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UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AND PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

11 February 1946

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

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 CinCAFPac, 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), LANSDOWNE (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 hard, 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 commandeer 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
mitsushima	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	2,558	

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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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), TANEY (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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Although Taku was the nearest sea port to Tientsin, it was a poor one, as a sand bar prevented the approach of large ships closer than approximately seven miles. From this bar, a narrow channel which permitted the passage of LSMs at high tide led to Taku. In addition to these hydrographic detriments, the Hai Ho River customarily freezes during the winter months, thus making the use of Taku and T'ang-Ku as ports extremely hazardous. For this reason, it might subsequently be advisable, or even necessary, to transfer the base of operations to Chinwangtao (120 miles to the northeast along the shore of the Gulf of Pohai) during the winter season.

In anticipation of this necessity, the 1st Marine Division would seize and hold the airfield at Linyu, about nine miles east of Chinwangtao. After the occupation of Tientsin by the 1st MarDiv, it would seize, hold, and initiate rehabilitation of the airfield at Peiyang, about three miles southeast of Tientsin. The division would also be prepared to occupy Peiping with one RCT, seizing and holding the American Legation and one U.S. Marine barracks at that point, as well as the airfield at Nanyuan, about 10 miles southeast of Peiping.

On about M plus 10 (October 10th) the 6th Marine Division (Major General L.C. Shepherd, Jr.), less the 4th RCT, would land at the excellent all-weather port of Tsingtao, about 265 miles southeast of Tientsin, seizing and holding the port facilities at that point and occupying the city. It would then seize, hold, and initiate rehabilitation of the airfield at Tsangkow, about seven miles north of Tsingtao.

In order to bring the port facilities in all ports seized to full operational status as soon as possible, Gropacs would be provided.

Air support for these Marine operations would be furnished initially by CV s, but as soon as airfields could be made operational, the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing would be established in the area, with headquarters at III Amphibious Corps Headquarters in Tientsin. Marine Air Bases would be established at Tientsin and at Tsingtao, and subdivisions of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing would be based at each point. In addition to these primary bases, auxiliary airfields would be established at points of secondary importance as required by future developments.

Although it was not anticipated that large-scale combat operations would be necessary, our forces were to be prepared for any contingency. Acts of treachery, attacks by individuals or small groups, and sporadic fighting among the irregular bands had to be expected. Inasmuch as developments requiring full-scale combat operations subsequent to the landings did not appear likely, assault landings were not contemplated. The ships of the SEVENTH Fleet would be prepared to provide naval gunfire from light units only, but adequate air support would be furnished, and, in an emergency, the potential air support available from fast carriers and land-based air appeared certain to be sufficient to cope with any situation which might arise.

The Evacuation of P.O.W.s from Manchuria and China.

The Program of Supply Drops to P.O.W. Camps—The confirmation of the Japanese surrender on 15 August, 1945, presented to the Allied Powers the difficult task of supplying Japanese-held prisoners of war and civilian internees with food, clothing, and medical supplies until they could be evacuated by occupation forces. A large

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number of prisoners were known to be in Japanese camps, and the reported conditions of starvation-rations, disease, and maltreatment made relief measures particularly urgent. It was estimated that the time that would be required for the evacuation of the prisoners from the widely-scattered camps in Manchuria, Korea, North and Central China, and the four main Japanese home islands would be about 30 days, and it was believed that many lives could be saved by prompt and adequate supply of the known camps.

It was apparent that air transport would be the most feasible method of providing the supplies necessary, particularly to those located in the interior; and the original plan was that Far East Air Forces aircraft, based on Okinawa and the Philippines, would share the air-supply task with Marianas-based B-29s. Later the entire project was assigned to the Twentieth Air Force.

The most perplexing problem in planning these operations was the determination of the location and population of the camps to be supplied. Until 27 August, 1945, the only information upon which the Twentieth Air Force could base its planning was a compilation called the "Black List", issued by the General Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces, Pacific, and a Navy Compilation issued in Cincpac-Cincpoa Bulletin No. 113-45. These lists were incomplete, and their accuracy was further reduced by the wholesale removal of Allied prisoners from the heavily-bombed Japanese coastal areas during the last few months of the war.

