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Hiram Elliot
January 28, 1992

Unknown Interviewer – Majority of interviews conducted by Rose Manibusan or Daniel Martinez.
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Interviewee: Hiram Elliot
Guam Citizen
Interviewer: Unknown
Date: January 28th, 1992

Q: Today is January 28th, 1992, could you please give me your name?

Elliot: My name is Hiram W. Elliot.

Q: Mr. Elliot could you explain a little bit about how life was for you in the early part of December 1941?

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Elliot: The early part of December, 1941. This was right about the time that I was – I would be visiting my wife at the hospital, she had just delivered her first child. It seemed to be routine except that there was sort of an eerie feeling in the air, you know, that something was happening. Something I couldn't understand. Then when I came to the hospital, on my way up, I noticed that there was a great deal of activity. This was especially during the day time. There was a great deal of activity around the hospital area. There were painters going up to the roof of the hospital, painting the roof with red paint – a big, red cross. And then there was pipeline down below that was being fixed, I don't recall what it was, but it was water pipe. It was water pipes, but I didn't recall exactly what size they were. And I suppose they were – at that the time, I suppose they were putting in some more telephones or something of the sort. I'm not sure. But I had a feeling of nervousness that my wife would be there and something was going to happen very soon.

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I asked one of the nurses on the ward as I looked in on my wife. The Navy nurse was in there. I asked her, I said, what is all the activity up there? She said, oh, that is just a new regulations that they have to follow, they have to put a red cross up there. But that was

satisfied – and it just came out of my mouth that – that the Japanese were coming. And she said, oh no Mr. Elliot, don't ever think of those things. I said, well, what is all the – what is all the hush hush? She said, there is no hush hush, she said, you have to be careful what you say here. Your wife is just – she lost a lot of blood during her delivery and she needs rest and comfort and so on. So I just decided that there was nothing more for me to say and I said, okay, I wanted to keep rapport until at least I got my wife out of the hospital.

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And then it was routine after then until the morning of December 8th when I woke up and I went to church, I came back home out of church and these – there was unusual foot traffic people, going back and forth in close proximity to our house and the deli that I was operating. And I never gave it any more thought. I went to the house to get my breakfast. But then later on, my dad came around, he says, I heard news on the radio that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. And in as much as my dad was suffering from some sort of pain that was still in the back of his head, he hit the back of his head when he slipped. He hit the back of his head on the edge of the cement, the doorway into the bathroom when he was going in to brush his teeth. And I thought that would trigger some sort of a feeling in him to bring about that remark. I said, don't worry about it dad, I said, everything is going to be okay. He said, well, he said, the Japs are coming. It's like almost repeating what I was telling the nurse up at the hospital.

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And he says, you better go up and see how Rosie is doing. I said, okay Dad, just as soon as I get my breakfast. So in comes this girl that was working for me at the deli, she was running in and she says, you better come up in front and take a look because there is some people – there is a lot of people running about in front of the store. They are not coming into the store, she says, they are running back and forth outside. She said, there seems to be a little commotion out there that indicates something is very wrong. So I rushed out there to take a look. This was around about oh, around about – almost 9:00 in the morning. And I ran out there and true enough, there was one sailor who ran up – he noticed me and he ran up to me

and he says, hey chum, he says, you better get your family out of here, the Japs have just bombed Pearl Harbor. And they may be coming to Guam to hit it.

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And just about that time, I looked up at the sky and I heard this humming sound, it was sort of a sporadic and I wondered where it was coming from. I looked up to the sky and the - [interruption] -

Q: You were talking about the confusion and you went to check on your store.

Elliot: The girl notified me of the confusion that was out there in front of the store in Agana. And I rushed up to find out what it was all about. Just about the time that I came up there, the one person, sailor, came up to me, one that I knew. He told me that – he says, you better get your family and get the hell out of here because the Japanese have just bombed Pearl Harbor.

