

No. 1422

ESTHER GARCIA MORAS, after having been duly sworn, testified on 25 June 1945 as follows:

- Q Please state your full name, age, nationality, present address, occupation, and marital status.
- A ESTHER GARCIA MORAS, 24 years old, Filipino, Ramon Rocas Building, Calero Street, Manila, housewife, married, no children.
- Q Where and with whom did you live on 9 February 1945?
- A At 220 Alhambra Street, Ermita, Manila, with my mother, Mrs. PAQUITA COSTAS GARCIA, my sisters, PRISCILLA COSTAS GARCIA, EVANGELINE COSTAS GARCIA, CAROLA COSTAS GARCIA, my father FEDERICO GARCIA, and my brothers FREDDIE COSTAS GARCIA and JOAQUIN (QUINET) COSTAS GARCIA.
- Q Where was your husband at that time?
- A He was in the hands of the Japanese in the island of Cebu. He is now with the American Army at Leyte.
- Q How long have you been married?
- A Six years, the 19th of June 1945.
- Q The Japs forced you to leave your home on 9 February 1945?
- A Yes.
- Q Where did they take you?
- A They took us all to Fergusson plaza which was about ten meters north of our home.
- Q Besides your immediate family, were any other civilians taken to the Fergusson Plaza that day?
- A Yes, approximately 1500, more or less, men, women, and children were brought to Plaza Fergusson that day by the Japanese.
- Q What time of day did you arrive at Fergusson Plaza?
- A 8 o'clock in the evening.
- Q What happened then?
- A The men were separated into one group, and the women and children into another group. The group of women and children, which numbered approximately four or five hundred persons, was further divided, and from that group of women and children approximately 25 younger girls were placed in one separate group.
- Q How many Japanese were present in and about the Plaza Fergusson at the time you were first marshaled and then segregated into groups?
- A Approximately thirty.
- Q Of this number, how many, if any, were officers?
- A I only noticed one.
- Q Do you know the names, ranks, units, or branches of service of any of these Japanese?
- A I only know that they were marines, somebody told me. I personally could not tell the difference.
- Q Can you give us a description of the Japanese officer?
- A Well, he wore a saber, was about 5 feet 8 inches tall, medium built, and did not wear glasses. I could not notice anything further about his appearance. I was too scared.

- Q Give us the names, ages, nationalities, present addresses if known, occupations, and marital status of the members of your group of 25 girls.
- A PRISCILLA COSTAS GARCIA, 15 Filipino, Ramon Roces Building, Calero Street, Manila, schoolgirl, single; EVANGELINE (Evan or Ivan) COSTAS GARCIA, 14 Filipino, Ramon Roces Building, Calero Street, Manila, schoolgirl, single; PILAR MIRANDA UBAGO, about 30 years old, Filipino, 55 Alejandro VI, Sarpaloc, Manila, home girl, single; LUCY TANI, 25, Filipino, 78 Lourdes Street, Pasay, Rizal, secretary to Captain Tenny, single; GLORIA CHEZI, 15, JULIA CHEZI, 20, MARGOT CHEZI, 26, all of whom are Italian-Filipinos, unmarried, home girls, residing on Tanduay Street, Manila; VICKY GADOL, 17, British subject, 131 Apelo Cruz, Tabon, Pasay, Rizal, home girl, single; FANNY GADOL, 14, having the same address, occupation, and marital status as her sister VICKY; MARCIA LUISA SOTELO, 32, Spanish, address unknown, home girl, single. The rest of the girls, approximately twelve in number, were of various nationalities including Chinese and Filipinos, and I don't know their names and addresses. They varied in ages from 18 to 24.
- Q How long did your group of 25 stay at Plaza Fergusson?
- A About half an hour.
- Q Then what happened?
- A Under guard of two or more Japanese soldiers, we were marched to what had been formerly known as the Coffee Pot Cafe located on Dewey Boulevard immediately south of the Bay View Hotel.
- Q What time did you reach the Coffee Pot Cafe?
- A About 9 o'clock in the evening.
- Q Upon your entering the Coffee Pot, who was present in addition to your group of girls?
- A There was a Japanese officer who was sitting at a desk in the rear corner.
- Q Did any other Japanese enter?
- A Yes, several Japanese were coming in and out all the time.
- Q Did you recognize any of the Japanese?
- A No.
- Q You know any of them by name?
- A No.
- Q You know their rank, unit, or branch of service?
- A No, except that they were all marines. They had greenish uniforms, and I noticed anchor insignias on several of their caps and arms.
- Q What happened then?
- A They directed us to sit on the floor and made signs for us to go to sleep and that there was nothing to be afraid of.
- Q Did you act accordingly?
- A No. They brought in bottles of whisky and packs of cigarettes and some crackers.
- Q Did you and the rest of the girls partake of the food and refreshment offered you?
- A I smoked the cigarette but I did not drink or eat. Some of the girls, however, took a drink because they were nervous, and some, like my sister Priscilla, took a drink because they were thirsty.

