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Jose Soriano Reyes
July 23, 1994

Interview conducted by Daniel Martinez
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508 compliant version by and Michael Faist

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Cultural Review Notes: Jose Soriano Reyes died on August 18, 2001, at the age of 81. He is buried with his wife, Dolores Leon Guerrero Cruz Reyes (July 25, 1916 - Dec 16, 1989) at the Merizo Catholic Community Cemetery in Malesso, Guam. His parents were Jose Ada and Isabel Soriano Reyes. They had nine children and one reared daughter: Jose, Demetrio, Johnny, Evelyn, Helen, Elizabeth, Frank, Joseph Jr., Kene and Engracia Cruz.

Interviewee: **Jose Soriano Reyes**

Military Rank: Civilian

Interviewer: Daniel Martinez

Hilton Hotel, Guam

Date: July 23, 1994

— 00:00:00 —

AUDIO DESCRIPTION: Reyes. The frame opens up on Reyes. He is Chamorro. Wearing a ball cap and vertical striped button-up shirt. The wall behind him is salmon pink colored.

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Q: The following oral history interview was conducted at the Hilton Hotel in Guam on July 23, 1994. The interviewer is Mr. Daniel Martinez, Historian for the National Park Service of the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial, and the subject of the interview is Mr. Jose Reyes in Guam region. He served as a Civilian and was instrumental in the freeing of prisoners at Merizo. This interview is being made by the National Park Service, War in the Pacific National Historical Park in conjunction with KGTF, Channel 12 in Guam. Mr. Reyes, I understand that the National Park Service has your permission to make this recording and to retain all literary and property rights deriving from it. Is that your understanding?

Jose Reyes: Yes, sir.

Q: Okay. Well, good afternoon.

Jose Reyes: Good afternoon.

Q: Before we get started here I have just a few questions that are pretty standard and for the

record, could you give us your full and complete name, middle name as well, if you have one?

Jose Reyes: Okay.

Q: How about that?

Jose Reyes: Okay, Jose **Soriano** Reyes.

Q: Okay. And can you spell your last name for us?

---00:01:56---

Jose Reyes: R-e-y-e-s.

Q: Okay. And when were you born and where were you born? What was the date of birth and where were you born?

Jose Reyes: I'm born in Merizo on March 17, 1920.

Q: Okay. And is that where you grew up and went to school?

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: Okay. And your mother and father, what are their names?

Jose Reyes: My father's name is **Jose Ada Reyes**.

Q: And your mother?

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Jose Reyes: My mother's is **Isabel Soriano Reyes**.

Q: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Jose Reyes: Just me myself.

Q: Just—you were a single boy?

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: So you were very close to your parents?

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Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: How many years of school were you able to complete?

Jose Reyes: Years of school I completed is only to the 6th grade.

Q: Okay. To the 6th grade?

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: And were your folks merchants or farmers, or what did they do for a living?

Jose Reyes: Farmers.

Q: Farmers. That's a pretty rural area out there, right?

--00:03:05

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: What did they farm?

Jose Reyes: They farmed everything.

Q: I'm from state side, so tell me types of plants.

Jose Reyes: Corn, rice, and we plant every kind of—

Q: Vegetables?

Jose Reyes: Vegetables.

---00:03:22---

Q: How was life in Merizo?

Jose Reyes: Our life is alright because we have all we want. But the rest of the family they don't have.

Q: When the war starts, where were you when the Japanese came in December of 1941?

Jose Reyes: 1941? I am working at the, ah, **power** plant in Agana. Because I started, **heavy** equipment. I go to school and they give a certificate and I apply for it, because that's why I quit school, because I want to **help my father**, and I want to study outside and I know it's, to be a teacher is only because you can earn only 12 cents an hour. Being a heavy equipment operator I can earn a lot.

Q: And so you wanted to make money—

Jose Reyes: I want to make money. That's the way I want.

Q: What kind of heavy equipment did you operate?

