



# America's Foreign Legionnaires:

The Lodge Act Soldiers –  
Part I

by Charles H. Briscoe

*Private Andre V. Carson  
visited the Statue of  
Liberty on weekend pass  
from basic training at  
Fort Dix, NJ.*

After World War II, some fourteen million refugees formed a huge stateless population in Western Europe. The Western Allies simply referred to them collectively as “displaced persons,” or “DPs.” Many released prisoners of war (POWs) trying to get home or into Western zones of Germany chose to join the population Diaspora. To provide the stability necessary for postwar economic recovery, Western Allies resettled or repatriated the bulk of them between 1945 and 1947. However, a large East European population refused to return to their Soviet-occupied countries. These people filled DP camps throughout West Germany.<sup>1</sup> A U.S. senator who had seen how foreign units had been integrated into the German and Russian militaries envisioned the creation of similar postwar units in West Germany.<sup>2</sup>

Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., the Republican junior senator from Massachusetts, had been pushing to form a Volunteer Freedom Corps (VFC) since 1948. A VFC, filled with stateless males, would serve as a bulwark against Communism in Europe. Although some American legislators perceived its merit, postwar Western European governments regarded it as a possible economic burden and potential threat. Interest at home was not that great either.

The first and only step towards a VFC was passed by Congress on 30 June 1950, five days after North Korea invaded the South. The initial act [the Lodge-Philbin Act (U.S. Public Law 597, 81<sup>st</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session), referred to as the Lodge Act] authorized the voluntary enlistment of 2,500 unmarried foreign national males in the U.S. Army.<sup>3</sup> This act provided more than a hundred Eastern European soldiers to Army Special Forces and Psychological Warfare units between 1951 and 1955.<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of this first installment of a two-part article is to explain the Lodge Act, to show why enlistment goals were not met, to describe the recruiting, testing, selection, enlistment and preparation for service in Army replacement centers in Germany, and the shipment of the alien enlisted soldiers to the United States for basic recruit training. Very few of the Eastern European native speakers in Special Forces (SF) in the early days were Lodge Act men. Little more than 100 of the more than 800 recruited under the Lodge Act served in SF.<sup>5</sup> Timing was poor for several reasons: the postwar world was split by an ideological Cold War that would last more than forty years; America was in the throes of an anti-Communist Red Scare and war in Korea; and the military was slowly complying with a presidential order to racially integrate.

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◀ A Red Scare swept the United States in the early 1950s.



## Lodge Act & Family Contributors

John C. Anderson\*  
(*Karlis Borovskis*)

Peter V. Astalos

Bronislaw Binas

Andre V. Carson\*  
(*Andrej Vasilev*)

Paul Ettman

Karel Fux

John F. Gordon\*  
(*Woloszyn Wojciech*)

Rudolf C. Horvath

Vaclav Hradecky

Frank Jaks\*  
(*Frantisek Jaks*)

John Koenig

Frank Kokosza\*  
(*Franciszek Kokosza*)

Henry M. Kwiatkowski

Clarene C. Mann

Josef Masin

Stanley Minkinow\*  
(*Stanislaw Minkinorow*)

Teodor W. Padalinski

Anthony Pilarczyk

Julius Reinitzer

Stanley Skowron\*  
(*Stanislaw Skowrovy*)

Walter J. Smith\*  
(*Wladyslaw J. Naumowicz*)

Henryk Szarek

George S. Taylor\*  
(*Ryszard J. Tayler*)

Martin Urich

Jan Wiatr

Lucien Zochowski\*  
(*Lucjan Zochowski*)

\*Changed name.

▶ Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. was the driving force behind alien enlistment in the U.S. Army in the early 1950s.



Like many Congressionally-mandated programs, alien enlistment got lukewarm support from the Pentagon and Army commanders in Europe. Army Regulation (AR) 601-249, *Alien Enlistment*, provided general guidance to enlist 2,500 Eastern European males.<sup>6</sup> Because recruiting was a mission of the Army Adjutant General (AG), the U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) AG was given the task. That headquarters staff element instituted an enlistment process that was based on individual applications by alien volunteers. Advertisement became the responsibility of the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) and USAREUR Public Information Offices (PIO). The foreign labor service units supporting the American and British forces in Germany and France were the easiest to target for recruits.<sup>7</sup>

Although two-thirds of the postwar American labor force hired in Germany and Austria were natives, the U.S. Army also managed labor service (LS) elements of displaced Polish, Latvian, Czech, Lithuanian, Estonian, Albanian, and Bulgarian males, trained and organized as paramilitary guard, engineer, transportation, and public health medical units by nationality.<sup>8</sup> In northern Germany, the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) recruited aliens, like Henry M. Kwiatkowski from Poland, for its



▶ \*John C. Anderson (left) served in the Latvian Labor Service in Ludwigsburg, Germany.

▼ Baltic Labor Service Commemorative and Honor Insignia worn by Georgs Liepens, 8920 Labor Service Company in November 1949.



auxiliary service units.<sup>9</sup> The first step was to distribute bulletin board notices to the U.S. Army personnel in charge of the LS units in Germany and France.

Vaclav Hradecky from Bilenice, Czechoslovakia, was assisted by his labor service unit commander, Captain (CPT) Karel Cerny, a WWII Czech Army major, and CPT Price, the U.S. Army advisor. Price's secretary, who spoke Czech, typed up Hradecky's application.<sup>10</sup> \*George S. Taylor, Poznan, Poland, had the program explained to him by LT Merritt from Texas. He helped Taylor with his application and arranged the CIC (Counter-Intelligence Corps) interview.<sup>11</sup> Frantisek "Frank" Jaks from Jablonc, Czechoslovakia, was in a LS unit in Nuremberg, Germany, waiting approval to emigrate to Australia, when he applied for enlistment.<sup>12</sup> Not everyone who wanted to join the U.S. Army received support from their LS chain of command.

"When I got back to France [after taking the entrance exams in Germany], I discovered that my Labor Service lieutenant had charged me as AWOL [absent without leave]," said Jan Wiatr from Welnowiez, Poland. "But CPT Sanders, an American officer of Polish descent who had befriended me, smoothed that over. However a month

▲ Private Frank Jaks performing guard duty at the main gate of the Czech 7991st Labor Service Detachment, 4091st LSC, Nuremberg, Germany, in 1952. Shown above is the shoulder patch of the Czech Labor Service units working for the U.S. Army in Germany.