- Q How long did you stay in the Coffee Pot?
A Between one hour and a half and two hours.
- Q Were any of the Japanese who entered and left and stood around the Coffee Pot under the influence of liquor or drugs as far as you could tell?
A They were drunk all right.
- Q Did they act in any unusual manner?
A They were noisy and bold. They would sit in front of us, stare at us, and try to make us friendly to them. They were talking to us but no one could understand them.
- Q Did you observe any of the girls become intoxicated?
A No.
- Q Were any other civilians brought in to the Coffee Pot while you were there?
A No.
- Q Were any of your group removed from the Coffee Pot before your departure?
A No.
- Q What happened next?
A About 11 o'clock that night they herded us together in a group and took us over to the Bay View Hotel.
- Q How many Japanese took you over there?
A Just two.
- Q Did you recognize any of them?
A No, I can't tell one Jap from another. They were all so dirty and smelly that I looked at them as little as possible.
- Q Upon your arrival at the Bay View Hotel, what happened?
A We were marched up the stairs to the second or third floor and taken to a room the number of which I don't know, but it was on the side towards the bay and it wasn't a corner room.
- Q Who else was in the room when you arrived?
A Nobody.
- Q Did anyone come in the room besides your group?
A No. The Japs shut the door on us and we could hear them on the other side of the door.
- Q Describe the room.
A It was entirely unfurnished except for a few camouflage nets and old mattresses lying on the floor. There was a small bathroom but no water was running in it. There was one window and the room was about seven meters square.
- Q What did you do?
A We tried to make ourselves comfortable, but everybody was nervous and praying. There was hardly room enough to lie down, and it was pitch dark.
- Q Then what happened?
A In about 5 or 10 minutes in walked about 5 Japs with flashlights and candles, and commenced to look around and peer into our faces. We pulled our hair down over our eyes and turned our faces into the wall and crouched into the corner attempting to avoid their scrutiny.
- Q What did the Japanese do?
A They completed their inspection and then left the room in about five minutes, closing the door upon us.

Q Then what happened?

A In about another five minutes, three Japs came in and grabbed my two sisters Priscilla and Evangeline by their arms and forcibly pulled them from the room. Both of my sisters pulled back and resisted strenuously and cried out in anguish to be left alone, but they were taken anyway.

Q Did you see your sisters again after that?

A Yes, in about half an hour Evangeline (Evan) came back to the room alone crying and shaking all over and sobbing and fell in my arms. She was crying like her heart would break. I tried to soothe her and ask her what had happened? She said the Japs were doing things to Priscilla. I then asked her what happened to her. She said, "Nothing happened to me because I am menstruating."

Q Did you ask her for particulars?

A No, there was so much turmoil in the room with all the girls crying and praying and my sister was so upset that I just held her close and we waited.

Q When did you see Priscilla again?

A She came into the room about 20 minutes after Evangeline had come back the first time.

Q What was her appearance?

A She was perspiring, her hair was awry, and her dress was soiled and mussed.

Q Did she say anything to you?

A She said she wanted to die.

Q Did you question her?

A No, I knew what had happened.

Q Did she say anything further other than that she wanted to die?

A No.

Q Before your sister Priscilla returned to the room as you have just related, had the Japanese come back and bother anyone?

A Yes, about five minutes after my sister Evangeline had returned, three Japs entered and took hold of my sister Evangeline again and Fanny Gadol and dragged them across the floor and out of the room. All the while, Evangeline and Fanny were struggling and screaming.