---00:04:30---

Jose Reyes: Everything of heavy equipment, even from the **dragline** or anything.

Q: Right. You like that?

Jose Reyes: I liked that stuff. I don't want to be, stay under the house like a teacher.

Q: I see.

Jose Reyes: I want to work out.

---00:04:43---

Q: You like working outdoors?

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: When the bombing started, did any bombs come close to you?

Jose Reyes: When bombing started I'm still working for the, ah, **J.S. Pomeroy**, the first contractor that came to Guam. I applied on the, the ah, **the boss** at night time asked me if I can help him and stay with him, you know, all the time. I have a shift at night because before we used to shift two weeks at a time for every operator. So he asked me to kind of, if I'd like to work at night and I said I have to talk to my wife. So I talked to my—but I really like the work at night because I'm doing, I'm working in the daytime. Making more money.

Q: Overtime.

Jose Reyes: I want to work. I'm not going to want to sit down because I get bored.

Q: So you were married.

---00:05:43---

Jose Reyes: Yes, I'm married.

Q: And so your wife said it was okay?

Jose Reyes: No. My wife says anything that you want to do is okay.

Q: It's okay. So, she supported you in that decision. When the war starts are you—you say you're working in Agana?

---00:06:01---

Jose Reyes: Yes. In Agana for the federal government.

Q: I see. And how is the bombing? Did you know that it was the Japanese?

Jose Reyes: No. At night time we, because I'm working **the water break [breakwater] in Cabras** Island. And you know, the ships were coming in. I thought it was, what do you call, a **Shoreham, or Gold Star**—that's the only ship that come to Guam.

Q: Right?

Jose Reyes: Okay, but **there's a lot** out there turning around. I can see, I can spot it outside.

Q: Right. And those were the Japanese ships?

Jose Reyes: Those were the Japanese ships.

Q: Oh. So when the Japanese bomb Guam—

---00:06:40---

Jose Reyes: Yes. They bomb early in—

Q: In the morning. Monday morning.

Jose Reyes: Monday morning.

Q: Were you close to that or did you just watch it from a distance?

Jose Reyes: No. I'm not there because I have to take all the people they had **working down** there. I have to take—the foreman, you know, asked me if I can take care of those people that are working **down there**. [Laughs.]

---00:09:05---

Q: And when the Japanese land on Guam, when did you first see a Japanese?

Jose Reyes: They land later and they don't land that time.

Q: Right.

Jose Reyes: Second day they don't land. Third day they land.

Q: Does that frighten you?

Jose Reyes: Yes, it frightened me because it's a war, but I, it doesn't hurt me too much because I have been watching wars since, this war, you know, the Vietnam war. All those wars—I am watching because I own a theater and usually get war pictures. And that's it, people like war pictures so I get what they, what they want.

---00:07:48---

Q: But you weren't owning a theater then, though, right? You were doing the heavy equipment—

Jose Reyes: Yes, I own something.

Q: Oh, you did!

Jose Reyes: Yes, and the same thing. I own a ranch and on the ranch I buy small cow and I fence it, **small caribou**, pigs, chicken, I got all on my ranch.

Q: Was this before the war or after the war?

Jose Reyes: No, before the war.

Q: Before the war. So you were fairly well established as a—you had your money and you had, you had property.

--00:08:21

Jose Reyes: Yes. I am established. And because I want to—I don't want to have somebody for **help**. I want to do it myself.

Q: I see. So you're a fairly independent person.

Jose Reyes: Oh, yes.

Q: When the Japanese come do they—how do they treat you?

Jose Reyes: Oh, they **treat us, real**—They don't treat me because I always try and escape again, I want to turn my way around them.

Q: You don't want to get near them?

Jose Reyes: I don't want to get near them because they're going to hurt me.

Q: So did you stay in the hills and—

--00:08:57

Jose Reyes: No, I just stay on my place but I always said if the Japanese come I always try and **leave them**.

Q: You just hide or go away?

