

# 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) VILAS D. BALK  
Rank 2nd Lt A. S. N. D-674274  
Unit 355 F.B. Sq., 354 F.B. Gp.

Signed Vilas D. Balk  
Dated 31 August 1943  
Witness \_\_\_\_\_

# RESTRICTED

AG P BR HQ SCS

122472

SECRET

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

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL  
EVADING OR ESCAPING FROM ENEMY OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

BALK, VILAS D. Indht 0-624274  
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

72.42 (No. of missions)

355th Sqd 354 Fighter Bomber  
(Squadron) (Group)

TARGET: Enroute B-26 to Alamein

Date mission in action: 26 July 1944

Date arrived in UK: 31 August 1944

MEMBERS OF CREW: (Please list names next to positions)

Indicate what happened to each man and how you know.

PILOT VILAS D. BALK

CO-PILOT

NAVIGATOR

BOMBARDIER

RADIO OPERATOR

TOP TURRET GUNNER

BALL TURRET GUNNER

WAIST GUNNER

WAIST GUNNER

TAIL GUNNER

Decorations:

Date of Birth: June 6th 1918

Private Address: Mondovi, Wisconsin

Length of Service: 3 yrs. - 6 mo.

Job as Civilian: FARMER

From what field did you take off? Take off time.

STRIP A-2 . . . Approximately 18:15

Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed? yes

Were you wounded? Give details. I had 3 small shrapnel wounds in my left leg, scratched my knee and bumped my head slightly.

Did you pay your guides? If so, how much? yes total of 1600 Francs.

Do you speak FRENCH? no SPANISH? no GERMAN? yes ITALIAN? no OTHER LANGUAGE?

Did you have identity papers? no

(over)

Have you been questioned before on your escape or evasion? If so, where and by whom? *ya*  
Col. WHITE of 4th ARMY Hq., no names of helpers or their addresses  
given.

Have you given any one a written report on your experiences. Where and When? *no*

Did you report on your operations? If so, where and to whom? *no*

Did you sign a security certificate warning you against talking about your escape or evasion? If so, Where and When?

Date of arrival in Spain:

Date of arrival at Gibraltar:

Place and date of departure for UK. By sea or air. *STRIP 31, August 31<sup>st</sup> 1944*

*AIR*

List names of American or British personnel believed to have been arrested by Germans.

List names of American or British personnel believed to be evading.

APPENDIX "B" TO E AND E REPORT NO.

List all military information which you observed or were told while evading. Give fullest possible details. (Airfields, troop encampments, coastal and interior defenses, AA batteries, radar installations, troop movements, results of allied bombing, location of enemy factories and ammunition dumps, enemy and civilian morale, etc., etc.,.....)

Several motorcycle patrols came from Damville to look for me the first evening.

I saw an enemy Radar or radio station west of Damville, it was along a highway and looked like a large hedge.

I saw three searchlights Southeast of Damville guiding planes, I am not positive if planes landed.

I saw some bombs <sup>1000 LB.</sup> near Conches where it seemed the Germans had ~~an~~ landing strip.

I saw a small German encampment of troops about 3 miles Southwest of Conches.

I saw a German Half track painted a bright yellow go north from Vernuil.

Saw a few trucks travelling around 22:00 to 23:00'clock along highway from Vernuil to Breteil.

We heard enemy armor retreating on the nights of Aug. 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

Enemy was reported by French to be low on fuel, ambulances left setting at roadside. Horses were taken from French farmers.

French civilian morale high, they report enemy morale low.

all territory in allied hands.

E & E CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

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

Plane crashed 26<sup>th</sup> July 1944 at about 19:15 o'clock near DAMVILLE

Nature and extent of damage to plane when source bailed out.

Was it on fire, etc? The engine was hit and stopped, it was on fire, a hit on left side of cockpit, also flames and smoke in cockpit.

At approximately what altitude did source bail out? 10,000 ft

Were any of the crew injured or killed before the plane crashed? I had three small shrapnel wounds in left leg.

What members of the crew bailed out? Did their parachutes open? Pilot, yes.

Did the plane explode on striking the ground? yes

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

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

Did source examine the wreckage of the plane? If so, what was its condition? no

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. no

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

## APPENDIX "D" TO E AND E REPORT NO.

No., Rank, Name:- 0-674274, Ind Lt. VILAS D. BALK

Unit:- 354 Fighter Bomber 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 BOXa. Did you use your aids box? *yes*

b. If not, why?

