

C-O-P-Y

COMINCH FILE

FF1/A16-2

Serial 002418

UNITED STATES FLEET

Headquarters of the Commander in Chief
Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

4 November 1943

SECRET

From: Commander in Chief, United States Fleet and Chief
of Naval Operations.
To: Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific
Ocean Areas.
Subject: Capture of U. S. Aviators by the Enemy.
Reference: (a) CNO restricted ltr. Op-16-F-9, A16-3(29), Serial
No. 2178716, A16-3(411230), dated 30 December,
1941.

1. Enclosure (A) to reference (a) deals with precautions to be taken by naval personnel in the event of falling into the hands of the enemy. It is felt that under ordinary circumstances the instructions covered by Reference (a) are sufficient to prevent the disclosure of information by prisoners of war.

2. Circumstances may, however, arise during major operations where prisoners of war are subjected to strong duress by their captors with a view to extracting information of immediate value. Intelligence recently obtained in these Headquarters furnishes an example where three aviator prisoners of war imparted information of considerable importance to the Japanese. While it is not known how or under what circumstances the prisoners in question gave the information, the fact remains that intelligence was made available in such fashion as to allow timely counter-measures to be taken by the Japanese, if desired.

3. The disclosure of intelligence by the captured flyers mentioned in Paragraph 2 suggests either (a) lack of proper indoctrination, or (b) information obtained by the enemy under duress. It is believed that further indoctrination and instruction of all flying personnel engaged in major operations will to a large extent obviate the leakage of valuable information. It is, therefore, considered essential that steps be taken immediately further to impress upon all personnel concerned what attitude should be adopted when captured by the Japanese, and to make certain that they are, before probable combat, thoroughly and recently familiar with the enclosure of Reference (a).

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4. Proper indoctrination concerning the conduct of prisoners of war when strong duress is applied by a ruthless enemy is one of considerable difficulty. It is believed, however, that careful briefing of personnel with regard to information which may be imparted to the enemy only as a last resort will to a great extent lessen the danger of disclosure of valuable intelligence.

5. It is not believed desirable to lay down rules of an inflexible nature in this regard. In briefing pilots and members of their crews, however, it is suggested that Task Force Commanders be guided by the situation as of the time of the operation, and that information which may be disclosed under the conditions envisaged above should be uniform for all personnel involved. The information so imparted must necessarily sound plausible, and should be uniform in so far as all hands are concerned. It need not necessarily be correct and should, if practicable, constitute information which will in fact tend to deceive the enemy rather than assist him, particularly during the early phases of an operation.

6. In order to insure that the enemy does not obtain important information regarding future plans and communication intelligence, officers and enlisted personnel having detailed knowledge of these should not be sent on combat missions over enemy territory. Plane crews on such missions should be given only such information as they need to know to carry out the mission.

/s/ F. J. KING
F. J. KING.

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COMSVINTHFLT

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Cinepac File.
Pac-J051-ha
A8/A16-2

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AND PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS
Headquarters of the Commander in Chief

Serial 001516

November 17, 1943.

S-E-C-R-E-T

From: Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and
Pacific Ocean Areas.
To: All Flag Officers, Pacific Ocean Areas.
All Marine General Officers, Pacific Ocean Areas.
Commanding General, U. S. Army Forces, Central Pacific
Area.
Subject: Capture of U. S. Aviators by the Enemy.
Reference: (a) Cominch Secret ltr. FF1/A16-2, Serial 002418 of
4 November 1943.
Enclosure: (A) Copy of reference (a).
1. Enclosure (A) is forwarded for information and compliance.
2. Comnorpac and Comsopac are requested to ensure that the
contents of enclosure (A) are disseminated to Commanding Generals of U.S.
Army Forces within their respective areas.

C.W. NIMITZ.

Copy to:
Cominch.
Comsowespac.

J. V. Mercer
J. V. MERCER,
Flag Secretary

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Authority *NU 1745002*