

RESTRICTED

1. Because disclosures of information regarding evasion from capture, escape, details of imprisonment, release from internment, and repatriation have been made, the lives and services of fellow soldiers and those who help them have been lost or endangered. All information which you possess on these subjects, including the experiences of others as well as your own, briefings and equipment for evasion and escape, and preparations and other activities in connection therewith, constitutes MILITARY INFORMATION which is classified SECRET by the War Department.

2. You will therefore disclose no information whatever, beyond the fact of your return to duty from "missing in action" or "prisoner of war" or "internment", to anyone except the following military officials:

- a. The first Military Attache to whom you report;
- b. An officer designated by the Commanding General of an overseas Theatre of Operations;
- c. The Prisoner of War Branch, MIS, Washington, D.C., the interrogating agency designated by the A/C of S, G-2, War Department General Staff;
- d. Certain other officers holding written authority from the A/C of S, G-2, WDGS, to interrogate you.

3. You will particularly guard against disclosure of SECRET information to relatives, friends, representatives of the press and radio, and military officials, except as noted in a, b, c and d above.

4. In order to protect yourself against disciplinary action, any question involving publicity must be referred BY YOU PERSONALLY to the A/C of S, G-2, WDGS, Washington, D.C.

CERTIFICATE

I certify that I have read and fully understand all of the foregoing and the Directive of the Secretary of War, 6 Aug 43 (on the reverse side), and will at ALL TIMES hereafter comply fully therewith.

I understand that all information concerning escape, evasion from capture, activities and equipment in connection therewith, and details of imprisonment or release from internment, is SECRET and must not be disclosed to anyone except the military officials specifically designated. I further understand that disclosure to any other person will make me liable to disciplinary action for failure to safeguard MILITARY INFORMATION.

I realize that publicity concerning my experiences, by word of mouth or otherwise, will endanger the lives of many persons and therefore it is my duty to take all possible precautions to prevent it.

I further certify that I have received a copy of the foregoing.

Name (Print) Robert W. Bechtel Signed Robert W. Bechtel
Rank S/SGT A.S.N. 13096713 Dated 28 JUL 1944 Place GIBRALTAR
Unit 384th Bomb Grp Witness Horace W. Forster

HORACE W. FORSTER,
Colonel, G.S.C.,
U. S. Mil. Lia. Off.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT
The Adjutant General's Office
Washington

AG 383.6 (31 Jul 43) OB-S-B-M

KLS/el-2B-939 Pentagon

6 August 1943

SUBJECT: Amended Instructions Concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War, to Include Evaders of Capture in Enemy or Enemy-Occupied Territory and Internees in Neutral Countries.

TO: The Commanding Generals,
Army Ground Forces;
Army Air Forces;
The Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area;
The Commanding Generals,
Theaters of Operations;
Defense Commands;
Departments;
Base Commands;
The Commanding Officers,
Base Commands;
Director, Bureau of Public Relations.

1. Publication or communication to any unauthorized persons of experiences of escape or evasion from enemy-occupied territory, internment in a neutral country, or release from internment not only FURNISHES USEFUL INFORMATION TO THE ENEMY but also JEOPARDIZES FUTURE ESCAPES, EVASIONS AND RELEASES.

2. Personnel will not, unless authorized by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, publish in any form whatever or communicate either directly, or indirectly, to the press, radio or an unauthorized person any account of escape or evasion of capture from enemy or enemy-occupied territory, or internment in a neutral country either before or after repatriation. They will be held strictly responsible for all statements contained in communications to friends which may subsequently be published in the press or otherwise.

3. Evaders, escapees, or internees shall not be interrogated on the circumstances of their experiences in escape, evasion or internment except by the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations. In allied or neutral countries, American Military Attaches are authorized to interrogate on escape, evasion and internment matters.

4. Should the services of escaped prisoners of war, evaders, or internees be deemed necessary for lecturing and briefing, such services will be under the direct supervision of the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations.

5. Commanding Officers will be responsible for instructing all evaders, escapees, and internees in the provisions of this directive which supersedes letter, AG 383.6 (5 Nov 42) OB-S-B-M, 7 November 1942, subject: Instructions concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War and other previous instructions on this subject.

By order of the Secretary of War:

/s/ J.A. ULIO

J.A. ULIO

Major General,

The Adjutant General.

