

1,200 Former Nazi Prisoners En Route Home

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MOSCOW, March 11.—Nearly 1,200 officers and men of the United States armed forces who were enabled to escape from Nazi prison camps in German-occupied Poland and the eastern borders of the Reich by the smashing advances of the Red Army, have sailed for American bases from the Black Sea port of Odessa.

These released prisoners, many of whom had harrowing tales of last-minute escapes as the Nazis fled before the Russian guns, are aboard Allied ships which even now must have traversed the Turkish Straits since they quit Odessa March 7 and 8.

A thousand more Americans are still in Odessa where special dormitories have been provided by Soviet authorities to house them and other Allied soldiers released from the Germans. These facts were reported Sunday by a special correspondent of Pravda, who estimated that a total of almost 10,000 Allied fighting men are awaiting repatriation in the Black Sea port, while 3,413 already have sailed homeward.

Aboard transports now en route which include one English ship which had brought hundreds of Soviet citizens to Odessa from the United Kingdom after Allied forces in the west had freed them from enemy concentration camps, were 227 American officers and 969 men as well as 1,391 English soldiers and officers and 826 French citizens.

A huge transferral and exchange of military personnel now is under way among the three great Allies. Vast numbers of Allied soldiers still are being gathered together in Poland and shifted by train and plane as rapidly as possible to Odessa.

Already at the Odessa transit camp, according to Pravda when this dispatch was written, were 2,250 American officers and men, a similar number of British and 5,000 French, including not only soldiers but civilian forced laborers among whom were women and children. By this time the number may have swollen as railway carload after railway carload trundles hundreds from Poland.

Meanwhile, special American and British officers are seeking to help the Polish government care for those still wandering about that desolate land, complicating the already exceedingly difficult food, housing and transport situation.

Persons who have seen the American escapees uniformly remark upon their neatness and relatively excellent condition after years in Nazi stalags and oflags, stating their relative health and good clothing are largely the result of the fine prisoner-of-war service run by the American Red Cross.

Hundreds of American and British Red Cross parcels sent through the USSR have been distributed and arrangements have been made to handle entertainment and medical facilities under the supervision of British and American officers.

A smaller-scale evacuation is taking place regularly from the American Army Air Base of the Eastern Command, USAAF, which was established in the USSR.