

GEN. OTTER TELLS DAILY NEWS OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR INTERNING CAMPS

This Paper Gets One of Most Extended Interviews the Distinguished Soldier has Ever Given—Announces the Main Camps for Ontario—Is Here to Decide Upon Care of Aliens Registered in Port Arthur and Fort William.

In one of the most extended interviews he has ever given a newspaper, Sir William D. Otter, Canada's most distinguished soldier, yesterday told the Daily News many hitherto unpublished details of the arrangements for the internment and treatment of aliens in the Dominion of Canada.

General Otter, who has retired from active connection with the militia, is acting at present as a special officer in charge of the internment of aliens throughout the Dominion and is here to make arrangements for the care of the 1500 men and women of Austrian, Hungarian, German and Turkish nationality who have been registered in Port Arthur and Fort William by specially appointed registration clerks during the past few weeks.

Gives Few Interviews

A soldier all his life, and thus kept apart largely from controversies or discussions of public matters, and naturally quiet and reserved in his manner, General Otter has been one of the least interviewed of the prominent men of Canada. Newspapers seldom record him as having given them information or comment. As a rule, when they have, it has been only to the extent of a few words, but yesterday afternoon at the Prince Arthur hotel the general talked for a full half hour to a member of the staff of the Daily News, on the distinct understanding that whatever he said might be published.

The general had just returned from a visit to the agricultural buildings and grounds, in company with Lieut.-Col. Little of the Ninety-Sixth regiment. He had been looking over the buildings and grounds with a view to learning how they might be used as an internment camp.

No Announcement Yet

"I cannot tell you whether we will use them for internment purposes or not," the general said, in answer to a question from the reporter.

"Are they suitable?"

"Oh, yes, under certain conditions and arrangements. I am to meet committees of the Port Arthur and Fort William city councils and the agricultural association tomorrow (Monday) to go more fully into the matter of their use but no decision

will be made until I return to Ottawa."

General Otter returns to Ottawa this evening. After closing up some business in hand there he will leave again on a trip west which will take him as far as the Pacific coast. He told the Daily News that the registration of aliens was still going on and would be in progress for some time yet. In anticipation of the finishing of the work he did not care to make any estimate as to the number who would be registered.

"How do the aliens seem to feel towards the registration and plans for their internment?" the Daily News asked.

"I have not seen or heard of much of any resentment. A great many of them are more or less indifferent. There may be a few isolated cases of hostile feeling having been expressed. The attitude of these people is one of the things I am studying."

Attitude of Aliens

The Daily News told the general of the incidents in Port Arthur last week when a steamer near the government elevator was burned, evidently by an incendiary, and the firing upon a militia guard in the same vicinity the next night.

"Yes, those are the kind of cases I am interested in," said the general. "Of course it is hard to tell sometimes just what they mean. The man who fired at the sentry may have wanted to kill him, or he may only have been trying to stir up some excitement for the fun of it."

This, however, took the general into an explanation of the government's reason for selecting remote points for the main internment camps, such as those along the N.T.R. The reason is, he explained, to get the men as far as possible from contact with the general public and into places where any individuals with such hostile intentions as the man who fired on the local sentry apparently had, would have no opportunity of carrying them into effect.

Treated As Prisoners Of War

"We will treat these interned aliens as actual prisoners of war," General Otter said. "We are bound to do that under our agreement at The Hague convention. They will have to work but we will pay them, besides feeding

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and housing them. The pay, however, will not be much, about twenty-five cents a day, or enough to keep them in tobacco."

General Otter said that arrangements had been made for three principal concentration camps in Ontario.

One will be at Petewawa, the military training grounds, where it is proposed to put from 600 to 800 men at work cleaning up the grounds, which amount to about thirty thousand acres.

Another main camp will be at Kapuskasing, on the Transcontinental railway, between Hearst and Cochrane and one will also be located at Hurricanaw, on the N.T.R., 175 miles east of Cochrane, on Lake Abitibi. To each of these latter about 1000 or 1200 men will be sent.

The sites on the N.T.R. at Hurricanaw and Kapuskasing have both been selected by the provincial government, and will be cleared by the aliens for use as experimental farms.

Not Used For Competitive Labor

General Otter said it was not the present intention to use the prisoners of war in making roads. "That is work where they would enter into competition with ordinary labor," he said, "and it is not our intention to do anything of that kind. The clearing up of the camp at Petewawa and the experimental farms is work that would hardly be done under normal conditions. Our principal reason for putting them to work is that while they are busy there will not be so much discontent."

A gang of 150 men have already gone to Hurricanaw to prepare the camps and as soon as they are ready the prisoners will be sent up from the centres of population where they have been registered.

The System At The Camps

General Otter also explained to the Daily News the system under which the internment camps will be conducted. "As far as caring for and keeping the prisoners is concerned, the system will be purely military," he said. "Each camp will be in charge of a commandant of the rank of lieutenant-colonel or major. The three principal departments, commissary, medical and guard, will be military. The labor will be directed by foremen, chosen not as soldiers, but as being capable of having the work done in a way satisfactory to the government, according to its purpose of using the land for experimental farm purposes."

General Otter said that it had not been decided whether the aliens of Port Arthur and Fort William would be sent to any of the main internment camps. If they are, it will be to the closest.

Women of the alien nationalities must also be taken care of when left destitute. Special provision will be made for them in the registration districts and they will not be concentrated at large camps like the men.

General Otter asked that he be not quoted as making any comment or reference to the military activity in Canada, or to the war.