



1 Berlin	13 Montreuil-Bellay	25 Gurs	37 Vitry le-François	1 Bűderich	13 Hechtsheim	25 Landshut
2 Dieppe	14 Amboise	26 Les Sables-Portet	38 Ste. Menehould	2 Rheinberg	14 Biebelshelm	26 Planegg
3 Attichy	15 Bourges	27 Castré	39 Mulzig	3 Wickrathburg	15 Bad Kreuznach	27 Babenhausen
4 Cherbourg	16 Soulac	28 LeVernet d'Ariege	40 Brumath	4 Köln	16 Mannheim	28 Bad Aibling
5 Delta Base	17 St. Médard-en-Jalles	29 Rivesaltes	41 Sarrebourg	5 Remagen	17 Würzburg	29 Gotha
6 Alençon	18 Gernignan	30 Marseille	42 Sarralbe	6 Sinzig	18 Heilbronn	30 Münster
7 Rennes	19 Andernos	31 Aubagne	43 Overjische	7 Bretzenheim	19 Neu Ulm	31 Bremen
8 Evrons	20 Daugnague	32 Mulhose & St. Louis	44 Metz	8 Andernach	20 Burgau	32 Aurich
9 Champagne	21 Plassac	33 Colmar	45 Stenay	9 Budesheim	21 Ingolstadt	
10 Orléans	22 Labouheyre	34 Langres	46 Erbiseul	10 Siershahn	22 Regensburg	
11 Thorée-les-Pins	23 Buglose	35 Brienne-le-Château	47 Mons	11 Bingen & Dietersheim	23 Augsburg	
12 Mulsanne	24 Bayonne Beyris	36 Mailly-le-Camp	48 Ostend	12 Ingelheim	24 Dachau	

Convention. The message, dated March 10, argues in part: *"The additional maintenance commitment entailed by declaring the German Armed Forces prisoners [sic] of war which would necessitate the provision of rations on a scale equal to that of base troops would prove far beyond the capacity of the Allies even if all German sources were tapped."* It ends: *"Your approval is requested. Existing plans have been prepared upon this basis."*

On April 26, 1945, the Combined Chiefs approved the DEF status for prisoners of war in American hands only: the British members had refused to adopt the American plan for their own prisoners. The Combined Chiefs stipulated that the status of disarmed troops be kept secret.

By that time, Eisenhower's quartermaster general at SHAEF, General Robert Littlejohn, had already twice reduced rations for prisoners, and a SHAEF message signed "Eisenhower" had reported to General George Marshall, the U.S. Army Chief of staff, that the prisoner pens would provide *"no shelter or other comforts...."*

The problem was not supplies. There was more than enough material stockpiled in Europe to construct prison camp facilities. Eisenhower's special assistant, general Everett Hughes, had visited the huge supply dumps at Naples and Marseille and reported: *"More stocks than we can ever use. Stretch as far as eye can see."* Food should not have been a problem, either. In the U.S., wheat and corn surpluses were higher than they had ever been, and there was a record crop of potatoes. The army itself had so much food in reserve that when a whole warehouse was dropped from the supply list by accident in England it was not noticed for three months. In addition, the International Red Cross had over 100,000 tons of food in storage in Switzerland. When it tried to send two trainloads of this to the American sector of Germany, U.S. Army Officers turned the trains back, saying their warehouses were already overflowing with ICRC food which they had never distributed.

Nonetheless it was through the supply side that the policy of deprivation was carried out. Water,

food, tents, space, medicine - everything necessary for the prisoners was kept fatally scarce. Camp Rheinberg, where Corporal Liebich would fetch up in mid-May, shivering with dysentery and typhus, had no food at all when it was opened on April 17. As in the other big "Rhine meadow" camps, opened by the Americans in mid-April, there were no guard towers, tents, buildings, cooking facilities, water, latrines, or food.

George Weiss, a tank repairman who now lives in Toronto, recalls of his camp on the Rhine: *"All night we had to sit up jammed against each other. But the lack of water was the worst thing of all. For three and a half days, we had no water at all. We would drink our own urine...."*

Private Heinz T. (his surname is withheld at his request) had just turned eighteen in hospital when the Americans walked into his ward on April 18. he and all his fellow patients were taken out to the camp at Bad Kreuzpath in the Rhineland, which already held several hundred thousand prisoners.

Heinz was wearing only a pair of shorts, shoes, and a shirt.

