

This is an interview on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. It's April the 3, 1997. The interview is with Frank Ephraim. I'm the interviewer, Nancy Alper. This is side A of the fifth tape of the interview with Frank Ephraim.

Frank, we were talking about your attendance, your family's attendance, at Yom Kippur services. And perhaps you can cue me into the period of time that you'd be talking about when you talk about that, specifically in the context of your singing in the choir with your father.

And so we're talking now about the year 1943, possibly also 1942. But basically in 1943, we were in the middle of the war, occupied by the Japanese, as, of course, I've already mentioned. Now, the American Jews and the British Jews that may have been in the Philippines were interned at Santo Tomas University outside of Manila. And the remainder of the Jews, which were the ones of German, Austrian, and the Czech-- whatever other origin-- of course continued their services Friday nights.

And of course, we had a very large Yom Kippur service, where in those days, everyone fasted. And Rabbi Schwartz and the Cantor Cysner were officiating. And there was some rumor or some talk about the fact that some of the Americans might be brought in for a short period of time to attend Yom Kippur services.

We weren't certain what was going to happen. We were all there. The synagogue was full. And then suddenly, some signal-- somebody mentioned there was a bus outside had arrived. And sure enough, two bus loads actually of internees, American Jews, British or others, marched into the synagogue.

So we stopped services for, oh, about half an hour. And we welcomed them back and all that sort of thing. And of course, we all know each other. So that was a very emotional period. And normally, they didn't-- they were so-- it was a conservative type of service, not Orthodox and not Reform.

So normally, you don't interrupt that kind of thing, but they did. And for about half an hour, they just broke up. But then the services continued, and the Americans participated. Apparently, this whole thing was organized by the rabbi, who tried to get the Japanese to release these people for the services.

And indeed, they did. So here they were with us for about two or three hours, and then they would have to go back. So that was the major event, of course, for us, being a very small community under occupation and seeing our brethren, who were American citizens.

I was curious-- and I don't think we discussed it in previous tapes-- whether or not you actually ever went to that camp at Santo Tomas or St. Thomas.

Yeah, no. The camp at Santo Tomas was outside the city. It was well-guarded, and it was difficult to get to, for one thing. However, there were people who would, on their bicycles, take some food with them and bicycle up to that area. It was surrounded by walls and fences. You couldn't really get in or anything like that.

But they did manage to throw stuff over the walls. So that was kind of dangerous obviously, because if they were caught at it, it could mean God knows what. But they did that, usually at some remote place around the periphery of the campus. This was a university campus. So it had some wall-like or barbed wire enclosures.

But you were able to do that at night. And of course, there were curfews in those days. You weren't allowed to be out at night beyond 11:00 PM. So there was all kinds of-- some people, younger people, who had bicycles and were able to do that-- did take that risk and did indeed throw food over the walls.

I was surprised that you had mentioned that services continued throughout the war. It was my impression from what I had read that the functioning of the Jewish community through Temple [Amiel] changed fairly drastically over a period of time after the Japanese occupation, responding to the understandable pressures of what it was like to be occupied. What was your experience and your family's experience of what the Jewish community was doing through the

Temple during that period?

Well, they actually did a great deal. It was a very close-knit community, of course and I have mentioned it before, but there were a number of people in great need and sick or old or what have you. And a community home was procured. And many of us went out there to actually plant stuff like peanuts and green vegetables and so forth.

My father, who had done relatively well with his particular kind of business, as did others-- he was elected to become a member of the board of the Jewish community. And on one occasion or several occasions, actually-- it was already later in the war, late '43, perhaps-- when they had to get money to pay for staff people and just to hand out bucks for the people living in that home. What he had to do, since he had a lot of Chinese business friends who lived on the other side of the Pasig River-- that is, the northern part.

And what they did was they collected real American dollars and real old pesos, which of course you couldn't use, but you could certainly exchange for the so-called "Mickey Mouse" Japanese occupation money-- and, well, had to do that. So what he did was he took all those dollar and peso bills and put a rubber band around them and on each side, put some of the occupation money. And that was put into a straw shopping bag.

And he walked with it over the bridges, past the Japanese guards. But the reason for the Japanese occupation money notes on either end was that if he was searched, or the bag was searched, they would think he was carrying a big pile of occupation money, which was OK, because we'd had to haul tons of that around to buy anything. So he went over there and exchanged the money with his Chinese business friends into all so-called Mickey Mouse money.

Of course, he came back with two bags now that he had to get all this extra-- in 1,000-peso or 10,000-peso notes. So he came back over the bridges with that same-- now with two bags rather than one. That was one of his chores. It was a bit risky to do, but he's the type of guy that did not view that as the world's greatest risk, so he did that.

And then they had meetings and what-- how to raise money and so on, because after all, there was no other source or resource available except the Jewish community itself. There was no government we could turn to or no business other than our own businesses that we could turn to. So the Jewish community had to fend for itself based on what they had, and that's it.

The Jewish community acted in some way as a liaison to the Japanese. Is that not correct? And I'm wondering if you had any personal experiences of the community having to go to the Japanese, either their surveillance division or the military itself, to try to protect or help members of the Jewish community?

No, there was really no formal connection between the Jewish community per se. It was dispersed. It was an informal organization more than anything else. There was no direct liaison relationship. The only one was, of course, the observance by the Japanese secret police of the activities in the temple and, I guess, occasional-- whatever, gatherings or meetings that the rabbi might have had.

But there was none-- like the board that my father was on, there was no contact with the Japanese authorities whatsoever. Since basically the Philippines were, although run by the Japanese, the internal bureaucracy was Filipino. And of course, they didn't have enough people to do all that. So whatever had to be done was done through the Philippine portion of the government. Then they in turn, of course, were under the gun of the Japanese.

There wasn't a great deal to liaise about because most people did their own thing-- whatever. And the temple building itself was just that-- a building. And the rules and whatever applied to everyone, so there was nothing particular. The only interesting thing was that those of us who had German passports and, of course, were uncertain of who and what we were during that time, the Japanese did stamp the passports with the term "stateless."

And in fact, I have a passport like that, and I'm holding it here in my hand. It is my mother's passport, because I was on it, since I was a young fellow. And there's my mother's picture. And there's the fact that there was one child, and my name is shown here. But there's also now a stamp in Japanese on this passport. And I have a translation of that stamp by someone.

And it says something like-- it gives the date, which was the 17th of April, I believe. It looks like it might have been 19-- I'm not sure what year it was, probably 1942. And it shows that this stamps-- what it says is that this is a person without a country, without citizenship. And also, that was a Jewish person. The Japanese katakana lettered this for Jewish-- [JAPANESE] are on that stamp.

