

April 25, 1944.

Mr. M. D. McLarty,
810 Park Street,
Fort Worth, Texas.

Dear Mr. McLarty:

The enclosed letter from Mr. Norman H. Davis has been received during Mr. Carter's absence from the city.

Meanwhile, knowing how interested you are in having his reply to Mr. Carter's letter of April 17, I am sending it along to you.

I am sorry the information was not more encouraging.

Yours very truly,

Secy. to A. G. Carter.

KD.SB

A M E R I C A N R E D C R O S S

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

WASHINGTON 13, D.C.

April 21, 1944

Mr. Amon G. Carter
President
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Fort Worth, Texas.

My dear Mr. Carter:

Mr. Norman H. Davis has asked me to reply to your letter to him of April 17 with which you enclosed a letter which you had received from Mr. M. D. McLarty, 810 Park Street, Fort Worth, Texas. I sympathize with you and Mr. McLarty in your anxiety on learning from the War Department that S/Sgt. Jack L. McLarty, 18215956, was missing in action over Germany the 9th of October, 1943, and I wish that there might be something we could do to get definite word for you regarding him. Ever since the American armed forces came into direct contact with the enemy, we have been trying to work out some way in which the services of the American Red Cross could be used to obtain definite information about men missing in action. In the many discussions which we have had with the military authorities on this subject, it has been made clear that our own Army and Navy take all possible steps to secure definite information as quickly as possible about men so reported. They interview the survivors of the action, obtain as complete reports as possible, and maintain a constant watch over all records and reports in an effort to get final information. They leave nothing undone in connection with information which may be available on our own side of the line, and so in this work there is little that the American Red Cross can do to help them secure additional information.

There is, of course, always the possibility that men reported missing in action have been taken prisoners of war, or have been found by the enemy behind their lines. The practice followed in getting reports back to United States authorities from the Germans is quite efficient, although it does take some time for the reports to come through. You are, of course, familiar with all this because of the report you received about your own son. Reports of men who have been captured or whose bodies have been found behind enemy lines are submitted by the German authorities to the International Red Cross Committee at Geneva, and are in turn cabled by the International Committee to the War Department here. The families are then immediately notified by the War Department as soon as the reports come in. On the average, such reports take about six weeks from the time the men are reported missing in action until the War Department has the information here. Our own authorities and the Red Cross endeavor to speed up such reports, but a considerable amount of checking is necessary before the enemy can be sure that their information is correct, and the enemy authorities are quite scrupulous in making sure that their reports are exact.

With respect to reports from the enemy, we have found that there is no effective action we can take in any particular case to speed up a report. For reasons of security, we cannot transmit to the International Red Cross Committee the full identification

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of the man reported missing, because we would be giving military information to the enemy. There have also been a number of instances in which men reported missing in action have been able to get back from enemy territory, and we would hesitate to bring to the attention of the enemy a man who might be in their territory but not yet taken prisoner. I know you will agree that we should not take any action which might jeopardize the opportunity of men to get back to their own lines.

I am sorry, therefore, to have to tell you that we know of nothing we can do that will expedite a final report on Sergeant McLarty. All possible means for obtaining the desired information are being used, and all those at home can do is to wait and hope.

We, of course, have many similar cases every day, but I have never yet been able to find the right words to express our sympathy and our hope that the families may soon have definite information.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Philip E. Ryan
Philip E. Ryan
Director, Civilian Relief
Insular and Foreign Operations