One of the surrender conditions imposed by the Allies was that the Japanese Government should mark clearly all prisoner of war and civilian internment camps by means of landmarks 20 feet high with the letters "PW" painted in yellow on a black surface, and that it furnish the Supreme Commander a complete list of the names, locations, and populations of all the camps. The first Japanese list, known as the "Yellow List", was made available to the Twentieth Air Force on 27 August. It contained 73 camps. There remained the task of verifying the location of those camps appearing on the "Black List" and in the Navy Bulletin but upon which no additional information had been received.

On 29 August, aircraft of the 314th Bombardment Wing based on Guam were dispatched to verify the location of camps on the Japanese home islands of Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu; and on 31 August, aircraft of the same Wing were dispatched on reconnaissance missions to Hainan Island, the Peiping, Hong Kong, and Shanghai areas of China, and the Mukden area of Manchuria. This reconnaissance verified the existence and location of 57 additional camps. Special requests and additional reports were expected to increase the list of camp locations as the operations progressed. Cincpac-Cincpoa provided air-sea rescue facilities consisting of surface vessels on permanent stations interspersed along the routes to be flown.

An important factor in planning these operations was the availability of food, medical supplies, and cargo parachutes. It was obvious that all supplies must be packaged and made available in the Marianas, if the Twentieth Air Force was to carry out the supply drops with the necessary dispatch. The food and medical supply requirements for the program was set up on a basis of 30 days' supply for 69,000 persons. Of the 63,000 cargo parachutes required for the project, there were only 11,100 in the Marianas, making it necessary to air-lift all available cargo parachutes from the Philippines to the Marianas.

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From a series of tests, it was found that a 10,000 lb. load, consisting of 40 individual drop units, was the capacity of a B-29; while the best altitude for dropping was between 500 and 1000 feet, and the best speed approximately 165 miles per hour. To facilitate identification, it was decided that all aircraft engaged in these operations would be marked "PW Supplies" in letters three feet high under each wing. Population figures for many of the camps were merely rough estimates, and it was considered inevitable that there would be cases of over-supply and under-supply.

It was planned to drop supplies in three increments of 3-day, 7-day, and 10-day supplies. A fourth increment of additional 10-day supplies was to be dropped if needed, though many of the camps would have been evacuated before that became necessary. The three-day supplies were to include juices, soups, clothing, and medical supplies. The seven-day supplies were to include additional medical supplies and food of a more substantial nature. The 10-day supplies were to be almost entirely food, with some medical supplies. Leaflets with instructions concerning the allocation and use of supplies were also to be dropped. Photographs of the camps and the results of the drops were to be taken by each aircraft, when conditions permitted. Normally, each aircraft was to carry supplies sufficient for 200 persons for the particular 3, 7, or 10-day period; however, for camps of 1000 or more population, the aircraft were to be especially loaded for greater efficiency of packaging.

From 27 August to 20 September, aircraft of the 58th, 73rd, 313th, 314th, and 315th Bombardment Wings flew 900 effective sorties over 158 prisoner of war and civilian internment camps, including sorties flown to camps which were added to the lists after operations had begun. Although all five Twentieth Air Force Wings participated in the operations, more than half of the effective sorties (52.4%) were flown by the Saipan-based 73rd Wing because of the greater range made possible by its location. Ten sorties were staged through Okinawa. A total of 4470 tons of supplies was dropped by B-29s on these missions.

After three days of operations, it was decided that the planned altitude of 500 to 1000 feet for dropping was too low for efficient operation of the cargo parachutes, with the result that all crews were briefed to release at altitudes above 1000 feet, in order to allow better functioning of the parachutes, to avoid casualties among the prisoner personnel, and to prevent destruction of the supply bundles.