So the Japanese essentially made us all stateless, which obviously left us without a country and no category whatsoever. So essentially they could do with us what they wished. But for the time, they just left us alone. They did not take any other action.

As I mentioned before, they were quite busy with many, many other things. And one has to remember, there was-- the country at that time had 18 million Filipinos. And we're talking here about 10,000 whites or so that they had to deal with. They simply ignored us or that nothing.

Do you have any recollection of whatever administrative process was carried through in order for the Japanese to look at passports and make some decisions as to how they were going to handle them administratively?

Well, that was relatively simple. Everyone had to register at some point when they came in-- Filipinos and all alike. I mean, this was something that's very common in most countries other than the United States and England, perhaps. So you had to register. And there was a Japanese sitting at a desk or a table.

And he looked at whatever papers you had. And I think this was done in districts or at some point-- and then gave you another piece of paper, and that was your ID. And when they saw a passport like we had, then they either deferred things, and you had to go to another desk. And then they maybe on another day just simply stamped it. It was not a very formal procedure. And they just simply wanted to know who was who. That's all.

And of course, they often had the road checks, roadblocks, where when you pass by on the street, they would ask you for your ID. And you would show them whatever you had. And if you had a stamp on your passport or wherever, that was OK. So it was fairly informal. There was no fancy procedure that you went through at that time, anyway.

Do you have any notion or recollection as to why-- what would have been the administrative purpose of denominating you as stateless or homeless? Since my impression from the things you've been saying in the interview are that the fact that you were German was really more significant to the Japanese than the fact that you were Jewish.

Yes, that's an interesting thing. Now, to the ordinary Japanese soldier, the German passport with a swastika in it, and even with the red, it mean nothing to them. That was German rather than anything else. However, the authorities certainly were knowledgeable. And they could see that the passport had run out-- that was not an up-to-date passport.

So they asked what this was, and they explained, I suppose. It was on that basis where they put the stamp in. I'm not sure whether the stamping of the passport-- whether it was done for the Jewish community as a special procedure at some point or not. It may well have been. However, they decided that since-- in fact, we refused to be considered German. That was another key factor.

So at some point, they simply decided that's the stamp they were going to put in there, and that was it. There was no other requirements as far as I know. That was it. I think other countries simply got a stamp as well. They simply held onto their passports or whatever papers they had. And the Filipinos, of course, didn't have a passport, so they got ID cards.

I wanted to ask you a bit during this period-- and I think we're still talking about 1943, more or less-- what the organized Jewish youth group and/or so-called Sunday school classes, Hebrew classes, bar mitzvah classes, were like during that period?

Well, they were fairly routine. I mean, certainly in 1942 and '42, and even in the very first part of 1944, people simply went to the synagogue on Fridays and Saturdays and for holidays. And there were occasionally some get-togethers by

the youth group, youth, maybe for Purim or things like that. There was no really organized Jewish youth organization.

Everybody was pretty busy, either just trying to scrape together food and a living, so that-- or doing their victory garden. It wasn't called "victory garden," but doing the gardening. We had a big food garden there at our house, too, raising chickens and ducks and things. So you were pretty busy doing that-- gathering firewood.

These were tough times. You didn't have time to-- leisure time to have dances or do things like that. That just was not available. So you were busy. And the other thing were restrictions. You couldn't just take off anywhere. There were, as I mentioned before, there was curfews.

And transportation was scarce. And we had just that bicycles to get around with. So the only recreation was for us maybe to play soccer or football or other games with other kids someplace, on the empty lots or in park-type settings. But that was about it.

Now, the house that you're referring to where you had the garden was the house that you went to following the period of time that you had been in the apartment complex, where so many Westerners or non-Asians were. And this was, as I recall, the house that you lived in that was across the street from the so-called "pink house?"

Yes, that's correct. It was a court which lead off from the main street, Dakota Street. And it was six identical houses. They were large houses, and they had big porches running the length of the house, both upstairs and downstairs. And, yes, it was around that-- in that house that I had the garden.

We grew corn. We grew Lima beans. We grew all kinds of the Phillipine potatoes-- not sweet potatoes like yams, but there's another kind of sweet potato called kamote, which is a sweet potato, but not like the yams-- yellow inside. And then we have some ducks and chickens and stuff like that. And we had people that made or sewed to help us out. And that was the house that we're referring to now.

The pink houses weren't pink to begin with. There was a development, a series of pink bungalow-type houses-- stucco-washed, were made of stucco. And they were used-- they were residential, until one time, the Japanese just came in and took over, and everyone had to leave, except for one of the houses, which was turned into a restaurant.

And the owner's son actually went to school with me. And once I went in there, and there was all these chickens hanging up from the roast-- sort of a roasting type of setup. But the rest of the houses were converted. And these stucco houses, they-- as I say, the Japanese cleared out everyone.

And what they did with that-- they turned the whole thing over into a Red Light area for Japanese navy personnel. But it was only for what was called-- like petty officer ranks, not the very low ratings, but the so-called higher sergeant or whatever equivalent level. And that was going on there for a year or more.

And it was staffed by both Japanese and Filipino women. The Japanese were geishas, and they wore their kimonos. And they had this little pillow-like thing in the back of their kimono. And some of the guys used to say, I says, well, now we know what the pillows are for that they wear their kimonos, you see?

But the interesting part was there was a lot of Filipino girls as well. And they, of course, made money in the process. And what they would do then is send people out to buy goodies that were still available because things were getting very short. For example, they wanted to get some cheese, like a Gouda cheese, or something like that, which is essentially not available. That was all gone. Cigarettes were really going fast-- American cigarettes.

And some of us would go out and have a little cigar box in our hand. And when the Japanese sailors or whatever they were came by or came out, we would try to buy cigarettes from them, because Japanese cigarettes were very mild in contrast to the cigarettes that were being made in the Philippines. And they were very harsh and dark tobacco. So we-- some of us were able to buy some and then sell back to our fathers and other people like that. But that was just a minor thing.

But, yes, there was a lot of that kind of traffic on that street-- a little bit further from where we lived. I would say about half a block away, but still. However, it was during that time when I went to school at the De La Salle College on Taft Avenue, which was like eight blocks further inland from our street. Our street paralleled the Dewey Boulevard, which was right along the Bay Area.

And I would be in class. And one of my classmates was Benigno Aquino. He was a Junior. And he was the son of the then puppet speaker of the house or the parliament. And of course, Benigno Aquino was also then later known as "Ninoy." And he was the fellow that was killed by the Philippine government on his return to the Philippines. I forgot now what year it was.

