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Place of Interview: San Antonio, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

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Approved: Kenneth R. Isaacs

Date: August 24, 1974

Mrs Ken Isaacs

Oral History Collection

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Isaacs

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

Place of Interview: San Antonio, Texas Date: August 24, 1974

Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Isaacs for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on August 24, 1974, in San Antonio, Texas. I am interviewing Mr. and Mrs. Isaacs to get their reminiscences and experiences and impressions while they were at Pearl Harbor during the Japanese attack there on December 7, 1941. Mr. Isaacs was aboard the repair ship USS Dobbin at the time of the attack, while Mrs. Isaacs was at home in Honolulu during the attack.

Now Mr. and Mrs. Isaacs, to begin this interview, what I'd like each of you to do first of all is to give me a very brief biographical sketch of yourself. In other words, tell me where you were born, when you were born, your education--things of that nature. Just be very brief and general. Mr. Isaacs, why don't you begin?

Mr. Isaacs: Okay, although ladies should be first, I will begin. I was born in West Frankfort, Illinois . . .

Marcello: I'll let you go first because I thought maybe she'd want to think about what dates she wanted to give me for when she was born (chuckle).

Isaacs: . . . on July 13, 1915. West Frankfort, Illinois, is down in the southern part of Illinois in the area called "Little Egypt." From West Frankfort my mother and father moved to Benton, Illinois. My father was killed when I was three years old in a coal mine. I went to grade school, high school in Benton, Illinois, and in 1935 I joined the CCC and was transferred to Lawrenceville, Illinois, where I met Mrs. Isaacs.

After the CCC tour I joined the U. S. Navy and did my preliminary training at Great Lakes, Illinois. Then I was transferred to San Diego, California, onto the USS Dobbin. That was in 1937, so at the time of Pearl Harbor, I had a little better than four years in the U. S. Navy, and I had extended my tour in September, 1941, for another two years because we were real happy that we were living in Honolulu and we were stationed there, and we thought that two more years in the Navy and then I would be through. Of course, that didn't prove true because I continued on through the war and went on out into the Pacific and . . . I was transferred from the USS Dobbin in about 1943, and I put a ship into commission in Portland, Oregon, that went

on out and was in the Battles of Ulithi and also of Suva Bay when we went into . . . with MacArthur's troops into . . . I was on an attack passenger ship at that time. It was an auxiliary ship, but we were carrying troops, assault troops, into the area. Is that sufficient?

Marcello: That's very sufficient. Mrs. Isaacs, would you give me a brief biographical sketch of yourself?

Mrs. Isaacs: I was born in Lawrenceville, Illinois, on September 19, 1909. I went to grade school there, high school, and then went to business college in Evansville, Indiana. On July 13, 1939, we were married in San Diego, California.

Marcello: In other words, you had joined the Navy, Mr. Isaacs, before you had gotten married.

Isaacs: Right. We couldn't very well live on $21 a month when I first joined the Navy (chuckle).

Marcello: That's very true.

Mrs. Isaacs: In September of 1939, the Dobbin went to Hawaii for maneuvers and was to be there several months, so I went back to Illinois and intended to return to San Francisco when they returned. However, the Dobbin was stationed out there, and in 1940 I went to Honolulu.

Marcello: And that's where you were when the Japanese attack occurred. Let's just go back here a minute, Mr. Isaacs. Why did you join the service?

Isaacs: Primarily, the reason at that time in 1937 is that we were still in the . . . partly in the throes of the Depression. I had two years of military organization in the CCC camp. I had an uncle who retired from the U. S. Navy, and I thought it seemed to be a good sense of security, and I was not particularly anxious to get away from my would-be wife at that time. The law wasn't after me or anything. I just thought I'd like to see the country, to see the world.

Marcello: This is a rather standard reason that a great many people give for having joined the service at that particular time. It was a matter of economics. It represented a certain degree of security. Why did you select the Navy over one of the other branches?

Isaacs: Well, it was primarily my . . . I had seen the Army life in the CCC camp. We had reserve officers. As I said, I had an uncle who had retired, and I thought that the Navy would be an interesting career, and I would be able to travel and see a lot of the country at that time.

Marcello: How hard was it to establish housing and all of this sort of thing for a wife overseas at that particular time? Were there any difficulties involved in getting from the mainland over to the Hawaiian Islands?

Isaacs: Well, of course, at that time I was only a yeoman second class in Honolulu. You had to be a first class petty officer or above before they would transfer your family. So I was working in the personnel office of the executive offices of the ship. This executive officer liked me, so he wrote a letter into Washington, D. C., stating that I was able to support a wife. It still came back disapproved because of the regulations of the Navy. I understood that part. We understood when we sent it in that it would probably be disapproved. So it was very, very difficult unless your wife was able to work or that she was very, very thrifty and saved your money because even at that time a second class petty officer was, I think, drawing about $72 a month. Of course, you don't realize the food and the various other things that the Navy did provide for. But it was very, very difficult for lower enlisted men in the Navy to be married and support a family. It came to my attention all the time, working in personnel and working in an executive office, that we would have these cases come up where the men had married and had had financial difficulty and eventually marital difficulty because of the shortage of money and that they couldn't move their families around.

Marcello: This is very interesting because I had never heard the reason why the Navy was rather hesitant to move wives, let's say, from the mainland over to the Hawaiian Islands. Like you mentioned, it was a matter of economics.

Now you mentioned awhile ago that you were a yeoman aboard the Dobbin. Did you go to any special school, or did you receive on-the-job training aboard the Dobbin in becoming a yeoman striker?

Isaacs: I received on-the-job training aboard the Dobbin. When I went aboard I was on the deck crew in a deck division. I did the normal things of washing down the wooden decks and the running of the motor launches, and I was coxswain of a motor launch, which you can be a seaman second class and still be a coxswain of the motor launch. We had a number of motor launches on board the Dobbin because of being a repair ship and because . . . when ships nested with us, they would use our liberty ships when they'd go ashore, and if we were in a port, why, we would either run on the hour . . . every half hour. We had fifty-foot motor launches, and we had thirty-six-foot motor launches which were run by diesel engines at that time.

