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VIII. United Nations Commission to Investigate War Crimes

(Dept. of State Bulletin, October 10, 1942, Vol. VII, No. 172)

The President has made the following statement:

“On August 21 I said that this Government was constantly receiving information concerning the barbaric crimes being committed by the enemy against civilian populations in occupied countries, particularly on the continent of Europe. I said it was the purpose of this Government, as I knew it to be the purpose of the other United Nations, to see that when victory is won the perpetrators of these crimes shall answer for them before courts of law.

“The commission of these crimes continues.

“I now declare it to be the intention of this Government that the successful close of the war shall include provision for the surrender to the United Nations of war criminals.

“With a view to establishing responsibility of the guilty individuals through the collection and assessment of all available evidence, this Government is prepared to cooperate with the British and other Governments in establishing a United Nations Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes.

“The number of persons eventually found guilty will undoubtedly be extremely small compared to the total enemy populations. It is not the intention of this Government or of the Governments associated with us to resort to mass reprisals. It is our intention that just and sure punishment shall be meted out to the ringleaders responsible for the organized murder of thousands of innocent persons and the commission of atrocities which have violated every tenet of the Christian faith.”