

Febr. 12, 1941

The preparations the Authorities are doing for us, shown, that they also think, we shall have to stay here much longer than we did. They build 2 new hospitals with all comforts, they are further beginning to build roads, a new reading hut, they enlarge the laundry e.t.c.

But we hope, they are wrong. We hope Mr. Layton's arrival will bring a change in the whole matter. The transmigration will begin to get in more, there are secondly some 150 men out of 900 here in camp who are going to join the A.M.P.C. They came to this decision, as they fear, they will have to stay here another year or longer, and as they have no chance to transmigrate to any country and they feel, they would not bear it to stay here longer in this situation. And third, may be, in a year, when most of the transmigrants and the joiner are released and it will remain a rest of about 20-25%, there will arise a possibility to work and to earn a living and may be to get a chance of staying here.

March 17 41

The today's Newspapers are bringing Mr. Roosevelt's full aid pledge in his speech at a dinner of the White House Correspondents' Association. An extract may be mentioned the following sentences which became slogans:

"The British people and their Grecian allies need ships," "From America they will get ships."

They need planes. From America they will get planes.

"Yes, from America they need food, and from America they will get food."

"They need tanks, guns, munitions and supplies of all kinds. From America they will get tanks, guns, munitions and supplies.

The newspapers headlined Roosevelt's message as: "Powerfull, Eloquent Message" or "U.S. Aid Will Beat Dictators," e.t.c.

Roosevelt promises limitless help for Britain. I only hope and wish that the help may come in time what I am anxious for. But, nevertheless, his statement brings a turning-point in the whole war

situation. America can help Britain most in the way of supplying things they need urgently more as if it declares war on Germany.

Nothing of importance happens during the last 2 months in this camp. We get more and more use to this stupid life and are trying always to make the best out of this bad job. Our campschool works fantastically and there are possibilities to learn English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French. There is further a Debating Society, which students of all courses are anxious to attain. In addition to this there are courses in Commercial English and Phonetics and a long row of evening lectures of all kind. One of the most important arrangements is the Library. The Library build up from nothing through a lend – and – borrow – scheme, that only these men are first entitled to borrow books who made a contribution towards the Library in form of a book or money. Later, with the help of outstanding Societies and friends,, the library could provide reading material to all men in the camp, in different languages, so that no one could complain to have nothing to do with his time.

APRIL 12, 1941

Major Layton arrived here on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April, after 3 months of impatient waiting. In 2 minutes time his arrival was known all over the camp. He began immediately to call for some groups of internees. First on the turn were the group of married men, who have still their wives and families in England. He promised them, that they will be given first a chance to return to England in the near future. Then he calls for a group of about 110 men (from Camp N<sup>o</sup>7 and N<sup>o</sup>8) who are or have been of polish nationality. They were told, that their internment has not been (fulfilled) carried out by mistake as they assume it, but to right. He asked everyone whether he is willing to return to England to show his willingness for making good the Governments faults. As one of them declared to be prepared to return, he went into further questions about skilled worker or whether he has no possibility to transmigrate to the US. of America. As consequence, most of them stand back from returning to England. As third group he asked for those people who are willing to join the Pioneer Corps, but have not yet made their decision, because of having to clear up some points. He answered all questions put before him in the way, that all will be all right if they join the P.C. For those who have already enlisted, he brought forms for filling up and promised to speak to them at his next visit.

In his interviews he gave our Camp-leader and the leader of the Transmigration Department, he divided us into 3 groups.

- 1) The Transmigrants
- 2) The Joiner, and
- 3) Highly skilled worker.

The Transmigrants, mainly those groups who intends to go to the U.S.A. Before Major Layton came here he visited the Refugee internees who are interned in Canada. Than he went to New York and Washington where he got in touch with the authorities and Jewish Committees. In Washington, he could not settle all as he wanted to, as the authorities there,, are looking to us as deported enemy aliens to whom they are not willing to give permission to immigrate to the U.S. I am sure Major Layton tried all he could, but could not get through this matter. They promised him to deal in this matter humanily and to give that OK he was waiting for by mail. So he left for Australia. Arrived in Australia, he soon visited the U.S. Consul in Sydney, to see how far papers have been transferred and he himself brought some papers from the U.S. Consul in London. About his interview with the Consul he reported to our Campleader, that the Consulate is not in the position to deal with such a lot of cases, as he was not in an equal situation before. He said, that he asked in Washington for a greater Staff and has to wait for this.

As to those who joined the P.C. he explained that they are part of the British armee. He is not able to say wether they will be trained in Australia or overseas, as this matter has to be arranged with the Australian authorities.

To the skilled worker he suggested to join the P.C. and assured, if there will arrise need for these men, they will be released from the P.C. to work in the armament factories.

17.4.41

Major Layton left today for Sydney and promised to be back in 2 or 3 weeks. He than intends to deal with all cases he could not deal on his first visit and with those whose cases does not come under these 3 main groups. Before he left, he went into the matter of our claimed compensation for the things we have been deprived on the Dunera. He brought printed forms which we had to complete in Triplicate. The form was as follows:

(Note.-Claims will not be considered unless submitted on these forms.)

Claim for Compensation

U.K. INTERNEES

(This form is to be completed by the Internee in Triplicate.)

The Secretary of State,  
Home Office,  
London, England.

I, the undersigned declarant, hereby respectfully claim compensation for loss or damage to personal effects owned by me and shipped on the S.S. "Dunera" from England to Australia on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1940, particulars whereof are set out hereunder.

SURNAME (in Block letters)

CHRISTIAN NAME (in file)

NATIONALITY: PLACE of Birth

Name of Internment Camp in England where first interned: - - - - -

Name of Internment Camp in England where interned immediately before being brought to Australia . . . . .

Total amount of Compensation claimed, sterling £

LIST OF ARTICLES IN RESPECT OF WHICH COMPENSATION IS CLAIMED.

Description of Article. (list separately items "Lost" & "Damaged")	DATE WHEN PURCHASED	PLACE WHERE PURCHASED	Description. of Condition (e.g. new, how long used. etc.	PRICE PAID (MARKS or lira)	AMOUNT CLAIMED (STERLING)  £. s. d.
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Any documents, such as receipts, insurance policies, etc., which would substantiate the claim should be attached and listed here . . . . .

When did you last see the goods claimed as lost? . . . . .

When did you first ascertain the goods were damaged or lost? .....

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When did you first report them as damaged or lost? .....

What goods are included in this claim that were not reported by you on that occasion? ...

.....

Have you made any previous claim for compensation? .....

If so, how much did you claim? (sterling £ ) .....

\_\_\_\_\_  
I, ..... at present am an internee at ..... Internment Camp, in the  
State of .....

Do solemnly and sincerely declare that all the above answers are true and correct in every  
particular.

And I make this solemn declaration by virtue of the Statutory Declaration Act 1917  
conscientiously believing the statements contained therein to be true in every particular.

Declared at .....

the ..... day of ..... 1941

Before me .....

NOTE: - Any person who wilfully makes a false statement in a Statutory Declaration is  
guilty of an indictable offence, and is liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour,  
for four years.

This form was to be filled up within 24hours and was signed before a Justice of Peace and  
in the presens of Major Layton on the next day.

There remains only the hope that our claims will be settled. But, as these forms are to be  
send to London, another 6 months or so will have to pass, before we will get informed,  
how our case stands.

18.4.41

We enjoyed the Passover-Feast in a way as no one would imagine to meet in an  
internment camp. There were three kinds of "Seder" evenings in our camp. (Orthodox,  
liberal, and such who made only the first "Seder" – evening.) About 75% of the camp

inhabitants took part on this festival. It will always remain in my memory, the "Seder" evening we had here. As to the foodstuffs, the Quartermaster were informed a months ago of this feast and that we are not allowed to eat all the foods he delivers usually. So the Authorities supplied us with Passover-Bread, Potatoes, and Fruits in equivalent to the articles we marked as not allowed. Also the Jewish – Welfare Society in Sydney showed for the first time their will to help us. They sent us, after getting special permission, Vine, Passover –flour, fruit, and oil. I am to say, that we had in this week such a lot of good food, that we could not eat it. Our thoughts were at this time with our relatives in Germany and England, who in no way are provided with half of that quantity and quality. And that in an internment camp. I dare say that a lot of people in Europe would be rather more interned in Australia under the same status as we are living here, than living in freedom in Germany or in England. Reached this point I wish to remark immediately, that this is not my way of thinking. I rather would live in freedom and be satisfied with worse food. No one who lives in freedom can understand what it meant, to be interned. We do not know anything about how long we will have to stay here and that is the main reason that some people are getting mental cripples.

Anyway, we had a nice "Passover."

20.4.41

A book with the title "The Internment of Aliens" by F. Lafitte, a Penguin Special reached this week a member of our camp. As this book is dealing with our case, the campschool arranged lectures, on which chapters were read, to give a great lot at one time the chance, to hear what is written in England about this problem. This book deals with the time when the Nazis swept into France after having invaded Belgium and Holland in May 1940 up to September 1940. It mentioned our deportation to Australia, but does not go further into our special case, then at the time when this book were first published, our memorandum had not reached England yet. The author charges the Government for their taking up a wrong attitude towards us. This book is written in such a passion that one can think, the author Mr. Lafitte himself has suffered the same experiences and were interned. Besides that, he must have had in some way connection with the authorities responsible (Home Office, War Office etc) and studied this subject thoroughly. For those who lived through all this, it is a lively account, to from an outsider most possible extent. I only attended two lectures, and I am sorry not to have heard the whole thing as the author describes it.

May 3rd, 1941

The military authorities outside of our camp ordered today, that 100 men, especially those who have no transmigration, to be named on a list. Those hundred will have to go within two days to another camp in Victoria, placed in Tatura. Much excitement arose under the inhabitants of the camp. What does that mean. Does it mean, that the other who have a transmigration will soon be able to emigrate to the place of their destination. If so, no one, who has the intention to transmigrate, want to join the transport. Therefore the camp direction could not get these required 100 men together. Each man, they asked for his preparedness to join this transport, refused to do so. The main reasons were either they feared to loose time in their emigration matter or they did not want to loose friends they made in the past 8 months. So was the case, too, when some comrades of the kosher group, were asked or ordered to join the transport. They refused to agree as they can't expect, as single man, or small group to get kosher meat and food there. Moreover, just this group went through hard times, before all this was granted. The endeavour of the camp-direction was not successful. They, only, had some 85 men on the list. So they were forced to decide that the rest has to be filled up by men of the kosher group. This led to the decision of the kosher group leader, who himself was on the list of those who have to go, because he had no transmigration in the near future, to gather a group and within 10 min. there were 27 men around him, so that others could be freed and the 100 men were together.

These 100 men, met on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup> of May, when they broke off, outside the camp, another 100 men from Camp 8. Just as they went out, news came through, that we, the remainder, will have to follow by next week. When our camp leader asked the camp Commandant whether these rumours are true, he issued an statement, that nothing is true of this kind of rumours, and, so far as he is informed there will be no other transport in the next three months. After this announcement was hanged outside the Headquarter, camplife, grew more and more to his usual character.

