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Governor
Island of Guam

Testimony on H.R. 44, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act
July 14, 2011

Thank you, Chairman Fleming for inviting me to testify today. For the record, my name is Eddie Baza Calvo and I am the Governor of Guam. On behalf of our people, especially those who found themselves slaves during World War II, I would like to express my support for H.R. 44, also known as the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act.

Distinguished members of the House of Representatives, war claims for the people of Guam are long overdue. On December 8, 1941 our island was changed forever. As all of you know, that was the day Japan attacked my home. For nearly three years, those on Guam were forced out of their homes, were subjected to slavery, and suffered rapes and beatings. Tragically, many died at the hands of the Japanese Imperial Army.

On July 21, 1944, what is now known as Liberation Day, American Marines and soldiers stormed Guam, and began a successful campaign to reclaim the island. It began as their tribute to the Chamorros and Americans who fought and died for our freedom. It was a celebration of our liberation from slavery and oppression. Over the years it's become a commemoration of the Greatest Generation. It is not simply a remembrance of war, but a celebration of what our community has become because of the freedom Chamorro and American warriors fought to give us. But, the Liberation of Guam should not become a dying memory just because that generation is nearly gone. Upon us is the great responsibility to celebrate our identity and traditions with pride.

Every year, the entire island commemorates the bravery of these men, remembers their loved ones who survived our darkest time in history, and prays for those whose lives were stolen by war. Members of Congress while our survivors are indeed liberated, they are not free from the scars of these atrocities.

Everyone who has spent time on Guam has heard a personal account of what our people suffered. In fact, many of our survivors remember this day in 1944. They can still hear the and feel the bombs exploding as American forces prepared to storm our beaches. And while dodging bombs already seems inhumane, it pales in comparison to the stories all Guamanians have heard. We have first-hand accounts from a generation who endured war and occupation, then rebuilt this island from the ground up. Sadly, there aren't many of them left to tell these stories to our children and grandchildren. There are new generations growing up without the special moments Guam's greatest generation shared with us. I firmly believe sharing some of them with you today will help you truly understand and appreciate my position. For your reference, there are more attached to this testimony, as compiled by Guam Senator Frank Blas, Jr.

Father Jesus Baza Duenas

Father Jesus Baza Duenas was born in 1911 and was the second Chamorro to be ordained a Catholic priest. He was one of only two Catholic priests that were allowed to remain on Guam during the Japanese occupation. Father Duenas was an outspoken voice of morality during that time, often expressing his opposition to the treatment of Chamorros to Japanese authorities.

The Japanese occupiers believed Father Duenas knew the whereabouts of an American radioman who remained hidden on Guam: George Tweed. This paranoia turned out to be deadly for Father Duenas. On July 8, 1944, he was arrested. He was tortured for information on Tweed. Days later, the Japanese beheaded Father Duenas for his truthful silence.

Dolores Jones

The harsh reality of war also forced many children to suffer unimaginably. Dolores Jones was orphaned at 11-years old. She was forced to march to a concentration camp, like 18,000 others. That's a terrible situation for any child to deal with alone, but Dolores was also forced to act as a mother to her siblings.

There was no shelter, latrines, food, or medicine at the concentration camp. It soon became apparent this was a death camp, and the Japanese soldiers were planning a massacre. According to one account, forty men were tied up and beheaded. Sadly, no records exist that detail how many people died at these concentration camps.

Guam suffered like no other place in America. Chamorros were raped. They were beaten. They were made slaves. They were forced to denounce the country they loved and swear allegiance to a country that was literally killing them. All the while, our people remained loyal to the United States. They never lost hope that one day, and soon, America would return and spare them from the suffering and pain. As I've stated before, many died protecting American lives. These acts were done out of a deep and committed loyalty to the United States. All throughout the occupation, this loyalty is what gave our people hope. People were certain the loyalty went both ways. Sometimes, this hope is what kept people alive, knowing these horrible circumstances were only temporary. In fact, there's a famous song our war survivors sang, when it was safe, to help raise their spirits. And the end of every verse was:

My dear Uncle Sam, won't you please come back to Guam?

The Japanese tried everything to break this resolve. They marched Chamorros to concentration camps; they became increasingly violent; they murdered Chamorros at a more frequent rate, with more mass casualties at a time. It was what our country stood for that Chamorros so bravely defended in their defiance of the occupiers. As the rumors, arrests and the preparations for marches began on Guam on July 8, 1944, people were fighting for the very ideals we yearned for.

