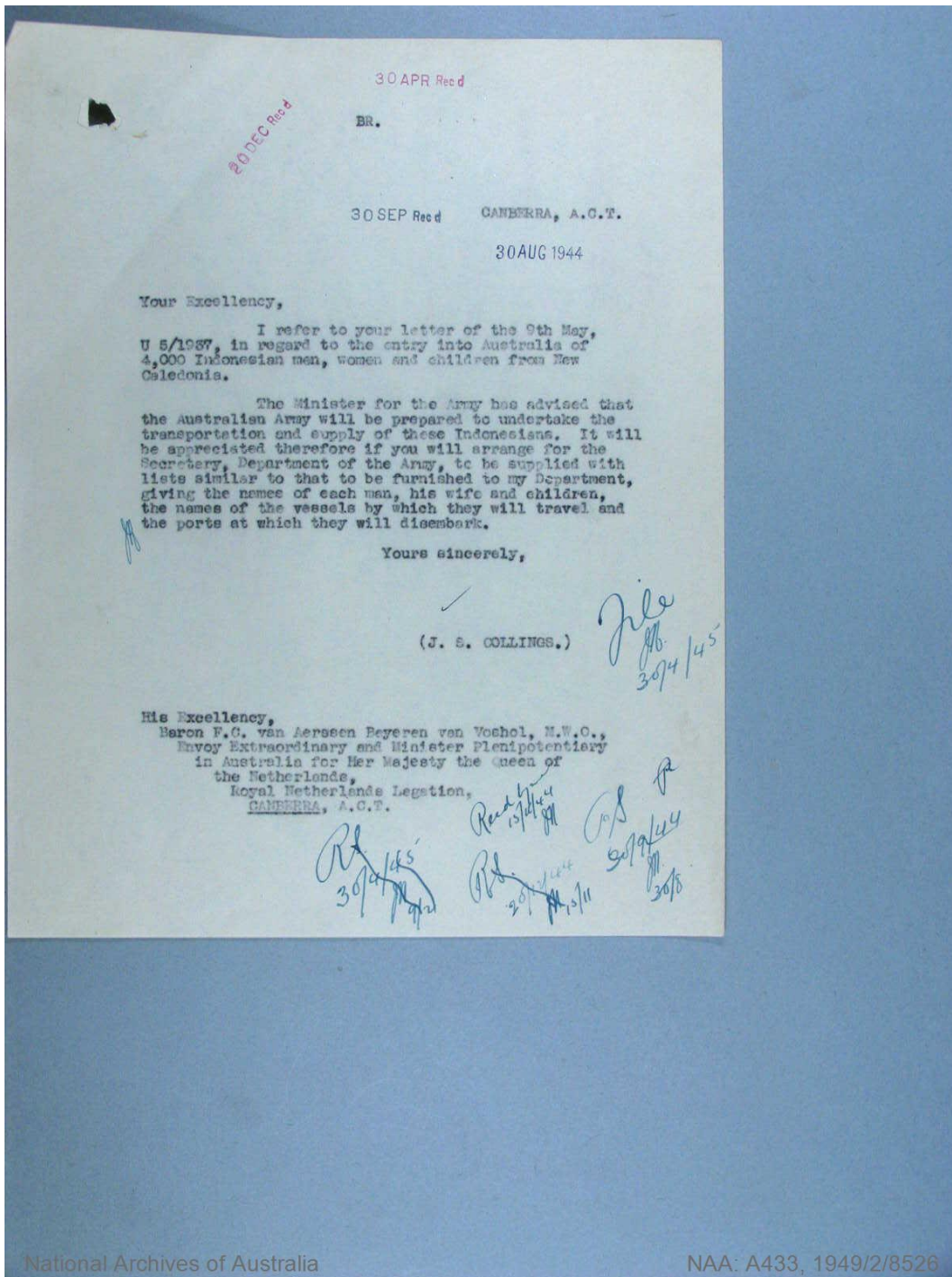


AA File, Series A 433 /1, Item, 49 /2/8526, Admission of 4000 Indonesians, Netherlands Minister, letter to J. S. Collings, Minister for the Interior, 24 January 1944



30 APR Rec d

20 DEC Rec d

BR.

30 SEP Rec d CANBERRA, A.C.T.

30 AUG 1944

Your Excellency,

I refer to your letter of the 9th May, U 5/1937, in regard to the entry into Australia of 4,000 Indonesian men, women and children from New Caledonia.

