

BM/JAG/65156,
General Headquarters,
South East Asia Land Forces.
10th March, 1947.

G.O.C.,
Singapore District.

Subject:- War Crimes Trial.

Reference the proceedings of the trial by Military Court of Col. SUGASAWA Iju and his petition attached thereto.

1. The accused was tried on three charges, as set out in the charge sheet. He was found guilty, with certain exceptions, and sentenced to imprisonment for 12 years.

2. The facts of the case were briefly as follows:

At the material time the accused was in command of the Siam P.O.W. Administration. P.O.W. were encamped by the side of the newly constructed Burma-Siam Railway for the purpose of maintaining the same. The railway was used for military purposes only. The P.O.W. were compelled to handle bombs, flares, petrol, ammunition and other warlike material. Immediately after an aerial bombardment they were ordered to uncouple burning railway trucks on a siding near the camp containing ammunition and other military stores. They worked in repair shops and repaired railway bridges. Anti-aircraft batteries were operating immediately outside the camp. P.O.W. were also compelled to build gun emplacements and assist the gun crews in carrying supplies. On one occasion about 80 P.O.W. were killed by aerial bombardment and on another occasion about six. Several were injured.

Seven Indian P.O.W. were imprisoned in a small pit under the guard room for several days. They had very little to eat and were short of water.

P.O.W. were made to work when they were unfit, food was not sufficient and there was a shortage of medical supplies. P.O.W. were kicked and beaten for no reason. Red Cross supplies were misappropriated or allowed to go bad before distribution. Protests were made from time to time without redress.

3. In his defence the accused gave evidence on oath, admitting that he was the administrator of P.O.W. camps in Siam, and said that he had under his command several P.O.W. camps and did his best to supervise them. He carried out the "Labour Regulations" concerning P.O.W. issued by the authorities in Tokyo. When prisoners were working outside the camps they came under the command of the units employing them. He admitted that P.O.W. worked with the anti-aircraft units. He did not take any air raid precautions until after the bombardment, as he believed that the Allied forces knew the location of the P.O.W. camps which were not therefore in danger. He denied knowledge of the allegations contained in the 2nd charge.

4. The accused has petitioned against the findings and sentence. He contends that he was wrongly convicted of the 2nd charge and that the sentence is excessive.

5. I advise that the petition be dismissed and the findings and sentence confirmed.

FGT DAVIS.

FGTD/RRH

Brigadier,
DJAG, South East Asia Land Forces.