Q Did you say or do anything?

A I tried to hold Evan back, but I was not strong enough. Everyone in the room was crying and trying to hide under mattresses and nets.

Q Did Evangeline return to the room?

A No, I did not see her again that night until the next morning when she was with my mother.

Q Did you see Fanny Gadol again that night?

A No, I did not see her until the next morning, downstairs.

Q Did any more Japanese come in the room?

A Yes, about ten minutes after Priscilla had come back in the room, about four Japs, I think, entered the room and took me and some of the other girls who I was too distraught to observe.

- Q Did you resist?
A Yes, I told them I was sick and that I had a headache, but that made no difference to them. They just pulled me by the shoulders and forced me out of the room and pulled me down the hall to another room.
- Q How many Japs actually took you to this other room?
A Three of them.
- Q Can you describe any of these three Japanese or any of the Japanese who had entered the room prior to your removal?
A No.
- Q Do you know their rank?
A No, they were just marines; no officers.
- Q What happened when you reached this room?
A They made me lie down on the floor.
- Q Who was present?
A Just I and the three marines.
- Q Did you notice how the room was furnished?
A There was nothing in it. I was forced to lie down on the bare floor. They lifted my dress up to my waist and tore off my pants.
- Q How many of the Japs actually pulled up your dress and tore your panties off?
A One.
- Q What did the other two Japanese do at this time?
A Just standing there, looking and laughing.
- Q What were you doing?
A I was struggling, kicking, and striking out with my arms, but the one who was holding me down slapped me all about my face with his bare hands.
- Q Did you lose consciousness?
A No, but I became dazed from the slapping and when I finally got exhausted, I lay on the floor like a log.
- Q And then what happened?
A While the marine held me pinned to the floor with one hand, he unbuttoned his trousers with the other hand and then forced his sexual organ into me.
- Q How long did he engage in his carnal embrace with you?
A About two or three minutes.
- Q Before, during, or immediately after this act, did he kiss or fondle you in any manner?
A He tried to kiss me, but I held my arms both folded over my face, and he could not reach my lips.
- Q Did he have an emission in you?
A Yes.
- Q Did you have an emission?
A No.
- Q Did his act of ravishment cause you any physical pain?
A Yes, a little pain.
- Q Did he attempt any other form of physical relations with you of an unnatural fashion?
A No.

- Q When he had completed his orgasm, what happened?
A He stood up, and one of the others got down on me. He had his trousers unbuttoned and his organ was out and he forced it into me.
- Q How long did he violate you?
A Just a few minutes.
- Q Did you resist him?
A I tried to resist him but I knew all was over and I was lost.
- Q Did he have an emission?
A Yes.
- Q Was he wearing any preventive?
A No.
- Q Did you have an emission?
A No.
- Q Did his rapacious act cause you any physical pain?
A No.
- Q Did he attempt to caress or fondle you?
A No.
- Q Then what happened?
A When he had finished, he got up and the third one attacked me in the same manner and he likewise completed the sexual act. I did not come, and I continued to cover my face and protect myself the best I could.
- Q Did these three Japanese hurt you as a result of the act?
A No.
- Q Did any of the Japanese offer you any payment of any kind?
A No.
- Q Did any of the Japanese promise you any special favor or word of protection if you would acquiesce in their desires?
A They did not talk. They just had me down, the three damned brutes, and then went out of the room while I was still in a dazed and bewildered condition.
- Q Did any of the three Japanese you have just mentioned possess any weapons?
A Yes, one of them had a gun with bayonet fixed, and the other two had just their bayonets.
- Q Did they threaten you in any way with their weapons?
A No.
- Q Then what happened?
A I crawled on my hands and knees, struggled to my feet, and somehow managed to get back to the room where I had been taken from the other girls.
- Q About how long had you been gone from the room and the girls?
A About 20 minutes.
- Q About what time was it when you returned to the room rejoining the girls?
A It was nearly midnight.
- Q After your return to the room, what did you observe?
A I did not observe anything. I just fell on the floor and sobbed.

Q Then what happened?

A I was in a mental haze all the rest of the night. The Japs kept coming in and out of the room, dragging out girls individually and in small groups of two or three. After I had been lying on the floor about two or three minutes, one Jap marine came and dragged me to a room in which there was a bed and which was completely furnished.

