

CHAPTER 3

OVERSEAS INTERNEES – ACCEPTANCE BY COMMONWEALTH

FOR CUSTODY IN AUSTRALIA

(A) INTERNEES FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM

1. In June 1940, the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom received at Canberra a telegram from His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom stating that the question of the custody of German and Italian internees in the United Kingdom had been under consideration and that the retention there of the large number of dangerous or potentially dangerous persons involved would impose a serious burden on the authorities responsible for their custody, as well as immobilise a considerable number of personnel guarding them. The telegram further stated that in the event of a serious attack on the United Kingdom there would be a danger that the internees, if given the opportunity, might assist the enemy, and the personnel required as a safeguard against such a contingency could better be employed for other more essential purposes.

2. As the military authorities in the United Kingdom had informed the government that internment on islands in close proximity to Great Britain was open to serious objection from the point of view of national security, the considered opinion of the government was that it would be far better if internment could be effected in some more distant area. The High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in Australia was therefore asked to ascertain whether, in the circumstances, His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia would be prepared to accept German and Italian internees and arrange for their detention, and if so, the maximum number which could be accepted on the condition that all expenditure on account of transport and maintenance would be borne by the United Kingdom Government.

3. The Military Board in Australia gave urgent consideration to this request and recommended to War Cabinet that the United Kingdom authorities be informed that the Commonwealth Government agreed to accept a total of 6000 (including internees and prisoners of war) from Great Britain. War Cabinet concurred in the recommendation and a cable was despatched early in July 1940 advising acceptance of the proposal and requesting details of nationalities and sexes of internees and the probable date of despatch from the United Kingdom.

4. Only one shipment of internees was received in Australia under this arrangements; comprising 2542 males (2342 Germans and 200 Italians). These internees were transferred on the "Dunera" which departed from England on 10 Jul 40 and arrived in Australia on 27 Aug 40. AT the request of the United Kingdom Authorities, 13 German internees were re-embarked on the Dunera for return to England.

5. An officer of the Directorate of Prisoners of War and internees was sent to Fremantle, Western Command, to board the Dunera on arrival and to prepare appropriate detention orders under National Security Regulations. This officer reported that all internees were enemy aliens and that he was therefore preparing detention order under Regulation 20 of National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations. It was not until a later date that advice was received from the United Kingdom that a small number were actually British subjects. On receipt of this advice detention orders under Regulation 26 of National Security (General) Regulations were signed in respect of those concerned.

6. Early reports on this shipment indicated that embarkation in England had been effected under trying conditions; speed was essential owing to the collapse of France and it had been impracticable to give adequate attention to questions of accommodation and conditions of the vessel. As a result the internees suffered a most uncomfortable trip. They were twice fired on with torpedos but both missed their target. To illustrate the speed with which shipment was effected it is reported that officers and men allotted to the vessel for escort duties were given only two hours notice and in many instances their wives did not

know of their departure. Baggage of the internees, estimated at 20 tons, was not properly recorded or labelled and some of it contained perishable food-stuffs smuggled on board. No basic documents were supplied in respect of the internees and some considerable time was required, after their arrival at internment camps in Australia, to document them.

1. Disembarkations were effected as follows : -

At Melbourne	345 Germans and 200 Italians, Including 26 sick.
“ Sydney ”	1997 Germans, including 56 sick.

Internees disembarked at Melbourne were transferred to Tatura Internment Camps and those disembarked at Sydney, to Hay.

8. The types of internees included in the “Dunera” shipment were many and varied for reasons set out hereunder : -

- (a) Internment in the United Kingdom had been effected under most difficult and trying circumstances.
- (b) There was no opportunity, prior to their shipment, to sift and consider fully the information available on individual cases.
- (c) Many had been interned merely as a precautionary measure and some had good grounds for hating the Nazi system.

9. Tribunals set up in the United Kingdom had, however, roughly classified Germans into Categories ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’. ‘A’ Category included those considered hostile or whose conduct of character had been such as to make it undesirable to allow them to remain at large. 251 of these internees were included in the ‘Dunera’ shipment and were segregated at Tatura Internment Camp No.1 Class ‘B’ included those whom the Tribunal considered sufficiently reliable to be allowed their liberty, subject to certain minor restrictions, (prior to the collapse of France), and Class ‘C’, those who could be definitely regarded as friendly and reliable. Conditions of emergency caused the general internment and the government made it clear that, except in the case of ‘A’ Category internees, internment of itself did not imply any moral stigma on the individual. Classifications into the various categories had not been entirely satisfactory as the standards adopted by Tribunals had varied considerably and there was generally a tendency to make free use of the intermediate ‘B’ Category.

