

REPATRIATION

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Op-13/wlh

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21 October 1943

MEMORANDUM FOR: DIRECTOR OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE.

Subject: Repatriation of Civilians and prisoners of war.

1. In connection with the approval of a "summary of steps taken by the Department of State in behalf of American nationals in Japanese custody", Captain Eldredge was informed that the Navy recommended deletion of the following sentence in one paragraph:

"Furthermore, it is a major objective of warfare to deplete as rapidly as possible the forces of the enemy and it has so far been deemed inexpedient for military reasons to propose the release and return of able-bodied prisoners of war."

2. In my relations with the State Department on this subject, I have never indicated any policy that we would not welcome an exchange of prisoners of war with the Japanese if such could be arranged, or that we would place any restrictions on such an exchange if it should become practicable.

3. For that reason, I discussed the matter with Admiral Edwards this morning, and at his direction, with Admiral King, who stated clearly that no restrictions were to be laid down which would prevent any possible return of American prisoners of war from the custody of the Japanese.

4. In order that there could be no mistake made by the War Department or the State Department concerning the Navy's attitude, I am this date informing both Mr. Breckinridge Long and Major General White that the Navy's policy on these matters is to facilitate any practicable exchange or return of American prisoners of war from Japanese or other custody, and that no restrictions will be laid down.

5. As the Office of Naval Intelligence has a direct connection with the War Department in connection with such matters, it is suggested that you arrange to communicate this policy to Major General Strong.

/s/ A. D. Struble.
A. D. STRUBLE

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MEMORANDUM FOR 16-1-B

Please route to all interested, including 16-2.

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To Op-16-1

Repatriation. Senate has been having an informal hearing on repatriation exchange of prisoners etc. State Dept. prepared for this Committee a statement of what had been done to secure exchange of prisoners, gist of existing conventions on subject etc. In this statement appeared a sentence which in effect stated the U.S. Military opposed the exchange of able bodied P.W.'s. Basis for this statement was that O.N.I. objected to exchanging any submarine P.W. Adm. King states Navy Dept. will not oppose exchange of any Prisoners of War and this becomes the policy.

R.E.S.

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