Q Was this an officer?

A No, he was not officer. He was just a marine.

Q Who else was present?

A Nobody.

Q What happened?

A He took me in this room, lighted the candle, fixed the bed and put a sheet and pillow on. He removed all my clothes and then he carried me to the bed and placed me gently thereon. He started to caress me, embracing me and kissing me all over my body, my legs, my stomach and about the breasts, but he could not touch my face because I held a pillow tightly over my face with my arms.

Q How long did this continue?

A After about ten minutes he got on top of me.

Q How long did he engage in his carnal act?

A Nearly thirty minutes.

Q Did he have an emission?

A Yes.

Q Did you?

A No.

Q Did this raping hurt you?

A Yes, it did.

Q Describe the hurt.

A It burned me and I felt very sore inside of me.

Q Did he say anything to you during the entire time you were in the room?

A No.

Q Can you describe the appearance of this marine?

A He had no hair, he had a two-day growth of beard, he had several prominent upper gold teeth, he was about five feet 2 inches tall, weighed around 130 pounds, did not wear glasses, had a scar about two inches long just above his right eye, and had no tattoos.

Q You have any idea as to his name, unit, rank, or organization?

A No, except that he was a marine, not an officer.

Q Did he offer you any reward or any payment?

A No.

Q Did you resist his efforts?

A Yes, certainly, but I was afraid and he was too strong.

Q Then what happened?

A He put on his clothes, told me to put on mine, which I managed to do, and then motioned me to leave, which I did. I returned to the room where the other girls were.

Q What time did you get back to your room?
A It was about 1 o'clock in the morning, 10 February 1945.

Q Were you molested again that night?
A Yes, I was raped between 12 and 15 times during that night. I cannot remember exactly how many times. I so tired and horror stricken that it became a living nightmare. The Japs would come singly and in groups, drag me from the room hardly before I had fallen to the floor from a preceding raping, and would again take me and do it to me over and over. I am not sure because I was trying to avoid looking at their faces, but I do not think any one of the Japs used me more than once. None of them were officers that I can recall. On each occasion I did my best to prevent the attacks, but as I grew weaker and weaker and my private parts became more inflamed and painful, I gave up all hope of living and expected them to continue until they killed me. I cannot repeat detail for detail after the first few assaults, but finally, at about 4 o'clock in the morning, I was raped by a marine whose organ was so large that it tore my insides and I bled from my private parts. Only then did they leave me alone utterly exhausted, in great pain and bleeding badly.

Q Did you observe during any of your short stays in the room with the girls whether or not any of the other girls were being taken or ravished by the Japs?

A No, not at the time particularly, but I do know other girls were coming and going under the compulsion of the Japs. I learned afterwards that nearly all the girls in the room, with the exception of two or three who were menstruating or otherwise unable to satisfy their demands, were raped by the Japs.

Q Were you given any food or water during that night?
A Yes, a few crackers and some water about midnight. They just brought crackers and threw it on the floor.

Q On the first occasion that night when the three Japanese took you and violated you consecutively, was the room lighted by a candle or flashlight?
A No, it was very dark.

Q Did any of the attackers wear any preventives?
A No.

Q Were any of the attackers under the influence of liquor or drugs?
A Yes, practically all of them were very drunk.

Q During the night, did they force you to take any more liquor?
A No, I was sober. Their breaths were terrible and the odor of their bodies was indescribably terrible.

Q During the course of the night, did you become nauseated and vomit?
A Yes, I was sick to my stomach, but I held on without throwing up somehow.

Q Did any of the Japs other than the first one you described as having slapped you beat, strike, or otherwise bruise you in any manner?
A No, only the natural marks or black and blue spots caused by their grasping me tightly by the arm.