▲ Henry Kwiatkowski stands on the elevated boardwalk between the LS living tents at Captieu, France. The cantonment grounds turned into a veritable mud hole when it rained.



▲ Teodor Padalinski with the Polish Labor Service Company in Captieu, France.



▲ Jan Wiatr is among these 4011th Polish Labor Service Company volunteers from Kaiserslautern, Germany, that came to Captieu, France.





▲ Private Henryk Szarek (right rear) with fellow French Foreign Legion paratroopers in Hanoi in 1951.



▲ Private Henryk Szarek shakes hands with the 307th Replacement Group (EUCOM) commander before leaving Zweibrucken with five other Lodge Act enlistees for Camp Grohn in Bremen.

later when I got the letter to report to Sonthofen for in-processing into the U.S. Army, that lieutenant really went crazy. CPT Sanders ignored his protests and even had his driver take me to Sonthofen in the staff car. I left Captieu 'in style.' I found out later that four guys from my platoon in France, were accepted," laughed Wiatr. "That's why he was so mad."<sup>13</sup>

A few months after applying, Henryk "Frenchie" Szarek got a letter from USAREUR headquarters to report to the 4097<sup>th</sup> Polish LS Battalion in Pirmasens, Germany, to demonstrate his suitability for military service. After two months guarding ammunition bunkers and motor pools in a blue dyed Army enlisted man's uniform, the ex-French Foreign Legion paratrooper and Indochina veteran finally gave the American captain in charge an ultimatum: "If I'm not accepted for U.S. Army enlistment in two weeks, I'm quitting [the LS unit] and going back to France. I didn't come here to pull guard in a 'fireman's uniform.'"<sup>14</sup> Recruiting and selection from LS units was not sufficient to fill the requirement for 2,500 single Eastern European men.

The USAREUR PIO extended their advertising campaign to Austria, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg, in 1951. Press releases and news film clips were sent to European and Allied-approved German and Austrian newspapers, news magazines, and to movie theaters. The semi-monthly *HUETE*, a German photo magazine, and the monthly news magazine, *Der Monat*, produced by EUCOM contained articles on Lodge Act enlistment.<sup>15</sup> The notices did produce some results.

Polish volunteer \*Stanley Minkinow saw a poster in the Munich train station.<sup>16</sup> A news clip about the Volunteer Freedom Corps showing in a local movie theater got the attention of Peter V. Astalos from Cernauti, Romania working in a German coal mine in the British zone, and \*Stanley Skowron from Podgorzc, Poland working in a Dutch coal mine in Limburg. Teodor Padalinski, another



▲ The Coal Miner's Diploma of Honor awarded to \*Stanley Skowron in Limburg, Holland.

▼ Logos of Voice of America and Radio Free Europe.







▲ This cartoon from a Polish newspaper depicts children being sent to Germany as farm laborers.

Pole from Zyrardow learned of the Lodge Act program in 1950, working in Holland. "But, no specifics for application were given; no address, nothing. It wasn't until I joined a Polish Labor Service unit in France that I got any specifics."<sup>17</sup> Latvian \*John C. Anderson had emigrated to Belgium in 1947 to work three years in the coal mines to get citizenship. When the government reneged on its promise, Anderson returned to Germany to join a LS Company in Ludwigsburg. There, he applied for enlistment and was in the second group.<sup>18</sup> *Voice of America* and *Radio Free Europe* explained the Lodge Act incentives to Eastern Europeans listening covertly. Rudolf "Rudi" G. Horvath heard a *Voice of America* broadcast in Budapest, Hungary.<sup>19</sup> But the men not working for the U.S. military had a more difficult time applying for enlistment.

Because Lodge Act recruiting was a staff-managed program, it did not receive command emphasis from Army leaders and the chain of command. After swimming the Danube River at Linz, Austria, to escape in July 1950, Rudi Horvath spent months trying to locate an American soldier in Munich who knew anything about the program. He could not find one of the "special recruiting offices opened in the U.S. zone that processed some 2,600 applicants by September 1951."<sup>20</sup> By then the quota had been raised to 12,500. Horvath finally found a clerk typist who had heard about it. "He was working late, so I asked him to type up an application for me. When he said that he did not have the required form, I suggested that he improvise using a standard request form with my personal data and add that I was applying for enlistment under the Lodge Act. When he was done, the clerk agreed to send the 'doctored up' form to Heidelberg for me," said Horvath.<sup>21</sup> Then, Rudi returned to washing the cars of American servicemen to survive. Other young men were more fortunate.

\*Andre Carson from Löm, Bulgaria, was in his final semester at the University of Munich when the U.S. Army colonel in charge of the supply depot asked him about his future plans. After the American officer explained the Lodge Act enlistment incentives, Carson decided to apply. His emigration to Australia like that

of Czech Frank Jaks was still in process.<sup>22</sup> John Koenig from Yugoslavia was working in the heating plant of the American *kaserne* in Hoescht, Germany. The officer in charge of the facility, Warrant Officer Senior Grade (CWO) Mussard from Massachusetts took him to the Army Test Station in Frankfurt.<sup>23</sup> Still, "getting the word out" in Western Europe was only part of the enlistment problem.

Unbeknownst to most applicants, the Army Counter Intelligence Corp. (CIC) was conducting security investigations. How long these background checks took depended on how long the applicant had been living in Western Europe. Obviously, life behind the Iron Curtain could not be investigated. "Street work" for investigations required time and was not a high priority for State and Defense Departments that were being rocked by the Red Scare.<sup>24</sup>

"Background investigations were done to determine if parents, relatives, or friends were associated with the Communist Party. CIC agents acted like there was a 'Commie' behind every bush," remembered Czech Vaclav Hradecky. "My German identification (ID) card listed me as Yugoslavian. Still, the CIC talked with the Austrian farmer that my family worked for during the war," said John Koenig.<sup>25</sup> "The German farmer in Kleinhirschbach where I had done forced labor for two years was questioned," said \*Walter J. Smith from Majdan, Poland.<sup>26</sup> It was a bit different for Julius "Bear" Reinitzer from Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Reinitzer used a "blue chip" with the CIC. After escaping in late 1949, he accepted a job secreting agents across the border for them. On his third trip he was caught after the agent was wounded. Reinitzer was sentenced to 14 years of hard labor in the Kachomvich, Czechoslovakia uranium mine. After two unsuccessful attempts, the "Bear" finally got away and reached West Germany on 22 June 1952. CIC arranged for the aptitude tests in Munich.<sup>27</sup> But his case was atypical.



