 31.3.4) was engaged in occupying and securing important installations along the beach between the airfield and the Navy Yard, as well as garrisoning Azuma Island.

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B. OCCUPATION OF HOKKAIDO AND NORTH HONSHU.

Preparatory Operations.

As previously noted, the THIRD Amphibious Force (TF 32, Vice Admiral T. S. Wilkinson) was charged by Cincpac's operation plan 12-45 with the landing of troops of the EIGHTH Army in the THIRD Fleet zone of occupation. The Phase I areas for the EIGHTH Army were (1) the Tokyo Bay area (which has been discussed) and (2) the Aomori-Ominato area in northern Honshu.

At the moment when the surrender offer was made, the amphibious forces of the Pacific Fleet were widely spread over the Pacific, from the U.S. West Coast to Okinawa and the Philippines, engaged in troop movements and transportation of troop equipment, in overhaul, and in troop training. Plans and orders had been issued for concentration of these forces at a later date in preparation for an assault on Kyushu, but these concentrations had by no means been effected at the time of the surrender, and the simultaneous provision at the mounting points of adequate shipping to meet the dates originally established for the occupation of all Phase I areas was impossible.

Instead, therefore, of ordering ships to mounting points for all Armies simultaneously, Cincpac was obliged to adopt a system of priorities, based upon the relative dates of arrival prescribed in the basic plans. Accordingly, shipping required for Tokyo was given the first priority, that for the SIXTH Army objectives the second and third, that for Korea the fourth, and that for Aomori-Ominato the fifth.

Further, the successive availability of shipping even in the first priority was such that a substantial delay in the first movement, and consequent failure to meet the planned dates of debarkation at Tokyo, would result if the entire expedition, composed of the XI Corps, were to load and proceed to the objective as one unit. This was also true later in the case of the Aomori-Ominato Force which, at best, could anticipate considerable delay due to its being assigned fifth priority on shipping.

The basic plans were therefore modified to provide that the sea-borne units of the Aomori-Ominato Force would proceed in echelons, each echelon containing a division plus a portion of Corps and Headquarters troops, as quickly as shipping could be assembled successively for the mounting of each division. Ships carrying the first echelon of the Tokyo force were, upon completion of debarkation at the objectives, to return to the mounting areas, in order to lift succeeding echelons to either the Tokyo or Aomori-Ominato areas.

The THIRD Amphibious Force was designated as TF 32. Its principal subdivisions were TF 33, the Tokyo Force, under Rear Admiral J. L. Hall, and TF 34, the Ominato Force, under Rear Admiral R. L. Conolly. TF 34 was assigned to transport the IX Corps (Major General C. W. Ryder, USA), consisting of the 81st Infantry Division (Major General P. J. Mueller, USA) loaded at Leyte for landing at Aomori, and the 77th Infantry Division loaded at Cebu and landed at Otaru and Hakodate. The 158th RCT was to be loaded at Legaspi and landed with the IX Corps in northern Japan. (Subsequently, its destination was changed to Yokohama, to join the XI Corps.) TransRons 15 and 19 were assigned to TF 34.

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Naval Occupation.

Inasmuch as these forces could not be organized and sailed to the objective as soon as seemed desirable, a naval force under Vice Admiral F. J. Fletcher, Commander North Pacific Force, departed Adak for Ominato (on Mutsu Bay, near the northern tip of Honshu) on 31 August to effect an emergency occupation. The force under Vice Admiral Fletcher's command comprised approximately 60 ships in all, led by the flagship PANAMINT (AGC), escorted by vessels of the North Pacific Force, and augmented by numerous fleet units despatched from the Central Pacific, including five escort carriers, to provide air coverage. This force arrived off Ominato on 6 September in a heavy rainstorm and proceeded to anchor.

Marines immediately manned reconnaissance boats to tour the shoreline, and naval crews prepared to immobilize Japanese shipping. Few Japanese warships were found in the port, however, there being only 8 frigates, 12 torpedo boats, 13 small gunboats, and 4 launches in the harbor ready for service. In addition, there were a damaged destroyer, an obsolete cruiser, and four merchant ships, the largest being 8000 tons.

