

RG 59 - General Records of the
Department of State

Records of the
Special War Problems Division

Inspection Reports on War
Relocation Centers, 1942-46 [3 of 3]
Inspection Reports on Prisoner
of War Camps, 1942-46 [1 of 10]
[Lot File No. 58 D 7]

Box 21

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW PROJECT

NND 893002

RECORD GROUP	ENTRY	BOX
59	Lot 58 D 7	21

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

NA Form 1409 (4-85)

REPRODUCTION TAB	REPRODUCTION TAB
NAME	NAME
PAGE NUMBERS TO BE COPIED	PAGE NUMBERS TO BE COPIED
TOTAL PAGES	TOTAL PAGES

Seagoville. 142-143

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority NND 893602

ated by SD to:

H. of Justice (Kelly) 2

Seagoville

CONFIDENTIAL

Supplemental Report on Alien Detention Station
Seagoville, Texas,
January 25, 26, 1943.

Date: *Feb. 10, 1943*

P.W.H.E.M.

I. IN CHARGE OF CAMP: Mr. Joseph O'Rourke, Chief
Inspector, Border Patrol,
Immigration and Naturalization
Service.
Dr. Amy Stannard, Warden,
Bureau of Prisons.

II. CAMP VISITED BY: Mr. W. Bruppacher, Representative
of the Swiss Legation in charge
of German Interests in the
United States.
Mr. J. M. Garay, Spanish Consul
at New Orleans representing
Japanese interests.

Accompanied by: Mr. P. W. Herrick, Special
Division, Department of State.

III. PERSONS DETAINED AT THE CAMP:

At the time of the visit a total of 647 enemy
aliens were detained at Seagoville comprising the fol-
lowing:

Germans: 132 males, 161 females
Japanese: 136 males, 160 females
Italians: 3 males, 5 females
Miscellaneous: 10 males, 40 females
Total: 281 males, 366 females

Since this visit was made at the instigation of
the Swiss Legation in charge of German interests and
the Spanish Embassy in charge of Japanese interests the
German and Japanese detainees were interviewed. These
enemy aliens were organized under the following spokes-
men who were interviewed by the representatives of the
protecting Powers alone and while the representative of
the Department of State was present:

German Spokesmen:

Dr. Anna Marx Building 4
Mr. Herman Egner Building 5
Mr. Stubbe Building 6
Mr. Kettelhon Building 11

Japanese Spokesmen:

Mr. Yaeju Sugeinachi Building 7
Mrs. Take Uchida Building 7
Mr. Ryunosuke Ichins Japanese in huts.

IV. PHYSICAL

-2-

IV. PHYSICAL CHANGES:

The "victory huts" which were erected during the past few months are now occupied by a group of Japanese detainees from the other American Republic. The adult males in this group for the most part were transferred from the Alien Detention Station at Kenedy, Texas. This group of huts and buildings forms a complete unit since it includes a mess hall, kitchen, necessary latrines, et cetera. Concrete side walks have been built to and from each building.

These huts differ from the "victory huts" at other stations in that they have glass windows. A gas stove supplies the heat in each hut. The Japanese, stated that during a recent spell of cold weather they were unable to keep warm because the wind entered their huts through the walls. It was pointed out to the representative of the protecting Power that sub freezing weather was very rare in this region, that such weather occurred only during three or four days during a winter, and that in view of this fact it was not believed that the Japanese would suffer any great hardship in living at Seagoville in these huts in winter time. The representative of the protecting Power, however, expressed his concern over this condition and stated that he would be obliged to make a report of it to his Embassy at Washington. He added that if it were possible to secure canvas to hang up around the walls inside of the huts, the cold air might be prevented from entering inside. During the visit made to Kenedy a day after this inspection at Seagoville this condition was discussed with the Germans living in "victory huts" there who stated that at the beginning of a recent cold spell which had reached Kenedy, they had suffered from the cold in their huts but that the camp authorities, upon learning of this fact, had increased the gas pressure which enabled their stoves to produce more heat. These Germans stated that thereafter they were comfortably warm in their huts. If gas pressure could be increased at Seagoville, it is believed that a similar result might be obtained.

