

Ex 1867

Evidentiary Document No. 5410.

STATEMENT.

MAUTA LEONARD Native Boy of BITAGALIF NEW BRITAIN having been called on 29th October, 1945, and duly sworn states:-

I remember working at the TOBERA AIR Field with a party of natives. We were working with a truck. The engine broke down and one of the boys TO URAVAGIN told the Japanese that the engine would not work. The Japanese called him up and hit him on the head with a stick this was the Japanese interpreter. TO URAVAGIN retaliated by hitting the Japanese in the eye and breaking his glasses. We all then ran away. We were caught and taken back to the air field. There there Japanese tied us up together in two parties. Five together in one party, and the rest in another. The Japanese who had been struck by the Natives then took up a wooden mallet and hit the five who had been tied together on their heads. They all fell down. The Japanese who was with the interpreter and whose name is CHICABA took a stick and hit the natives who had fallen on the ground on the head. Three of them died immediately, but two of them did not die. The names of those who died immediately were, TO LUI, TO MORAC, TO EDIN, and two still alive were TO URAVAGIN and TO VARGIL. The Japanese then told the boys to pick up the five natives and carry them away to bury them. I saw that the two were still alive for I could see them moving. CHICABA told the rest of us not to look. The party went away and some Japanese went with them. Later the boys came back and told me that they had buried them all including the two still alive. They said that one of them had said "Better you kill me and then bury me, but kill me first," but the Japanese took no notice and they were told to hurry on with the burial. I saw all that happen up to the time when the burial party went away.

We were on our way to the MINSABU to complain about the Japanese guards treatment of TO URAVAGIN when he struck him when we were captured by the soldiers. We had been told we could complain of bad treatment to the MINSABU. CHICABA was a Navy Man.

LEONAT  
Signature of Witness.

I, Father William Cadogan, Roman Catholic Missionary of RAMALI Mission do hereby certify that this statement was made by MAUTA LEONARD in pidgen and after same had been written down in English was read back to witness in pidgen before he signed it and the translation is a correct translation of the witness's evidence.

(sgd) William Cadogan  
Signature of Interpreter  
29 Oct. 1945.