

## **‘High Standard of Efficiency and Steadiness’: Papua New Guinea Native Police Guards and Japanese War Criminals, 1945–53**

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### ABSTRACT

Drawing largely on archival records, this paper examines the Australian use of a detachment from the Native police force to guard the Australian war criminals’ compounds for Japanese war criminals established at Rabaul and Manus Island, both in the Territory of New Guinea, from 1945 to 1953. Australia was the only Allied country in the immediate post-war period to utilise civilian police as guards for Japanese war criminals, let alone to draw principally upon Indigenous personnel. While Australian views of the Indigenous population remained paternalistic, if not outright racist, throughout this period, the use of the Native police opened up some small space for more complex perceptions of questions of racial difference. Yet, the Native police detachment to the Australian war criminal compounds has been, until now, generally overlooked in the broader history of the Native police forces of Papua and of New Guinea.

Key words: Papua and New Guinea, Native police, Japanese war criminals

Following Japan’s defeat by the Allied Powers in August 1945, many Allied countries held war crimes trials in locations across Asia for the purpose of bringing to justice Japanese perpetrators of crimes against Allied service personnel and civilians, including local populations. At the 300 trials conducted by Australia between 1945 and 1951 in Morotai, Darwin, Wewak, Labuan, Rabaul, Singapore, Hong Kong and Manus Island, 812 Japanese were tried, 137 Japanese were executed, and far more Japanese were sentenced to terms of imprisonment. Those imprisoned were held in Australian war criminals compounds at Rabaul from 1945 to 1949 and at Manus Island from 1949 to 1953, both within the Territory of New Guinea; thereafter, all remaining war criminals were repatriated to serve their sentences in Sugamo Prison in Tokyo. In other parts of Asia, Japanese war criminals convicted in military courts convened by other Allied Powers were held in existing civilian prisons – such as Changi Prison in Singapore, Stanley Prison in Hong Kong and Sugamo Prison in Tokyo – that were administered and guarded principally by Allied military personnel until the civilian authorities resumed official control or by a mixture of military personnel

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and civilian prison officers. Japanese war criminals convicted by Australia, however, were placed in purpose-built compounds, which, although administered by the Australian army and navy, were guarded by a detachment from the Papua and New Guinea civilian police force. The decision to use civilian police as guards raises many issues. Principally among them were issues of race, for the police in question were largely composed of Indigenous Papuans and New Guineans, although a small number of white officers were supervisors. This paper explores the role and use of a detachment of Papuan and New Guinean<sup>1</sup> police to the Australian war criminals compounds. The utilisation of the Native police as a labour force to guard the war criminals further illustrates the post-war continuity of colonial perceptions of race, including the alleged importance of preserving the racial hierarchy. At the same time, however, the army and navy's treatment of the Native police appears to have demonstrated some incremental positive change in racial perceptions of the Indigenous population.

#### PERCEPTIONS OF RACE IN PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

As many scholars have shown, Australian discourses on Papua and New Guinea during the colonial period often concentrated on race relations or perceptions of race.<sup>2</sup> Historically, the term 'native', among others, was used as both a noun and an adjective to refer to the local Indigenous populations, and of course this has long since been unpacked as imperialistic, colonialist and racist, among other features.<sup>3</sup> Many Australians at the time, for instance, only perceived 'natives' as a kind of amorphous group, an inevitable (to them) demarcation based on physical appearance, living standards, language and education. In the Territory of New Guinea, for instance, where a small Australian bureaucracy had administered the large 'native' population since the early 20th century, a racist attitude had been adopted. Attitudes among the Australians in Papua and New Guinea toward the Indigenous population were similar to those found in other colonial outposts, such as the existence of clear 'rules' as to how the 'natives' should be treated, with newcomers 'instructed' on how to act.<sup>4</sup> These attitudes towards the Indigenous population continued during the

<sup>1</sup> The island of New Guinea included the 'Territories of Papua and New Guinea' until Feb. 1942. It was simply 'New Guinea' under military administration from Feb. 1942 to 1945, the 'Territory of Papua-New Guinea' from 1945 to 1949 and the 'Territory of Papua and New Guinea' from 1949 to 1971. Given the number of title changes through the 20th century, the term 'Papua and New Guinea', although inaccurate, may be used when necessary.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Edward P. Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea* (Brookvale, NSW 1975).

<sup>3</sup> 'Native' was, perhaps, one of the more benign terms used in relation to the local population. For a discussion of the implications of the term 'native', see, for example, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (eds), *Post-Colonial Studies: the key concepts* (London 2000), 158. See also Arjun Appadurai, 'Putting hierarchy in its place', *Cultural Anthropology*, 3:1 (1988), 36–49.

<sup>4</sup> See Hank Nelson, 'From Kanaka to fuzzy wuzzy angel', *Labour History*, 35 (1978), 177.

war, with some commentators attempting to preserve their authority on racial grounds. For instance, while warning Australian servicemen facing deployment to Papua and New Guinea about the dangers they faced, such as mosquitoes and crocodiles, Mr E.J. Robson, described as ‘formerly of the New Guinea Administration’, also instructed:

When in the company of natives always remember that you are a white man and a ‘Master’ ... Never be intimate with the natives. Remember that white men have to live with the natives after you have pushed the Japs out. Have your little joke with them if they are not cheeky, but never lower yourself or the white men.<sup>5</sup>

It would be a mischaracterisation of Robson’s instructions, however, not to acknowledge that he also suggested that servicemen should ‘give the natives a fair go and in the majority of cases they will give you a fair go ... Get the respect of the native and you will find him a loyal and faithful friend’.<sup>6</sup>

While the racialised view of the ‘native’ was very strong in the Australian colonial administration, a few roles existed, which, if taken by members of the Indigenous population, offered a more complex pattern of racial themes. Many racial perceptions can be seen in the way that Native police in Papua and in New Guinea, for instance, were utilised and treated during and after World War II by Australians. The histories of police forces in Papua and in New Guinea in the late 19th and 20th centuries have received some scholarly attention,<sup>7</sup> as have the roles and actions of Indigenous police and Indigenous soldiery during World War II.<sup>8</sup> Noah Riseman concluded that the role of the police during the war, like other organised Indigenous groups, did ‘not symbolize significantly changed colonial dynamics’ and did ‘not lead to the breakdown of discrimination and racial hierarchies in Papua and New Guinea’.<sup>9</sup> Yet, among all the accounts of recruitment, training, administration and the difficulties of policing in remote regions, and even more difficult service during the war, the lengthy detachment of Native police to serve as guards for the Australian war criminals compounds in Rabaul and on Manus Island has been virtually ignored. A study of this Native police detachment generally reinforces Riseman’s conclusion, given both the deemed necessity of maintaining white supervision of their ranks and also the