Evacuation of the P.O.W. camps by the U.S. Army and Navy and other agencies gradually reduced the task of supply during the course of operations. Although lack of information on evacuation progress caused some confusion in the first few days of the operations, the list of camps was reduced rapidly after 5 September. Each succeeding phase of the operations saw a marked decrease in the number of targets, and the fourth phase included only a few camps.

Missions were directed to 169 prisoner of war and civilian internment camps during these operations, with one or more successful drops being made at 158 of these camps. All missions against the other 11 camps were unsuccessful, chiefly because of the inability of crews to locate the camps from the coordinates available. Of the camps upon which successful supply drops were made, 158 received a three-day supply drop, 128 received a seven-day supply drop, and 91 received one or more 10-day supply drops.

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Eight B-29s were lost on these missions, with a total of 77 casualties. One aircraft was shot down by Soviet forces over Korea when they took it to be a captured plane manned by Japanese personnel, but all crew members were rescued uninjured. Three of the planes were lost operationally, and four were lost from unknown causes.

In Manchuria, four camps were located near Mukden, one at Sian to the north, one at Hsinking, and one north of Harbin. In North China, two camps were located near Peiping and one at Wehsien. In Central China, a group of about 30 camps was in or near Shanghai, two each were found near Kihwa and in the Chusan Islands, and one was located east of Nanking. In Southeast China, 32 camps were evenly divided between the Canton area and Hong Kong, and seven were located on Hainan Island.

Evacuation of P.O.W.s from Manchuria--At Mukden, Manchuria, the relief team dropped there found 1673 prisoners, consisting of 1321 Americans, 293 Englishmen, 67 Dutch, 44 Australians, one Canadian, and one Frenchman. The Sian camp, 100 miles to the north, which was apparently used for high-ranking officers and important civilians, contained 34 prisoners of war--eight Americans, 16 Englishmen, and 10 Dutch. In addition, the Russians reported liberating 1670 prisoners, including 28 generals, in the Mukden area.

The Evacuation of prisoners from Mukden was begun on 23 August, and on the 24th the men began arriving in Kunming. Many were survivors of Wake Island and Bataan, of whom some were suffering from malnutrition, while others had contracted tuberculosis or other diseases. They reported that their treatment had not been unduly harsh except in the case of prisoners who attempted to escape. During the final days before the Japanese Government announced that it would surrender, the attitude of the guards changed radically, with the prisoners being told that the Japanese and Americans were the best of friends.

Two plane loads of Allied military and administrative leaders were flown from Mukden to Chungking on August 28th, the most famous of whom was Lieutenant General Jonathan M. Wainwright, former commander of American forces in the Philippines. Other officers of general rank in this party were Major General E.P. King, Jr., who signed the surrender of Bataan; Major General A.M. Jones, who commanded the southern front in Luzon during the early phases of the fighting; Major General W.F. Sharp, former commander in the southern Philippines; Major General T. Dooley; Major General G.F. Moore; Brigadier General L.C. Beebe; Brigadier General M.S. Lough, Brigadier General C. Bluemel; Brigadier General J.R. Weaver; as well as Colonel J. Pugh.

In the British group were Lieutenant General A.E. Percival, former commander in chief of the forces in Malaya and Singapore; Sir Shenton Thomas, former Governor of the Straits Settlement and High Commissioner for Malaya; and Sir Mark Young, former Governor of Hong Kong. Dutch evacuees included A.W.L. Tjarda van Starckenborgh Stachouwer, former Governor General of the Netherlands East Indies, and Lieutenant General Hein ter Poorten, former commander of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army.

By 3 September, 120 military personnel had been evacuated by air to China from prison camps in the Mukden area. The Mukden-Dairen Railroad Line, although in great disrepair, was opened on the 6th, and arrangements were made with the Russians for the evacuation of the remaining 1721 P.O.W.s (including 1210 Americans) through Dairen.

