

HOMMA, MASAHARU - TRIAL OF

MISC - 16

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

vs

MASAHARU HOMMA

Public Trial

Volume V I I I pgs 889 to 1034

Manila

Date 10 Jan 1946

Copy No. 11

XXX

Lt RAFF : All right. The prosecution calls as its next Witness Captain Pedro L. Felix.

PEDRO FELIX

called as a witness on behalf of the Prosecution, being first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

Q. (By Lt Raff) Will you state your name, age, and nationality?

A. Pedro L. Felix, 32 years old Filipino.

Q. What is your present rank and assignment?

A. Captain, Inspector General Service, Philippine Army.

Q. Now, in April of 1942, were you a member of the Philippine Army forces in Bataan?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What was your rank and assignment, or what was your rank and organization at that time?

A. I was a Captain since February 1942, assigned to S-3 of the 72d Infantry 91st Division.

Q. Now, Captain, will you indicate on the map in the rear in what vicinity your unit was on or about the 9th day of April 1942?

A. We were on the west coast of Bagac, the extreme left sector, The 91st Div to which I belonged was in the extreme left sector of Bagac.

Q. Did you surrender to the Japanese Imperial Forces in April 1942?

A. Yes, sir, on order of the division commander of the

91st, 72d Division surrendered at the Division CP on 11 Apr 1942.

Q. And how many men were with you at the time of the surrender of your unit?

A. Will you please clarify the question?

Q. About how many men were there with you at the time of the surrender?

A. Do you mean our regiment?

Q. Your regiment or any other soldiers or soldiers of any other unit.

A. I figure in my particular regiment we were about 1500 men, officers and men.

Q. Did you first make contact with the Japanese with respect to to the surrender?

A. The first contact we had, if you mean the physical contact, as regards surrender, was on the 11th of April 1942.

Q. What did they require you to do at that time?

A. We were required to surrender all arms that we had.

Q. Did you remain in the surrender area for any length of time?

A. Of I remember right, sir, surrendered about 11 o'clock on the 11th April 1942, and we stayed there for about five hours until - - we stayed there for about five hours until they gave us orders to march towards Balanga.

Q. Those of us who were lucky to get transportation rode in automobiles and on army trucks, while the rest of the men marched on foot.

Q. How many trucks were there at that time?

A. Do you refer to the trucks that we used?

Q. Yes, that is right.

A. There were more or less about - - anywhere from 15 to 20 trucks.

Q. You say that those who were lucky got into the trucks and started towards the destination designated by the Japanese?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How far did you go?

A. We started the afternoon of the 11th, and towards evening we reached as far as the Pantingan River.

Q. Were you then proceeding along the main highway between Bagac and Balanga?

A. No, sir.

Q. Please explain what route you used.

A. During the war in Bataan there several lateral roads connecting the east coast to the west coast, and also roads north south used as as communications. In our particular case ---

Q. Were these commonly referred to as trails.

A. They were called trails, yes.

Q. All right, proceed.

A. The 91st Div CP was then on trail number 8, south of the town of Bagac. From trail number 8 we marched eastward until we reached the Pantingan River.

Q. You say you marched?

A. We rode. I was lucky to be one of those that rode on a truck.

Q. What happened when you reached the Pantingan River?

A. It was almost dark when we reached the Pantingan River because the bridge broke down at that point. We could not proceed any further so we spent the night at the Pantingan River that night.

Q. Now, what happened the following morning?

A. The next morning we repaired the bridge, and soon after the bridge was repaired we continued on with our truck, but we had hardly gone about two kilometers when we were stopped by Japanese soldiers who ordered us to get off our vehicles, and so we had to proceed on foot.

Q. What happened then?

A. We marched on foot, and just as we came near the junction between trail number 6 and trail number 29, the Japanese soldiers sorted out the enlisted men from the officers. The officers were made to sit as a group apart from the enlisted men.

Q. What happened then?

A. We had been in the place for about two hours, and suddenly, I think it was about noontime, a Japanese command car arrived in the

area, and from the attention the Japanese soldiers gave the Japanese officer that alighted from that car, he must have been a very high ranking officer.

Q. Could you see his car?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What were the markings on the car?

A. About the only marking that I can remember was the usual Japanese star, the insignia that is used on Jap vehicles.

Q. Do you know who this ranking officer was?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How do you know?

A. While sitting in a group of officers, there was a Jap officer that was trying to be friendly with us. As soon as that Japanese passed our place he voluntarily told us that that person was General Nara.