A conference was held the following morning between Commodore R. E. Robinson (Chief of Staff to ComNorPac), and three Japanese Emissaries representing the Commandant of the Ominato Guard District. The requirements for the entry of Commander North Pacific Force were delivered to the Japanese, while the Japanese in turn delivered charts of the minefields in Tsugaru Straits and the entrance of Mutsu Bay, as well as data concerning the shore defenses guarding the base. With the receipt of this information, Task Group 40.4, the Mine-sweeping Group, commenced sweeping the entrance to Tsugaru Straits. Meantime, aircraft from TF 44 conducted a reconnaissance of northern Hokkaido, in addition to furnishing fighter cover and anti-submarine patrols.

On 8 September, Japanese pilots came aboard and assisted in bringing the entire force into the Ominato Naval Anchorage, via Tsugaru and Tairedate Straits, without incident.

The following day, September 9th, the flag officers and commanding officers of the ships of the North Pacific Force came aboard PANAMINT (Vice Admiral Fletcher's flagship) to witness the formal ceremonies of occupation. The senior Japanese Navy, Army, and civil officials were brought aboard PANAMINT at 1012. Vice Admiral Kangi Ugaki, Commandant of the Ominato Naval Guard District, Lieutenant General Toshimoto Hoshino, Commander of the Aomori Defense Force, Motokiko Kanai, Governor of Aomori Prefecture, and Yoshio Kaiho, Chief of Police, were the seniors in each category, and each was attended by appropriate aides. Vice Admiral Fletcher addressed the delegates, setting forth his policy and orders in brief, and giving the Japanese officials copies of Order No. 1 for the Emergency Naval Occupation of the Ominato Naval Guard District.

On 11 September, the North Pacific Force prepared for the evacuation of prisoners of war from the camps in the vicinity of Ominato, five P.O.W.s being freed from Bibai Prison Camp and brought aboard PANAMINT the same day. Communications were established with another camp north of Bibai, and supplies

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were dropped by carrier aircraft. KILLEN (DD) boarded and inspected the Japanese hospital ship Kaasaki bound for Truk with supplies for the by-passed garrison there. No contraband was found, and the ship was permitted to proceed.

Five more P.O.W.s (all U.S. Army personnel) were recovered and brought aboard PANAMINT the following day, and on the 13th, these repatriates together with the five released on 11 September were flown to Yokosuka by a PBM of VPB 21.

The inspection of Ominato Naval Base was completed on the 13th, whereupon an inspection of the seaplane ramp was made and soundings taken for a seadrome. Inspection revealed that Ominato Airfield was better suited for operations than Kabayama Airfield.

On 14 September, KITKUN BAY (CVE), HOWORTH (DD), and HMS BARFLEUR were ordered to Hakodate, Hokkaido, for the evacuation of P.O.W.s held there. The following day, this task unit departed from Hakodate for Tokyo Bay, having embarked 296 repatriates. The same day, Lieutenant Colonel James P. Devereux, USMC, former commander of the heroic Wake Island garrison, was flown into Ominato by carrier plane from the P.O.W. Camp at Chitose, being flown south to Tokyo Bay by a PBM on the 16th.

The Japanese were ordered to commence minesweeping at the eastern end of Tsugaru Straits and off Muroran on September 15th. A total of 27 Japanese vessels sortied from various locations to rendezvous at Ohata and commence sweeping operations.

Satisfied that Japanese resistance would not materialize, Vice Admiral Fletcher detached the major portion of the fleet units that they might be re-assigned where needed, and departed Ominato by PBM on the 17th to attend a conference in Tokyo with the Commanders THIRD and FIFTH Fleets. That same day, the evacuation of Allied prisoners of war and internees in Hokkaido was completed. ComNorPac returned to Ominato from Tokyo on the 19th, again hoisting his flag in PANAMINT.

After the minesweeping operations of the Japanese had been interrupted on the 18th by a typhoon which passed 90 miles southwest of Ominato, AMs of the North Pacific Force were assigned the task of sweeping the western entrance of Tsugaru Straits on 19 September, while Japanese vessels swept in the area around Shiriya Zaki.

At 0000, 20 September, the Commander FIFTH Fleet (Admiral R. A. Spruance) relieved ComTHIRDFleet and ComNorPac of their respective responsibilities in eastern and northern Japan and assumed command of all naval operations in the Japanese Empire. Most of the ships previously under ComNorPac were transferred to the FIFTH Fleet.