But he and I were in the same class. And we would walk back from school together because he lived several blocks away from where I did. And we would cut back through a barrio, which was a native Philippine village, at the outskirts, just beyond those pink houses.

And there were these what we call "nipa huts." "Nipa" is the term that's used for the palm thatched roof of these houses, which were open. They were built on stilts, lots of windows, and lots of pigs, children, everything running around the area. But that was a shortcut for us.

And we'd cut through there. And of course, in doing so, we walked by that whole section-- all these pink stucco houses. It was in daylight, so there wasn't that much activity. Then I peeled off to where we lived. And then he went on to where he lived. And we would do that just about every day.

And we'd would talk about things. And he, of course, like most-- all Filipinos-- was very pro-American. And we'd talk about things that-- what we would be doing when the war was over. And so anyway, that was one interesting episode. And that's why I got to know this fellow, Benigno Aquino.

Why don't you tell me a little bit about that school in contrast to the Jesuit school? You went a period of time between the Jesuit school and the De La Salle school when you weren't in school, right?

Well, De La Salle was the Jesuit school. De La Salle was an order of Jesuits. And there was a period prior to that, after the entrance of the Japanese into Manila, when there was no school. But then soon, schools began to open again.

Things got back to quote, "normal," unquote. And that was, of course, one school that was reopened. And I went to that school both-- it was for convenience, and it was reasonable. And I had been to that school before the war. So we went to that school.

And I may have mentioned this was-- there were brothers of all nationalities. And there was several brothers who were Americans and British. They weren't allowed to teach. They were taken to an internment area out of the city. So the German and the Polish and whatever other nationalities, all Caucasians, were left to teach, plus Filipino lay persons who also taught.

And as I mentioned before, one of the brothers had to learn Japanese. And he also taught the language, while the Filipino teachers taught Tagalog, which was-- both where required. So that was the school.

And the other fellow that was in that school was Jose P. Laurel, Junior. His father was the puppet president of the Philippines. And later, his brother after-- this is now the 1980s, became a politician. I forgot-- Salvador Laurel. And he was ran or was together with Corazon Aquino, the widow of Benigno Aquino, who then later became president of the Philippines. But these people attended schools like that. There were several Jesuit schools. That was simply just one of them.

Anyway, there was another incident I want to mention that goes back to that particular time. And that's the Japanese bicycle incident. That was an interesting one. The Japanese army was extremely poorly equipped. They came in with just really very little. They helped themselves to everything that the American army left over.

Their trucks, for example, were painted sort of a brown. That was their standard military color. And they were Ford trucks, that is, if they had any. They were very simple trucks, but that's all they had. They used every piece of transportation they could find. Every automobile, truck was taken for their use.

But one time, we were playing out-- we used to play a lot out near Dewey Boulevard. And the Japanese also had large battalions or battalions that used nothing but bicycles. And these were very cheap Japanese bicycles. Japanese material was very poor quality at the time.

And these bicycle battalions would then come roaring down the boulevard. And they went where-- I don't know, came from one place, went to another. But we'd get a phone call from our friends that lived further up and said, there's a battalion coming by. There's about 500 guys on a bicycle.

And we'd go out there before they arrived, of course. And we had these little pieces of glass or metal-- not that much. And we would just run across the boulevard and spread that stuff around. And naturally, they came up the wrong side of the street, because in Japan, you drove like the British on the left, rather than in this country or whatever.

And so we knew how they were coming down the street. And we just spread that stuff around, and then we continued to play. And sure enough, there would be several that would get flat tires as they came roaring by. And then a guy with a flat tire would jump off his bike, hop on the bike of someone-- of another bicyclist. And his bicycle, which was now disabled, was then towed by a third bicyclist.

So we reduced their vehicular capability by some, but not by very much, I'm sure. But anyway, it was just something to do and to show whatever resistance, passive or otherwise. So that was the Japanese bicycle story. And that was done several times.

Were you surprised when the Japanese actually occupied Manila-- how ill-equipped they were? In other words, had whatever information or news reports that you were getting-- did this or anything else shock you, what you had heard compared with the reality of what they were really like?

Not particularly shocked us. Bit of a surprise when we noted that the first night, when they guarded that compound where we lived, those apartments, that they did not have their own rifle and that the rifle changed hands when they changed guard. And the rifle stayed with the people doing the guarding, and the others who marched off without a rifle. So that was a bit surprising.

Their very manner of equipment, their poor clothing and so on-- yes, a bit of a surprise. However, we also had heard they were well-experienced, having been in China and then Malaysia and other places. So from that standpoint, as far as capability is concerned, they seemed to have a kind of reputation.

But materially, yeah, it was a bit of a surprise that they did not have the equipment or the quality of equipment that you'd expect. The Americans had the quality of equipment, but unfortunately they needed the manpower. Even though they had sufficient training or leadership, probably, to resist properly, and of course, very little, if any experience in combat, quite contrary to the Japanese.

Were you ever involved in any personal experiences that illustrate the lack of organization on their part? Or as a rule, did the Japanese, in your experience, seem fairly disciplined in their treatment of the locals?

Yes, Japanese-- they appeared disciplined, but that's sort of Japanese nature. Everything is by the book. And being military on top of that, everything went according to a very specific plan. They were very thorough. They put up a table, for example, to do some processing.

And the first thing to do was wipe it off, clean it off. And then they sat down. And it's all very stiff-like. In many ways, they were a robot-like people. The language sounded robotic to us as well. It had this guttural, staccato, very paced type of sound, which, of course, we couldn't understand, since we didn't know any Japanese.

And their relationship with one another was very formal. They were always doing these short military bows and so on. And they also wanted order. And they were much like the Germans in that respect. People were lining up, and the Filipinos tend to be rather lackadaisical in that. They'll crowd around and this sort of thing, and they're casual.

The Japanese were not casual. The line had to be straight and so on, so for the buses and whatever line there was. There were a lot of lines. There were people lining up for food or whatever-- had to be checked or whatever. And the Japanese had-- everything had to be just so. They were very strict about that.

It was unreal, certainly. And the communication between the Japanese and the others was difficult. And they didn't have any capability of speaking English. A few of the officers did, but not very many. The ordinary person there was probably a farm boy. And they had no knowledge of English or anything.

So that, of course, made it difficult to communicate and often many times resulted in the Japanese slapping people or hitting people or with their rifle butts or whatever. That was quite common. That's how they operated. They had that kind of a mentality.