Q. Now, after the high ranking officer left, what happened?

A. As soon as General Nara left the officer in charge, the Jap officers and non-commissioned officers on one side of the trail and then allowed the privates to continue the march towards Balanga.

Q. What did they do, referring to the Japanese, to the officers and non-commissioned officers?

A. The officers were ordered to form three groups, each group to form columns of fours.

Q. GENERAL DONOVAN : Before you go any further, I would like to get the name of this officer straightened out. How do you spell that General's name?

LT RAFF : N-a-r-a.

THE WITNESS : That is right sir.

GENERAL DONOVAN : Find out what his job was, if you can.

Q. (By Lt Raff) Do you know who General Nara was?

A. As far as I can remember, sir, General Nara was supposed to be the Japanese commander facing us during that time, opposing us, rahher.

LT RAFF : On the chart he is indicated as one of the Generals of one of the units under General Homma.

Q. (By Lt Raff) About how many officers and enlisted men were there at that time, Captain?

A. I beg your pardon?

Q. About how many officers and noncommissioned officers were left when the privates were taken away?

A. There were anywhere from 350 to 400 officers and noncommissioned officers left.

Q. And what happened?

A. As soon as we have formed our line of four, some Japanese soldiers came with telephone wires, the W-110, our own telephone wires and started tying our hands behind us, each man connected, tied one behind the other. I was made leader of one of these three groups that formed.

Q. So on, continue on with what occurred at that time.

A. As soon as they have tied us, we were marched to a ravine off the junction of trails numbers 6 and 29, and once there ---

Q. How were you lined up when you reached that ravine?

A. From that place where they tied us, we marched into columns of fours, but as soon as we reached the ravine we were made to face towards the bottom of the ravine.

Q. Was there a Japanese interpreter who spoke to you at that time?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What did he say?

A. There was a Jap interpreter who talked to us in tagalog. He gave statements which can be translated this way: He say, "My friends, you have to be patient, This is your fate. Had you surrendered earlier, maybe we would not kill you."

Q. And then what happened?

A. He says, "If there is anything that you want to request before we kill you, you ask them now."

Q. Did anyone answer him?

A. Yes, sir. Some of the boys asked that they be spared, and there was one sergeant who claimed that his mother was a Japanese. He asked that he be spared of the massacre, and the Jap interpreter, apparently interested in his case, interceded on his behalf, but was turned

down.

Q. And then what happened, Captain?

A. I was in the first column. They moved us about 15 yards in front of the other in three columns, in my group, and made us sit on the ground. Just before executing us, the Jap soldiers around gave us -- stuck of cigarettes into our mouths and lighted them for us. But on a given signal by the Jap officer in charge, they started bayonetting and beheading us on that line.

Q. What happened to you, Captain?

A. I was on the extreme left of that line, and I was watching on the right, I saw at least two heads cut off before they struck me in the back with a bayonet. The first thrust hit me in the shoulder blade; the second one went through and through, and I thought they had cut my intestines, I fell on my side, and the Jap soldier thrust again; this time they hit my spinal column. He tried a fourth one, and it hit the upper part of my chest, the upper part of my back, and I didn't know that it went through also until I found it out the next day.

Q. How many times in all were you bayoneted?

A. I was bayoneted four times.

Q. You say that these bayonet thrusts went through and through you. Will you kindly indicate by your hands on your body where they entered and came out? Stand up.

GENERAL DONOVAN: I would like to go a little further than that and have him pull his shirt off and indicate it.

(The witness rose, removed his shirt and exhibited his back to the Commission)

GENERAL DONOVAN : Do you count four there?

THE WITNESS : Yes, sir.

GENERAL DONOVAN : One, two, three, four -- is that correct?

COLONEL MEEK : Yes, sir.

Q. (By Lt Ruff) - Where did they come through?

A. One of them went through here (indicating). The other one, the point just came out of this position here (indicating), sir.

GENERAL DONOVAN : Thank you very much. You can put your shirt on later.

COLONEL MEEK: May he be excused to put that on?

GENERAL DONOVAN : Yes, We will take a short recess.

(Short recess)

GENERAL DONOVAN : The Commission is in session.

COLONEL MEEK : Sir, all members of the Commission are present. The Accused is present with two members of his counsel. The Prosecution is present and ready to proceed.