May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1941

I only want to mark, that today is the anniversary of my internment. When I got up in the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup> of May, last year, in the Kitchener Camp, I found in astonishment, round the camp soldiers with fixed bayonets. This was the most contrast thing, ever

happened, in history. Apart from about 800 civilians, there lived in the camp more than 1000 men who had joined the A.M.P.C. and stayed there with us during the time of their physical training. It looked like, seen from outside, as "Soldiers guard on Soldiers".

A lot of camps and restrictions. I have gone through this time. Now, I look forward to the time, when I shall be free again, and be able to live in civilisation.

May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1941

The following extract from "THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD" of the today's issue, shows that the Court of Inquiry has been opened, and according to our statements, the commanding Officer and other military personnel have been called for. At this time, letters reached us from comrades who were deported to Canada, that they had nearly the same experience as we made on the Dunera and that uncle Ganew [?] went with them. May be, they had not the same experience or chance to get through to the public, as we did and that only our case is to be dealt with that "Court Martial".

The extract goes as follows:

COURT MARTIAL OF GUARDS  
Alleged Ill-treatment of Internees.

London, May 14, 41

As the result of the report of the court of Inquiry which investigated allegations of ill-treatment to German and Italian internees on the liner "DUNERA", which took them to Australia, the Secretary of War, Capt. H.D.R. Margesson stated that he had ordered the trial by court-martial of the commanding officer of the military personnel on board, and the regimental sergeant major, and a sergeant.

(The Dunera arrived in Sydney from England last September with the first large batch of Germans and Italians for internment in Australia. They were guarded on the voyage by British soldiers. It was announced in the House of Commons in Febr. that investigations were being made into allegations about the conduct of the guards during the voyage.)

May 17, 41

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

INTERNEES MAY BE FREED. MUST RETURN TO ENGLAND.

The Minister for the Army Mr. Spender said last night, that Major Layton, a representative of the British Government, was in Australia to consider the case of aliens who were shipped to Australia after being interned in England and who alleged that they were wrongly detained.

Australia was acting only as the custodian of those internees Mr. Spender said. The question of their release would be determined not by the Australian Government, but by the Officer who had the authority of the British Government to secure the release of internees, brought here from Britain when he considered sent action proper.

If the British Government decides, that any of these aliens should be released, because it had been established in England, they will be released from Australian detention camp, but only so that they can than at once be returned overseas.”

Mr. Spender said: “They will go direct from our internment camp to ship which will take them back to Britain, or to any country which the British Government permits. They will not be permitted to be at large in Australia.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> May we have been informed by the Camp-Commander, that we have to prepare for moving as follows:

200 men, mainly those who are not phisical fit, may enlist on a separate list with the doctor, and will be send to Trange, a camp near Sydney.

Further, all the men who enlisted for the P.C. on a second list. Where these men will be send, is so far, not known.

The remainder will have to go to TATURA, where part of us have been send to, some time ago.

When we read in the newspaper that Italian and most probably German Prisoner of War form the far east are due to arrive in the near future, we knew, that we only have to move in order to make room for this transport.

Today, the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, the commander informed us, that the group for Tatura will leave on Monday the 19<sup>th</sup> of May in the morning at 4 o'clock.

Though we moved from one camp into another, our luggage was searched a day before we went off, and loaded into the train. At 3 o'clock in the morning we had our breakfast. After forming in groups of 50 we left the camp in the dark of the night. We were lucky to leave this camp, though we did not know where we are to come. Anyway, we wanted a change. We left behind us the group of the men who joined the P.C. and, meanwhile was

informed, to prepare for leaving on Wednesday, two days later. Apart from these group, there were the group of the sick people for Orange, who will leave one day later.

We were led by guards to the railway station and boarded the special train. By leaving Hay, I want to recall one thing, which I think is worth to mention and not to be left out. During the time we lived at Hay, our terms to the guards, who were mainly older men, called up especially for guard service, men between 45 to 60 years who served in the last war, were especially good. When time went on, our relations were the more friendly, the more they knew us. It grew as such a position, that the Sergeant-Major, the Corporal and the privates, who were in charge of the inner camp, every day came to visit us in the store, where I worked. We invited them for tea and other dishes, and had on these occasions wonderful talks on various topics. So we got used to one another. As we went off, the abovementioned bid us farewell at the gate, with handshakings like best friends. They hurried to assure us, that they know, they will never again meet such a nice people as we are. They treated us in the best possible way with much understanding. Just these older people, brought for, more will to understand our special situation, as younger would do it. Above these all I can't miss mentioning Major Grace, who was the commander in charge of our camp, during the last 5 months. Since that time I have been interned, I have not met such a correct and nice officer, who troubled himself so much about us and helped where he could.

Nearly one hour after our train left Hay, dawn and sunrise broke through. When I came to Australia last year, I had not the possibility to see much of Australia, because most of the time we went from Sydney to Hay was at night. Moreover, today, I was glad to travel by day, and able to see something of Australia. I wanted to see whatever I could, because I fear, one day I will leave Australia without having had the possibility to see anything. Most of the soil I could see was uncultivated, so called steppe. Vast areas lay down without bringing for foods or other things, it could. The train run sometimes near the Murambidgee, one of the world's largest rivers, which is running through most of Australia. So I was told. We further past the worlds largest sheep-railway –station near Waaga, N.S.W. At one of the railway stations we got, each of us 2 boxes of refreshments, containing Fruit, cakes and sandwiches. Our group of 50 was a kosher one, and as we only made use of the fruit, we gave the other things back to the sentries, who guarded us. They really did not know what to do with such a lot of food. But on the next railway station, they passt it out to some private people.

Our new camp, where we are bound to go to, is situated in the State of Victoria, one of the best cultivated and fruit states throughout the Commonwealth of Australia. The railway station, on the frontier, between New South Wales and Victoria is TOCUMVAL which we reached at about 3 p.m. Here we had to change train. Why?

That is one of the most interesting things in Australia. One must know, that within the Commonwealth of Australia each State governs and works for itself. So it came, that the railway tracks in these States, are different. Since 1850, so I have been informed, negotiations were taken up to solve this problem. But, up to date, they came to no agreement and we had to change, and to reload our luggage. About one mile behind the railway station was a bridge, which we had to pass and which is the real border between N.S.W. and Vic.

Now we went through Victoria with another, much greater speed. Here, one could see on the first glance, as the German say: "Weht ein ganz anderer Wind". Here is quite the contrary of what I described to be in N.S.W. Large fruit plants besides fruit plants, corn, and rice fields are to be seen. Irrigation all over the country which can hold pace with each best cultivated country in Europe. Three hours later we reached the railway-station TATURA. We were loaded in military and private buses and brought to the camp, which we reached after 40 minutes.

Tatura Camp No.2. When we reached this camp, it was again night. After getting off, we were brought in one of the 18 huts. The camp was built according to the same plan as the camp in Hay. Only that the camp was divided into 2 compounds. The other compound was filled on the next evening with about 400 men, from the camp 8 at Hay. As we learnt on that evening, camp 8 had been dissolved in the same way as our camp. Nevertheless, as I already mentioned, the camp was built equal to the Hay'er camps, the huts were built from metal sheets instead of wood. So it was clear, that these huts were much colder as the wooden huts. Before us, German internees, who came with us, and were disembarked in Melbourne, lived here. Altogether, I had not much joy with these camps. Therefore, I was much enjoyed, when, in answer to our request the commander of this camp informed us, that the kosher group of 129 men will leave tomorrow for another camp in Tatura, where, already, about 50 men, those who left us in Hay,, are staying.

We arrived here on the 21 of May and were satisfied with this change. This camp is built in another way. The camp is divided into four sections. Each of 240 men capacity. Each part is separated and one has no connection to the other part. One only can speak to a man in

the other section over a distance of 10 yards, so the only way of speaking is crying (sic). Each section consists of 10 huts of 24 men, and the huts, consists of 12 cubicles of 2 men each. This was the clue of this camp. Two in a room separated from each the other men in the hut, with an extra door to the outside. Wonderful showers and bathing tubes. We were quite satisfied with this improvement, and thought, if it is that we must be interned, we want to stay here. We lived in Section B. 175 men, all men who came here in order to eat kosher food. In Section A. lived the men who left Hay a fortnight ago from camp 7 and camp 8.

I Section C are most non-jewish Refugees from Nazi Oppression, who lived in the first time together with the Nazi-German internees and were later separated on account of quarrels they had with the Nazis.

Now in Section D. Non will believe it, but it is true. Here are interned German refugee families. Men, women and children of all annual sets. These refugees left Germany for years for Shanghai. But on their way to China, they were taken off in Singapore and lived and worked there. Towards the end of the last year, when England began to strengthen Singapore, the refugees were asked to join a transport for Australia, as the Island has to be evacuated. The steamer "Queen Mary", one of the worlds largest passenger boats lay in the harbour and took them on board. They had a wonderful voyage and as they were disembarked, militar guarded them and brought them here. So, they came voluntarily, just as we thought to be free. Some of us met friends and talked over the barbed wire, daily. Some hours we stand there and looked to the children when they played handball. Some children are born in the camp and will most probably get a birth-certificate, which will state, born at Tatura, N<sup>o</sup>3 Internment Camp, Section D. Ein schones start in Leben.

(Unser) Our Campleader got in touch with the authorities to reach for us the same grant for kosher meat as we were lucky to experience at Hay. But, we, surely, will have to wait a long time, as we always have to.

THE ARGUS, MELBOURNE, May 24, 41

INTERNEES IN AUSTRALIA.

Replying to a question, Mr Morrison Home Secretary said in the House of Commons, yesterday, that he would be glad of information concerning reported changes in the treatment of internees, send to Australia. He was expecting an early decision by the

Australian Government on the question of communications by internees with the outside world.

We. Too, would be as much glad as Mr. Morrison would be, to be able to write more letters, and these by air – mail to a cheaper postage as 5. – to 6. –shilling for one letter.

One must know, that we are really cut off from the outside world. Each letter takes 6 to 7 months, untill reply can arrive and thus in a time of technia, where each hour bring news.

May 25<sup>th</sup>, 41

Six men left today for England. They are first gathered in the camp in Liverpool near Sydney. All are married men and have their families in England. The whole transport makes the total of 250 men. They all hope to be freed in England and to live together with their families and to be able to work again. These are the reasons which caused these men to go back, though there is a great deal of peril, as about 40% of all ships are being sunk.

May 26, 41

THE SUN NEWS PICTORIAL  
MAIL TO INTERNEES IN AUSTRALIA –

- No longer postfree.

Ordinary international postage and registration fees and conditions nor apply to mails (parcels) posted in Australia to prisoner of war or civilian internees in the Commonwealth.

Formerly mail not more than 1lb. in weight was transmitted free, the Postal Department announced on Saturday.