▲ U.S. Army Corporal Henry Chludzinski (left), a Polish speaker, was detailed to assist Lodge Act applicants at the Mannheim Army Test Center in 1950. \*George S. Taylor (right in his 4088th Polish Labor Service Company uniform) was an applicant for Army enlistment. When Taylor was accepted in mid-October 1951, he had already served five years with the Polish LS in Germany.

Another problem that plagued the administrators was determining appropriate aptitude tests for the alien applicants. Unlike in the United States, schooling was interrupted for most children in occupied European countries for seven years. Thus, the majority of candidates had not graduated high school. It was several months before “approved” applicants received a letter to report to an Army Test Station. Those rejected for security reasons never got a response.<sup>28</sup>

The aptitude tests and qualification criteria for aliens proved to be a “work in progress” for the five-year duration of the Lodge Act enlistment program. Determining which military aptitude test to administer was tough for Army Test Centers in Europe. The first group was given the exams for Officer Candidate School. Topics ranged from mathematics, science, and basic geography to English grammar and reading comprehension. The tests were in English. Since what little English most applicants knew was spoken, German-speaking U.S. soldiers were provided to assist. Unfortunately, every candidate did not speak German.<sup>29</sup>

“The first part of testing there was a lot of sign language being used for instructions. All exams were extremely tough and there were time limits. When there were multiple choices for answers and true/false questions, I gambled to complete on time,” remembered Rudi Horvath. “Mathematics and science are universal languages so my high scores in them probably balanced the low English reading test results. That’s how I think that I passed.”<sup>30</sup> Frank Jaks, a Czech, reached the same conclusion.<sup>31</sup>

At the end of the first part, about two-thirds were retained for the second battery of tests. By the third battery, only fifteen remained from the original group of fifty. And when these few were told to return to their LS units or civilian jobs, most departed not knowing whether they had passed or failed the entrance exams.<sup>32</sup> EUCOM reported that alien enlistees made scores on the Armed Forces qualification tests comparable to those of American high school graduates.<sup>33</sup> “How I passed I’ll never know because as a child, my father took me out of school in my fifth year. Since I could write my name



▲ COL Foster, the Replacement Group commander, met some of the new recruits at the Zweibrücken train station. The overnight valises and thick briefcases were referred to as “schnitzel” bags by the East Europeans. ▶ Private Frank Kokosza poses in his new uniform with the U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) shoulder patch worn by the Lodge Act enlistees in Germany.



▲ Private \*John C. Anderson and the second group of Lodge Act soldiers assembled in front of the EUCOM 7720th Replacement Depot in Sonthofen.



▲ \*Walter J. Smith did forced labor in Germany during WWII before joining the U.S. Army.



▼ Sonthofen Kaserne with the Bavarian Alps in the background.



▶▶ 4194th (Bad Wildungen) and 6950th Polish Labor Service unit discharge papers issued to Bronislaw Binas dated 10 April 1947 and 4 February 1952.

**Certificate of Discharge**  
ARMED LABOR SERVICE

This is to certify that: **Pl. Binas, Bronislaw** having served honorably and faithfully in the labor service of the US Army, Europe, as a soldier, for a period of **37** months, in discharge of **WARREN FRANKLIN**, was released from the **4194 Labor Service Company (AO) Post 7 5400 F 15, Bad Wildungen, DM 43** on the following conditions: (a) **Time: 30 days, regular.**

**IDENTIFICATION DATA**

Date of Birth: **14 Feb 1908** Nationality: **Polish** Race: **White**

Height: **5'8"** Color of Hair: **Brown** Eyes: **Blue**

Weight: **140** Color of Skin: **Medium** Complexion: **Fairly**

**PERSONAL DATA**

1. The above named individual was paid in full the date of discharge, his collection has been paid in full for all periods while in the service of the US Army.

2. US INSURANCE CHECK NUMBER: **N/A** in the amount of \$ **0.00**

3. **N/A** has been issued for the Pension Office. The amount is **N/A** in accordance with **N/A** under applicable regulations of the **N/A**

**4194 LABOR SERVICE COMPANY DETACHMENT**  
BAD WILDUNGEN - TELEF. 110

4194 Labor Service Company  
DETACHMENT, Bad Wildungen  
Telefon 110

I certify that **Pl. Binas, Bronislaw** on **10 April 1947** is today discharged from **4194 Labor Service Co** upon his own request.

He is being discharged **in order to Rejoin**.

**Signature: Bronislaw Binas**  
Commanding Officer  
1st Lt. **1947**

I certify that **Pl. Binas, Bronislaw** on **10 April 1947** during that four month being in **4194 Lab Serv Co Detachment Bad Wildungen** was a very good hard worker.

He has not been punished and is very reliable.

**Signature: J. Mann**  
Commanding Officer  
1st Lt. **1947**



▶ 2LT Clarence C. "Larry" Mann, 307th Replacement Battalion was the alien enlistee company commander at Sonthofen and Camp Grohn from December 1951 until June 1953. 2LT Larry Mann's wife, Joan (right), was nicknamed the "Coca Cola Lady" by the Lodge Act soldiers.



**UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE**  
**LABOR SERVICES AGENCY**

**The Polish Labor Service Commemorative Badge**

is awarded to

**Sergeant Major EDMUND S. TELLER**

United States Army

in appreciation of his cooperation and assistance rendered the Polish Labor Service Units of the United States Army, Europe

**EDMUND WITWICKI**  
Polish Liaison Director

No. 10002

▶ Anthony Pilarczyk served in the Free Polish Brigade in Nuremberg-Fischbach, Germany, from December 1945 to February 1946. ▶ This commemorative certificate shows the postwar Polish Labor Service insignia.

and do basic arithmetic, he figured that was enough education for a farmer," said Walter J. Smith (Wladyslaw J. Naumowicz) from Majdan, Poland.<sup>34</sup>

By the time Andre Carson took the "entrance" exam it was being offered in English and German.<sup>35</sup> When Vaclav Hradecky took his examinations in Munich in mid-1952, applicants could choose a Russian, French, German, or English version. "I took mine in Russian because I understood that better than German," remembered the Czech applicant.<sup>36</sup> It was late fall of 1951 before the first acceptable Lodge Act applicants assembled in Sonthofen, Germany, after their initial in-processing at the 7720<sup>th</sup> Replacement Battalion (EUCOM).