Q. (By Lt Raff) Do you know of any other officers who were in the group with you, Captain?

A. I know several of them, sir.

Q. Will you name them, please.

A. There were, Major Onofre Casupang, G-1, 91st Div; Maj Arevalo, G-2, 91st Div; Capt Fajardo, the Ordnance Officer of the 91st Div; Capt Devesa, the quartermaster officer; a certain Capt Lopez of the 91st Infantry; Lt Lopez, assistant G-3 of the 91st; another Lt Lopez an ordnance officer, Capt Inocencio, 72d Inf; Capt Samala of the 91st Inf; Lt Paglinawan of the 72d Inf; Lt Jacinto of the 3d PC, Phil Constabulary Regt; and many others whose names I cannot now recall.

Q. Now, do you know who was immediately to your right in the column?

A. The man immediately to my right was Lt Jacinto of the 3d Phil Constabulary Regt.

Q. And who was to your left:

A. I was to the extreme left.

Q. Have you mentioned a Major Vargas?

A. Oh, yes, sir.

Q. Was he with you?

A. Major Vargas -- he was a first Lt then, of the First Engineers -- was one of the officers that was in my group.

Q. That was in your group?

A. Yes.

Q. How many men would you estimate were in that place at the time of this massacre:

A. Do you mean the troops that were massacred?

Q. That is right.

A. I would figure that since there were three groups, each group forming columns of fours, and each column of files, there were 30

to 35, I would say there were not less than 350 officers and noncommissioned officers in that massacre.

Q. Do you know many survived the massacre?

A. May I relate something about this?

Q. Go ahead.

A. The massacres started about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, At about 5 o'clock that same afternoon there was hardly anybody living. I was conscious all the time but I didn't move. I could not move because there was a Jap soldier going back and forth, and I was afraid that he would discover that I was alive. There were many soldiers going back and forth, and I was scared they would discover that I was alive.

I waited until darkness came, and at dark I removed my head, which was under the legs of Lt Jacinto, I removed my head from under Lt Jacinto's already still legs and tried to rest. There was no sound at all from my companions, and it seems to me that I was the only one living there.

My problem then was how to free myself from the rest of the dead. I was so desperate myself that I tried to commit suicide. I didn't expect to live anyway, so I tried to press my nose on the ground and force myself not to breathe, but nothing would come out of it. I seem got tired of committing suicide and thought of a way to escape.

Since the ground was sloping I had to brace myself, brace my feet on the ground, until the wire connecting me to the rest of the dead men would come across my mouth, and everytime it would come across my mouth I tried to chew the wire. It took me three hours before I could cut the wire that connected me with the rest of the dead companions.

I would like to mention here that while I was chewing the wire somebody was groaning behind me about 20 yards behind. I called out to him, and I asked him if he was still alive. He said he was all right, that he was able to free himself from the wire that bound him, but that he was badly wounded.

I asked him to come near me, so that I could untie me, but apparently the poor fellow was very helpless. As soon as I cut the wires, which connected me with the rest of the dead, I dropped myself to that fellow. His name is Lt de Venecia of the First Engineers. He untied

the wire that bound my hands behind me; after that we rested. Lt de Venecia, aside from three rifle wounds, had eleven bayonet wounds all over his chest. We were both very thirsty, and being the strength of the two I went over the dead bodies, believing that I could get water from the canteens of the dead men, but I couldn't find any.

The last resort I had to do was to urinate in my canteen, and I tried to drink it, but I just couldn't take the taste of it, so I gave it to Lt de Venecia. Apparently Lt de Venecia was very thirsty for the lack of blood he suffered, and he drank the urine. After resting for about an hour, I told Lt de Venecia that it would be wise to leave the place, go to a place of safety where we could die peacefully.

We drag ourselves from the place, We could not stand, since it was very dark and the ground was sloping. So we had to move on our hands and buttocks. I tried to make use of the fact that in the afternoon during the massacre, I tried to remember directions. At the time I remembered that we were facing directly north to the place of the execution, and we kept moving, but at about 3 A.M. Lt de Venecia could not proceed any further. He asked me to leave him, but before leaving him he further requested me to build him a fire, and also further requested that should I reach Manila to notify his family about his fate.

I left Lt de Venecia after I built a fire for him and proceeded on my way.

It was about 9 o'clock the following morning - that was on the 13th April - when I came to what I believe was a creek. Just before reaching the creek, however, I heard rustling of leaves behind me. I sought over right away and then looked behind me. I saw two soldiers that belonged to my division. I called them and they felt very weak, just like myself. One of them was a sergeant in the 91st QM Co and he had another cut, another sword cut on his back.