Two days earlier we hoped to get permission to write more letters and these to a special cheaper fee. The todays announcement says quite the contrary.

The Argus on May 27, 41

MORE ITALIAN PRISONERS LANDED IN SYDNEY

Sydney, Tuesday. – More Italian prisoners of war have been disembarked in Sydney and sent to the prison camp, where they will live in compounds until the end of the war. Camp will be of the hutted type, as that prepared to accommodate enemy internees from Britain earlier in the war. Prisoners disembarked included 4 medical officers and one priest, and the doctors will be used for medical service in camps.

An officer of the military police rushed after one man who was carrying what appeared to be a camera case slung over his back. It contained soap, a toothbrush, and toothpaste. Ship's guards said, the prisoners were clean and delighted to have a chance to wash their clothes. Only one man showed resentment. He tried to refuse the burgundy coloured great-coat passed to him by a guard, and made gestures indicating disapproval of the garment.

Though the prisoners do not speak English, they are learning fast. "How's Musso?" asked one of the guards, who stood with fixed bayonets by the gangway. "Good" came the prompt reply. Another held up the tin pannican [pannikin], and asked hopefully "beer". Several wrapped their pannicans in newspaper to keep them clean.

A report spread among prisoners that only those without overcoats would get a Commonwealth burgundy greatcoat. Many promptly abandoned their tattered Italian coats on the ferry. Several also abandoned badly worn boots for Australian Military boots.

#### GUARDS URGENTLY NEEDED

Response to the Army's appeal for 800 garrison battalion men to guard prisoners of war had fallen below expectations, Southern Command announced yesterday.

Returned soldiers between 45 to 55, rifle club members, and others with military experience, are urgently needed for this work. Officials indicated that if the response did not improve Militia units might be called upon to guard war prisoners.

#### MEN TO BE PUT TO WORK

CANBERRA, Tuesday. – "Prisoners of war arriving in Australia from overseas will be put to work, but the nature of the work has not been determined," Mr. Spender, Army Minister, said today. If the men were left idle they would almost certainly become demoralised. The type of work and payment would be determined by the Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war, to which Australia had subscribed. The convention was being examined, and he expected to make a statement soon. The care for the real prisoner of war, seems to become different from that we experienced. They was no fear, that we, who have been interned innocently, would become demoralised. In some way, they are right, we already are in that state. We have been smuggled into this country under the name "Enemy Aliens". Now as the

British Government don't see any reason for releasing us. They say, that does not help us, if you admits your mistakes. Take them back. As this is not such an easy job now, and is combined with peril, we are kept behind barbed wire. We only can hope, the Australian and British Governments will come to an agreement in our matter, and to end this terrible situation.

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"THE ADVOCATE" MOELBOURNE

MAY 29, 41

(CATHOLIC PAPER)

German Internees In Australia.

A PLEA FOR JUSTICE.

At the present time, Australian prison camps contain 2000 Germans, deported from England, nearly all of whom are accepted as "anti- Nazi" by the British authorities. More than 1700 of whom are under Military control at Hay, N.S.W., and others at Tatura, VIV.. Most of them were sent here in the "Dunera" last September. Their despatch is now admitted to have been a mistake, while scandalous episodes connected with their voyage have been subject of a debate in Parliament and a court of inquiry, as a result of which an officer and two of the N.C.O's in charge of them have been ordered to appear before a court-martial.

Besides this, the release of 250 of them has been ordered by the Home Office. – but not carried out. Some 800 have visas to U.S.A., 400 are boys of 16 -19, who were at school or universities in England. About 250 were in German concentration camps before taking refuge in flight abroad. All these, after eight months, are still enduring imprisonment, they cannot be taken to England or America because of the shipping difficulties. Many, when arrived here, were sick, - few had any clothes except those they were wearing. Their equipment fit[for?] the Reverina [Riviera?] summer was quite insufficient, and personal requirements, - such as razors and toothbrushes – unprovided. These unfortunates' wives and families have not been permitted to join them, they live in huts, subject to rigid military discipline and are under strictly prison conditions as regards interviews with friends or relatives. They are only allowed out of camp when they are in working parties, under armed guards.

Here surely is a matter, which should be the object of careful enquiry here except in the case of those whose release has already been ordered in England, whom there can

be no possible reason for detaining. Five hundred at Hay have actually volunteered to serve in a P.C. in theatres of war overseas. There are many others, too, who are both able and willing to help in the Australian war effort, others, who can not be "useful" by reason of age, weakness or lack of skill, have still every right to the liberty enjoyed by men who are neither our enemies nor offenders against our laws. We profess that our Commonwealth is fighting for justice and freedom. If we care seriously for those values, it is up to us to prove our sincerity by applying our principles in the case of these unhappy men, instead of continuing the oppression which they have already suffered at the hands of the tyranny from which we seek to deliver the world.

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This article caused the Council of Civil Libertier to interfere, at their annal meeting, in our matter. The following statement were printed in the Newspapers, which deals our matter in the same way as the above article.

THE AGE, FRIDAY, MAY 30, 41

#### ALIEN REFUGEES

Efforts to secure release.

Complaints were made at the annual meeting of the Council of Civil Liberties last night that thousands of innocent alien refugees from England, many of them anti-Fascists, were interned in Australia.

The Secretary (Mr. B. Fitzpatrick) said 2000 refugees had been sent out from England and were in two internment camps, but the authorities would not release them, even on the best of recommendations. There were about 400 between 16 years and 19 years of age, who had been attending English public schools and universities at the outbreak of war, but their release could not be secured. Archbishop Mannix informed the council that he was interested in two boys who were Austrians, but he had been unable to induce the authorities to allow them to continue their education. The treasurer (Mr Fadden) promised to take the matter up with the Minister of the Army, and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Curtin) and other Federal-Members consented to make enquiries. Mr. F. Mc.Kellar said one internee was a former editor of an anti – Nazi newspaper who had to leave the Continent when France fell. That man was a member of the P.E.N. Club, and the P.E.N. Club of New York would be pleased to receive him, but the man was not allowed to

write to the club to make the necessary requirements. He (Mr. Kellar) was pleased that Federal members were to inquire into the matter.

. - .

There seems to be a beginning stage of going into our matter. But, according the speed the authorities are working, I am sure, there will pass another ½ year or more before a single relief will be granted to us. Nevertheless, we are thankful, that there are some prominent men interested in our case and prepared to do something to get us out.

#### THE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH NEWS

MELBOURNE, MAY 30, 41

#### Jewish Position in Germany

200.000 left of 750.000

A poignant survey of the Jewish position in Germany was given by Mrs. Recha Freier, the head of the Youth Alijah in Germany. She stated that only 200,000 out of 750,000 Jews who had formerly lived in Germany and Austria are now left in those countries. The Jews left behind were devoid of all hope of existence and waiting only for death.

The majority of the 1,500 Polish Jews who had been living in Germany at the outbreak of the war, Mrs. Freier stated had died in concentration camps.

. - .

What a feeling I had after reading this article, can't be described. Owing to his former Polish nationality, which has been declared, by the Polish Government, as out of order, before the outbreak of this war, my father has been brought to the German concentration camp – "Sachsenhausen". The cruelties, which former inmates of this camp had had experienced are well known all over the world. And now, my dear father, has to go through such tortures. My thoughts are at day and night with him. I pray and hope to our Lord to give him the strength to get over this time and to enable him to live in freedom again with us.

THE ARGUS, MELBOURNE

June 4th, 41

#### PRISONERS TO WORK

Low rate of Pay

Italian and German prisoners of war who are brought to Australia for internment will be made to work. This announcement was made yesterday by Mr. Spender, Army Minister, who said their employment would be strictly in accord with Geneva Convention provisions.

The prisoners would be paid, but the rate would be very small. Details of the work had not been decided, and problems associated with effective supervision would greatly influence the selection of localities in which the work was to be done.

"I should be obvious," Mr. Spender added, "that if the men are left milling around and doing nothing, they will become demoralised."

Interned enemy aliens who were not prisoners of war would not be put to work in the same way as war prisoners, Mr. Spender said. Under international conventions, internees could be employed only on camp maintenance.

. - .

This article shows again, that the authorities are anxious to avoid, that the prisoners of war, would become demoralised. No one cares for us and our mental position at the whole. And again, the Army Minister, Mr. Spender calls us "enemy aliens". In spite of the declaration by British Offices, that we are "friendly aliens" and more than that, are "Refugees from Nazi – Oppression," Mr. Spender takes no notice from that. We have been smuggled in under the mask of – enemy aliens – and he, therefore will not agree with any correction of our status. And just the status, is our main trouble. Major Layton has been sent by the British Government to clear this matter. To clear our "status". To see that we can immigrate to the U.S. And to see to settle the claims we made out of the "Dunera" case. And what has he done of all this, since he arrived here, some 2 months ago? Nothing!!!

4.6.41

Rabbi Gurwitz from Melbourne visited our camp, today. In his accompaniment were two militas, a Lieutenant and the Intelligent Sergeant to overhear all his talks. Rabbi Gurwitz came from a orthodox jewish congregation, which helped us, especially the kosher group, enormously.

10.6.41

So far, we believed, in a short time will that O-K from Washington come. We were assured, Mr. Layton works on this point, as before, with all his powers. But today, a comrade got a letter from the American Consul at Sydney, in which he stated: "Owing to your internment the Consul General is not in a position to state, at the present time, when final action may be taken in your case." This says clearly enough, that we have no hope of getting the visa as long as we are interned.

. - .

Major Layton arrived this morning at No.3 Camp. He called for the Leaders of the Sections (A to C) and informed them of the following: "The men who left for England are on their way." He further said, that he had an interview with the American Consulate at Sydney. He regrets to have to inform us, that nothing came out of this talk. He wants to state, that he is able to bring us as free men before the Consul, but he (the Consul) is not able to issue the visas according to his remark, made some time ago, that he is awaiting an answer, he asked for, from Washington. He further added, that the matter has been taken out of his hands and those of his colleague Mr. Patterson, who has been sent to Canada in the same mission, and that the British as well as the American Governments, respective the departments, are dealing with our case. ~ Just, when the camp-leader came back into the camp, the newspaper arrived, and the following article could be read:

THE SUN, JUNE 19, 41

THURSDAY

#### AMERICAN BAN ON REFUGEES –

And Why.

Washington –Wednesday

A.A.P.- An official announcement says the State Department has flatly instructed its representatives throughout the world to refuse visas to refugees with close relatives in Germany or German-controlled territories.

This departure from the traditional policy of providing refuge for the oppressed is a consequence of the Nazi custom of forcing refugees to become spies through threats against, or actual torture of, close relatives.

The State Department realises that the decision debars many otherwise eligible immigrants, but says, it is necessary in view of evidence that such terrorism has often worked to Germany's advantage.