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I thought I would look around and see what is happening. As I looked up, I couldn't see anything at first, but I still could hear that hum, hum in the sky. I finally spotted nine planes that was coming from the east, heading west toward the direction of Sumay. As they passed, I rushed back into the house and told the people in my house that I was going up to the hospital to get my wife out of there and bring her home safely. When I went out, I started running up towards the hospital. When I came up there, my wife had already left, someone had already picked her up. Perhaps it was her mother and her sister picked her up and took her up towards Barrigada. So I was satisfied with that. I wasn't finished yet, I went back, I wanted to find out what was going to happen to the store. So I told the clerk at the deli to secure the place and then I rushed over to the house, thinking I would find my mother and try to get her out. I found out she was gone. So I went over to the drug store to get that place secured and after that, I went back up looking for my wife. I found out she was safely taken up to Barrigada and then -

Q: What was it like for you when the bombing started going on?

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Elliot: I was not – I noticed the way they were bombing, again, it was – there were very few bombs dropped in Agana and they were dropped mostly where the government buildings are located. And they – then they dropped bombs over at the power plant. They dropped bombs that went right down the smokestack, right down in the power plant and that of course blew the bottom of the smokestack out and it just created havoc there. So at that time, the power plant had already been closed down. So as I roamed around, I met some of the other merchants and asked them what they thought they were gonna do. They said they were going to wait until later on, they weren't in a hurry. I wanted to get everything secured so I could get out of Agana because I knew that if the Japanese came in, they were going to come to Agana, they expected to do some house to house fighting. So I decided that I should direct my attention to my family and I went up to Barrigada where my family were. And I stayed there until the – all through the period between the 8th and the 9th. The night of the 9th.

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And then the night of the 9th, my wife asked me to – if I could go back downtown and pick up some clothes and things that they needed for her and the baby. I went down and I borrowed a car from one of the people here who had a ranch up at Maite and I borrowed a car from him, had my brother in law, George, to drive us down to Agana and when we came to Agana, we went to our house to pick up some groceries that we had in the cupboard and then we picked up some clothing for my wife and the baby and also mine and we packed them into the car and on the way up I met my dad, he was roaming around again, he was waiting, he thought everything was going to be okay. I thought he was out of his mind, so I persuaded him to get in the car with us and go up to Barrigada and then perhaps he can come back down later on, which he finally consented to. So we all proceeded up to Barrigada and waited until the next day. I found out the next day that the Japanese had already come in, by the grapevine, and that we – there was a call out for people to proceed down to Agana and meet up with the

Japanese. I was sort of reluctant because I didn't know whether it was a trap or some sort of a trick.

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I decided for the sake of everybody else, I should go down and investigate and I wanted my wife to get – have more comfort than what she was getting at that ranch. So we finally decided the following morning, on the 10th, to go down, this was round about almost noon time. So we proceeded down to Agana and I went to the plaza to find out that there was already some lines formed in front of the governor's palace. Formed there to pick up passes that would permit you to roam around at large. So I went up there, into one of those lines and met a friend of mine, he just pulled me in, in front of him and said, come in here. He said, we will be up there pretty soon. No sooner than I was in the line and the Japanese officer who was passing out these little pieces of cloth with some fancy writing on it, he told us to disband. He says, that's all for now, come back later. And then another Japanese gentleman motioned to us that we were to proceed over to the Plaza de Espana, that we were going to be introduced to the big wheels of the Japanese Navy. At the Plaza, they indoctrinated us, told us that we were now citizens of the Japanese Empire.

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Full blown citizens. And we should turn north, face north and take a deep bow and salute the Emperor and express inside of us, our love for him and so forth. Which we did. After that, it was more or less just – I was trying to get my – I didn't get my pass yet, so I walked around and made believe that I was interested in the Japanese Army. They liked it. I walked up to one soldier there and he was polishing his machine gun, a 1941 vintage and it was long and sleek and I figured it worked very well. He showed me how it works and everything. And I thanked him for it. And then I went to find out that some of the houses in Agana were occupied where I could take a shower. I took a shower at my uncle's place, Mr. Pedro Martinez and they were – [interruption]

Q: Talk about your father coming down in Barrigada and what happened?