The other fellow, a corporal in the same outfit, had a short cut at the base of his neck, which exposed his spinal column, the bone connecting the head and the body here (indicating). I instructed the corporal to see if there was water in the creek, and he did. So we joined the corporal at the creek and took water. Just as we were drinking at the creek, Major Vargas, then Lt Vargas, appeared, and he

told me he was able to escape earlier that evening, So all in all when I reached the creek there were four of us. There would have been five of us, but I said, Lt de Venecia died on the way.

Q. Now, were you able to escape from this place, Captain?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How did you manage that?

A. Once at the creek we were able to wash our wounds. I tried to convince the others of a way to escape. I told them of the four of us I am the weakest, but if they will stick with me I am sure that I can get them out of this hole. I explained to them that by following the creek we would come out into a river, and that river would flow into a bay; whether it would come out of Manila Bay or Subic Bay I didn't know at the time, but I told them that by following this creek I am sure we can get out of this place.

So the men were apparently convinced of my reasoning and we started following the creek. We subsisted on snails, cracking the shells, and we ate them all. Also on all fruit and leaves that we picked on the way, as long as they were not the bitter leaves, and we took them.

On the third day we came across another soldier. He turned out to be one of those that was massacred. He had three bayonet wounds but was able to escape soon after the Japanese left the area. So we continued on the way. We were now five on the way.

On the fourth day we came across an old bivouac area. Upon examination of the papers lying around we found out that it used to be the command post of the 41st Div under General Lim. We tried to go over to the place to see if we could find some food, but the most that we could get was salt and some unhusked rice.

At about noon of that day we tried to continue on our way, but just as we were moving out of the place three Japanese soldiers on horseback suddenly appeared.

By the way, that place turned out to be the Catmon River, and having been previously assigned to that sector I knew the terrain very well. I explained to the group that from the place, from that command post of General Lim, we could -- I could pick my way blindfolded; that by going north we would hit the Pilar-Bagac road, or that by going due

east we would hit the town of Orion or Pilar.

As I have said, we tried to pick our way at about noon, but as we were about to go three Japanese soldiers on horseback arrived at the river. After they watered their horses they left the place, and so we decided to leave the area. But just as we were starting again a convoy of Jap trucks came by, so I decided that we should stay in the place and stay in hiding for some time.

When dark came I reasoned out to the men that the best thing that we could do would be to follow the current of the river so that after my companions agreed we tried to follow the current of the river. I would like to mention here that the sergeant, the quartermaster sergeant that had an exposed brain, could not continue from there on, so we left him. At that time he had maggots in his brain already, and he was just very weak. He could not continue on the way.

At about midnight, when it was midnight, we were too weak to continue, and so we decided to rest by the river side. That night we slept naked, because we believed that the wet clothes on our body troubled us more than to sleep without them.

The next morning, to my surprise, we found out that we slept to within 50 yards of a Japanese bivouac area. We moved from the place right away, and upon dawn we started hitting the Pilar-Bagac road by going north. Instead, we started to cross Mt. Samat and proceeded eastward. On the evening of the 5th day after the massacre, we reached my old sector. The farmers were back in that area, and we tried to find, to seek shelter for the night. Fortunately, some of the farmers in that area knew me, because as I said, I used to be assigned in that sector.

Acting on orders that I gave my companions, they refused --they made it a point not to answer any question from the civilians.

The civilians asked me what happened to us and I lied to them. I told them that we were at the hospital and we did not know the troops had surrendered, so we were on our way home from the hospital.

Q. And you subsequently returned to your home, is that correct?

A. I subsequently returned rather reached home on the 14th, after staying about two week on the way; two weeks after the massacre I reached home.

Q. Now, to your knowledge, Captain, who of your group have survived the

massacre, if you know?

A. The only person that has been accounted for so far is Major Vargas.

LT RAFF : You may cross examine.

CROSS EXAMINATION

Q. (By Captain Ott) Captain, would you point out on the map just exactly what your route was?

A. You mean from ---

Q. I mean from the time you were captured and put on the trucks, where you got off the trucks, and just briefly recount where each event occurred.

A. Trail No. 8 was a lateral trail parallel to the Pilar-Bagac road around this area here (indicating on chart). From Trail No. 8 --that was on 11th April 1942 -- we moved eastward until we came to Trail No. 6.