But despite their best efforts, many Chamorros survived until they were liberated. Sadly, although they survived the atrocities of war, most of them have been called by God to rest.

I'm sure many of you are aware of the strategic importance Guam and the Marianas played in defeating the Japanese Imperial Forces. The U.S. Department of Defense needed our tiny little islands, and arguably would not have recaptured the Pacific Theater without them.

In this special relationship we've had with America for over a century, it has not always been the actions of the federal government that have pleased us. But it has always been the ideals of this country, and what it means to people yearning for freedom around the world, that we have always loved. It has always been the American serviceman and woman, who was willing to die for us, whom we have honored and respected for the freedom we have. It is this way because only 67 years ago we were those people yearning for freedom, given to us by those Marines and soldiers who came back for us, bled for us and died for us.

It is more urgent than ever before to grant these claims. The time is now, while they're are still survivors left. Our people have lived, still loyal to this country, despite sixty-seven years without any recognition for their suffering.

Ladies and gentlemen, honorable Congressional Representatives, the United States has an obligation to this—make no mistake about it. The federal government took on this liability after it signed the Treaty of Peace with Japan in 1951. Our people are not asking for something extraordinary. We are expecting the country we fought for, the country we suffered for, the country we died for, to honor its responsibilities to our elderly.

This is not just a statutory obligation, it is a moral obligation. Passing this legislation into law is a chance to demonstrate the importance of Guam. It is an opportunity to show we truly belong to this country. It is a definitive way to prove the mutual respect we have for each other.

During the war, Chamorros' loyalty to America was unwavering, even in the face of death. All I am asking is for America to recognize this loyalty.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for H.R. 44.

Edward L.G. Aguon passed away on September 28, 2007

"The most agonizing memories come to mind when I think of the occupation of being forced to watch people brutalized, tortured and killed, to see the look on their face when the final stab of the bayonet pierced their flesh, to hear the cries as their last breath leave their bodies. And even then, the attackers continued to thrust the bayonet into their lifeless bodies."

(On the March to Manenggon)

"Tens of miles in hot and rainy days, we were gathered like cattle being led to the slaughter. We could not help anyone who fell behind or fell down. Even if that person was your grandmother, a sick relative or a dying friend, you had to move on and leave them there."

Joseph Crisostomo Aguon 80 years old, Survivor

"I was forced to work at the airport... My job was to dig and sometimes carry water for the Japanese Soldiers. At the end of the day, we were getting a handful of rice as our payment... I was assigned to work in Canada, Barrigada as a mess boy... I was transferred to work in Ordot digging tunnels. If the Japanese were not satisfied, we were told to line up face-to-face and slap one another. When my turn came, I refused to slap the old man facing me. I was hit by the Japanese guard holding a stick. The man whispered, go ahead and slap me. I will understand."

Magdalena San Nicolas Bayani 94 years old, Survivor

"We were obligated to work. We worked in Ta'i and every morning we'd go through the swamp all the way up to Ta'i morning and night. We'd leave at 5 in the morning and return at 8 at night. All day, we'd plant, dig, gather rocks, and pull weeds. We'd rarely eat during the day. One day, we were told to stop work, stand in line and we stood there without knowing what was going to happen. We were warned that whomever whines, cries, or call out, we'd all be killed... There were three men who were standing there while some people were digging a hole in front of them. When the hole was dug, three Japanese with raised bayonets approached and told the men to kneel down with their hands tied behind their backs. They were told to bow their heads with their necks fully exposed. The three Japanese counted to three and the three were then beheaded right in front of us. The heads rolled down into the hole.

"One day, we were all standing facing the East. I didn't even know what we were doing. But, we were supposed to bow to the East, to the Emperor, the god of Japan, and the world, supposedly. I didn't bow quickly enough. I'll never forget. Nakase Sensei kicked me, slapped me first and then kicked me. Kicked my feet and I fell down.

"We would clean, pull grass, pull weeds, whatever. Bare hands. We had to feed ourselves with whatever we could bring from home... Later on, of course, I recall that they had a night shift. I don't recall what the night shift was for. But, we were all asked to bring our dogs to Tai. Later on, I found out that the Japanese were cooking dogs for the night shift.