At that time, the U.S. Naval Support Forces in Northern Japan were constituted as Task Force 56, under Rear Admiral F. C. Denebrink, with the title Commander North Japan Force, and consisted of units in the Japanese home islands formerly under ComNorPac. The functions of TF 56 in the Northern Japan area were threefold: (a) the demobilization of Japanese naval forces; (b) the demilitarization of Japanese naval installations; (c) the disposition

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of Japanese naval material, either by destruction or being rendered militarily useless, by diversion to the use of the U. S. occupation forces, or diversion to Japanese uses.

The same day, September 20th, Vice Admiral Fletcher, in PANAMINT, with DesDiv 89 less BENNETT, plus RICHEY, MILLS, and RAMSDEN, departed Ominato and returned to Adak. Ten days later, Vice Admiral Fletcher was ordered detached as Commander Alaskan Sea Frontier, CTF 95, and Commander North Pacific Force, effective 10 October. He was succeeded by Rear Admiral R. Wood, who had previously acted as Commandant Seventeenth Naval District, Commander Naval Air Base Seventeenth Naval District, and Commander Fleet Air Wing FOUR.

Occupation by Army Units.

Meantime, while the North Pacific Force was effecting this emergency occupation of northern Honshu and of Hokkaido, the ships of the THIRD Amphibious Force and the Army troops which were to participate in the regular amphibious landing and occupation were mounting their forces in the Philippines.

TransRon 15, commanded by Commodore W. S. Popham, was assigned to lift the 81st Infantry Division (veterans of the Palau Campaign) plus IX Corps Headquarters and Base Units. Of the squadron, three ships loaded at Manila, the remainder at Leyte. TransRon 15 departed from Aomori (on the coast of north Honshu) under ComPhibGrp 3 (CTF 34, Rear Admiral R. L. Conolly) on 18 September, arriving on 25 September and landing from boats without incident; part over a low seawall in the city and part over beaches to the eastward. Aomori was the only one of the four major ports in the Northern Japan area which had suffered appreciable damage during the war, being approximately 85% destroyed.

Transport stores were landed over the seawall, while the AKAs were taken alongside a dock and unloaded there. Vice Admiral T. S. Wilkinson (Commander THIRD Amphibious Force) had proceeded from Yokohama in MOUNT OLYMPUS (AGC) and was present at this landing. After Com5thFleet assumed responsibility for all naval operations in Japanese home waters at 0000 on 20 September, he approved the continued use of task force numbers 32, 33, and 34 for operations already in progress. All other forces assumed FIFTH Fleet designations. (TF 34 was dissolved on 15 October, but the task units of this force retained the same numeral designations under the operational control of CTF 32, until the respective dissolution of each.)

Stand-by fire support, from cruisers and destroyers of TF 34.7 (Rear Admiral Denebrink) and limited air support from two CVEs--HOGGATT BAY and MATANIKAU-- which were assigned by CTF 56 (Rear Admiral Denebrink, the Commander North Japan Force) were provided for the landing of the 81st Infantry Division at Aomori on the 25th, but no firing was necessary, as the landing was entirely unopposed. The escort carriers, operating about 50 miles east of Mutsu Wan, launched a combat air patrol of four VF, a single VTB air observer, a direct air group (4 VF and 4 VTB), and four VTB photo planes at 0530 on the 25th. "Dumbo" services were furnished by VFB aircraft operating from the Ominato Seadrome. The air support units were released at dark on 25 September, the CVEs returning to Yokosuka.

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Hiroshima and Kure (in southern Honshu) were both inaccessible; but Hiro Wan, just east of Kure, afforded satisfactory conditions for landing the Hiroshima-Kure occupation force, and the necessary sweeping was practicable. Kochi (in southern Shikoku) was originally thought to present no difficulties, but the landing scheduled for that port was later transferred to Matsuyama (in northwest Shikoku), a site which offered no obstacles in the form of mines, when Kochi was discovered to be inaccessible. Tsuruga (in south-central Honshu) and Okayama (in southern Honshu) were both inaccessible.

In order to execute the occupation of the key cities as set forth in the original plans, Com5thPhibFor found it necessary to occupy the Shimonoseki-Fukuoka area by an overland movement from the accessible ports of Sasebo-Nagasaki; the Tsuruga locality from Wakayama or Yokkaichi; and Okayama from Hiro Wan.