Q. Well, how far were you south of the main highway from Bagac to Balanga at that point?

A. I would say that we were about a mile or a mile and a half or so.

Q. Will you continue your itinerary there?

A. At noon of 11 April, I was one those that was lucky to ride on a truck, and proceeded eastward. When we reached Pantingan River that afternoon, we could not continue because the bridge broke down.

Q. The bridge had been blown down?

A. Broke down.

Q. Broken down. The bridge on the main highway across the trail, is that it?

A. Across the trail? On the trail, across the Pantingan River.

Q. Well, doesn't the main highway also cross the Pantingan River?

A. I do not know whether it does, because I never had the chance to go to that sector along the Pilar-Bagac road, except in our own particular sector at Bagac.

Q. Was any particular explanation offered to you for taking that trail instead of the main highway?

A. I think the only reason why they took Trail No. 8 was the Division CP was on Trail No. 8, and since Trail 8 also comes out to the east, it was -- I believe the Japanese forces really planned it out that we

would take Trail No. 8 to No. 6 until we reached the east coast.

Q. Aren't these trails rather difficult to manage with trucks?

A. Well, it is true that they were not surfaced roads. The rails was fairly passable by motor vehicles. We used them during the campaign in Bataan.

Q. Then will you continue from there, Captain, please.

A. As I have said, in the evening of the 11th we reached Pantingan River, and since the bridge broke down at that point we decided to stay and rest for the night.

GENERAL DONOVAN : Just a minute.

He doesn't have to repeat again exactly what happened at all these places. As I understand, you want to find out - - -

CAPTAIN OTT : All I wanted him to do is trace it on the map.

GENERAL DONOVAN : Will you ask him, then, where the massacre occurred, where this event occurred, and let us get along? We don't want to repeat that over again.

CAPTAIN OTT : Nor do I.

Q. (By Captain Ott) Would you point to the map, if you can, where this massacre took place?

GENERAL DONOVAN : Just approximately.

A. I am sorry; if we can get a bigger scale map --- (pause)

Q. (Capt Ott) You can't see it. I see. How far is that south of the main highway?

A. I should say at some point this lateral road that was constructed in Bataan was not really parallel at all to the highway; at some point it has to go up, following the grades of the mountain. And I believe at that point where the massacre took place it must have been about five or six miles.

Q. At what point did you see General Nara?

A. Near the juncture of Trail No. 6 and Trail No. 29.

Q. How far is that from where the massacre took place?

A. It is only about 200 yards.

Q. How long after General Nara left did the massacre occur?

A. The actual massacre took place -- must have taken place about an hour/after he had left.

Q. You spoke of a friendly interpreter, Do you know who the friendly interpreter was? Was he a Japanese?

A. He was a Japanese civilian.

Q. And he spoke in Tagalog?

A. Yes, he did.

Q. Why do you call him a friendly interpreter? I think that was the term you used.

LT RAFF : I don't think it was. I don't recall it.

COLONEL MEEK : A tagalog interpreter.

A. I didn't say he was friendly.

Q. (Capt Ott) Did you say he was a Tagalog interpreter?

A. No. He was a civilian Japanese who talked to us in Tagalog.

Q. Had he been talking to you in Tagalog during this trip?

A. I beg pardon.

Q. Had he been talking to you in Tagalog during this trip.

A. We saw that Japanese interpreter only just before the massacre; we never saw him before.

Q. Do you understand Japanese?

A. No sir.

Q. Who were present with General Nara? Could you identify anyone with General Nara?

A. I don't know anybody- I cannot identify anybody with General Nara.

Q. Were there any officers there with General Nara?

A. Pardon me. Do you refer to the officers in the car with General Nara?

Q. No those that were with your group.

A. I don't know.

GENERAL DONOVAN : Let's get the question straightened out. Are we talking about Japanese officers or Filipino officers?

CAPTAIN OTT : Japanese officers.

Q. (By Cap Ott) I am asking you this: Were there any Jap officers with you, with the Japanese guards along this trip?

A. There were -- from Trail No. 8 until we reached Pantingan River there were no Japanese guards whatsoever.

Q. No Japanese guards?

A. None whatsoever.

Q. When you reached the Pantingan River how many guards were there?

A. There were particularly no guards until they sorted out the privates but there were many Japanese troops along the trail and along the banks of the Pantingan River.

Q. Where did these guards come from?

A. I don't know where they came from but, as I said, we were only guarded as soon as they have sorted out the privates from the officers.