V. REQUESTS AND COMPLAINTS:

Japanese

1. Seventeen elderly women from the continental United States who are detained at Seagoville without their husbands or children asked to be transferred to a place where they would have a minimum contact with the children at the station who they stated were unbearably noisy. They were told that this would not be possible. The husbands of twelve of these women are interned at either Camp Livingston or Lordsburg, New Mexico, and they asked that their husbands be transferred to Seagoville. They were informed that they would most likely be reunited with their husbands as soon as the Crystal City Internment Camp was completed but not before since two separate transfers would be involved

which

-3-

which would not be feasible in view of the present lack of transportation facilities as well as for financial reasons. These women were further informed that transfers to Crystal City would probably take place within the next two months. These women charged that discrimination had been shown in reuniting families since more German families had been reunited than Japanese. They were assured that no discrimination was intended and it was pointed out to them that in the last two months many Japanese husbands from Kenedy had been reunited with their wives and children at Seagoville.

2. The Japanese detainees asked that lumber be made available to them in order that they might build swings, see-saws, and other play facilities for their children. They were informed that at present it was usually necessary to obtain a priority to secure lumber but that an effort would be made to get wood for them without a priority for this purpose.

3. The Japanese spokesmen stated that, in their opinion, Mrs. Tora Miyake, a widow detained alone at the camp, was not receiving proper medical attention. This matter was taken up with Dr. Smith at the hospital who stated that Mrs. Miyake might possibly have Hodgkins disease and that she was at the hospital under observation. Dr. Smith further stated that laboratory tests were being made on Mrs. Miyake's condition and that as soon as her illness had been diagnosed she would receive the necessary treatments. When interviewed Mrs. Miyake requested that she be allowed to enter a hospital at Portland, Oregon, or go to the Mayo Clinic. She was informed that nothing could be decided in this connection pending the results of the laboratory tests.

Germans

1. The German detainees during this visit again requested that space be made available to them in the Industries Building for recreation purposes. As mentioned in a previous report, this space is now used to store the baggage of the Japanese detainees who are to be repatriated. Mr. O'Rourke informed the representative of the Swiss Legation that since the date of the sailing of the Gripsholm appeared to be indefinite he would make arrangements to move this baggage elsewhere and to allow the detainees to use this space for recreation. The detainees also asked to be allowed to use a tennis court located outside of the enclosure on the station and requested additional space for exercise outside of the white line but within the enclosure.

2. The detainees stated that the services of a camp employee to purchase articles for them at Dallas had been discontinued. They stated that a shopping service was necessary and requested that such a service be established. The Camp Commander informed the representative of the Swiss Legation that this service had been discontinued on account of the lack of transportation facilities and for the reason that it required the full time services of an employee.

3. The

-4-

3. The detainees complained that they did not receive enough green vegetables and that their diet contained too much starch. This matter was discussed with Miss Brooks, the dietician at the camp who it is believed was able to prove to the satisfaction of the representative of the Swiss Legation that this complaint had no foundation.

4. The detainees again complained of the overcrowded conditions in their dormitories. They were informed again that this condition was only temporary and that it was a result of acceding to their many demands for reunion of families when adequate facilities were not available.

5. A number of the detainees asked that their children be permitted to attend a high school at Dallas. Mr. O'Rourke stated that this would be impossible in view of transportation difficulties.

6. The detainees again requested that work for pay outside of the enclosure be made available to them. They were informed that there was no appropriation to pay them for their work and that to secure such an appropriation would require an act of Congress. They were told that this matter was being studied and that it was hoped in the near future they could work for pay.

7. The detainees again asked that experienced teachers among the Germans interned or detained at other camps be transferred to Seagoville and again mentioned three such persons who are presently interned at Stringtown. They were informed again that male internees could not be transferred to Seagoville unless they were accompanied by their wives.

8. The detainees from South and Central America again complained of the delays in the mail to and from the other American Republics. They were told again that this matter was being investigated.

9. The detainees asked that special stationery for use in international mail similar to that supplied in Army Internment Camps be made available to them. They were informed that this matter was being taken care of.

VI. COMMENTS:

There appears to be much discord among the four German spokesmen. This was particularly noticeable during the meetings which were held to discuss camp conditions with the representatives of the Swiss Legation and the Department of State. A lack of cooperation among the German internees and their failure to cooperate fully with the camp authorities was evident as a result. If this situation should continue, it is felt that the duties of the spokesmen should be assumed by the camp authorities as has been done recently at Kenedy with marked success.

The

-5-

The representative of the Swiss Legation expressed his approval of the medical care accorded to the detainees under the direction of Dr. Smith who has now replaced Dr. Sproule. It is to be recalled that a complaint was made by the representative of the Swiss Legation in this regard during a previous inspection of Seagoville.

Parmley W. Herrick
PARMLEY W. HERRICK.