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Elliot: My dad proceeded down from Barrigada to get his pass, someone told him that he needed that pass to be an eligible citizen, so he came down to get a pass and when he reached – I followed a little further, a little later after he went down, and followed after him and by the time I got down, I was looking for him at the place over there right next to the governor's palace and I was told that he was already pushed inside the brig. So I lined up and got my pass. I knew if him and the other people were in the brig, he would be safe and sound, because they are not going to touch him anymore, they just want to set him aside for a while. So I went and got my pass and proceeded up to Barrigada. But not before I got myself a shower down at Agana. When I got up to Barrigada, I brought my wife down. We came down to place here in Maite, in which my in-laws, my mother-in-law was living, and we parked there for a while, until we felt that we were – could go down to Agana without any interruption from the Japanese soldiers.

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Later on we went down to Agana and I was looking forward to going to my house to get the place cleaned up. And as I approached, I saw some beds coming out, being toted by two or three soldiers and I figured, if those were my beds. Then there are no beds for us at all. I decided we would wait a little longer. I finally brought my parents and my wife down to Agana and we started cleaning up the place.

Q: How long was your father [inaudible] - ?

Elliot: I want to note something, the Japanese came in on the 10th, they invaded the place on the 10th and they left here almost exactly – about one month later, on say the 11th of January, is when they left Guam. They were headed for another assignment, leaving just a token force, the Japanese navy people, no army, just the navy were left here. I figured they were coping the mode that the American Navy had, the American Navy had complement here of about 300 Navy people, including Marines, so the Japanese decided to keep the same number here since

they had nothing to worry about.

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They were close to their bastion in Saipan and the army was well on its way to the places they were going to invade. So we carried on here and we cleaned out our place and then I received an order from the civil affairs, the Japanese civil affairs, that is, to open up my store, my drug store. And sell the merchandise. So I opened up the drug store. I practically sold out everything there, except most of the drugs and the proprieties that was in the pharmacy and all the other things went like hotcakes. But instead of American dollars, we were getting Japanese yen. So another fellow from the Japanese civil affairs came over and told us it was time for us to close up. So we closed up. We were permitted to keep the cash, which was nothing more than just a lot of Japanese yen and then we got orders to inventory what we had left and bring the inventory over to the Japanese – the office of civil affairs, which they call [mensacho - Japanese word], which I did. After I got everything there, then they told me that I was free to go and you are not to open the store any more. That was it. Short time later, I was – much later, about a year or so later, they told me that I would have to vacate the premises where the store was, and move all the merchandise out of there, over to my house. And they would take it from there. I followed their orders and – [interruption]

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Things were becoming scarce, especially food, right about 1943. Since the early part of 1943, things were getting scarce. I had a job working at the Naval Air Station at that time, they called it the [kenchicoho - Japanese word], that is the Japanese Air Base up at the Naval Air Station, one of the first ones they began building, because they sat on their fanny at that time, because just like the Americans did, and they thought – they pretended and they really thought that they had everything in their pockets. So they weren't working on it. So they started working on it and I was conscripted to work up there. And the food that I was taking up, which was in a paper bag, for my lunch, consisted of one leaf, leafy vegetable, that was a Chinese cabbage. One cabbage leaf - that is what I had. Plus sometimes a leg of chicken. That was my lunch. But as the Guamanians did at that time, they – when they get together

at lunchtime, they – everybody brings out their – opens up their lunch and we share. In other words, if I would rather have a handful of rice than that chicken, a guy can have my chicken and I will get his handful of rice. But we went around to see.

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That way, we were satisfied for a while. But when food was getting scarce, we had nothing to go on. Everything was – we were – it was voluntary rationing on our part. Nobody had to do anything about it. The Japanese didn't care whether we ate or not, we just had to work because they had a job to do. The tide was turning and they had to – they had to fortify, put up these fortifications. So as we went along – [interruption]

Q: Talk about what it was like in February '43 when [inaudible].

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Elliot: The Army – the Japanese army, that is, came back about February 1944 and that is when all the work started picking up for the building of the airports. One at Orote Peninsula out at Sumay and the other one up at where Naval Air Station is now, our International Airport is. They started that down there and in the meantime, the army was positioning themselves in different places. Well, I got a job with the – had a job with the labor forces that were [unintelligible] working up here at the Naval Air Station and as I was telling you, there was no food, we had to ration ourselves and go forage for things, if we had a place to forage for. And we could buy or barter from each other, that is the Guamanian population. So I worked up there and they also started – simultaneously they started the other one down there at Naval Air Station, the one at Sumay.

