

THE OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP

WASHINGTON

October 15, 1943.

Mr. Amon Carter, Publisher,
Fort Worth Star Telegram,
Fort Worth, Texas.

Dear Mr. Carter:

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your long telegram of October 9th addressed to the District Postal Censor, New York, on the subject of tobacco parcels to American prisoners in Germany. Since your complaint, in the main, is not one for direct action by the Office of Censorship I will have to confine my reply to general considerations.

As you know, mail and parcels to Prisoners-of-War held by Axis countries are governed by the Geneva Convention of 1929 implemented by regulations initiated by the signatory governments. You can realize that several Federal agencies are primarily concerned with these provisions, this Office performing little other than a "policing" function in respect to security and accepted regulations.

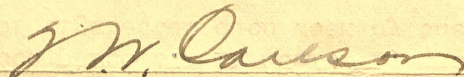
Communications (including parcels) can be sent only to identified Prisoners-of-War, and the next-of-kin system of identification labels for parcels was adopted by the Provost Marshal General in order to maintain necessary security control. At the present time comfort parcels are permitted one every 60 days and tobacco parcels one every 30 days. Although tobacco cannot be included in comfort parcels, tobacco labels permit the sending of three cartons of cigarettes, or 24 ounces of smoking tobacco, or 100 cigars, or about two pounds of chewing tobacco every 30 days. The Provost Marshal General furnishes these labels to next-of-kin without need for application. In other words, every 60 days you receive three labels, one for a comfort parcel and two for tobacco parcels. In addition, each Prisoner is furnished with four packages of cigarettes each week by the International Red Cross.

The interest of Censorship is confined to (1) verifying identifications, (2) checking Prisoner-of-War regulations, and (3) subjecting communications (including parcels) to regular censorship examination. What can or cannot be included in parcels for Prisoners-of-War is a matter for determination by agencies other than the Office of Censorship. However, we are represented on the Special Controls Committee and because of this have a voice in matters of policy. Since your telegram involves the latter, I am taking the liberty of presenting its contents to the Special Controls Committee indicating that Censorship has no objection to (1) including tobacco in comfort parcels,

(2) increasing the number of tobacco labels, and (3) revision of present schedule of allowable items permitted in comfort parcels.

As to your complaint over delays in delivery of packages and mail I can assure you that rarely does U. S. Censorship detain communications for longer than 48-hours. From the time of release by Censorship to delivery, transportation facilities and Nazi censorship must be taken into account. However, there is a channel through which these delays can be traced and I suggest that you take up the matter with the Department of State.

Sincerely yours,



N. V. CARLSON,
Colonel, G.S.C.,
Chief Postal Censor.