<sup>5</sup> E.J. Robson, ‘Points about New Guinea for servicemen’, *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners’ Advocate*, 30 Oct. 1943, 6.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> For an overview of the Papuan and New Guinean police prior to the war, see Bill Gammage, ‘Police and power in the pre-war Papua New Guinea highlands’, *Journal of Pacific History*, 31:2 (1996), 162–77. See also August Ibrum K. Kituai, *My Gun, My Brother: the world of the Papua New Guinea colonial police, 1920–1960* (Honolulu 1998).

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, August Ibrum K. Kituai, ‘The involvement of Papua New Guinea policemen in the Pacific War’, in Yukio Toyoda and Hank Nelson (eds), *The Pacific War in Papua New Guinea: memories and realities* (Tokyo 2006), 186–208; Noah Riseman, *Defending Whose Country? Indigenous soldiers in the Pacific War* (Lincoln, NE 2012), 142–8.

<sup>9</sup> Riseman, *Defending Whose Country?*, 148.

questions that were raised about the lawfulness and propriety of using ‘natives’ as guards over Japanese war criminals and the degree to which they should be empowered. Yet, a study also shows some encouraging signs of changing perceptions of race in the fact that, for instance, some high-ranking Australian military officers in this period would not tolerate racist behaviour, from either Australians or Japanese, towards the ‘natives’. Indeed, the racial issues at play around the Native police detachment are also complicated by the fact that the police were guarding Japanese war criminals, who had their own long-standing views on racial hierarchy.<sup>10</sup>

## NATIVE POLICE BEFORE AND DURING WORLD WAR II

On the cusp of World War II, the Papua and New Guinea police forces reportedly numbered between 1,400 and 2,400 men while, during the war, more than 3,000 men were enlisted in the police force.<sup>11</sup> Although these forces were controlled by the colonial and then military administrations, they were overwhelmingly composed of Indigenous members. The New Guinea Police Force in April 1940, for instance, reportedly consisted of 36 ‘European’ commissioned and warrant officers and 930 ‘police boys’.<sup>12</sup> Historically, the Native police had often been romanticised: Sir John ‘Hubert’ Murray,<sup>13</sup> long-serving lieutenant-governor of Papua, described the local constabulary in 1931, for instance, as a ‘hardy and vigorous body of men, muscular and well set up’, who ‘cut a picturesque figure as they swing along the road in their uniforms of navy blue and red’.<sup>14</sup> Murray’s romanticised portrayal of the Native constabulary was reinforced through a series of books written in the 1930s by Jack Hides, a patrol officer from 1928 onwards who led expeditions through the unexplored interior of Papua.<sup>15</sup> Hides’s third book was the romantically titled *Savages in Serge*, which documented a series of ‘native’ patrols that Hides led into ‘deep forest of the Rentoul River country’.<sup>16</sup> One reviewer described the book in July 1938 as a fully deserved ‘tribute to the native police’ and a ‘splendid contribution to the growing library about the colonisation and civilisation of the Papuans’.<sup>17</sup> Yet, beneath the romantic view was the clear-cut perception of racial differences that had to be preserved. Tellingly of then prevalent racial attitudes, the ‘white’ police in the New Guinea Police Force in 1940 performed what ‘little’ police work was

<sup>10</sup> John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: race and power in the Pacific War* (New York 1986), 8.

<sup>11</sup> Nelson, ‘From Kanaka to fuzzy wuzzy angel’, 184.

<sup>12</sup> ‘New Guinea’s efficient and loyal native police’, *Advertiser* (Adelaide), 6 Apr. 1940, 11.

<sup>13</sup> See H.N. Nelson, ‘Murray, Sir John Hubert Plunkett (1861–1940)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/murray-sir-john-hubert-plunkett-7711> (accessed 12 Dec. 2013).

<sup>14</sup> I.[J.]H.P. Murray, ‘The armed constabulary of Papua’, *Police Journal*, 4:4 (1931), 571.

<sup>15</sup> See James Sinclair, ‘Hides, Jack Gordon (1906–1938)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hides-jack-gordon-6660> (accessed 12 Dec. 2013).

<sup>16</sup> J.G. Hides, *Savages in Serge: the story of the Papuan armed constabulary* (Sydney 1938), n.p.

<sup>17</sup> ‘Savages in serge’, *Courier-Mail* (Brisbane), 2 July 1938, 6.

required among the white population; the ‘authority of the 930 police boys’ was ‘over the natives only’.<sup>18</sup>

The outbreak of war and the Japanese occupation of parts of Papua and New Guinea in early 1942 altered the role played by the Native police quite considerably, although not, as Riseman has pointed out, with widespread change to racial perceptions. Both police forces were initially disarmed and disbanded in April 1942, but were quickly resurrected into a single force by the Australian and New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU).<sup>19</sup> The force had 2,064 members in December 1943, 2,553 members in December 1944, and 3,137 members at the end of the war.<sup>20</sup> The former administrator, Robson, instructed deploying servicemen that

A fine type of native is found in the ranks of the native police force of New Guinea, and are valuable in peace and war. Some new types have been recruited as a wartime measure but the old police boy is a well disciplined and an energetic man, very proud of the uniform he wears.<sup>21</sup>

Such was the perceived authority of the Native police that a small group of them – chosen for being the ‘story tellers in their own villages’ – were brought to Australia on a ‘tour’ for ‘propaganda purposes’ in late 1942, where they were shown ‘large numbers of men in training’ and ‘numbers’ of military vehicles and guns and also attended a ‘demonstration of fire power’.<sup>22</sup>

Some police joined up to serve in the army, becoming ‘highly effective soldiers in war’ as they had been ‘soldiers in peace’.<sup>23</sup> A particularly famous individual was Sgt Katue, who reportedly had a ‘Papua-wide reputation for valour as a police boy’ before joining the army. In 1942, Katue had an ‘amazing saga of adventure against the Japanese’, including personally killing 26 Japanese soldiers and marines.<sup>24</sup> Katue later won the Military Medal and was regarded as the ‘most successful sniper in the New Guinea war so far’.<sup>25</sup> By the end of the war, even Maj. Gen. B. M. Morris, the general officer commanding ANGAU – who generally distrusted

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Alan Powell, *The Third Force: ANGAU's New Guinea war, 1942–46* (Oxford 2003), 24.