After a conference between the Commander FIFTH Fleet and the Commanding General SIXTH Army (General W. Krueger) in the Philippines about 21 August, the following schedule of landings within the FIFTH Fleet zone of operations was tentatively planned. These dates were subject to change as circumstances might dictate:

- 2 September---Kagoshima, Kii Wan in support of the occupation of Kanoya Airfield.
- 22 September---Sasebo.
- 25 September---Wakayama.
- 26 September---Nagasaki.
- 3 October----Nagoya.
- 3-13 October----Hiro Wan.
- 4 October----Matsuyama.

CominPac was directed to carry out the necessary sweeping.

All landings made by SIXTH Army elements in Kyushu, Shikoku, and western Honshu were to be the responsibility of the Commander FIFTH Amphibious Force, with the Commanders Amphibious Groups 4, 5, 8, and 14 assigned specific missions. At the same time, the SIXTH Army was originally assigned troops as follows:

- FIFTH Amphibious Corps - (VAC) - 2nd, 3rd, and 5th MarDivs and Corps troops.
- FIRST Corps - 6th, 25th, 33rd, and 98th Infantry Divisions and Corps troops.
- TENTH Corps - 24th and 41st Infantry Divisions and Corps troops.

The Amphibious Group Commanders were assigned the following missions:

- ComPhibGrp 4 to conduct landings of VAC troops.
- ComPhibGrp 5 to conduct landings of X Corps troops.
- ComPhibGrp 8 to conduct landings of I Corps troops.
- ComPhibGrp 14 to act as Commander Base Group at Manila to handle the logistics of turn-around shipping and to supervise the loading of service units, rear echelons, etc.

Prior to the actual commencement of the loading of the divisions concerned, the following changes in assignments of the divisions were made:

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32nd Infantry Division assigned to VAC in place of the 3rd MarDiv detached.

96th Infantry Division assigned to I Corps in place of the 6th Division detached.

In late August, ComPhibGrp 5 was detached, and his duties were reassigned to ComPhibGrp 14. Upon the latter's detachment on 5 September, ComPhibGrp 11 was assigned to the FIFTH Amphibious Force to take over the landing of X Corps troops. The Acting Commander of Amphibious Group 14 was then assigned duties as Commander Base Group at Manila.

During the early planning stages, when the form Japanese reaction to the surrender rescript would take was still an unknown quantity, the 5thPhibFor's general conception of the operation was one of landings conducted as assaults in everything but actual firing, with naval gunfire and air support deployed and instantly ready. The initial landings of troops were to be made across suitable beaches, to be followed up by seizures of dock areas and the unloading of service elements, equipment, and stores. The necessity for minesweeping in the vicinity of each objective obviated any question of effecting surprise landings.

Later directives took cognizance of the submissive attitude of the Japanese and provided for early announcement to Japanese authorities of the dates of arrival of the occupation forces and the presentation to these authorities of the conditions to be met by the Japanese prior to these landings. Before sending any troops ashore, the Commanding General SIXTH Army determined that the Japanese people were sufficiently tractable in temper to permit the widespread travel throughout Japan of small units whose purpose was the investigation of prisoner-of-war camps and the acceleration of their evacuation. Incident to this plan, the first objectives of the 5thPhibFor--Sasebo-Nagasaki-Wakayama--were occupied by naval forces well before the arrival of occupation troops.

On 2 September, elements of the FIFTH Air Force and the 1st Battalion of the 127th Infantry (32nd Infantry Division) landed at Kagoshima (in southern Kyushu) to set up emergency airfield facilities at Kanoya to cover the movement of troops by air to the Tokyo area.

In coordination with these airborne landings, TU 95.3.8 (Captain C. M. Jensen, ComDesRon 46 in DAVID W. TAYLOR) put ashore elements of the SIXTH Army from the six LSTs of the force at Takasu, four miles west of Kanoya, on 4 September. By 0930 on the 6th, the last LST had been unloaded, and the following day, TU 95.3.8 departed for Okinawa.

This occupation allowed the entry of advanced parties, representing the Amphibious Force and troop commanders, to check Japanese compliance with the stated conditions, investigate beach and dock conditions, arrange troop and dump areas, etc. In turn, landing plans were modified to take advantage of the changed conditions.

