

DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Obeying the signed international agreements designates basic rules in relations between countries. It is the reflection of executed politics and to a large extent creates an image of a country and authorities representing it. Breaching by the Soviet side the basic records of the treaty regarding mutual repatriation was not only a reflection of the USSR authorities' politics towards the American ally but also inscribed into an exacerbating conflict, which after the end of military activities degenerated into the Cold War. Additionally, a common lack of performance of duties accepted regarding the issue of liabilities, showed the attitude of Soviet authorities towards liberated captives and civilians – both their own citizens and foreigners.

Poland played an important role in the repatriation of the Americans during 1944–1945. Firstly, because of the military units located on its territory, which were the place of concentration of liberated from German captivity USA army soldiers and civilian internees; secondly, because of the significant help provided to the Americans by the Polish Red Cross and the Poles living in the areas neighboring with the military units.

The aim of the project is to research the repatriation of American war captives and civilian internees, liberated between 1944–1945 from German captivity by the Red Army, who within the framework of repatriation procedures operative at that time, were kept on the territory of Poland in military units subservient to Plenipotentiary Board of the Council of People's Commissioners of USSR for Repatriation (all liberated, both war captives and civilians were first to be gathered in front camps and military commands – the first concentration place, and after organizing bigger transports sent to Odessa, where they were handed over to representatives of allied headquarters or appropriate organs of particular countries). What will undergo the research will be formal–legal rules of organization and coordination of the repatriation process, including long-standing negotiations led by representatives of the top political and military authorities of both countries; the role and activity of organs responsible directly for executing repatriation; fulfilling the accepted obligations by both sides; commands and camps of Plenipotentiary Board functioning on the territory of Poland including the characteristics of living, sanitary and medical conditions in them; the scale and type of help provided by the Polish Red Cross and the Poles towards the Americans held in them. Apart from the above-mentioned exploratory questions, the analysis conducted will also aim at characteristics of American contingents in particular military units, taking into account a few constituents: the place of liberation, the time spent in captivity, the age, military ranks, functions performed, military units. What will also undergo the research will be the organization of transports to Odessa, the attitude of Soviet soldiers and representatives of Plenipotentiary Board towards the repatriated and the role of Soviet political police in the repatriation process of the Americans.

What advocates the realization of the proposed research is in the first instance the necessity to fulfil a significant gap in Polish, American and Russian historiography. Until now, there has been no study nor an article devoted to the repatriation of American soldiers and civilians from Soviet units located on Polish territory. Additionally, because of a varied and interdisciplinary character of the research, its results will present unknown until now countenance of American–Soviet relations in the years of the Second World War, will establish new adjudication regarding issues of treating war captives and civilians during an armed conflict, as well as coapt an unknown fragment of Polish history during its groundbreaking years 1944–1945. A very important argument for this direction of the research is the fact that there exists a wide source base in a form of unused till now archival repertory.