I was going to ask you earlier when you talked about the guard what your jobs were around the house as a member of the family. You were obviously going to school and running around on the streets to some degree. I was wondering what your duties were. And then the second piece of that might be, when you said "standing in line," it reminded me of what I assume was an increasing food shortage and what people had to do to get food in your personal experience.

Well, as I mentioned, we lived now in this larger house. And we had some help plus the so-called houseboy or cook that we had inherited from the person that had lived across the street-- was an American and was interned. My routine was this. Well, first of all, the gas for cooking was beginning to run out. And maybe you'd get a couple hours' worth of gas a day-- maybe. There was a lot of-- enough electricity. So that one big thing was people got their refrigerators shifted-- changed from gas to electricity.

And this fellow who did that-- he must have earned a bundle. He came over one day. And what he did was he took the burner, the flame, portion out of the gas refrigerator, and the flame was running into a tube that was a sort of heating part of the machinery.

He took that out, and then put in a rod, a ceramic rod, wrapped with nichrome wire-- the kind you use in a hot plate. And on each end, he put a piece of asbestos. And then that was hooked up to an electric cord. And he shoved that into that tube underneath the refrigerator. And that then became the source of heat once you plugged it in. And that converted the refrigerator from gas to electricity. It was unique.

And this guy showed up on a bicycle. But in those days, there were bicycles and bicycles. He came in with a Cadillac of a bicycle because he could afford it by now. He was a Filipino fellow. And he did that conversion in a matter of 25 minutes or less. And he charged a pile for it, of course, but then he was in great demand because everybody wanted their refrigerator to keep working, obviously. So that was one of the things that occurred.

Now we also began to cook with what is in today's age called a hibachi stove. They were little charcoal-- pottery charcoal stoves. Now charcoal was getting expensive. But my job every day was to take a little stool, which was made out of 2 by 4s with two legs and a piece of 2 by 4 across the top, on which was connected a wrought-iron scraper.

And I would take two coconuts that we'd buy, crack them in half, empty the fluid that was in the coconut. That eventually became vinegar because it would ferment. And then the white meat I would then scrape off with these scrapers into a bowl. And then you'd have the shredded stuff there and this bowl under you.

And then you would add just a little bit of water and give all that a good squeeze into another container. And that was like cream. And then you add more water, like two cups, and then you'd squeeze that and put it into a larger container. And that was just a regular milk.

And pretty soon, you got down to almost skim milk. So we were getting milk out of coconuts for cooking and for

putting into coffee and things like that. So that was my-- and then the shells of the coconut were used to burn. You could actually use them as fuel. They'd burn like would or anything like that-- fairly intense heat out of those.

So that was my daily chore-- to work over two coconuts and get the milk and that stuff. And the shredded coconut dried-out meat was also put into a pile. You could later on mix that with sugar and make some kind of candy out of it, which was not the greatest, but that's what we used. So we were beginning to use all kinds of substitutes and things of that nature.

And of course, services were beginning to deteriorate rapidly. We had shortages of, as I said, gas. Even the electricity would go out from time to time. So that was the thing.

Now, we're still in 1943. And before I go into the more serious starvation period in the Philippines, I still want to mention two things. One is our trip to Baguio. And Baguio is a little town, sort of a resort town, up in the mountains of Northern Luzon. And in fact, they grew potatoes and strawberries there, which is quite unusual for the Philippines.

And to get there, normally by car, you would have to traverse a road called the Zigzag Road. It was a road through the mountains, including ravines and so on. But to get even to that point, you had to take a train.

So one fine day, my father said, we're all going to go to Baguio. We need a break for four or five days. And never been there, and we're allowed. I've got permission. And we were off. We went to the, quote, "railway station," and boarded this train.

Now, we didn't have reserved seats or anything like that. And the first thing you saw was about two or three of the benches on the train, where the Japanese secret police, the Kempeitai, had reserved space. And they sat there because they used that train a lot. And the rest was full of Japanese troops who were being transported. And they had all our knapsacks and rifles. And they wouldn't move to give us a seat. And they were slouched about.

But eventually, we got to sit down, and we kept going. And we ended up in a town called Dagupan, which is north-- the northern part of Luzon. There the train-- we had to get off, because from there, we had to get a bus that would take us up the mountains, up this Zigzag Road, to Baguio.

All right, we got through it. There were buses, but they were mostly full. We had to bribe the drivers. And as usual in the Philippines, there was luggage and bags on top of the buses as well as people on top of the buses and chickens and the usual kinds of things.

So we finally got onto the bus. And the bus started taking off. And it got to the first bridge over a ravine, where there was a Japanese post. And they stopped us, and they made everyone get off the bus, because apparently, they were concerned that the bridge wouldn't hold with that heavy load. So we walked across the bridge, and the bus then followed us.

And this procedure went on for eight or nine times. They got a lot of bridges. Until we got to one post and bridge, and the driver says, we want everyone to get out, because he was concerned. But the Japanese sentry just got on the running board and said, just keep going. You know, he made-- yeah, go ahead. But he was coming with us. So the bus driver went across this bridge, sweating, but made it across.

We finally arrived in Baguio, and we know some people up there. And they met us. And Baguio is very hilly, so there was no transportation. But everybody had built a little pushcart. And what they would do is they would push the pushcart up the hill.

And then we'd all get on, and it would roll-- continue rolling down the hill. They would go over this procedure all the way to the hotel. It was a mess, but we finally made it. And that was the way they transported one another. And it was quite-- it was cooler up there and very pleasant.

And I wanted to mention one interesting incident-- well, one of the things you had to do immediately-- you had to get



yourself a badge, which had-- it was like a white sheet piece of paper, and there was a red dot in the middle. It was the Japanese flag. And you had to put your name on that.

And then you had to wear that because the Japanese government in Baguio required that. So, yes, sure enough, so you translated your name in this katakana script into-- what it must sound like. My first name-- it came [JAPANESE] or something like that. We won't even talk about the last name. It didn't matter.

The most interesting site in Baguio was that-- you may have all heard of headhunters. Well that is headhunter country. And these people are called Igorots. Igorots-- that's the name of this tribe.

And they wear loincloth-- sort of large, bulky sack in the front and a g-string down the rear. So they were quite exposed from the rear. And they all had long hair mostly. And the women would carry their babies in a sort of a container, like the papoose type of thing, with a band across their head, holding that thing up that was on their back. It was like a backpack, but held up with a band across their head.

