

Japs are Fiends, Says Webb in Atrocity Report

GUILTY OF MURDER, BESTIALITY

MEN AND WOMEN

HACKED, MAIMED

MURDER, rape, cannibalism, indescribable bestiality and brutality were perpetrated by Japs against Australian and American soldiers, missionaries, and natives.

These atrocities are recorded in the report made to the War Crimes Commission by Sir William Webb on his investigation of war crimes in the Australian theatre of war.

He calls the Japanese fiends, whose actions were contrary to the rules of warfare under the Hague Red Cross and Prisoner of War conventions.

The report was released simultaneously in Canberra and London yesterday.

Massacre and Mutilation

SIR WILLIAM WEBB in his report emphasises that at the time of the atrocities Japanese forces were still advancing in their southern thrust towards Australia.

Japan, he says, was winning victories which preceded the fall of Singapore, including the capture of Rabaul on January 22, 1942 —

When the terrible massacre of Australians and civilians took place at Tol and Waitavalo plantations, at Wide Bay, in New Britain, on February 4, 1942, and when two badly wounded Australians were deliberately burned alive in a hut.

Her armies were still winning victories.

When, at Guadalcanal, a native boy had his tongue severed with a Japanese bayonet.

When Roman Catholic priests and nuns were bayoneted and the nuns raped.

When American soldiers, while still alive, had their livers removed by a Jap surgeon for the enter-

tainment of Jap soldiers.

When, at Tarawa, 21 Australian, New Zealand, and British civil servants were tied to trees and then, after a day or two, had Jap troops let loose on them.

When, at Salamaua, a native, against whom no offence was proved, was handed over to a Jap surgeon for "medical experiments."

Japanese armies were still advancing across the Owen Stanley Range and at Milne Bay.

When Australian soldiers and natives were tied up, tortured, used for bayonet practice, and finally murdered.

When bayonets were pressed into the posteriors of men and left there.

When bayonets were driven into white female Anglican missionaries at Popoindetta.

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When a party of nine persons, including two white female Anglican missionaries, two white male Anglican priests, a young woman, and a child of six were decapitated, bayoneted, or shot at Buna beach.

When native women were staked to the ground for raping, and, after being raped, probably by scores of Jap soldiers, had their breasts cut off and were mutilated.

It may be that these native women were first ravished to death and then mutilated by fiends, whose carnal desires death had frustrated," says the report.

Most Cruel In Victory

"JAPANESE atrocities were at the flood until their armies met defeat, since when they appear to have receded," says Sir William Webb.

Points from findings on atrocities in the different areas investigated by him are:

SOLOMON ISLANDS.—Massacre at Tol and Waitavalo: After the Japanese landings at Rabaul on August 23, Australian troops withdrew in separate small parties. At Tol plantations the prisoners, with hands tied behind their backs, were lined in parties of 10 or 12, and marched to the plantation in different directions. One escaped and met a party of civilians, who released him. Another escaped, but died.

The other men were shot and bayoneted, or both shot and bayoneted, singly or in groups, by the Japs.

Two wounded Australians placed in a hut by one of the survivors were burned alive when the Japs set fire to the hut.

At Waitavalo plantation a party of 11 had their hands tied behind them and were shot from behind with rifles and machine guns. Six who were left for dead by the Japs recovered and made their escape. Shooting or bayonetting of each victim was done in the presence or hearing of those still awaiting their turn, who either saw the actual killing or heard the screams as the bayonets were driven home.

Sir William Webb agrees with the conclusions of a military court of inquiry that the number killed was not far short of 150.

He says he found no justification or excuse for these actions. The Japs gave no reason for their terrible conduct. The white flag was hoisted by some Australians, and not abused by any. The killings constituted atrocities, as they were outrageously cruel and wicked, and carried out with savage brutality.

Priests, Nuns, Killed

GUADALCANAL.—Sir William Webb confirms the bayonetting of two Roman Catholic priests—a Dutchman and an American—and two Roman Catholic nuns, aged 25 and 35, at the village of Tasimboko, by Jap. forces in August, 1942.

The nuns' bodies were naked when found, and the Commissioner found they had also been raped.

A third nun, aged about 60, was allowed to escape.

In the Kokumbona area of Guadalcanal two Americans who had escaped into the jungle were recaptured. After attempts had been made to injure their feet they

recaptured. After attempts had been made to injure their feet they were dissected while still alive by a medical officer, who removed their livers.

A native boy was tied, and bayoneted eight times on Guadalcanal because a reply to a question about American troops was regarded as unsatisfactory. He was left for dead, but later was rescued, and was awarded the George Medal.

BUKA ISLAND.—On March 9 a planter who was a coast watcher was battered to death by a party from a Jap cruiser.

MILNE BAY.—The shocking record of frightful atrocities against Australian soldiers and natives at Milne Bay shows that they were committed within three days after the attack, when things appeared to be going well.

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