

PRISONERS OF WAR INFORMATION BUREAU
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL

This Bureau receives the names of American Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees reported by the enemy powers. It answers inquiries and furnishes all available information concerning Prisoners of War to those interested.

The following information is subject to change but is substantially all that is available at this time:

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS. A number of reports from neutral sources indicate that American Prisoners of War and civilian internees are receiving fair treatment considering all the circumstances which accompany War.

PHYSICAL CONDITION OF PRISONERS OF WAR. The Geneva Convention requires each internment camp to have a properly equipped infirmary with adequate medical personnel in attendance. Prisoners of War must be medically examined at least once a month and any who are ill must be given treatment. It also requires that notification concerning capture indicate fact of wounds or serious illness. Current information indicates substantial compliance with above requirements. The letter to you accompanying this circular gives all information in possession of the Bureau at this time. If no mention is made of health, wounds, or hospitalization, such matters were not mentioned in the cable received and you may assume that he is in normal health.

INSPECTIONS. Inspections of enemy prison camps are made by representatives of the Protecting Power and also by delegates of the International Red Cross, who are permitted to make thorough inspection of camps and prisoners have the right to converse with them. If the delegate or representative of the Protecting Power finds ground for complaint that cannot be settled on the spot, he states such complaints to the detaining government concerned. As both the Protecting Power and International Red Cross act independently, although with knowledge of the others activity, there is a double scrutiny of conditions in the camps. The reports of these inspections are forwarded to this Bureau.

CORRESPONDENCE. Under the terms of the Geneva Convention, officially reported prisoners of war are permitted to correspond with friends and relatives. There is no limitation on the number of letters which may be sent them, postage free, by relatives and friends, but all communications should be brief and strictly of a personal nature, and if possible typewritten or in block letters. "V" Mail facilities are not available to prisoners of war. There is no assurance that Air Mail will facilitate delivery.

Mail to prisoners of war should not be sent through this Bureau. Existing regulations do not permit mailing of cash, money orders, or checks to prisoners of war. Reports indicate that prisoners are receiving mail.

Mail to American Prisoners of War is routed by the Post Office Department by any available means. There is no information at hand concerning the time required for mail from prisoners of war to be delivered in the United States.

Camp numbers and prisoner of war numbers are necessary in sending ordinary mail to prisoners of war in Germany and Italy. To date these numbers are not necessary in sending ordinary mail to prisoners of war in Japanese Custody. The address should be plainly written leaving room on the face of the envelope for a forwarding address should it be necessary and should indicate the nationality namely American Prisoner of War.

Packages enroute to members of our Armed Forces at the time of capture are returned to the sender.

Cables. Arrangements have been made by the American Red Cross permitting cables to prisoners of war as follows: (1) To Germany and Italy; only in case of extreme emergency such as life or death. (2) To Japanese controlled territory, one cable to each prisoner of war, thereafter only in case of extreme emergency such as life or death. To send cables contact your nearest chapter American Red Cross.

PAY. The terms of the Geneva Convention pertaining to Officer's pay are being amended to permit the payment of small sums dependent upon rank. The balance between the amount paid and regular pay and allowances will accrue to his credit and will be paid upon return to military duty. There is no provision for the payment of pay to enlisted men, prisoners of war, but regular pay and allowances will accrue to his credit and will be paid upon return to military duty. They may, however, be paid an allowance for work performed, other than Camp maintenance.

(Over)

Questions relative to pay of prisoners of war should be addressed to The Finance Officer of the Army, Washington, D. C.

RANK. All questions concerning rank of Prisoners of War should be addressed to The Adjutant General of the Army, Washington, D. C.

REPATRIATION. While hostilities continue there is no provision for the repatriation of able-bodied prisoners of war. It may be possible to repatriate totally incapacitated prisoners at a later date.

INSURANCE, ALLOTMENT AND WAR BONDS. Questions regarding Government insurance should be directed to the Veterans Administration, Washington, D.C. Those pertaining to allotment should be directed to the Office of Dependency and Benefits, 213 Washington Street, Newark, New Jersey. In regard to war bonds, to the War Bond Division, War Department, Washington, D. C.

PERSONAL EFFECTS OF PRISONERS. Personal effects will be returned to the United States when transportation is available. Questions concerning them should be directed to the Effects Quartermaster, Kansas City Quartermaster Depot, Kansas City, Missouri.

STANDARD RED CROSS PACKAGES. In all possible cases the International Red Cross under arrangements made by the American Red Cross is now delivering weekly parcels to American Prisoners of War. These parcels contain substantially the following items:

16 oz. milk powder, 8 oz. processed cheese, 6 oz. liver paste, 12 oz. corned beef, 16 oz. oleomargarine, 12 oz. pork luncheon meat, 8 oz. salmon, 4 oz. sardines, 8 oz. sugar, 12 oz. prunes, 4 oz. concentrated orange juice, 4 oz. coffee, 4 oz. chocolate, 1 oz. salt and pepper mixed, 3 packages cigaretts, 7 oz. biscuit, and 4 oz. odorless soap.

PERSONAL PARCELS. Prisoners of War interned in Germany and Italy when permanent camp is known may in addition receive parcels sent by next of kin in the United States. A label is forwarded without request from this office to the next of kin every 60 days with full and complete instructions concerning parcels and the mailing thereof. Only one label may be issued for each prisoner during each 60 day period.

The label is transferable by the next of kin but the person actually mailing the package must indicate the fact of transfer on the label.

The next of kin to whom the parcel label is sent is the person designated by the soldier himself as emergency addressee upon his entry into service.

Questions concerning food rationing as it affects sending Prisoner of War parcels should be addressed to Office of Price Administration, Washington, D. C.

Transportation facilities are not available at this time to enable personal parcels to be sent to the Orient. When facilities become available, package labels without request will be sent to each next of kin.

CLOTHING. The detaining power is required by the terms of the Geneva Convention to furnish clothing. The War and Navy Departments are making available to the American Red Cross articles of clothing to supplement that furnished by the detaining power. The next of kin may send certain types of clothing fully described in the circular accompanying personal package labels.

TYPES OF CAMP. (German) Oflags, Stalags, Ilags, Marlags, Milags, Dulags, and Luftlagers. Oflags are for army officers. Stalags for N.C.O.'s and other ranks, but sometimes with an officers' section. Civilian internees and others are confined in Ilags. Marlags and Milags are for naval and merchant seamen respectively. Luftlagers are for airmen. Dulags are transit camps.

(Italian) Campo_____, M. P._____, which means Camp Number and Military Post Number, both of which should be used in the address.

It is requested that next of kin keep the Prisoner of War Information Bureau advised of any change of address.