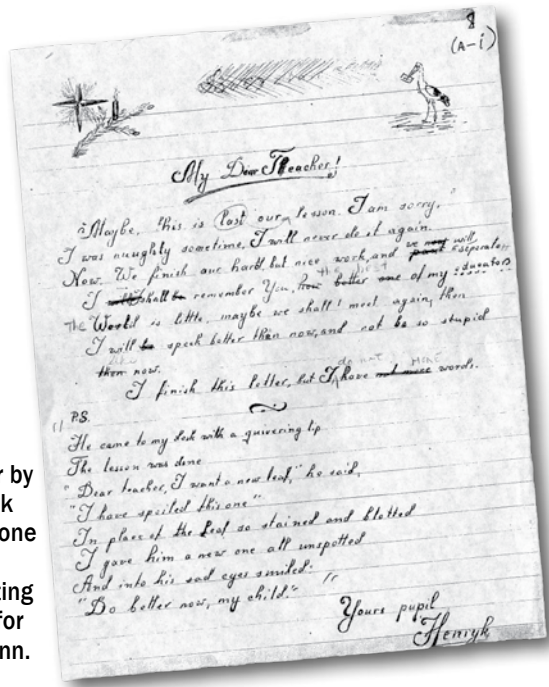
Sonthofen was located in the Bavarian Alps in southern Germany. "Picturesque would be an understatement. The facility had been an SS officer candidate school. The barracks were more like a hotel with two to four men per

room with their own bathroom. Many rooms had balconies and views of the mountains. The mess hall was in an adjacent building. The alien recruits were fed standard American fare. Daily formations were held in an enclosed quadrangle," recalled Second Lieutenant (2LT) Clarence C. "Larry" Mann, the company commander.<sup>37</sup>

Receiving the letter to report to Sonthofen in October 1951 was the "happiest moment in my life. I had been bumping around in Western Europe since I had escaped Poland in 1946," said Anthony J. Pilarczyk.<sup>38</sup> Like Martin Urich from Filibovo, Yugoslavia, who served in the 9<sup>th</sup> Panzer Division, Ex-Flag Sergeant Peter V. Astalos, one of the few Romanian volunteers, had also been a Panzer tank commander on the Russian Front. "If it hadn't been for the U.S. Army, it would have been the French Foreign Legion. I learned to love freedom and democracy later, but at that time, my primary motivation was to be a soldier again," stated Astalos.<sup>39</sup> The U.S. Army replacement personnel at Sonthofen were pleased with the motivation and high quality of the Lodge Act recruits.

2LT Larry Mann, who spoke German and some French, expected orders to Korea after graduating from New York University (Bronx) in June 1951. Instead, the infantry officer was sent to Sonthofen, Germany, to command a replacement company with two sections instead of platoons: one section was Iron Curtain country refugees who volunteered for five years in the U.S. Army in return for American citizenship; and the other, a modified basic training section was for U.S. military male dependents. "We operated a kind of military prep school for military-age sons of





▶ This letter by Private Henryk Szarek was done as an English language writing requirement for Mrs. Joan Mann.



▲ New Lodge Act enlistees try on their new combat boots as the supply sergeant of the replacement center watches.



▲ Private Vaclav Hradecky with his English instructors at Camp Grohn, Bremen, Germany in 1952



▲ The Sonthofen barracks covered in deep snow.

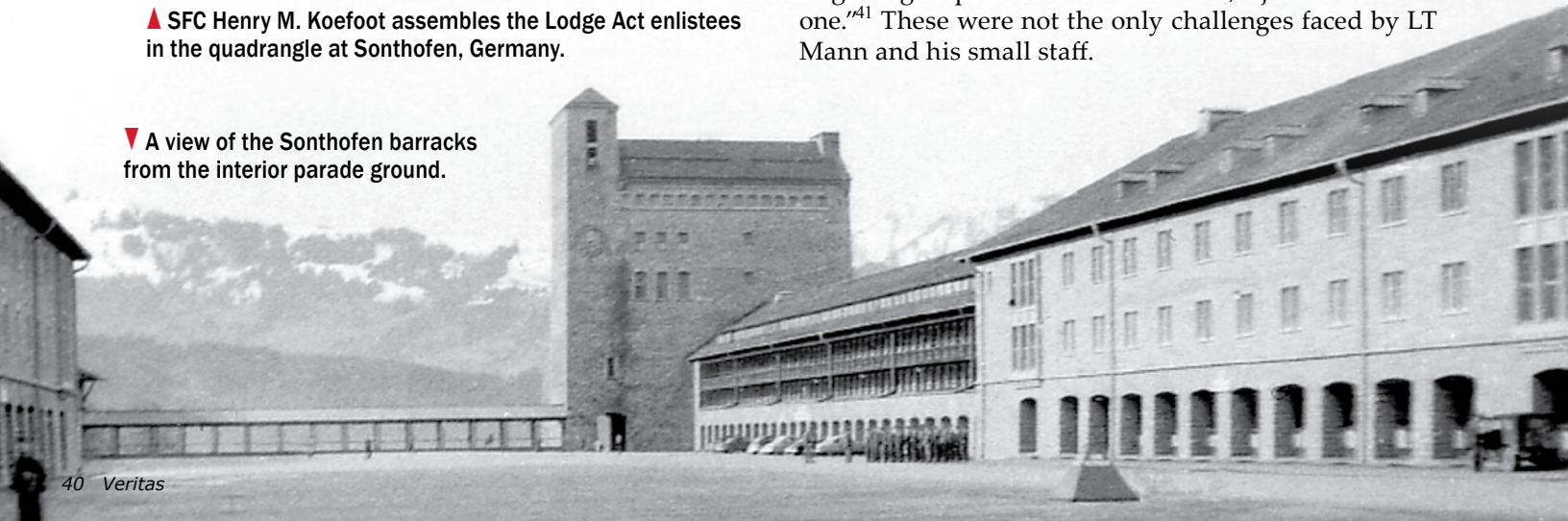


▲ SFC Henry M. Koefoot assembles the Lodge Act enlistees in the quadrangle at Sonthofen, Germany.