<sup>20</sup> Riseman, *Defending Whose Country?*, 147.

<sup>21</sup> Robson, ‘Points about New Guinea for servicemen’.

<sup>22</sup> See the correspondence about the tour, Canberra, Australian War Memorial (hereinafter AWM), AWM54, 431/8/3.

<sup>23</sup> Gammage, ‘Police and power’, 177. See also Hank Nelson, ‘Hold the good name of the soldier: the discipline of Papuan and New Guinea infantry battalions, 1940–1946’, *Journal of Pacific History*, 15:4 (1980), 202–16.

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, ‘Black warrior: private jungle war’, *West Australian*, 10 Oct. 1942, 5; ‘Papuan sergeant’s private war: valour of former police-boy’, *Argus* (Melbourne), 10 Oct. 1942, 3. For a complete list of honours and awards to Indigenous soldiers, see James Sinclair, *To Find a Path: the life and times of the Royal Pacific Islands Regiment*, vol. 1: *Yesterday’s Heroes 1885–1950* (Bowen Hills, QLD 1990), app. A.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Papuan M.M. winner is leading sniper’, *Courier-Mail* (Brisbane), 4 Jan. 1943, 3.

‘native’ troops as a ‘potential danger to European and native civilians’ and a ‘source of trouble’ – regarded the Native police as ‘particularly reliable’.<sup>26</sup>

In contrast to the perception of reliability, Native police in Japanese-occupied areas were perceived quite differently. It is unclear the degree to which existing police administration, voluntary or otherwise, continued in occupied areas. When the Japanese Imperial Army Headquarters issued its occupation policy in April 1942, it emphasised the utilisation of the Australian colonial apparatus under which the Japanese ‘planned to restore the native constabulary and to use it for the maintenance of public order’.<sup>27</sup> As a result, it has been suggested that village officials under the Japanese were often those who had occupied the same positions under Australian administration.<sup>28</sup> Yet, according to a newspaper account in 1943, the Japanese in New Guinea ‘rejected’ the ‘system of native police boys as something western’ and ‘debarred’ Native police from positions of local authority because of the ‘influence they carried and their loyalty to us’.<sup>29</sup> The reliability of the locals who did opt to serve the Japanese as police was apparently questionable: in some instances, individuals reportedly volunteered as police in order to ‘take personal revenge’ on others.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the ‘New Guinean *kempei* [military police], like their Japanese counterparts, were feared by local villagers’.<sup>31</sup>

Following Japan’s defeat, Australia prosecuted a number of Japanese for war crimes that were actually committed under their orders by Native police. There may have been some early Australian intention of also charging Native police with war crimes, which would have been possible under the War Crimes Act 1945, as many of those who had worked for the Japanese were held in Australian custody after the war. During the war crimes trials, a Native policeman named Selap told the Rabaul Court, for example, that he had worked as a ‘police boy’ for the Japanese civil administration and that he and several of the other former ‘police boys’ were presently ‘staying’ or ‘living’ at the ‘RPC’, most probably a reference to the Royal Papuan Constabulary.<sup>32</sup> Another Native policeman, Saisa, explained that after the Japanese surrender, they had all ‘run away but were later brought back’ and told that they were to be ‘kept at the RPC’. In the end, however, no Indigenous Papuans or New Guineans, police or otherwise, were ever charged in the Australian war crimes trials. There was no hesitation, however about prosecuting ‘natives’ in the civilian criminal system for treason for assisting or collaborating with the Japanese, even during the war. For instance, Capt. W.R. Humphries, the senior Australian magistrate at Port Moresby,

<sup>26</sup> Maj. Gen. B.M. Morris to HQ First Aust. Army, 15 Sep. 1945, AWM54, 419/5/6.

<sup>27</sup> Hiromitsu Iwamoto, ‘The Japanese occupation of Rabaul, 1942–1945’, in Toyoda and Nelson, *The Pacific War in Papua New Guinea*, 257–8.

<sup>28</sup> Bryant Allen and Keiko Tamura, ‘Food supply and relationships between Japanese troops and villagers in the inland Aitape–Wewak campaign, Papua New Guinea, 1942–45’, in Toyoda and Nelson, *The Pacific War in Papua New Guinea*, 302.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Fall of King Po Unga: the end of a regime’, *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 30 Jan. 1943, 4.

<sup>30</sup> Iwamoto, ‘The Japanese occupation of Rabaul’, 266.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Evidence of Selap, Rabaul R9 trial, Canberra, National Archives of Australia (hereinafter NAA), A471, 80742.

investigated a number of Japanese killings of various Allied civilians and soldiers and later acted as crown prosecutor in the trials of 'natives' for treason for their actions in handing over the victims to the Japanese in 1942.<sup>33</sup> A number of those accused were convicted of treason and sentenced to hang.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, after the war, additional criminal trials of local inhabitants were held for treason for their conduct during the occupation,<sup>35</sup> although it is unclear whether any of those accused were charged in relation to their actions as police. The closest most Native police came to war criminals, however, was as guards at the Australian war criminals compounds.

### NATIVE POLICE AND THE WAR CRIMINALS COMPOUNDS

Unlike the other Allied prisons, such as Changi, Stanley and Sugamo, in which suspected or convicted Japanese war criminals were imprisoned after various post-war international and national war crimes trials, war criminals convicted by Australia were held in purpose-built war criminals compounds at Rabaul from 1945 to 1949 and on Manus Island from 1949 to 1953.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, while Allied military personnel largely staffed or reinforced the staff of existing civilian prisons, the Australian compounds, although administered by the Australian army and navy, were guarded by Native police who had been detached from the New Guinea Police Force. At Rabaul in 1946–47, for instance, the Native police guards numbered approximately 130.<sup>37</sup> This number included some who were married, as the provided police accommodation included 11 married quarters.<sup>38</sup> As Brig. E.M. Neylan, the commandant of the military district, described:

<sup>33</sup> As reported in William Webb, A report on Japanese atrocities and breaches of the rules of warfare, 1944, NAA, A1066, H45/580/2/8/1, 129. For a number of documents from the treason trials (principally evidence heard), see Depositions re Japanese atrocities, 1943, NAA, J1889, BL43895/13.