Jose Reyes: No, I don't hide because I'm not afraid of them. There's one thing, I'm never afraid of anybody.

Q: Did the Japanese come to your farm and take food away?

Jose Reyes: Yes. They come to my farm and take the food away.

--00:09:21

Q: Did they ever pay you for it?

Jose Reyes: No.

Q: So there's nothing you could do. They're going to take your food. Do they take your farm animals or chickens, or?

Jose Reyes: Sometimes.

Q: Sometimes. Were any of the Japanese kind to you at all, or nice where—

Jose Reyes: Oh, yes. The last minute when **the war is**, when the U.S. invade Guam there's a captain there, a captain in the Army, he was about 300 feet from my ranch and he comes to me and ask me if **I build**, what do you call, ah, for taking a shower, you know, in the hot water, because I got a, a pool and there's a well. Good water. And they asked me if they can come

every 4 o'clock to take a shower, you know?

--00:10:16

Q: The Japanese?

Jose Reyes: The Japanese. And there would be somebody, you know, come before them and heat it up with a big 50 gallon tank of water.

Q: So that man was good.

Jose Reyes: That man was good because he just came to Japan, I think a month before the war.

Q: Oh, I see. Was he from America?

Jose Reyes: **From the States and then he goes back to Japan.**

--00:10:41

Q: Oh, and he got caught there.

Jose Reyes: Yes. [Laughs.] No, he was **called** back home **to Japan** and was telling me that, I really respect him because we talk with each other.

Q: He treated you with respect?

Jose Reyes: With respect. And—

Q: Did he die here?

Jose Reyes: I think he died here. But I don't know where he died because, you know, the, when the airplane and—American airplane and **the Japanese airplane**, by the time when it's near the

liberation he always come and **say**, come on **Joe**, you see this? I don't like to tell him that I'd like to see, but I just **take it easy because I...**

Q: Did you—a lot of people know about George Tweed and that business. Did you ever see George Tweed, or did you talk to him?

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Jose Reyes: No. Man. I'll tell you about George Tweed—the only thing I can tell you about George Tweed is lot of the people on the northern part got hurt.

Q: Because they helped him.

Jose Reyes: They helped him. And the help is really—what do you call it, I don't think it's right to do it because they put him in the water, they suck the, the water hose, you know, in the mouth. Geez.

Q: They tortured those people.

--00:12.13

Jose Reyes: They tortured those people. And I got a friend over there.

Q: Oh, you have a friend that that happened to? And then they also killed people.

Jose Reyes: Yes, they killed people. No, the Japanese kill people, not just with the war.

Q: No, no. I mean, those people, to find out—the Japanese, to find out about George Tweed would torture people, and kill them if they found out that they were helping them. So the Chamorro people took big chances helping George Tweed.

Jose Reyes: Yes, that's right.

Q: But you were in the south.

Jose Reyes: I'm in the south.

Q: And he actually moved north.

---00:12:45---

Jose Reyes: Yes, he moved north to down in the **airfield** in **[cut off by interviewer]**.

Q: Tell me about when the Americans come, there's a huge naval bombardment. Now did any of those shells land near your farm at all?

Jose Reyes: No.

Q: Down the coast line then?

Jose Reyes: No. No. The first time I get to the people of Merizo because I'm working, you know on **NAS [Naval Air Station]** because that's going to be a construc—ah, airplane field. The Japanese started, so when I go to work for the Japanese—

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Q: You worked on that airfield?

Jose Reyes: I work on the field. The first day I come in the, the **heavy equipment boss** was looking for me to work for him, but we are going to work for carrying, what do you call, that, we call it a **muku, you know, corals with just a sack**. [Laughs.]

Q: It wasn't like operating a tractor or anything.

Jose Reyes: Yes. The people, that's what they do. The people **in Merizo** but me, myself, the minute **I got there the heavy** equipment operator is looking for me already.

Q: Of course, when the Americans land, just before landing, they have rounded up a lot of Chamorro people and put them in a concentration camp. In Merizo, there was an incident that occurred and you played a big role in that. Could you tell me about what that incident?

