

## INHUMAN TREATMENT OF PRISONERS BY JAPS

LONDON, January 28.—He had grave news to give to the House concerning the treatment of war prisoners and civil internees in the hands of the Japanese, the Foreign Secretary (Mr. Eden) said, replying in the House of Commons to a question by Sir John Wardlaw Milne.

"Although a large number of postcards and letters recently received from prisoners and internees generally suggested that the writers were in good health and being well treated, there was no doubt that the terms of these communications had been dictated by the Japanese," Mr. Eden said.

"I regret to have to tell the House that information which has just been received by the Government no longer leaves room for doubt that the true state of affairs is very different so far as the majority of the prisoners in Japanese hands is concerned."

### NO INSPECTION OF CAMPS.

Mr. Eden said that the House was aware that a very high proportion, perhaps 80 or 90 per cent. of the prisoners and internees were located in the southern area, comprising the Philippines, Dutch East Indies, Borneo, Malaya, Siam and Indo-China.

Japan hitherto had withheld permission for a neutral inspection of any of the camps in question. We were not even allowed to know the numbers of prisoners, nor had their names been indicated to us.

Information reaching Britain for some time past regarding the conditions under which the prisoners were detained and worked in some of these areas was of so grave a character as to be likely to cause distress to relatives, and the Government felt bound to satisfy itself the information was authentic before making it public.

"We are now so satisfied and it has become my painful duty," Mr. Eden said "to inform the House that in Siam there are many thousands of prisoners from the British Commonwealth, including India, who are being compelled by the Japanese military to live under tropical jungle conditions without adequate shelter, clothing, food, or medical attention.

These men are forced to work on buildings, railways, and road making. Our information is that their health is rapidly deteriorating, that a high percentage is seriously ill, and that there have been some thousands of deaths yet such deaths reported to us by Japan totalled just over 800.

"The railways and roads concerned lead to Burma, and the conditions I have described apply throughout their entire length.

"One eye-witness reports of a camp in Siam: 'I saw many prisoners clearly. They were skin and bone,' unshaven, had long matted hair, and they were half naked."

"The same witness reported that the prisoners wore no hats or shoes. May I remind you this was in a tropical climate where the neighbouring countries are virtually uninhabited and where there are practically no local resources which could provide medical and other relief."

### NO HEALTH PRECAUTIONS

"From Java we have evidence," Mr. Eden went on, "leaving no doubt that many of our prisoners are confined in camps with inadequate protection against malarial infection, and lacking proper sanitation.

"Except insofar as the prisoners may sometimes obtain food from local resources, their food and clothing are insufficient to maintain them in health.

"Reports from the northern area refer to the emaciated state of the prisoners arriving from Java.

"So far I have no information available regarding conditions in other parts of the southern area, with the exception that the conditions in the internee camps at Saigon (Indo-China), and near Bangkok (Siam) appear to be at least tolerable.

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neutral inspections of camps in the southern area is difficult to understand, in view of the fact that they allowed visits by neutral inspectors to camps in the northern area, comprising Hongkong, Formosa, Shanghai, Korea, and Japan, although not on a scale regarded as adequate.

"The Government is reasonably satisfied that conditions generally in this area are tolerable, although the food is inadequate for long periods to maintain the health of the prisoners.

### CONDITIONS WORSE AT HONGKONG

"Conditions at Hongkong appear to be worse.

"The whole story would appear to be bad indeed, but I have worse to come.

"We have a growing list of cases of brutal outrage on individuals or groups of individuals."

Mr. Eden said that he could not burden the House with full details of these horrors, but in order to give some idea of their nature, he must, he feared, quote one or two typical examples.

"The first case," he stated, "affects a civilian officer in the Shanghai municipal police force who, together with some 300 other Allied nationals, is interned in a detention camp for so-called political suspects in Shanghai.

"This incurred the displeasure of the Japanese gendarmerie, and was taken to their office. When he emerged from the building he was practically out of his mind. His arms and feet were inflicted where ropes had left deep scars. He lost 40lb. in weight, and died one or two days after his release.