<sup>34</sup> Webb, A report on Japanese atrocities, 1944, NAA, A1066, H45/580/2/8/1, 131, 135. For an overview of those tried for treason and executed during the war, see Hank Nelson, 'The swinging index: capital punishment and British and Australian administrations in Papua and New Guinea, 1888–1945', *Journal of Pacific History*, 13 (1978), 130–52.

<sup>35</sup> For example, one Funnalip was tried for treason at Lae, New Guinea, on 1 Feb. 1946 and was sentenced to death, yet his sentence was later commuted to 10 years' imprisonment with hard labour. See the correspondence in AWM54, 1010/1/18. For the full register of 'native' criminal trials in 1942–43, see AWM54, 1010/1/17.

<sup>36</sup> Narrelle Morris, 'The Australian war criminals compounds at Rabaul and Manus Island, 1945–53', in Georgina Fitzpatrick, Tim McCormack and Narrelle Morris (eds), *Australia's War Crimes Trials 1945–51* (Leiden forthcoming).

<sup>37</sup> Orders for Aust. camp comds, appendix 'B' to Reorganisation and control of Japanese camps, 8 MD GS instruction no. 30, 9 Apr. 1946, AWM52, 1/7/47/5; memorandum from Brig. E.M. Neylan, commandant, 8MD, 11 Nov. 1947, NAA, MP742/1, 336/1/1434.

<sup>38</sup> Memorandum from Maj. T.W. Upson, War criminals compound – layout & running of, appendix 1, 27 June 1947, NAA, MP375/14, WC10.

The native police are housed in barracks adjacent to the central portion of the Compound, with ancillary buildings such as kitchen, mess hut, and storeroom. Their duties vary, but they are mainly employed as guards, sentries, roving piquets [sic]. All are supplied with weapons and ammunition – rifles being individually issued, whilst a limited number of Bren Guns and Owen Sub-machine Guns are available as occasions may require.<sup>39</sup>

The police detachment was in familiar hands, as Maj. T.W. Upson, the camp commandant from 1946 to early 1950 (when he was disabled in a car accident and discharged), had been a police officer in New Guinea for 18 years, including being seconded to the Royal Papuan Constabulary during the war.<sup>40</sup>

It is not clear why Native police were detached to guard the compounds, although it was most likely a manpower issue, particularly as army units in New Guinea were increasingly returned to Australia and demobilised from mid-1946 onwards. No evidence exists that the decision was deliberately made on racial grounds by the army or agreed to by the civil administration to make a calculated point to the Japanese war criminals about their relative status (although they may have interpreted it that way). Overwhelming evidence does exist of some lingering need to preserve the ‘proper’ hierarchy of races. For instance, officials were cognisant that it might be improper, or perhaps even unlawful (although it was never expressed what laws might prohibit it), to have ‘natives’ guarding Japanese. When the administrator of the newly combined Territory of Papua and New Guinea, Mr Jack Keith Murray,<sup>41</sup> proposed in May 1946 that the war criminals be retained in the Rabaul district (where they could be used as a labour force in the reconstruction of a town to replace Rabaul), he was concerned with, among other issues, their standard of treatment, the work to which they could be put and also whether any limitations existed regarding the war criminals being guarded by Natives.<sup>42</sup> In raising these issues, Murray acknowledged that ‘considerations of an international character’ would ‘influence the making of rules for the establishment and management of such prisons’ for war criminals.<sup>43</sup> This was a recurring theme: Murray also sought in June 1946 to be informed of ‘any limitations imposed by international or other considerations in re[garding] natives guarding war criminals’.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Memorandum from Brig. E. M. Neylan, 11 Nov. 1947, NAA, MP742/1, 336/1/1434.

<sup>40</sup> See the sworn evidence of P422 Maj. T.W. Upson given to the Australian Military Court of Inquiry into the death of Lt Gen. Adachi Hatazō held in Rabaul, 15–23 Sep. 1947, NAA, MP742/1, 336/1/1264.

<sup>41</sup> For a brief biography of Murray, see Brian Jinks, ‘Murray, Sir Jack Keith (1889–1979)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/murray-sir-jack-keith-11209/text19983> (accessed 11 July 2013).

<sup>42</sup> Mr J.K. Murray, administrator of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea to secretary, Department of External Territories, 23 May 1946, NAA, A518, C16/2/6.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Letter signed for administrator to the secretary, Department of External Territories, 13 June 1946, NAA, A518, C16/2/6.



The Department of the Army eventually advised Administrator Murray that the standards for war criminals should be a 'standard of discipline, health, cleanliness and amenities' based on 'Australian Detention Barracks standards' and a 'standard for accommodation, punishments and general maintenance' based on 'that provided for native prisoners held in the Territory, amended as necessary to ... essential Asiatic requirements',<sup>45</sup> albeit without specifying what those standards or amendments might be. In the Department of the Army's view, the war criminals could be put to 'any type of work performed by natives', including projects such as roads, buildings and wharves, and including 'hard labour duties'.<sup>46</sup> The department suggested, however, that, while the war criminals could be guarded by 'native' guards, these must be 'must be supervised by white officials' who were in positions with 'direct contact' and 'control of' the war criminals.<sup>47</sup>

A similar issue of the propriety and lawfulness of utilising Natives in relation to the war criminals arose when it was proposed to use either Native police or soldiers to carry out the executions of those war criminals who had been sentenced to death by shooting and were awaiting execution in Rabaul. In June 1946, for instance, the chief legal officer of the local military district, Col Crofton Stephens, asked the army's director of legal services for a ruling on whether any legal objections existed to either Native police or Native troops from the Pacific Islands Regiment (PIR) carrying out those executions. He explained that the 'reason for asking' was that

with the rapid evacuation to Australia of AMF [Australian Military Forces] from whom firing parties have been drawn in the past, it will soon become increasingly difficult to obtain firing parties from AMF troops with battle experience, as those remaining after 30 June 1946 will be principally young inexperienced reinforcements.<sup>48</sup>