RESTRICTED

(See Reverse Side)

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT The Adjutant General's Office Washington

AG 383.6 (31 Jul 43) OB-S-B-M

KLS/el-2B-939 Pentagon

6 August 1943

SUBJECT: Amended Instructions Concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War, to Include Evaders of Capture in Enemy or Enemy-Occupied Territory and Internees in Neutral Countries.

TO: The Commanding Generals,
Army Ground;
Army Air Forces;
The Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area;
The Commanding Generals,
Theaters of Operations;
Defense Commands;
Departments;
Base Commands;
The Commanding Officers,
Base Commands;
Director, Bureau of Public Relations.

1. Publication or communication to any unauthorized persons of experiences of escape or evasion from enemy-occupied territory, internment in a neutral country, or release from internment not only furnishes useful information to the enemy but also jeopardizes future escapes, evasions and releases.
2. Personnel will not, unless authorized by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, publish in any form whatever or communicate either directly, or indirectly, to the press, radio or an unauthorized person any account of escape or evasion of capture from enemy or enemy-occupied territory, or internment in a neutral country either before or after repatriation. They will be held strictly responsible for all statements contained in communications to friends which may subsequently be published in the press or otherwise.
3. Evaders, escapees, or internees shall not be interrogated on the circumstances of their experiences in escape, evasion or internment except by the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations. In allied or neutral countries, American Military Attaches are authorized to interrogate on escape, evasion and internment matters.
4. Should the services of escaped prisoners of war, evaders, or internees be deemed necessary for lecturing and briefing, such services will be under the direct supervision of the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations.
5. Commanding Officers will be responsible for instructing all evaders, escapees, and internees in the provisions of this directive which supersedes letter, AG 383.6 (5 Nov 42) OB-S-B-M, 7 November 1942, subject: Instructions concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War and other previous instructions on this subject.

By order of the Secretary of War:

/s/ J. A. ULIO
J. A. ULIO
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

1. Information about your escape or your evasion from capture *would be useful to the enemy* and a danger to your friends. It is therefore **SECRET**.
2. a You must therefore not disclose, except to the first Military Attache to whom you report, or to an officer designated by the Commanding General of the Theater of Operations, or by A. C. of S., G-2, W. D.
- (1) The names of those who helped you.
 - (2) The method by which you escaped or evaded.
 - (3) The route you followed.
 - (4) Any other facts concerning your experience.
- b You must be particularly on your guard with persons representing the press.
- c You must give no account of your experiences in books, newspapers, periodicals or in broadcasts or in lectures.
- d You must give no information to anyone, irrespective of nationality, in letters or in conversation, except as specifically directed in Par. 4.
- e No lectures or reports are to be given to any unit without the permission of A. C. of S., G-2, W. D., or corresponding organization in the theater.

CERTIFICATE

I have read the above and certify that I will comply with it.

I understand that any information concerning my *escape or evasion* from capture is **SECRET** and must not be disclosed to anyone other than the agency designated by A. C. of S., G-2, War Department, the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations, or to the Military Attache in a neutral country to whom I first report. I understand that disclosure to anyone else will make me liable to disciplinary action.

Name (Print) Robert W. Bechtel
Rank 1st Sgt. A. S. N. 13096713
Unit 384th Bomb Group

Signed Robert W. Bechtel
Dated July 31, 1944
Witness _____

RESTRICTED

AG P BR HQ SOS 2-44/2M/22472

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT The Adjutant General's Office Washington

AG 383.6 (31 Jul 43) OB-S-B-M

KLS/el-2B-939 Pentagon

6 August 1943

SUBJECT: Amended Instructions Concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War, to Include Evaders of Capture in Enemy or Enemy-Occupied Territory and Internees in Neutral Countries.

TO: The Commanding Generals,
Army Ground;
Army Air Forces;
The Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area;
The Commanding Generals,
Theaters of Operations;
Defense Commands;
Departments;
Base Commands;
The Commanding Officers,
Base Commands;
Director, Bureau of Public Relations.

