

First Jap war criminal guilty

Ordered airman bayoneted; officer admits cannibalism

From Bill Hudson, "Sunday Sun" Special Correspondent

MOROTAI, Saturday.

FIRST Jap war criminal to be convicted in the Pacific area, Captain Tokyo Iwasa, has been remanded for sentence.

● He was found guilty today of having ordered and caused to be carried out the bayoneting of an Australian airman on Talaud Island (North Celebes) on March 23, this year.

Captain Iwasa's face showed no emotion when the President of the court, Col. J. L. McKinley, announced the verdict. Which, he added, must be confirmed by a higher authority.

Iwasa's counsel, Capt. J. C. Brown, a Wollongong solicitor, said Iwasa had instructed him that he did not wish to give evidence.

Main point contested at the trial was whether a person is responsible for an unlawful act which he had been ordered to carry out by his superior officer.

Defence plea unsuccessful

Capt. Brown argued that Iwasa was in the same position as a platoon commander of the Australian forces who was given an order to take a platoon out and carry out an execution.

"The contention is that the platoon commander should first satisfy himself as to the validity of the order," said Capt. Brown.

"I suggest that it is never done. It is not reasonable to expect a junior officer to do so. He gets a clear order and carries it out, and that is all that Iwasa did."

First trial for cannibalism

From NOEL OTTAWAY, "Sunday Sun" Special Correspondent

WEWAK, Saturday.

First trial for cannibalism in the Pacific area was held at

the Pacific area was held at Wewak (New Guinea) yesterday, when First-Lieut. Takehiko Tazaki appeared before a special military court under the War Crimes Act.

Prosecuting officer, Captain Ray Steele, of Kew (Vic.), alleged that on July 19 of this year Tazaki mutilated the dead body of a Queensland soldier at Soarin and on the following day ate portion of it.

Tazaki pleaded not guilty to both charges.

"Human flesh is delicious"

With head shaven to the skin, and wearing Australian socks with his Jap uniform, Corporal Eichi Yamamoto gave evidence that the Australian's body had been cut up and eaten by Lieut. Tazaki and Lance-Corporal Mena.

Yamamoto said that Tazaki had told him he had eaten the Australian, adding: "Man's flesh is delicious."

Speaking on his own behalf, Tazaki said that for a year he had lived without meat, and at least twice each month suffered attacks of malaria.

On July 19, his force was surprised by the Australians, and altogether 14 of his men were killed in two attacks. One Australian was shot.

His losses had made him extremely bitter against the Australians, and, with Lance-Cor-

poral Mena, he stripped the Australian of clothing and, after cutting off some of the flesh, ate it two hours later.

"I ate the flesh because I was very hungry and weak and wanted to bring back my strength, so that I could live and carry on," Tazaki said. The president adjourned the Court to consider the verdict.