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Jose Reyes: In Merizo?

Q: Yes.

Jose Reyes: Okay. On the 10th of July I'm not down in Merizo. I'm working up there already. And they—I don't have to—I cannot leave there, I have to stay there all the time. The only time when I get away because there are five of us operating the machine. I said, "Can we make plan **to take a chance** to go out because nobody's coming knows where we are." So I tell them please let's do it this way. Let's one go out, the four go out and one stay for that night because we always work at night. So be sure the guys come out for the next night, be sure the guy come in before this guy go away. So that's the time when I have a chance to go to Merizo.

Q: And what did you find in Merizo?

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Jose Reyes: Okay. On the 10th of July, my, my wife told me that **there was** to be executed—three. Three of them. They called all the Merizo people **and they are** to be executed on July 10th. But I'm not down there on July 10th, but if I'm down there maybe I do something, but it's better if I'm not down there because the soldiers are plenty in Merizo. Okay, because—so I came down maybe on the 12th or the 13th day. **Lucky I'm not** down there because I've got guns, I've got everything.

Q: Where did you get the guns from?

Jose Reyes: I got it from a friend of mine in the Marines.

Q: Oh, you got it from the Marines.

Jose Reyes: Yes, I did. Remember the old gun, you know—

---00:16:26-

Q: Sure. The bolt action.

Jose Reyes: Bolt action. I know how to shoot. I can—

Q: Because you're a hunter.

Jose Reyes: No. I'm not a hunter [Laughs.]

Q: How did you know how to shoot?

Jose Reyes: Because he give it to me and I'm practicing it. I can get down the coconut tree and from that gun. I can shoot the trunk of a coconut tree with the gun.

Q: Now did you get these guns from the Marines that landed or from the Marines that were there before?

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Jose Reyes: There were Marines before. It's a policeman, you know? [Laughs.]

Q: So, what did you do in Merizo then when you found out they were going to behead these people, or did they do that? Did they kill them?

Jose Reyes: No, they don't do anything that time. Okay, when I went back to work, because I have to be back, you know, because it's time for me to go back on my day [Laughs]. So, they **shut** us down in the place where we were sleeping at night, you know, early in the morning—4

o'clock, **the machine** gun from the American plane [makes shooting noise.] From there I run from **NAS** to Merizo. Just imagine that I run.

Q: That's a long run.

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Jose Reyes: That's on the 15th. Okay. When I get to Merizo my wife told me they are not, they are ready to go, because everybody's got to go to some place here in Merizo, you know? So I tell **my wife** go ahead and I'll—I don't want to get over there early, you know? I said, **keep my** daughter and I'll, no, my second to the youngest because she's already help to do something when I tell her, you know. So I **give** direction and **then** I go. I'll be in there before dark. I don't want to stay with them. [Laughs.] So, when we go back to where they are, you know, she told me where they're going to be **camped**. I went up there. About 4:30, 5 o'clock, almost dark, I heard, when we are heading down to the place where they are, I heard three shots. I said that's a cannon, because we were very close to it, and as I'm watching this whether they're closing up, you know, so I said that's the cannon. But not the cannon, that's the three shots of, what do you call it, hand grenades that they're shooting those 30 people that—I don't see that 30 people when they **left** because it's the morning. So in the afternoon so they're shooting the 30 people.

Q: Did you know those people?

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Jose Reyes: I know them but I don't know **they were** going to be shot because the reason they're taking people is to carry the, ah, army **things**, you know, to the north. That's why **they said**. All those people are going to the north.

Q: But they weren't, were they? They were shot, right?

Jose Reyes: Yes, that time. But before, that's what they're doing, taking things for the, for the army.

Q: Slave labor.

Jose Reyes: Slave labor. And, what do you call, I said that's a cannon. And, when they took my daughter to the group of the girls, you know, the women, they are watching and they were

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those guards **that** scared them. But nobody can move, nobody can get away because they're going to be killed.