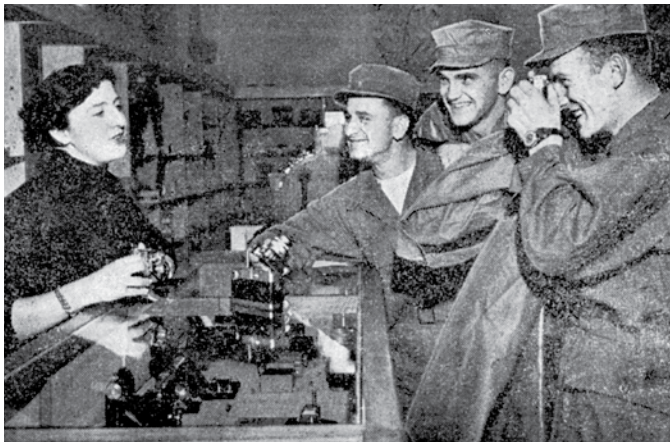
senior Army personnel in Europe bound for college in the States. For the alien recruits, in addition to the administrative processing prior to induction, we issued complete uniforms, ID [identification] cards and "dog tags," arranged physical and dental examinations, scheduled batteries of inoculations, provided individual soldier skills training, presented basic English classes, and oriented them in U.S. customs.<sup>40</sup>

Not everyone passed the medical exams. Some had never had one. "I tested positive for tuberculosis (TB) and diphtheria. After being quarantined for three or four weeks in the hospital, it was determined that I was a carrier, but not contagious. These were probably picked up when we were in the Warsaw ghetto," said \*Stanley Minknow from Lodz, Poland. "Since my original group had left for the States, I joined the next one."<sup>41</sup> These were not the only challenges faced by LT Mann and his small staff.

▼ A view of the Sonthofen barracks from the interior parade ground.





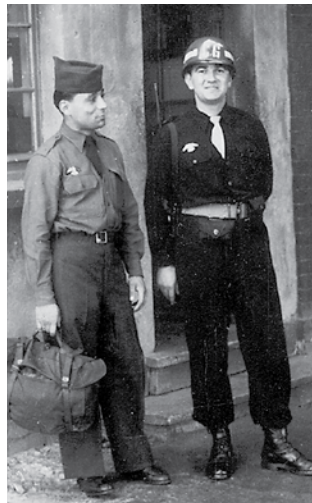


▲ Gerald Coelek (right) uses PX clerk Benate Busch as a camera subject as Henryk Szarek (left) and \*Lucien Zochowski (center) lend advice. On their first pay day the alien recruits went on a shopping spree (*Stars & Stripes*).



▲ Lodge Act soldiers at Sonthofen were amazed at the abundance of food provided in U.S. Army mess halls (*Stars & Stripes*).

► Private Henry M. Kwiatkowski returned to the Polish LS Company at Captieu, France, in his new uniform wearing the Army of Occupation ribbon and his Polish LS Badge.



▲ Private \*John F. Gordon from Balice, Poland (right) and another Lodge Act soldier posed for this photograph in their new U.S. Army uniforms.

“Several Army sergeants served as tactical trainers and two corporals spoke several languages. The recruits spoke fifteen different languages in various dialects. They also had varying levels of education. I can remember using five guys to get a message across. I wasn’t sure if the final version was what I intended. It was the old ‘pass the message’ game that one played as a child. We used some of the officers’ wives to teach English. The enlistees had to speak and respond in English only,” said Mann. “My wife was a teacher and kept some letters written by the soldiers.”<sup>42</sup> “My English amounted to basically ‘Yes,’ ‘No,’ ‘Thank you,’ and ‘Good morning,’” commented Frank Jaks from Czechoslovakia.<sup>43</sup> There were other issues.

“Getting the East European recruits into uniform was tough. Most men were shorter and wider in the body than the average American. We tailored Quartermaster uniforms to fit. These were probably the best dressed enlisted soldiers in the Army at the time, said LT Mann.<sup>44</sup> “The truth of the matter, the U.S. Army supply sergeants could not equate European metric sizes to the American sizes in inches. So, we really looked sharp in those tailored uniforms,” recalled \*Andre Carson from Bulgaria.<sup>45</sup> Unaccustomed to the higher standard

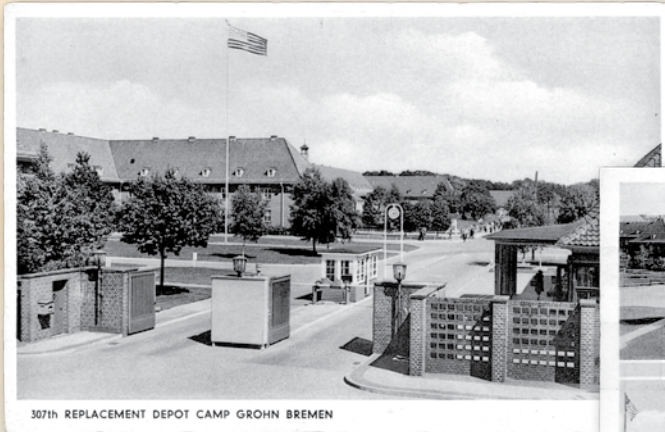


▲ Private Frank Jaks (second from right) and his Lodge Act compatriots ready to load the train for Bremerhaven.



## Sonthofen to Camp Grohn and Back

In July 1952, the 320<sup>th</sup> Replacement Battalion moved from Sonthofen to Camp Grohn near Bremen (closer to Bremerhaven, the port of entry/departure for American troops). Before the battalion officers escorted the fifty-man groups aboard the train to Bremerhaven every few months. Less than six months later (December 1952), the 320<sup>th</sup> relocated back to Sonthofen.<sup>51</sup>



◀▶ Period postcards of Camp Grohn where the 320<sup>th</sup> Replacement Battalion was located outside Bremen, Germany in 1952.



of living in the Army, the recruits treasured their new clothing and equipment. Shoes were always polished to perfection and their ODs (olive drab dress uniform) were treated like “Sunday best” clothing.<sup>46</sup> “Oh, yeah! We felt like special people in those tailored uniforms,” said Paul Ettman from Sierdaz, Poland.<sup>47</sup>

Sergeant First Class (SFC) Henry M. Koefoot, a American Army tactical NCO (non-commissioned officer), said: “They’re the best. No ‘whys’ or ‘ifs’ when you tell them to do something. All you see is a streak of lightning and the job is done.”<sup>48</sup> “Physical fitness was not a problem. The men were in their twenties and early thirties and had lived a hard life. They did not frequent Sick Call. These soldiers were just happy to be there. The aliens were getting paid more money [\$72] than they had ever earned in their lives,” said LT Mann.<sup>49</sup> “Payday turned the PX into a miniature madhouse. These soldiers guzzled gallons of Cokes and fruit juice, chewed four or five sticks of gum at a time, and bought almost every item in stock,” wrote a *Stars and*

