

STATEMENT

I, Master Technical Sergeant Jesse L. Stewart 255182, USMC, being duly sworn depose and state:

My home address is McKinnon, Myoming. At the present time I am attached to Marine Aviation Detachment, U. S. Naval Training Center, Ward Island, Corpus Christi, Texas. I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps on 19 October 1936 and have been in continuous service since that time. I was captured by the Japanese forces at Wake Island on 23 December 1941. On Wake Island I was a member of the Marine Aviation Detachment. I was held in the following Prisoner of War Camps:

Wake Island from 23 December 1941 until 12 May 1942.

Transported from Wake Island to Yokohama, Japan aboard the ASAMA MARU thence by train to Zentsuji, Shikoku Island, Japan.

Zentsuji Prisoner of War Camp from 18 May 1942 until 17 January 1943.

Tanagawa Prisoner of War Camp from 17 January 1943 until 21 May 1943.

Umeda Bunsho, Osaka City from 21 May 1943 until 21 May 1945.

Tsuruga Prisoner of War Camp from 21 May 1945 until 11 September 1945 at which time I was repatriated.

I was at Umeda Bunsho, Osaka Branch Prisoner of War Camp from 21 May 1943 until 21 May 1945. About the latter part of 1944, 2nd Lt. Motoo Namba, Imperial Japanese Army, came to this camp as Camp Commander.

Lt. Namba was very lax in his control over the guards of the camp and allowed them to treat the Prisoners of War exactly as they wanted. He did nothing to help us as far as camp conditions were concerned. About the time of his arrival we received a shipment of Red Cross food parcels. Lt. Namba and his staff ate Red Cross food from them on and I have seen Lt. Namba, Mariyama, a gunsoko, Shimayoshia, a gunsoko, and Shinya, a gunsoko pack Red Cross food out of the camp. I have also seen the entire camp staff smoking American Red Cross cigarettes.

On Christmas day of 1944 Lt. Namba issued each Prisoner in Camp,
318 in all, a full food parcel. He then had the American Camp Commander,
Zemo Tarnowski and the office force come through the barracks and each



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men had to give something out of his Red Cross box as a present to the Japanese Camp Staff.

He held a shakedown inspection of the barracks about once each month and on these inspections he and his staff would take anything they desired from the gear of the Prisoners of War, whether it be food, clothing, cigarettes, or other items. It. Namba knew we were stealing food and other essentials out at the railroad yards where we were working. He did not stop us from doing this but made certain he and his camp staff were well supplied with anything a Prisoner of War could steal.

Many beatings took place in this camp, both individual and mass beatings. It. Namba never interfered with these beatings, but seemed to approve of them. These beatings were numerous and it is impossible for me to remember them all but I will list some of them that I can remember.

In November of 1944 Japan started being bombed by B-29 sirplanes. Each time, after an air raid, at evening or morning muster each man calling out 29 when we counted off would be beaten. I cannot remember each instance of this kind but it happened about 5 or six times. I do remember one case distinctly, on the night of 13 March 1945 Osaka was subjected to a very heavy incendiary raid. On the morning of the 14th of March at morning muster every man answering to No. 29 was severely beaten by the guards holding tenko (Muster).

In or about April 1945 K. C. Turner, U. S. Navy had contacted a mild case of dysentery. As his detail was lined up in front of the gate waiting to be admitted to the camp, Turner had to go to the latrine and requested permission to do so. Gisaburo, Mariyama, Kimura, and Aoki saw him go and accused him of going to get rid of stolen items. They stood him at attention and beat him on and off until about 2200. Turner was hospitalized for about three days as a result of this besting. I saw Lt. Mamba walk by the place where Turner was being beaten and leave camp.

In or about April of 1945, HDCHUM, Chief, U. S. Navy was beaten severely and confined to the brig for about seven days, because, as

Lt. Namba stated, "Hookum was encouraging the Prisoners of War to steal food on the Umeda Railroad Yard working detail". Hookum was beaten five or six times a day during the entire time of his confinement. All the Camp staff except Lt. Namba participated in these beatings. Lt. Namba saw many of these beatings and did nothing to stop them. Hookum was only given one meal a day during the time he was in the brig, and was only allowed one blanket. Shortly after this Lt. Namba left Umeda Prisoner of War Camp.

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Umeda Camp was abandoned on 21 May 1945 and the majority of us were transferred to the Tsuruga Prisoner of War Camp. Here we again came in contact with Lt. Namba, better known to we men from Umeda as "The Pig".

Lt. Namba was Camp Commander of Tsuruga from the time I arrived there until the end of the war.