"We were told to watch, or if we didn't watch, we would be next to suffer the fate of these three men... One of them was allowed to speak... He started to say the "Our Father, who art in heaven ... " in Chamorro. Then they were pushed down to kneel. Three Japanese men, officers, with Samurai swords, each had water poured on the sword. Pushed the men down. Then he cut their heads off... I heard later that one of the Japanese officers took one of the heads and was giving it to the neighbors to cook it."

Teresa Reyes Borja 80 years old, Survivor

"They tied me to the coconut tree like a carabao or a cow. That's a very sad. And right now, like only a

couple of months back when they tie me there for almost one day, they tie me to the coconut tree and they almost killed us. I hope to God people from Merizo so they can know what I'm saying and it's true. And it's very painful for me when I think about that. Only I know that the carabao and the cow are tied not the human being, but that time I was tied up for almost one day when I'm 12 years old."

"It's a long story, and I think the people that came here today, what they say, it's true. And I don't want to say. It's a long story to say everything what the Japanese did to us, to me and all my family."

Rosa Roberto Carter passed away on April 11, 2010

"Most of us suffered wounds from being forced into the jungle, where we contacted scarring napalm from the United States bombing of the Japanese. When the bombing stopped, we were forced to go back to clearing bushes, which were dripping with this napalm. And in a proper setting, I could show you some scars, which have irritated me for 60 years. One of my brothers lost parts of two fingers, as well, from the live ammunition scattered over so much of Guam after the fighting in 1944. And at one time, I found myself clinging to a large breadfruit tree while American planes attacked. Human limbs, arms and legs, flew through the air on their own. People screamed in the grip of hysteria. I saw people going berserk."

"In regard to the constant terror of being an occupied people, earlier in Mangilao, many of us were forced to line up in orderly rows to witness the beating of a family for the crime of trying to hide some of its food from the Japanese occupiers. If we showed any emotion, we would have been beaten too. "

Francisco Leon Guerrero Castro 79 years old, Survivor

"We then had the order for a forced march to concentration camp in Manenggon. Because of my father's fear of what the Japanese might have intended ... One person that testified here, I also recollected that during the Japanese occupation, a Japanese national who was living in Guam, way before the war and during the war, had circulated the rumor when they started seeing Uncle Sam come back to Guam, she started circulating the rumor that when the Americans gets back to Guam, they won't find nothing but flies. That statement was very true."

Rosa Tenorio Castro 77 years old, Survivor

"If I did not march, they will kill me. Also, they will make me work in hot sun with no food and water and even though it's raining or not raining. It's a forced labor for a child. You don't have any democracy. There's no say so, "I beg your pardon." "Do it or else the end it be of you." In other words, they were very cruel to us Chamorros."

"We went to Manenggon. Then, the marching on Manenggon, I thought, being a child, my understanding is only a child's understanding. But, now it's not. It's the opposite way around. What I heard as a child, that we were going to go to Manenggon, where there's a camp to be preserved from the American bombing. But, that is not true. They put us there so that the Japanese collect the Chamorro and give a big bomb. One bomb is enough for many people. That's what they intended to do."

Jose Quinene Cruz 63 years old, Survivor

"My only recollection from my grandmother and my father and my mother was one morning, when I was playing out in the rain, it was raining real hard and I told my mother, "I wish God would stop this rain." She told me, "Son, if the rain didn't stop, you would not be born." That's the only time when she spoke about the war. With further query, I said, "Mom, why, what happened?" She said, "I was in a firing squad with Nana," my grandmother, "and your father and two other siblings. We were there

because when the taicho came," because my grandmother was the one who was massaging the taicho. Well, the taicho came and Nana was not there, they burned their house because they were out in the ranch. They burned their house. When they came back, they found out that their house was burned. Then, they were actually corralled to go to the river right next to where the Malessos' Church is. They were lined up to be killed. It rained and it rained and it rained. Because of the meticulousness of the Japanese, they actually did not kill them. My mom said we just slowly slipped out because they were enjoying themselves probably thinking that they'll kill them."

"I come here because I think the deprivation that I feel is really the deprivation of some of our loved ones. My uncle would've probably gotten me really, really advancing with a confidence that he actually had to the family. He was killed because of his stature. He was killed because he was a tall man, he was a big man. I'm a big person and my father's smaller than I am. I always told him, "Gee, if I only known Uncle Kin, I probably would actually measure up to him."

