

file PSE Settlements folder 2-45
Confidential State

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 1, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Shooting of American prisoners of war at Malmedy.

In a letter dated December 28, 1944 from the Secretary of War I was informed of an incident which took place at Malmedy on December 17 during which a large number of American prisoners of war were subjected to machine gun fire from German tanks. I promptly forwarded a telegram through the protecting Power protesting vigorously against this action and notifying the German Government that this Government expects assurances that orders will be given to prevent the repetition of such an occurrence and that the German Government will identify and punish the persons responsible. A copy of the telegram is attached hereto for your information.

Enclosure:

Telegram to Bern.



C
O
P
Y

PLAIN

AMLEGATION,

BERN

AMERICAN INTERESTS - GERMANY.

Please request Swiss to inform German Government that a group of fifteen survivors have reported that on December 17 in the fighting south of Malmedy about 130 members of an American Field Artillery Observation Battalion were taken prisoners by the German forces. The prisoners were stripped of their valuables and equipment, herded into a field, and subjected to machine gun fire from tanks at a range of approximately 100 feet. The American Government protests most vigorously against this gross violation of the Geneva Prisoners of War Convention and the generally accepted international rules of warfare. It expects that the German Government will give the necessary orders to prevent the repetition of such an occurrence, that the German Government will identify and punish the persons responsible, and that the American Government will be given assurances to this effect.