Q: Were you still living in Agana?

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Elliot: No, we had already moved out of Agana. We moved up to the suburbs here, right up

here at Maite. Not far from Agana, right above Parish Brothers building, right on top of the hill. Agana was re-occupied again by the army. The army took over again, but they left behind for us to clean up. Now they came back to dirty it up again. The ultimate demise of the city of Agana. Because soon after that, the city of Agana would be a target. A target from ships, American ships who were a little over 30 miles outside of Guam. Big battle wagons. And big bombers of B-29 bombers and their fighter bombers. And they were coming from all directions. So we had to go back. We found out that the suburbs were too hot, there was shrapnel flying all over the place.

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In fact there was one, I'm not sure if it was a bomb, but it was a big, heavy object that dropped very close to our house and dug a hole in the ground. So we decided to move away from there. We moved out. My family moved out to a place over here in the swamps, which was a little safer. But the army was working like mad to get things – refortify, bring back their fortifications. So after that we decided that things were still getting too hot, so we moved further back into the swamp, further up east, get deeper and a place that is not attractive whatsoever. There is plenty of water. Food was – there was more food there because there was a lot of coconut trees that I was familiar with already. And there were other things that we had to have, like we had to have protein, carbohydrates, stuff like that. We had some little children to feed also. So I had to take a hike up towards Yigo to forage for such things as fadang, pandanus and all those other things and soursop, sweet potatoes and whatever grows in the ground.

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Like, yam, taro, so on. And that made up food menu for a while, but I would have to repeat – again, go back up there again, and that was quite a hike. That takes – starting out from 7:00 in the morning here, and getting up there by 11:00 at night, because I had to take the long way around, go through the swamp, you know, through Toto. Those deep places where – but those places were still occupied by so many Japanese soldiers. They were there, burning their dead. That is where they cremate their dead. Cremate them in – right on top of sheets of

corrugated tin and cover it with some more tin and they pile up brush and stuff like that. [interruption]

Q: And you were going to Yigo - ?

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Elliot: I was going to Yigo to get another trip to get some more food up there and I was going – I had to go the long way around into the boonies. Heavy shrubbery. Stay out of sight of any Japanese. I did run into some Japanese there, but they just glanced at me, they didn't bother. These were Japanese soldiers and they were burning their own dead up here in the deeper places. They had to put their dead on sheets of tin, corrugated tin, and then put some other pieces of tin on top and they – sort of like a luau style, more or less, without digging into the ground. And I went through there and on up to Yigo. I got stuck a while up at Yigo because of the - there was – there had been heavy bombardment going on. There was shelling from the ships, bombardment from the B-29s which were passing over every day. They were coming through every day. Some of them were – sometimes they would drop bombs, sometimes they didn't. It seems like they were doing a great deal of harassment. As much as ~~—[audio cuts] [tone]~~

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Q: How did you go about going to Camp Manenggon. Who told you that you would have to go here and did you have a choice?

Elliot: When we were living up at the swamp, the Comacho / local Guamanian leader was directed to advise everyone around that area to pack up and proceed up towards Ordot. Which we did. We packed up, we proceeded towards Ordot with what we had. The only transportation we had to carry our load, which was a very big load, including one sick old lady that had to be carried as part of the load, on that karabao cart. The others of us, we had to walk. So we proceeded up toward Ordot. There was a slight mole about that area, right across from the entrance to KUAM and we stayed there until about early in the morning, when we

were again directed by a Saipanese, to bundle up and proceed up towards Chalan Pago, on up towards Yona. From there – this was early in the morning, round about 4:00 in the morning. So we went up the hill, it was a torturous ascent up because the hills at that time were not like they are now, now they have been shaved off. You see the ups and downs had been shaved up and they are more level.