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 hiding in woods and walking.*

Chocolate or Peanut Bar.

Milk (tube).

Benzadrine tablets (fatigue). *no*Halazone tablets (water purifier). *found a small clear creek and used the bag and 2 tablets.*Matches. *no*Adhesive tape. *yes, on my wounds.*Chewing gum. *yes, while walking.*Water bottle. *yes, when I found the small clear stream.*Compass. *yes, while walking through woods.*Sewing kit. *yes, repair my French clothes.*d. Did any of the above items prove unsatisfactory? *no.*e. How did you finally dispose of the box? *hid it in a large hole under leaves and bushes.*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? *yes,**a small French phrase card*2. PURSEa. Did you carry a purse? *yes*State color of stripes and letters. *Red.*

If NOT, State why not.

b. Did you use the purse? *yes, the maps and 1600 French compass.*

(over)

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

Maps. Which ones? *The one of Normandy.*

Compass. *yes.*

File (hacksaw). *No.*

Foreign currency. State countries and amounts. *contained 2000 Francs.*  
How did you spend the money? *Gave 100 Francs to a farmer for a cap and eider. Gave 1500 Francs to helper that gave me clothes and meat. Gave 400 Francs to another helper.*

d. How did you dispose of:-

Maps. *Buried two and one was left with a farmer.*

Compass. *lost*

File (hacksaw). *lost*

Surplus currency. *No surplus*

3. Were you issued any extra compasses or further aids to evasion? *No.*

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

a. Did you carry passport-size photographs? *yes.*  
If so, how many? *6*

b. Did you use them? *yes.*

5. LECTURES

a. Were you lectured on evasion and escape? *yes.*  
State WHERE, WHEN and by WHOM. *at Oak Maby Field, Fla. and at Air Base near Shrewsbury.*

b. Did you find the lectures of value? *yes.*

c. Do you have any suggestions to make which, from your experience, you feel will help other evaders and escapers? *yes, stay under cover and obey your helpers.*

P-51 Mustang

Lt. Back.

26 July. - Escaping B-26 which were bombing a target. - Was hit before the target by 2 Fw 190. Plane went on fire so I bailed out at 10000 feet. - Landed in a small tree in a wooded area. - Left stuck on the tree (Landed <sup>near</sup> DAMVILLE approx 3 miles W. of Damville) Ran to the other end of the wooded area went down about 1945 and hid until about 1 AM for I heard motorcycle searching. -

I then went in a field trying in a potato patch until 3 PM. - went into forest to protect from rain until 1 AM. -

Contacted farm house women.

Gave me only water and bread. I walked again until the edge of woods saw the farmer cutting woods. - He brought me clothes and food I hid my uniform in a hole. took out of my escape kit what I wanted. He would not keep me. Walked until 3 AM slept in a grain shop until 8. Saw in woods 3 fellows, could not help they said gave me food. - (28 July) On the 29th about noon saw an old man walking in field. - (1/2 between Vincennes and RETEVILLE) He took me to his house. they were 4 people there

the 2 of them were Paris taxi drivers  
walking on the fields. - They took me to a school teacher  
(aged 35 named PICAN) He took one escape photo  
stayed with him the afternoon. at 10<sup>PM</sup> was

taken to farm house owned by ALBERT  
PELLETIER <sup>2 daughters Renée 22, Lucienne 19. - a woman who had these 23 Pican lived with me for the night to then a Antwerp little</sup>  
~~the next morning~~ ~~to the~~

2 days later PICAN brought persecut and a  
fellow who<sup>1</sup> was told was leader of loose  
men in that area called DE GAULLE. he  
questioned me. - I stayed there until 3 August  
~~to Paris~~ ~~when~~ then 1/2 away to a farmer called

Robert (3 small children, wife and his  
mother). De Gaulle came and checked my name  
and serial number. stayed here until 6 August

then back to Pelletier stayed there until 10<sup>th</sup>  
then back to Robert 14 days then back to Pelletier  
until U.S. men came on the 21<sup>st</sup> - The 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne  
Person. 4 Markers picked me up -

send to division they stayed the night.

The next afternoon went down to <sup>to the Army</sup> Camps by -

→ back to my old outfit had moved →  
went to my outfit → 9<sup>th</sup> A.F. → came  
here →

R E S T R I C T E D  
HEADQUARTERS  
NINTH AIR FORCE

*MIA. 26 July*

*UK. 31 August*

*126*

APO 696, US Army,  
25 August 1944

SUBJECT: Orders.