*Stripes* reporter.<sup>50</sup> “In the excitement I bought a box of pie mix thinking that there was pie inside,” Rudi Horvath laughed years afterward.<sup>52</sup> Before leaving for Bremerhaven, the Army port of debarkation for all American troops leaving for the United States, every recruit was offered a seven-day leave to visit friends or relatives living in Western Europe.<sup>53</sup>

These men were proud to have “made the cut” to enlist in the American Army and were anxious to show off their tailored uniforms. “One hour in the U.S. Army (after enlistment) and I already had a medal,” remarked \*Stanley Minkinow. “When I went back to visit my school at Bad Reichenhall, I was a ‘big man on campus.’”<sup>54</sup> “I went back to see my buddies in the 4011<sup>th</sup> Labor Service Company in France and to ‘needle’ that Polish lieutenant,” chuckled Jan Wiatr.<sup>55</sup> Frank Jaks returned to his old LS unit in Nuremberg.<sup>56</sup> In Holland, Peter Astalos and Teodor Padalinski celebrated with some textile factory co-workers.<sup>57</sup> Since many had no place to go, they chose to stay in camp because they got





▲ Lodge Act soldiers on the dock at Bremerhaven in 1952 waiting to board the USNS *General J.H. McRae*.



◀ As a merchant seaman on the *MS Batory*, Henry Kwiatkowski was awarded the Polish Military Cross of Valor in Bronze.



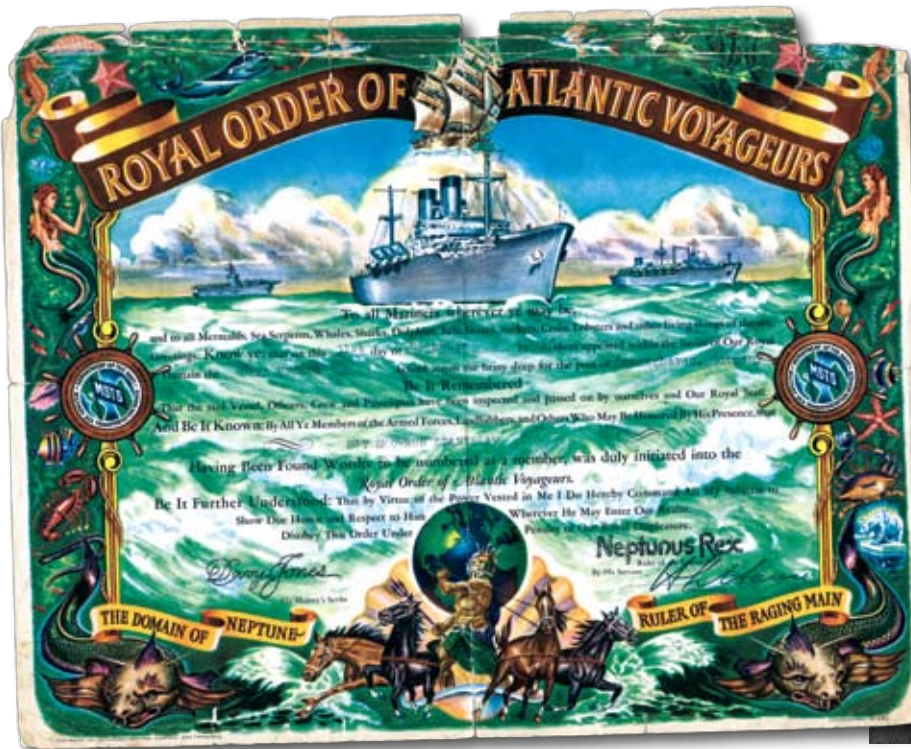
▲ Private Frank Jaks and his Lodge Act group during lifeboat drills aboard ship in February 1953.

◀ Julius Reinitzer and two other Lodge Act soldiers en route to the States aboard the USNS *General J.H. McRae* in 1952.

▼ The USTS *General Kreuger* berthed at Bremerhaven carried Henry M. Kwiatkowski and his fellow Lodge Act soldiers to New York in 1953.







◀ Private Vaclav Hradecky bundled up in his life jacket during a lifeboat drill on the troopship carrying him to New York.



▶ \*Private Stanley Skowron standing on the fantail of his ship en route to America.

▲ "The Royal Order of Atlantic Voyageurs" awarded to \*Private Stanley Skowron for surviving the trip from Bremerhaven to New York.

decent food. The enlistees' final departure was a moving event for many of the Eastern Europeans.

While some Lodge Act soldiers waited to board their troopship, German artists pen brushed soldiers' names in very fancy script on duffle bags for two *Deutsch Marks* (about 25 cents). But, the most memorable part was the Army band playing *Auf Wiedersehen* for the soldiers leaving Germany for the States. "This was very moving for us. Some men had tears in their tears fearing that they would never return to Europe. Most had friends or family who had left home and the continent earlier. None of them had returned," said Vaclav Hradecky. "It was quite emotional."<sup>58</sup>

The trans-Atlantic trip to New York City aboard a U.S. Navy vessel was etched into the memories of most Lodge Act soldiers. Rough seas and bad weather were common during winter crossings of the North Atlantic. Frank Kokosza and Henry M. Kwiatkowski, two former Polish seamen, had no problems. "There wasn't much to do aboard a troop ship but they fed us well," remembered Kokosza.<sup>59</sup> During lifeboat drills all personnel gathered on deck in life jackets. However, most of the Eastern Europeans recalled the voyage as quite unpleasant.

Bulgarian \*Andre Carson said, "I started feeling sick before we lost sight of land. I felt so miserable that I slept on deck and refused to pull KP (kitchen police). My attitude was, 'Arrest me. Who cares?' I was still so wobbly afterwards that I slept with one foot on the floor at Camp Kilmer."<sup>60</sup> "It was a helluva rough trip. The front railing was torn off the ship. I stayed sick all the way to New York," remembered Yugoslav John Koenig.<sup>61</sup> After ten days of seasickness the Statue of Liberty was more

than a beacon of freedom for Jan Wiatr. It meant that finally, stable, dry land was close at hand.<sup>62</sup>

Rudi Horvath from Budapest was ecstatic, "I couldn't believe it. There seemed to be car lights everywhere. It was phenomenal. After all those years of trying I had finally reached freedom."<sup>63</sup> Henryk "Frenchie" Szarek remembered that there was snow on the ground in New York, "but I was happy because now I was in a country where freedom flourished."<sup>64</sup> When \*Walter Smith from Madsdarg, Poland, spotted the Empire State Building on the skyline, he felt that "he had entered a new world."<sup>65</sup>

\*Stanley Minkinow from Lódz, Poland, vowed when he saw the Statue of Liberty that he was going to "start off on the right foot in America." The young soldier made his grand entrance when he tripped over his duffle bag stepping off the gangplank.<sup>66</sup> Afterwards, the future Americans boarded a bus for Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, between Piscataway and Edison. They had arrived.

