

FLEET READY AT HONG KONG

Prisoner Lists To be Speeded

By COL. R. S. MALONE (Public Relations Chief, Canadian Army)

ATSUGI AIRFIELD, NEAR TOKYO, Aug. 30.—(CP)—The fastest possible means will be provided to transmit the names of prisoners released by Allied occupation of Japan. Latest reports indicate the prisoners may be in better condition than first thought.

As quickly as possible lists giving the bare fact that the prisoner is safe in Allied hands will be rushed by air courier to Manila where the recovered persons office has wireless facilities to dispatch names for all Allied governments.

After 24 hours, when the governments have a chance to notify next-of-kin, the names will be released to press representatives in the theatre. Further details regarding the health and condition of the prisoners will follow later by official channels when processing is possible.

Canadian and other Empire prisoners will be moved as soon as possible to Manila where the Empire section has been established in a portion of a large camp under the U.S. replacement depot. All possible arrangements and facilities have been

arranged for prisoner reception there. A teleprinter will enable prisoners to send short personal messages to next-of-kin and air mail forms will be available.

A team of Canadian personnel is on hand in this camp to assist in handling and processing Canadian prisoners. Several weeks likely will be required for outfitting, medical attention, sorting, interrogating and so forth before dispatch of the prisoners homeward is possible.

Splitting up our Canadian party a few days ago, Cmdr. Peter MacRitchie of Toronto, naval public relations officer, William Stewart, Canadian Press war correspondent and a naval photographer headed for Hong Kong in a Canadian ship to obtain early reports on Canadian internees and circumstances there.

Col. M. W. McA'Nulty of Sher-
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PRISONERS' LIST

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brooke, Que., is expected to arrive in Manila shortly in charge of Canadian repatriation. It is possible Canadian Hong Kong prisoners may be evacuated via Manila also.

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Writing from the H.M.S. Indomitable, one of a large force of British warships lying off Hong Kong today, C.P. War Correspondent Stewart said the fleet was awaiting reply to messages asking the Japanese commander to get in touch with it. The ships bear succor for an estimated 6,000 war prisoners and internees, including 300 Canadians, who fell into enemy hands when the Crown colony surrendered Christmas Day, 1941.

One of these ships is the H.M. C.S. Prince Robert, former flagship of the Canadian National Steamship's Pacific coast fleet, which is carrying medical supplies, food and clothing for the prisoners.

Messages to the Japanese were dropped Wednesday by aircraft in command of Admiral C. H. J. Harcourt, aboard the Indomitable. Planes from this force flew reconnaissance over Hong Kong and Kowloon yesterday.

The 4,000 war prisoners, including the Canadians, are believed to be in camps in the Kowloon area on the Chinese mainland and the 2,000 civilian internees are at Stanley camp on Hong Kong island.

Canadian prisoners at Hong Kong are members of the Royal Rifles of Canada, the Winnipeg Grenadiers and a brigade headquarters. In all about 1,985 men with these three units fought at Hong Kong. After surrender the Japanese reported they took 1,689 prisoners. It has been officially assumed that 296 Canadians were killed or missing in the fighting.

Meanwhile the external affairs department at Ottawa said Wednesday it had learned from an Allied source that 19 Canadians, all members of religious orders, have been reported alive in Peiping.