Q: So what do you do?

Jose Reyes: What did I do? I went back and I planned something.

Q: What did you plan?

Jose Reyes: I planned something to do something to get **that** over, you know? **Because** every time I get to Merizo at night I go around and **check** all the Japanese where they are.

Q: Oh, you check out where they are?

Jose Reyes: Yes.

---00:20:48---

Q: So you're already planning.

Jose Reyes: Yes. I've been planning it since the day when my wife—

Q: Went to camp.

Jose Reyes: No, when my wife told me that they're going to be executed. From the 10th of July I'm planning everything. Sometimes I don't sleep.

Q: So did you tell friends?

Jose Reyes: No. I don't tell anybody.

---00:21:13---

Q: So how are you going to do this?

Jose Reyes: I don't—I don't tell anybody because you know the Japanese, how they treat the people?

Q: Yes.

Jose Reyes: They don't go to the guy that do it. They go to the family first.

Q: I see.

Jose Reyes: I don't—so the person that I'm asking to help me, good friend. But it's only two friends of mine doesn't say anything.

Q: Which friend was that?

---00:21:38---

Jose Reyes: I can, I can show you that—this here.

Q: Which friend helped you. What was your friend?

Jose Reyes: **See this here.** This is my cousin. **Taijeron (Patricio), and this one Nangauta (Mariano).** These two brothers. These are two brothers and this is my, what do you call, **god brother, kompairi.** And he **know he** doesn't have children, don't have one or want children. He refuses.

Q: So, he doesn't want to help because he doesn't have children that are in the camp.

Jose Reyes: Yes. He's afraid.

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Q: He's afraid that they'll be killed.

Jose Reyes: They'll be killed.

Q: But you're not afraid.

Jose Reyes: I'm not afraid.

Q: So what's your plan? What do you want to do?

Jose Reyes: My plan is to get to do it before the 20th of July.

Q: Because that's the day that they'll be killed?

Jose Reyes: That's the date. And for sure. So I get them on the 19th. I got them on the 19th.

---00:23:05---

Q: Okay.

Jose Reyes: But these, these four guys, you know, with us, they just follow me again in the last—because we, we go—because I know this is going to be the last pick up of the things you know because **Tingting Hanom** and **Atate** is different. We stay in two camps.

Q: Now, here's the 19th of July. How many Japanese soldiers are there?

Jose Reyes: With us?

Q: Yes, at the camp.

Jose Reyes: In the camp is 15 **at Atate**. Four on the camp where they're washing their stuff, you know, and 3 is coming from the village. I take everything—

Q: And you have six men?

Jose Reyes: Only six men.

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Q: So how do you, how do you do it? How do you—

Jose Reyes: How do I do it?

Q: How did you kill the Japanese? What was your plan?

Jose Reyes: To attack them by fist first.

Q: By fist?

---00:24:06---

Jose Reyes: **At the other camp, where** there's few, it's four of them. So **I hit**, see—I don't even tell the four guys what we're going to—only two guys knows what are we going to do. So when we start, you know, just come up and because **they're involved already** [Laughs.] That's why I do it that way.

Q: So you hit the Japanese.

Jose Reyes: I hit the guy that is **watching**, okay. I ran straight to him, you know, because I'm

mad. We got a **lot** already in the morning but we **throw them** on the hills, and we turn back because it's getting late. So, I'm there, come on, let's go, let's go. They said what are we going to do? They're scared and I don't blame them to be scared because there's three men over there.

Q: But you didn't have any weapons?

Jose Reyes: No, weapon.

Q: Just rocks?

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Jose Reyes: No! Just fist. No rocks, no nothing.

Q: So you threw the first punch?

Jose Reyes: The first punch because I have to because they're scared. So the first guy that I get to, because I said we're going to get some of their stuff, you know?

Q: Get the gun and things.

Jose Reyes: No, I don't get a gun.

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Q: The Japanese gun, though. You want to get the Japanese gun? Or you just want to kill him?