1. Publication or communication to any unauthorized persons of experiences of escape or evasion from enemy-occupied territory, internment in a neutral country, or release from internment not only furnishes useful information to the enemy but also jeopardizes future escapes, evasions and releases.
2. Personnel will not, unless authorized by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, publish in any form whatever or communicate either directly, or indirectly, to the press, radio or an unauthorized person any account of escape or evasion of capture from enemy or enemy-occupied territory, or internment in a neutral country either before or after repatriation. They will be held strictly responsible for all statements contained in communications to friends which may subsequently be published in the press or otherwise.
3. Evaders, escapees, or internees shall not be interrogated on the circumstances of their experiences in escape, evasion or internment except by the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations. In allied or neutral countries, American Military Attaches are authorized to interrogate on escape, evasion and internment matters.
4. Should the services of escaped prisoners of war, evaders, or internees be deemed necessary for lecturing and briefing, such services will be under the direct supervision of the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations.
5. Commanding Officers will be responsible for instructing all evaders, escapees, and internees in the provisions of this directive which supersedes letter, AG 383.6 (5 Nov 42) OB-S-B-M, 7 November 1942, subject: Instructions concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War and other previous instructions on this subject.

By order of the Secretary of War:

/s/ J. A. ULIO
J. A. ULIO
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

1. Information about your escape or your evasion from capture *would be useful to the enemy* and a danger to your friends. It is therefore **SECRET**.

2. a You must therefore not disclose, except to the first Military Attache to whom you report, or to an officer designated by the Commanding General of the Theater of Operations, or by A. C. of S., G-2, W. D.
- (1) The names of those who helped you.
 - (2) The method by which you escaped or evaded.
 - (3) The route you followed.
 - (4) Any other facts concerning your experience.
- b You must be particularly on your guard with persons representing the press.
- c You must give no account of your experiences in books, newspapers, periodicals or in broadcasts or in lectures.
- d You must give no information to anyone, irrespective of nationality, in letters or in conversation, except as specifically directed in Par. 4.
- e No lectures or reports are to be given to any unit without the permission of A. C. of S., G-2, W. D., or corresponding organization in the theater.

CERTIFICATE

I have read the above and certify that I will comply with it.

I understand that any information concerning my *escape or evasion* from capture is **SECRET** and must not be disclosed to anyone other than the agency designated by A. C. of S., G-2, War Department, the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations, or to the Military Attache in a neutral country to whom I first report. I understand that disclosure to anyone else will make me liable to disciplinary action.

Name (Print) Robert W. Bechtel
Rank S/SGT. A. S. N. 13096713
Unit 984 Bomb Group

Signed Robert W. Bechtel
Dated July 31, 1944
Witness _____

AG P BR HQ SOS

122472

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT
The Adjutant General's Office
Washington

AG 383.6 (31 Jul 43) OB-S-B-M

6 August 1943

KLS/el-2B-939 Pentagon

SUBJECT: Amended Instructions Concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War, to Include Evaders of Capture in Enemy or Enemy-Occupied Territory and Internees in Neutral Countries.

TO: The Commanding Generals,
Army Ground;
Army Air Forces;
The Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area;
The Commanding Generals,
Theaters of Operations;
Defense Commands;
Departments;
Base Commands;
The Commanding Officers,
Base Commands;
Director, Bureau of Public Relations.

1. Publication or communication to any unauthorized persons of experiences of escape or evasion from enemy-occupied territory, internment in a neutral country, or release from internment not only furnishes useful information to the enemy but also jeopardizes future escapes, evasions and releases.

2. Personnel will not, unless authorized by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, publish in any form whatever or communicate either directly, or indirectly, to the press, radio or an unauthorized person any account of escape or evasion of capture from enemy or enemy-occupied territory, or internment in a neutral country either before or after repatriation. They will be held strictly responsible for all statements contained in communications to friends which may subsequently be published in the press or otherwise.

3. Evaders, escapees, or internees shall not be interrogated on the circumstances of their experiences in escape, evasion or internment except by the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations. In allied or neutral countries, American Military Attaches are authorized to interrogate on escape, evasion and internment matters.

4. Should the services of escaped prisoners of war, evaders, or internees be deemed necessary for lecturing and briefing, such services will be under the direct supervision of the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations.

5. Commanding Officers will be responsible for instructing all evaders, escapees, and internees in the provisions of this directive which supersedes letter, AG 383.6 (5 Nov 42) OB-S-B-M, 7 November 1942, subject: Instructions concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War and other previous instructions on this subject.

By order of the Secretary of War:

/s/ J. A. ULIO
J. A. ULIO
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

1. Information about your escape or your evasion from capture *would be useful to the enemy* and a danger to your friends. It is therefore **SECRET**.

2. a You must therefore not disclose, except to the first Military Attache to whom you report, or to an officer designated by the Commanding General of the Theater of Operations, or by A. C. of S., G-2, W. D.