In the forthcoming landings at various ports in southern Japan, the following procedure was followed in determining the command relations between various flag officers: When an amphibious flag officer was present and conducting scheduled occupation operations in an area within the jurisdiction of an area

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to their destinations under their own power, but escorted by DD/DE types and by tugs.

Upon its arrival at the original destination, the Sasebo Unit was made available for partial reassignment to the Nagasaki Operation and to Shimonoseki-Fukuoka (when these ports were opened) as desirable, and the Wakayama Unit was similarly made available for the operations at Yokkaichi-Nagoya and at Kure.

Evacuation of Prisoners of War from Southern Japan.

As the first U. S. troops began to land in Japan, it became apparent that the evacuation of Allied prisoners of war must receive the highest priority if many of them were not to succumb before assistance arrived, as a result of their poor physical condition. As we have seen, the evacuation of P.O.W.s from Honshu by THIRD Fleet and EIGHTH Army rescue teams began immediately. On 3 September, the day after the surrender ceremony, a FIFTH Fleet delegation headed by Rear Admiral D. C. Ramsey, Chief of Staff to Admiral R. A. Spruance, flew to Yokohama for a two-day conference with the staff of the Supreme Commander on the evacuation of Allied prisoners of war from Southern Japan.

The plan agreed on called for the EIGHTH Army to extend its evacuation program to the west, and to evacuate P.O.W.s through Osaka to Tokyo until relieved by FIFTH Fleet and SIXTH Army units. The RAMPS (Recovered Allied Military Personnel) on Shikoku were to be ferried across the Inland Sea to the mainland of Honshu, then moved by rail through Osaka to the Tokyo area.

The FIFTH Fleet and SIXTH Army organized two evacuation forces consisting of suitable landing craft, hospital ships, transports, Army contact teams, truck companies, and naval medical personnel. Two ports, Wakayama and Nagasaki, were established as evacuation centers for all western Japan. To the SIXTH Army belonged the responsibility of supervising the delivery of the RAMPS to these two ports. The medical examination and processing became the function of the FIFTH Fleet. This was accomplished by stationing Navy medical teams at both ports and by assigning medical officers and corpsmen to accompany Army recovery teams into the various prisoners of war camps.

The Evacuation of P.O.W.s from Nagasaki - On 11 September, TU 56.5.1 (Rear Admiral F. G. Fahrion, ComCruDiv 4) arrived at Nagasaki to commence the repatriation of Allied P.O.W.s rescued from camps in that area and brought to that port for evacuation to Okinawa. The medical examination and processing station was established in a large warehouse near the docks, but the hospital ship HAVEN remained at the dock in the capacity of a station and screening hospital. She also supplied the processing station with steam, hot water, general utilities, and food.

Some medical teams were stationed on the dock; others worked with Army recovery teams which went to the various prisoner of war camps. The medical screening was so planned that every prisoner was routed past a battery of trained nurses and interpreters, where a check-off questionnaire was made. This included a brief summary of the individual's military and naval experience, the date of his capture, the type and degree of his sickness in camp, his mistreatment or punishment in camp, the quality and quantity of food he had been given, and his occupation while a prisoner. More than 9000 personal statements

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_____ were obtained in this way.

The medical examinations and processing disclosed many instances of brutality. On the other hand, close questioning often brought out that the prisoner had been guilty of breaking some petty but strict prison rule. A considerable number of the older men stated that the camp treatment, although extremely severe, was on the whole not too bad. They expected quick punishment when caught for an infraction of the rules, and they were not disappointed. All complained of the food, clothing, housing, and lack of heating facilities. Malnutrition was common. Many serious cases of beriberi and tuberculosis required hospitalization.

A total of 9061 RAMPS were evacuated at Nagasaki. Of this number, 685 were stretcher cases or patients so weak as to require hospitalization. The rest, more than 92%, were able to proceed on transports as ambulatory troop passengers. Upon their arrival at Okinawa, many RAMPS were flown in troop-carrying C-46s to Manila.

By 22 September, the evacuation of these P.O.W.s from the Nagasaki area had been completed. Meantime, the medical officers of TU 56.5.1 had found opportunity to study at first hand the effects of the atomic bomb dropped on 9 August upon the inhabitants of Nagasaki.