- Q After this last incident which you had at about 4 o'clock in the morning when you began to have a slight hemorrhage, what happened?
- A After that the Japs did not come back again. We all lay there trying to rest ourselves.
- Q How long were you kept in that room?
- A Until about 6 o'clock in the morning. We left the room and tried to find our folks. I found my mother, my sisters Evangeline and Carola, and my brother Quinet together in a corridor. They had been looking for me too. Then the five of us went to another room on the same floor where there were several family groups, and we stayed with them.
- Q Did you recognize any of these other people?
- A Yes, Mrs. Trinidad Llamas Garcia, Teresita L. Garcia, their cook Rosa (I don't know her last name), Mrs. Eric Stern and her son Jerry, Mrs. Stern's servants, Rosario and Matilde (I don't know their last names), Mrs. Lorraine Quirino, her daughter Nancy, and her two sons (I don't know their names), Maria Ghezi Galatas, Mrs. Sarah B. Gadol and her son David and servant Genoveva Trinidad. There were a few others whom I do not remember or know.
- Q Did the Japanese molest you or any one in your presence subsequent to your departure from the room where you spent the first night?
- A No, most of us were able, on the morning of 10 February 1945, to go to the main dining room where the Red Cross people protected us during the subsequent nights.
- Q When did you escape from the Bay View Hotel?
- A On the afternoon of 12 February 1945. The building was burning furiously, but the Japanese marines would not let us go out. However, an order was finally given to let us flee from the burning building, and we did.
- Q After you got out of the building until you were rescued by American soldiers, were you subjected to any other cruel or unusual punishment by the Japanese?
- A No, we only underwent the terror and danger of shelling customary in warfare. However, at one time, where and when I don't recall, a hand grenade was thrown in the room in which we were hiding and my brother Joaquin (Quinet) was killed. I don't know whether or not the Japanese threw the grenade.
- Q Were you at any time after your escape from the Bay View Hotel examined by a doctor?
- A Yes.
- Q When was that?
- A On 28 March 1945 I was examined by a United States Army doctor, Captain Robert R. Jones of the 117th Battalion, Medical Detachment of the 37th Division, APO 37.
- Q What was the result of this examination as to the question of venereal disease?
- A It was negative.
- Q Did you become pregnant as a result of your experience?
- A No.
- Q Do you know of anyone else that was in the Bay View Hotel or in the Boulevard Alhambra Apartments during the period from 9 February to 13 February 1945 who was molested by the Japanese besides those you have named as being in the room with you?
- A No, I know of no one.

Q Do you know the names or can you describe any officers or marines of the Japanese Imperial Forces who were present during any of the afore-mentioned periods of time?

A No, I don't.

Q Other than these 12 to 15 rapings and the slappings and the force used upon you in connection therewith, did the Japanese injure you in any manner?

A No.

Q Have you anything additional that you can think of which you should or can testify about this atrocity?

A That is all I can say.

/s/ Esther Garcia Moras
ESTHER GARCIA MORAS

Commonwealth of the Philippines)
City of Manila) SS

I, ESTHER GARCIA MORAS, of lawful age, being duly sworn on oath, state that I have read the foregoing transcription of my interrogation and all answers contained therein are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

/s/ Esther Garcia Moras
ESTHER GARCIA MORAS

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 27 day of June 1945.

/s/ David T. Sweet
DAVID T. SWEET
1st Lt., J.A.G.D.

C E R T I F I C A T E

We, FRANK H. MORRISON II, 1st Lt., O-1797858, JAGD, and DAVID T. SWEET, 1st Lt., O-2052561, JAGD, certify that on 27 June 1945 personally appeared before us ESTHER GARCIA MORAS and gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth; that after her testimony had been transcribed, the said ESTHER GARCIA MORAS read the same and affixed her signature thereto in our presence.

Place: Roces Building
Calero Street, Manila

/s/ Frank H. Morrison 2
FRANK H. MORRISON II
1st Lt., J.A.G.D.

Date: 27 June 1945.

/s/ David T. Sweet
DAVID T. SWEET
1st Lt., J.A.G.D.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Alva C. Carpenter, Chief, Legal Section,
General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the
Allied Powers, do hereby certify that the attached
photostatic copy of the affidavit of ESTHER GARCIA
MORAS is a true and correct reproduction of the
original affidavit; and that a signed and sworn
copy of said affidavit is presently on file with
this Section.

/s/ Alva C. Carpenter
Alva C. Carpenter,
Chief, Legal Section.

Witness: /s/ John R. Pritchard

Sworn to before me this 29th
day of October, 1946, Tokyo, Japan.

/s/ John R. Pritchard
Captain, Infantry
Summary Court