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ENCLOSURE 9.SPEECH DELIVERED AT MIJOSHI by the PREFECT OF HIROSHIMA.

To-day you are not going to hear any particular news from me. As Superintendent of this camp I regularly visit this place in order to keep myself informed of your conditions. I am the Representative of the Japanese Government.

Your main complaint regards food supply. However we do our utmost with regards to food matters on your behalf. Japan has a shortage of food, which is natural for a nation engaged in a serious war. You are always complaining of food but your food is actually better than that of Japanese subjects. It is very difficult to obtain suitable food in this area.

The hostile feeling in this country is so bad that people are of opinion that the food supplied to you, is a great sacrifice. Your food rations at present are larger than those for Japanese subjects, therefore we cannot bear your complaints any longer. Circumstances are indeed unbearable for you in comparison with your former living conditions, but bearable if you reflect that your ship might have been sunk in the Pacific by a Japanese submarine.

You may ask "why Japan seized a hospital ship; is it not a shame, that this was done--"

I am not sure of the actual task of your ship. I am convinced, however, that Japan did not seize your ship illegally. Your opinion is contrary to mine, but it is of no avail to discuss this subject any longer, because Japan is convinced of the legitimacy of the seizure and of your internment. After the war this question will be discussed and decided. Japan, however, always lives up to International Treaties.

Your leader, America, sank many of our hospital ships and even machine-gunned the decks. The worst crime committed by this nation was the notorious "DAIRO" murder in the PHILIPPINES.

Your country and England intentionally interned Japanese subjects in the hottest places of the Indies and in America in the coldest.

Therefore we have no concern with your case. Fortunately or unfortunately your country left the front in the first stadium of the war, but during this first period various cases of bad treatment of Japanese subjects occurred in your country.

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You pretend to have treated the Japanese internees decently, but you know fully well, that this is a lie. The Japanese are filled with indignation at this treatment. You always refer to International Law, but it was America, as leader of the Allies, who violated this Law.

Under what "gentleman treatment" we might be if we should be in your circumstances!:-

It is no use comparing your present conditions with your former glorious way of living. We are convinced of doing our utmost under the present circumstances.

Hostile feelings are so bad here, that it is disapproved that Japanese food is withdrawn for your nourishment. You never eat turnips, laboe or terong, whilst even these foodstuffs are difficult to obtain. If you persist in refusing to eat them, all right, you will not be forced. We are not ashamed, for we do our utmost and always did so.

There is a great shortage of foodstuffs and soap, which is common for nations at war. You do not think of our great care for you, but instead you are always complaining. We do our duty, but apparently we cannot satisfy you.

Holland and Japan are enemies at present because Holland chose the side of the Allies. Formerly both countries were connected by firm ties of friendship.

Personally I have no hostile feelings towards you, on the contrary: For me there is some mysterious joy to have met you here in this remote corner of the world. But as a faithful servant of my Government, I must do my duty, which consists in peacefully interning you here. If you might escape, I again have to do my duty: You might be shot to death. Of course you are fully aware that such an attempt would be useless. You know the manifold differences in colour of hair, complexion, etc., between the Japanese and your people.

Attempts to escape will be severely punished. We do not want such a thing to happen. Such an attempt will be strictly punished. I informed the Government of your interests regarding correspondence with your country and your relatives. I stated that correspondence about your good health and well-being will be sent to your relatives. It is my wish that you keep your health until the necessity of your internment is over. I hope you can leave here as soon as possible, that your internment here is not unpleasant and that you will not have unhappy memories of this period.

Shortage of food and inconveniences are unavoidable in time of war. You do not understand our difficulties. You should realize that you might have lost your lives at sea.



My personal opinion is that your internment here will not be of long duration, because hostilities will soon be over.

I repeat that every attempt to escape will be strictly punished.

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Translated by Section V.

A.M.V.V.

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