Jose Reyes: I kill him and then we going to take the Japanese gun. That's right. The men say come on, with two already behind me. I turn over and hit him.

Q: Did he go down?

Jose Reyes: Yes. I smash his, ah, this here.

Q: The forehead.

---00:25:50---

Jose Reyes: Forehead. Then I'm trying to hold his hair, but no hair, so I get him behind and hit him again. Gee. Blood all over me because—

Q: Did you knock him out?

Jose Reyes: I knock him out the first time. I thought we were going to wrestle, but that time I'm very strong. I'm 24 years. I can do anything.

Q: So what were the other Japanese soldiers doing?

Jose Reyes: Oh, they attacked **were attacked by the rest**. [Laughs.] You know what, it makes me laugh now because when you're scared **they're** hitting **the wrong part** of the guy. **You** hit him here, you hit him everywhere—

Q: Except where you need—

Jose Reyes: Except where you need to.

Q: How long did this fight last?

--00:26:36

Jose Reyes: Oh, maybe about three minutes or four minutes.

Q: And then all the Japanese were taken care of?

Jose Reyes: Yes. All the four Japanese taken care, and I tell the boys, you know, I said, make

sure the Japanese are dead because I don't want to fight again. Because I'm waiting for the one that—

Q: So how did they kill them? Did they strangle them?

Jose Reyes: They strangled them and I don't want to say that.

Q: That's okay. It's part of history.

Jose Reyes: They strangled them. They hang them up in a tree and they strangled them and they get their own knife [makes cutting gesture across stomach.]

--00:27:17

Q: And cut their stomach.

Jose Reyes: Split it. So I went back and said, gee. That's **alright, they're dead.**

Q: Because you were angry. You had hard feelings about what they had done to your people.

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: So how do you take care of the rest of the Japanese?

Jose Reyes: Okay. After that we go. I tell the one, one man with **boy's nai**, one boy, okay, because we're waiting already for the, for the four guys from the village. Okay. Because it's about maybe about 5 miles inside the jungle where we stay. So I'm waiting for those, I told these boys,

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okay you—one of my men, you know, I let him stay with the boys and I let him—they don't have to hide because these people doesn't know what we do. So I tell them to stop the Guamanian that are walking behind. Just talk like nobody's business. [Laughs.] Don't tell them that we killed

the Japanese because they will tell the Japanese. So I tell them just tell them that something like that, just talk. So **they let the Japanese** go forward so that's—only one Japanese go ahead and move. So the guy that I tell him to stop the Guamanians behind, they run away because they're scared. They run away and hide. So the boys are right behind the Japanese, **and so this** place where **I saw** the Japanese is going down, and you have to jump before you get up to the trail. So the Japanese jump and get up to the trail then two guys, two Guamanian. So I'm hiding behind the **breadfruit** tree and he was close to me and I see the Chamorro I said, gee. He goes, "What's the matter?" So I shot the Japanese. I shot in the heart and it goes through the hand of the second person, Guamanian, and the third person Guamanian in the belly.

Q: Oh boy.

Jose Reyes: Right through and only one shot. Because it's going this way. So we take care of that Japanese, we take care of the Guamanian and then we have to go because the three doesn't show up.

Q: Now is this a Guamanian or a Saipanese?

Jose Reyes: Guamanian.

---00:30:16---

Q: Guamanian. So what happens is, there's a kind of a running battle to get the Japanese to kill all of the Japanese that were guarding.

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: I understand that the Japanese—was it there where they raped the women before? Was there a raping going on before this?

Jose Reyes: I don't know anything about raping.

---00:30:39---

Q: Not your group, the Japanese were doing—they apparently were doing atrocities there.

Jose Reyes: Yes. Sometimes maybe some place there, but not there because I am always be close to the where the Japanese are staying and to see what they're doing.

Q: Oh. I see. You're watching them.

Jose Reyes: I'm watching them.

Q: You're ah—[tape skips briefly here.]