10. When accepting the internees for custody, the Commonwealth Government had made it clear that none would be released in Australia, but that they would remain interned here until returned to the United Kingdom for release or for any other purpose. However, the United Kingdom Authorities, in a “memorandum for the information of the Australian Government” regarding these persons, expressed the hope that the classification of internees would be undertaken here and that a system of less rigid custodial treatment to genuine refugees from Nazi oppression and other not falling within the potentially dangerous class, would be applied. The Commonwealth Government then emphasised its intention not to release any internees in Australia and that the non-interned wives and families of the internees already here could not be accepted.

11. Further representations were received that these wives and families should be permitted to come to Australia on the condition that they agree in writing to voluntary internment on arrival. War Cabinet was informed that Army did not consider it desirable to accept these persons as they could not be held for security reasons and if British subjects or refugees they could appeal or agitate for release immediately after arrival in Australia. There would then be no valid legal reason for their detention and they would no doubt constitute a source of political embarrassment already caused to the United Kingdom Government, the Commonwealth would agree to accept the persons concerned, at the same time requesting that only those persons be embarked for internment in Australia who would, by their retention in the United Kingdom, be the cause of embarrassment there.

12. Lack of shipping and other important considerations ultimately led the United Kingdom Authorities to abandon the proposal, and at this stage a Home Office representative (Major J.D. Layton – later Lt-Col) was sent to Australia to liaise with Army and other Commonwealth Departments concerned in regard to emigration of United Kingdom internees, their enlistment in the Pioneer Corps of the British Army and other allied matters.

13. These internees presented a difficult problem at all times, as will be observed during the reading of the report, but it is certain that their acceptance by the Commonwealth during Great Britain's greatest danger was a service of very definite value to the country. However it is appropriate to point out that the transfer of persons who are a thorny problem politically e.g. Jewish refugees of unknown antecedents is always likely to end up as an embarrassing political and administrative problem to the Power accepting them for custody. When the security risk has abated, it is so very easy for the original Interning Power to say to the Detaining Power that the latter has full freedom to release such persons at its discretion. This type of situation is well worth bearing in mind should the Army ever again have to advise the Government on transfers of internees from abroad.

13(a) For future benefit, it is accorded that apart from inter-Governmental arrangements for transfer and custody of internees, it is essential that on an administrative level as between both the Governments and the service authorities concerned there should be the clearest possible arrangements for documentation and security of personal possessions and baggage during transfer. Claims made by internees for real and imagined losses of their personal possessions during all stages of their movements were astounding, both in volume and amount. Dealing with such claims occupied a tremendous amount of time, caused widespread friction and resentment and probably considerable wastage of public funds in settling claims on a sympathetic basis.

(B) INTERNEES FROM THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

14. About the same time as the request was made for the despatch of internees to Australia from the United Kingdom, the Straits Settlements Authorities made representations for the transfer to Australia of a small number of interned aliens. These persons were not considered to be dangerous enemies, and it was stated that if it were not for the special circumstances obtaining in the Straits Settlements it was probable that the majority would not have been interned. Chief among the reasons actuating their internment was the fact that the islands of Singapore and Penang were fortresses in which presence of persons of enemy nationality, however harmless they might appear, was regarded as incompatible with security. It was also considered that the tropical climate of Malaya was unsuitable for the prolonged confinement of Europeans.

The Commonwealth agreed to accept these internees (families) under the same conditions as applied to United Kingdom internees and at the expense of the Straits Settlements Government. A total of 266 internees was received on the "Queen Mary" on 25 sept 40, made up as follows : -

	<u>German</u>	<u>Italian</u>	<u>Non-Enemy</u>	<u>Total</u>
Adult males	109	26	4	139
“ females	78	11	3	92
children	28	7	-	35
	_____	_____	_____	_____
	215	44	7	266
	_____	_____	_____	_____

16. Detention orders were signed under Regulation 20 of National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations for all enemy aliens under Regulation 26 of National Security (General) Regulations for non-enemy aliens.

17. The internees were apparently not search prior to embarkation at Singapore and large amounts of money and valuables had to be removed from their possession on arrival in Australia. They also brought with them large quantities of baggage and personal effects, the total being estimated at 150 tons.

18. All were accommodated at Tatura Internment Camp Victoria, where specially partitioned huts were made available for use by families.