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At that time there was a lot of slippery areas where the poor bull have to sit on his butt and slide down, slide down the hill with the cart in back of him. And then when got up to the other part, he starts climbing up with his hoofs digging – trying to dig into the road. But we finally got up to Yona, where we stopped for a while and waited for daylight to come on and then we proceeded down into Pulantat and down into Manenggon. It was another torturous set, but we were so – too involved in survival, trying to keep everything in tune, so that nobody would panic or anything like that. We had no food; we had no water all throughout that trip. So when we came to Manenggon, we had to set up our tents, which is similar to what they call a pup tent. Set up a pup tent and cram in as many people as possible in there. Man, woman and child. Of course men would probably sit outside, they would rather sit outside. But the woman would be in there.

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And the rains came. It starts raining. It starts raining, soaking up that dry – dry, because we already had a dry spell. The rain came and started soaking up that dry spell. Start softening up the dirt till you can – when you step your – you sink that far up. Every time you pick up your feet, you suck it up. So we stayed in Manenggon for about – a little over a month, until about – it was after the 21st, because it was the 21st when the Americans, I believe, landed here. But we came out of there after that. Not very long after that. We had to proceed slowly, because we didn't know whether we would be ambushed or we would be – there would be snipers outside to take potshots at us or anything like that. We had to make sure that we weren't going to be annihilated. So – but during the time that we were in Manenggon, if you could ever imagine a person living in a barrel – say a great big giant barrel of slop or filth, that

was it. Because there was – you had to have conveniences like – you would go out there and empty your bowels or empty your kidneys and I went out there and went to a place that they had dug up from the ground.

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And they had bamboo poles stretched across where you could hold on to and do your stuff and it just happened that I had a match with me, a box of Japanese matches with me, but I wanted to see where I was going. And I got to the edge of that hole and I struck that match and held it down and what I saw just – took care of all my – whatever incontinence I might have took on myself, see. And I just – my bowels just closed up just like that. I couldn't do anything, because what I saw there was just like – that wire sticking up there, wiggling up there, like worms. Right from the ground. Worms that long. They were just waving, like that. I just turned right around and I said, I think I can hold this till daylight and maybe go into the boonies somewhere and lean up against a coconut tree or something. There are no fire hydrants up there, but I know there are a lot of coconut trees.

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Thinking about the women that go down there, that is the people that I was thinking about. But we got out of there – the first soldier that came down there, when I saw him, he had already killed one Japanese he told to stop. He just aimed his – he didn't even aim his rifle, he had one of those short sawed off – looked to me like a cannon or maybe it is a – it looked like a cannon to me. When he shot it, it just tore the back of that Japanese, just flopped forward. I didn't pay attention to that.

The first thing I asked him was for a cigarette. So he gave me a pack of Camels. We came out of that – that was another long trek we had to go through, Manenggon, to get out of there. But we finally got out. This time, instead of going up towards Yona, we went up towards Mt. Tenjo. Have you been up to Mt. Tenjo? We went up to Mt. Tenjo and from Mt. Tenjo, you can look down here and you see Naval Air Station there and oh, what a feeling it was. It was cool up there, there was a light spray, there was a cool breeze, you know? Light spray. I hadn't had a bath for about a month and a half already. About six weeks I hadn't had a bath.

Q: Is that how long you were at Camp Manenggon, is six weeks?

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Elliot: Yeah, that is about how long – because between the – well, it was shorter up in Manenggon, because we had to do a lot of trekking. Before I left, I took a bath, you see. It was a stray faucet up in the swamp, you see, they used to – I guess for watering your cow or if you are pasturing something. And I took a bath there and from that time to the next bath I got, was about a month and a half. I took my first bath when I came down to Anigua, a refugee camp down in Anigua, at that time the Americans had already come in and they were camping all over the place. In fact, when I was up there at Mt.Tenjo, I think I had – what do you call it? I had sores under my feet, between my toes and everything. And I had – I was just filthy all over. Even my head, I could feel some people up there, crawling all over inside my hair. So we walked down Mt. Tenjo towards Piti and on the way down, I rode on a bulldozer. A guy from – a Marine came down with one of those great big bulldozers, you know, I think it was a four passenger bulldozer. I got up on that bulldozer and I rode down with him, all the way down.