Marcello: How would you describe your on-the-job training at that time aboard the Dobbin? Now again, I'm referring to your training as a yeoman striker.

Isaacs: I guess I was real fortunate and . . . not being overly ambitious . . . but I had a good bunch of men. We went into these offices, and I went right into the executive's office. I carried the mail around, and I did a little typing and learned to make some of the reports that are required and handled the personnel records. The training was very, very good at that time.

Marcello: Did you normally work under a ranking petty officer or something of this nature?

Isaacs: Yes. In each . . . they had a chief yeoman in the office. They had a yeoman first class and a yeoman second class, and they had two of us who were called yeoman strikers.

Marcello: And I would assume that during that peacetime Navy there was no sense of urgency. In other words, there was plenty of time for one to learn his particular specialty. Is that a safe assumption to make?

Isaacs: That's a safe assumption to make. You were talking about schools. After you became a yeoman second class, the Navy had yeoman schools for shorthand where you could go to school in San Diego . . . at Norfolk they had a shorthand school. But outside of that, that was the only training that was provided. There was no going from boot camp. After your three months in boot camp, you did not go into a yeoman's school to become a yeoman. As a rule you went

aboard ship, and you became a deck hand or you became a fireman in the machine shop before you would . . . if you eventually wanted to be a yeoman, then you would have to ask for a transfer to be a yeoman.

Marcello: From what I know, rank came very, very slowly in that peacetime Navy, did it not?

Isaacs: That's very, very true because there was only a certain amount of ratings open. The Navy budget was very strict, and they only had . . . they had it definitely limited to so many billets aboard each ship. At that time they weren't commissioning a lot of ships. There weren't a lot of people leaving the Navy. A lot of people, because of the economic conditions, were staying and doing their twenty years on board the Dobbin. There was an awful lot of men who--the four or five years I was on there--had eventually done their twenty and retired. Then I would see them later on during the war, where they had been called back.

Marcello: Now describe what the Dobbin was like and what some of its functions were. It was a repair ship, of course, and as I told you before we started the interview, to me these are some of the more interesting ships that were afloat at that particular time. What was it like? What

sort of a complement did it have aboard? What were some of the functions that it performed?

Isaacs: Well, the Dobbin was classified as a auxiliary destroyer tender. It had a Navy classification of AD-3 which meant that it was the third auxiliary tender that had been built by the Navy. It was an old ship. It carried on a complement of between 500 and 600 men. But later on, I will show you where we were . . . had about 1,000 men on it at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack. On the Dobbin we had everything that was necessary to repair and service any kind of small craft or larger craft for that matter. We had a complete optical shop. We had a complete repair shop. We had an extensive radio hook-up to where we could carry the flags. The various commanders of destroyer flotillas would sometimes come aboard. We had admiral's quarters on there in addition to captain's quarters. We had a shipfitter shop which worked on the ships, carpenter, molding, blacksmith. We had a complete dental . . . we had two dental officers. We had two medical officers. We had a complete sickbay and operating facilities. We had a barber shop, a print shop, the ice cream for the . . . we had a complete laundry, and we did the laundry for the officers on the destroyers when they

came over, which helped them out. We had diving personnel aboard, qualified Navy divers, who could go . . . and in addition we had these launches for the use of the nesting of the destroyers when they were alongside to go ashore on liberty.

Normally, we were a ship that would go to an advance base and set up an operation where we could float and eventually . . . and it proved . . . that was ideal later on because after Pearl Harbor we were down in Samoa. We were down in Tongatapu. During the Battle of the Coral Sea, we had aircraft bombs for the aircraft carriers' planes. We had provisions and we were able to do any work that was necessary on any ship that might have been damaged. We moved on up after that time up after that time up along the coast of Australia and did the same thing, and then we went on into New Guinea and then on into the Philippines as we moved along.

Marcello: In other words, this was a very versatile ship, and it was one that had a great many highly skilled specialists aboard. I would assume that it would be a very, very serious loss if a ship of this nature were destroyed.

Isaacs: Looking back, I feel that it was because we were carrying in our holds at that time . . . we had better than a million dollars worth of meat, provisions, dry stores, anything that a ship might need in the way of repair. We had possibly

another million or a million and a half dollars worth of ammunition, including destroyer torpedoes, including any type of machine gun thing. We had a complete gunnery department. Of course, the one thing I did forget was that we had a complete torpedo shop where we could repair torpedoes that had a malfunction on destoyers. They would overhaul them. We felt that it was a very valuable ship. It was a very necessary part of the auxiliary fleet of the Navy.

Marcello: Mrs. Isaacs, what did you think about the idea of living in the Hawaiian Islands?

Mrs. Isaacs: I thought it would be wonderful. And it was a real wonderful experience even with Pearl Harbor. I said, "If Pearl Harbor had to be, I'm glad I was there."

Marcello: When did you arrive in the Hawaiian Islands? Now I'm referring perhaps to the month and the year rather than a specific day, if you can remember this.

Mrs. Isaacs: In the spring of . . .

Isaacs: I think it was June of 1940.

Marcello: And how long had you been over there by that time, Mr. Isaacs?

Isaacs: I had been there since '39. I'd been there from September of '39 through that length of time.

Marcello: What sort of housing did you find in Honolulu?

Mrs. Isaacs: Well, as I went over, I met another woman that was going over at the time. Her husband was a warrant officer, and they were going to get married when she arrived. On Beretania Street there is a court called King's Court. It was a group of houses and one big house at the end of the court. This house had several apartments in it, so we had made arrangements to share an apartment with this couple when they were married. It had two bedrooms. There was no problem with housing. We moved from that to the first available house in the Court--the two couples--and it was fixed so that you could have two families in one house. Then we decided to move from this to 550 Circle Lane, which I called my "termite palace." We had an apartment in this house on Circle Lane, and it was filled with native families or people in the Air Force.

