

The Economic Organization of a POW Camp
R.A. Radford
Economica, 1945, 189-201
Questions for Discussion

1. What, according to Radford, accounts for the development of an exchange system in a POW camp?

Can the development of the system be explained by the equality or lack of equality in the distribution of supplies?

Were prisoners generally unhappy with their particular allotment of supplies and thereby motivated to develop an exchange system?

Which force does Radford think was most important in accounting for the evolution of the exchange system?

In what sense does the "extent of the market" matter in the POW camp exchange system?

2. According to Radford, did cigarettes function well as money in the POW camp?

Was it important to their use as currency that cigarettes had intrinsic value?

Why would individuals re-roll their machine-rolled cigarettes?

What is the significance of the fact that a halving of Red Cross parcels changed prices?

What accounts for the fall in the value of the "bully mark"?

3. Why, according to Radford, were traders (middlemen) disliked?

Does Radford regard traders as social parasites?

In what sense did traders take advantage of pricing discrepancies?

Why did the British officers attempt to regulate prices in the POW camp?

4. In your view, did the POW exchange system produce a just distribution of goods? Would you have favored regulation of the exchange system? What sort?