

Some Tokio Raid Airmen Executed

WASHINGTON, April 21 (AAP) : President Roosevelt revealed "with feeling and the deepest sorrow the barbarous execution by the Japanese Government of some members of this country's armed forces who fell into Japanese hands following the raid on Tokio."

"This recourse by our enemies to frightfulness is barbarous," said President Roosevelt. "The United States will hold personally and officially responsible for these diabolical crimes all those officers of the Japanese Government who have participated therein, and in due course will bring those officers to justice."

President Roosevelt said on October 19 the USA Government learned from the Japanese radio of the capture, trial and severe punishment of the American fliers. Continued endeavour was made to obtain confirmation, but not until March 12 did the Government receive a communication given by the Japanese Government, stating that the Americans, in fact, had been tried and the death penalty pronounced.

President Roosevelt's statement was accompanied by the text of a State Department protest sent to the Japanese Government on April 12 through the Swiss Minister at Tokio.

President Roosevelt added: "This attempt of the Japanese war lords to intimidate us will utterly fail and will make the American people more determined than ever to blot out the shameless militarists of Japan."

The State Department's note discloses that Japan admitted that all the captured crews had been sentenced to death. The sentence had been commuted for the larger number, but certain of the accused were executed.

The United States subsequently was informed that Japan refused to treat the remaining aviators as prisoners of war, to divulge their names and sentences or to permit the Swiss Minister to visit them.

Japan alleged that aviators submitted to this treatment because they intentionally bombed non-military installations and fired on civilians. Japan also alleged that the aviators admitted these acts.

The United States Government brands as false both charges, and points out that the aviators had not deviated from their instructions to bomb military objectives.

The note adds: "There are numerous instances where the Japanese have employed brutal and heinous methods in extorting alleged confessions for use against their victims."

"If the aviators made these

victims.

"If the aviators made these alleged admissions they could only have been extorted fabrications."

The note recalls Japan's solemn undertaking to observe the Geneva Prisoners of War Convention, and concludes by stating that the United States will hold responsible for the executions which it dubs "deliberate crimes," all officers who took part in their commitment.

The note adds:

"The United States Government warns Japan that for any other violations of its undertakings as regards prisoners of war, also for any other acts of criminal barbarity inflicted on American prisoners

in violation of the rules of warfare, as that military operations draw to their inexorable and inevitable conclusion, the American Government will visit upon the officers responsible the punishment they deserve."

A London message says that within a few hours of revelation that the American airmen had been executed, Batavia Radio appealed for fairer treatment of Japanese prisoners in Allied hands. The announcer said: "It is hoped the Australians and other enemy Powers will encourage fairer treatment."

The announcer added that the appeal resulted from a recent "talk," as a result of which the 1938 law relating to the punishment of prisoners would be revised to conform to the general system of criminal law and fairer administration of justice to prisoners.