"The atrocity that I bring is really the atrocity of being deprived of the memories of all of our heroes, all of my people, all of my elderly and all of the people who have merited. I close really with a nightmare that my mother-in-law and father-in-law actually had. That one, I vividly experience. When Pop is about 80, 79 years old, he was starting to have Alzheimer's. When he leaves the house, there was one time when it was really a heavy rain. I think it's part of the recollection of the war, Pop, we found him hiding under one of the bushes. We asked him, "Pop, what are you doing?" He said, "The Japanese are coming."... Those are memories of the living. But, the memories of the dead I carry. I carry the deprivation of the memories."

Rita Santos Cruz 72 years old, Survivor

"I was one person and I believe that there is no amount of money will ever equal the horror and pain of such an experience. We have not come to ask for money there is no value to suffering, hunger and cruel punishment and that no million will suffice to satisfy that indignity. We have not been acknowledged as a nation of people and also that we have suffered under the hands of the Japanese. Many have been raped, force to labor and I was forced to pick papaya and coconut for the Japanese. We marched to an area As Lucas in Talofof. When we got there we saw a long and huge hole that was dug up but we had no idea what it was until my mother asked for a hug because the Japanese were suppose to kill us."

Barbara Castro Dela Cruz 76 years old, Survivor

"I witnessed the beheading of three Chamorro men, who the Japanese accused of spying for assisting the American George Tweed. During the execution, I was placed at the front row, a few feet away from the men who were to be killed. It was a painful experience because the Japanese threatened that anyone who looked away or showed any emotion during the execution would be next, saying we were witnessing our mirror that could be done to us as well."

Vicente Diaz Gumataotao 82 years old, Survivor

"Every day that I see Japanese, they'll beat me up. Either they wring my ear or they knock my head. But, they took us to be slave, forced labor, more likely, in a rice field, cornfield and potato, and sweet potato field; they worked 12 hours a day. Out of 36 of us, I really feel sorry for those 35 because I'm the only survivor."

"There was a lot of atrocities and I witnessed a lot of things that were happening in Guam, like the Late Frank Won Pat, when he was beheaded at Pigo', I was there, it was the first person that was beheaded by digging his own grave and they won't waste a bullet for him to be killed. He had to be beheaded by a sword."

“At Orote Point, the food that we eat over there is 50% worm and 50% rice. It’s all rotted rice. We have to eat because we’re starving.”

“I asked for my machete back, they beat me up until I was unconscious. When I got up, I don’t even know where I’m at. That’s the worse experience I ever had. It’s a horrible experience that I have been through. But I’m not the worst. There are a lot of people here that are worse than I am.”

Concepcion Judicpa 66 years old, Survivor

“Although I did not put in my testimony, I would like to, and maybe I will revise that later, but, in my testimony, my sister, up to this point, my sister's only about 80 pounds. It's because she lived during those days. She had, like all the other testimonies, there was malnutrition and so on. I, when I got married, I was only 85 pounds. Thank God I had five kids and was able to gain some weight. But, I believe that was as a result of the times when there was hardly any food to go around.”

Pilar Diaz Cruz Lujan 79 years old, Survivor

“I was 11 years, 2 months old on December 8th, 1941. The mass of the Immaculate Conception was just celebrated in the Santa Cruz Church in Agana. As we were coming out of the Church, we heard and saw planes overhead. Instantly, we waved and cheered as if we were watching an aerial show. Little did we know that those same planes had bombed Sumay... That was the end of the peaceful island paradise of Guam. A few days later, the people of Guam were captured by the Japanese and that was the beginning of the reign of terror that was forced upon the inhabitants of Guam.”

“As far as I'm concerned, the trauma and the lasting negative psychological impact of the people cannot be measured... The point is, the physical scars can never measure up to the fear that I carry today, even as old as I am now. The subject of war experience is not a subject that is easily passed on from one generation to the next. It is painful and horrifying experience that many people want to discuss, but most are unable to express without outward signs of emotional release.”