Marcello: I gather from what you say that the Navy did not build any special housing for dependents, unlike the Army or the Air Corps. For example, you know, there was dependent housing around Wheeler Field and close to Hickam Field and this sort of thing. But there was nothing like this for the Navy?

Isaacs: We were primarily mobil, and the Navy did not want . . . I don't know even to this day whether the Navy gets into

dependent housing or not. Normally, if you are a . . . a person entitled to a housing allowance, they usually pay you in cash, and you fend for your own housing because it is mobil, and you have no indication how long a ship will be in any particular spot.

Marcello: What was the social life like for a young married couple in those pre-Pearl Harbor days in Honolulu? Mrs. Isaacs, why don't you talk a little bit about that. What did you do so far as social life was concerned?

Mrs. Isaacs: We'd get together with other Navy wives and husbands and visited back and forth. Of course, Mr. Isaacs and myself, we were on a limited budget since we were under different circumstances. We used to look for things to do. Usually, we'd go out to Waikiki Beach and sun-bathe or go on picnics with some other Navy couple. Nothing real fantastic or exciting.

Marcello: Well, in other words, given the limited amount of money that you had, I think you're saying in effect that you had to make your own fun in most cases.

Mrs. Isaacs: Right.

Marcello: How would you usually socialize, let's say, on a weekend? What were some of the things you might do on a weekend?

Isaacs: I played Navy basketball. We would have basketball games sometimes on Fridays and Saturdays either at the YMCA or

at one of the forts there. We went to . . . I remember we went to Schofield, Fort Kamehameha. At Ford Island we had a good basketball court. Mrs. Isaacs would come along, and then after the game we would go out and may have a few drinks. We attended as many free functions as we could . . . dances and the . . . at that time it was . . . there was quite a few Hawaiian bands. I remember Owens. I can't think of his first name.

Mrs. Isaacs: Harry.

Isaacs: Harry Owens, who composed "Sweet Llanai." Why even after Pearl Harbor when she was fingerprinted there, he was the one that fingerprinted her, which was, you know, something.

There was really no lack of social activities. We weren't starved or we weren't hurt in any respect from that point of view. Normally, I would be ashore possibly every other night, and most every weekend I would be ashore. Mrs. Isaacs worked at the Liberty House, which was a large department store there in Honolulu. She had the companionship and made the friends of her co-workers there which were . . . we were not really . . . outside of not going to the Royal Hawaiian and not going to the other islands which normal people do now, why . . . and, of course, at that time the island of Oahu was reasonably just still a

paradise. There was not all the large hotels that there are now. You went out to Waikiki Beach, and you just automatically went in swimming, and the water was clear and the people were having a lot of fun.

Mrs. Isaacs: That "Hawaii Calls" radio program--maybe you heard it--years ago. I don't know, but anyway, it came from Waikiki Beach and was every Saturday afternoon. They broadcasted it from there. A lot of us just went out to the beach and so on to listen to the broadcast.

Marcello: You mentioned liberty awhile ago. Did your liberty routine ever change very much as one got closer and closer and closer to the actual attack itself?

Isaacs: No, our routine did not change. As far as liberty . . . as far as the preparation for war, I think it changed. At one time we had a British naval officer aboard ship. He was there for observing and for consultation with the admiral that was on board at that time. We had an admiral who was commander of Destroyer Flotilla One, which included several divisions . . . or an admiral, yes, who was in charge of that. He conferred and then immediately after he had been there for a short time we started taking wood--our wooden decks, our wooden paneling, and all such things as that--off the ship. It was just sort of automatically ripped out to where we'd come down to bare metal. The

reason that they said we did that was that the British during World War II, their ships, when they were hit the fires would . . . the automatic heat from one compartment, if it was wood, would go right into the heat of the . . . would burn the next compartment. So that part we did do on board our ship.

There was a normal amount of . . . a little bit more physical exercise which we did, too. They tried to beef us up, which normally the Navy is not as well developed as possibly the Army in hiking and that sort of thing.

We also knew this . . . we had a Commander Lattimore come aboard. He came aboard ship in about April of 1941. He was from Navy Intelligence. They had transferred him aboard from Washington, D. C. He was a very quiet man. He was an elderly man at that time. And he would take hikes up into the Aiea hills which was . . . at that time around Pearl Harbor we were surrounded with sugar cane growers and pineapple growers. It was not built up with all the fortifications it has at the present time. He came back to the ship one time, and he had an arm wound which he said that he had fell. For awhile he had his arm in a cast.

It healed and then he took . . . in July of 1941, he took a . . . he left the ship again, wearing a khaki uniform

and an old hat and a walking stick which, evidently, was a souvenir to him from somewhere else.

And he didn't come back to the ship. After we realized that he was absent, well, we sent searching parties of about 300 men from the area, the ships there in the harbor, and the Honolulu police were notified. The Army was notified. They searched for approximately a month trying to locate the man. They never did find him. They took their trackers from Schofield with their dogs who are familiar with that area there, and they went into the area, and they didn't find anything. The Honolulu fleet did, too.

There was no result of his remains anywhere. The thing . . . the talk was that he went up into the hills. He had run into these Japanese spotters who were plotting the fleet, and they killed him and did away with him.

Marcello: This is an interesting story, and I've never heard this before. Did you know anything more specifically about the activities of this Commander Lattimore? In other words, did you work around him or close to him at all as a yeoman?

Isaacs: I had talked to him, and I had met him. He was a very solitary man in that when . . . normally, captains are solitary--the majority of captains. There are some who like . . .

Marcello: Was he a commander or a captain?

Isaacs: He was a commander, but he was captain of the ship. He was captain of the ship.

Marcello: Of your ship?