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And the first place he hit, he says, say fella, he says, you look like you are hungry. I said, I am. He says, do you want some food? I said, don't mind if I do. So we came down to Piti, the area would be around about that place where the USO is. And the first thing I smelled was a great big galley down there. Marine Corps galley. And this was round about 5:00 in the afternoon when we came down there. I smelled that sweet smell, you know, like I tried to figure out what it was. I finally found out. I went there and I saw a great big pan of this – this big cook came over with a spoon, he says, well, what is your problem? I said, I don't know, I got no problems. He said, you want some food, don't you? I said, yeah, I want some food. He said, what kind of food do you want? I said, I don't know, what do you have? I said, what is that smell over there? He said, oh, he said, that is bread pudding. I said, I would like to have some of that. He gave me some bread pudding. A whole plate full of bread pudding. Boy, I smelled

that, that was – that was really something. I started eating on that and from there on, I went up towards Asan. I wanted to get to Agana and the only way I could go was to walk. I looked around to hitch, you know, hitch a ride up there, but they weren't going in that direction, they were coming from that direction. See, all the way down.

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So I walked up as far as Asan and I got to Asan and there is where I got a ride and I rode up to – they had a refugee camp down at the cemetery down there, the big old cemetery there, that is where they had a refugee camp. And THERE is where I got my bath. And still there was no water, you see, because it was just coming out of the – we were just coming out of the dry season. But there was one great big hole there and there was a swampy area there, you know? One great big hole. Where cows go in to bath. I said – I met a friend of mine and I asked him, I said, have you taken a bath yet? He said, no. He said, are you going to take a bath? I said, yeah. I said, but I have no soap. He said, I got soap. So he still had a piece of Japanese soap with him. So we went into that – at first I was reluctant because there was this camp – refugee camp over there, there is all kinds of women there, I mean, hell of a lot of women. Big women, small women, little women, so forth, and there were also men. And we were in plain view. How can we fix it so we can get a bath here in privacy?

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So I sez, there is only way to take a bath and that is take off your clothes and take a bath. So he says, so I said, do you mind turning away? He says, no problem. He turned the other way, we turned in opposite directions, took our clothes off and went in there, dunked and took a bath. Boy, it felt so good. That Japanese soap really smelled good. We got out and went to the camp and got a bite to eat.

Q: Did you make it back to Agana [crosstalk]?

Elliot: I was already in Agana, yeah. At that place, I found my family. In fact it just happened that there were some people who went from Mt. Tenjo, went down the other direction towards

Agat. Others went this way. I didn't want to go to Agat because I had nothing to do with Agat. My family would be at Agana, so I went down towards Agana and I found my family down at the refugee camp in Anigua. I stayed with them until I got a job right then and there, I got a job as sanitary inspector and my wife and my mother in law and her only child went to – at that time we had – we already had two children, see. We lost one child.

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That when I chock-up against the Japanese. They deprived me of the right and the time that I could spend with my child when it was sick and dying. So we lost that one, it was a boy. So she proceeded to the place, back up to Maite where my mother in law used to live and the house was still there, except that the roofs were full of bullet holes. Or shrapnel holes, you know. And I stayed down there to get that job so that I could have something occupy myself with. And at the same time, be eligible to get into the chow line. The Navy was running that place.

Q: If there is one more thing you could say about your time during the Japanese occupation, what would that be? From everything you experienced and you coming out of this.

Elliot: The most exciting part to the – the most exciting part that I had there was the one without fear. That I had without fear. Is when I needed clothes. I didn't have any clothes. The only clothes I had on – I had, was what was on my skin. After I took a shower, I had to go back in those dirty clothes. I had no clean clothes. I lost all my clothes. On the way up, part of it on the way up, and the rest of it on the way down.

