

November 16th, 1939

PRIVATE AND
CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Mr. Under Secretary,

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As I promised you at our meeting on November 14th, I enclose herein a copy of the orders which have been issued to the Commanding Officers of His Majesty's Ships regarding the removal of enemy aliens from neutral ships.

As I explained at our interview I have been instructed to show you these orders privately and in strict confidence and I should therefore be grateful if this communication could be treated as entirely unofficial.

Believe me,

Dear Mr. Under Secretary,

Very sincerely yours,

(SGD) LOTHIAN

The Honourable

Sumner Welles, INDEX

Under Secretary of State of the United States,

Washington, D. C.

FRHM:DH

It has now been decided that enemy aliens of the following categories travelling as passengers may be removed from neutral ships subject to restrictions described in paragraph 4 below:

(a) Officers and non-commissioned officers on active or reserve lists of enemy army and corresponding ranks and rating of enemy naval and air forces provided they are capable of useful service.

(b) Enemy agents of either sex or any age.

(c) Technicians who can be shown to be taking part in enemy war effort or intending to do so. This category includes scientists, engineers, skilled workers, mercantile marine officers and trained civil service or police staff whose activities can be reasonably shown to be of importance to the enemy war effort but excludes diplomatic and consular officers.

2. Enemy aliens who are bona fide members of crews of neutral ships should not be removed but aliens belonging to above categories as to whom there is reason to suppose they have signed on for the purpose of returning to enemy territory to aid in prosecution of war may be removed.

3. Examining officers should bear in mind importance of avoiding offence to neutrals and should not decide on removal except where there are definite grounds for suspicion.

4. Until further orders practical application of this policy is limited as follows:

(a) In general removal from neutral ships should only take place in contraband control bases and then only from neutral vessels inward bound to European ports. Where however there are good grounds for believing a particular individual or particular individuals are enemy secret agents they may be removed at sea or from vessels outward bound.

(b) Ships of American states should not be stopped for any reason in western half of Atlantic or in eastern Pacific without special instructions.

5. Persons proved to belong to categories described in (1) and (2) should be handed over to military as prisoners of war. Persons who after questioning on board while ship is in contraband control base are reasonably free of suspicion by time ship sails should be allowed to proceed in her. Persons who remain subject to considerable suspicion when ships sails should be handed over to local military for further investigation.