

December 19, 1944.

Colonel Thomas D. Drake,
War Department General Staff,
Organization and Training Division G-3,
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Colonel:

Your letter of December 15 in reply to my letter of November 20 has been received, for which please accept my thanks.

The information contained therein is tremendously interesting as well as distressing. However, there was one ray of satisfaction wherein you stated you received a cable from Sweden that their "Y" representative was in Oflag 64 November 28 and that everything was running the same, and the further fact that there are over 900 Americans now there. The weather cold, snow and rain, though their morale continued to be very high. These boys must have a lot of guts and courage, and it is a crime and an outrage that those who are responsible for this neglectful condition do not see the necessity for prompt and effective action. I was especially interested in the letter from Miss Helen Wade Jackson of Buffalo. They have been doing an excellent job. Amon Junior wrote me that he liked their package better than any packages that had been received.

I am not sure whether or not I sent you copies of my wire and correspondence with the International Red Cross officials in Washington. In any event, I will enclose them herewith. Receipt of a card from Amon Junior dated September 28, stating the distressing fact that they had had no mail for more than a month and no packages for over three months and did not expect any, prompted me to immediately wire J. Townsend Russell the enclosed telegram. I also enclose a copy of his reply, as well as a copy of my telegram in reply to Mr. John F. Cotton, Assistant Director, Relief to Prisoners of War. It is inconceivable that Mr. Cotton would refer to the fact that

there was a reserve supply of 1,424 food parcels in Oflag 64, as I explained in my wire that this was only two weeks' supply in keeping with Amon Junior's letter. Now to find that they have 900 prisoners makes it even worse.

I am glad that you talked with General Arnold, and I am writing him as per the enclosed copy with the hope that you will have an opportunity to give him the complete story and that he may read copies of the correspondence which you sent to me.

The bulletins which you sent out to the next-of-kin are very interesting and, I am sure, tremendously appreciated. It may be that your conversation with Mr. Russell as well as Mr. Pate will have some effect to the extent of causing them to make a vigorous effort to remedy the deficiencies in the system of providing clothing and food for the prisoners of war. There is no reason on the top side of the earth why they should have waited until October to send warm overcoats and blankets or why they should not have sufficient vision to realize that prisoners of war would continue to increase with the activities that we have on the American and British fronts. There have been so many asinine, foolish rules and regulations to interfere with adequate service for the prisoners of war that it seems inconceivable that a condition like this could possibly exist. What they need is some red-blooded, human, capable, frank, and vigorous individual to go to Geneva and see that these atrocious conditions are remedied.

Mr. Cotton stated in his letter they were confident that the distribution of these parcels would continue regularly, and the clothing, 350 overcoats and 1,200 blankets, were shipped from Geneva shortly thereafter. If they do not have any better luck on this shipment than they did last Fall when the boys did not receipt their overcoats until December 13, God help the newcomers without overcoats, as well as all of the boys that will go hungry. It makes my blood boil so that I can hardly control my language to the point of not violating the mail regulations by the use of profanity.

The fact that the Chairman of the Red Cross returned from Europe giving a story to the

newspapers in New York telling about his trip to Rome, Paris and London and failed to even mention the thirty thousand American prisoners of war, is almost sickening. I would have thought that he surely could have gone to Geneva and made an effort to find out direct information regarding the prisoners of war, which certainly would have been interesting to the mothers, fathers, wives and sweethearts of these thirty thousand boys confined in prison camps in Germany. I notice now they are asking for \$180,000,000. Personally, I have never heard of so much general complaint against the Red Cross and I think you are one hundred percent right in the statement you made to J. Townsend Russell.

Again, I want to urge you to see that my name does not become involved in any way in connection with this matter, as I am fearful as to how it might affect Amon Junior and his welfare.

I have just received a letter from Mrs. Edward G. Batte of Waxahachie, stating that she had received a letter from her son dated October 1, which is three days later than my letter. He stated that the Red Cross had messed things up as there are 190 men there who have no overcoats, and 50 with only one pair of pants and they only have one week of Red Cross boxes. He also mentioned the fact that two men from France reached the camp immediately after capture while it took them formerly two months to reach 9-A2, stating that the Red Cross is evidently only providing enough on the basis of the ones there several months instead of anticipating new arrivals and the Red Cross claims they have food boxes stored in Switzerland several months in advance at all times, further stating then why can't they get them to the camp as it affects the boys already there as much as the newcomers. Mrs. Batte stated that she wrote the Red Cross office in St. Louis, but doubts if they will pay any attention to her, as they haven't in the past.

My daughter, Ruth, will be home from school Friday and if we could have only had the good fortune to have Amon Junior home, it would have been a grand occasion.

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I hope you and Mrs. Drake have a nice Christmas, and I wish it were possible for you to spend it in Fort Worth.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

ACC.SB