Well, these Igorots would come to town. And they, of course, normally would not wear anything on top-- that is, men. They would just wear this heavy loincloth sack affair in the front. But when they came to town, they would all be wearing the coat of a formal business suit-- just a coat. And they would walk around with this striped or whatever pattern-- [AUDIO OUT]

This interview is being conducted on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on April the 3, 1997. The interview is with Frank Ephraim. I'm Nancy Alper, the interviewer. And this is the second side, side B, of the fifth tape of the interview

Yes, as we were with the Igorot story, this was quite unusual to see. The Igorots, by the way, are also one of the world's finest carvers. Their wooden carvings of the carabao, which is the Philippine water buffalo, very long knives and forks. Bookends are really nice pieces, and they do a wonderful job. I'm not sure how many heads they actually hunt for, but there was rumors.

And these people indeed looked like they were what they were described to be. But they were friendly. And when they were in town with those-- their formal wear for town visits, they walked around, just as anyone else did.

But the Japanese, of course, in Baguio and also, of course, on the way up by train-- you were always concerned. With the Japanese, you never knew what would happen. They're not predictable. They could be very friendly to children and smile and do-- give out little goodies or whatever.

But they may start drinking, and then they got to be like rogues. It was not a predictable behavior. You always got that Oriental rage or whatever style of life or character sitting in front of you.

And I do want to mention the reason we knew they were Japanese secret police or the Kempeitai military police was, indeed, there was a sign that says, "These two benches are reserved for the Kempeitai." And that was the end of it. And there were three guys sitting there, and they were just sitting there, staring.

The Japanese traditionally, at least at that time, don't go into long conversations on a train with one another, as you would find in the United States or in many Western countries. There would be silence. And I did talk to one Japanese man. He was an officer, traveling in civilian clothes. And he was getting off at some point before we did.

And I chatted with him a little bit. He spoke English. This was a Japanese business man in the Philippines who was now working with the Japanese government, and there was lots of those. They, of course, were more familiar with the culture, both the Western and Philippine culture. So they were quite different from the ordinary soldier that you would run into in the Japanese Army. You just pretty soon accepted that that was the way they were, and that's it.

But our sojourn in Baguio was fairly short. We stayed there for a few days, and then came back. By that time, we had heard that the Philippine guerrillas were active. And they were often active in that area. That was a wonderful area to

hide out in. In fact, there were still some Americans left in that area. It was the so-called "Mountain Province," partially jungle, hard to reach, inaccessible areas, where they may have had people hiding out.

And we had heard that these guerrillas had mined or blown up a bridge or two on that very famous Zigzag Road. So instead of going back down the road, we went another route. I didn't even know it existed, which was not the Zigzag Road-- very few bridges, if any. And got back to where the train was, and then took the train back to Manila-- a relatively uneventful trip, as far as I can remember. But it was an interesting-- something different-- we hadn't had any kind of vacation in so long, and so this was a really interesting experience.

You had said something I think about Jewish families running an inn there. And maybe you could elaborate a little bit on that.

Oh, sure. Yeah, these families-- there was a family, name of Kowalski. And they actually lived in Baguio. And they ran a sort of-- that's where we stayed, with them. And they ran-- I guess you could call it an inn, because it was sort of a resort anyway, and they had that inn. And I went roller skating up nearby. There was a little roller-skating rink, so I did that.

And he had built one of those vehicles, a very nice one, actually. And, well, we would push it. And then on the downhill, we'd all hop aboard and roll down on that thing. It had a brake and a steering wheel. And so they were one of perhaps-- oh, there may have been all of two dozen Jews living in Baguio, if that many. And the Kowalskis had this little inn-like affair.

And there were some others who lived up there. I think they may have had a store or something like that. But again, it was war. And the people were all scrounging, so they were doing whatever they could. But it was nice to see people up there, and it was nice to be there. So we went back down.

And I do want to mention one thing in 1943. We're dealing with that year, just to finish it off. The Japanese, in order to-- obviously, for propaganda purposes produced a movie, a full-length movie. It was called Dawn of Freedom.

And it was designed to ingratiate themselves with the Philippines, for the Filipinos, because the basic theme of the story was one of the Japanese soldiers that had arrived with Japanese forces befriended a Philippine family, one of the sons of which was very, very ill. He had some problem that was serious. As the film proceeded, the Japanese soldier was instrumental in getting this boy to a hospital and to a good Japanese doctor and, pretty soon, had him cured. And this was a heartwarming-rendering, all-baloney type of movie.

But amongst the background of the movie was the battle in Bataan and Corregidor. And there, they apparently got hold of volunteer whites of some kind. We're not sure whether these were American prisoners that they used or paid or someone else to play the role of American soldiers that were being overrun by the Japanese forces. And that was shown.

But we never know who these people in fact were-- whether they were people living in Japan who were brought in for that filming. It was not certain. They made this long film. And then apparently, the problem with this boy, the Philippine family. He had a with his legs and couldn't walk.

So at one point during the film, this Japanese soldier, part of a regiment that was now leaving the Philippines. They were departing, going somewhere else. And he was marching away. And then it showed the boy, the Philippine boy, was able now to walk and wave him goodbye.

So it was one of these tear-jerker type of affairs. And that movie was called The Dawn of Freedom, shown everywhere, all the time. Of course, we did go to see it, since we did go to movies a lot, being cool in the movie house. And we saw a lot Japanese war movies. And you could sleep through those. But that Dawn of Freedom was this big thing they tried to pull over.

Before we go on a bit, what was still available to actually purchase at that time? And what do you recall personally the circumstances of going out and trying to buy something?

Yes, that actually leads me right into the bar mitzvah bit, because as I mentioned before, I was-- one year before the bar mitzvah actually took place, I began to study with the cantor, Joseph Cysner. And at that time, as I mentioned, we lived in this larger house. And my father, being a very smart cookie, he began just to scrounge everywhere for goodies for the bar mitzvah, amongst which he was able to get hold of six cases of Philippine rum and also four or five cases of cr me de menthe and cr me de cocoa and gin.

We actually drank the gin occasionally. It tasted like rosewater. It was Philippine gin. And the rum was a very common drink in the Philippines, but we would mix that in with Philippine lime juice.

The Philippine limes were called calamansis, and they were sold by the hundreds from vendors that would tour the local area or in the market-- little green fellows, looked like limes, a little sweeter than limes, yellow on the inside. And that would be squeezed out into jars. That juice would then mix with brown sugar and rum and ice, or whatever-- if you had ice. That would be the common drink in the Philippines, and the gin occasionally as well.