Great excitement arose amongst the inmates of the camp. This article brought the end of the hope and ability to immigrate to the U.S.A, as nearly 60-70% of us have close relatives in Germany or in German occupied territories. Just a day before I got a letter from the American Consul at Sydney, stating that my dossier has been transferred from London to his Sydney – Office. Now as all seems to be out, Major Layton said, he is able to bring us as free men before the Consul at Sydney. We still do not believe it, as we have here some men whose wives are already in the U.S.A. and who have no more relatives in Germany. Why, does he, Major Layton not bring these people to the American Consul to prove his statement. The main trouble is, that the Australian authorities look at us as a deported and not evacuated aliens. Why did Major Layton during his staying in Australia not bring the truth forth. If the Australian Government will have been informed about this, we have a chance to be allowed to correspond with whom we want and more letters weekly. A day later Major Layton came up to our camp to speak with some internees who asked for an interview. Here, again, the whole tragic of the Jewish fate run before him, that he must have been impressed, to promise to do all he can.

The Argus, SATURDAY, June 21, 1941

#### INTERNEES WANT TO AID WAR EFFORT.

CANBERRA, FRIDAY- Employment in Australia's war effort of internees whose release has been recommended and who are anxious to remain in Australia and assist the war effort, will be discussed between Mr. Spender, Army Minister, and Mr. Holt, Labour Minister. As a result of investigations by Major Layton, who was sent out from Britain, said Mr. Spender, internees had been classified as follow: -

- 1) Those who should be interned for security reasons;
- 2) Those, who should not be interned and wanted to return to Britain; and
- 3) Those who should not be interned but wanted to stay and help in the war-effort.

It seemed foolish not to use the men who had been given a perfectly clean bill by the British Government. No man about whom there was the slightest shadow of doubt would be used.

No shipping was available for others who wanted to go back to Britain, and there were obvious difficulties about releasing them.

When Layton left us a day before, no one had any hope of being able to go over to the U.S. No one had any hope of being released in Australia, and there is no hope, that the war is soon over, so this meant, we shall have to stay here for the duration of the war. Now, the todays article brings some hope of being released in Australia. Though I know, I will have to wait another 6 months, before any release in Australia will be granted. Despite of the war, where men are urgentey needed in some industries, we are always told: wait!!!

June 27, 1941

Since I left England I had no mail from my brother Artur from Palestine. Today a letter reached me, form which I must learn, that he joined the British Forces, and is in an artisian-works-coy. [Artisian Works Company, Royal Engineers] This was most surprising to me and I could not help, to lie down on my bed and weeping. 18 months ago, when I mentioned to him, that I intend to join the A.M.P.C., he wrotes back, not to do so, and illustrated this by mentioning,: who will give it back if you lose an eye or one foot. That, now, just he has joined the Army, was a great surprise to me which I could not understand. Only if I think, that he finished school and had no chance to get a job, because of the war, I try to understand his step. I further know the methods, very well, from my own experience, by which young men in his situation are driven to join the Army, as they are given as answer to all questions or steps they want to take up, and are in some way dependent on authorities of societies: "join the army and everything will be alright". I am not going to reproach him this all, as it is too late. When Layton was here and we had to learn from his explanations that he can't help us in any way, we asked him to allow us, to contact with President Roosevelt ourself. First, he refused to do it and as we later explained our reasons, he could not help saying us, do, what you think best. So we went on in forwarding the following cable and £ 7.-.- the cost of this, has been collected.

"CABLE TO PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

We are about 200 religious Jews escaped from Nazi Germany after most terrible persecutions. =

For a long time registered for U.S.A. we had to wait for visas and meanwhile found temporary shelter in England with the purpose of immigrating to the U.S.A. = A year ago through unfortunate circumstances we were interned during wholesale

internment and sent to Australia on board "Dunera" = Released for U.S.A. but kept interned until receive visas =

We hold affidavits and fulfil all conditions for immigration =

Home Office recognised us unreservedly as reliable friendly aliens =

Most of us have relatives in U.S.A. =

All the same we have not yet received visas =

Most deeply desperate we appeal to you as leader of a great nation which regards as noble task to receive innocent persecuted people to all our long hoped for immigration into your country so as to become good citizens of your state. =

Urgently we appeal that our last hope may not be destroyed and that Sydney – Melbourne Consuls General be authorised to issue visas thus terminating our misery. =

. - .

But the Commander refused to allow us to forward the before mentioned cable, after he, as he said, connected with the Southern Command.

THE SUN, NEWS-PICTORIAL, June 26, 41

U.S. IMMIGRATION CHANGES

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, A.A.P.

New immigration regulations, which come into force on Tuesday make the entry of immigrants contingent on their suitability to the national defence programme.

In ?????, all applications for visas will be considered by a committee composed of representatives of the State, War, Navy and Justice Department.

. - .

This means another 3 to 4 months of waiting for those who have no relatives in Germany and hoped to get over soon. The same technic is used, since long ago, by the South-American States.

. - .

On account of the new introduced immigration laws, we got new forms to fill up and to forward to Mr. Brand, the liason officer between us and the American Consulate at Sydney. The looks as follows:

MOSES CHAIM GRUNBAUM

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR APPLICANTS FOR VISAS

The questions asked below should be answered carefully and in full details. No spaces should be left blank.

1. I have the following close relatives:

NAME	CITY or town and country in which at present resident:
a) FATHER: Naftali Gruenbaum	Concentration Camp Sachsenhausen, Germany
b) MOTHER: Rifka Gruenbaum	Berlin, Germany
c) WIFE: nil	
d) CHILDREN: nil	
e) Brothers: Ira Gruenbaum	New York, Brooklyn, U.S.A.
"M. Joses Gruenbaum	RIO DE JANEIRO, BRASIL
"ARTUR Gruenbaum	British Forces, Middle East

"Isaak Gruenbaum	Abergele, N. Wales, England
f) Sisters: M. Rosa Gruenbaum	London, N.19, England, Nurse

(The words "deceased" or "Nil" should be used in appropriate instances above. The present whereabouts should be based on the last available information recovered by the applicant).

2. My description is:

(a.) Height: 5/6

(b.) Weight (in pounds): 152lb = 10 ½ stone approx.

(c.) Color of hair: fair

(d.) Color of eyes: blue

(e.) Complexion: pale

(f.) Scars, marks Appendicitis -

or identifying Operation Scar

features:

3. My activities during the last five years have been: Up to August 1939 as independent butcher and sausage maker. August 39 till May 1940 Kitchener Camp. From May 1940 up to date interned.

4. I intend to be engaged in the following activities in the UNITED STATES: ~~If possible butcher and sausage maker~~ – ~~Otherwise~~ To make my home with my cousin Charles Loevner, Pittsburgh, Pa. – ~~I am prepared to work in the National Defence Programme~~

5. I have been known by the following names (other than my present true and legal name) (include professional names, nicknames, and aliases): Only Moses Chaim Gruenbaum

6. My military or naval service has been: No service ..... From: date ..... To date .....

DATE: 4 July, 41

SIGNATURE: Moses Chaim Grunbaum

. - .

Just as we were sending them to Mr. Brand, news reached us not to do so. Without reason! What may that be? It may be true, that these forms are the work of Mr. Brand and not from the American Consulate, and he thought of something better, when informing us not to forward the forms. We shall have to wait and to see what this meant.

July 4, 41

In this time of uncertainty and given up all hope, I received new affidavits which I asked for on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, when I thought they will enable me to go over. I am most crossed about it, as the affidavits are, wonderful, I must say, and would not need any further support by others.

July 7, 41

Statement of Mr. Herbert Morrison

Home Secretary on 14<sup>th</sup>, May 1941

(Extract from a letter of Mr. Brand to our emigration Department.)

“ . . . . . the internment was of precautionary character and was not intended to imply, and did not in fact imply, any reflection upon any loyal and friendly alien, who was interned in pursuance of general directions. In no case has the release of an internee been authorised, wether for immigration or for any other reason, unless His Majesty's Government had reached the conclusion after investigation that the alien might be at liberty in this country without prejudice to the interests of National Security.”

. - .

July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1941

According the announcements of the newspapers, regarding the new Immigration laws of the U.S. a Memorandum reached us today, from the American Consul at Sydney which states, that all affidavits are now valueless.

The memorandum is as follows:

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

7 Wynyard Street, Sydney, Australia

## MEMORANDUM FOR APPLICANTS FOR IMMIGRATION VISAS

(Unnecessary delay and needless expense will be avoided by reading this memorandum carefully).

A new procedure relation to the immigration of aliens in to the United States has been instituted as of July 1, 1941. All cases of all applicants for immigration visas (wether or not application was made before July 1, 1941), except as noted below, must now be submitted to the Department of State, Washington, D.C. for preliminary consideration before they may be given final consideration at a consular office.

Procedure: There must be submitted to the Department of State on behalf of each applicant a biographical statement on Form B, and two affidavits of support and sponsorship on Form C or two affidavits of sponsorship on Form D in the cases of persons not requiring assurance of support in the United States. Applicants should advise their sponsors in the United States to obtain these forms from the Department of State. Form B should be completed by the interested person in the United States most familiar with the applicant's history and background. Children under 18 years of age may be included in forms covering an accompanying parent. Affidavits on forms C and D may cover members of an immediate family group proceeding together to the United States. The affidavits on form C should be prepared by American citizens or by aliens lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence.

All cases will be considered in Washington by a special committee and an appropriate communication will be sent to the consular office where the alien's case is being considered. The alien will, however, not be invited to make formal application for a visa until satisfactory evidence is submitted of reasonable expectation of obtaining an exit permit, and of having definite reservations for transportation within the period of the validity of the visa.

The only exception to the above outlined procedure is in the case of certain native born citizens of countries of the Western Hemisphere.

After these new procedure is the only way to get over to the U.S. I fear, that none of us will be able to immigrate to the U.S. as it looks like, that the United States will soon be an active partner in the war.

July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1941

Today I got in the possession of an extract of a debate in the House of Commons on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 1941 which I find worth to be taken down here.

#### HANSARD ALIENS (Treatment of ships)

Mr. Wedgewood. – About 5 weeks ago I received from the Governor General of Australia a letter covering a letter of Bishop Tucker, and including a report drawn up by the Society of friends and others, who was visited Refugee Camps in Australia, concerning the passage of the steamship “DUNERA,” loaded with 2400 Refugees from this country to Australia. By the same mail I received a considerable number of other letters including cutting from Newspapers. I mentioned that because I think two things are to be recorded at once, in the first place, that a certain amount of publicity has been given to this report already in Australia, and secondly that the reaction in Australia was extremely creditable to that country, to the press and to the public here. They felt very strongly what occurred to be a slur upon this country.