This completes Part I of "America's Foreign Legionnaires: The Lodge Act Soldiers in the U.S. Army." Part II will address the relocation of the replacement battalion from Sonthofen to Camp Grohn (Bremen) in



July 1952 and back again in December 1952. Camp Kilmer was the transition point for basic combat training and those slated for English language training at Fort Devens, Massachusetts. The Lodge Act soldiers in basic and advanced combat training, parachute schools, and early assignments will follow. Included will be the stories of three Czech anti-Communist guerrillas, Josef and Ctirad “Ray” Masin and Milam Paumer, who bypassed the application, testing phase, Sonthofen, and went straight to Fort Dix, New Jersey.<sup>67</sup> They were among the hundred Lodge Act soldiers that served in Special Forces during the early days (1952-1960).

The purpose of this article was to introduce the Lodge Act, the enlistment procedures, and to permit some of the veterans to explain their experiences. I hope that this first installment of a two-part article for *Veritas* will prompt other veterans to participate. More is better. ▲

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## Endnotes

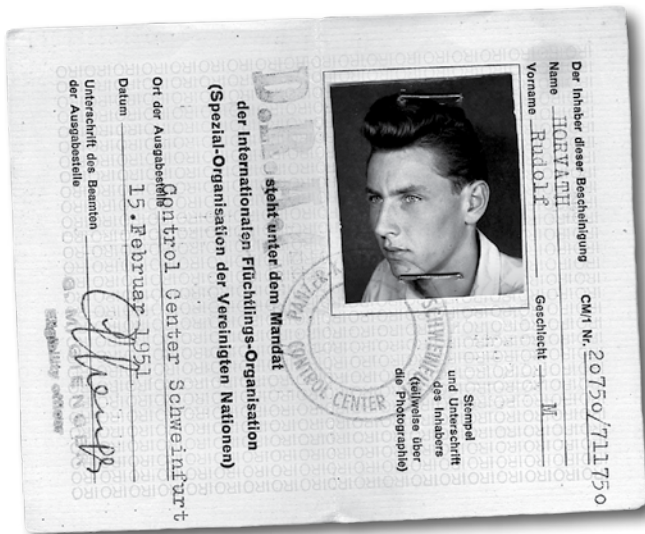
- 1 James Jay Carafano, “Mobilizing Europe’s Stateless: America’s Plan for a Cold War Army,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 1:2 (1999) 61.
- 2 Carafano, “Mobilizing Europe’s Stateless,” 66.
- 3 **Senator Henry Cabot Lodge initiated the bill in the U.S. Senate and Congressman Philip J. Philbin, a Democrat from Massachusetts introduced the Alien Enlistment (Lodge) Bill in the U.S. House of Representatives. Credit rightfully belongs to the Senator, hence it has been referred to as the Lodge Act.** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lodge-Philbin\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lodge-Philbin_Act).
- 4 James B. Jacobs and Leslie Anne Hayes, “Aliens in the U.S. Armed Forces: A Historico-Legal Analysis,” *Armed Forces and Society*, 7:2 (Winter 1981) 197.
- 5 Jacobs and Hayes, “Aliens in the U.S. Armed Forces,” 197.
- 6 Letter, Lodge to General James Lawton Collins, Army Chief of Staff, 26 November 1951, Henry Cabot Lodge II Papers, Legislative Subject Files, Box 39, Massachusetts Historical Society cited in Carafano, “Mobilizing America’s Stateless,” 69.
- 7 **The British Pioneer Corps had afforded refugees from Nazism during World War II a chance to fight against Adolf Hitler. They ultimately had fifteen battalions.** H.W. Brands, Jr., “A Cold War Foreign Legion? The Eisenhower Administration and the Volunteer Freedom Corps,” *Military Affairs* 52 (January 1988), 7-8.
- 8 Resume of Army Roll-Up Following World War II, File 39, US Army Center of Military History, 83-87, and Top Secret Supplement, Annual Historical Report, Headquarters, US Army Europe (U), 1 January 1953-30 June 1954, 75, US Army Center of Military History cited in Carafano, “Mobilizing America’s Stateless,” 69.

- 9 **Lodge Act soldier Henry Kwiatkowski from Poland served in the British Auxiliary Service in the 317<sup>th</sup> Tank Transport Company at Berkhausen, Germany.** Retired SFC Henry Kwiatkowski telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 3 and 21 October 2008, Silver Springs, MD, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Kwiatkowski interview with date.
- 10 Retired LTC Vaclav Hradecky, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 9 September 2008, New Ipswich, NH, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, hereafter cited as Hradecky interview with date.
- 11 Retired CSM George S. Taylor, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 11 September 2008, Hopedale, MA, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Taylor interview with date.
- 12 Retired MAJ Frantisek (Frank) Jaks interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 14 June 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter as Jaks interview with date.
- 13 Retired SFC Jan Wiatr, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 2 October 2007, Fayetteville, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Wiatr interview with date.
- 14 Henryk Szarek, interview by Robert Seals, Arlington, MA, 27 August 2006, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Szarek interview with date and Headquarters, 4097 Labor Service Battalion, APO 189, US Army Europe, Certificate of Discharge dated 22 June 1953, signed by Captain Zadzislaw Baraniecki. Henryk Szarek personal files, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 15 “Stateless Europeans Enlist,” U.S. European Command (EUCOM) *Information Bulletin* (September 1951). Armed Forces Information and Education Division, EUCOM (Frankfurt, Germany), September 1951, [images.library.wisc.edu/History/EFacs/GerRecon/omg1951Sept/reference/history.omg1951sept.i0034.pdf](http://images.library.wisc.edu/History/EFacs/GerRecon/omg1951Sept/reference/history.omg1951sept.i0034.pdf) dated 30 January 2009 and “Aliens Start Army Training,” *EUCOM Information Bulletin* (November 1951), [images.library.wisc.edu/History/EFacs/GerRecon/omg1951Nov/reference/history.omg1951nov.adenaerproposal.pdf](http://images.library.wisc.edu/History/EFacs/GerRecon/omg1951Nov/reference/history.omg1951nov.adenaerproposal.pdf) dated 30 January 2009.
- 16 Retired MAJ Stanley Minkinow, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 23 October 2008, Huntsville, AL, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Minkinow interview with date, “Stateless Europeans Enlist,” U.S. EUCOM *Information Bulletin* (September 1951) and “Aliens Start Army Training,” U.S. EUCOM *Information Bulletin* (November 1951).
- 17 Retired SGM Peter V. Astalos, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 25 June 2008, Fayetteville, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Astalos interview with date, retired SFC Stanley Skowron, interview by Dr. Briscoe, 21 September 2008, Fayetteville, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Skowron interview with date; retired SFC Teodor W. Padalinski, telephone interview by Dr. Briscoe, 18 July 2008, Boulder, CO, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Padalinski interview with date.
- 18 Retired SGM John C. Anderson, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 26 June 2008, Denver, CO, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Anderson interview with date.
- 19 Astalos interview, 25 June 2008, Rudolf G. Horvath, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 15 May 2008, Dumont, NJ, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Horvath, “Escape from Behind the Iron Curtain: The Odyssey of a Lodge Act SF Soldier” *Special Warfare*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (April 2003), 37.
- 20 “Stateless Europeans Enlist,” U.S. EUCOM *Information Bulletin* (September 1951).
- 21 Horvath interview, 15 May 2008, Horvath, unpublished memoir, 15, and Horvath “Escape from Behind the Iron Curtain,” 43.