In due course, Col A.G. Allaway, the director of legal services, advised Stephens that, if a war criminal had been sentenced to death by a court having the authority to do so, the execution of that war criminal 'in the proper manner and by the proper officer is justified'. Yet, if the execution was carried out by an officer 'upon whom that duty is not cast' or in a 'different manner', it was 'murder'. Hence authorisation was the key issue regarding the suggested use of any Native personnel in firing parties. He advised that, as all members of the PIR were members of the Australian Military Forces, he saw 'no legal objection' to Native troops of the PIR being 'duly detailed' to carry out the instructions of the properly appointed and authorised officer to execute war criminals. In relation to the Native police, however, he thought that they 'should not be used for this purpose unless expressly authorized by the Governor-General'. He explained that the 'execution of war criminals

<sup>45</sup> See copy of memorandum from Mr F.R. Sinclair, secretary, Department of the Army, to secretary, Department of External Territories, c. July 1946, NAA, A518, C16/2/6.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Memorandum from Col Crofton Stephens, CLO, 8MD to the director of legal services, 8 June 1946, NAA, MP742/1, 336/1/1434.

constitutes a military duty' and the 'employment of civilians – such as NG Native Police Force – for any purpose in connexion with the Defence Force should be authorised by the Governor-General'.<sup>49</sup> Up to this point, Allaway's advice had been strictly on the law, without importing any racial element. Allaway then instructed Stephens, however, that the 'advisability of employing natives, whether members of the Forces or not, for executions of Japanese war criminals' had been discussed 'on a high level some time ago and was not approved'.<sup>50</sup> Moreover Maj. Gen. B.M. Morris, then the commandant of the local military district, had expressed 'doubts about its desirability'.<sup>51</sup> The 'question' was, Allaway pointed out, 'definitely one of policy' and 'natives should not be used for this purpose without prior approval from HQ AMF'.<sup>52</sup>

Most of those war criminals awaiting execution by shooting in Rabaul had, in fact, been sentenced at other trial locations, such as Darwin and at Morotai. Indeed, while 112 death sentences were handed down at Rabaul, of which 79 were confirmed, only three of the death sentences were for death by shooting; the other 76 were for death by hanging.<sup>53</sup> Historian Georgina Fitzpatrick has argued that the 'drunken and botched spectacles' of two early Rabaul firing parties, conducted by Australian army personnel in May 1946, discouraged the courts at Rabaul from thereafter passing further sentences of death by shooting.<sup>54</sup> It is, however, just as likely that the difficulty of assembling an experienced Australian firing party from mid-1946 onwards and the issue of whether Indigenous personnel could be utilised played a part.

Interestingly, despite the firm advice that it was neither advisable nor, in fact, approved to use Native police on execution parties, the proposal again arose in mid-1947, when Vice Adm. Okada Tametsugu was sentenced at Rabaul to death by shooting. The army military district headquartered in Rabaul was advised that, while they should have 'a very complete set of instructions'<sup>55</sup> for shooting parties, these had been 'prepared when we had sufficient trained personnel serving in the Army to form firing parties, but of course we now doubt if that situation exists particularly in Rabaul'.<sup>56</sup> The military district was asked whether they could, in fact, 'provide suitable firing party' from Australian personnel, 'bearing in mind that their task would be one

<sup>49</sup> Col A.G. Allaway, director of legal services, memorandum on war crimes: use of PIR and NG native police force, 5 July 1946, NAA, MP742/1, 336/1/1434.

<sup>50</sup> Col A.G. Allaway, director of legal services, to chief legal officer, 8MD, c. July 1946, NAA, MP742/1, 336/1/1434. Alas, no evidence of this discussion at 'high level' has been located.

<sup>51</sup> Reported in *ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Two additional sentences of death by shooting were not confirmed.

<sup>54</sup> Georgina Fitzpatrick, 'Death sentences, Japanese war criminals and the Australian military', in Fitzpatrick, McCormack and Morris, *Australia's War Crimes Trials*.

<sup>55</sup> This was the Australian Military Forces, Execution of Japanese war criminals, 25 Feb. 1946, NAA, MP742/1, 336/1/786.

<sup>56</sup> Typewritten copy of letter (from the context, likely from the director of legal services, AHQ Melbourne, to Brig. E.M. Neylan, commandant, 8 MD Rabaul), 30 June 1947, NAA, MP742/1, 336/1/1434.

calling for good training and steadiness', or whether a 'native Police Firing Party' could be sought from the civil administration. Brig. Neylan, the commandant of the military district, responded in a handwritten letter that his 'personal view' was that executions were 'primarily a task' for Australian 'white' personnel and that, probably, sufficient personnel were in place in Rabaul. He advised that the local 'native' unit was 'not a strong entity on which to call', given 'recent recruitments' and 'the fact that its members are aware of their early demobilisation'. Even more tellingly, he confided that there was 'also the thought that authorizing a native to take life may not be in the best general interest'. He advised that should his first choice of personnel 'fail', however, he would 'not hesitate' to use 'native' troops from the New Guinea Infantry Battalion to the 'required end'.<sup>57</sup> Regrettably, little record exists of who actually carried out executions at Rabaul of Japanese war criminals, it is not clear whether Indigenous personnel ever participated in firing squads. In Okada's case, for example, his warrant of execution by shooting merely indicates that Australian army officer Capt. J. Gerke supervised the execution and that the attending medical officer was army officer Capt. J.M. Ellis.<sup>58</sup>

What the Japanese war criminals thought about the Australian army arrangement that had them being guarded, and possibly executed, by Native police is unclear. While no evidence directly supports the claim, one press report from Manus Island in June 1950 suggested that the Japanese 'do not take kindly to the native police boys who have been appointed to guard them'.<sup>59</sup> Similarly another report from Manus that month suggested that 'some of the Japanese bitterly resent[ed]' being guarded by armed Native police.<sup>60</sup> The war criminals certainly registered some complaints about the behaviour of their guards, and in terms that sometimes alluded to the racialised view of them as 'natives'. Lt Katayama Hideo, who was on death row at Rabaul in early 1947, submitted a lengthy document that argued that several of the camp staff had, in disregard of the camp commandant's policies, 'committed great injustices' or caused 'native policemen to do so'. Katayama compiled a document listing various specific complaints, particularly about 'abuse of punishment', which he submitted to Brig. Neylan in July 1947.<sup>61</sup> In one of the complaints, he described how, one night in January,<sup>62</sup> a 'native' guard had fired off his rifle, even though no Japanese had gone near the wire palisade around the compound. Katayama continued:

It was probably that the stupid native not knowing how the firing mechanism of his rifle worked, had fired it off in error. But the

<sup>57</sup> Handwritten letter from Brig. E.M. Neylan to [indistinct], 18 July 1947, NAA, MP742/1, 336/1/1434.