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I had no clothes whatsoever. So I had to get clothes. I met one of my – a friend of mine who was a steward in the Navy, he had come ashore. And I looked at him, oh yeah, I liked the clothes he was wearing. He had on a suit. Blues. And he packed on side arms and he asked, is there anything I can do? I said, I would like you to get me a suit, something like yours. So he did, he got me a suit. $5 for the whole suit, set of clothes. But I had to wait a couple of days

for it. In the meantime I got outfitted by the Marines with one of their – I said, do all Marines come this big? They were all for – the waist was – they were all 40s. 40 waist. My waist was only something like 28. And I had to put it on. So I took it anyway, just so I would have something. And they were clean. I took them to work and the fatigue ~~– [interruption]~~

~~- 00:59:09~~

I was outfitted at the refugee camp, down in Anigua, with a pair of pants that was a size 40 waist and that was all they had. They didn't have any of the smaller ones, the smaller ones were all gone. So I took it, couldn't do anything else, because I had to have some clothes. There was no underwear or anything like that. I had no way of washing the clothes that I wore out of camp. The jacket that went with the pants was just as big, but again, I figured it would go well, for not having a blanket over you, you had something, it's big enough, you can pull it up to your face and cover yourself up. So with that, I shoved off and got myself a job and proceeded to go up towards Agana. Now, before that, I had to be oriented with my job, which was as sanitary inspector, going to make sure that camps were kept clean, there were no debris, no litter around, laying around. And make sure that people knew how to take care of eliminating flies from the – and above all, there was a – I think I will just skip the latrine, because that was part of the job, making sure the latrine was well taken care of. The lime powder, the keep the odor down and so forth and keep the bugs from forming.

~~- 01:01:30~~

I proceeded up to Agana to find my family and I found them housed up at the house we vacated up here at Maite, the house was still there. The roof was full of holes caused by shrapnel. And there were – there was one uncomfortable thought there, there was some Marines living in the same building. The Marines were on top, my family was down below. Down below was – it was an unfinished building and the down below, there was no flooring, the floor was a dirt floor. Up on top, I went up top to pay a visit there and the Marines were using my double bed and they were sleeping in my double bed. I thought that was highly improper, but I thought, I'm glad to be alive, so what the hell. The heck with the bed. The Marines moved out of there in a couple weeks, they had to move out to go to – they were going

down to Guadalcanal, around that area. Then we went back to the business of getting ourselves properly set up, getting our living conditions improved. We moved into – I think this is as far as I go, as far as the Japanese are concerned. The rest of it is all with my recovery – my economic recovery and health recovery and so on.

~~- 01:03:48~~

Because we were still sick. I had developed dysentery, on the way up there I had dysentery, I had bleeding piles and ~~– [interruption]~~

~~Q: [inaudible]~~

Elliot: One particular highlight I would like to mention about the destruction of Agana – when they actually started the wholesale destruction of Agana by the way of bombing and shelling, the bombing started around about the later part of April – between April and May 1944 and they were bombing the place. These were – the bombs were dropped by fighter bombers, dive bombers they called them. And they were coming incessantly, just about every day they were coming. And they were coming in regularly, early in the morning. First of all, the bombers would – or rather the ship out at sea would fire these – what do you call it? These things drop out of the sky? You know? That light up?

Q: Flares?

~~- 01:05:55~~

Elliot: Flares, yeah. The ships would shoot flares in towards places like Agana and the airbase up at Naval Air Station. And then these – just about ten minutes later, these dive bombers start coming in and they start their periods of harassment. They are harassing this place up here – Agana. During the day, the guns from the ships out at sea would be firing salvos into shore, right towards Agana. And almost – rather, intermittently the dive bombers would be diving in to Agana with fire bombs that just blow up into flames as they hit the ground and cause the buildings to burn up. As a result, Agana was burnt to a crisp.

As the rains came during the night, they would mix in with the coals and everything and later on, during the day, the bombs would come back and re-light up those flames again.

Q: So you were not allowed to go back to Agana?

~~- 01:07:50~~

Elliot: You cannot go back, you would be crazy to go back. Some of the Japanese, they ventured back, but they make it. They were – at the time that we were up at the swamps, while we were staying at the swamps for a while, we could hear – we never ventured again anymore. When we started living at the swamp, we never ventured back to Agana, because they were digging – they were digging holes into the hills up toward – on the cliff line. They were digging holes into the hills, building caves in there. They built those caves, those are all man-built caves. And they go very far inside.

Q: Are you talking about the Japanese?

Elliot: Yeah, the Japanese were doing that. So – but these Japanese would venture down there, they would do that. But for us civilians, we didn't even bother.