Tsuruga was the worst camp I was in as far as beatings were concerned.

Lt. Namba allowed and ordered beatings nearly every day. I will mention those I distinctly remember.

Some time around the middle of June 1945 one Prisoner of War by the name of Cobb, U. S. Army, was besten by Ryunsuke Kimure and Hiroichi Uno. Cobb had been caught stealing salt by one of the civilian yard bosses and this was reported to camp. It. Namba questioned him and then ordered him besten. Kimura performed this besting in the presence of Sgt. Uno. Kimura used his fists on Cobb and I saw Cobb knocked unconscious twice. When he was knocked down, Kimura would kick him. When this did not cause Cobb to crawl to his feet, Kimura would throw cold water on him and then rub salt into the places where he had broken the skin on Cobb's face. I did not see this entire besting but did see about one-half hour of it. After Cobb was turned loose he was practically unrecognizable. His face was swollen completely out of proportion and had many places where the skin was ruptured.

About three days after the beating of Cobb, two men, Dele Molve and Hicks, two Army prisoners, were beaten by Kimura, Ikeda, and Tsuda. They

had been caught eating raw beans at the docks. I only witnessed about fifteen minutes of this beating as my detail was moved on into the building but all three men were black and blue and their faces were badly marred when it was finished. In this beating Kimura used his fists, Ikeda used his belt, and Tsuda used a club.

On or about June 12, 1945 a shakedown of the billet was conducted by Lt. Namba and his camp staff; During which they found some charcoal burners, some raw beans, and evidence of raw beans being parched in the billeting spaces. This discovery was confined to one section of the billet occupied by U. S. Army prisoners. Each man in this section was called out and stood at attention. There was about 48 or 50 of them. Immediately after they were called out all the members of the camp staff except Lt. Namba and Sgt. Major Taya came out into the yard armed with various weapons ranging from scoop shovels to belts and bare hands and began a mass beating of the prisoners. This beating lasted throughout the day and many of the prisoners required medical attention when it was over. At this time it was common to see Prisoners of War about the barracks and on the job whose face was so beaten up they were unrecognizable.

On or about July 10, 1945, one Charles Tramposh, Corporal, USIC was badly beaten by Kizura, Ikeda, and Tsuda. Tramposh had been badly wounded on Wake Island, one bullet passing through the intestines and injuring the muscles on one side so that his intestines hung over to that side. He had been working throughout his internment as a medical assistant in the hospital. On this particular day Tramposh had completed his hospital duties and had gone to the cobbler shop where he was sitting down reading and talking to the men that worked in the cobbler shop. Kimura walked into the shop. Tramposh did not see Kimura come in and, therefore, did not immediately jump to attention and bow to Kimura. Tramposh was taken before Lt. Namba and charged with having a "Bad Attitude" by Lt. Namba, then taken down to the lower part of the Japanese office and beaten up. Kimura used his fists, Ikeda used his belt, and

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Tsuda used a stick. Tramposh was so badly beaten his eyes were both completely closed, and his mouth so badly busted he could eat nothing but soup for about one week. I did not see this beating but saw him that night when he told me about it. As a result of this incident Lt. Namba made Tramposh go out on the job and work. His condition was against this, but the fact that he was not completely cured from wounds received in battle did not matter to Lt. Namba.

Zemo Tarnowski and Corporal Martin, USMC, who acted as camp interpreter, were beaten and slapped many times during our stay in this camp. The only charges against them being that they had a "bad attitude" which was Lt. Namba's common charge against a Prisoner of War. Zemo Tarnowski was American Camp Commander over we Umeda men and did all he could to get better food and quarters for us. As a direct result of these actions of his, he was beaten by every member of Lt. Namba's staff except Sgt. Major Taya, who never touched a Prisoner of War to my knowledge. Corporal Martin received his beatings because he always acted as Zemo's interpreter. Zemo was known by the nicknesse of "Ski" by both Americans and Japanese in this camp.

Namba's staff. These were mostly at morning and evening muster. We would be punished for little or no reason, deprived of meals, given extra work, and be slapped around during these punishments. I have seen Lt. Namba watching these mass punishments many times. He made no effort to stop them and seemed to approve them.

Living conditions at this camp were very poor. The food, while not as bad as at previous camps, was still not sufficient and with the eid of Bunzo Imura, a civilian interpreter and Sgt. Taya, we were allowed to steal large quantities of soy beans on the job and haul them into camp to cook with our rice and soup. Fish was issued once a week, this being our first regular neat ration.