"The second case, also a civilian, comes from the Philippines, where three British subjects who escaped from an internment camp were recaptured, flogged, and later sentenced to death by a military court, although international law prescribes the imposition of only disciplinary punishment for attempts to escape."

Referring to cases affecting soldiers, Mr. Eden continued: "A number of Indian soldiers captured in Burma had their hands tied behind their backs and were forced to sit in groups by the roadside.

"Then they were systematically bayoneted from behind in turn, each man apparently receiving three bayonet thrusts.

"By some miracle one man who collapsed subsequently recovered and escaped to our lines.

"Another case concerns an officer of a well-known regiment of the line who was captured in Burma.

"He was clubbed across the face with a sword, then tied to a stake, and a 'Only by raising his body could he get enough air to keep him alive.

"He was then subjected to further torture. Fortunately an Allied attack force passed around his neck, developed, and the Japanese fled, and the officer was rescued by a British patrol.

"A third case concerns the transport Lisbon Maru, which was used for conveying 1800 British war prisoners from Hongkong.

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"The prisoners were seriously overcrowded, and many were under-nourished, and had contracted diphtheria, dysentery, and other diseases. There was no medical provision, and sanitary arrangements were virtually non-existent.

"Two prisoners died in the hold where they lay and no attempt was made to remove the bodies.

### MEN LEFT TO DROWN

"When this vessel was torpedoed by an Allied submarine on October 1, 1942 the Japanese officers, soldiers, and crew," Mr. Eden continued, "kept the prisoners under the hatchways and abandoned the ship forthwith, although it was 24 hours later before the vessel sank.

"There were insufficient lifeboats, rafts, etc., aboard but some of the prisoners who broke out of the ship, swam to land and were fired on.

A total of 800 prisoners lost their lives.

"I have said sufficient to show the barbarous nature of our Japanese enemies. They have violated not only the principles of international law, but also all the canons of decent civilized conduct.

"We have repeatedly made the strongest possible representations to Japan through Switzerland.

"Such replies as have been received, have been evasive, cynical, and otherwise unsatisfactory.

"We had the right to expect that once it was aware of the facts, the Japanese Government would remedy this State of affairs. The Japanese know well what are the obligations of a civilized Power to safeguard life and health of prisoners.

"This was shown by their treatment in the Russo-Japanese war and in the war of 1914-1918.

"The Japanese Government should reflect in time to come that the record of its military authorities in this war will not be forgotten.

"It is with the deepest regret I have been obliged to make such a statement to the House, but after consultation with our Allies, who equally are victims of this unspeakable savagery, the Government felt it its duty to make public the facts."

### BRITISH PARLIAMENT STUNNED

LONDON, January 28.—Revelation by the Foreign Secretary (Mr. Anthony Eden) in the House of Commons yesterday of Japanese atrocities against war prisoners will undoubtedly awaken British people to the realities of Japanese brutality and to the formidableness of this enemy more than anything else that has occurred during the war.

Parliament was stunned as if by some terrible new disaster, and newspapers have outspokenly condemned the Japs' barbarity.

One of the few suggestions thus far for neutral intervention has come from Mr. E. Shilwell, Labour Member, who asked Mr. Eden whether Russia could help by making Japan aware of the Allies' abhorrence.

It is thought in London, however, that the Soviet might be reluctant to intervene because such action would place her in the role of a protecting Power. Moreover, the Russians are fully concerned at the treatment of their own prisoners by the Germans.

Sir G. H. Stakepeare has given notice of a question in the House of Commons as follows "In view of the gross atrocities which puts Japan outside the community of civilized nations, will Mr. Eden consult with the U.S. Government with a view to issuing a warning that the procedure agreed to at the Moscow conference for the trial of German war criminals after the war will be applied to Japan."

### U.S. DEMAND FOR REVENGE ON

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## U.S. DEMAND FOR REVENGE ON JAPANESE

NEW YORK, January 29.—A spirit of revenge is sweeping Washington following publication of Japanese atrocities against American and Filipino prisoners in the Philippines.