Maria Santos Martinez 83 years old, Survivor

“I was 14 years old when the Japanese came on Dec. 8, 1941. When the Japanese came, they made us run into the jungle right near St. Johns. Our family hid there and it was so dark and we couldn't find each other because we were near a cave by St. John's. In the morning, my father left us to cut his tuba and when he climbed down from the coconut tree, he saw a battalion of Japanese coming from the direction of Gun Beach. They stopped at the house of my aunt and found a young woman by the name of Maria Camacho whom they dragged out and raped. They held onto her father and while a bayonet was pointed at him, the battalion took turns on the young woman. My father ran back to us in the jungle and told us about what he saw.”

“Every morning, the Japanese would send us off to work. When I didn't work, would then be told to make sure to clean my neck because I would be cut off at the neck if I didn't work. I would always cry out of fear. I would tell my mother that I didn't feel like working because I was always so hungry and sick but a Japanese would always remind me that if I refused, I would be killed by being beheaded.”

“When the American planes came they would shoot at us from the air because they thought we were the Japanese. We would all run into the jungle where we'd pray the Lord's Prayer. We even tried sticking our heads into holes in the ground out of our fear of being hit. When my companions become thirsty and they ask to drink, the Japanese would then take their guns and hit them with it.”

Lucia McDonald 83 years old, Survivor

“Once the Japanese soldiers found out through the interpreter that our father was an American Navy man, they tortured us on a daily basis. We would get punched, kicked and poked by bayonets and a head choke. On one occasion, my three brothers were in prison and beaten badly. One brother was beaten so badly on his leg that when they release him months later, he could not walk anymore.”

“We had to hide our food so we wouldn't get beaten. On one of our work days, we were forced to circle around and witness the execution of three men. One was beheaded and the others shot. We were told not to cry or yell or else we also would be killed.”

“I was afraid to report to the fields because of the plane dogfights that morning. The next day, along with three other girls, we were escorted and questioned about our accidents at the field that day. I was slapped repeatedly and a sword was placed on my shoulder. The interpreter told me that I was going to be killed if I lied about my absence. I begged for my life. Later, he asked if I wanted to be drowned in the big drum of a container of water. Two girls were told to clean the wounds of the Japanese soldiers. One girl was taken into the sleeping quarters of the Japanese official and I was told to grind coconut for the soldiers. Three of us were released that night. One girl, who was taken into the sleeping quarters was kept there for a couple of days before they returned her home. But, then her father hung himself because he could not bear to see his daughter suffering and what she went through.”

Dolores Cruz Meno 78 Years Old, Survivor

“There's two of us girls, because I was so fragile, I was so skinny. My parents are very poor, I am the youngest one in the family. So, there's two of us girls to carry that with the bamboo. We put the bamboo on the basket, we slid it into the farthest part of the basket and we carry it on our back out to the Manganese to deliver it to the Japanese people for their supplies. We do not have anything for us. They all get it for themselves.”

Manuel Mafnas Merfalen 82 years old, Survivor

“One morning, we were visited by a few Japanese and an interpreter and the Commissioner of Dededo... They introduced themselves to be the representative of the police, and the reason for their being there was because of my sister being married to an American Navy man... So the question went on repeatedly to my sister, and my sister was only giving them negative answer. Each time they're not satisfied with the answer, it was followed with a blow in the face, not with the palm open, but with the fist closed, to my sister's face every time she gave a negative answer. This went on for almost an hour, and they finally decided to leave, leaving my sister with a puffy face, bleeding through the mouth and nose...And then the following day, the same people came, informing my mother that we have to deliver my sister down to the Agana police station for more investigation...They were tying up her hands in front of her, and there was a chair just before her and she was told to get on the chair. So they strung up my sister to the beam of that building and I watched her dangling on that rope... Every time she gave an answer, it was followed with a whip, about a yard long whip, instead of a beating with the hand. I can see through the window flashes of blood. Her dress is soaked with blood. She wasn't crying, but I can see tears dripping through her face... When I was watching through the window, they poured this container of liquid over her head, then she started screaming. And what it was, it's not water, but it's gas. I can smell the fume of that gas coming out through that window from a distance of maybe 15 feet. So I started moving away from the building. I was crying. As far as I can go from 100 feet away, I can still hear my sister yelling.”

“We were on an ammunition and supply detail for some command in Mangilao for the military and, at the time, there was a plane flying over us. We were told to disperse with what we have on our shoulder

into the jungle. My brother, being a heavy smoker, he took out his cigarette and light it, and momentarily when the supervisor of that crew saw the light, he yelled at one end of the group of people where we were and, in no time, he was there already yelling at my brother. I couldn't help watching him, what he was going through, and he was brutally kicked, hit with a stick, knocked down unconsciously... And at that time, they tied my brother's arm and dragged him behind a horse, and that was the last time I see of him.”