Jose Reyes: **Let's go** because it's already—

Q: It's gone too far, right.

---00:31:04---

Jose Reyes: Yes. [Laughs.]

Q: Okay. Let's finish this story. So you've killed five Japanese now and when do you—how do you finish the rest of them off? Does this whole thing—you have to go to where the Japanese are?

Jose Reyes: We have to go another five miles.

Q: I see.

Jose Reyes: But **we're not carrying anymore** -

Q: You have guns now?

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Jose Reyes: No. Only one gun and a bayonet.

Q: And a bayonet.

Jose Reyes: Yes, because there's only one guard but there were three, you know, the Japanese. But they have hand grenades and knife. But no, no more gun. Only one gun. Oh, two gun. Two gun, and knife and hand grenades. And I'm telling them if you, anybody know how to use it, and nobody knows. [Laughs.]

Q: Nobody knows how to use the gun except you.

Jose Reyes: Nobody—yes, except me because I've been—when I working for the **Pomeroy**, you know, they use a lot of dynamite and a friend of mine is the boss of the dynamite and I'm asking him a lot of questions to, about the dynamite.

---00:32:18---

Q: So you know how to use dynamite.

Jose Reyes: I know how to use. I can throw dynamite **just** like carbine [makes shooting noise]. Control dynamite by fuse. And I can—

Q: Accurate, huh?

Jose Reyes: **Accurate**—because one time **nai**, it's not going—okay. One time when after the invasion, a friend of mine asked me to go **distill** tuba for whiskey, and that's the hard, because 100 percent whiskey. Okay. I made two shot with only the caps, no, no dynamite. So I just throw to [makes gesture with hands]. They run away from the, what they're doing. They run to my ranch, you know and say why you do the **that?** Maybe the, what do you call, the liquor be running? [Laughs.]

Q: So, you went to get some liquor?

--00:33:29

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: Now tuba is distilled coconut, right?

Jose Reyes: Yes. You distill it through—

Q: Can you—Mr. Evangelista used to get tuba and he used to say it was very strong.

Jose Reyes: No, not strong unless it's a day old or two days old. It's just like vinegar. But the first load of tuba is just sweet. You can make you—too much peeing. [Laughs.]

Q: Make you sing a song? [Laughter.] When—what was the last group of Japanese that you had to deal with and kill? Where were they at?

Jose Reyes: When we patrol. When we take the people to someplace else, that's the area, you know. Because I'm leaving more than 500 people there.

--00:34:26

Q: In Merizo?

Jose Reyes: In Merizo.

Q: What was their condition? What condition were they in?

Jose Reyes: The people?

Q: Yes.

Jose Reyes: They are healthy now because they eat anything, like breadfruit, coconut, all those

things.

--01:34:24:00

Q: But in the camp they weren't healthy, were they?

Jose Reyes: Oh, they're not healthy there because they are in camp already.

Q: Some of them were dying?

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: And the bad water?

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: No food from the Japanese?

Jose Reyes: No food from the Japanese.

Q: They are starving.

--01:34:38:00

Jose Reyes: The Japanese get our food.

Q: How do you feel about the Japanese today?

Jose Reyes: No. Because I feel about the Japanese today, I tell them because I run business for the Japanese on the ship, because I got boats and everything - **a lot of tourists**. A lot of them asking me why are you doing there because—I don't really hurt them. I just want to save my people, that's all. I don't really hurt them.

Q: You wanted to save your people.

--01:35:16:00

Jose Reyes: Yes. Because what they did on the 15th, they killed some of my people, there were 30 of them put in a hole in **Tinta and just** a few of them escaped. So one of **them** is my cousin, and he came over to his ranch **where we** were staying, you know?

Q: And told you the story.

Jose Reyes: No, he doesn't tell me. He told my sister. And my sister told my older sister, told me that those people are dead. I don't know how many escape but that's all I know.

Q: So you have no hard feelings today?

