

L Taylor

Translation (Note. The original does not lend itself to precise translation. The following is substantially accurate) 12/11/42

Dear friend,

I beg you to have copied and corrected as you wish this report in order that it may be presented to the Allied and French Authorities by such means as are at your disposal. All that the said report contains is exact. We know that the wireless has spoken on the subject of our liberation but the management of the camp do not wish to know anything. The Polish are as badly treated as the others. The Jews are persecuted. I think that you will make a report and that in the near future it will be seen. Why do you write nothing? The bearer of this letter will, perhaps, also tell you what he knows, and if, before this letter gets through, our lot changes I think the report may still serve you. Au revoir.

FC  
Please note  
RM

DJELFA, le 20/11/42.

THE CONDITIONS OF THE INTERNEES AT THE DJELFA CAMP.

THE CONDITIONS OF the internees, numbering about 870, has not changed since the liberation of Algeria from German protection. Quite to the contrary in fact they have got worse.

However, the internees want only one thing - to serve the cause of the Allies. Many amongst them belong to the United Nations, Poles, Czechs, Russians and Belgians etc., and all the others are able easily to show that the only reason for their internment was their activity against the Axis forces.

1. 470 Internees, Spanish, old soldiers who fought in the Spanish Republican Army who have been interned for nearly four years. They have fought under the orders of their legal government in defending the country against internal revolution and the intervention of the Axis against foreign invasion of the country.
  2. 275 volunteers of the International Brigade of the Spanish Republican Army who have fought under the orders of the legal government and who have been interned, persecuted and mocked at for four years. Amongst these are 111 Poles, 91 under the jurisdiction of U.S.S.R., 35 Germans, 11 Czechs, 9 Roumanians, 8 Austrians and 10 Hungarians.
  3. In total 745 old soldiers of the Spanish Republican Army, 85/100 of the internees from Djelfa Camp. People who, in spite of everything have kept intact their morale, the spirit of sacrifice and love for their people. And that in spite of the inhuman regime to which they were submitted.
  4. 122 other internees called officials are really victims of the anti-semitic, racial and political repression. Only a very small section of this category deserve the title Official of the Sûete. Even today the Jews are victims of an attitude deliberately anti-semitic and of racial distinction on the part of the administration. There are 10 Spanish residents of Algiers who have been interned because of their activities in helping Spanish refugees - their fellow-countrymen.
- There are 43 Spaniards (among the old Spanish soldiers) who resided in Algiers before their internment and who have ties, both family and economic, in the country.
- There are 12 Spaniards and many others who are in possession of visas for Mexico and the U.S.A. etc. There are more than 100 Russian citizens who should have returned in 1940 but were prevented from going by the change in Africa.
5. Correspondance. The camp management prevent the sending of letters to Allied governments and institutions as well as to their families and friends. It is sufficient that a letter treats even indirectly with the problem of liberation for it to be returned or spoiled.
  6. BULLYING  
Penalties, the internees are victims of a regime of repression deliberately more marked since the Allied troops liberated Algeria. One retains the impression that the internees are exasperated in order to be able to justify, if events make it necessary, the notoriously inhuman regime of the past.

The Physical condition of the internees:

1. There are in the camp about 30 consumptives, about 70 chronic invalides very ill (with heart disease, gastric troubles etc.) for whom the treatment is not equal to the most minimum requirements of their condition.

2. About 50 have passed the age of 50 years. About 20 invalides and disabled people.

3. epidemics which actually exist.

a. Ictere (jaundice) infectuous in a mild form from which about 150 internees are suffering.

b. Colitis and dysentery from which about 70 internees are suffering. The illnesses have affected seriously the general condition of the patients so much more because helpful dieting has been impossible. Before these epidemics there is a very contagious one, feverish lumbago, from which about 150 internees suffer.

Les conditions sanataires. The sanitary conditions are very precarious. The infirmary is installed in a shed without a roof and with holes not stopped up. The consulting room is destitute of any installation and means of examination.

The sheds are overcrowded and full of parasites. There are no sanitary arrangements in the camp. The sheds are without heating. Work is done under the most primitive conditions. The food is monotonous and insufficient. The coming of winter is, under such conditions, a real peril for the internees.

CONCLUSION.

The internees are exasperated by the uncertainty of their fate and the prolonged stay at the camp. They are bewildered by the lack of intervention and of news on the subject of their liberation.