On 12 September, many bomb victims were still being treated for burns, fractures, and a type of severe anemia said to be due to exposure to the radio-active gamma rays released by the bomb. The availability of HAVEN (AH) at the dock created a fortunate opportunity for factual clinical findings, since the main hospitals and the Nagasaki Medical College, including practically all medical equipment, had been destroyed. The facilities of HAVEN permitted X-Ray studies and a collection of valuable pathological specimens, biopsies, and autopsies to be made. Preliminary findings indicated that many victims were suffering from the radioactive gamma rays, which produced a delayed severe anemia. This was accompanied by a great reduction in white cells, simulating a type of pernicious leucopenia or agranulocytosis.

The Evacuation of P.O.W.s from Wakayama - Task Unit 56.5.2 (Rear Admiral R. S. Riggs, ComCruDiv 12) was formed on 4 September to evacuate RAMPS and Allied civilian internees from the Prisoner-of-War and internment camps of western Honshu and Shikoku, a group estimated by intelligence reports at 10,000 persons. The port of Wakayama (in southern Honshu) was selected as the evacuation port because of its centralized location and its position as a rail center. TU 56.5.2 was therefore designated as the Wakayama Evacuation Unit, and comprised MONTPELLIER (CL)(F), SANCTUARY and CONSOLATION (AHs), CABILDO (LSD), TANNEY (CGC), HOPPING, COFER, and TATUM (APDs), LUNGA POINT (CVE), FLOYD'S BAY (AVP), and four DEs of CortDiv 86.

The Wakayama Evacuation Unit anchored in Wakanoura Wan (a smaller but comparatively sheltered anchorage just south of Wakayama Beach) the afternoon of 11 September, and during the evening the initial contact was made with Major B.F. Maloney, USA, the SIXTH Army representative in the Wakayama area, who had arrived there during the morning to assist the Evacuation Unit and to prepare the way for landing of the I Corps of the SIXTH Army later in the month. Contact was also established with Japanese officials representing the Vice Governor of Wakayama prefecture.

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In the forenoon of the 12th, representatives of CTU 56.5.2 went ashore and examined facilities for processing, examining, and transporting recovered Allied military and civilian personnel from the Wakayama-Osaka Railway Depot to the evacuation ships in Wakanoura Wan. Japanese civil authorities were found to be cooperative, and a resort hotel, the Mampa Ro, on the north shore of Wakanoura Wan, was obtained by Major Maloney for use in processing RAMPS. A small warehouse near the only serviceable jetty in Wakanoura Wan was taken over as headquarters for the Beachmaster Shore Patrol.

Events proved that the original estimate of 10,000 prisoners of war to be evacuated through Wakayama was considerably exaggerated, as Major Maloney revealed that only about 2600 were to be expected. It had been thought that the first of these would arrive during the night of 12-13 September, but these were diverted to Nagasaki and never appeared at Wakayama.

Throughout the day of September 13th, preparations went forward for the arrival of the RAMPS. The hospital unit and the medical examination rooms of the Mampa Ro Hotel were set up, staffed, and equipped by all ships in the unit, but principally by the hospital ships. Showers and a decontamination unit were installed. Stocks of fresh clothing were sent ashore, a galley was set up to feed on a 24-hour basis, and voice radio and signal stations were established at the hotel and at the Beachmaster's headquarters. During the afternoon of the 13th, HMNZS GAMBIA (CL) and NIZAM (DD) stood in to Wakayama and added their facilities.

The first train bringing RAMPS to Wakayama from the Prisoner of War Camp at Nii Hama, in Shikoku, arrived on 14 September. The litter cases, including those mentally defective and (should any appear) women and children, were to be processed and dispatched directly to designated hospital ships. The ambulant males (by far the great majority) were transported by boat from the jetty to the Mampa Ro Hotel, about a quarter mile to the westward, where they were processed.

Upon arriving at the hotel, the RAMPS checked their gear and were stripped, showered, and decontaminated. Next, they underwent a thorough medical examination, were issued fresh ship's store stock clothing, were fed and examined. SIXTH Army Recovery Teams interviewed each RAMP, giving him an opportunity to send a cable home and to file an affidavit with the War Crimes Commission representative. A Records Unit compiled statistics on the RAMPS, and a designating officer assigned each RAMP to his ship. Upon leaving the hotel and reclaiming their gear, the RAMPS were sent directly by boat to their assigned ship.