Isaacs: Of our ship. A commander in the Navy, but yet a captain, see. You will run into that. You will see a lieutenant commander who will be captain of a destroyer, although his rank is only lieutenant commander in the Navy. Commander Lattimore was a kind man in comparison, let's say, to our captain who was at Pearl Harbor, Paddock. He was . . . he ate by himself. He ate by candlelight. I think he was a deep man. I think he must have been highly respected in Washington, D. C. Normally, captains at that time would come aboard and only be on board for a year or eighteen months. That would be their tour of duty. The executive officers who were right below the captain, their normal tour of duty aboard this type of ship was one year because the Navy wanted to give them that added experience. So it happened--I was lucky in the Navy--that two of the Naval officers that I worked with, who were executive officers aboard the ship, had become admirals later on. I sort of followed their careers. One of them was J. P. Womble, Jr. The other one was Wooldridge. I can't remember what

his name was, but I followed his career. He later commanded the battleship New Jersey, which was the latest thing out during World War II, and then he later was back in Washington as an admiral in the Washington, D. C., operation.

Marcello: I want to get back to this Lattimore again because I think he's a very interesting person. Now he did come aboard your ship as your skipper.

Isaacs: As our skipper.

Marcello: When did this take place? When did he come aboard, first of all?

Isaacs: He came aboard . . . I imagine it was around May. It was the early part of 1941.

Marcello: And then he disappeared sometime in July of 1941.

Isaacs: He disappeared in July of 1941.

Marcello: And you never really knew specifically what he was doing other than the fact that he had been an intelligence officer.

Isaacs: Well, I will say that is a rumor, too, but he did come from Navy Intelligence. We had a number of Navy Intelligence people that had served duty aboard our ship. We didn't have a special unit as such. These men were just doing tours of duty to further their Naval career and give them that added experience.

Marcello: From what you say, I gather that his disappearance caused a great deal of consternation among the higher echelons in the Hawaiian Islands.

Isaacs: Yes, because it went as high as it could go to the Army officials, to the Navy officials, to the Air Force officials, to the survey officials, because they were having trememdous searching parties out. Of course, the other theory was that he recognized that this was going on, and he disappeared himself and went back into Washington, D. C., which is entirely probable. It's possible.

But until you have been in the sugar cane and the pineapple fields of the area surrounding Honolulu, you would never . . . you would see why it's entirely possible for the man to be lost. He could be killed there, and there would be no way at all because in some of those areas the only way you could get in them was just cut your way through the brush. It was never thoroughly scouted, never thoroughly, because of the fact that they had dogs and they had regular trackers from Schofield Barracks. It was a real wilderness.

Marcello: As you mentioned awhile ago, it was more or less standard operating procedure for this Lattimore to make periodic trips into the hills.

Isaacs: That's correct.

Marcello: For whatever purpose--you probably didn't know--you assumed he was there on some sort of . . .

Isaacs: It was for hiking purposes. We, you know, figured at first it was for the exercise. Being an elderly man--he was up in his sixties--he just wanted to take the hike and just explore the terrain.

Marcello: Your other skippers had never done this, though.

Isaacs: No, our other skippers were, you know . . . everyone is his own man, and we had no indication that that would happen.

Marcello: What sort of speculation was being offered aboard the ship when the skipper disappeared? In other words, I'm referring to scuttlebutt among the crew members. What significance did you attach to this? Do you recall at the time?

Isaacs: Well, as I said before, we thought that possibly his Navy Intelligence background had . . . that he might have went a little overboard and wanted to go up there just to see if it was being done, and we are positive that later on it was being plotted in that area.

Marcello: But at the time did you suspect that this is what had happened to him? Did you feel that in July of 1941,

when he disappeared, that Japanese agents or something had done him in?

Isaacs: We figured that it was the result of foul play, or . . . at that time we figured it was a result of foul play. Later on, we had a feeling that what he might have discovered had caused him to immediately leave the area because of his background and taking that information with him.

Marcello: During this period, did you give very much attention to world affairs?

Mrs. Isaacs: We gave enough attention to this, and I clipped all the newspaper writings about it and have them at home--the reports of the search for Lattimore and his disappearance. The Honolulu newspapers printed about it at that time and I kept the clippings. I don't think I was as interested in world affairs then as I am now. But I know that when I went to Honolulu, my father said to me, "You'll be caught in a war over there." Now he was interested enough. He followed these things but I didn't. I said, "Oh, Dad, you're just imagining."

Marcello: When you thought of a typical Japanese, what sort of a person did you usually conjure up in your own mind?

Isaacs: Well, we were living in the middle of Japanese, Chinese, Portuguese, Hawaiian, and we saw them. That was what

they were. I mean, we had no prejudice against them. We had nothing . . . we were there for survival, really, you know, and there was no . . . Mrs. Isaacs worked in the Liberty House with Japanese people and Hawaiian people. There was no . . . we had no . . . we may be more prejudiced now, which is probably normal as you get older, than you were at that time. Of course, in 1949, we were so curious about the Japanese that we went and spent a year in Tokyo, Japan, just to live around them and with them and just to try to understand them a little bit better.

Marcello: How safe and secure did you feel in Pearl Harbor?

Isaacs: You mean in Honolulu before Pearl Harbor?

Marcello: Yes, before Pearl Harbor.

Isaacs: We were completely safe. We had no feelings of any attack or anything of that sort. We felt that we knew that the Japanese had . . . were conquering the Far East, and we were safer in that respect. We knew that they were doing a lot of fighting and that their war machine was . . . but we had no idea that it would happen.

I was more concerned, actually, when we were in the San Diego Bay in 1937 and 1938 with the Japanese fishing boats that used to come in there. I was more concerned

with them than I was . . . of course, in Pearl Harbor we were in an enclosed harbor, where in San Diego Bay, well, commercial fishing boats and commercial ships could come into that area.

Marcello: Without trying to put words in your mouth, would it be safe to say that if war did come between the United States and Japan that you believed most of the action would probably occur in the Philippines or certainly somewhere in that particular area rather than in Pearl Harbor or the Hawaiian Islands?

Isaacs: Yes, that would be my guess. If I had--at that time--to pinpoint where it was going to be, I would say Midway, the Philippines, areas out in that . . . Guam, Samoa, those areas there which, to me, would be the logical way . . . that the Japanese were doing anyway. They were moving out from the Japanese homeland and taking those areas as they came to them.

