

EIGHT MURDERS, 43 SUICIDES IN PRISONER CAMPS

56 PWS Shot While Trying
To Escape—35 Killed—
Murder, Suicide Low.

Washington, Feb. 15—(U.P.)—Eight murders and 43 suicides have occurred among Axis prisoners of war in this country, Maj. Gen. Archer L. Lerch, provost marshal general, said today. All or nearly all occurred among Germans.

Five of the murders and two of the suicides were ascribed directly to Nazi political activities within the camps, Lerch added.

All have been carefully investigated and those responsible for the murders have been court-martialed.

Lerch disclosed that 56 prisoners of war have been shot trying to escape. Guards killed 35 and wounded 21 of these.

Lerch pointed out that the murder and suicide rate among the more than 350,000 war prisoners in this country was lower than the rate among civilians either in this country or in Germany.

Viewed as Prank

Discussing the Nazi swastika incident at Camp Papago Park, Ariz., Lerch said it was regarded as a prank and not viewed too seriously by the war department.

He said a prisoner of war made and displayed the Nazi emblem in violation of regulations and was being disciplined.

Lt. Col. Verne Austin has been assigned to succeed Col. William A. Holden as commander of the Camp Papago Park camp, Lerch said. Austin last year took command of the Tule Lake, Cal., internment camp following difficulties there.

The incident of the Nazi flag followed by a few weeks the escape of 25 prisoners from the Arizona camp. All were recaptured.

Santa Maria, Cal., Feb. 15—(U.P.)—A German prisoner of war was found hanged in his quarters at the Lamont prisoner of war camp near here last Friday morning, Camp Cooke public relations officers belatedly disclosed today.

Officers said that the prisoner's body was found during the regular morning prisoner check-up.

A formal statement said that a "full investigation" of the hanging was being conducted by the ninth service command. The Lamont camp, in Kern county, is under the supervision of Camp Cooke.

HEARING SET FOR FEBRUARY 20 ON RIVER DIVERSION

Apprehensive of the detrimental effect huge power, reclamation and flood control projects in the Klamath river basin might have on fish life, the state game commission at its monthly meeting recently appointed a committee to attend a hearing set by the army engineers at Klamath Falls February 20.

Kenneth Denman, local attorney and member of the state game commission who will attend the Klamath Falls meeting, said that the proposed project would drain about 20,000 acres of duck marsh and the Spencer Creek fish hatchery would be ruined. Denman added that the water would be used to irrigate the huge Central Valley in California and would be no benefit to Oregon.

Tentative Plans

Plans tentatively being studied by the army engineers call for the storage of flood waters in new reservoirs in the upper Klamath and Trinity river basins and diversion of the developed surplus waters to the Central Valley project for future hydroelectric and irrigation use.

The engineers' study covers a proposed channel south from Tule Lake to deliver some 600 second feet of water into the Pit river basin and thence into Shasta reservoir. An alternate channel would leave Klamath river near the state line and deliver water into the McCloud river. To add to water storage in the Klamath basin the engineers proposed a dam at Chiloquin narrows in Sprague river which would back water up to Beatty on the Klamath Indian reservation.

Basin Assured Water

While the engineers have insisted Klamath Basin will be guaranteed priority for all water needed for irrigation, some officials have indicated their skepticism of the value of such guarantees for all time. They said that once the channel is built at a cost of about \$100 million and the central valleys begin getting water through it, it might prove difficult to withhold water even though it is needed in Klamath basin.

Sportsmen of both Oregon and California fear the depletion of fishing resources or almost their entire destruction if these ambitious industrial plans go through. The engineers have promised to consider all the wildlife problems of the region, now being jointly studied by United States fish and wildlife service and other government agencies.

It will be the purpose of the Oregon game commission, delegates at the hearing to present all objections of fishermen and it is expected that the California delegates will cooperate.

River Survey Asked

The commission at its recent meeting also ordered a letter sent to the United States reclamation bureau, and army engineers, demanding that these agencies survey all tributaries of Rogue river for possible power, flood control and irrigation dam sites before it acts on proposals for construction of approximately 20 dams now in contemplation on the main Rogue river.

UNITED URGES DIRECT AIR ROUTE TO ALASKA

Washington, Feb. 15—(U.P.)—United Airlines urged the civil aeronautics board today to grant its application for a direct route from Seattle, Wash., to key cities in Alaska.

The CAB is hearing applications for routes from the United States to Alaska, the Pacific islands, China, India, and Australia.

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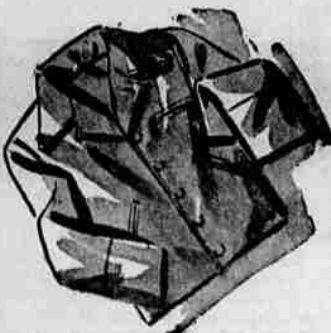
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