- (1) The names of those who helped you.
- (2) The method by which you escaped or evaded.
- (3) The route you followed.
- (4) Any other facts concerning your experience.

b You must be particularly on your guard with persons representing the press.

c You must give no account of your experiences in books, newspapers, periodicals or in broadcasts or in lectures.

d You must give no information to anyone, irrespective of nationality, in letters or in conversation, except as specifically directed in Par. 4.

e No lectures or reports are to be given to any unit without the permission of A. C. of S., G-2, W. D., or corresponding organization in the theater.

GERTIFICATE

I have read the above and certify that I will comply with it.

I understand that any information concerning my escape or evasion from capture is **SECRET** and must not be disclosed to anyone other than the agency designated by A. C. of S., G-2, War Department, the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations, or to the Military Attache in a neutral country to whom I first report. I understand that disclosure to anyone else will make me liable to disciplinary action.

Name (Print) Robert W. Bechtel
Rank S/SGT A. S. N. 13096713
Unit 384th Bomb Group

Signed Robert W. Bechtel
Dated July 31, 1944
Witness _____

AG P BR HQ SOS

/22472

RESTRICTED

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
P/W and X Detachment
Military Intelligence Service

E & L REPORT NO
EVASION IN

July 31, 1944
(Date)

Robert Bechtel S/SGT 13096713

(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

17 (No of Missions)

TARGET: Swinefurt

Date Missing in Action: Apr. 13, 1944

Date Arrived in UK: July 31, 1944

545th Bomb Sqd. 384 Bomb Grp.

(Squadron) (Group)

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIR)

Indicate what happened to
each man
and how you know

PILOT - Was wounded in right leg. Told by French

CO-PILOT - Had the same experience as me. Was with me all

NAVIGATOR the time

BOMBARDIER - Was wounded badly about the head. I saw it.

RADIO OPERATOR -

TOP TURRET GUNNER - Was wounded above L. ear. Was with the Co-pilot

TAIL TURRET GUNNER - Was burned slightly about the hands. That's Me

WAIST GUNNER -

WAIST GUNNER - Was wounded in the back. Was with me for two
days + then we chased from a house by the Jerries. The
other three of us hid in the woods but he kept
nothing ON RUNNING + we didn't see him after that.

Were you wounded?

Was burned slightly.

SECRET

APPENDIX "D" TO E AND F REPORT NO.

No., Rank, Name:- 13096713 S/SGT Robert W. Bechtel
Unit:- 384th Bomb Group

Suggestions for improvement of escape equipment and training come largely from those who make use of them. Your report and comments will help others to evade capture or to escape.

1. AIDS BOX

a. Did you use your aids box? Yes

b. If not, why? Did not have to get them.

c. If you used it, state briefly the circumstances in which you used each item, for example, "While hiding in woods for two nights".

✓ Horlicks tablets. - while staying at a cabin with

✓ Chocolate or Peanut Bar. very little food.

Milk (tube). No same

✗ Benzadrine tablets (fatigue). When coming over the mountains

✗ Halazone tablets (water purifier). When coming over the mountains
we melted snow + put these tablets in the water.

✓ Adhesive tape. For bandages on the top turret

✓ Chewing gum. MAN'S head

Water bottle. When in the mountains

✓ Compass. No

✓ Sewing kit. In the mountains

d. Did any of the above items prove unsatisfactory? very much

e. How did you finally dispose of the box? The Benzadrine Tablets didn't seem to do

f. Can you suggest any way in which the contents of the aids box might be changed to make it of greater use, bearing in mind that the size of it cannot be larger?

2. PURSE

a. Did you carry a purse? Yes

State color of stripes and letters. Can't remember yellow
If NOT, State why not.

b. Did you use the purse? Yes

(over)

c. If so, which of the following items in the purse did you use?

Maps. Which ones? The Map of France + the

Compass.

File (hacksaw).

Foreign currency. State countries and amounts.

How did you spend the money?

d. How did you dispose of:-

Maps. - Gave some to members of French resistance

Compass.

File (hacksaw).

Surplus currency.

3. Were you issued any extra compasses or further aids to evasion?

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

a. Did you carry passport-size photographs?

If so, how many?

b. Did you use them?

5. LECTURES

a. Were you lectured on evasion and escape?

State WHERE, WHEN and by WHOM.

b. Did you find the lectures of value?

c. Do you have any suggestions to make which, from your experience, you feel will help other evaders and escapers?