<sup>58</sup> For the completed warrant of execution in relation to Okada, see NAA, A471, 81209.

<sup>59</sup> Quoted in extract from 'Team to defend Japs in trials curries favour', *Truth* (Sydney), 4 June 1950, 48, AWM, AWM166, 4.

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in extract from George H. Johnston, 'Jap prisoners live pleasantly on Manus', *Telegraph* (Brisbane), 26 June 1950, NAA, MP375/13, WCC5/8.

<sup>61</sup> Lt Katayama Hideo Lamentations of the nation, AWM114, 423/10/36, 40–53.

<sup>62</sup> It is not clear whether this was Jan. 1946 or Jan. 1947.

native had to have a reason for the firings, so naturally he said he had fired because some Japanese had approached the palisade.<sup>63</sup>

In punishment, all of the ‘C’ group – effectively one-third of those in the compound – were given a Sunday’s hard labour, which deprived them of their sole non-working day that week. In another complaint, Katayama reported that several ‘native guards’ had appeared at the working area armed with ‘whips, sticks and rubber hose [sic]’ and had ‘thrashed’ them with ‘obvious pleasure’. An Australian officer would ‘come along now and again to see what was going on and would order the guards to make it more severe’. Thus ‘inspired’, the ‘natives beat us even more fiercely’. Eventually some of the Japanese collapsed. The guards then ‘reviling the stretched out and corpse like Japanese as malingerers’ from work ‘beat and kicked them even harder’. Their ‘swooning bodies’ were then ‘kicked into the side of the road like stones and remained there motionless’.<sup>64</sup> In a postscript to his document of complaints, however, Katayama advised that, as some staff had been since relieved of their posts, conditions in the compound had changed and it was now a ‘model prison’.<sup>65</sup>

After the war criminals compound was transferred to Manus Island in February 1949, the compound also continued to be guarded by Native police, who had been shipped from Rabaul.<sup>66</sup> The police also guarded the war criminals’ working parties when they went out from the compound. As one newspaper article described, the ‘giant fuzzy-wuzzy police boys’, while doing so, wore ‘navy blue lap-laps’ but no shoes and were ‘armed with .303 rifles’.<sup>67</sup> While the Native police certainly guarded the working parties, they apparently did not always enforce the performance of work. Another newspaper article complained about the war criminals ‘taking it easy’, as ‘native police boys armed with rifles are merely to see that they [the war criminals] do not run away’.<sup>68</sup>

The Native police also guarded Japanese suspects during the 26 war crimes trials held on Manus Island in 1950–51. A newspaper report on the first trial in June 1950 described the presence of two Native police in the court: one at the front entrance and the other in the dock, with an ‘Owen gun on his lap, and a bayonet in its scabbard at his waist’. Recalling the earlier romanticised portrayal of the Native police, the ‘most colourful figure in the court’, apart from the accused, was a ‘police boy’, Lance Cpl Kakami, who wore a uniform of a ‘blue laplap and blue woollen sweater, with red piping’, and his sidearm, thus making a ‘striking contrast with the naval officers and civilians, who wore all white’. His ‘barrel chest’, however, ‘made the other big men in the court look like pygmies’. The article

<sup>63</sup> Katayama, Lamentations of the nation, AWM114, 423/10/36, 45.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>66</sup> As reported in memorandum from Mr F.R. Sinclair, secretary, Department of the Army, to the secretary, Department of External Territories, 30 Aug. 1949, NAA, A518, C16/2/6.

<sup>67</sup> ‘War criminals to leave tropical haven’, *Newcastle Morning Herald & Miners’ Advocate*, 25 July 1953, 5.

<sup>68</sup> Alan Underwood, ‘Japanese war criminals “taking it easy”’, *Advertiser* (Adelaide), 20 Nov. 1951, 2.

explained that Kakami had 'served with distinction' in the Papuan Infantry Battalion<sup>69</sup> and wore various ribbons, the 1939–45 Star, the Pacific Star and the Australian General Service medal. Kakami 'spoke good English and showed interest in the court proceedings' as he sat throughout in the gallery.<sup>70</sup> Sir Gerard Brennan, the former chief justice of the High Court of Australia, who served as the associate to President Kenneth Townley during the Manus Island trials, later recalled that the police guards in the courts sometimes dropped off to sleep during the proceedings, causing a 'terrible clatter' when their guns suddenly fell to the ground.<sup>71</sup>

Native police continued to guard the war criminals after the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) assumed command of the compound in early March 1950 (Figure 1), and as the archival records of the compound under the navy are considerably more comprehensive, it is easier to build a picture of the role of the Native police from 1950 onwards. Unlike the army, which had been based on land in the region during the war, the navy had no officers with 'any experience of handling native police',<sup>72</sup> so a white police officer was provided by the civil administration to 'assist' the navy in controlling and disciplining them.<sup>73</sup> This police officer usually had the rank of sub-inspector. Judging from correspondence, the police superintendent and/or commissioner at the Port Moresby headquarters of the police retained overall command of the detachment. For example, the camp commandant asked the police officer-in-charge in June 1951 to apprise the police superintendent in his next report of his regard for the 'high standard of efficiency and steadiness of police guards'.<sup>74</sup>

Despite being detached to the compound, the police remained subject to police force regulations, although discipline apparently occasionally proved difficult. A number of reports were made, for example, of guards who were lax in the performance of their duties or who otherwise committed offences. Perhaps the most frequent problem was that guards, performing a monotonous job in the tropical heat with generally compliant Japanese under their supervision, sometimes fell asleep on the job, just as they did on guard in the courtroom. Lt Cdr A.I. Chapman, the camp commandant, asked the police officer-in-charge in March 1950, for example, if he could investigate a case from the previous day where a tower of the compound appeared

<sup>69</sup> The article actually named it as the Papuan Infantry Brigade.