The barracks that we first noved into was very crowded. There was 504 men in this camp and the building would not have given edequate housing

to more than 150. We could not stand upright on our bunk spaces and there was not floor space enough for all men to stand at one time. We had no bething facilities whatsoever and all our water had to be gotten from one artesian well which had been driven with a one inch pipe. It took about five minutes to obtain a bucket of water from this well. The latrines were between two wings of the building and would accommodate only about 12 men at a time. Inasmuch as we were esting soy beans mild dysentery was rampant in camp and the receptacles beneath the latrines would not last all night. Each morning the floor space of the latrine was flooded.

On the evening of July 12, 1945 and the morning of the 13th we were burned out by an incendiary raid. We were not allowed to move from our bunk spaces until many hits had been registered on the building and it was blazing from all parts. As soon as we were allowed out of the building we had to go to work and remove our food supplies from the storehouse which was located on one side of the building. During the time we were moving our supplies the bombs were falling all around us. In spite of this we had very few casualties. One man, G. H. Thomas, U.S. Army, lost two fingers of his right hand. A few men were burned but nothing serious enough to cause disablement. The day after this raid, the 13th of July 1945 we were moved into a warehouse on the docks. This warehouse had a dirt floor, and the roof leaked all over. The floor was damp and we had to place our bunks on this damp earth together we could not walk between them. Sgt. Tays attempted to have us noved to a safer place but Lt. Namba would not allow this. We had to pack water from our old barracks area which was about 200 yards from this warehouse. We had no latrines whatsoever and had to use the edge of the dock as a latrine. Many men became sick from sleeping on the damp ground. Our rations were cut to about one-half of the previous amount and all we had for our noon meal was boiled wheat. Sgt. Taya attempted many times to have us moved to a building about five miles from the dock area but Lt. Namba would not allow this as we would have to come

to work by train.

On the 31st of July 1945 we were again the target for an American air raid, this time by fighters and dive bombers. No Americans were injured in this raid but our warehouse barracks was completely demolished. We were then moved to a building which about 50 of our men had been working on since the raid of the 13th of July. It was part of an old brick factory about two miles out through town and was located directly alongside of the Toyo Cotton Mills. These mills were bombed on the 8th of August 1945 and debris fell all over our camp. This building we were moved into had no roof other than bark and only slats for walls. It could not be called a barracks but would be better termed as a "Pig Sty". There was no water other than one well about 50 yards from the building and we could not drink the water from it, but had to bring our drinking water from our first camp site. The latrine was a shallow trench some twenty feet long with a board floor and a long slot down the center of the floor. The building where we were housed was about 130 feet long and 40 feet wide and had three and four bunk tiers in it. Each man had only roomenough to lay down. It was raining quite often and our bedding was always wet. Two men, Corporal Allen, USMC, and one E. C. Holt, U. S. Navy, contracted consumption while we were in this building. We remained in it until after the war was over.

Working conditions at Tsuruga were long hours and heavy work, unloading ships and loading box cars. We were forced to handle a shipload of guns and emmunition and another ship load of bombs. We loaded war materials and machinery into the ships after they were unloaded of the cargo they brought into Tsuruga. Most of the ships' cargoes were soy beans, selt, coal and pig iron. Our hours were from about 6:30 to 7:00 in the morning until dark. We never had any regular days off but were only allowed a rest day when there was no work. This was very seldom. I only had about three days off during my entire stay in this camp.

Lt. Nemba personally ordered us to work unloading the bombs and ammunition. Lt. Nemba was at all times well aware of the bad food, bad sanitary conditions and poor quarters accommodations. The American Prisoner

of War Camp Officials made numerous protests about these conditions but Lt. Namba ignored their protests and at times ordered those prisoners of war making the protests beaten. Lt. Namba was also personally responsible for sick men being forced to work, as, before a sick Prisoner of War was allowed to stay in camp it had to be approved by Lt. Namba, and only in those cases where the man had an extremely high temperature was he allowed to stay in camp. None of the buildings we occupied as quarters were marked as Prisoner of War camps and that was why our camp was bombed. Captain Nell (phonetic) U.S. Army M. C. and Zemo Tarnowski and other Americans protested to Lt. Namba about the absence of markings and the locating of the Prisoner of War quarters near military objectives but no heed was paid by Lt. Namba to these complaints. I have seen Motoo Namba at Sugamo Prison, Tokyo, Japan and identified him as the camp commander I have referred to in the foregoing statement and as the Japanese Lt. known to the Prisoners of War under him as "The Pig" at Umeda Bunsho and Tsuruga. This affidavit was prepared by me personally and is true in all

respects.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 30 day of

CITY OF TOKYO

ISLAND OF HONSHU, JAPAN