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On 11 September, after a three-day wait while tied up alongside the docks at Dairen, Manchuria, the U.S. Navy hospital ship RELIEF began to receive on board a capacity load of Allied military personnel recently recovered from the Japanese military camp at Mukden, 200 miles to the north. During the three days of enforced waiting, the ship had made complete preparations for receiving the liberated men, and throughout the afternoon of the 11th rumors persisted that the train which was to bring the prisoners was enroute to Dairen. The scene that ensued when they did appear is described by RELIEF as follows:

"When they finally began to arrive at 2050, the scene was dramatic and poignant. They were heard before they were seen. Then, from out of the darkness beyond the docks, the first of them stepped into the glare of the dock floodlights, first one or two, then 10, then the whole procession. They carried all their worldly possessions on their backs or in duffle bags.

"The entire ship's company manned the rail to greet them. As the ex-prisoners crowded the dock at the foot of the gangway, the ship's crew shouted over the rail to them, tossing them cigarettes, swapping stories, finding out where they were from 'Back in the States'. The ship's Red Cross lights and green bands had been illuminated, and the ship started Stateside music, playing over the ship's public address system--Dixie, The Marine Hymn, Stardust, etc. The RELIEF was the first American ship these men had seen in three years; in some cases, four years."

By 2245, the last of the 753 RAMPs, including 518 Americans, had been received aboard. The others were Dutch, British, and Australians. The senior officer of the group of RAMPs was Colonel L.S. Churchill, USA, formerly of the Far East Air Force. The nationalities represented were varied, but they were one in requesting a hot shower as the first thing they wanted. By midnight, most of the repatriates had been provided with beds, but, in the words of the RELIEF's observer:

"After everything was quiet, some of the ex-prisoners, hungry for conversation with Americans, and too excited to sleep, stayed about the decks, swapping yarns with the crew, or listening avidly to accounts of what had been going on at home during the past four years. They wanted to know who the movie stars were, what songs were being sung; they listened proudly to descriptions of the rocket guns, and the accounts of Kwajalein, Okinawa, Guam, etc."

Later that night, two civilian internees came aboard RELIEF for transportation, and early on the 12th, the hospital ship set out for Okinawa.

The general physical condition of the recovered prisoners from the Mukden Prison Camp was higher than expected. Even though malnutrition was evident, and many of the personnel were suffering from impaired eyesight, while almost all were afflicted by parasitical intestinal growths, the general condition was excellent, considering the treatment they had received. The average loss in weight had been 40 lbs. In the period between the end of hostilities and the arrival of the P.O.W.s at Dairen, most of them had regained from 10 to 30 pounds. This gain was attributed to two factors--the supplies dropped by the B-29s, and the release to the prisoners since 15 August of the food previously withheld regularly from them by the Japanese.

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The following day, COLBERT (APA) left Dairen with the remaining prisoners from Mukden. On 17 September, when approximately 100 miles west of Okinawa, she struck a mine, flooding her engine room. One man was missing and two were injured in the explosion. After her boilers had been secured and the flooding brought under control, COLBERT was taken in tow by BUTTE (APD), and ordered to proceed to Buckner Bay. Later, the tow was taken by a tug, and COLBERT arrived at Okinawa on the 19th.

Evacuation of P.O.W.s in China—A total of about 1100 P.O.W.s and internees were liberated from camps in the British concession at Tientsin during the first week of September. In the same period, a total of about 1200 prisoners were found in the Yangchow Prison Camp, northeast of Nanking. In the Canton area, humanitarian teams reported finding 18 U.S. Army men, two Navy men, and 16 merchant seamen. A rescue team dropped near Samah Bay in southern Hainan Island reported that about 400 men had been found in a camp at that location. The men, mostly British and Dutch, were reported near death as a result of malnutrition and disease. Medical supplies, food, and clothing were dropped at the camp on 31 August. Around the middle of September, GERUSALAMME (AH) and the transport GLENEARN arrived at Hainan from Hong Kong and evacuated approximately 140 stretcher cases and ambulatory patients from the P.O.W. Camp there.

Evacuation of Allied Prisoners of War from Formosa.