Have A lot of patience + Faith in the French

SECRET - AMERICAN
MOST SECRET - BRITISH
MIS (X)

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
F/W and X Detachment
Military Intelligence Service

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL
EVADING FROM ENEMY OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

13096713

1. Full Name, Rank, and Serial No. Robert William Bechtel S/Sgt
2. Decorations. Air Medal One O.K.C.
3. Unit or Squadron. ~~384 Bomb Group~~ 545 Bomb Sqd.
4. Division (Army) or Group. 384 Bomb Group
5. Date of Birth. March 23, 1923
6. Length of Service. 2 years One month
7. Private Address. Pottstown Landing RD#1 Pottstown, Penna.
8. Job as civilian. Clerk
9. From what field did you take off? Grafton Underwood
10. Take off time. Not Certain
11. Date and target. April 13, 1944 Swienfurt
12. Where did you land? Beaumont, France
13. Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed? Yes
14. What was your position in aircraft? Ball Turret
15. Were you wounded? Burned
16. Did you pay your guides? If so how much? No
17. Do you speak French? Spanish? Just what I picked up in the two places
18. Did you have Identity Papers? French papers - Yes
19. Have you been questioned before to-day on your escape or evasion? If so, where and by whom? Have you given anyone a written report on your experiences. Where and when?
A few Questions about people who helped me. By Authority
IN Gib No.
20. Did you report on your operations? If so, where and to whom? No
21. Did you sign a security certificate warning you against talking about your escape or evasion? If so, where and when? Yes IN Alhama Spain + IN Gib
22. Date of arrival in Spain. Gib
23. Date of arrival at Gibraltar. June 15th 1944
24. Place and date of departure for U.K. By sea or air. Gib. July 30, 1944
25. Place and date of arrival in U.K. By Air.

Bristol

July 31, 1944

TOP SECRET

E & E CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Robert Bechtel S/SGT 13096713 July 31, 1944
(Name) (Rank) (ASN) (Date)
384 Bomb Group
(Unit) #845

Date, time and approximate location of plane crash or landing.

Apr. 13, 1944 - 4 o'clock Beaumont near Toul

Nature and extent of damage to plane when source bailed out. Crashed Landed
Was it on fire, etc? Had two engines out before we hit the
target. Got as far as Beaumont + the flak from a
train got our other two engines. We were about 500 ft high.
At approximately what altitude did source bail out?
Didn't bail out. Crashed landed.

Were any of the crew injured or killed before the plane crashed?

Everyone that was injured was so before the
crash landing.

What members of the crew bailed out? Did their parachutes open?

Did the plane explode on striking the ground?

No.

Did source see any other members of the crew dead or alive after
reaching the ground?

Yes I saw them all get out of the
plane

Did he receive any information from others as to whether any other
members of the crew were dead or alive? If so give detailed furnished
by his informant and whether the other crew members were identified by
name or otherwise.

Date, time and approximate location of plane crash or landing.

Did source examine the wreckage of the plane? If so, what was its
conditions?

Yes we saw
pictures of it taken by the French. It was
just about completely destroyed by fire.

If the plane crashed in water how far was the plane from land and what means
was source rescued and what life rafts, wreckage, etc., remained on the
surface that would have assisted other personnel to keep afloat.

At approximately what altitude did source bail out?

Were any of the crew injured or killed before the plane crashed?

What is source's opinion as to the fate of the other crew members and his
reason for his opinion?

The French said the wounded W.G.
+ Bombardier went to Switzerland + the other five
were prisoners. They weren't very convincing though.

Did the plane explode on striking the ground?

844
CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES ARMY
OFFICE OF THE A. C. OF S., G-2

DATE: 1 AUGUST 1944

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I, HAROLD J. NESS, SGT. AC 34384937

HEREBY CERTIFY that I have known and have been associated with

ROBERT W. BECHTEL, S/SGT. AC 13096713

prior to his being reported missing in action over enemy territory.

The person whose signature and right thumb print appear hereon is the individual referred to above.

Robert W. Bechtel

Harold J. Ness

RIGHT THUMB PRINT:



The individual whose signature and right thumb print appear hereon
has been identified to the satisfaction of this office as ROBERT W. BECHTEL
S/SGT. AC 13096713 545 Bomb Squad 384 Bomb Group

previously reported missing in action over enemy territory.

J. E. CARROLL

CONFIDENTIAL

J. F. Carroll
SPECIAL AGENT, C.I.O.