19. The Home Officer Representative in Australia held authority to represent the United Kingdom Authorities in respect of Straits Settlements internees in view of the fall of Singapore, and the problems associated with these internees were somewhat similar to those experienced in relation to internees from the United Kingdom. The party consisted of mixed types some of them being potentially dangerous and other refugee types.

20. A further shipment of 4 adult males (Italian) and two children arrived in Australia on the M.V. "Boissevain" in February 41 making the total number of internees from the Straits Settlement 272.

(C) INTERNEES FROM PALESTINE

21. The Government of Palestine approached the United Kingdom Government in September 1940 asking whether it would be possible for some 2,900 enemy aliens interned in Palestine (where the accommodation problem was acute) to be transferred to one of the Dominions. In referring this request to the Commonwealth Government, the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs stated that in addition to the 2542 internees already sent to Australia from the United Kingdom, the only projected transfer of civilian internees from that country was a further 800 persons but that It may also be necessary to transfer captured airmen (then numbering 600, and increasing) to Australia. As the Commonwealth had agreed to accept up to 6000 internees and prisoners of war, the United Kingdom authorities expressed a desire that the Palestine Government should be assisted if at all possible, but any such transfer should not adversely affect the acceptance of further civilians from Great Britain.

22. War Cabinet gave urgent consideration to the request and approved of the acceptance of a further 800 civilian internees and up to 1000 airmen (prisoners of war) from the United Kingdom and a further 1658 civilian German and Italian internees, preferably males, from the United Kingdom or Palestine, to bring the total to 6000. Under this approval similar conditions were made to those applicable to other overseas internees held on behalf of the United Kingdom.

23. In November 1940, advice was received from the British High Commissioner in Palestine that the necessary arrangements for transfer of internees from the country would have to be temporarily deferred as the authorities had on their hands large batches of illegal immigrants who must necessarily be disposed of without delay.

24. Further advices in February 1941 indicated that it was proposed to transfer to Australia only the more extreme Nazi and Fascist elements who were potentially most dangerous to security should the war approach closer to Palestine, the number being estimated not to exceed 850, including women and children. This proposal was accepted and 834 internees were disembarked from H.M.T "Queen Elizabeth" on 23 Aug 41. Officers from Army Headquarters boarded the vessel at Fremantle and prepared detention orders under National Security (General) Regulations, as well as basic documents in respect of each internee.

25. The party was composed as follows : -

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Germans (a) Married	150	150	300
(b) Children under 16	139	105	244
(c) Others	84	36	120
Italians (d) Married	31	31	62
(e) Children under 16	20	18	38
(f) Others	67	4	70
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	491	343	834
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Health of the internees was average and clothing good. Approximately 100 tons of baggage belonging to the internees was unloaded.

26. These internees were accommodated at the Tatura Internment Group, Victoria, only 3 being retained temporarily in hospital due to sickness. They were classified by the Palestinian Authorities into two main groups, viz, those known to be particularly active enemies and others who required some restriction for security reasons. Short summaries of information concerning each individual were received, but it was found necessary to treat all the internees as pro-Nazi and pro-Fascist during the early stages of hostilities, as active agitators among them whipped up sentiment in favour of the enemy.

27. By arrangement, all correspondence regarding the internees was conducted direction between Jerusalem and Australia insofar as matters of routine were concerned. Correspondence on matters of policy was addressed to the United Kingdom.

28. No further transfer of internees were effected from Palestine, and it will be observed from section (A) of this Chapter that the proposed transfers from the United Kingdom mentioned in paragraph 22 were not effected.

(D) INTERNEES FROM IRAN

29. The War Office, London, suggested to the Army authorities in Iran in August 1941 that arrangements should be made for the transfer to Australia of Germans "captured" in Iran, and later advices from C-in-C India intimated that men, women and children were involved in the proposed transfer and that the total number involved was approximately 1000.

30. It was realised that the removal of these internees from Iran would be regard by C-in-C India as a major importance and that their internment in India would be doubtless be regarded as undesirable owing particularly to the necessity for them to be guarded by white troops. Accommodation for them could be provided in Australia without the construction of a new camp but extensions and alterations to existing camps were necessary to provide them with satisfactory living quarters.

31. The Commonwealth Government agreed, in the circumstances, to accept the proposed shipment of approximately 1000 mixed sexes on the same conditions as applied to previous shipments of internees held in Australia on behalf of the United Kingdom and with the expressed understanding that none would be released in Australia, and that all would be shipped from Australia after the cessation of hostilities. The United Kingdom authorities were

informed that these persons would be held in Australia as internees under National Security Regulations but that on any important policy matters affecting them, the United Kingdom Government would be consulted as there was no British Administration in Iran responsible for the internees.

