WHAT ABOUT SHIPS.

What about ships to bring the boys back from Guam and Okinawa, from Hawaii and the Philippines, from Europe and the Mediterranean areas, from Burma and India. Ships and ports are still the two foremost problems to get the maximum number home by Christmas. Perhaps a concise report on overseas demobilization would prove useful and timely.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE.

While it took 48 months to assemble and transport the bulk of our military forces overseas, it will, according to present schedules require only 10 months to bring them back. As of December 3rd, about 4,000,000 soldiers, sailors and Marines have already been brought back from Europe and the Pacific. The rate of return is about 600,000 per month compared with a peak of 283,000 sent over in any one month. This peak load of troop shipments from the United States to overseas areas was reached in January of 1945.

THOSE WHO STAY FOR AWHILE.

With the exception of an occupational force of 370,000 and a closing out force of 300,000 to assemble and handle the vast quantities of surplus war goods still remaining in those areas, all troops will have been returned from the European and Mediterranean theaters of operations by January of 1946. With the exception of 500,000 troops to be used for occupational and closing out purposes, it is expected that all other troops will be returned from the Pacific area by April of 1946.

SHIPPING.

For the Atlantic run, shipping is no longer a critical item and as of December 5th, 32 troop transports with a carrying capacity of 83,000 men have been ordered transferred from the Atlantic to the Pacific. On the Atlantic run, as of this date, 400 vessels with a capacity of 578,000 men have been in service. This includes converted Liberty and Victory ships, hospital ships and also the Queen Mary which has a capacity of 11,400. The average round trip for these vessels require about 5 weeks. On the Pacific run, 471 vessels have been operating with a total carrying capacity of 791,000 men. This trip of course requires a longer time and the average turn around is about 10 weeks. It takes the fastest of our troop ships about 23 days to reach Japan and about 26 days to reach the Philippines. The slowest of these can make the trip to Japan in about 30 days.

SOME ADDITIONAL FACTS.

December will be the peak month and it is expected that 760,000 troops will arrive from all overseas theaters. Planes are also being used as indicated by the fact that for the first 23 days in November, 24,000 men were returned from all overseas areas by air or at the rate of a little more than 1000 per day. To retain the Queen Mary in service for the return of troops, we had to swap the British 10 Victory ships with much smaller carrying capacity and which were also much slower. In addition to the number of vessels catalogued above, there are some cargo ships which can transport from 10 to 50 men in addition to cargo. The fleet of troopships now operating is substantially larger than the entire foreign trade fleet of our merchant marine service in 1939. Certain officials of the National Maritime Union and the Longshoreman's Union have been circulating propaganda to the effect that suitable vessels were being returned to passenger service by private steamship lines when they might have been used to carry troops. The War Shipping Administration has characterized such reports as absolutely false. The one dark spot in the transportation picture at this moment is the lack of railroad facilities to bring the troops from ports of debarkation to the separation centers. This has become quite acute and is receiving sustained attention by War and Navy authorities.