But anyway, so he was preparing for the party for the bar mitzvah, and he was buying all this stuff. However, everything else was beginning to disappear. You were forced to buy rice in sacks because-- and this was not the most white rice anymore. It was sort of reddish and not as refined. And sugar, brown sugar, in sacks because that was for the future because you weren't sure whether there'd be any left.

So you begin to store up stuff-- sugar; rice; oil, cooking oil; lard. Butter was no longer-- there was never any butter after the beginning of the war, which you could get, but still was quite rancid by that time. So there was margarine and lard. And of course, fruit was available, but was obviously getting very expensive. Bananas was still relatively inexpensive, as was these large papayas. In the Philippines, papayas are about the size of large watermelons-- huge. And those were the common fruit that you could still get, pretty much.

There was corn and things of that nature and fish occasionally. Meat-- there was no beef. There was the water buffalo meat, which we ate. And there was horse meat, which occasionally we ate. We didn't eat it, but you could buy it. There was pork, of course, and that was about it.

But the prices of these things were rising rapidly, and there just simply were shortages. And everyone began to feel that. And as we got into 19-- end of '43, beginning of '44, my bar mitzvah was approaching. It was to be held on the 26th of February, 1944. And that was the day of the Torah portion of it that I had been studying for.

And my father's business, which I had mentioned, was buying and selling lots-- not lots, but quantity lots of hardware, nuts and bolts and things like that. That kind of business was beginning to really decline because pretty much all the materiel that was left in the Philippines from before the war had now essentially been sold to users, whoever they might have been at some stage. It was being used up, obviously. So that business began to really decline.

And at that point, my father and many other men and women in business were essentially down to two things-- selling personal items like silverware. We had taken-- gotten out of Germany a roll of serving spoons and things like that-- silverware-- were able to take that out and other things of that nature-- began to sell them, piece by piece. That was how you maintained income.

Or you would, of course, grow things-- as much as you could. Or you would exchange things. I mentioned the money was going to be worthless. You needed a bag full of money to buy a kilo of rice. So that was very tough, and things began to deteriorate.

However, up until my bar mitzvah, things were still possible, sort of. And the bar mitzvah was a big affair. We had 200 people over for the reception. Had 35 people for dinner in the house that night, including my father's Philippine friend, who worked for the Philippine government still at the time. He was in the tax bureau, and it was called the IRS equivalent.

We had the family physician there. We had all kinds of people-- good friends that were there for dinner. And we put on

as much as we could, scraped up whatever was possible, and had a decent dinner that night.

The service was kind of interesting. The Temple, as usual, was full, but that was the typical Temple crowd on a Saturday morning. I did my thing. And I recall-- I even have a picture of it. I was all dressed in white, short pants. Here in the Philippines, so this was a common thing to wear, although some wore long pants, depending.

And the rabbi was there, Rabbi Joseph Schwartz, and the sermon and all that-- all part of the bar mitzvah ceremony as part of the regular Saturday morning service. And then, as I said, 200 people came over to the house.

Now, I was always handy with my hands. I like to make things. And I had made, a year before that, a miniature Torah shrine with the scrolls and everything in it. And I had that on the table. Then people gave me books, and all kinds-- I must have gotten 200 books, all kinds of books and stuff. But that was one thing that was still available, of course. It doesn't wear out.

And the Filipino friend of my father's brought me the traditional fountain pen. And he, of course, not knowing that that was one of the things that you give. But indeed, that's what he brought along, just by accident. And those got interesting that evening.

And we had all this booze, of course. And the rabbi felt so good about it, he got slightly tipsy. And he gave his wife his house key, and she could go home. And he was going to hang out a little bit longer. It was one of those last affairs that people could enjoy themselves.

After that-- we're now talking February, March, March 1944-- things began to deteriorate. As I mentioned, there were food shortages. We were at the point where-- and of course, my father, as I mentioned, was still on the council of the Jewish committee-- run the community.

And there were people who were-- they had fires, and they were burned out. And they had to be housed, and all problems of that nature in the community. People no longer able to earn livings, so there was food shortages for them. They had to be helped to the degree possible. Those people that had something were able to share. So that's how you lived for several months, at least.

And, well, my father was elected or asked to join the Board, as they called it, of the Jewish community, because he was an active person. He had done well during the first portion of the war in business. The American old-timers were no longer there.

And they had often been members of the board, and they had been established, and they knew their way around. And of course, by that time, we'd been there since '39, so we'd been there about four years at least which, looking back, doesn't seem long, but certainly at that time it seemed quite long.

So they were looking for people to be on committees and on boards because, as I mentioned before, there were many problems. Old people had to be taken care of. There was to have a kadisha, the Burial Society-- I mean, obviously people died, and kids were born. And there were difficulties in helping out families.

So the community was on its own. There was really no one to turn to. There was no joint-- there was no governmental agency. If anything, they were hostile. So we were by ourselves. Us 800 to 900 people were on our own.

And some of the Jews lived in outlying provinces like on islands in Liloan, Cebu. And so of course, we could not reach them so easily, but they were there, also on their own. So the community had to take care of itself. And so they looked for people.

And there were many others who joined the board. There must have been about a dozen people on this board. And they had various functions. And as I said, my mother-- my father, one of his functions at one time was to get that money exchanged.

And then we also organized work parties to help in this one large home for people. Or we helped-- there was social work going on voluntarily, because we did have people from Germany, and many of whom were well-educated, that were lawyers and doctors, of course-- extremely busy, and they were in practice. The lawyers, unfortunately, had difficulty in the Philippines because obviously, once you are no longer in your particular legal area, you were not able to practice. So they went into business, most of them and did well, most-- well, relatively well, some better than others.

And we had some Jews who became-- one was a butcher. Akaman-- we'll come back to him later, he and his family. He did butcher. He butchered, and then he sold his stuff. It was not kosher. We had some kosher families who, of course, had tremendous problems getting food. Chickens was about the only thing.

We had a death, and a young boy died in one of the orthodox families. We're not certain whether this had to do with the fact of the food shortage or something-- a disease or illness that created a serious problem for the boy. He died. And then there were situations where people needed major medical care. And they were old, so they had to be-- the doctors would not take any money. Did that for free.

Of those 800 or 900 Jews who were still left in Manila, at least at the time, would you say most of those were German Jews? It seems to me that toward the end of the period where Jews were still able to get into the Philippines, there were a few more coming in from Eastern Europe. But the bulk were from Germany and Austria.