Marcello: As you socialized with other Navy couples, did the subject the possibility of war ever come up? Now I'm sure that when the husbands got together they couldn't avoid shop talk and things of this nature. Did you ever talk very much about the possibility of war between the United States and Japan?

Mrs. Isaacs: No, we didn't. Even though there was some indication that things were not just as they should be--for instance, the

waterworks of the City of Honolulu had been barricaded up with sandbags, and strategic points like that had been sandbagged and so on--it still didn't occur to me that we might be at war, and we never discussed it among ourselves. And, of course, then when I went to work at the Liberty House, I certainly didn't discuss it with the employees there because they were civilians, and some of them were Japanese, as John said, and some were Chinese and some were Hawaiian. There was no discussion. In fact, I really did sort of feel that it would happen.

Marcello: Did you ever become suspicious of any of your Japanese neighbors as relations between the United States and Japan grew steadily worse?

Mrs. Isaacs: Not until after the attack (chuckle).

Marcello: Well, this, I think, more or less brings us up to the days immediately prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, What I want you to do at this point is to describe to me what exactly your activities were on Saturday, December 6, 1941, from the time you got up until the time that you went to bed. I want you to go into as much detail as you can possibly remember on that particular day. Then after we discuss Saturday, December 6, we'll talk about the Sunday of December 7. Okay, Mr. Isaacs, we'll start off with you, first of all.

Isaacs: The liberty policy of the USS Dobbin was that we would have port and starboard liberty, which meant that you would go . . . say you would go Monday . . . if port was on Monday, then the starboard watch would stay aboard. On Tuesday it would reverse itself. On the weekend it would change, where you'd have also Saturday and Sunday.

So this particular weekend I was to be free for December 6 and December 7. Normally, our liberty would start about noon on Saturday. So a little after noon, well, I put on my uniform and my little sailor hat and went ashore. To go ashore to Honolulu, you have to go first by motor launch to the landing, and then we took what is called a jitney which hauled about six to eight people, or there might be a bus. The bus would then take us to downtown Honolulu. From downtown Honolulu, I was close enough to where we lived on 515 Circle Lane that I could walk. So I was home approximately at two o'clock. As I still do, I would take my siesta and get a few hours of sleep.

Then we went to another Navy couples' house--Bland McConnell and his wife. We had been friends with them for a number of years when we were stationed . . . when we were first married in San Diego, they were friends of

ours. So we stayed with them awhile. We didn't stay too long. Then we came home and listened to the radio, and then we went to bed. So that is my recollection of December 6.

Marcello: I gather, then, that you didn't do too much socializing on that particular Saturday evening.

Isaacs: There was no . . . if we . . . if I had a drink, I don't even remember it. I don't remember . . . sometimes we would have one or two drinks but nothing riotous or anything that would . . . there was very little socializing done as far as the drinking part. It was just talk, small talk, that we did.

Marcello: Do you remember what time you did go to bed that night?

Isaacs: I think it was around ten or eleven o'clock.

Marcello: Mrs. Isaacs, are there any other details that you can remember from that evening that your husband failed to mention, or was this basically what you did that particular evening?

Mrs. Isaacs: We went to the McConnell's, and we didn't have but . . . as he said, normally, we would stay, but for some reason we decided to go home early, and we did. I do remember that we went home by bus, and Kenneth hands this bus driver a five-dollar bill for bus fare, and he couldn't

change it. We were going to stop at a place and get some change. We were going to go right in to get it, but the drugstore or whatever it was was closed. He said, "Oh, forget it." So we rode the bus free that night. But when we got home we sat around for awhile. He and I stood and looked out the kitchen window for awhile and then went to bed.

Marcello: While you were visiting the McConnell's, did the conversation more or less take a routine course, or did you talk about world events or anything of this nature? Did you speculate about what the Japanese were going to do next? Because, after all, the Japanese ambassadors were in Washington and this sort of thing.

Isaacs: Nothing of . . . as I said before, it was just small talk. There was no . . . we weren't . . . as I can recall we were . . .

Mrs. Isaacs: Well, the feeling, I think . . . there was a feeling in the city at that time amongst the people. I believe that there was. I was working at the Liberty House, and that day people were shopping for Christmas. They bought like there was no tomorrow. All the service personnel were spending as if this was going to be their last Christmas for buying gifts that they probably wouldn't have bought

otherwise--expensive gifts--and these were to be mailed back. I had a terrific sales day that day. I think there was a tension there because . . . but no one put it into words.

Marcello: Generally speaking, on a Saturday night among married couples in the Hawaiian Islands, was there a great deal of partying and things of this nature that usually occurred? In other words, partying that went on till the wee hours of the morning or anything of this sort?

Isaacs: Not with the particular group that we were in. They may have been . . . I think there was indications that higher ranking people . . . there were quite a lot of beach parties. There was quite a lot of hotel activity, quite a lot of home residence luaus and that sort of thing, but it wasn't . . . it never reached that stage that we have here in San Antonio, where every weekend there's five or six murders. It hadn't reached that particular activity.

Marcello: Okay, I think this more or less brings us up to the fateful Sunday itself, and once more I'll ask you to give me a blow-by-blow account of everything that happened on that Sunday morning of December 7, 1941, from the time you got up until all hell broke loose. Or maybe all hell broke loose before you got up that Sunday morning.

Isaacs: No, it was no difficulty. We had a very enjoyable sleep that night. We slept real sound. Mrs. Isaacs got up

first. Normally, she would click the radio on, but she didn't. We feel that she was up around seven o'clock. She went ahead and fixed breakfast, and then she called me, and then she turned the radio on. The same announcement came over the radio: "All military personnel report to their ships or station!"

Marcello: Now at this particular point I gather that you had not heard any explosions or anything of this nature.

Isaacs: We had not heard anything even though we were close--fairly close--to the downtown area.

Marcello: How far were you from the Pearl Harbor Navy Base itself?