Task Group 77.1 (consisting of BLOCK ISLAND and SANTEE (CVEs) and THOMAS J. GARY, BRISTER, FINCH, and KRETCHMER (DEs)) was enroute to Jinsen, Korea, on 3 September, to participate in the landings there by supporting the minesweepers clearing mines in the Yellow Sea off that port, when orders were received cancelling the scheduled mission and ordering the task group to alter course for Kiirun, in northern Formosa. There the planes of the group were to make air drops of food and medical supplies to prisoner of war camps, preliminary to effecting the evacuation of the inmates as quickly as possible.

The following afternoon, 4 September, Colonel A.O. Cooley, USMC, Commanding Officer, Marine Air Support Group 48, three members of his staff, and 15 Marine enlisted men were transferred from BLOCK ISLAND to THOMAS J. GARY, with orders to proceed inland from Kiirun to the P.O.W. camps in the vicinity and arrange for the evacuation of the Allied prisoners being held there. It was known that a special AGAS P.O.W. team was operating in that part of Formosa, but all attempts to contact them prior to landing were unsuccessful.

Before dawn on 5 September, planes of TG 77.1 took off for Kiirun and Taihoku (inland from Kiirun). Inasmuch as there had been no previous communications whatsoever with anyone on Formosa, one of the primary missions of this flight was to make message drops in strategic places such as administration buildings near Kiirun Harbor, Matsuyama Airfield, and P.O.W. camps. The purpose of these messages was to inform the Japanese that the task group expected to dock at Kiirun and would demand the utmost cooperation. In addition, the planes made a show of force, flew photographic runs, covered the escort vessels, and carried out a reconnaissance of the entire area.

Reconnaissance and photo planes having reported Matsuyama Airfield operational, and having also located three P.O.W. camps--Nos. 1, 4, and 6--in the Taihoku area, Rear Admiral Ketcham determined to risk landing one of the planes at Matsuyama Airfield

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in order to establish liaison ashore as quickly as possible. At 1010, accordingly, a TBM carrying a staff liaison officer landed and was met by the Japanese commander of the airfield. The liaison officer immediately commandeered a car and was driven to the prison camps to determine the most urgent needs of the prisoners of war. Having gathered this information, he arranged for it to be flown back to the flagship by one of the F6Fs covering the landing of the escort vessels. Shortly thereafter, planes loaded with suitable medicines and food began landing on Matsuyama Airfield, delivering a total of 9500 pounds during the day.

Meantime, the main seaborne landing was underway. As the intelligence concerning Kiirun was very meager, it was not known whether resistance would be encountered from some of the more fanatical Japanese. Neither was the location of the Japanese minefields known. In view of these circumstances, when THOMAS J. GARY, and KRETCHMER entered the probable minefield area at 0718 on the 5th, all possible precautions were taken to put the ships in a condition to repel any attack which might be forthcoming, and to minimize damage and casualties should they strike a mine. Covered by a CAP of four planes and two anti-mine aircraft from the CVEs, the two destroyer escorts moved to a point one mile due north of Kiirun Island, where they lay to for a pilot to guide them into the harbor.

Although unable to raise the shore station by flashing light, the DEs did manage to contact it on the radio; whereupon they directed the Japanese to send a pilot and the local military commander. To this demand the Japanese radio station replied affirmatively. After an hour's delay, a small tug came out at 1000 and motioned for the escorts to follow him in to the harbor, where the pilot was waiting.

There was no sign of hostility from the port, while the Japanese flags on the public buildings and on the fort were at half mast. The populace of Kiirun was kept back from the docks and warehouses by Japanese Army guards. Everywhere there appeared to be a spirit of cooperation.

Having picked up the pilot and moored, THOMAS J. GARY put Colonel Cooley ashore to meet the Japanese representatives and begin negotiations for the evacuation of the P.O.W.s. On the dock were a group of American and British P.O.W. officers, four members of the AGAS P.O.W. team, and a five-man Japanese delegation, all of whom participated in conferences aimed at speeding up the evacuation. It was learned from the Japanese in course of these conferences that the P.O.W. camps had been turned over to the prisoners on 3 September.