The Minister for the Army has advised that the Australian Army will be prepared to undertake the transportation and supply of these Indonesians. It will be appreciated therefore if you will arrange for the Secretary, Department of the Army, to be supplied with lists similar to that to be furnished to my Department, giving the names of each man, his wife and children, the names of the vessels by which they will travel and the ports at which they will disembark.

Yours sincerely,

(J. S. COLLINGS.)

*file*  
*30/4/45*

His Excellency,  
Baron F.C. van Aerssen Beyeren van Voshol, M.W.O.,  
Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary  
in Australia for Her Majesty the Queen of  
the Netherlands,  
Royal Netherlands Legation,  
CANBERRA, A.C.T.

*R*  
*30/4/45*

*Recd 15/4/44*

*AS*

*R*  
*30/4/44*

*30/4/44*

Mention of Camp Casino:

15 JUN 1944

7 AUG



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

Acting MINISTER FOR THE ARMY.

15 JUN 1944

My dear Minister,

With further reference to your letter of the 26th April, regarding the admission into Australia of Indonesians from New Caledonia, it is advised that the consequential arrangements required at Casino Camp have received consideration.

There are at present approximately 400 Indonesians in Casino Camp where six tents have been erected and six are held in store. The Indonesians are using for living accommodation the various hutted facilities (i.e. mess huts, store huts, etc.) available, but the existing hutting would be quite inadequate for the expected numbers. Tentage is in short supply with little likelihood of substantial increase owing to difficulty of production, but, in any case, it would seem desirable that these Indonesians should be housed in pre-fabricated or pre-cut buildings rather than under canvas.

The army programme for pre-fabrication is already allotted to meet current and anticipated requirements and, as regards labour, I find that the Royal Australian Engineers are fully employed on other projects.

It is accordingly suggested for consideration that your department should undertake responsibility for the requisite work at Casino as was done previously in connexion with the Portugese occupation of the army camp at Bobs Farm, N.S.W. In this connexion it is advised that the United States Forces have a larger pre-fabrication programme than our own and your department might find it necessary to approach the American authorities for the temporary release of some of this material.

*Dutch authorities have promised to supply*  
The Australian Army is prepared to undertake the transportation and supply of these Indonesians and it is requested that the earliest possible notification be given of the date or dates of arrival, ports of disembarkation, and the respective numbers of men, women and children in each ship.

Yours sincerely,

*J. M. Fraser*  
(J. M. FRASER)

Senator, the Hon. J. S. Collings,  
Minister for the Interior,  
Parliament House,  
C A N B E R R A A.C.T.

23 JUN Recd

The Secretary.

Referred, by direction.  
*J. E. Collings*  
(J. E. Collings)  
Private Secretary, Canberra.  
16th June, 1944.

20 JUN 7



*M. J. Selay*

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.

KK

No. 44/2/732

MEMORANDUM:

Admission of 4,000 Indonesian men, women and children from New Caledonia.

The Netherlands Minister in Australia has applied for permission to introduce into Australia a maximum of 4,000 Indonesian men, women and children from New Caledonia.

2. The Minister states that the Australian Army authorities have granted the use of a military camp at Casino, New South Wales, for the training of Indonesian soldiers and an Indonesian labour battalion. It is intended that all Netherlands Indies personnel in Australia should be concentrated in this area under the control of the Netherlands Indies Army who will accept full responsibility for their discipline, hygiene and supervision of employment.
3. Over 1,000 Javanese in New Caledonia have volunteered to join the forces, but it is impossible to establish a separate training establishment there and it is stated that without the men from New Caledonia it would not be practicable to concentrate the various small Netherlands Units here into one establishment.
4. It is also stated that many of the Javanese in New Caledonia, especially the best among them, are married and could not be persuaded to leave their women and children in New Caledonia without their protection.
5. The Netherlands Indies Government undertakes all financial responsibility for the Indonesians introduced and for their repatriation to the Netherlands Indies at the earliest opportunity.
6. The Minister for the Army has advised that there is no military objection to the proposal and that arrangements have been made for the accommodation of these personnel at Casino Camp. There are already some hundreds of Indonesian ex-internees from Dutch New Guinea at the camp with their wives and children.
7. It is recommended that the Netherlands Minister be advised that no objection will be raised to the admission into Australia of Indonesian men from New Caledonia for training here as soldiers or placement in an Indonesian labour battalion, together with their wives and children, the total number of souls not to exceed 4,000; provided that such persons are in sound health and on the understanding that the Netherlands Indies Government accepts full responsibility for the maintenance of such persons during their stay in Australia and for their repatriation in due course.

RECOMMENDATION  
APPROVED

*J. Horgan.*  
12/4/1944.

