

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

MORNING

EVENING

SUNDAY

AMON G. CARTER, PRESIDENT

FORT WORTH, TEXAS

November 18, 1943.

Prisoner of War Information Bureau
Office of The Provost Marshal General
Washington, D.C.

Gentlemen:

As a matter of information, I would like to ask just why and on what basis, of common sense or otherwise, should there be technical restrictions concerning the 11 pound packages which "next-of-kin" are permitted to send to prisoners-of-war every sixty days?

For example, we are only permitted to send 1/4 pound of bouillon cubes, 1/4 pound of dried meat extracts, 1/4 pound coffee, Nescafe, tea, etc., only a pound of chocolate, powdered milk, sugar, etc., and various other weight restrictions are imposed on the items to be included in the 11 pound limit. Inasmuch as these are eatables and there is no objection on the part of the German Government, why should anyone in the American Government make objections and decide what the prisoner should have as long as the package does not exceed the regulation size and weight and does not violate rules governing the particular commodities we are permitted to send?

In other words, why not let the prisoner of war have some preference as to what his next-of-kin can send him? Why should those in the Government become his dietician and say he can have so many beans and so many ounces of this and that? Suppose the promulgator of this regulation had someone leaving over his shoulder every time he ate a meal to tell him just what he could and could not have. I realize it is necessary to have rules and regulations but there is no rhyme or reason in making them cockeyed. Without attempting to be facetious, it looks as if those in charge of this particular matter must be somewhat like the man who stated that his wife did not care what he did so long as he did not enjoy himself. That seems to be the spirit displayed towards the prisoners of war by those in authority in the Government - - whoever that may be.

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We have the same ridiculous difficulty with the Censors. For example, I sent my son a picture showing the funeral of a German prisoner of war in a camp at Atlanta, Georgia, who was killed accidentally. It showed the casket covered with flowers and the Nazi flag; that the body of the German prisoner lay in open-air service at the camp. The fellow German prisoners flanked the casket accompanied by a U. S. Army Officer as well as a German Army chaplain. Another prisoner stood ready to read the ritual. This was sent back with the statement: "Clippings in mail to enemy territory are objectionable". In reality this is not a clipping. The picture with the description was pasted tightly and securely on a piece of card board. There certainly could be no objection insofar as the Germans are concerned as it shows one of their prisoners buried with full honors. There certainly should be no objection on the part of the American Government to showing its friendly attitude in giving an enemy prisoner of war full consideration and respect. The purpose in sending the picture was to permit the German authorities to see how well the Americans treat the German prisoners with the idea this should be beneficial and helpful in impressing upon the Germans that our boys should receive just as friendly consideration under similar circumstances.

I realize you have many perplexing problems confronting you but there should be no definite, closed, arbitrary rule that should not be subject to common horse sense interpretation. The people of the country as a whole are becoming more thoroughly disgusted every day with the O.P.A. and the various asinine rules and regulations promulgated and forced down the throats of a tolerant public. When the soldiers overseas do get home my guess is that they will clean up a lot of this tomfoolery and try and help the Government get back to common sense democracy. Our soldiers are fighting in foreign lands against some of the same things we are practicing in our own country. So, it looks as if when they clean up the Germans and Japs they will have to come back and do the same kind of job at home.

No doubt you will presume when you read this letter that I am not in a very good humor about some of these ridiculous rules and regulations. As to whether it means anything to you or not is another question. But,

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again, I say how would you feel if you could exchange places with a prisoner of war and have some of these cock-eyed things rammed down your throat?

Yours very truly,

W. L. Carter

AGC.KD

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