Isaacs: We were . . . that was approximately ten miles from Honolulu to Pearl Harbor, and I was only about five minutes' walk from downtown Honolulu where I would normally catch the bus or catch a jitney.

Marcello: Did this radio announcement indicate that the military installations were under attack?

Isaacs: It did not.

Marcello: So in other words, I assume, therefore, that you were returning back to your vessel at a rather leisurely or regular pace. Or was there a sense of urgency in your getting back to the ship?

Isaacs: It all depends how it strikes you, and that particular morning I said, "Honey, it's just a drill. It's just a drill." And I think I started to go out the door, and she said, "Well, I already have breakfast ready. Why don't you sit down and eat breakfast?" So I sat down and ate breakfast. I still felt that it was a drill.

Then as I walked out and I . . . walked out of the house, and I had gone maybe two blocks. I realized all of a sudden it wasn't a drill, and I started running. I'd run awhile and I'd walk awhile the five minutes that it took to get down to the bus station or jitney station. There was a jitney there. There were four or five sailors around. We all piled into it, and we headed toward Pearl Harbor and the landing where the ship would pick us up. Even at that time, there were planes overhead, and you could hear strafing. Even in Honolulu there was noise going on, so I knew this was for real. It wasn't a play thing.

Marcello: What time did you finally leave your apartment?

Isaacs: I would say I left the apartment probably at a quarter after eight.

Marcello: And the attack--as best we can tell--probably began sometime around 7:55. Isn't that correct?

Isaacs: That's right.

Marcello: So as you mentioned, you were setting a rather leisurely pace. Now had you kept the radio on, and was there any further information coming over the radio before you left the apartment?

Isaacs: The other announcement, after they said "All personnel return to their ship or station," was that the Japanese planes had . . . planes with the rising sun had been sighted. As far as really alerting us, it seems like communication just wasn't there.

Marcello: Okay, so describe the trip from the time you got in the jitney till the time you got back to your ship.

Isaacs: So after we got in the jitney, it was a sort of hectic ride. He was moving as fast as he could, and everybody was excited. We all wanted to get back to our ship or station. We tried to pay him, and he wouldn't take any money. We had to go through the gate there with the Marines. There was no problem there. They let us go right in. We could have been Japanese agents, and we would have went right on in because everything was thoroughly mass confusion.

Then we came down to the landing dock where normally our liberty boats would come in and pick us up. I lucked

out. There was a fifty-foot motor launch that came along from our ship. They picked me up, and we started back towards the ship.

As we went back towards the ship, Battleship Row--the area that the torpedo planes and things came down on--we turned facing it. As we turned facing it, I saw this big hulk that looked like a barge or something that had been turned over. There was a couple of other men in the liberty boat with me, and we were discussing it and the coxswain said, "Well, that is the battleship Oklahoma!" It was upside down and it had capsized. The Arizona was on fire at that time, and there were still planes overhead.

Marcello: Now where was the Dobbin located in relation to the ships on Battleship Row?

Isaacs: We were tied up to a buoy at the northeast end of Ford Island with destroyers. There were five destroyers alongside of us. They call it Destroyer Division Number One, plus the USS Phelps. The destroyers that were alongside was the Blue, the Helms, a couple of others, the Hull, Dewey, Worden, USS MacDonough, and the USS Phelps. They were tied alongside. We could nest as many as wanted to nest on one side of us.

Getting back to your question, going down Battleship Row, facing it, then we veered off to the right, and we went partly around the island, which would be about maybe a half a mile, and we were tied up in that area there. There were several ships--several other nests of ships--that were tied up out in the . . . to some of the other buoys, too.

Marcello: By this time, I gather that you realized what was going on.

Isaacs: I realized what was going on the minute after I was two blocks from home. I realized that there was just no tommorrow, that we were faced with a war, and we were going to have that problem.

Marcello: Describe what the trip was like from the time you got in the motor launch until you got out to your vessel. Were there any incidents that occurred during this period? In other words, was the motor launch strafed or anything of that nature?

Isaacs: The motor launch was not strafed. The harbor was full of oil. A lot of oil . . .

Marcello: Was it afire yet?

Isaacs: It was afire around the Arizona and where the battleships were located. It was still burning--the water was. The

Oklahoma was . . . the oil was still leaking out of it, and, of course, automatically it was on fire.

Marcello: I would assume--and correct me if I'm wrong--that at this time the first wave had already passed by, and were you heading for the Dobbin during the lull?

Isaacs: We were heading for the Dobbin, but yet the Japanese bombing planes were still overhead. The torpedo planes had already done their damage, but there were still Japanese planes overhead at the time that I . . . in fact, we were not attacked by the enemy planes where we lost our casualties until, oh, 9:10 when we were actually attacked because their primary targets, which were the battleships and the dry docks . . . they had done that, and then they were looking for other targets. Of course, one of the reasons they would move to us is because we had an admiral aboard ship, and with an admiral aboard ship, he has his flag. Whether they were that wise, which I think they were, they knew that they were hitting a command ship of the Navy, which they would actually prefer to do.

Marcello: As you were aboard the motor launch and heading toward the Dobbin--I'm sure that you were excited--but did you have time to survey the damage that had been done at

this time? And if so, what sort of emotions or thoughts were running through your mind?

Isaacs: To see a battleship capsize like that is a horrible thing because you don't realize how much of a battleship is under water. It's enormous. It's . . . you can just imagine what the biggest whale would look like. Well, that's what that turned-up Oklahoma with the keel sticking up there looked like. In the background was the Arizona smoking. My thought then was that I didn't know if we were ever going to get out of there alive or not. I had the feeling that it was just the end of the line. The man upstairs had called your number, and you were going to get it before the day was over.

Marcello: Approximately what time did you arrive aboard the Dobbin?

Isaacs: I would say that I was there maybe at 9:30. Coming aboard, the thing that they handed you first was a life jacket. The next thing they handed you was a helmet, and the next thing they handed you was a gun. They were well organized for a destoyer tender, which normally is not a fighting ship.

