

(Private.)

JANUARY 15, 1918.

14351-4.1.

Op. 28.

From: Secretary of the Navy.

To: The Surgeon General, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

Subject: Transportation of sick and wounded of American Expeditionary Forces.

1. Please confer with the Surgeon General of the Army, as requested by the Secretary of War in the above letter, to make the necessary arrangements to put the matter of the joint use of naval hospital ships into effect.

2. Return papers.

(Signed) JOSEPHUS DANIELS.

14351-4.1.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, January 15, 1918.

To: Chief of Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

Subject: Transportation of sick and wounded of American Expeditionary Forces from Europe to United States.

Inclosure: One.

1. Forwarded herewith for your information is a memorandum from the Chief of Staff United States Army, to the Chief of Naval Operations.

2. In accordance with the last paragraph of this memorandum, you will confer with the Surgeon General of the Army with a view to making such recommendations as you believe necessary in order that all questions involved in this memorandum and in previous correspondence on the same subject may be definitely settled.

3. Attention is particularly invited to the previous correspondence and to the department's eleventh inclosure of January 22, 1918, a copy of which was furnished you, which outlines clearly the policy which the department approves and upon which action must be based.

(Signed) JOSEPHUS DANIELS.

(Private.)

129028

FEBRUARY 7, 1918.

To: Secretary of the Navy.

Subject: Transportation of sick and wounded of American Expeditionary Forces from Europe to United States.

1. As directed in 14351-4.1, Op-28-B, January 28, 1918, a conference was held with the Surgeon General of the Army, and the following recommendations are submitted:

(a) That the hospital ships *Bassac* and *Beep* should be considered as entirely unavailable for Army purposes as "sick transports." Their total capacity is relatively very small, and it is believed that they will be completely occupied with their function of accompanying mobile units of the fleet as medical supply ships and for the care of the sick and wounded of the Navy.

(b) That Navy transports now in service at present, it is believed, will suffice for bringing back large numbers of certain types of cases requiring nominal medical care and nursing; in short, cases not confined to bed. A limited number of bed cases, under proper conditions for their care and comfort, can be returned in the sick bays of these ships. However, the number of such cases will be limited by the number of beds available after the Navy sick and the sick of troops in transit are taken care of. It has been a fact on every Navy transport making the eastward trip to date that the sick from the troops in transit overflowed the sick-bay accommodations. These Navy transports, however, are already engaged in bringing back to the United States Army cases of various types. The Army Medical Department delivers these patients to the medical officer on the transport at the port in Europe. Upon arrival at a port in the United States the surgeon of the port (Army) takes charge of transportation of patients from the transport and their subsequent care.

(c) That to take care of the more serious cases (bed cases), contingent on casualties, which may be expected to reach thousands in number, and the urgent need which will develop to relieve the hospitals in France in order that they may be ready for further casualties following another extensive engagement, it is considered absolutely necessary that there be furnished a number of hospital ships or "sick transports." It is considered as a conservative estimate that six ships