Q: How long before you can actually go back to Agana and try to relocate your [inaudible]?

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Elliot: I went back to Agana about – about two weeks after the Americans had come in. After I saw Agana, I walked through Agana coming up from Anigua. I walked up to Agana and I was going up towards Maite, to the old house over there, to my family, and the streets were all busted up. The streets were – mud was about a foot thick and it was soft, soft mud. It wasn't even red, it was like – it's all white like ashes. It was white. And the buildings, there were no buildings except a few that were standing up. I could not – [interruption]

Q: When did you eventually return?

Elliot: Eventually I returned from the Anigua refugee camp, up to where my family was located, up at the Maite. I found them and on the way up, I got a ride from an old friend of mine, before the war, he was an officer in the Navy. A commander, Perry. He was a fellow that I had befriended because his son was on drugs, he was on amphetamines and I snitched on the boy, you see, to his parents and they thanked me for it, because – but Commander Perry was the one that picked me up there. He became a captain at that time. He picked me up and he gave me a ride.

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He told me, he says, he remembered a favor that I had done for him and – [interruption] JCA, that is the Joint Communications Activities. I became a lineman, a telephone lineman and I had given the job of crew boss. In other words, I managed a crew. We go out to outfits, different US Army outfits to provide them with a crew to dig trenches for the island wide telephone system. And there were still Japanese around – snipers. We ran into a few. We had soldiers with us, guarding us, protecting us with his rifle. And we spotted one. Our job, we had the whole island to string up with telephone wires, they were all buried cables, I don't know if you have ever seen any of those. The old ones, the old buried cables, they are usually around the driveway.

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Q: Commemoration what do you have to say about that because, with the Japanese being here during the occupation, they were now a very important part of the economy of Guam?

Elliot: Well, I still – knowing – having a little prior knowledge of the Japanese more so than other people have, I have no objection to them coming over here, but I cannot forget what their purpose was, at the beginning. But they feel at the beginning they – I believe this, that they are trying to make up at the end. They had such a thing such as the Southeast Asia Co-prosperity Sphere that included Guam as far as up as Hawaii. Now, they didn't strike Hawaii

by mistake or by accident. They might have gone up to the United States, to the mainland by accident, but they did not go to Hawaii by accident. Hawaii was inside that Southeast Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. They go for little islands, they are not going for the big islands, they are not going to take Europe or South American or North America. They want islands. And Guam was included there. And because Japan is over-populated right now and they are still – they are very prolithic, they want to go into other places. And Guam is – has been on their schedule for a long time. Maybe they have changed; maybe their customs have changed, but just remember, they are not like Americans. The Japanese are full-blooded Japanese. The Americans are a combination of different nationalities. Different ethnic groups.

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In other words, America is the melting pot of the world. We've got Japanese, we've got Chinese, we've got Russians, we've got Germans, we've got everything. Those people are refugees –refugees from their own nations, they are there because they don't like it. Oh, they still have that thumping in their heart for the motherland, but they would rather have a place like America, which everything is freedom, where freedom rings.

The Japanese now are – they are not going to take anything by force. But I find now that there is more – there is an element that is more forceful than all the silver and gold, or rather than all the steel and iron that you have in the world, and that is silver and gold and the Japanese have it.

They are going to buy the shirt right out of your back. Now, maybe I'm wrong, but what if I'm right? And we don't wait – but I'm not afraid of the Japanese now. All this development, this is going to end sometime this – we are going to be overdeveloped. And like any place else, Guam is too small to be a Hong Kong.

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At first I thought that Guam was too small, then I found out from a guy who told me, several years back, he says, we need about four – about half a million people here on Guam, population. I said, that is too many. I said – he said, why too many? He says, Hong Kong is

smaller than Guam. He says, and we have over 400,000 people in Hong Kong. I said, yeah, but in Hong Kong, you cross the border, you are into China. See? You have other lands right beside you. In Guam, where does the overflow go? Out into the Pacific Ocean? There is water all around us, see? We are isolated. One guy said that. At the time he wasn't even an American citizen yet, see?

[END OF SESSION]