*S. Collins.*  
14/14/44

COPY.

ROYAL NETHERLANDS LEGATION

U.S.

MELBOURNE.

24th January, 1944.

Sir,

With reference to a previous correspondence in January and February, 1943, regarding the admission in Australia of Indonesians, I have the honour to approach you once more with a request to grant permission to a maximum of 4,000 Indonesian men, women and children from New Caledonia, to enter Australia, for the object of training the men for military purposes in a training camp, under circumstances and conditions as set out in the enclosed memorandum.

Remembering your highly appreciated collaboration on previous occasion, I trust that no objection will be raised against the landing of these people in the Commonwealth. It would be appreciated if the Collector of Customs in each of the probable ports (Brisbane, Sydney or Melbourne) could in due course be instructed accordingly.

Thanking you in anticipation,

I have the honour to be,  
with the highest consideration,  
Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(SGD). VAN AERSEN BEYEREN.

Netherlands Minister.

Senator the Honourable J.S. Collings,  
Minister for the Interior,  
CANTONMENT. A.C.T.

COPY.

MEMORANDUM.

20th January, 1944.

ACCOMMODATION OF INDONESIANS FROM NEW CALEDONIA  
IN CASINO CAMP.

The Australian Army has granted the use of military camp in Casino, New South Wales, for training of Indonesian soldiers and an Indonesian labour battalion. It is the intention of the Australian Army and the Commander-in-Chief of the Netherlands Indies Forces that the control, accommodation and training of all the Netherlands Indies personnel in Australia should be concentrated in this area under Netherlands Indies Army control and on the understanding that the Netherlands Indies Army accept full responsibility particularly in discipline, hygiene and supervision of movement.

There is at present an urgent need for more Indonesian trainees to join the forces as scouts, guides, liaison or in a labour battalion, and for work with intelligence services. The only remaining source is New Caledonia from where over a 1,000 Javanese have already volunteered to join the forces. The only complication existing is that many of these people and especially the best amongst them, are married, and could not possibly be persuaded to leave their women and children in New Caledonia without their protection. Moreover, it has always been an accepted principle with the Netherlands Indies Army that Indonesian personnel have their wives and children with them in barracks.

As it is utterly impossible to establish a separate training organisation in New Caledonia, an appreciable increasing of the Netherlands forces and services with the type of men most urgently needed can only be achieved if permission could be granted for men enlisting in New Caledonia to bring their families here, until they can be moved on into liberated Netherlands Indies territories. Such permission has already been granted in a number of cases, for instance by letter of the Minister for the Interior of 3rd February, 1943, for five Javanese from New Caledonia.

A number of trained Javanese such as "Mandoers" (head-men or head-boys), used to controlling and taking charge of Indonesians, are available in New Caledonia and are urgently wanted for similar positions here. They are highly suitable for training as non-commissioned officers.

It should be observed that the only other source of manpower, that is in the free part of Dutch New Guinea, has been gleaned of all individuals suitable for this purpose, and that as long as the densely populated occupied parts of the Indies have not been liberated, New Caledonia is the only source available.

If and when the Commonwealth Government would agree in principle to the entry into Australia of a maximum of 4,000 men, women and children from New Caledonia and the whole of Casino Camp would be ceded to the Netherlands Indies Army for training the men, it would become possible to concentrate the greater part of the small units of Netherlands Indies forces now dispersed all over Australia into this one camp under unified control. Without the men from New Caledonia this would not be possible because there are now insufficient men even to provide the necessary guards for the proper control of the camp area.

As all personnel will be under strict military control as to movement in and out of the camp area no immigration problems need be feared, and repatriation to the Netherlands Indies at the first opportunity, also of the women and children, is guaranteed.

Since

Since the Army has decided to allow the married ex-internees residing in Cowra to be moved into a camp at Casino with their women and children, no objection in principle appears to exist from the side of the Australian Army, to admit the people from New Caledonia provided of course the necessary guarantees are given.

SUMMARY.

It is proposed to allow entry of a maximum of 4,000 Indonesian men, women and children into Australia for the object of training the men for military purposes in a training camp under the conditions :-

- (a) that the Netherlands Indies Government undertake all financial responsibility for these people, and for their repatriation to the Netherlands Indies at the earliest opportunity;
- (b) that the Netherlands Indies Army control the accommodation, training and controlling of all Netherlands Indies military Indonesian personnel in Australia in one camp and accept the full responsibility particularly in the matter of discipline, hygiene and supervision of movement.

As soon as the permissible entry has been granted, the further administrative arrangements could be made between the Australian and the Netherlands Indies Armies.