The work of processing and embarking RAMPS continued throughout the morning of 15 September. By 1500, the last RAMP had been embarked in his evacuation ship. During a period of 27 hours, a total of 2575 recovered personnel had passed through the processing machinery. They came from Prisoner of War and civilian internment camps at Obe, Zentsuji, Nii Hama (Hiroshima No. 2), Tamano (Hiroshima No. 3), Omine (Hiroshima No. 4), Motoyami (Hiroshima No. 6), and Ohama (Hiroshima No. 7). They included U. S. sailors from Guam, U.S. Marines from Wake, U. S. soldiers from Corregidor and Bataan, Australians captured in Java, Dutch from Sumatra, British and Scotch taken at Singapore and Hongkong. As it turned out, there were no women, no children, and only a handful of civilians.

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Typhoon of 17-18 September - With the departure of SANCTUARY (AH) and CABILDO (LSD) for Okinawa, HOPPING (APD) for Guam, and LUNGA POINT and COFER for Nagasaki on the 15th, it was planned to sail CONSOLATION for Okinawa, and TATUM for Nagasaki, to assist in RAMP evacuation, but the presence to the southwest of the Ryukyus of a typhoon which was moving northwest, caused these plans to be deferred, and on 16 September, TU 56.5.3 (the LST Unit) was recalled to Wakanoura for protection.

The majority of ships were at anchor on one half hour's notice for full power when the center of the typhoon struck the southeast coast of Shikoku shortly after nightfall. At Wakayama, winds of 50-60 knots, with gusts up to 90 knots, were experienced. The barometer fell to 28.94. Maneuvering control was lost on many vessels, and dragging anchor was prevalent. TATUM (APD) dragged her anchor to within 200 yards of the seawall along the northeastern shore of Wakanoura Wan and would have been driven into the wall had she not slipped her anchor and gotten underway. Unfortunately, while accomplishing this, her First Lieutenant and two enlisted men were lost overboard.

Heavy seas carried YMS 478 up on the north shore of Wakanoura Wan, where she broached and capsized, and was finally deposited high and dry on the beach between Dejima and Tanoura Villages. One officer and one man were lost during the disaster. Subsequent inspections by CTG 52.6 and SOPA (Admin) disclosed that salvage was impossible, and she was given up to cannibalization.

During the typhoon, three LSTs (555, 965, and 890) were driven aground and considerably damaged on the north coast of Wakanoura Wan. Eventually, however, LSTs 890 and 965 were unbeached on the 22nd and 23rd respectively with the assistance of LCMs and other LSTs. No personnel casualties were incurred by any of these three LSTs. LST 555 had to be pulled off by a rescue tug.

Damage was considerable in Osaki Wan, adjacent to and south of Wakanoura, where small craft had been berthed. LCIs 320 and 350 were driven aground, but unbeached themselves without aid at high tide on the night of 20 September. Damage was negligible, and these ships returned to duty the next day. LCI 814 was damaged at the waterline by collision but continued to operate. One LCVP was sunk, but no personnel casualties were incurred. One PBM-5 seaplane was lost, with one member of her crew.

Occupation by SIXTH Army Units.

Occupation of Sasebo - The Southern Occupation Group, TG 54.1 (Rear Admiral L. F. Reifsnider, ComPhibGrp 4) was assigned the task of mounting, moving, and landing SIXTH Army troops assigned to the occupation of the Sasebo-Nagasaki and Fukuoka-Shimonoseki areas of southern Japan, following the termination of hostilities. The particular SIXTH Army force assigned to these operations was the FIFTH Amphibious Corps (Major General H. S. Schmidt, USMC), consisting of the 5thMarDiv (Major General T. E. Bourke), and 2ndMarDiv (Major General L. P. Hunt) the 32nd Infantry Division, U. S. Army (Major General McBride, USA), as well as 5thPhibCorps Headquarters and Corps troops. These divisions were mounted in the Hawaiian, Marianas, and Philippine areas respectively, and moved progressively as separate groups to the Sasebo-Nagasaki area in accordance with the movement orders issued by the Commander Southern Occupation Group.

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