It was also felt that the Government in this country ought to do something to put the matter right at the earliest moment. I took the correspondence to the Secretary of State for the Dominions, and he advised me to take it to the Home Office. Thence it went to the War Office and immediately the Secretary of State for war decided to appoint a court of Inquiry into the whole affair, the Court to be appointed as soon as the people, who were charged with the responsibility for what happened got to this country. I need not go fully into the case, which is very unpleasant. Sufficient it to say that the Refugees on board the “Dunera” were mostly Jews belonging to class “C” that is to say friendly Jews. There were 2400 in a ship, which was suitable for carrying only half that number. They were robbed by the soldiers in charge and battened down, being allowed up on deck only on certain occasions. In fact conditions were both unjust and inhuman on board of that ship, especially so, as it was reported to me, that in the other ship, which went to Australia conditions were unpleasant, but quite in accordance with what one would expect from the British Army and British Tradition.

This Court of Inquiry has not yet been set up, and I want to urge on His Majesty’s Government the need for three things. In the first place I think there must be a certain degree of publicity; at least the findings of this Court must be published. Only that will satisfy public opinion in Australia and in this country. It will be good, because it is important, that we should show the world, that when anything of this sort has been done

by people in British Service, direct action is taken by this House and by the Government in order to prevent its happening again, and to compensate the victims. I believe, publicity is possible in an democratic country and it is certainly desirable. Do not let this be a hole and corner affair, so that anybody can charge us with the desire of trying to conceal what is unpleasant in our conduct. We must show the world that we are not afraid of people knowing what has happened and what steps the Government has actually taken.

Therefore, publicity is extremely important. I would also urge that there should be on the Court not merely Officials of the Government, but some independent persons of judicial mind, whose report will carry weight. Thirdly, and perhaps most important of all, I think there should be evidence given, not only from the defendant's point of view, but from the point of view of the victims themselves.

I do not think it is enough simply to take sworn statements. Steps should be taken to return to this country at once a certain number of Refugees, who have suffered so that they can be cross-examined on their sworn statements – although I know this will delay the findings of the Court of Inquiry – and so that they may have the satisfaction of feeling that their side of the case has been stated as well as it could be in the circumstances. Whether, in addition to this, there should be representation of the victims by lawyers, I do not know, but I am certain that mere sworn statements should not be considered sufficient and that, even of the cost of delay some of these people should be brought back to give evidence.

As to the terms of reference, it is very important that the Court of Inquiry should deal not merely with the rights or wrongs of the case and whether punishment of any sort is required, but also make recommendation for the compensation of the people, who have been robbed. They cannot be compensated for the inhumanity, but they can be compensated for the injustice and the watches, wedding rings and money, that have been taken from them should, as far as possible, be restored to them. I think must come within in the surview of the Court of Inquiry.

There is one small action that ought to be taken before the Court of Inquiry is held. Some steps ought to be taken to get some money to these Refugees, who are now penniless in Australia. To have no money, even to buy razor blades, cigarettes, newspapers or postage stamps is a terrible position for them. Their money has been taken from them. I think the Government might arrange for them to have some small sum each week, pending to the decision of the Court of Inquiry. This would certainly make life easier for them, and I believe it would have a very good effect in Australia, if something of this sort were done.

People in Australia constantly visit those camps now. They are looking after their duty to the Refugees in Australia much better, than we have done here. They have constantly in their mind their duty to these friendly aliens. If some small cash allowance could be made to this people immediately as an instalment on any claim they may have, it would have a very good effect.

But there is more involved now. Since the case of the "DUNERA" going to Australia, there has been the case – not equally shocking, but shocking – of the "ETTRICK" going to Canada. I have not seen sworn statements regarding the Ettrick, but the accounts I have really call for an enquiry as well. I do not know what steps the Government are taking to get any evidence about the Ettrick. The Officers are here and the Government know their side of the case. The one statement containing details which I have had about the Ettrick was signed and was in a form of a diary. It was very unpleasant reading, but when I thought of sending it to the War Office, I was immediately told, that it could not be used. There is not unnatural nervousness on the part of these people. I asked, that when the case of the DUNERA is being inquired into, something should be said and done about the Ettrick at the same time, and that any steps taken in the case of the DUNERA should also be taken in the case of the ETTRICK.

I do not want the House to imagine for one moment that either the case of the "DUNERA" or the "ETTRICK" are typical of what goes on board our ships. You always have a few brutes in any service. Fortunately we can deal with them in this country, not as in Germany. The British soldier and officer, particularly in the Pioneer Corps, are behaving almost with affection towards these unfortunate Refugees. Commandants in camps here are being extremely British. But we do get these bad cases and if we stand on them we stop them elsewhere. I am afraid that there may be even now in ships upon the seas conveying Italian prisoners, for instance, to South Africa or India, the same sort of thing happening. Steps ought to be taken right away to show the Government's determined disapproval of this sort of thing and do make it quite clear to any Military in charge of Prisoners or Refugees, wherever they may be, that any unhumanity, robbery or "souvenir-ing" as ever it is called is criminal and will be sternly punished. It is because all of us in this House uphold, as best we can, the honour of this country, that these questions have to be brought up. It is because we bring them up here, that these cases are rare. I beg the Government to take advantage of the fact, that we are still a free democracy where these

things can be brought up, and to make quite certain, by expressing publicly their desestation [detestation] and horror that such things do not occur again.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. Richard Law): -

My Rt. Hon. friend, the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Mr Wedgewood) has spoken on this rather disagreeable matter with great moderation and feeling. I rather wish that it had not been necessary to have a debate, even a short one, upon this subject, because I would not like the idea to get about that there was any division between the views of my Rt. Hon. Friend and the view of the Government, if these allegations were proved to be true. My Rt. Hon. Friend said that he wished the Government would state its detestation of these occurances. It is impossible to say anything specific while this matter is still sub judice, and it would be unfair to do so. I am sure, that my Rt. Hon. Friend will find that the Government, if these allegations should be proved would detest them quite as much as he. My Rt. Hon. Friend devoted the earlier part of his remarks to an appeal for the fullest possible publicity to be given to any inquiry there might be on the case of the "DUNERA". I wish I could persuade him that that is not necessarily the right attitude to follow in case of this kind. My Rt. Hon. Friend said perfectly truly, that this was a democratic country and that in a democracy the fulliest possible publicity was required. It is perfectly true, that this is a democratic country, but, unfortunately, it is not a democratic world, and if the allegations are proved to be well founded, I can foresee certain definite disadvantages in washing our dirty linen in public in a world which contains enemies as well as friends. My Rt. Hon. Friend also said, he was quite certain, that the case of the DUNERA was not typical or characteristic of what was happening. To publish every detail of an inquiry that could be made, would be construed in enemy countries and in enemy propaganda as an admission of guilt not applying to a particular case, but generally to the British character and the British way of waging a war. I think that the Rt. Hon. Gentleman would agree that this is extremely undesirable. When he first brought up the case, the Secretary of State said, that certain preliminary investigations were in hand and when they were completed, he would know wether or not there was a prima facie case for an inquiry and he promised if a prima facie case was established that inquiry there should be. I want to comment to the very minimum of the case at the present moment, but I can tell the House that this preliminary investigations have been completed; that there is a case for inquiry and furthermore it is clear, that some, if not all of these internees of that ship, have suffered

loss. These two things have been established by the preliminary inquiry so far as it has gone.

I am going to say a word about the Court of Inquiry. If we establish a Court of Inquiry it will be held in secret and it will be months before it completes its inquiry. In fact, it may prove impossible to complete until the end of the war. Essential witnesses may have to be gathered from every corner of the globe: they are not only in Australia, some are in India, some in Africa, and some at the moment are sailing the tropical seas. To wait until these witnesses are gathered before the Court of Inquiry might take months or longer. It might be impossible while the war is going on, but I am informed by the Judge Advocats-General that it may be possible – he can not give me an assurance - to institute court martial proceedings without the establishment of the court of Inquiry. If that should prove to be possible, I suggest, that it is a more realistic fulfilment of the pledge of the Secretary of State to hold an inquiry which might carry in for months.

With regard to Compensation, if a Court of Inquiry is held, it will carry on for a long time, and if we fulfil our original intention of waiting until the Court has completed its proceedings before considering the question of compensation, that would have the effect of putting these unfortunate people into a very difficult and even impossible position. They might have to wait until the end of the war before any compensation was paid. Accordingly my Rt. Hon. Friend has decided that that would be an impossible course to follow and he is going to see what steps he can take to provide a much more immediate reparation for these people in in Australia without waiting for the result of any court or any disciplinary action that may be taken here. I cannot say at this moment exactly what steps we can take, but I think I can say, that we will see, that the compensation is made as expeditiously and as justly as possible. There will be no waiting for the collection of evidence before this is done. It may prove to be a little costly to the Exchequer, but we have thought and I feel quite rightly, that in a case of this kind it is better to clear our good name, even if it is perhaps a little expensive, than to wait and have this business dragging on for months with quite unjustifiable reflections upon your good name and character in the meanwhile. I hope I have said enough. -

EARL WINTERTON (Horsham and Worthing): -

I hope the Hon. Gentleman will deal with the part of the Rt. Hon. Gentleman's speech which was concerned with the future. I would suggest that he should give an assurance that the most strict instructions will be given to officers and men in charge of all prisoner

ships that it is a military offence which will be severely punished for them to “swag” – to use a schoolboy term – any articles with prisoners or to buy any articles from prisoners or to sell them.

MR. LAW: -

If it has not already been made perfectly clear to officers, guards, and crews on these ships, I think I can say that it will definitely be made clear, and that everything will be done to see that the instruction is not ignored and that there is no repetition of unpleasant incidents of the kind referred to. I hope that the House will feel that the steps taken to provide immediate compensation for those who have suffered – when I say “immediate” I do not mean at this moment, but in a very short time – and the steps taken to see that where disciplinary action is merited it is meted out, the War Office has dealt with this matter as Hon. Members would wish it to be dealt with, and in a way, which will clear the good name of this country from any imputations that may have been put upon it. With regard to the ETTERICK, which was mentioned by my Rt. Hon. Friend, as that has not to be the subject of this debate. I cannot say very much about it without more notice, but I can say that the same principles which have activated us in this case will move us in that one, and that we shall act as quickly as we can.

MR EDMUND HARVEY (Combined English Universities)

I think the whole house will feel relieved and thankful for the spirit in which the Financial Secretary has dealt with this most delicate, difficult and painful subject. I am very glad also that he was able to give the assurance he did in reply to the noble Lords. I am sure, that all who are troubled about what happened owe a debt to my Rt. Hon. Friend the Member of Newcastle-under-Lyme (Mr. Wedgewood) for the way in which he has raised this difficult matter and the confidence he expressed in the general spirit which I feel certain will be shown in the proceedings which are to take place. As one of those members who have received a number of letters from internees and friends of internees. I should like to say how widespread will be the thankfulness among the poor people at the statement that reparation is to be made. I am sure, that will be deeply appreciated and that they appreciate even more than any momentary compensation the way the spirit in which the matter has been dealt with by the Government this afternoon. On behalf of many who cannot speak here I should like to thank the Financial Secretary and the Government for their attitude.