Q. Were they common soldiers, or noncommissioned officers, who sorted out the officers and --

A. Yes, there were Japanese officers, noncommissioned officers and privates in that group.

Q. How many commissioned officers were there?

A. You mean in the group that guarded us?

Q. The Japanese, yes.

A. As far I can remember, there were four of them.

Q. And how many guards were there, Japanese guards?

A. There was a company of them.

Q. Now, at the time the massacre occurred, were there Japanese troops going along that trail?

A. The massacre really took place off the junction of Trails Nos. 6 and 29, so that once we were at the ravine we were not in a position to see anybody, since that was a thickly wooded area.

Q. And nobody from either highway could see you in the ravine, either?

A. Nobody.

Q. Did anybody appear to you to give the order to make this segregation?

A. I should say that apparently it was an order, because the segregation of officers and noncommissioned officers took place soon after General Nara left.

Q. Are you implying that General Nara gave such an order?

A. It is really possible that he did.

Q. It is possible, but do you have any reason to believe that he did? Was anything said to you at the time to indicate that he had given such an order?

A. Nothing was said except that I believed that it was on orders.

Q. On what do you base your belief?

A. Because as soon as General Nara arrived in that area he assembled all the Japanese officers and ---

Q. How many were there? How many officers were assembled?

A. There were four officers in the particular group, in the groups that guarded us, but there were other officers from the other groups that were nearby, too.

Q. What happened after General Nara left?

A. After General left, one of the Japanese officers ordered all officers and noncommissioned officers on one side of the trail.

Q. And how long after that, after he left, was that order given?

A. Oh, maybe about five or ten minutes afterwards; hardly ten minutes. They ordered the privates to take the road and march towards Balanga, and the officers and noncommissioned officers on the other side of the trail were ordered to form three groups, and each group to form columns of four.

Q. Well, the segregation took place after an hour after the ---

A. No.; took place soon after, as I have said -- about five or ten minutes after General Nara left.

Q. Then when did you reach the Pantingan River where the massacre took place?

A. LT RAFF : Sir, I would like to object to that, because he testified it didn't happen at the Pantingan River, it happened in a ravine off the junction of Trails 6 and 29.

CAPTAIN OTT : Well, I am confused by the specification. The specification mentions Pantingan River, and I assumed this is the same event.

GENERAL DONOVAN : As far as the Pantingan River is concerned, that is where the truck stopped, wasn't it?

THE WITNESS : Yes, sir, The massacre took place after crossing the Pantingan River.

GENERAL DONOVAN : Can we go on from there now?

Q (By Capt Ott) How long after General Nara left did you reach the place of the massacre?

A. We spent the night at the Pantingan River on the 11th, the night of 11th, and we were able to cross Pantingan River on the 12th, We never saw General Nara until after we have crossed Pantingan River on the 12th about the noon of the 12th.

CAPTAIN OTT : Now I am confused on that.

GENERAL TRUDEAU : He misunderstood your question.

GENERAL DONOVAN : The Commission understands, I believed, the truck broke down and they went across the river. Then he met General Nara on that crowd, and they took him to a ravine near Pantingan River. "Near" may mean a mile or three miles, or in the vicinity, That is about the only landmark you would have around there to put this thing in a particular locality?

Is that correct?

THE WITNESS : Yes, sir.

GENERAL DONOVAN : All right.

The Court will recess until 8:30 tomorrow morning.

(Whereupon, at 1620 hours, 10 October 1946, the trial was adjourned until 0830 hours, 11 October 1946.)

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

(SIGNED) Illegible
for ANGEL G. MIRANDA
Capt Inf
Chief, Records Division
NWCO

HEADQUARTERS

ADJUTANT GENERAL RECORDS DEPOSITORY
PHILIPPINES COMMAND
UNITED STATES ARMY
APO 900

EXCERPT FROM PROCEEDINGS IN THE TRIAL OF
MASAHARU HOMMA
(Vol. IX, Pages 1035 - 1185)

LIEUTENANT RAFF: The Prosecution calls as its next
witness Major Eduardo Vargas.

EDUARDO T. VARGAS

called as a witness on behalf of the Prosecution, being
first duly sworn , was examined and testified as follows:

. DIRECT EXAMINATION

Q (By Lieutenant Raff) Will you state your name, age,
and nationality?

D-45

A Eduardo T. Vargas, 31; Filipino.