▼ **A photo of the New York skyline in 1952 taken by Private Vaclav Hradecky as their troopship waited in the harbor to dock.**







- ◀ This was the ID card issued to Rudolf G. Horvath by the Displaced Persons (DP) Center located in Panzer Kaserne in Schweinfurt, Germany in 1951. The middle initial is incorrect.
- ▼ Czechoslovak Labor Service PFC Frantisek "Frank" Jaks was presented this meritorious service certificate by the 4091st LS Company (Guard) prior to leaving for enlistment in the U.S. Army.



- 22 Retired Chief Warrant Officer Four (CW4) Andre Vasilev Carson, interviews by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 28 November and 7 December 2007, Fayetteville, NC, digital recordings, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Carson interview with date; Jaks interview, 14 June 2007.
- 23 Retired MAJ John Koenig, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 4 September 2008, Fayetteville, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Koenig interview with date.
- 24 H.W. Brands, Jr., "A Cold War Foreign Legion?", 8.
- 25 Koenig interview, 4 September 2008.
- 26 Walter J. Smith, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 28 July 2008, Lochbuie, CO, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Smith interview with date.
- 27 Retired SGM Julius Reinitzer, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 25 August 2008, Hudson, NH, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Reinitzer interview and date.
- 28 U.S. Army CIC agents interviewed Ruhr coal mine supervisors, miners, and families where Peter V. Astalos worked until 1952. Checking Labor Service (LS) references simply entailed talking with American military officer supervisors, ethnic company chains of command, and reviewing personnel records at the LS Basic Training Center in Mannheim. They interviewed the German farmer for whom Walter J. Smith (Wladyslaw J. Naumowicz), a Pole, had worked during WWII. Smith interview, 28 July 2008, Astalos interview, 27 June 2008, Padalinski interview, 18 July 2008, retired MSG Frank Kokosza, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 26 June 2008, Fayetteville, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Kokosza interview with date, Horvath interview, 16 May 2008; Carson interview, 28 November 2007.
- 29 Wiatr interview, 2 October 2007; Horvath interview, 16 May 2008.
- 30 Horvath interview, 16 May 2008.
- 31 Jaks interview, 14 June 2007.
- 32 Horvath interview, 16 May 2008 and Wiatr interview, 14 June 2007.
- 33 "Stateless Europeans Enlist," U.S. EUCOM *Information Bulletin* (September 1951).
- 34 Smith interview, 28 July 2008.
- 35 Carson interviews, 28 November and 7 December 2007.
- 36 Hradecky interview, 9 September 2008.
- 37 Retired COL Clarence C. Mann, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 14 April 2008, Tucson, AZ, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Mann interview with date.
- 38 Retired SSgt Anthony J. Pilarczyk, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 10 September 2008, Vacaville, CA, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Pilarczch with date.
- 39 Astalos interview, 25 June 2008.
- 40 Mann interview, 14 April 2008.
- 41 Minkinow interview, 23 October 2008.
- 42 Mann interview, 14 April 2008; Hradecky interview, 10 September 2008.
- 43 Jaks interview, 14 June 2007.
- 44 Mann interview, 14 April 2008.
- 45 Carson interview, 28 November 2007.
- 46 Robert J. Dunphy, "27 Refugees Find Army Leading to New Way of Life," *The Stars and Stripes* (11 October 1953): 7.
- 47 Retired SFC Paul R. Ettman, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 19 September 2008, Worcester, MA, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited as Ettman interview with date.
- 48 Dunphy, "27 Refugees Find Army Leading to New Way of Life," 7.
- 49 Mann interview, 14 April 2008.
- 50 Dunphy, "27 Refugees Find Army Leading to New Way of Life," 7. Monthly pay for a corporal in the Czech Labor Service Company in Nuremberg in 1952 was 173 Deutsch Marks (DM) or about \$42 in American Occupation script money depending on the exchange rate. Hradecky interview, 10 September 2008.
- 51 Mann interview, 14 April 2008; Jaks interview, 14 June 2007.
- 52 Horvath interview, 16 May 2008.
- 53 Dunphy, "27 Refugees Find Army Leading to New Way of Life," 7 and "Stateless Europeans Enlist," U.S. EUCOM *Information Bulletin* (September 1951).
- 54 Minkinow interview, 23 October 2008.
- 55 Wiatr interview, 2 October 2007.
- 56 Jaks interview, 14 June 2007.
- 57 Astalos interview, 25 June 2008; Padalinski interview, 23 July 2008.
- 58 Hradecky interview, 10 September 2008.
- 59 Kokosza interview, 26 June 2008.
- 60 Carson interview, 28 November 2007; Wiatr interview, 2 October 2007.
- 61 Koenig interview, 4 September 2008.
- 62 Wiatr interview, 2 October 2007.
- 63 Horvath interview, 16 May 2008.
- 64 Szarek interview, 27 August 2006.
- 65 Smith interview, 28 July 2008.
- 66 Minkinow interview, 23 October 2008.
- 67 Josef Masin, telephone interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 10 November 2008, Santa Barbara, CA, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, and Barbara Masin, *Gauntlet*, (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2006), 320.