

Returning to America

A ship with many Americans arrived in San Francisco 4 days before the projected date and no one was there to see these skeletal heroes get off the ship. Some men are convinced this was because the government did not want them to be seen in their wasted condition.

Many of the men had to sign a promise to never speak of the atrocities of the Japanese, and others were told never to speak of their treatment, since no one would believe them.

These heroes came home to have their rights to compensation from the Japanese signed away by their own US government and were left to fend for themselves. Many believed that the US government treated the POWs of the Axis powers much better than the ones held by Japan. They have yet to get any compensation from the US government or the Japanese, while Britain has compensated their POWs held by Japan. This is probably because the US government wanted the data produced by Unit 731 and because they saw Japan as a Block against the communist world, and a deal was struck. None of the Japanese generals, etc., were prosecuted for war crimes, although a few lower level people were. Many American lawyers were preparing for the war crimes trials, when they were suddenly stopped.

While some American POWs of the Japanese still hold out for compensation, at this point, most would settle for a sincere Japanese government apology with notice of same in Japanese newspapers and history books, and an admission on the part of the US government of how they were deprived of their rights to compensation for political purposes.

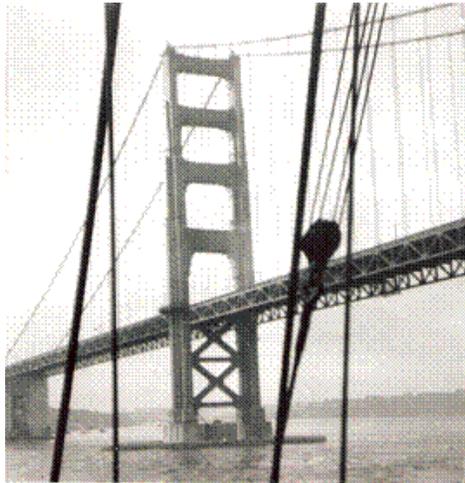


Photo by Joe Vater

When they passed under the Golden Gate Bridge, most of the men began to believe they were really free. Before that, it had seemed somewhat unreal.