

Q. #1625

P. 1*

Evidentiary Document # 52644.

The International Military
Tribunal for the Far East.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND OTHERS

v

ARAKI, SADAO AND OTHERS.

A F F I D A V I T.

I, Ian Farquhar Macrae of 14 Myrniong Grove, Hawthorn in the State of Victoria formerly VX44787 Major I.F. Macrae of 2/21 Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces make oath and say,-

1. I was captured at Ambon on 2nd February 1942. Together with 262 other Australian prisoners and about 300 Dutch prisoners I was shipped from Ambon to Hainan on 25th October 1942. On the instructions of the Japanese all the sick and weak men from Ambon were included in the draft and formed the great majority of it. We arrived at Hainan on 5th November 1942.

2. The prison compound was about ten acres with a low barbed fence around. The huts were coolie barracks of a primitive style made of all scraps of timber and iron. Men slept on the floor on old grass mats - two men to three mats. The area for sleeping, 263 officers and men, was 4608 square feet or 18 square feet per man. This included all sick, no separate accommodation was provided for them. Roofs and walls were not weather proof. No materials were provided for repairs and the huts were infested with bugs, cockroaches, rats, lice, fleas and ants. Sanitary arrangements and hygiene were entirely absent or very primitive. There were no fly precautions. The Japanese were quite indifferent to the whole state of affairs and no assistance was given despite repeated requests. Men ate and worked in filthy surroundings inhabited by natives and imported coolies. The camp was a quarter of a mile from an old swamp. This made malaria very prevalent.

3. On leaving Ambon we had been told to take all our sick as we were going to a rest camp. In spite of this, the men were compelled to commence road work. Subsequently they were engaged on building a railway embankment, excavating anti-aircraft gun emplacements and putting the guns in position and unloading ammunition and supplies from ships. Hours of work were from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. with an hour off during the day. At first there was a rest day once a week but later only one rest day every five to seven weeks.

The work was carried out under very trying conditions - the climate was very hot and enervating during the greater part of the year. The men were kept at hard work, driven by Japanese officers, N.C.O.s, and men by kicks, by blows from rifle butts and by floggings with shovels, pick handles, iron bars and sticks of wood. Three men had limbs fractured

in this way and a large number of others had to receive medical attention. To keep up the numbers the Japanese compelled sick men to work.

4. Only one issue of boots and clothing was made up to the time of the Japanese surrender. Even this issue contained only a few pairs of boots and there was not enough clothing to go round. After twelve months men were compelled to work barefooted.

5. No outward mail was permitted by the Japanese and no advice regarding prisoners of war on Hainan ever reached Australia through any channel.

During the three year period, on one occasion, Australian prisoners received from one to three letters. No other communication from relatives was received.

6. In Haisho there were about one hundred barracks filled with Hong Kong and Canton coolies. These coolies were working at the iron mine and at the port of Haisho. They were starved and emaciated in appearance. Whenever I passed the building that they used as a hospital, I saw bodies of dead coolies which had been dragged out, up to 10 or 12 bodies a day.

For breaches of discipline the Japanese would bring the coolies to our camp where they would punish them by floggings or by the water torture. The latter consisted of filling them up with water until their stomachs were distended and then jumping on their stomachs.

7. On the evening of 17th July 1943, about 120 Chinese were brought to the camp with their arms tied behind their backs. They were taken outside the camp and bayoneted to death by the Japanese and buried near the camp. I saw new graves after the incident and the method of death was described by numerous Japanese.

8. From time to time complaints about lack of food and clothing, poor accommodation and brutality on working parties were addressed to Area Commandant and handed in at Guard Room for forwarding. The Camp Commandant refused to forward these complaints and on one occasion struck Captain Aitken, the Medical Officer, and Captain Iskin, the Quartermaster for handing in such a complaint as to food for the sick. On another occasion Lieutenant-Colonel Kapitz, the elderly Dutch commander, addressed a complaint to Headquarters. For this the Camp Commandant brutally beat him with a stick in front of the troops. No proper visits of inspection by senior officers were made after December 1942.

9. At the commencement of our imprisonment at Hainan, the daily food ration consisted of 480 grams of rice daily, this was later dropped to 350 grams and finally to 200 grams. Some meat and vegetables were issued up to the end of 1944, but then these issues ceased.

10. Despite the fact that the town of Haisho was frequently bombed during 1944 and 1945, no attempt was made to distinguish the compound as a P.O.W.

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camp to aircraft. Anti-aircraft guns and other military targets were near to the camp and the camp was well within a target area. An anti-aircraft machine gun was mounted inside the compound. An apparatus for locating aircraft was kept sometimes in the compound and sometimes close outside it.

11. In April 1945 I escaped with a party of prisoners of war and joined the Chinese guerrillas with whom I remained until the Japanese surrender.

12. Deaths resulting from starvation, brutality and neglect reduced the numbers from 263 to 162 in three years.

(Signed) I.F. MACRAE.

SWORN at Melbourne in the State)
of Victoria this the 3rd day of)
October 1946,

Before me,

(Signed) ?

A Commissioner of the Supreme Court of
Victoria for taking Affidavits.