

# The End of the War

On August 1, 1944, The following order was sent to Japanese Military and police commanders. Most copies were destroyed, but 2 were not, one from the Philippines and one in Taiwan.

The December 14, 1944 murder of 150 American POWs on the Philippine Island of Palawan was the direct result of this order. Preparations were being made at Mukden to obey it.

“Kill All” order

"Under the present situation if there were a mere explosion or fire a shelter for the time being could be had in nearby buildings such as the school, a warehouse, or the like. However, at such time as the situation became urgent and it be extremely important, the POW's will be concentrated and confined in their present location and under heavy guard the preparation for the final disposition will be made.

The time and method of the disposition are as follows:

1. The Time.  
Although the basic aim is to act under superior orders, Individual disposition may be made in the following circumstances:
  - a. When an uprising of large numbers cannot be suppressed without the use of firearms.
  - b. When escapees from the camp may turn into a hostile Fighting force.
2. The Methods.
  - a. Whether they are destroyed individually or in groups, or however it is done, with mass bombing, poisonous smoke, poisons, drowning, decapitation, or what, dispose of them as the situation dictates.
    - a. In any case it is the aim not to allow the escape of a single one, to annihilate them all, and not to leave any traces.

To: The Commanding General  
The Commanding General of Military Police

I hereby certify that this is a true translation from the Journal of the Taiwan POW H.Q. in Taiwan, entry 1 August 1944.

Signed: Stephen H. Green

The document in Japanese and an English translation are found in RG 138 box 2015 at the National Archives in College Park MD This is the part of the document that refers to the POWS. (full text is at [http://www.mansell.com/pow\\_resources/Formosa/doc2701-trans.html](http://www.mansell.com/pow_resources/Formosa/doc2701-trans.html))

As the Japanese Imperial Army realized that they were about to lose the war, the Mukden Camp commander ordered the making of enough buns for 3 days. It is believed that the POWs were to be sent 3 days into the wilderness around the camp and murdered.



Drawing by Bill Wuttke

In his book, "Abandoned on Bataan, Red Allen writes that an interpreter at MKK warned them, "Be careful when the war ends Japanese would give each man a bun and a baked Potato and start them on a march. They were to be mowed down and the explanation would be that the men had tried to escape."

On August 14, the men knew the buns and potatoes were prepared and the men had decided to overpower the guards, take weapons, and fight to the end.

Japan surrendered on August 15. Americans had broken the codes used by the Japanese and knew about the Kill All order. They had been making plans to get supplies to the known POW camps as the war ended, but in the case of Mukden, and 3-4 other camps, they felt the men were likely to be murdered before they could get to them. On August 16, before word of the surrender got to the camps, a six man American OSS team parachuted into the Mukden area to tell the Japanese camp leaders that Japan had surrendered and prevent them from killing the POWs.

These liberators became POWs for one night, then two went on to the Sian camp where high ranking officers were held.

See Report of Operation Cardinal

The POWs were freed by the Russians, the closest allied troops, on August 20, 1945. The Russians gave them decent food, and distributed the mail that the Japanese had withheld. They also gave the men the remains of the Red Cross boxes that the Japanese had not plundered, allowed them to wash, and gave them new clothing. They even hastily constructed a stage and entertained the POWs with movies and a Russian Dancer.



The American recovery team arrived on August 26th, to start the process of getting the men home. On August 27, the sickest of the men were being evacuated by plane, and then the rest were organized to go by train to the port in the city of Darien (Now Dalian) to board ships to take them to jumping off points to home. By September 11, the last of the living men were out of the camp and the men in the cemetery were disinterred and either returned to their families or buried where the family requested.



The cemetery had been designed by John Moseley, #972, a trained landscape architect, held as a POW at Mukden.