494 internees were disembarked from ss "Rangatiki" at Adelaide on 19 Nov 41, the shipment being made up as follows : -

Unattached Males		478	
Family groups : -			
Males	6		
Females	6		
Children	4	16	
			———
	Total	494	
			———

The unattached males were transferred to the Loveday Internment Group, South Australia and the remained to Tatura Internment Group, Victoria. 16 internees were ill on arrival.

33. Detention orders were prepared under Regulation 20 of National Security (Aliens' Control) Regulations as all internees were of German nationality.

34. No dossiers were sent with the internees, and little was known at this stage concerning the types of internees in the groups received. It was later established that the internees had been apprehended in a general round-up of Germans and Iran, without a great deal of regard to their past records. However, among them were many trained Nazi agents and it was considered desirable for security reasons that these and the others who had been exposed to their influence should as far as possible be kept from contact with internees familiar with Australian conditions.

35. A difficult problem arose in respect of large sums of money taken from these internees in Iran, and certain losses of personal belongings occurred during their voyage to Australia. These two matters are dealt with in Chapter 15 of Part I of the report (paragraph 16).

(E) INTERNEES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

36. 18 German male civilian internees taken in Persia were transferred to Australia from the Middle East in December 1941 on the same financial and other conditions as applicable to the various groups of overseas internees held on behalf of the United Kingdom. These were embarked with a number of German and Italian prisoners of war sent to Australia under the general scheme for the acceptance of prisoners of war. The vessel used for the purpose was the "Queen Elizabeth".

37. The internees, whose health was good, were transferred on arrival to the Internment Group at Loveday, South Australia. Detention Orders under Regulation 26 of National Security (General) Regulations authorised their internment in Australia.

38. As these men were considered to be pro Nazi in sentiment, their release from internment in Australia was not given consideration until towards the end of 1944 when changed conditions made it practicable to relax rigid security control of internees with good camp records.

(E) INTERNEES EX FOREIGN LEGION.

39. In August 1941 a small number of German deserters from the Foreign Legion in Indo-Chind arrived in Singapore as volunteers for the Free French Forces and were believed to have been told to volunteer by the German Military Attache at Bangkok, and to then act as

German Agents. As it was impossible for the Authorities in Singapore to decide which were genuine volunteers, they were all taken into custody and a request was made that they be accepted in Australia for internment. The anticipated number was not to exceed 20.

40. Acceptance of the proposal was cabled to Singapore early in September and the persons concerned (12 in number) were embarked without warning on the ss "Rangatiki" which was bringing internees from Palestine to Australia in November 1941. They were detained in Australia under National Security (General) Regulations and held at Tatura Internment Group, Tatura.

(F) INTERNEES FROM NEW GUINEA (INDONESIANS)

41. A proposal concurred in by General MacArthur was submitted by the Chief Commissioner of the Netherlands Indies Commission in Australia, to the Commonwealth Government requesting that consideration be given to acceptance for internment in Australia of two groups of internees from Dutch New Guinea, viz: -

- (a) 21 men (criminal types) with one woman and 4 children, and
- (b) Approximately 250 men, 53 women and 126 children.

42. The Dutch authorities anticipated evacuating these internees in several parties and suggested their concentration on Thursday Island pending transfer to the mainland. It was indicated that group (b) would require sub-division and segregation as a number of them were willing to work and co-operate whereas others refused to work.

43. The internees were mainly Javanese who had been detained under conditions of restricted movement in Dutch New Guinea over a long period of years. They were generally communistic in outlook and their presence in New Guinea was considered undesirable, as in Japanese hands they could be used for Fifth Column work and also to broadcast etc. to the native population of Java concerning their treatment as exiles from Java.

44. On acceptance of the proposal by the Commonwealth, subject to clarification of financial aspects, it was ascertained that the Dutch Authorities were unable to implement their earlier suggestion that they might evacuate the party to Thursday Island in Dutch vessels, and that they desired the Commonwealth to assume full responsibility for the evacuation. This presented some difficulty as the internees were held at Tanah Merah on the Digoel River, about 250 miles from Merauke and the only method of access was by river which was navigable for vessels not exceeding 600 tons. It is noted that one factor not adequately considered at the time was the medical condition of these persons. They were riddled with tropical diseases and were physically unsuited for living outside a tropical area.