I would say we're talking at least 80% German Jews, 20% Austrian Jews, and then a scattering of some people who had come from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and other countries that were able to get out at that time. So that was the predominant form-- German-speaking Jews, a strange community in the Philippines, including the rabbi. But the cantor was from Poland. And his mother spoke only Yiddish. But Yiddish was not spoken. German Jews don't speak Yiddish, nor do Austrian Jews. But most spoke English. They preferred to speak English to all around. And that was the community.

Was there a Jewish burial ground?

Yes, there was a Jewish section in one of the burial [INAUDIBLE]. Yes, there was. They had arranged for that-- the community. I was not familiar with it. I had not been there. I don't recall, anyway.

But, yes, we had a chevra kadisha. It was run by a person who was an Orthodox Jew from Germany. And they were a couple, childless couple. The name was Hahn-- H-a-h-n. And when they went to the synagogue, she said upstairs, and he sat downstairs. But this was his tradition. But he was head.

Before we go onto the more intensive period in '44, you had mentioned to me that if there was any organized anti-Semitic activity in Manila during this period of Japanese occupation, that it came from the non-Jewish German community and not from the Japanese government or an arm of the Japanese government.

I am not 100% certain about exactly where anti-Semitism might have cropped up. It's not impossible that it came in some form at some point from the Japanese. However, there was an incident-- and I just want to retrace a little bit. The German community in Manila was mostly made up of the so-called "old-timers," who were not there in Nazi Germany at any time. They had come there right after the First World War. However, there was a small group of them, of Germans.

And there was a big German club. They all belonged to that, simply because they were Germans. But there was a small group that would walk around with little pins on their lapels with a swastika on it-- you know, "We are good Nazis," et cetera. Not many of the Germans wore those pins. I would say you probably had maybe 5% or 10% maximum of them who would be wearing that. The others would not have anything to do that sort of thing.

One fine day in downtown Manila-- well, there was, first of all, a restaurant called the Astoria. It was on Escolta Street. It was on a main business street. And this was an air-conditioned restaurant, sort of upscale, for businessmen. And it was actually run and owned by a man called But-- B-u-t, or something like that. He was a big, fat blubbery fella.

And he was a pro at being a bartender, at being a restaurateur. And he had long come from Europe. He was Jewish, but only partially. I don't know. I'm not sure exactly what he was, but he owned the Astoria. And it was a meeting place of businessmen, particular at lunchtime, and also became a meeting place for Jews and for who'd be in that area and eat there. But also, it was a hangout for people who were in the diamond exchange. So there was always a few people at one of the tables that were doing their diamond thing, apparently-- or jewelry, whatever.

Anyway, one fine lunchtime, this German-- one of the German Germans who wore a little swastika pin-- at a table rose and began to make a speech. And in that speech, he essentially mimicked the policies of Adolph Hitler, talked about the fact that the Jews ought to be banished. He talked about the fact that the Jews ought to be put into a camp in Manila and et cetera, et cetera, and complained about the Jewish interference in business-- made a whole anti-Semitic speech, plain and simple.

Well, most the Jews got up and left that were in there. The others didn't know what was happening, I'm sure. This was related to me, by the way, by someone who was there. And one of the persons from the Jewish community-- I believe he was one of the board members or something. And he actually stayed because he felt that he wanted to listen to this guy all the way through, see what he had to say, just be able to report it. And then he did, in fact, tell everyone else about it.

However, that incident came and went, and nothing happened thereafter. I mean, he was not arrested or anything like that, because again, you're dealing in a situation. The Japanese are in command. They're allies of the Germans. They could care less or wouldn't do anything about it anyway and so on.

But nothing happened. There was some talk at one point in the war-- 1943, '44-- some suggestion in one of the newspapers, where maybe the Jews ought to be wearing some kind of an armband, just to identify them-- a yellow armband, of course. But that never materialized.

What anti-Semitic, official anti-Semitic processes or procedures existed, I can't-- I'm not sure. There might have been, but I did not directly see any, although obviously, the Japanese were allied with the Germans. And one day, during the war, a German flying boat arrived in Manila with German naval officers on board. And they were trotting around downtown. But that was just four or five people, and not much attention was paid. And it was just partly Japanese-German Axis collaboratory event. That's it.

You mentioned that-- and I don't know if it was at every service-- but that the Japanese would show up, periodically anyway, when Jews were gathering, particularly for services, to make sure nothing subversive was going on. And I'm wondering if Rabbi Schwartz or anyone else transferred information to the Jewish community from the pulpit-- how you knew about an incident like this German standing up at the hotel and making this kind of speech.

Well, the rabbi was pretty set on the way he gave his sermons. He was a very slow-spoken, quiet, and non-demonstrative type of person. He would not make direct reference to that. Sermons there were still carried out in the traditional Western European manner.

There were none of these announcements type of thing and none of these solicitation type of things. In fact, money was never referred to in that Temple at any time. So if anything, there would be announcements made in other venues, maybe after the service was Over or it was passed around.

People are great communicators, and the word gets around of anything very quickly. So people would phone each other, or they would see each other. That's how you kept in touch. Announcement at the synagogue-- well, first of all, it was a bit dangerous. If the Kempeitai were sitting there, and they'd heard, they would get in-- we just didn't-- we avoided that sort of thing. So that was not the place, for many reasons.

As I mentioned before, we're now entering '44, and the economy is going downhill. We were beginning to see people collapse in the street and begin to starve out of forced starvation in the Philippines. Many people were beginning to go hungry. This was very widespread, particularly in the city, because their food supply was running dry.

The Japanese took everything. I mean, they would often just confiscate stuff, whatever it was-- come into your house

and grab stuff. Up the street, they were beginning to confiscate bicycles. People were building little pushcarts to haul stuff around, and they would confiscate those pushcarts.

Their whole supply service was pretty soon-- consisted of whole trains of these pushcarts, which they had Korean or Taiwanese soldiers which were under the Japanese Army push around in the streets. So that you were beginning to see a tremendous amount of shortages.

And of course, in the course of which, there was more theft, although most people didn't have that much left anyway. There's not much to steal. Wood-- any bench, anything made of wood, was taken from the streets. They were used for firewood.

You could not leave anything. A bicycle with chains they would get to very quickly. You had to bring everything into the house, of course. So these were times when things were getting to the point where-- and nobody knew what the future would be. You didn't see an end to all this.

Did the Japanese ever come into your house? And if so, what were the circumstances?

Yes, they came regularly in groups of about seven with fixed bayonets. And again, they looked for radios. They looked for shortwave. They looked for-- I don't know what they looked for. But I remember once they went across the street in the house where now people were living who were mixtures. They were Philippine-Spanish mixtures. It was some young guys and a younger fellow, and then they had a dog. And there was an older man.

