

Authorities agree that we may expect 25 per cent battle casualties, and the commanding general, American Expeditionary Forces, estimates that 20 per cent of these casuals will be returned to the United States. Therefore, 7 per cent of the forces overseas must be expected to return to this country each year. Fifty per cent of those returning will need sick-bay or special accommodations en route.

5. The above figures are substantiated by the Canadian experiences.

6. The available accommodations on Navy transports will be inadequate to meet the needs, meaning that the entire fleet will make one round trip a month, and its maximum accommodations would be available for Army use. An impossible conclusion.

7. The position taken by the commanding general, American Expeditionary Forces, that the number and kind of patients to be evacuated to the United States must, from necessity, be a matter to be determined by him, is concurred in in this office.

8. It is recommended that the Surgeon General of the Army be authorized to require six ambulance ships of 10,000 tons each; plans and specifications of which should be submitted later. These ships should be purchased from funds of the Medical Department of the Army and operated solely under its jurisdiction and under the protection of the Geneva Convention. The six ships to be delivered at equal intervals between now and July 1, 1918.

9. A copy of the correspondence is hereto appended.

(Signed) W. C. GUSTAF,
Surgeon General, U. S. Army.

5414 K. E. (Misc. Div.)
WAR DEPARTMENT,
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, July 2, 1918.

From: The Adjutant General of the Army.

To: The Surgeon General.

Subject: Hospital ships.

1. The Secretary of War directs me to inform you that your request made in paragraph 8 of your first inclosure (S. G. O. 721A, patients overseas, June 1, 1918, for authority to require six ambulance ships of 10,000 tons each, plans and specifications of which would be submitted later, to be purchased from funds of the Medical Department of the Army and operated solely under its jurisdiction and under the protection of the Geneva Convention, said ships to be delivered at equal intervals between now and July 1, 1918, is disapproved.

2. It is believed that satisfactory arrangements now exist between the Army and Navy for the evacuation of the sick and wounded of our overseas forces, and in the face of the present shortage of commercial bottoms, they should be transported on transports and the naval hospital ships, until the four 10,000-ton ships, which the Embarkation Service has asked the Emergency Fleet to provide through its building program of new construction required before December 31, 1918, and which the Emergency Fleet Corporation has agreed to do, are furnished and ready for service.

3. The handling and control of such ships is clearly an Embarkation Service problem.

4. If the Surgeon General of the Army desires to submit any special plans and specifications to be considered in connection with the construction of the hospital ships referred to, same should be furnished the Embarkation Service at the earliest possible date.

By order of the Secretary of War:

(Signed) PAUL GIBBONS,
Adjutant General.

1 inch.

R. G. O. 121, 4 patients from overseas, Hoboken, N. J. (N).

War Dept., S. G. O., July 28, 1918. To the Embarkation Branch of the Purchase, Storage, and Traffic Division of the General Staff.

1. Returned.

2. Under the agreement the Navy is charged with the care of patients en route to the United States. In compliance with cable request, A. E. F., under date of July 23, it was requested that permanent sanitary personnel of the Army be assigned to these transports.