TORTURE METHOD LIKE INQUISITION, CIVILIANS ASSERT

Singapore Document Tells Grim Experience Suffered By Prisoners

Singapore, Sept. 8.—(Reuters)—Out of the civilian internees camp in Singapore has come a document of Japanese terror and torture methods which makes some of the grimmest reading of the Far Eastern war.

It was drawn up by three doctors of the camp after taking evidence lasting for three days from 36 internees—survivors of a group of 57 men and women taken from Chanfi jail for "special interrogation," October 10, 1943.

The report is signed by Prof. N. S. Alexander, and S. N. King and W. L. Blythe, members of the Malayan civil service.

The internees are unanimous that the story should be told to let people have an authentic record of the horrors perpetrated by the Japanese. Their cry is not for vengeance but for justice upon these criminals against mankind.

Sleep Sitting Up

The report states:

"The course of interrogation showed that the Japanese were trying to establish that there was a spy organization in Changi prison which received and transmitted by radio telephony, which had established contacts in the town for the purpose of sabotage and stirring up anti-Japanese feeling and which collected money from outside for this purpose.

"In fact, there was no spy organization, no radio transmission and no attempt to promote anti-Japanese activities outside the camp.

"Conditions under which internees were detained were rigorous in the extreme. From 8 o'clock in the morning until 10 o'clock at night the inmates had to sit up straight on the bare floor with their knees up, and were not allowed to relax, or to put their hands on the floor, or to talk, or to move except to go to the lavatory. Any infraction involved a beating by the sentries.

Women Get Same Treatment

"There was one watercloset to each cell and a water supply for all purposes, including drinking. Nearly all the inmates suffered from enteritis or dysentery. No soap, towel, toilet articles or handkerchiefs were permitted. The three women taken from Changi prison were detained in exactly the same conditions as the men, and shared cells with male prisoners of all races.

"Buildings occupied by the Japanese military police resounded all day and night with blows, bellowings of inquisitors and shrieks of the tortured. From time to time the victims from the torture chambers would stagger back, or if unconscious would be dragged back to their cells.

"Sometimes their hands were tied behind their backs and they were forced to kneel on sharp pieces of wood or iron, while sharp edged pieces of wood or metal were placed behind their knees so as to cut into their flesh as they knelt. While they were so kneeling the Japanese would jump on their thighs or on the projecting ends of the bar of wood behind their knees.

Remorseless Questioning

"Interrogation would go on remorselessly punctuated by blows. At times the victim would be tied to a table and flogged until he lost consciousness. This treatment was in some cases carried on daily for from four to five days consecutively.

"There were two forms of water torture. In the first, the victim was tied or held down on his back. Interrogation proceeded and the victim was beaten if he did not reply. As he opened his mouth to breathe or answer questions water from a cloth placed over his nose and mouth went down his throat until he could hold no more. Sometimes he was then beaten over his distended stomach.

"In the second form of water torture the victim was tied lengthways on a ladder face downward, with the rung of the ladder across his throat and the head below the ladder.

Ducked in Water Tub

"In this position he was slid head first into a tub of water and kept there until he almost drowned. After being revived, interrogation continued and he would be re-immersed.

"During interrogation, the inquisitor in many cases burnt the victim with cigarette and cheroot ends, even on the most sensitive parts of the body. Several Asiatics had petrol poured on their bellies and ignited.

"Electric torture by induction coil was used, one electrode being attached to the hand or foot and the other bare wire applied to various parts of the body. One victim reports that he was thrown across the room by the violence of the shock.

Health Permanently Impaired

"From these methods in many cases dislocations and permanent damage to the limbs and joints resulted—in one case the inquisitor punctuated his questions by slicing off with a frayed end of bamboo the flesh bruised in the previous beating.

"Of the 57 internees, 12 died of sickness directly attributable to the appalling conditions under which they were detained, one as a result of a fall and torture, and one was executed.

"Survivors required prolonged treatment in hospital for extreme emaciation, chronic dysentery, neuritis, scores of ulcers, scabies, beriberi, weak hearts or injuries to joints and limbs."

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