

# Five Japs Sentenced To Gallows

By RICHARD MASSOCK  
SHANGHAI, Feb. 28 (AP)—  
Seventeen Japanese military  
men were sentenced today—  
five to the gallows, 12 to pris-  
on—for the strangulation and  
cremation of three American  
B-29 fliers at Hankow in De-  
cember, 1944. An 18th defend-  
ant, the lone civilian to be  
tried, was acquitted.

The U. S. military trial com-  
mission decreed death by  
hanging for:

Maj. Gen. Masataka Kabu-  
ragi, chief of staff and deputy  
commander of the Japanese  
34th army in Hankow; War-  
rant Officer Tsutomu Fujii,  
who supervised the killings;  
and the trio who pulled the  
cords about the helpless air-  
men's necks; Sgt. Major Shozo

and Pvt. Yosaburo Shipakawa.  
Masui, Sgt. Koichi Masuda  
American defense counsel  
said the condemned men prob-  
ably would ask Lt. Gen. Al-  
bert C. Wedemeyer, theater  
commander and reviewing  
authority, for clemency—but  
that no higher appeal was  
planned.

Col. Kameji Fukumoto,  
commandant of Japan's Han-  
kow gendarmerie, was sen-  
tenced to life imprisonment.  
Terms of others ranged from 18  
months to 20 years. The civil-  
ian who was acquitted had  
served only as a witness at  
the killings, testimony showed.

All but Fujii heard their  
sentence without a flicker of  
expression, Fujii, who testified  
that he had helped pull the

strangling cords although his  
orders did not require it,  
closed his eyes as sentence was  
pronounced. He gulped once,  
then let out a sigh that was al-  
most audible in the small  
courtroom.

All 18 defendants had been  
charged with the murder of  
Second Lt. Lester R. White,  
Slickville, Pa.; Sgt. Henry W.  
Wheaton, Milwaukee, Wis.,  
and Sgt. James E. Forbes Jr.,  
East Hartford, Conn. The pros-  
ecution had asked the death

penalty only for those respon-  
sible for the killings, how-  
ever.

Four other Japanese, former  
officers, are awaiting trial

here March 11 on charges of  
complicity in the execution of  
three Doolittle raiders whose  
plane crashed in China after  
their surprise blow at Tokyo  
in April, 1942.

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