Lourdes Laguana Perez 80 years old, Survivor

“I watched my aunties, my father's sisters whipped when their three kamas were lost when they were going out. So, the Japanese rounded up all the old people first. They started whipping them. The Japanese were taking turns whipping the old people first. They were very strong because they started first. Then, when they went to the younger people, they were kind of weak. But, I watched my aunties cry but they have to hold their breath because if they cry more, or if we cry because I watch them, you'll get beaten more and you'll get whipping more.”

Jose Afaisen Pinaula 79 years old, Survivor

“I have suffered painful burn to both of my hands that lasted at least three days, then I was assigned to keep the diesel oil torchlight burning all night. I became nervous wreck. My morale was at its lowest breaking point. I was frightened and scared for my life, that I did anything the Japanese soldier just to survive and be alive. Forced to work, even if I was extremely ill, there was absolutely no excuse not to work, unless you on the verge of dying. I reach a breaking point in my life when I did not care what happened to me. “

Roman Leon Guerrero Quinata, Sr. 80 years old, Survivor

“Up to now, I do not understand why the animosity and suffering imposed on us by Japanese. Imagine, I was only 12 years old, with no knowledge and experience of hard labor. I was made to do all these things. I was forced to work in the rice field, after several month of schooling. But, of course, the Japanese ambition is not to educate us, but to force us to do hard work, hard labor for their interest in combating this war. No matter what it takes, no matter what it costs, as long as their interest is served sometimes I ask myself, "What have we done to make them hit us so much?" The Chamorros are a loving and generous people. They don't even respect the elderly. My mother recently had a baby, was forced to work in the rice field. Incidentally, the baby that was born just before the war, died during the war, after contracting pneumonia. Nothing matters to them.”

“I will summarize this ordeal as one that I will never forget. The pain, the suffering, the hunger and the beating is beyond my expectation. I am praying that it will not happen again, and none of my kids or grandkids will ever experience what I have gone through.”

Cristobal Reyes 68 years old, Survivor

“While at Fenna, he worked for the Japanese in the field crops. It was shortly after my father had to move to Fenna when he was made aware that the Americans were on their way to Guam. This alerted the Japanese and started ridding the islands of as much Chamorros as they can, so that it will help weaken the attack against them whenever it was to take place. This is what led to the massacre of Fenna. On one particular morning, all the people were gathered to go into several of the caves that were existed there. My father was in one of them. He was later called out by the Japanese to collect firewood and barks of trees to place in front of the cave. Up to this time, there was no mention or notice of machine gun position to fire directly in front of the cave. He witnessed the first cave was being set on fire at the entrance, and then was followed by shootings.”

Regina Reyes 95 years old, survivor

“In 1941, when we heard that the Japanese is in Hawaii, we’re to get away in the house. We stay there all day until four o’clock. I go to my other house. Since I just got in my house, they got in with gun and shiny bayonet. He asked me --- I don’t know what to say about this, pointed the gun, and I said, no, I don’t have. And then he just pushed me on the wall and do what he want. He raped me.”

Elvina Reyes Rios 81 years old, Survivor

“I was made to work by the Japanese. I was only 13 years old at the time. I was living in Agat with my parents. I was made to work in the rice field. I was made to work in Piti planting rice. I worked in the village of Agat to be in the garden. I was made to work in Jalaguag. The damage on my back is still there because when I was busy clearing land and I would stretch my body, the Japanese would throw rocks at me. It is still there on my back... I'd get to Fena at 6 in the morning and if I was late at least one minute, I would get one slap on my mouth. For three minutes, it was three slaps on my mouth. When I am done in Fena, I would grate 125 coconuts. I would get off at 6 pm and by the time I got home to the ranch at 9 at night.”

Francisco Perez Sablan 69 years old, Survivor

“My father was beaten up and was punished, brutal. They hit him with sticks and they break almost every bone in his body. My mother, they grabbed me from my mother, they threw me in the fire. They slapped my mother. They kicked my mother. Now, I got about maybe 15% or 30% of my back body burned. So, I'm just here today to tell you that it's a hard life, to grow up with no parents, no father, no mother. I didn't even finish my education because I have nobody to support me in my education. I grew up eating bananas, breadfruit, taros, lucky if I eat spam or corned beef in a month or week. It's a hard life.”