TO : 2ND LT VILAS D BALK, O-674274, AC, 354th Fighter Group

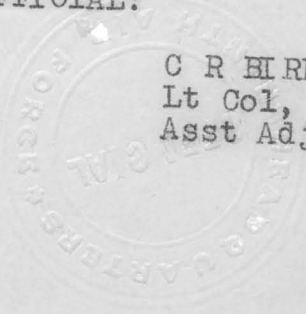
You will proceed on or about 26 August 1944 from Headquarters Ninth Air Force to United States Special Reception Center, 63 Brook Street, London W-1, England. TDN by MT, mil acft or rail. 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425.

By command of Major General VANDENBERG:

V H STRAHM,  
Brig Gen, USA  
C of S

OFFICIAL:

C R HERBARI,  
Lt Col, A.C.,  
Asst Adj Gen.



R E S T R I C T E D

## APPENDIX D

### AIDS BOX

I used the Horlicks tablets while hiding in woods and walking. I used the water bag and two halezone tablets as I found a clear stream with water. I used the compass while walking through woods. I used the sawing kit to repair my French clothes. I disposed of the box by hiding it in a large hole under ~~some~~ some leaves and brushes. I suggest that a small phrase card be added ~~to~~ in the box.

### PURSE:

I had a Red purse. I used the maps for walking I gave 100 frs to a farmer for a cap 1500 Frs to a helper who gave me clothes and food. I spent the rest. I buried two of the maps and gave the third one to a farmer

### PHOTOGRAPHS:

Yes I had 6 photographs, I used one for an Identity card.

### LECTURES:

I was lectured at DALE MABRY FIELD Flo. and at an Air Base near SHREWSBURY.

### SUGGESTIONS:

Stay under cover and obey your helpers.

2nd LT VILAS D BALK:

1261

I was escorting B-26 which were bombing ALENCON. Before reaching the target I was hit by two FW 190<sup>M</sup>, and my ~~the~~ plane was set on fire so I bailed out at 10,000 feet and landed on a small tree in a wooded area three miles W of DAMVILLE.

BAILED  
OUT

It was around 1900 hrs when I hit the ground, I could not get my chute out of the tree, I heard the noise of two motorcycles so I ran to the other end of the woods and hid until 0100 hrs the next morning. I <sup>then</sup> went into the fields and hid until the end of the afternoon. I ~~then~~ <sup>At 1700 hrs I went</sup> went to a nearby farm house, <sup>there</sup> a woman gave me there food and cider but would not give me further help so I walked again to the edge of the woods. <sup>until</sup> There I saw a farmer cutting wood, <sup>He</sup> he brought me clothes and more food

HELP.

but did not want to give me <sup>other</sup> further help. I ~~hid my flying clothes in a hole~~ took out a few things ~~ea-~~ from my escape kit and buried the rest in the hole with my ~~he~~ clothes. I walked alone until the 29 July. That day around noon I saw an old man working in a field, He took me to a house and I stayed there until the U S troops picked me up.

PICKED  
UP BY  
US TROOPS

APPENDIX B

Military Information outdated for the territory is now in allied hands.

Byron

APPENDIX C

I was shot down on the 26 July. I landed in a wooded area about three miles W of DAM  
1/2 between BRETEUIL AND VERNEUIL  
DAMVILLE. The next day I was given clothes by a farmer. On the 29 July at midday  
an old man working in a field took me to 4 men working in a nearby field. (One was  
his boss and the two others were taxi drivers from Paris) They took me to the  
schoolmaster of the village, his name was PILAN) aged 35) He took one of my  
escape photographs to make an Identity card and took me that night to a farm house  
owned by ALBERT PELLETIER (had two daughters: RENEE aged 22, LUCIENNE aged 19, a man  
called PIERRE aged 23 his home was in Lille where his father was a butcher, worked in  
the farm. Two days later PILAN came to see me in this house bringing with him  
an Identity card for me and a man whom everyone called DE GAULLE. This man questioned  
me to establish my identity, He came the next day to ask me further questions and  
finally was satisfied. I stayed at the PELLETIER'S house and with a neighbour named  
ROBERT \_\_\_\_\_? ( lived with his wife, 3 small children and his mother) On the  
21 The Americans-picked-me-up I was picked up by the 82 Armored Recon.