<sup>70</sup> Reg Harris, 'War trial "thrill" for women', *Newcastle Morning Herald & Miners' Advocate*, 6 June 1950, 3. Harris seemed especially interested in clothing, as he also described at length the dress of the Japanese defence team, the interpreter and translators.

<sup>71</sup> Transcript of recorded interview with Sir Gerard Brennan, AWM, S03304, 4.

<sup>72</sup> See teleprinter message from the secretary, Department of the Navy, to the secretary, Department of External Territories, 13 Feb. 1950, NAA, A518, C16/2/6.

<sup>73</sup> Mr F.B. Phillips, acting administrator, Territory of Papua and New Guinea, to the secretary, Department of External Territories, 7 Mar. 1950 and 20 Mar. 1950, NAA, A518, C16/2/6.

<sup>74</sup> Memorandum from Lt Cdr –, OIC Warcom, Manus, to the officer-in-charge, NGPF detachment, 13 June 1951, NAA, MP375/13, WCC5/8. This high regard arose out of the performance of the Native police involved in 'operation "Charlie"', which took place on 11 June 1951. Regrettably the authors have been unable to discover what this operation encompassed.



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FIGURE 1: Native police raising the colours at the RAN war criminals' compound, c.1948, AWM, photograph 306756.

unguarded. He reported that they had hailed the guard in the tower at least four times before he appeared, looking 'sleepy', although they had no proof that he had in fact been asleep. Chapman pointed out that it was 'regrettable' that nearby Japanese had seen their 'efforts' to raise the guard. While Chapman appreciated that guard duty was monotonous, he asked the police officer-in-charge to 'see that something in the nature of a pep talk is dished out'.<sup>75</sup>

Similarly, the commanding officer of HMAS *Tarangau*, the local naval establishment, advised the camp commandant and the police officer-in-charge in September 1950 that he had walked that day through one of the naval electrical shops where a party of war criminals was working and had discovered that the guard in charge of the war criminals was asleep. He advised that the guard had moved away from the working party, was 'seated, with his back towards them' and had 'unslung his rifle'. He thought that the guard 'quite obviously, had deliberately chosen this spot to be out of sight and undisturbed and gone to sleep there'. Indeed the guard was sleeping soundly through working noise so loud that 'ordinary conversation was inaudible; one had to shout to make oneself heard'. He regarded this as a 'particularly flagrant breach of duty', of which the Japanese were well aware, as he observed the guard exchanging 'sickly grins' with the Japanese after the guard had been awoken and directed to resume his post.<sup>76</sup> The guard, No. 7120 Police Constable Peiwa, was

<sup>75</sup> Memorandum from Lt Cdr A.I. Chapman, OIC Warcom, Manus, to Sub Inspector Thomas, OIC Guardforce, 27 Mar. 1950, NAA, MP375/13, WCC5/8.

<sup>76</sup> Memorandum from the commanding officer, HMAS *Tarangau* to the officer in charge, war criminal compound, 7 Sep. 1950, NAA, MP375/13, WCC5/8.

duly charged with 'being asleep whilst on duty' and was found guilty and sentenced to 14 days' confinement to barracks with 24 hours pack drill.<sup>77</sup>

Another investigation into the guards' conduct was launched after a press report about former General Imamura Hitoshi, who had been the commander of Japanese forces in New Guinea. The article claimed that Imamura, while working in the compound's vegetable garden, turned to the police guard with him and asked about the 'native' method of tilling the soil but, when the policeman began to explain, 'brusquely' handed him the shovel. The article concluded: 'For the rest of the morning Imamura lolled on the grass, the guard's rifle across his lap, while the police-boy completed the garden'.<sup>78</sup> The police sub-inspector advised that nothing was known of any incident that may have caused such a press report and, in his view, it was 'purely a figment' of the reporter's 'imagination'.<sup>79</sup> Lt Cdr Chapman reassured the police officer-in-charge that he had 'no reason to believe that laxity exists among the police guards'.<sup>80</sup>

It is the Australian responses to the few complaints lodged by the guards about their treatment by others that are perhaps suggestive of a slow change in some Australians' racial perceptions of the Indigenous population. No. 7118 Police Constable Manjamban lodged an official complaint in June 1952, for example, that he had been guarding a working party of war criminals at the 'native' hospital building site when a 'Naval man', whom he knew as 'Master Geordie', said to him, 'Boy, you go and get me that drum'. Manjamban replied that his work was to 'look after' the Japanese and that, in any event, Geordie had a 'boy' working for him who could fetch the drum. Geordie responded, 'You bloody black bastard', an insult Manjamban reported to his officer-in-charge.<sup>81</sup> To his credit, it appears that the camp commandant, Lt Cdr P.H. Baile, took the complaint seriously, as he referred it to the executive officer of HMAS *Tarangau* for 'investigation and necessary action'. The executive officer later advised that, when questioned, the naval rating concerned recollected the incident but did not recall his 'exact words to the Constable'. The executive officer considered, however, that a 'derogatory remark of some sort' had been made, contrary to standing orders, and the naval rating was 'reprimanded'.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>77</sup> See memorandum from A/Sub Inspector J. Graham, OIC NGPF, to the commandant, war criminals compound, 8 Sep. 1950, NAA, MP375/13, WCC5/8.

<sup>78</sup> Quoted in extract from George H. Johnston, 'Jap prisoners live pleasantly on Manus', *Telegraph* (Brisbane), 26 June 1950, NAA, MP375/13, WCC5/8. The same alleged incident is described in 'Are our Jap prisoners treated too kindly?', *Barrier Miner* (Broken Hill), 5 July 1950, 4.

<sup>79</sup> Memorandum from Sub Inspector C.D. Carr to Lt Cdr A.I. Chapman, commandant, war criminals compound, 3 Aug. 1950, and memorandum from Sub Inspector C.D. Carr to commissioner, RPC and NGPF, Port Moresby, 3 Aug. 1950, NAA, MP375/13, WCC5/8.

<sup>80</sup> Memorandum from Lt Cdr A.I. Chapman, OIC Warcom, Manus, to Sub Inspector C.D. Carr, 3 Aug. 1950, NAA, MP375/13, WCC5/8.