A detail was sent ashore from GARY to take over the local Japanese radio station, thereby establishing reliable communications between TU 77.1.3 and activities ashore at Kiirun.

At the conclusion of the conference aboard GARY, Colonel Cooley proceeded to Camp No. 1 to supervise the evacuation of the 312 prisoners located there, and at 1630, the first P.O.W. train arrived at Kiirun with the repatriates. GARY took aboard 156 of these, and KRETCHMER received the other half for delivery to BLOCK ISLAND and SANTEE. The outbound route of the DEs did not coincide with the one used in entering the harbor, since information obtained from the Japanese showed that the inbound track had crossed several minefields. The Japanese naval commander at Kiirun expressed the opinion that they had been very fortunate in not striking a mine on the way in, indicating that the task group's intelligence concerning the Kiirun minefields was decidedly faulty.

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The following day, FINCH, BRISTER, and KRETCHMER followed GARY into Kiirun Harbor to evacuate the remaining prisoners of war in northern Formosa, except for those in such bad condition as to prohibit their being moved.

At 1430 on September 6th, another P.O.W. train arrived at Kiirun, and the evacuees boarded the four ships of the task unit, a total of 848 being received, bringing the total number evacuated in the two days' operations to 1160. Shortly after, Colonel Cooley and the other personnel ashore reembarked, having completed their mission. With the departure of the American communications personnel, the local radio station was returned to the Japanese. At 1730, the four DEs commenced the transfer of the evacuees to the escort carriers.

Most of the repatriates were British Army survivors of the siege of Singapore, although 89 were American Army enlisted men, most of whom were survivors of the Bataan death march. The majority had been compelled to work in the Kinkaseki copper mines in northern Formosa.

The same afternoon, British Task Group 111.3 (Rear Admiral Servaes) arrived at Kiirun from Leyte. BERMUDA (CL), ARGONAUT (CL), and QUIBERON (DD) entered the harbor, while COLOSSUS (CV) and TUMULT (DD) remained outside to provide air support. Upon the task group's arrival, Rear Admiral Servaes visited Taihoku, where all of the remaining prisoners of war (121) were concentrated at the Japanese Military Hospital. Of these, 82 were non-movable patients, and the remainder were doctors and medical personnel. Most of the patients were desperately ill from malnutrition. A few days later, all of these invalids were transferred to the British hospital ship MANGANUI, which was sailed for Manila as soon as the weather permitted.

The Landing of the 1st Marine Division in the Tientsin-Chinwangtao Areas.

Tientsin, the second largest city and the commercial capital of North China, is located in Hopeh Province at the junction of the Pei Ho (River), Hai Ho, and the Yun Ho (Grand Canal), about 36 miles from the Gulf of Pohai and 70 miles south-east of Peiping. The meandering Hai Ho flows through the city and is an important outlet to the sea. The T'ang-Ku-Taku area is located about 30 miles downstream from Tientsin on the Hai Ho, and about seven miles upstream from the Gulf of Pohai.

T'ang-Ku, a short distance upstream from Taku, occupies a low plain along the north bank of the circuitous Hai Ho. Taku is on the opposite bank, along a bight of the river to the southeast. At Taku the entrance to the Hai Ho is obstructed by a bar of silt which extends across the river mouth. Before the Japanese occupation, a dredged channel approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long was maintained to allow a minimum depth of 10 feet at low water, but vessels drawing more than 14 feet of water could seldom cross this bar. Taku roadstead lies seaward of Taku Bar and is used as an anchorage for deep draught vessels unable to cross the bar. This anchorage is exposed, so that frequent heavy seas and swells hamper the unloading of cargo.

No suitable landing beaches existed in the Tientsin area, since the shore for many miles south of the mouth of the Hai Ho is low, muddy, shell-strewn, and backed by flat terrain, which is marshy, and is covered with a network of drainage ditches