Q Will you speak a little louder, please. State your rank and present assignment?

A Major, Corps of Engineers; at the present, Headquarters, Philippine Army.

Q Major, in 1941, April 1941, were you with the Philippine Army?

A I beg your pardon?

Q I mean April of 1942.

A Yes, I was.

Q What was your rank and assignment at that time?

A I was a first lieutenant, company commander of B Company, First Engineers, of the First Regular Division.

Q Where were you assigned? Where was your station in April of 1942?

A We were at Bataan, on the Pilar-Bagac sector.

Q Now, referring to the map behind you, would you take this pointer, step right up to the map with this pointer and indicate to the Commission the approximate sector that you were in Bataan.

A We were somewhere near to the right of the 91st Division; almost near Bagac.

Q Were you taken a prisoner by the Japanese in April of 1942?

A Yes, we surrendered on the early morning of April 10th.

Q Where did you surrender? Indicate it on the map.

A We were taken up somewhere in the same sector near trail 9.

D-46

Q Who was the commanding officer of your unit at that time?

A Of the division or the battalion?

Q Battallion.

A He was then Captain Polotan, now Colonel.

Q Now, what occurred with respect to the surrender?

I want you to describe the Japanese coming into your sector, and what happened immediately after that.

A Well, actually, we were waiting for the Japanese to come and give us whatever orders they wanted to give us. But on the morning of the 10th, at about 1 o'clock, the American officer who was then attached to our unit, came over and told us to rearm in order to quell about four Japanese who were creating mayhem in the quartermaster depot.

Q Who was this officer, if you know?

A He was Captain -- I don't recall the name. One of them was Lieutenant Stewart.

Q Do you know what was occurring with respect to these four Japanese that you have mentioned?

A Not very much, because we were sleeping at the time and suddenly awakened up.

Q And what did you do after that, Major?

A The whole battallion was told to get up, although it was only composed of three companies of 70 men each; less than 70 men each; rearmed with about sixty rounds for eachman and, leaving some officers and enlisted men to take care of the bivouac area, we proceeded toward the place where the quartermaster depot was.

Q What happened there?

A Before reaching the place, we encountered about seven Japanese fooling around with machine guns near a big fire, and the American officer in front of us was carrying a flag of truce, a white flag. He was told to disarm all of us, so we had to throw down all our rifles, pistols, and whatever arms we had, and we stayed in that area until early next morning.

Q And that would be the morning of the 11th, is that it?

A Of the 10th.

Q The 10th?

A It was 1 o'clock in the morning. We stayed there until that morning.

GENERAL DONOVAN: Could you get on to the part of the testimony that he is really concerned with?

LIEUTENANT RAFF: Yes, sir.

Q (By Lieutenant Raff) Now, just what happened to your group and yourself after that?

A After that, most of the officers, with the exception of my junior officers and I were separated from us in order to carry heavy equipment, ammunition, machine guns and spare parts of small cannons, while we were made to tie up rifles into groups of five and carry them across Pantingan River.

Q Major, were you subsequently involved in an incident in which a number of Filipino officers and noncommissioned officers were killed?

A In an encounter or without any fight?

Q Without any fight?

A Yes.

Q Where did that take place?

A Just about two kilometers from Pantingan River.

Q And just what happened at that time?

A While we were proceeding towards the eastern coast of Bataan we were stopped by a group of Japanese soldiers and told to wait on one side of the trail. While we were there waiting, a part of the 91st Division arrived in trucks and were told to dismount and leave the trucks behind them. After that, the Japanese officer in charge ordered all officers, sergeants, and corporals, to separate from the whole group. After we had separated, on the same side of the trail, I noticed a car arrive. It must have been a high ranking officer, because of the attention given him by the Japanese officers and enlisted men that were around there.

Immediately after that, when the car left, all the officers and noncommissioned officers were ordered transferred to the other side of the trail, and then what remained, presumably privates, was ordered to proceed on their way.

Right after the privates left, I noticed that several Japanese soldiers had surrounded us with fixed bayonets. And then some Japanese arrived with telephone wires, and the officer in charge asked for three ranking officers to step up.

Q Do you know who stepped up?

A There were three majors -- I don't know one of them -- the other two were Major Casupang and Major Arevalo. Then

they were ordered to form us into three platoons, four abreast, and -- I don't know what happened, but Major Arevalo was replaced by Captain Felix. When we had formed into the groups desired by the officer, the Japanese soldiers started cutting the telephone wires into short pieces and tied each one of us individually, and then with long wire tied each line along the group.