<sup>81</sup> Statement by No. 7118 Police Constable Manjamban witnessed by Sub Inspector Len K. Rahaley, 2 June 1952, NAA, MP375/13, WCC5/8.

<sup>82</sup> Memorandum from the executive officer, HMAS *Tarangau*, to OIC, WCC, 11 June 1952, NAA, MP375/13, WCC5/8.

Complaints lodged by the guards about similar insults from the Japanese war criminals were also taken seriously, as they were regarded as offences against compound discipline. Inagaki Tetsuo, for instance, was charged with behaving in a ‘manner disrespectful and insubordinate to a guard on duty’ in August 1949.<sup>83</sup> No. 6136 Police Constable Wali had complained that a group of Japanese whom he had chided for sitting down and talking when they were supposed to be working had said to him, ‘You bloody bastard’. Wali reported that he was ‘very angry with the Japanese for calling me a bastard’. As there was ‘uncertainty in identification’ in this case, however, the commandant was unable to convict Inagaki.<sup>84</sup>

When the War Crimes (Imprisonment) Regulations 1951 were eventually passed in 1951, years after the war criminals compound was established, the regulations included regulation 24(1)(d), which reads:

s24(1) A war criminal who –

...

(d) behaves in a disrespectful, insubordinate or obstructive manner towards a member of the staff or a visitor to the compound;

...

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be punishable in accordance with these regulations.<sup>85</sup>

The regulations defined ‘member of staff’ to include ‘a guard’, which was defined in turn as ‘a person employed in a compound for the purpose of guarding and supervising war criminals’.<sup>86</sup> Several offences under this regulation were dealt with at Manus Island, although the cases did not always record the finer details of the disrespectful or insulting behaviour directed towards the guards. Igawa Kichizaemon, for instance,

<sup>83</sup> This was said to be an offence against section 6 of regulation 44 in division 5 of the War Crimes (Imprisonment) Regulations 1947; however it is unclear which regulations these were, as formal regulations for the compounds were not issued until 1951, although drafts had been circulating since 1946. Two sets of draft regulations were in circulation by Sep. 1947. See letter from Brig. E.M. Neylan, commandant 8 MD, to Lt Col J.T. Brock, AHQ Melbourne, 4 Sep. 1947, and attached two drafts, AWM, AWM54, 783/2/2. The prison offences in these two drafts, however, were not in draft regulation 44, but instead in draft regulation 3 and draft regulation 70. Yet another draft contained the prison offences in draft regulation 31; see NAA, MP742/1, 336/1/2060.

<sup>84</sup> See the personal dossier of Inagaki in NAA, MP375/15, 37. Inagaki, who had been a civilian interpreter, was tried in the Labuan ML37 trial with mistreating prisoners of war and internees at Kuching, British North Borneo, and was sentenced to 10 years’ imprisonment. For the trial proceedings, see NAA, A471, 80754 PARTS 1–3.

<sup>85</sup> War Crimes (Imprisonment) Regulations 1951 (Commonwealth of Australia), reg. 24(1)(d).

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, reg. 1.



was charged in December 1950 with having contravened regulation 31<sup>87</sup> by behaving in a ‘disrespectful manner towards a guard’, namely Sgt Maj. Naduba of the New Guinea Police Force, by ‘not immediately answering when questioned’. Igawa was found guilty and sentenced to four days of extra work of one hour daily.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, Morioka Teikichi was charged in April 1952 with having, among other disciplinary offences against regulation 31.xxxv,<sup>89</sup> used ‘insulting language’ to No. 6174 Police Constable Tavi of the New Guinea Police Force. Morioka was found guilty of the charge (and another charge of acting in a manner contrary to good order and discipline; that is, he had ‘cause[d] a disturbance’) and was sentenced to 14 days of extra work of two hours daily.<sup>90</sup> While these examples perhaps only suggest that the compound regulations were being strictly enforced, which indeed they were for security reasons, it would nonetheless probably have bolstered the confidence of the Native police in their roles of authority and, at the same time, perhaps reminded the war criminals of their status.

## CONCLUSION

World War II marked a turning point in Australia’s colonial administration of Papua and New Guinea, for it introduced a third racial power – Japan – to the region. That there was continuity of pre-war and post-war treatment of the Indigenous populations is undeniable. While the bravery and loyalty of the Papua and New Guineans during the course of the war – something that was overly romanticised through poetry, the best-known example being the ‘Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels’<sup>91</sup> – might have spurred some to rethink long-held opinions, it is unfortunate that the Indigenous population had to act above and beyond what Australians thought they were capable of before

<sup>87</sup> As this charge was dealt with before the War Crimes (Imprisonment) Regulations 1951 were issued, Igawa was charged under what appears to be the draft regulations then in circulation, in which prison offences were in reg. 31, not reg. 24.

<sup>88</sup> See Igawa’s personal dossier, NAA, MP375/15, 33. Igawa, an army private, was tried in the Labuan ML3 trial with massacring prisoners of war near Miri, British North Borneo. He was sentenced to death, but the sentence was mitigated to 10 years’ imprisonment with hard labour. For the trial proceedings, see NAA, A471, 81214.

<sup>89</sup> It is not at all clear why, more than a year after the War Crimes (Imprisonment) Regulations 1951 were issued, Morioka was charged under reg. 31, when it should have been under reg. 24. For some unknown reason, the compound was still relying on the draft regulations.

<sup>90</sup> See Morioka’s personal dossier, NAA, MP375/15, 110. Morioka, a Formosan (Taiwanese) guard, was tried in the Labuan ML21 trial with murdering prisoners of war near Ranau, British North Borneo, and was sentenced to 10 years’ imprisonment. For the trial proceedings, see NAA, A471, 80715.

<sup>91</sup> Janice Newton, ‘Angels, heroes and traitors: images of some Papuans in the Second World War’, *Research in Melanesia*, 20 (1996), 141–56; Liz Reed, “‘Part of our own story’: representations of Indigenous Australians and Papua New Guineans within *Australia Remembers 1945–1995* – the continuing desire for a homogenous national identity’, *Oceania*, 69:3 (1999), 157–70.

they received what was, still, lesser regard and treatment. Moreover, the native Police detachment to the Australian war criminals' compounds in the post-war period makes it clear that the Indigenous population was still regarded, largely, as a labour force to be used as the Australian authorities saw fit.

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