45. The Department of the Navy was requested to arrange urgent movement of the internees and escort provided by HQ First Aust Army, but found it impracticable to effect the transfer from Tanah Merah, and the Dutch authorities then arranged movement by air of the internees to Thursday Island to enable their onward movement in one party.

46. Arrangements were made for an officer to complete detention orders under National Security (General) Regulations, at Thursday Island.

47. Shipments from Thursday Island completed the transfer of these internees in June 1943, the total number evacuated being 525 made up as follows : -

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Adults	317	69	386
Children	40	43	83
6/16 years			
Children	30	26	56
Under 5 years	_____	_____	_____
	387	138	525
	_____	_____	_____

(G) INTERNEES FROM NEW CALEDONIA

48. Internees received in Australia from New Caledonia were divided into three main groups; viz, Vichy French, Japanese and others. These groups will be dealt with separately.

(i) Vichy French

49. In May 1946, advice was received through the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom that the Free French Authorities were anxious to send to French Equatorial Africa 10 (later changed to 11) Vichy French adherents who they considered constituted a serious danger to the security and defence of New Caledonia. This action was contemplated in order to prevent the release of the internees in the event of a Japanese attack on New Caledonia, and to make possible their use as hostages should any official adherents of the Movement fall into enemy hands. The Free French Authorities accordingly asked whether the Commonwealth Authorities would be prepared to permit transit of the internees through Australia.

50. Acceptance of this proposal was conveyed to New Caledonia with the proviso that any internees received should not be at liberty while in Australia. It was considered that their internment was necessary to ensure that they would proceed on their journey when necessary transport became available and to prevent them from making undesirable contacts while in Australia.

51. As arrangements for their internment in Australia were made by the Commonwealth for security reasons, the costs of maintenance were to be a Commonwealth responsibility.

52. Under these arrangements, 8(eight) male internees arrived at Newcastle on s.s. "Cap Tarifa" on 20 May 42 and were interned at Liverpool, NSW. Detention orders, under Regulation 26 of National Security (General) Regulations, were prepared.

53. Later advices stated that a further 11 males with their wives and children would be sent to Australia, but no transfer was effected.

(ii) Japanese

54. Advice was received in Dec 41, from the British Consul at Noumea, that the new Caledonian Authorities had taken all necessary measures to intern all male Japanese nationals. The Commonwealth Government had agreed in June 1940 (vide paragraph 13 of Chapter 1) to accept all internees from these Islands.

55. Following on specific requests, the Commonwealth agreed to accept four shipments of Japanese internees from New Caledonia and parties reach Australia as under : -

<u>Date</u>	<u>Vessel</u>	<u>Details of Internees</u>			
		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Total</u>
22 Dec 41	ss. "Cap les Palmes"	280	17	39	336
23 Jan 42	"	296	3	11	310
26 Feb 42	"	233	5	19	257
3 Jun 42	ss. "Cremer"	208	4	9	221
		<u>1017</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>1124</u>

56. Detention orders under Regulation 20 of National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations were completed and the internees were dispersed as follows : -

Family groups	-	116 to Tatura, Victoria.	
Unattached males	-	1008 to Hay, N.S.W., "Loveday, S.A.,	766 242
		<u>1124</u>	

(iii) Other Internees

With the above shipment from New Caledonia the NEI Authorities sent to Australia 1 German, 5 Italians and 1 Czech, all of whom had been interned in New Caledonia. These were held in Australia under appropriate National Security Regulation pending disposal.

(I) INTERNEES FROM THE HEBRIDES.

58. In a Communication dated 9 Dec 40 addressed to the Prime Minister of Australia, the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific at Suva, Fiji, enquired whether, in the event of the outbreak of hostilities with Japan, the Commonwealth Government would be prepared to arrange for the reception and detention in internment camps in Australia of Japanese resident in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, British Solomon Islands Protectorate, and the New Hebrides. The total number was stated to be approximately 35.

59. War Cabinet agreed to the proposal as it was considered desirable that in the event of hostilities with Japan these Japanese nationals should be moved expeditiously as possible from the islands concerned.

60. The British Resident Commissioner in the New Hebrides advised in December 1940 that 33 internees would shortly be ready for transfer to Australia. He was unable, due to extreme shortage of personnel, to supply the necessary escort and 1 officer and 10 Ors were therefore sent from Australia to accept custody of the internees.