Jose Reyes: No hard feelings for me even from the first day of the Japanese war, after the liberation, I have no feeling.

Q: It was war then, right?

Jose Reyes: I know it's war and we have to fight **if** we're going be alive.

--01:36:15:00

Q: Well, this is an incredibly brave thing you did to fight with your fists against people who had guns.

Jose Reyes: Gun, yes. But they **don't want** when we patrol, I take the—I change the people **where they** stay, you know, the area, and I get some people to watch all around, and make sure they tell me before they do something because a lot of them trying to kill somebody. Some of our people, I say not this time. Please, because you're hurting, you hurt his family and everybody.

Q: Now there was two martyrs that were at the **Tinta Cave** and the **Fonte** [Unintelligible -- Cross-talk].

Jose Reyes: **Tinta Cave**. Yes.

--01:36:58:00

Q: Did you know a lot of these people that died there?

Jose Reyes: I know them.

Q: And the Taijeron, Antonio and Juan, was that related to the person that helped you?

Jose Reyes: They are brothers.

Q: Brothers. It's a sad story.

Jose Reyes: I know it's sad but what can I do? We have to do it to be alive. If I don't do that, if I run away, even run away maybe I will die because I've got young kids and **my** father's old. They cannot run.

Q: So, what motivated you--to save your family or to save your friends, or both?

Jose Reyes: To save my family, to save my friends, and everybody. That's the way, I said, I kneel down and ask God to help me, whatever I plan.

---01:37:58:00---

Q: So you relied on God and your faith, and courage. After 50 years, what do you think about of the old days?

Jose Reyes: I don't think about the Japanese or what, you know.

Q: When you think back 50 years, do you think about the happy times or the sad times?

Jose Reyes: After the war I work and I am doing alright. I have my family. I even finish my promise to my wife.

Q: What was that promise?

--01:38:45:00

Jose Reyes: Twelve children.

Q: Twelve children?

Jose Reyes: Yes.

Q: Wow. That's a family.

Jose Reyes: Yes. I like family. Even after that when I went to the States in '59 we stayed there for a while. My children, and my girls and my wife want a baby, so I adopt back there.

Q: You adopt?

Jose Reyes: Yes. And he's now working for this department. **He's the head.**

Q: Oh, for the FAA.

---01:39:13:00---

Jose Reyes: Yes. In Guam.

Q: In Guam.

Jose Reyes: I let them go to school and that's what happened.

Q: You're real proud of him?

Jose Reyes: Oh, yes.

Q: Well, it's been wonderful talking to you and listening to your story. Is there anything you want to tell me we didn't talk about?

Jose Reyes: There's only one thing I want to **it** mention now because the guy that really fought for, what's called, **was wounded at** the time when we were fighting, and I cannot do anything to the Japanese like hitting with a sword because there's a lot of people. Every time I try to shoot, you know, there would be somebody hurt. So I keep **on** —when I saw the guy behind him, you know, behind the Japanese, I holler to him and I said push **the Japanese**. That's all. So the

---01:40:14:00---

Japanese pushed and tumbled down. That's the time when they killed him. Even telling them to and teaching them about the gun they shot things, and I don't want **them** to have the gun and kill somebody. When somebody came from the jungle there, they want to kill the guy that is like a counsel, you know? They want to kill because they say **he** done this. I don't—I've not heard about that. So this guy asked me, give the rifle and I'll **kill** him. I said no more killing from now.

Q: The killing stops.

---01:41:03:00

Jose Reyes: Stop. When we—and the other camp, some people that they don't like in Japanese time, yeah, they're **really strict Guamanian**. They want to kill them, I said no more killing, please.

Q: The war's over.

Jose Reyes: The war's over. And once you kill there's a lot of people you're going to hurt, like **family**, cousin, and all those. So I told them no more killing.

Q: Well, I want to thank you for this interview and thank you for coming down to talk to us.

Jose Reyes: Okay.

Q: You're a very brave man.

[END OF TAPE]

[END OF SESSION]