MR. MENDER (Wolverhampton, East): -

In reference to that part of the speech of my Hon. Friend in which he spoke of the question of the "ETTRICK", I was glad to learn that he is thinking of dealing with it on the same principles. I have had the opportunity of reading a number of statements which have been sent by Refugees who have come back into this country. Something like 300 of these Refugees are available here to give evidence, and many of them are prepared to say exactly what has happened. I have sent these statements to the War Office, and I know that they are being considered at the present time.. I hope that, by Court of Inquiry, or possible by court martial, suitable action will be taken. To one thing which has arisen in this connection I would call attention and that is that some of the lower grade officials concerned have been saying to internees who have been come back: "You had better keep your mouth shut, or you may get into trouble; you may get interned again". I hope the Government will take an early opportunity of saying that there is not the slightest foundation for any statement of that kind and that, if any of the refuges feel that they would like to give evidence or are asked to do so, they are perfectly free to do so in this free country.

THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

811,11 –RAK:og SYDNEY, Australia, July 11, 1941

Mr M. LISSAUER, Camp Spokesman,  
Internment Camp N<sup>o</sup>. 3, Section B  
TATURA, Vic.

Sir:

Your letter of July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1941 has been read with careful and sympathetic attention.

While the Consulate General appreciates the difficulties of the situation in which you and your 200 fellow internees find yourselves, it is not in a position to be of any assistance to you at the present time. The matter of your original internment in England and of your continued internment in Australia is one of British and Australian jurisdiction and policy.

Major Layton, the British representative, and Mr. Walter L. Brand, General Secretary of the Australian Jewish Welfare Society, who is at present acting as Major Layton's liason officer,

as well as numerous internees and persons inquiring on their behalf, both in Australia and elsewhere, have been informed on a number of occasions that neither this office nor the American Consulate at Melbourne may accept a formal visa application in the case of any internee. Certain matters relating to internee visa applications in general are now under consideration, and no formal application may be accepted in any of these cases until such consideration has been concluded and a decision has been reached. A recent letter from this office addressed to the Emigration Department of Section B, Internment Camp No. 3, explained the actual situation in this regard.

With particular reference to your suggestion that you might telegraph the President of the United States, you are informed that the Department of State in Washington has been given full details regarding the situation as it affects you and your fellow internees. Any important development that might influence your prospective application are reported to the Department by telegram as they occur. While you desire to communicate direct with the President is understood, it is believed that it would not serve any useful purpose and the Consulate General may not recommend such procedure. Cables addressed to the President of the United States from aliens outside the United States are referred to the Department of State which in turn refers them to the consular office which is handling the case of the interested persons. That consular office than makes an appropriate reply to the sender.

Very truly yours

For the Consul General

sgt. Randolph A. KIDDER

American Vice Consul.

This letter states clearly, that above the new immigration law there is one thing which has not yet been cleared up by the British Government, that is our internment, which bars us from getting our visa. It is the more regrettable as Major Layton has been send over by the British Government to clear just this point: "our status". But though he is already here about 4 ½ months and stayed in Canada as well as in U.S.A. nothing has come out of his endeavour.

I decided to apply at the Under-Secretary of State for my release to go back to England as a free man. I know, I shall have to wait for a reply about 6 months, and hope to see clear, wether it is right to go back or not.

July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 41

A comrade of us got a letter from the Home Office from which the following extract may be taken down here.

HOME OFFICE 30 May 1941

Dear Sir, [With reference to your enquiry of the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. Concerning the above named] I am directed by the Secretary of State to ask if you are in a position to furnish documentary evidence that your client were deprived of their German nationality on 25<sup>th</sup> Febr. 1939. On receipt of such the question of their nationality will be further considered.

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July 26<sup>th</sup>, 1941

“B” CANTEEN

No. 3 INTERNMENT CAMP

TATURA. Our canteen, where I have become together with a comrade, the manager, works as follow: All goods we need and want are to be ordered through the “Defence Canteens Board” in Melbourne which firm is the buyer for all military and Internment Camp Canteens. They charge on all purchases 3% of the amount of the invoice. We are not allowed to order any goods with any firm direct, which we would like to do, to save these 3%. ~Now all goods which are delivered here are sold with a certain additional fee. So we have an income which enabled us to pay wages for kitchen work, sanitary work, gardener, e.t.c. so that those who have no money get some for their work. This scheme is equal to that we had in Hay, but there it was much easier. We are here only some 195 people (as we got this week 29 men, who went from Hay to Orange and came now to us) out of which only 5% are real capitalists, about 20% have so much money that they can buy nearly all they want, and the rest 75% have only little money. At Hay was the buying capacity three times higher and there lived 1000 men in one camp. ~ As for myself I am glad not to have accepted the job as storekeeper as at Hay, where I had to work nearly from morning till evening. Here we open twice a day for one hour, so that the whole working time is only 4 to 5 hours daily. So I have time for myself and time for sports, books and other things to get over the time. As for

the money with which one can buy in the canteen is it so, that when I want e.g. 10/- I go to the bank, (camp bank) sign a withdrawal form and about a week later I get coupons which the Military authority have printed. It says "CONCENTRATION CAMP NO. 3 MILITARY DISTRICT" they are like cinema ticket. These coupons are of the value of 1/- and for smaller amounts we get copper up to a certain amount. The new coupons, issued this week have a new text.



Thursday, August 7, 41

It looks like there are some more camps in Australia, in which we have not been yet. Today our camp leader was informed by the Camp Commandant, that we are to move next Monday to N<sup>o</sup> 4 Camp TATURA. The reason, as we learned later is, that this camp No. 3 is thought as family camp like our Section D is already (Singapore Camp). Some Italian families which were resided in Australia when war broke out will be our successors.

Thursday, August 28, 41

I could not find the very time to sit down and to put down a few lines, since 3 weeks. Sometimes one gets over the time easy, as it looks like you are on vacation. You get up at 6 in the morning. Takes a shower. Then prayer begins at about 6.45 to 7 o'clock. While you finish prayer at 7.45 there is a roll call. The first of the day. But we take no trouble about it. The Officers or Sergeants, who come to count us, seldom do that, as they see us in the "TALEISSIM & TEFILLIN" they only say good morning and are off. But sometimes they count. This does not worry us, too. If it happens, and it always happens, that some of the camp inmates did not come to the roll call, our camp leader who is always in company makes the number missing up in the way, that some more are in Hospital, in the Kitchen, Boiler, etc. So it is always alright. Now at 8 comes Breakfast. After

finishing Breakfast you go in your cubicle to make everything alright for the main (the second) roll call. Here every two men are standing before their cubicle and the hut-leader calls their name such as Mr. Gruenbaum and Mr. G. answers "here Sir". Very nice, indeed!!! After roll call you forget, that you are interned. For the most part of the day. You go to the sport – field or golf – link, to the camp – school or canteen, sit in your cubicle and study or works in some camp – job if you like then goes for lunch, and a very good one, to with soup, potatoes, vegetables, meat, sauce, stewed or other fruits and tea. There is today no man in Europe who can hold pace with us, her may be free and in the best position. And these things I just mentioned are the things which blind us not to see the barbed wire. But sometimes they are of no help any further. Abruptly, you see the barbed wire and nothing but the wire. Then you don't eat for days, and don't enjoy the other arrangements within the camp and you lay down in your bed and the whole problem is coming forth. You can't understand why you are interned and why just you have to go through all this. You want to be free, by all means, eat less, enjoy less, work more but be free, free. Free in all that. But there is no way. The British Government through her Ministers and Secretaries many a time declared that you have been interned by mistake. But they do nothing more. They say, they will make good the faults but nothing happens. If you thought, being able to immigrate to the U.S. You have no hope any more. In the first 9 month of your staying in Australia you would get a visa, but you were interned and could not make your personel application at the Consolate direct, to get your visa. Later, when because of a new law, the American Consuls are no more able to grant the visa, a British Representative appears and say's: "He is now able to bring you without guard to the Consul, but he has been informed of the new law, saying that, and that and that. He (the Representative) is very sorry and will try his best again." Result = America = "no". And may be you did hope (did not you?) to be released in Australia, there is so far no need of men like you in Australia. At the moment, after nearly 12 months of your hoping, there is only a little light in the door for highly skilled workers for war industry. May be in a year or two you, too, will get a chance at this and this job. For the moment you are of no use and must therefore remain interned. Result – Australia = "no". = What remains now. Being interned for the duration of the war with an unknown time. Or. Return to England through the Pacific and the Atlantic with all the dangerous things you once had the luck to pass without taking harm! To remain interned for the duration of the war is impossible for a man like me. It first makes, without doubt, its mark on the phisical and mental state of regarding persons. Suppose war is over in 2 more years. You will stay here until both belligerents will deal will deal with the future of all interned persons and prisoners of war. In the best case you will be permitted to stay in Australia. But this seems unbelievable. Then, if the

first case comes out of the question, there is another hope, to be brought back to England. If the worst comes to the worst you may be brought back to Germany. Further, nobody knows how the world will look after this terrible war. But one thing is sure. There is bound to be one of the most frightful times mankind had ever to go through. As this war is a total war, a total breakdown will follow. And in this future fight for earning your living, this internment will always hang on you like a black point in your life. They will always push you back as in the first line they have to care for those who took part in the war. Besides that all, you will be shy in communicating with people, for you will be unsteady in the ways how to arrange this and that, as you got out of use to it at all. ~ After this all there remains only one way, to go back to England. There I will be released, will be able to work and earn my living, will be free and able to do all I want and don't want. I will be together with my sister and brother, who are there, and for whom I am longing. It will be life again. I know I will not have such ample food as I do get here, but food is not all a human being in this time cares for. The decision to return is not a simple one. There are perilous points when crossing the Atlantic. But if I am going to wait any longer, Japan may enter the war and there will be additional danger in the Pacific and things would be much more bad.

So, as described, stands our outlook. In consequence I applied for my release from internment to be able to return to Britain as a free man. For the moment there is no shipping space and some other 600 out of the left 1700 declared their preparedness to go back to England. So I don't know when my turn will be and I will have another 4 weeks time to see whether the immigration to the U.S. or the chance of getting his release in and for Australia will be some steps further.

September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1941

I quite overlooked to mention that I have been moved on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August to No 4<sup>th</sup> Camp Section "C", Tatura. We are by car about 10 minutes away from No 3<sup>rd</sup> Camp, but one would not believe it, that the treatment here is 100% better. All the Officers and the Camp Commandant are very nice to us. They know who we are, mainly because we are the successors of the 500 who left for Adelaide, in order to proceed from there direct to England, to join the Army. Mail is coming in at least 24hours earlier and same applies to the newspapers, which come in 4 hours earlier, daily. We are here in 3 compounds the same men from No. 3 Camp, only that we are in different sections, because Section B is engaged by the Italians who came with us on the Dunera. We, from the 3 other Compounds are allowed to go over in one of these 3 camps daily from 10 to 12 a.m.

and 2 to 4 p.m. So we are able to contact one another and are not bound to see always the same people from your compound. I am now since I left Germany in the 8<sup>th</sup> camp and in order to hold the dates in remembrance I am going to take them down here.