Jesus Perez Sablan passed away on May 21, 2010

“We arrived in Manenggon without water, food or shelter. We hurriedly installed a lean-to temporary shelter using vegetation branches for our bedding. Believe me, war is hell.

How I managed to journey, to complete the journey, with my partially crippled dragging my leg with eventual healing was a mystery. Could only attribute it to faith, the will to survive, and, more importantly, the will of God. And I swear, that the above remarks were the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.”

Vicente Taitingfong Taisipic 73 years old, Survivor

“They gave me a bucket to patrol the whole area of Yona and collect manure, irregardless what kind of manure. And they gave me a quota that, if I don’t fill up six buckets during the field, that I would be beaten up. Practically, I was a walking maggot because, the fact of the matter is, that after the field work, I had to walk all the way from the school compound down to Asinan Valley. That’s where our ranch is located at. And my parents normally told me to go directly to the river, stay there with the other carabao or water buffalo. And at that time, soap is a luxury for us. We used lemon leaf for soap so I could get rid of the flies that had been following me from the field that I would be beaten up.”

“The Japanese sergeant told me and a few others to round up all the dogs. At that time, I was under the impression they’re supposed to eat it, but they behead it. And the one time, I came so close to at being cut by a Japanese sword. And then the dog, more or less, trying to reach and I reached over to grab it, hold it back, and then the Japanese soldier, cut him in half. Then he started laughing at me, and then, at

the same time, I was bloody all over, then he started getting mad at me that I wasn't doing my job holding the dog down."

Arthur B. Toves 81 years old, Survivor

"One afternoon, he ordered me and said to me, "Get one shovel and go to the cemetery and dig this hole for two." I did that because it's very soft, sandy part. I finished what they told me to do. I hid under the banana tree and wait for them. Sooner or later the truck came with the two local prisoners and the mother. They followed behind the car with the two Japanese, armed with swords and .45 pistol. When they got into the cemetery, they tied the hands of the prisoners. They ordered them to kneel down, face one another. "Look down at the hole and bend your neck." Ladies and gentlemen, sooner or later, that sword was flying, whacking the neck. One was next to the lady, the other was not, because they used the .45 to kill the guy. But, what makes me feel so bad that day, is that the mother was standing right next to the grave, watching all the things that being done to her son. I feel so bad, but I cannot do anything, or else, I'll be in the hole also."

"My father [was] still in prison. They came to the ranch, armed with bayonets, looking for anything to prove that we are spy. They didn't find anything. They brought us to Agana, my two oldest brothers, my two oldest cousins and myself. They bring up the recent account. My father was on top of that. Nine o'clock in the morning, I noticed the executioner in the window... When he came out, he let us stand, all of us five, attention. He touches my brother's neck, the oldest one. He said, "This is no good because this is kind of hard." Going down the line, they came to me. He touches my neck and exactly, this is what he said, "This is very good." One time, meaning to say the sword would just go through all the way because I was the youngest one."

Juan Martinez Unpingco passed away on August 10, 2010

"We seldom go to the other village and to Agana because we were afraid that we might meet Japanese soldier who were so mean and brutal. I have seen them slap our people with them and even stab people to death with their bayonet. They were ruthless and they have no regards to the value of human life. Then one day the Japanese soldiers came to our ranch destroying things and terrorizing us. We were so scared, especially when the same soldier rape my auntie Margaret."

"One day the Japanese soldier armed with rifle and an interpreter telling to forcing us to march to Manenggon concentration camp... If you stopped to rest, you'd be whipped and beat. These were the march when my father, got whipped - - oh boy he was really whipped had no reason, apparent reason. He was whipped with tangantagnan stick five feet long, one inch thick, my dad was whipped so severely until his body was swollen, lacerated, covered with matted blood and bruises. The beating took so long, so the soldiers took turns beating him. When the beating was finished, my father went to the nearby river and soaked his wounds for two hours to lessen the pain, swelling and bleeding."

"Our people, as well as my family, endured so much hardship, pain and agony and torture. There are times I have nightmare remembering the suffering and torture and the killing that I witnessed as a young man. I still remember the mangled bodies with worms and flies feeding them."