And apparently, one of the young guys-- they were sort of-- well, should I say, they were minor criminals in some respect. And one of them had been taken by the Japanese and given the torture, the water torture. And I don't know. The Japanese would come back there once in a while.

Once the dog barked, and the Japanese bayoneted the dog. And then they took the old man and took him in, and he was never seen again. So this was the kind of thing they did.

And one of the six houses in our court was actually occupied by these geisha girls. That's where they slept, some of them. But these were not the working-- these were the support geishas. They were older, and their job was to haul water and to haul food over to those pink houses down the street.

But they were in that house, but that was soon also vacated. That was vacated-- I may have mentioned the incident when the bombings-- well, I'll get back to that one. But anyway, that was occupied by these geishas or helpers-- Japanese women.

Well, in the back of those six houses were garages. You drove-- you came into the alley, and then just beyond our house was another alley. And that led to four garages, above which was a home, a place-- a huge apartment. And that was occupied by a man with his extended family who came to Manila from a province in Luzon called Pampanga.

And he fled there. And he fled with several horses, these little Filipino horses, and a vehicle, a caratella, and all his family. And the garages were now used as stalls for the horses. In fact, one night a colt was born in that very courtyard.

And then also one day, one of the kids-- she was about a 10-year-old-- stopped by in the back of our house. We'd chat with them. And she had a little five-year-old by the hand. And she introduced him. "This is Jose. He is my uncle." Now we can talk about the extended families. That's how it worked in the Philippines. That was very interesting.

But this fellow who was called-- the leader of the family-- a "cochero," which means a person who runs a horse and buggy operation. But he was a relatively wealthy man and had many water buffalo where he came from. They lived there throughout this period-- 1942, '43 mainly.

And one day they had a pig roast in the back. And everybody got a big chunk of that, and people sat around. That was during the war, so whatever people ate. They called it lechón. This is the Filipino-Spanish word for "roast pig." It was

roasted on a spit.

In any event, that was the-- now we're into '44. And basically we can jump to September of that year. September-- a very famous day. It was actually September the 21st in 1944. I was home from school because I was sick. I had a sore throat-- the usual problem. And we had one house girl, who was cleaning house. And my mother was at the market, and my father was downtown-- work-- still doing whatever he was doing.

And the Japanese had announced that they would have an air raid practice that day. And sure enough, the sirens began to-- you could hear the air raid sirens. And then pretty soon, you could hear some planes flying about. And then pretty soon, I heard some thuds, like a gun firing.

So I went outside. And I looked up in the sky, and I see way up there, a whole squadron-- maybe about 50 planes, little, tiny silver dots of planes way up there. And then I see puffs of smoke like anti-aircraft-- AK AK flak. And pretty soon, I see a plane-- it was on fire-- come down.

And not long after that, I hear-- most of the houses there are covered with some corrugated tin roofs. And I hear noises-- things falling on those roofs. And I finally realized, this is shrapnel from anti-aircraft weapons. And those planes up there are American.

So into the practice air raid was the first raid by what-- once we found later-- was an aircraft carrier division. I believe that was the one under-- it was Halsey-- Mark Mitscher's squadron-- Task Force 58, I believe-- that raided us with some 200 crewmen F6Fs-- carrier-based planes.

And of course, they bombed a lot of areas, strafed a lot of areas-- not where we lived, but there was chaos all over the city. My mother was at the market and out there somewhere. And she had a tough time getting back. My father was panicking there. So they all finally got back.

But the house girl and I, when we realized what was happening, we dived under the table. That was where we took shelter because these planes would occasionally dive down, strafe, drop a bomb somewhere, and then take off again. And then pretty soon, the raid was over.

After that, of course, things got even obviously much tighter-- restrictions. The Japanese set up anti-aircraft houses and machine guns, anti-aircraft machine guns and artillery all over the place. But there was quiet. Nothing happened for several months after that. The task force must have left Philippine waters. And of course, we knew that the American forces were coming up from Guadalcanal up through Bougainville, Rabaul, all these areas.

At this point in time, how are you getting information about what was going on in the Pacific?

Well, again, people were listening through the shortwave and would find out where the Americans were. You'd see occasional reports in the newspaper about battles or combat and about these tremendous losses that were being inflicted on American forces by the Japanese. By that time, the Japanese Air Force didn't appear to really exist. They had biplanes made of some red cloth.

They looked like the German Ace of First World War-- borrowed them from Rick Tobin's thing. And they were flying in groups of about 20 over the city. And you kind of wondered-- these were not true-blue fighter planes-- what they were for.

They restricted entry to the Dewey Boulevard, but that's because they made a landing strip out of part of it. And then they also made more restrictions. Now you couldn't go through a lot of areas of the city. And at the same time, of course, food supplies were really dwindling fast.

And so not much more happened till-- but, well, the first thing that happened after the air raid was no more school, since they figured, well, I'm not going to send kids to school here with air raids and all that kind of stuff. And they closed down. So September of 1944 was the last day of school until after the war, when I was back with a tutor for about a year



until regular schools opened back in 1946, early '46 or so-- late '46, '46. So we're talking over a year's worth of no formal school at that time.

We now get back to the Jewish community. And what were they doing? Well, they were doing what they had been doing before-- trying to scrounge food. That was the number-one thing. And we didn't have any casualties among them from those air raids. There were very few casualties among the population. After all, they tried to identify military targets. And as a result, that's what they were trying to hit.

However, one of the incidents I want to get back to now, talking about those pink houses, was the fact that one of the air raids at one time during that period-- maybe it was later in October. There was a bombing run at night. And the aim-- the targets were Japanese warships in Manila Bay.

And the next thing you know, after the raid was over, a few of us went out because we were interested to see what's just going on because we heard a lot of activity down where those pink houses were. But they were apparently working furiously to drag and bring wounded sailors ashore and carry them two blocks or three blocks from the water at Manila Bay to these houses. And these were all half-drowned, wounded, and what have you.

And they converted that whole section instantly into a sort of hospital and used the girls to help out. It was unbelievable. And as I mentioned, before the incident, we looked around, and we saw caps, sailor's caps, lying around. And on the sailor's caps with the names of ships.

And so that information we passed on to other people. We knew that eventually, hopefully, it would go further up the line. And then it would be known by United States forces which ships were hit.

But that major incident-- overnight, they converted that whole area, 40 houses, into-- and then what they did was every morning, they would march. A Japanese military unit would march down the street. Most of them-- well, two guys would then be hauling a kettle of cooked rice.