61. 4 Male Japanese internees were disembarked at Sydney on s.s. "Morinda" in January 1942 and were moved to Camp No. 6 at Hay, New South Wales. Necessary detention orders were signed under Regulation 20 of National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations, on arrival of the internees at Sydney.

(J) INTERNEES FROM THE NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES

62. The Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, London, made tentative enquiries of the Commonwealth in December 1941 concerning the possibility of acceptance for custody in Australia of about 400 of the most dangerous Germans who were confined in a camp in North Sumatra. It was feared that the German Government would bring pressure to bear on the Netherlands Government, by threats of reprisals in Holland, to have these internees released, and as tropical colonies were considered unsuitable, their transfer to Australia would be desirable should the Far East situation deteriorate.

63. This request was later broadened to over 4000 German and Japanese internees and War Cabinet concurred subject to acceptance by the Netherlands Government of responsibility for transfer and for all costs of erecting necessary accommodation, maintenance of guards and all incidental expenditure incurred by the Commonwealth.

64. Germans included in the figures quoted were eventually transferred to India and the following shipments of Japanese internees reach Australia : -

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Total</u>
1 st Shipment (Jan 42) s.s. "Cremer"	1266	200	322	1788
2 nd Shipment (Feb 42) s.s. "Heemskirk"	100	51	10	161
	<u>1366</u>	<u>251</u>	<u>332</u>	<u>1949</u>

Family groups among these internees were transferred to Tatura Internment Group, where Camp No.4 was set aside for Japanese only, and the remainder to Loveday Internment Group in South Australia. Detention orders were prepared on arrival at the port of disembarkation, under Regulation 26 of National Security (General) Regulations.

65. 17 Japanese were ill on arrival, one having chicken-pox and appropriate arrangements were made for their treatment in Adelaide until they were able to proceed to the appropriate camps.

(K) INTERNEES FROM THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

66. Under the arrangements referred in paragraph 13 of Chapter 1, three male Japanese internees were sent to Australia from the Solomon Islands, on s.s. "Morinda" which arrived in Sydney on 17 Feb 42. These internees were detained under National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations and were transferred to No.6 Internment Camp Hay, New South Wales.

67. In October 42, without warning, one native of the Solomon Islands, with his wife and 3 children, was disembarked at Sydney. Navy requested their internment which was effected and the internees were transferred to Tatura Internment Group, Victoria, after one of the children had recovered from a contagious disease.

(L) INTERNEES FROM NEW ZEALAND

68. General negotiations for the exchange of nationals were proceeding early in 1943 between the Japanese and British Governments, and advice was received about July of that year that the Japanese Government had requested the priority repatriation of approximately 30 Japanese and Thai national held in New Zealand.

69. It was decided that all Japanese and Thais held in New Zealand as internees should be transferred to Australia and that those not already named for priority repatriation (about 32) should then be held in custody pending a later exchange. Movement of priority cases by air was arranged in order to meet the exchange vessel in Australia and the first party of 10 men, 5 women and 10 children left by Liberator on 2 Aug 43. This aircraft crashed in flames immediately after take-off and 11 internees were killed and 14 injured, one of whom died later.

70. In view of a hold up in negotiations for the exchange (See Part 1 Chapter 23) the remaining internees were not moved to Australia until Nov 43 when the vessel "WAHINE" was used for a "safe-conduct" voyage under arrangements with the Japanese. The total party transferred numbered 50, comprising 39 males 4 females and 7 children. One of the women was sent to a Mental Institution on arrival.

71. The remaining internees were sent to Tatura Internment Group, Tatura, pending repatriation.

(M) SUMMARY .

72. To summarise, the following internees were received in Australia from overseas, for internment.

NATIONALITIES

<u>Internees from</u>	<u>German</u>	<u>Italian</u>	<u>Japanese</u>	<u>Sundry</u>	<u>Total</u>
United Kingdom	2342	200	-	-	2542
Straits Settlements	222	50	-	-	272
Palestine	664	170	-	-	834
Iran	494	-	-	-	494
Middle East	18	-	-	-	18
Singapore (Foreign Legionnaires)	12	-	-	-	12
New Guinea	-	-	-	525	525
New Caledonia	1	5	1124	9	1139
New Hebrides	-	-	34	-	34
N.E.I.	-	-	1949	-	1949
Solomon Islands	-	-	3	5	8
New Zealand	-	-	50	-	50
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	3753	425	3160	539	7877
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NOTE: The nationalities shown are those recorded on the basic documents of the internees. Some of them claimed other nationalities.