Heinz was far from the youngest in the camp, which also held thousands of displaced German civilians. there were children as young as six among the prisoners, as well as pregnant women, and men over sixty. At the beginning, when trees still grew in the camp, some men managed to cut off limbs to build a fire. the guards ordered the fire put out. In many of the enclosures, it was forbidden to dig holes in the ground for shelter. *"All we had to eat was grass,"* Heinz remembers.

Charles von Luttichau was convalescing at home when he decided to surrender voluntarily to US troops about to occupy his house. He was taken to Camp Kripp, on the Rhine near Remagen.

Work crews removed dog tags, stripped the bodies, and stacked them in layers interbedded with quicklime

"We were kept in crowded barbed wire cages in the open with scarcely any food," he recalled recently. "More than half the days we had no food at all. On the rest, we got a little K ration. I could see from the package that they were giving us one-tenth of the rations that they issued to their own men.... I complained to the American camp commander that he was breaking the Geneva Convention, but he just said, 'Forget the Convention. You haven't any rights.'"

"The latrines were just logs flung over ditches next to the barbed-wire fences. Because of illness, the men had to defecate on the ground. Soon, many of us were too weak to take our trousers off first. So our clothing was infected, and so was the mud where we had to walk and sit and lie down. In these conditions, our men very soon started to die. Within a few days, some of the men who had gone healthy into the camp were dead. I saw our men dragging many bodies to the gate of the camp, where they were thrown loose on top of each other onto trucks, which took them away."

Von Luttichau's mother was American and he later emigrated to Washington, D.C., where he be-

came a historian and wrote a military history for the U.S. Army. he was in the Kripp camp for about three months.

Wolfgang Iff, who was imprisoned at Rheinberg and still lives in Germany, reports that, in his subsection of perhaps 10,000 prisoners, thirty to fifty bodies were dragged out every day. A member of the burial work party, Iff says he helped haul the dead from his cage out to the gate of the camp, where the bodies were carried by wheel barrow to several big steel garages. There Iff and his team stripped the corpses of clothing, snapped off half of their aluminium dog tag, spread the bodies in layers of fifteen to twenty, with ten shovelfuls of quicklime over each layer till they were stacked a metre high, placed the personal effects in a bag for the Americans, then left. Some of the corpses were dead of gangrene following frostbite. (It was an unusually wet, cold spring.) A dozen or more others had grown too weak to cling to the log flung across the ditch for a latrine, and had fallen off and drowned.

The conditions in the American camps along the Rhine in late April were observed by two colonels in the U.S. Army Medical Corps, James Mason and Charles Beasley, who described them in a paper published in 1950: *"Huddled close together for warmth, behind the barbed wire was a most awesome sight - nearly 100,000 haggard, apathetic, dirty, gaunt, blank-staring men clad in dirty field grey uniforms, and standing ankle-deep in mud.... The German Divisions Commander reported that the men had not eaten for at least two days, and the provisions of water was a major problem - yet only 200 yards away was the River Rhine running bankfull."*

On May 4, 1945, the first German prisoners of war in U.S. hands were transferred to DEF status. The same day, the U.S. war Department banned mail to or from the prisoners. (when the International Committee of the Red Cross suggested a plan for restoring mail in June, it was rejected.)

On May 8, V-E Day, the German government was abolished and, simultaneously, the U.S. State Department dismissed Switzerland as the protecting power for the German prisoners. (Prime Minister Mackenzie King of Canada protested to the foreign Office in London the parallel removal of the Swiss as protecting power in British-Canadian camps, but was squelched for his pains.) With this done, the State Department informed the International Red Cross that, since there was no protecting power to report to, there was no longer and point in visiting the camps.

From then on, prisoners held by the US Army had no access to any impartial observer, nor could they receive food parcels, clothing, or medicines from any relief agency, or letters from their kin.

General George Patton's US Third Army was the only army in the whole European theatre to free significant numbers of captives during May, saving many of them from probable death. Bothe Omar Bradley and General J.C.H. Lee, Commander Communications Zone (Com Z) Europe, ordered a release of prisoners within a week of the war's end, but a SHAEF order signed "Eisenhower" countermanded them on May 15.

That same day, according to a minute of their meeting, General Eisenhower and Prime Minister Churchill talked about reducing prisoner rations. Churchill asked for an agreement on the scale of rations for prisoners, because he would soon have to announce cuts in the British meat ration and wanted to make sure that the prisoners *"as far as possible ... should be fed on those supplies which we could best spare."* Eisenhower replied that he had already *"given the matter considerable attention,"* but was planning to re-examine the whole thing to see *"whether or not a further reduction was possible."* He told Churchill that POWs had been getting 2,200 calories a day. (The US Army medical Corps