Marcello: I was going to ask you what the conduct of the ship's crew was at this time, and from what you say, I gather it was one of professionalism rather than one of confusion or panic or something of this nature.

Isaacs: We had a very good commander who was a repair officer, and I remember he was at the gangplank when we come aboard. His name was Skinner, and he was a lieutenant commander, a Naval Academy graduate, and he had . . . they respected him a whole lot. He really was . . . I thought he was really great. The fact that he was there when you come aboard, I mean, it gives that sense of security. All our liberty ships . . . all our motor launches--I imagine we had about eight--were in the water picking up survivors, taking them back to their ships, and doing what could be done. In other words, we had nothing--no small boats--aboard our ship at that time. They were in the water doing what they should do.

Marcello: Now at the time that you arrived back aboard the Dobbin, had the Japanese as of yet picked it out as a target? You mentioned that it was flying the admiral's flag. Was this to occur after you actually boarded the Dobbin?

Isaacs: This occurred about twenty minutes before I boarded the Dobbin.

Marcello: And had the attack already been completed by the time you got aboard the Dobbin?

Isaacs: That particular attack had been completed. There were still miscellaneous Japanese aircraft overhead. They

were still bombing. Bombs were still dropping, and our antiaircraft people were still shooting. At the same time that all of this was going on, we were passing provisions and, more important, passing ammunition to the destroyers that were still alongside for them to begin to get underway. All of the destroyers that were alongside us left with a full complement of provisions and ammunition.

Marcello: What did you specifically do aboard the Dobbin after you returned to it?

Isaacs: I went to general quarters. I was in the deciphering organization. My only job, really, was to carry messages from the deciphering room to the captain of the ship. So I went immediately to my battle station. We were still at battle or general quarters, as they call it. I went to that particular area. There was no activity that went on, and after the man in charge secured me after awhile, I was free to . . . and I went down and reported to my . . . to the navigator who was the . . . my particular section. I was the only one in the section, and I was in there as a navigator's yeoman. I had a lieutenant in the reserves who was the navigator.

Marcello: You brought up a very interesting question at this point. I know that as one got closer and closer to actual entry

into the war there was an influx of reserves being called back into the fleet. Did you have very many of these reserves aboard the Dobbin?

Isaacs: We had . . . I can recall of three. We had a Naval reserve dentist who come aboard, and it later turned out that he wasn't . . . the Naval life wasn't for him. He had been at Coronado, California, servicing the teeth of the wealthy people out there, and the Navy just wasn't his dish. We had two Merchant Marine officers who were in the reserves who come aboard, and the one who was my boss at the time was a J. F. Acker, Jr. He was a fine, young navigator and a fine, young officer. He had been called to active duty in the Navy. He was a lieutenant junior grade as the navigator. It turned out that he was a fine, young officer. We had another ensign aboard who, I don't think, ever adapted to the Navy life. He was an old-time Merchant Marine officer, and they are really something to behold when you associate with them at all.

Marcello: By the time that you got back aboard the Dobbin, had most of the officers returned? I would assume that most of the officers had been ashore, also.

Isaacs: Most of the officers had been ashore, and most of the officers had returned. Our two doctors were aboard in

the sickbay. The commanding officer lived aboard ship. Our executive officer had lived ashore, but he was back aboard ship. I would say that by the time I was back that most or all of the officers were aboard ship.

Marcello: What damage did the Dobbin sustain during the attack, if any?

Isaacs: The Dobbin sustained only shrapnel damage. As far as a direct hit on the Dobbin, we didn't receive any. The material damage was minor. We lost a motor boat hull that we were repairing. It was about thirty-five feet long. It's a boat that is used primarily for the officers. We had a number of small holes through the decks, bulkhead, beams, and we had damage to three radio transmitters. As I stated earlier, we were set up for tremendous communications as a flagship if they decided to put an admiral aboard. Of course, we were able to repair all of that damage except for the motor boat hull which was declared a total loss. They surveyed it.

Marcello: Did very much action take place aboard the Dobbin after you had returned to it?

Isaacs: You see, the action never stopped from the time I got aboard all through that night. There was . . . we had a continual influx of survivors from other ships. We took on 200 Navy men from the USS Raleigh, which was a

Navy cruiser. We also . . . any other survivors whose ships . . . when the destroyers got underway, there were still men ashore, you know, so any survivors from those ships, we took them aboard and logged them in and fed them and berthed them until we could get them back to their own ship.

Marcello: In other words, those destroyers didn't wait around. When they picked up enough steam and got enough power and had gotten the ammunition and so on, they took off. They headed for sea.

Isaacs: They headed for sea, and also some of the destroyers were partly dismantled. So all during the attack and all during the day, we were repairing and getting those destroyers ready to go to sea. It took some time to . . . it was in the middle of the afternoon before our ship was completely cleared of the destroyers.

Marcello: Mrs. Isaacs, what were you doing in the meantime? Now had you been continually listening to the radio and receiving the latest reports during this period, that is, from the time that your husband left and headed for the Dobbin?

Mrs. Isaacs: Well, first I went about cleaning up and still wasn't aware we were being attacked. I went out to the trash

can. The landlady's daughter said, "Isn't it awful about the Japanese attacking us!" That was my first . . . so when I went back in, I listened to the radio a little bit, and they said to us, "The rising sun's been sighted on the planes' wings! Stay in the house! Get off the streets! Don't look up!" So what do we all do? All the Navy wives in the house go out and look up to see what's happening.

Marcello: Were you able to see anything?

Mrs. Isaacs: No. Then we just more or less got together and talked. The landlady's husband was a Navy Yard worker, and they had to go back, too. They were called back. He left with his house shoes on because he thought he'd be gone about thirty minutes or so. Late that afternoon, Mrs. Keyes decided to go over to her mother's, and she told all of her tenants that we could stay in her apartment because we didn't have telephones in ours, and there was a telephone there. We kept thinking we might get some word.

