

Be Shifted to Pacific

1,800,000 Men To Be Discharged After V-E Day

By EUGENE RACHLIS



WASHINGTON, May 5. —About 1,800,000 men will be discharged from the U. S. Army in the months following V-E Day.

The Army General Staff's present plans call for a reduction, probably by the end of this year, from 8,700,000 to 6,900,000 men. This will leave four out of five men now in the Army to carry on the war against the Japanese, the remaining third of the disintegrating Axis.

These figures, disclosed by reliable Congressional sources, will be reflected in reduced draft calls, expected to be cut in half from the present 100,000 a month figure, within the next two or three months. Later, when the discharges begin to make themselves felt in the Army's war program, draft calls will be boosted again, but then only up to 75,000 monthly.

The bulk of the 3,000,000-man army in Europe will be redeployed or demobilized, but about about 20 divisions—300,000 to 400,000 men—will be retained as the European army of occupation. The new 15th Army recently formed in Europe has been selected to handle that job for the U. S. A. It will patrol one third of the conquered territories, while the British and the Russians will govern the rest.

These three members of the War Dept.'s general staff presented these figures and other aspects of the deployment and demobilization program, as it is currently conceived, to the House Military Affairs committee Friday in a closed session: Maj. Gen. Idwal H. Edwards, Assistant Chief of Staff, plans and training; Brig. Gen. Robert W. Berry, Acting Assistant Chief of Staff, personnel; and Maj. Gen. William F. Tompkins, director of special planning.

From what they offered, one high-ranking committee member said that it was "safe to say that a majority of the men in the European theater would be brought back home and given furloughs—probably for 30 days—before being shipped to the Pacific."

Pacific

Here is how that will work:

Soldiers will be granted point values—the actual values have not been made public—for length of service, service overseas, days in combat, wounds, decorations, age, marital status, number of children and dependents, and the degree of dependency.

Adding the points will determine the order of discharge. When sufficient men are sent to the Pacific theater as replacements, both from this country and the European theater, men in the Pacific also will be discharged under the same system.

Military Affairs Committee members were told that the War Dept. plans a complete publicity campaign after V-E Day, for both the people at home and the soldiers overseas, which will explain in detail the point system.

First to return from the European theaters to this country will be the sick and the wounded. The air transport command is moving ahead with plans to carry to this country as soon as possible some 50,000 men a month. This figure may not be reached for a while after V-E Day, however.

The big problem facing the War Dept. is shipping. Those men who go directly from the European theater to the Pacific theater may be flown by giant bombers or transported through the Suez Canal.

Shipping is also a major problem as far as materiel is concerned. It is now estimated that 70 per cent of the equipment used against the Germans can be also used against the Japanese. But getting this materiel to the Pacific fast may be a great factor in keeping many of the men from getting home from Europe as soon as most people would like them home.

According to the Army generals who testified Friday, the emphasis on winning the war against Japan is paramount, with demobilization a secondary factor. Therefore, the re-deployment of troops—retraining where necessary, new uniforms and the like—will be the big job.

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