The wave of indignation caused by the report has brought demands for accelerating the pace of the war against Japan, says the New York "Times" Washington correspondent.

The Secretary of State (Mr. Cordell Hull) said that the United States was gathering all possible information about the treatment of American prisoners held by the Japanese so that war criminals might be punished when the war ended.

Giving his view on the Philippines atrocities, Mr. Hull said: "It would be necessary to assemble together all the demons available anywhere and combine the ferocity which all of them embodied to describe the conduct of those who inflicted these unthinkable tortures."

Japanese responsible for the torture or mistreatment of war prisoners are liable to whatever punishment, including the death penalty, an American military commission might find proper, according to an interpretation of international law by Major Willard Cowles, of the Judge Advocate-General's Division.

The atrocities report is believed in Washington as likely to offset a growing feeling that the war is already won.

Comment by leading Congressmen was:

Mr. Sol Bloom (chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee): "We will hold the rats, from the Emperor down to the lowest ditch-digger, responsible for a million years, if necessary."

Mr. Joseph Martin (House Republican Leader): "The outrages will arouse the American people to an even stronger determination to make the Japs pay for their barbarity."

Mr. May (chairman of the House Military Committee): "If the brutal torture of American prisoners does not stimulate the people to action nothing under heaven will. We ought to quit fooling around island outposts and steam straight into Tokio to blow it to Hades."

Commander Melvyn McCoy, who supplied some of the details of the official account, said that at least 90 per cent. of the remaining prisoners in the Philippines faced certain death unless the quality and quantity of food improved.

He added: "The Japs don't recognize that any of their armed forces can be taken prisoner, and so feel free to treat Americans as they please without fear of retaliation."

Story of the atrocities has aroused Americans to such an extent that bond sales in the current fourth war loan are soaring all over the country.

One commentator says: "If the feeling there could immediately be translated into military action, the war against Japan would quickly be over."

### MACARTHUR'S COMMENT

BRISBANE, January 29.—General MacArthur's only comment to-day on the Washington report about the Japs' treatment of prisoners in the Philippines, was: "The stories speak for themselves."

General MacArthur has long been aware of what transpired after the Philippines fell, although the official reports have just been officially disclosed.

### TOKIO RADIO SCOFFS AT REVELATIONS

NEW YORK, January 29.—A Tokio radio spokesman, scoffing at Mr. Eden's revelation of Jap atrocities, said: "If the British and American leaders are so ready to raise a hue

said: "If the British and American leaders are so ready to raise a hue and cry over the mistreatment of war prisoners, why don't they teach men to stand up and fight to a finish? The way the Americans threw up their hands at Corregidor and the way the British gave up Singapore, on the heels of loud-mouthed assertions that they would fight to a finish, surely shows these men must carry on their backs a pretty wide streak of yellow."

He said the Rabaul situation had reached a serious stage, for which reason we cannot hold even the slightest optimism. It is noteworthy that the strategy against Rabaul is exactly contrary to his strategy in the Marshall area. While using mostly B 24's and B 25's land-based bombers, against the Marshalls, the enemy has used large numbers of fighters and few bombers against Rabaul. This indicates an effort to wear out the power of our superior air force strength.

The Tokio radio says the charges are a mere recurrence of the vicious enemy propaganda. Competent military quarters marvelled at the British and American authorities' stupidity in making such groundless accusations, in view of the cold-blooded butchery of our wounded soldiers at Guadalcanal. The British and Ameri-

cans are resorting to their favourite tactics of vicious allegations in order to cover up brutal assaults on our helpless hospital ships, against which the Japanese Government recently protested. The enemy's present accusations are not worth heeding, but it would not be surprising to see a similar occurrence in the future, whenever the enemy cares to resort to inhuman tactics.

The foregoing is contained in a despatch beamed to North American monitors. They did not hear any mention of Allied charges in the domestic Jap broadcasts.