Q Will you describe the area in which all these officers and noncoms were being tied?

A It was a trail, I think around trail 8, where the ground was very much sloping, and there was a big tree at that time that fell right on the trail, which prevented the trucks from getting through, and the Japanese soldiers were then working on that tree at that time.

Q Go on with what took place, Major.

A After that we were made to walk along the trail separately -- I mean, in lines already, and then each line was taken into the interior of the forest. I noticed then that there were a lot of Japanese following us, laughing and shouting at the others, calling the others towards our group. When we reached the interior to a small clearing, we were made first to sit down facing the Japanese officers and soldiers, and at that time some of the officers started to ask why that was being done to us.

Q Whom did they ask, if you know?

A A very young Japanese officer. Then the officer ordered us to get up and turn around so that we had our backs towards them. An enlisted man beside me started

talking and saying that his mother was a Japanese, he came from Bataan -- no, from Batangas. The interpreter that was there at the time approached him and asked him the name of his mother. He mentioned the name of his mother. He mentioned the name of his mother and said that she was dead. The interpreter then tried to intercede for this boy, but the officer said that nothing could be done any more.

So the interpreter then asked us what we wanted for our last wish. We asked for cigarettes, and the other fellows who had some food in their pockets had it opened up and given to them. While I was smoking I tried to pray that if I be killed, I be killed instantly without any hardship, and I raised my head and saw a Japanese sergeant pull out his saber and raise it up. I was fourth from the last man. When I saw him raise it up, I just bent my head as far forward as possible and prayed that if my neck would be cut, just cut it clean and through without any hardship. Suddenly I heard shouts behind me, and I felt a thrust in my back. I moved my body forward, following the thrust, and let myself fall down.

Q Where did this thrust strike you, Major?

A On the right side of my back. Luckily, the fellow at my side fell on top of my head, and the officer beside me was pushed forward because of the strength of the thrust and covered my legs. The other fellow on the other side was pulled towards me and covered my back, so that I was completely covered during the whole time after the thrust that I received. The when one Japanese struck the fellow on top of my back, it went through his

D-57-

BODY and through my right hand into the ground.

Q Do you still have a mark from that thrust?

A I have it in the hand and in the back. The Japanese then left us, and the soldier on top of me, my right, who couldn't stand the pains, shouted "Damn you Japs!", in the dialect, "Come back and finish me off; Kill me!" I tried to adminish him not to do that, because they would come back and maybe find us, some of us alive and actually kill us all off, but he said, "Partner, please let me die. I can't standit any more." He shouted again in the same words, and a couple of Japanese came back and gave him three thrusts. They went around and saw that the officer on my legs was still alive and gave him four thrusts. I didn't move, and even tried not to breathe so that they wouldn't notice that I was alive.

I stayed in that position until dusk, and when I found out that there was nobody around any more, I stood up, untied my bonds, which was loose, and just ran away from that place as fast as I could not knowing where I was going. Before I ran away, though, I looked around to see if there was anybody alive, and I novitced that everybody was very wan and pale, and I just left them, thinking that everybody was already dead.

Q Major, can you identify by name any of the men who were in this group at that time?

A The officers known to me before the war were Majors Casupang, Arevalo, Captain Peter Felix. My junior officers were Lieutenant Cesar Baldosa, Alberto De Venecia, Lieutenant Esmeralda, Agapito Fernandez and our S-4 Captain, Ruben

Carballo.

Q Major, can you estimate the number of officers and noncommissioned officers in that group?

A That were killed?

Q Yes, that were killed.

A There were maybe more than 350.

Q To your knowledge, how many of these survived?

A As far as I know, there were only four of us who survived, and I do not know if the other two are still alive now.

Q Will you tell what happened to you after you left this particular area?

A GENERAL DONOVAN: Unless it was another incident, we do not care about the escape part of it.

LIEUTENANT RAFF: Would the Commission care to see the wounds of this officer?

GENERAL DONOVAN: Yes, we would like to.

Q (By Lieutenant Raff) Major, would you remove your shirt and show the Commission your wounds?

(Witness exhibits wounds)

Q That is one on your back, and the other one is on your hand?

A Yes.

Q Did that one go through, the one on your hand?

A That went through to the back of the hand.

LIEUTENANT RAFF: That is all.

GENERAL DONOVAN: We will have a ten minute recess.