

(A) INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS AND AGREEMENTS

1. Initialing of Wheat Agreement at Washington, April 22, 1942.

A Wheat Agreement was initialed at Washington, on April 22, 1942, on behalf of Argentina, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

The text of this Agreement will be made public as soon as notification has been received that the five Governments have given it their approval.

2. Transfer of Protection of Canadian Interests from Argentina to Switzerland, Statement by Prime Minister, May 7, 1942.

In accordance with the government's policy of making public as quickly as possible all reliable information received about the welfare of Canadians in enemy hands, a statement about conditions in Hong Kong, received from the British embassy in Chungking, was given to the press last night. It reads:

"His Majesty's representative at Chungking reported that he has received information from sources which are considered reasonably reliable concerning the conditions under which Canadian prisoners are being held by the Japanese.

These reports would indicate that Canadians are receiving a good ration of rice supplemented by vegetables and bread daily, and a small quantity of meat. They are allowed to send out their trucks to bring in their food. They are also reported to have their own ovens for baking bread.

The information which has come to hand further discloses that very little disease exists, with the exception of a few cases of dysentery, and that supplies of quinine are on hand in the camp.

From the same reports it would appear that there is a shortage of warm clothing and blankets."

The house is aware that two days ago the Secretary State for Dominion Affairs made a statement in the House of Commons, London, with regard to a decision taken by the United Kingdom, in consultation with the governments of the dominions and of the other united nations, to transfer the protection of British interests in Japan from Argentina to Switzerland.

The welfare of Canadian nationals in Japanese hands, members of the Canadian forces and civilians alike, has been the cause of anxiety to the Canadian government ever since the outbreak of war with Japan. Throughout this trying period the Argentine has been our protecting power in Japan. The Canadian government deeply appreciate the services which have been rendered by the Argentine government, the Argentine foreign office and, in particular, by the Argentine embassy in Tokyo. As a result of their efforts, they have made progress in their work on behalf of Canadian prisoners of war,