### BRITISH PRESS COMMENT

LONDON, January 29.—The British Press has seldom spoken its mind with such force and unanimity as is seen in to-day's comment on the Japanese brutality to prisoners. "Revenge" and "outrage" are words often repeated in soberly constructed articles.

The "Daily Express" says: "If there lingered in any man's mind a thread of doubt that Britain would throw the whole of the terrible weight of her military power against Japan the day Hitler is dead and done for, it must snap now. The bestiality of our other enemy commands the full hatred of all Englishmen. We shall avenge these deeds."

The "Times" crystallizes opinion in terms perhaps more damning for their restraint. It says: "It can only be a remote hope that the publication of their shame to the world will avail where all else failed to call the Japanese Government to a sense of decent behaviour to helpless men whom the fortunes of war have placed at their mercy. Certainly the only final remedy lies in eradicating for ever the regime that is capable of these in-famies. The hideous cruelties that have now been revealed lend a new meaning to the word liberation, as applied to the re-conquest of the Far Eastern lands."

### AMERICANS' REVELATIONS

NEW YORK, January 29.—The Associated Press says Mr. J. B. Powell, former editor of the "China Weekly Review," said the Japs not only executed American flyers after the Tokio raid but they unmercifully tortured at least six of them. Powell, who returned to the United States in the first batch of Gripsholm exchanges in 1942, is still in hospital. He lost both his feet as a result of treatment at the hands of the Japs. He said: "I was imprisoned at Shanghai with 40 others, mostly Chinese, in a 12 by 12 foot cell,

prisoned at Shanghai with 40 others, mostly Chinese, in a 12 by 12 foot cell, where we were forced, day in, day out, with our knees hugged close to our chest. In the next cell six American aviators were tortured daily. The Japs seemed to take delight in torturing them. Two or three aviators were later taken to Tokio and executed; I am glad the army and navy have released atrocity material, because the torturing of Americans, British and Chinese has been going on since the war started. We received regular daily beatings with thick pine clubs. I was forced to write letters saying I was well treated and well fed, despite the fact that my daily ration of one bowl of rice was cut by half. I was really more dead than alive. Gangrene set in in my feet, because of malnutrition and the cold weather, and the way I was forced to sit. Finally, I became unconscious with the pain and was taken to hospital, where my feet were amputated."

The Los Angeles correspondent of the U.S. Associated Press says Captain Samuel Grassie, of Spokane, during an army sponsored press conference said he escaped after a year in Philippines prison camps. The Japs never gave prisoners the slightest medical treatment, but bayoneted those who collapsed. He said once he counted 500 Filipino bodies carried out of a camp for burial.

### NUN BRANDED WITH V SIGN

JOHANNESBURG, January 29.—It has been disclosed that a nun at present an inmate of a sanatorium at Johannesburg was branded with the V sign on the back and arms in a Tokio prison. She was arrested after Pearl Harbour, after living 48 years in Japan. The authorities offered her her freedom on condition that she renounced Christianity for Shintolism. She refused.

LONDON, January 30.—A priest who was thrown into the prison at the same time as the nun, who is in Johannesburg was branded with the V sign and was frequently flogged. He died from injuries. Jap soldiers, one day ordered the prisoners to leave prison. They fired volleys into the crowd, killing 300. The slaughter was stopped only when officers arrived.

### AMERICAN COMMENT

NEW YORK, January 28.—The New York "Times" correspondent, Hanson Baldwin, says the stories of Jap atrocities may affect strategy in the Pacific war. "They will bring home to Americans the nature of the Pacific enemy and create demands for the concentration of more force in the Pacific, particularly for the speeding up of operations so that Japan can be bombed. Public opinion may even demand another carrier raid against the Japanese coast. Moreover, there will be less moral repugnance against the use of certain methods of warfare, such as 'gas'."

Mr. Baldwin concludes: "The Pacific war is becoming a 'no quarter war,' which no holds are barred."

DENVER, January 29.—Senator Chandler said "General MacArthur told me of atrocities last autumn. He was intensely determined to avenge each boy's death."