24.8.1939 – 26.5.40 = Kitchener Camp. HUT 26/II in HUT 4/II

27.5.40 – 5.7.40 = Mooragh Detention Camp RAMSEY. I.O.M. House 4.

5.7.40 – 6.7.40 = Ship to Glasgow and back to Douglas

6.7.40 to 10.7.40 = Central Promenade Camp. DOUGLAS, I.O.M. HOUSE 8

10.7.40 to 5.9.40 = "DUNERA" from Liverpool to Sydney, AUSTR. MESS 68

6.9.40 to 18.V.41 = No. 7 CAMP HAY, EASTERN COMMAND, HUT 7

19. V.41 to 20.V.41 = No. 2 CAMP TATURA, VICT. HUT 5/A

21. V.41 to 14.VIII.41 = No. 3 CAMP TATURA, VICT. SECT "B" HUT 7

14. VIII.41 to 28.1.42 = No. 4 Camp Tatura, Vict. Sect. "O" HUT 7

28.1 42 to = No. 2 Camp, TATURA, VICT. HUT 14/B

I counted the Dunera as a camp too, for I was there more than 8 weeks and this was the most terriblest time I had to go through and I shall never in my life forget this voyage with all her terrible hours. I don't know how many camps are still in store for me. I only hope to G-d to have enough courage to take no mental and phisical harm.

בה

October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1941

A strange thing happens to me today, which I am immediately writing down, as it seems to me, that there is something, not only true but a prediction or warning sent to me. Of course, I must first state, it is a matter of faith and superstition, and I never believed on dreams. The blunt fact runs as follow: Today is הושענא רבה and the anniversary of the death of my grandfather after whom I am called. As I know my mother would have liked it to see me sit down and to learn משנית or something else, I decided to do so and as it is custom to read on this special evening the

fifth book Mose – דברים and the book והלים did so remaining awake until two in the morning. At six I got up for morning prayer and after coming back to my cubicle, I met a comrade, who lives in the same hut, named Leo Preiss. He wished me a גמר טוב and said afterwards that he had to say something to me which I may not take as a joke and he has decided to tell me. So, I said, it will be. Then he explained slowly, that he dreamed of me last night. I was going back to England and took when departing some orders from comrades for their families in England. Then, one day a cable came, that the ship I went back on, has been destroyed by a bomb. There was an excitement in camp and all men run up and down. ~ As this was on the very day of the anniversary of my grandfather's death, who was the father of my mother, who was very pious, I consider this dream of this strange man as something I would never care of, at other times.

So, this caused me to make up my mind not to decide to go back to England, and to wait how the situation will change.

Naturally there is not to oversee that time is coming nearer when Japan will join the Axis powers and declare war, possible when Germany will have reached Moscow. Then it will be more dangerous to return to England. The last transports went via the Panama channel, then straight to Canada and via Iceland to England. This voyage was in the first 5 weeks a pleasant one, and only the last week of the voyage is a bit dangerous. Whereas, when Japan declares war, the whole voyage will be dangerous.

October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 41

The following article came to hand, today.

A.G.E. Middle of August. 41

Questions in House about Dunera.

A.A.P. and our own correspondent.

London, Tuesday.

Capt. Margesson, Secretary of War, told the House of Commons that a court martial had found Maj. Scott, commanding officer of the troopship Dunera, guilty of failing to ensure a proper

enquiry was made into incidents aboard the Dunera, and had been sentenced to be severely reprimanded.

Mr. Wedgewood (Lab.) – Did the court – martial hear the evidence of the victims? Is the net result as far as Scott is concerned that he was reprimanded and promoted from captain to major?

Capt. Margesson. – I was asked to speed up proceedings. It was impossible to get back all the evidence of the people in Australia. I am not responsible for the court martial's sentence.

Mr. Wedgewood said an inquiry had been asked for, but instead there had been a hushing up of the court martial

Cries of "No, no".

Capt. Margesson did not reply.

~

October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1941

That O.K. which we were waiting for, for more than 6 months (since Major Laytons arrival) arrived today. It runs as follow:

AUSTRALIAN JEWISH WELFARE SOCIETY

GENERAL SECRETARY MACCABEAN HALL

W.BRAND. 146 DARLINGHURST ROAD

SYDNEY

20th October, 1941

EMIGRATION DEPARTMENT

CAMP 3, Section B,

T A T U R A, VIC.

Dear Sirs,

I have this morning been advised by the American Consulate that they have received a cable reading as follows:

The Department of State in Washington has notified Consular Offices in Australia that the consideration may be given under the new visa procedure which was established in July 1, 1941 applications for emigration visa by aliens who have been restricted by British Authorities but who have been unconditionally released for residence in British territory. No consideration will be given to application of aliens who are still restricted or who are released on condition that they emigrate.

In the cases of internees who have been given permission for release by the British Authorities but who have not been unconditionally released for residence in Australia no action may be taken. This means, of course, that no action may be taken on cases of internees who might be released but who would be re-interned if American visas were refused to them.

signed: W. L. Brand

General Secretary

It brings us no step forwards, though as for the Government of the U.S. there is a fair standpoint, if they state, that they are not willing to take people who are going to be re-interned, if they will not get their visas for the U.S. That means they will not have such people who are not good for the Australian or British Government. If they are good for them, they are good for us, too!!!

But on the other hand, the Australian Gov. fears, that if we will not get our visa, we will stay here and they will not be allowed to put us again behind barbed wire, and that would be, for a small, overcrowded, Land like Australia, a hard hit. Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha!

Jew, stay behind barbed wire, no one wants you!!! It is true, that we are fighting for our liberty and freedom, but not for your "liberty".

~

October 30<sup>th</sup>, 1941

Today we got a Radio fixed in one of our messhuts. That means to us some connection with the outside world. Music, News, some lectures, after 17 months. On the other hand, it awakes in us the wish of being free again.

November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1941

Major Layton arrived today. After 2 months of waiting and hoping, we have to learn, that nothing has changed so far to improve the situation concerning the possibility of immigrating to the U.S. or of getting released for Australia. As for the U.S. it is much more worst as we thought it to be. Whilst we translated the clause of the letter of the U.S. Consulate at Sydney of October 24<sup>th</sup>, in which is said: "Applications for emigration visas by aliens who have been restricted by British Authorities but who have been unconditionally released for residence in British territory, may be given consideration" In our eyes, this meant, that if the Australian Government will release us, by giving us permission to stay here, the U.S. Consul may consider an application. But Major Layton brought another translation of this passus; saying if one or let us say 50 men are released unconditionally from internment to enable them to proceed to the U.S. this does not mean on unconditional release, because other men are still interned. That means clear, that the Australian Government has released these 50 men "on condition to emigrate to the U.S." and this is not an unconditionally release. So the whole hope of getting to the U.S. is destroyed. In the course of the interview he has given our Delegation, he mentioned, that in his eyes, America, is hopeless.

And nothing has changed so far Australia is concerned, sais Major Layton. The Labour Gov. is a bit too young to await a final decision in our favour.

But he brought something and that is, any skilled worker who wants to go back to England, can apply for being returned, it seems that Major Layton has special order by the British Government to bring back all skilled men, in looking forward to a final liquidation of this problem.

Our delegation brought this news at 11a.m. and a full – meeting has been called together. When giving their report of the first meeting outside the camp, with Major Layton, in the presence of the Camp Commandand Major Scurry, they announced that Major Layton will be in Camp at 2p.m. and will only interview those men who decide to go back to England under the new possibility as "skilled worker". So I had not much time to decide.

I once more went through the whole thing as it stands now. America – hopeless. Australia – hopeless. If I don't take now the chance, may be I will be too late, and I will have to stay here for the duration. Japan may enter the war and passage will be impossible. On the other hand, if I decide to return, and if the Home Office will agree, I have 95% chance of being released in England. Being able to live together with my beloved sister Rosa and my youngest brother Isi. This

is worth while to take this step, and to decide to go back. Again to be free, Though I know, there is a war on in England and I will have to take some hardships. So I filled in, the Questionnaires brought by Major Layton, and waited for my interview.

When being interviewed, L. asked me first "where are your parents?" I answered my father is owing to his "polish decsent" since the outbreak of war in a "German concentration camp" Mjr. L. asked further: "why don't you join the Army?" I answered: "I can't join, because my parents are still in Germany." Then he said: "you k now, meat is rationed in England, is not it?" I did not answer to this remark, I only said: "that is no reason to keep me interned", and added: "a brother of mine is fighting in His Majesties Forces in the Middle East." He than put his name under the Questionaries and said: "well I'll have to send it in as it is, and you will hear from me in due course.

In putting his name on the form Mjr. L. gave his approval, which means he has no objections and could this man recommend to the Home Office, so that they may give their O.K.

The day after, when Mjr. L. came into our camp I gave him a letter asking him to see to arrange if ever possible, that I may travel together with a friend of mine Dr. M. Glatt, which letter was signed by both of us.

November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1941

Having found out by the time, that usually it takes to 4 weeks, between asking to be returned and leaving camp for end station "Liverpool camp, near Sydney, I prepare all for voyage. I already bought some Tobacco, Cigars, Coffee, Cocoa, Tea, Jam, and silk hoses for a present to my sister. So I stay ready to sail back.

December 16, 41

Today I have been informed by the Intelligence Officer of this camp that I have been released from internment to the U.S.A. provided I can secure a visa. He put before me a form of "Willingness to travel to the U.S.A." and asked me wether I am prepared to sign. Knowing that this is nonsense and that I will not get my visa unless I will be released unconditionally in Australia, I

signed this form nevertheless. I made a joke and asked the Officer whether I must prepare my luggage, whereas he said: "I promise you to do all can and I will let you know".

As this release was supposed to be the answer to my release application made on July the 15<sup>th</sup>, I immediately wrote a letter to the Home Office to extend my release for England as well so to enable me to return as a free man, and pointed out, that the release for the U.S.A. is worth nothing.

December 17, 41

Today I received a letter by Major Layton in which he asked me to send to him a copy of my polish-denaturalisation certificate. As he does not point out for what reason he needs it I did not know whether it is right to send it or not. I decided to wait.

December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 41

After having asked people what to do in this case and found out that it is all indefinite, I forwarded to Major Layton the copy he asked for.

31/12/41

On December 27, 41

I forwarded a copy of the letter sent on Dec.16, to the Home Office to Major Layton, to inform him that I have been released for U.S.A. and what application I made now. I did that mainly because I think Major Layton will recommend my release for the U.K. and will have quicker connection to get my application to the Home Office as I could do it.

So ends the year 1941 for me with an outlook to be in the beginning of 1942 a free man and be able to return to England. Good by 1941.

January 2, 1942,

I must say that it is a good beginning of 1942. This morning I received a letter from Major Layton stating the following:

31 Dec. 41

"I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> December 1941 addressed to the Under Secretary of State.

I am pleased to be able to inform you that you may, if you desire, return to the United Kingdom to be released on arrival.

In order that I may make the necessary arrangements for your return as and when possible I would be obliged if you will sign a "Form of Willingness to Travel" and have same dispatched to me through your Camp Commandant."

Though the passus "to be released on arrival" does not look like a release, it is in the whole a step forward. May be it means, I shall have to pass a Tribunal which will than pronounce my release.

January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1942

Major Laytons secretary appeared this morning in our compound and asked all who have been released whether or not they want to return to the U.K. and whether they are prepared to sign the "Form of Willingness to Travel". So I signed the "Form" and so decided to go back. To lay down the barbed wire and the whole internment business. For nearly 2 ½ years, since I left Germany I have been living in camps. May this be enough for my part and may this day and hour when I signed, be a lucky day and hour, and the beginning of a new life.

In the afternoon a banker from Melbourne Mr. Cohn appeared and put before us "Forms" wherein was announced that the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain has awarded an – ex gratia – payment to us for loss and damage alleged to have been sustained by me whilst being conveyed as an internee to Australia.

My case was a bit different. My claim has not been settled full. The typewriter has been treated as a reserved item. I don't know yet what this means. But as all lost valuables as gold rings, gold

watches, diamonds and typewriters became reserved items I will have to wait for more information. So my form had a headline "Reserved Item" and I signed that with the amount granted now I have no other claim besides the typewriter.

Now: if the amount granted is Engl. £ 25.-.-. payment will come as follow. The first 10.-.-£ will be paid full. The rest only  $2/3 = £10.-.$  - total £20.-.-. in Australian currency £25.-.- So all amounts above £10.-.- have been shortened with  $1/3$ .

On my part came according this clause £24.0.0 Australian currency. On the day when the amount was credited on my account I bought a new typewriter at the amount of £20.0.0.

January 21, 42

On Sunday, all men who were on the list to return to England were called out of the camp were a firm "Myer's Emporium" Melbourne, had send down their representatives with samples of suits, coats, shirts, hats, shoes e.t.c. to enable us to buy some things before we leave. On Tuesday (yesterday) Major Layton arrived, and asked for all who are on the return list to be gathered together. Here he declares that we are going to leave and that he wants to state, that he has not yet seen the ship and maybe our ship is a troop-ship and we will have to sleep in hammocks and that no stuarths [*stewards*] can be provided in war time so that we will have to fetch the food and wash the dishes ourselves. This told us, that all the may be's are real facts. But, nevertheless, if one decides to go back to England he does not care about the accommodations provided. We all know it can't be worse than the voyage on the Dunera. Then Major Layton asked whether we all know for what reason we are returning to the United Kingdom. As it happens that some of us did not know clearly for what reason (so was my case as I did not know what it meant: "to be released on arrival) Major Layton called 3 lists 1) all released 2) all who are returning under reconsideration of their case, and 3) all skilled workers. I was more than astonished to hear my name as kind of the first group "Released". I was full of joy and could not be soon enough on the boat to return.

Today, we had to gather in Section "A" of our camp where the police took fingerprints and snaps of all who leave for the personal papers which will identify us.

There are further rumours that we are leaving on Friday.

Friday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1942

Today we had to fill in Forms of Notice of change of abode in triplicate. So I quitted TATURA flat and looked forward to my new London address. The rumours now say we are leaving next Monday.

Saturday night, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1942 מִשְׁקֵי [?]

On of the greatest surprise of my life, was it, when at about 11a.m. news came through, that whilst Myers Emporium was distributing the clothes to the men of the "A" compound who were on the list to leave, the Major Lt. Taccelbury, who is in charge of all 4 Internment camps in Tatura, arrived and announced that the transport has been cancelled. Indefinitely cancelled he remarked. This gave a terrible shock to me. I could not eat anything the whole day. After having tried to return to England for more than 6 months, and after I have been lucky enough to get included in a transport which should depart at any moment, this upruct cancellation. In connection with this news we were offered to join the Labour Battalion. The conditions being much the same as the A.M.P.C. in the United Kingdom. I don't dare to believe that the transport was really cancelled. I think this has only be said to bring us, or the lot of us, to join the Australian Labour Battalion. After some time will have past, the transports will again start. For the reason, that I am longing to be reunited with my sister and brother in London, and for the reason that Papa is still in a German concentration camp and Mama still living in Berlin, and for the reason that I am most annoying of the attitude of the Australian Government, which left us interned for so long a time, though they knew that we are Refugees, I could not decide myself to take the chance offered and by means of joining up, to get out of internment. I still cannot believe that all this endeavours I have taken to go back, should have been in vain. No.

In May 1942

For four months I could not set down to write some more lines in this book, as I was so "depriminert" [?] and lost all the interest, in keeping this, what now follows in memory. But in order to fill the gap which comes out of this not-writing, I decided to give at least a short description.

So far as I can remember, we were not given much time to grumble about this happening. Two days after the cancellation of the transport and announcing of the possibility to volunteer for the Labour Battalion, we were informed to pack all our belongings as we are to move to No 2 Camp, Tatura. It was one set back more in this internment business. We knew quite well that we never will be treated as we were at No. 4. Camp and we never in internment will have lodging which is like to this we had to give up at No. 5. Camp. But this was an order and nothing to do against it.

So in the middle of this week, it was on January 28<sup>th</sup>, we moved by lorries. Our camp had to be cleared with a great hurry as Japanese families were awaited, which arrived in the same day. Now at No. 2 camp we were lucky enough to get a hut, as not all could get a place in a hut and had to sleep for a long time in tents.

Now, the whole lot of the Dunera Refugees, still interned, were here gathered together and amounted at the time when we arrived at No. 2. Camp above 1000, after about 300 men left camp that same day for the Labour Unit. And another party was soon to follow, these 300, so that we were then for a longer period nearly 1000.

These 1000 men were to be divided at that time as follows: about 400 who wait to return to the U.K. by all means. About 200 Transmigrants, who still hoped to reach their destination country direct. (America, Palestine, e.t.c.)

The rest of 400 was at this time undecided. Now the first 2 main groups, undertook all possible ways to help their [...]

## THE SENTRY

It isn't hard  
To be on guard  
If no one tries escaping.

There is no need  
To pay much heed;  
Just do a little gaping.

The internees  
Are refugees;  
Mistake has caused their entry

Since that is so  
I do not know  
Why they must have a sentry

I thought the chaps  
Might know perhaps  
But they don't know it either.

And all their tales  
Of former jails  
Don't make me any wiser.

Why should I care?  
I do my share  
Keep them within their border.

I get my pay;  
Therefore I stay  
On ground till further order.

The woman does not live that is not to be won by any man who sets his mind to do it, if only he be of her station and have the means to maintain her in it or raise her to a better. A woman's love, is a tree whose root is vanity.

. - .

R. SAB

Into the mind of every thoughtful man must come at times with bitterness the reflection of how utterly we are at the mercy of Fate, the victims of her every whim and caprice. We may set out with the loftiest, the sternest resolutions to steer our lives along a well considered course, yet the slightest fortuitous circumstances will suffice to force us into a direction that we had not thought of taking. RAFAEL SABATI.

### L o y a l t y

We have been Hitler's enemies  
For years before the war  
We knew his plans of bombing and  
Invading Britain's shore.  
We warned you for his treachery  
When you believed in peace.  
And now we are His Majesty's  
Most loyal internees.

We left in search of liberty  
The country of our birth.  
We thought to live in Britain was  
The finest thing on earth.  
You gave us hospitality  
(When we gave guarantees)  
And now we are His Majesty's  
Most loyal internees.

When war broke out we tried to help the British war effort.  
We could not join but volunteered for jobs of any sort.  
In our registration book they stamped. REFUGEES.  
That's why we are His Majesty's most loyal internees.

When Hitler's troops in Rotterdam came down by parachute,  
And everybody panicking the thing became acute:  
We were, with wives and families, arrested by police.  
So we became His Majesty's most loyal internees.

They told us not to be afraid, we might be back at night,  
We were not prisoners at all and would soon be alright.  
But after weeks of promising they sent us overseas  
Although we were His Majesty's most loyal internees.

The censor hinders me to tell the story of our trip.  
It is sufficient when I say "DUNERA" was the ship.  
M.P.'s discussed in Parliament, how we have sailed the seas  
Yet we remain His Majesty's most loyal internees.

And here we are, without the means of proving our case  
Behind a strongly guarded fence in a forgotten place.  
We wait while the authorities consider the release  
Because we are His Majesty's most loyal internees.

Kinderrein

A-Fall, B-fall, C-Fall,  
Wir sehen nie wieder Schneefall

G-Fall, H-Fall, I-Fall  
Da hilft uns auch kein Kniefall

O-Fall, P-Fall, Q-Fall

Wer frei wird, wird's durch Qufall [?]

R-fall, S-fall, X-fall

So ist es halt in Kriegsfall.

Denkst Du, das Dein Specialfall

Ist mehr als ein Normalfall,

So zeigt sich dieser Einfall

Ganz zweifellos als Reinfall.

*[From Elisabeth Lebensaft, Austrian Dunera historian -*

The poem actually refers formally to a nursery verse (don't know the exact English word) and is difficult to translate. "Fall" means "case". The poem lives through the rhyme

"Wir sehen nie wieder Schneefall" – we will never see snowfall again

"Da hilft uns auch kein Kniefall" – no kneeling down will help (prostration?)

"Wer frei wird, wird's durch Zufall" – whoever is getting free will be free through coincidence

"So ist es halt im Kriegsfall" – that's how it is during war

And the last four lines:

If you think, that your special case it is more than a normal case, this idea a flop (letdown)

Sorry for this poor translation. Hope, it gives you a faint impression.]

### Back in London

You have been in Australia for more than a year;

I am sure you can tell me a lot

As you know I am always desirous to hear

From the man who has been on the spot.

I am eager to listen to your report

Of the harbours and cities there,

Of the beautiful girls, of the cricket sport  
Of the kangaroo, koala bear.

I am sorry I cannot fulfill your desire  
I don't know how Australia looks.  
I have been in Hay and Tatura behind barbed wire,  
So you better enquire at Cook's.

### R u b b i s h

I found a piece of barbed wire.  
And formed it to a barbed ring  
And then I made this barbed tyre  
Hang from the ceiling on a string

I took a length of wiry copper,  
Just salvaged from a heap of dirt,  
And bent the outlines of a proper  
But somewhat undernourished bird.

Because the funny little creature  
Appeared so poor and slim and pale  
I added as a special feature  
A coloured feather to its tail

Within its ring the bird was swinging  
And turning in my draughty den  
Till, suddenly, it started singing  
And busy got my fountain – pen.

Do not expect my bird to flatter,  
To sing exactly to your taste.  
Remember, it is but a matter  
Of mischief, made of metal waste.



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REFUGEE - PARACHUTIST