So we stayed there. We just talked and kept wondering what was going to happen. That night was the longest night we ever put in. We had a woman across the street that came over there, and she was very excitable.

She stayed with us for the night, and she got real upset at every little movement. Anyway, during the night . . . it was a real moonlight night. It was as clear as it could be. She'd look out the window, and she'd see a shadow of a tree, and she'd want to call the police. She finally did call them once. Then we insisted that she not call them anymore because we might need them and they wouldn't come. But they told us on the radio to go about our business the next day. If we were, to go to our job; and if we didn't, we were just to go about normally.

Anyway, along about three o'clock in the morning there was an elderly Japanese couple that went down around Circle Lane, and this lady from across the street got so excited she wanted to call the police again, and she was "blank, blank, blanking" us because we wouldn't let her.

One other girl worked at the Liberty House, so we decided we'd try to get some rest. About that time Mr. Keyes managed to get home, and we told him where his wife was. He left and I guess he arrived over there alright.

But about four o'clock in the morning some activity happened over around the waterworks, which was not too far

from us, and they fired their machine guns. Man! You could have heard . . . this woman was trying to put us all down in the floor and so on, and finally she said, "Well, if you want to get your heads blown off, go ahead and do it!" But it was a real experience. It really was.

Marcello: How much were you thinking or worrying about your husband?

Mrs. Isaacs: Well, we were worrying. We were wondering. We kept thinking, "Well, we'll get some word. We'll get some word." But I didn't get any word from him until a week later, and he had written me a letter and mailed it that night. It took it a week to get there. When it came, it was cut right in two. I don't know what . . . half of it was about four lines by four lines.

But I went to work the next day and worked right along . . . the Liberty House was turned into sort of a guard station or something, you might say. The upstairs could be blacked off, and they had patrols for the city, you know, night patrols. Anyway, they could feed those people. The Liberty House, then, became sort of kitchen for the change of the guards--the civilian guards.

Marcello: Were you able to survey any of the damage that was done to downtown Honolulu? Now from what I gather, there were

not very many bombs that were actually dropped on the city. Most of the damage there was from falling shrapnel and this sort of thing, actually, off the ships in the harbor. Were you able to survey or see any of this, or did any of it occur within the immediate locality of your apartment?

Mrs. Isaacs: No, the only thing that occurred was the firing at four o'clock on the morning of the eighth from the waterworks. And I guess the guards there at that time . . . I think that they were sort of trigger-happy. Why it was fired, I don't know. That's the only thing.

Marcello: I'm sure that those ships were one big rumor mill that night. What were some of the rumors that you heard aboard the ship that night?

Isaacs: Well, there weren't really too many rumors because we . . . at 2115 we went back to general quarters because we had another plane attack come in, which is 9:15. Also, from the Aiea Hills and the plantations around there, there was continuous gunfire.

Marcello: You could hear this on the Dobbin?

Isaacs: We could hear this from the Dobbin. In other words, we were only about half a mile from there, and, of course, being more or less in a harbor there, the sound would come

up. So there was continuous firing and continuous activity there which we never did learn about, but I'm sure there . . . it was clear that damage was being done and that there was . . . of course, with . . . we were up all night. There's no question about that, and we were . . . and there was all kinds of activity going on because we were getting . . . as I say, there were still personnel reporting aboard late at night. There were personnel from our ship that were missing.

In fact, I can remember one man that we thought that . . . his name was Harris, who was an officers' cook. It took him, I think, four days before he came back to the ship, and we wondered what had happened to the man. We thought, "Well, he's either killed or he's either been taken by someone else to work." It turned out that he got as far as the Navy Yard, and they put him to work right over at the Navy Yard, and they wouldn't release him. They also wouldn't notify us that they had him. When he came aboard, why, it was all cleared. But he would have been the type of man that if I had to grab a man I would have grabbed him because he's about 6'3" and he was all solid man--solid muscle--and that was what they were really looking for in the Navy Yard.

We also . . . we had one man who was killed off our ship who was not . . . who didn't make it back, and his name was Marze--Andrew Michael Marze. He was a gunner's mate first class. He went aboard the USS Pennsylvania, and he was fighting the air attacks at that time. He was killed by a bomb.

Marcello: You mentioned awhile ago that some planes came over again at 9:15. Were these the planes off the American carrier USS Enterprise?

Isaacs: We never did know except that they sent us to general quarters because of the fact of communication. We never did know, but thirty minutes later, they moved us back into a condition three situation which would give every indication that the planes were possibly our own.

Marcello: Well, when those planes came over at 9:15, I gather that every gun in the harbor opened up on them.

Isaacs: No, not as I recall. It could have happened, but I don't recall that every gun in the harbor . . . because every . . . as many of the ships that we had in the harbor that could get to sea, they went to sea because they didn't want to be boxed in.

Marcello: I do know that when those planes came in from the Enterprise that two of them were shot down. Apparently,

they had not given the proper identification, and they were actually shot down by American vessels in the harbor itself.

Now Mrs. Isaacs, you mentioned something very interesting here, and this was certainly a deviation from what happened to most of the other service wives. Apparently, the Navy never made any attempts to get all of you together into one place or anything of this nature. Again, maybe it was because the dependents were scattered out. I think all of the Army personnel were . . . all the Army dependents, rather, were housed on base housing, and I guess that's the reason they kept all of them together and actually sent them into town or into the hills. But that sort of thing didn't occur with the Navy dependents.

Mrs. Isaacs: No, they did afterwards give us instructions as to what we were to do--that they were going to send us home and that sort of thing. But not at that very moment they didn't. The City of Honolulu or the _____ . . . they began to tell you . . . they'd divided the city up where you might . . . whatever area you were in , you would go to in case of an all-out attack again. Incidentally, one of the cashiers in the department I was

working in was a little Japanese-American woman, and when they were outlining the areas that we could go to in case of an attack, Jane said to me, "You can come to my house" because they were in that area. And they kidded me quite a bit about that--that a Japanese offered me a place to come to in case of an attack. But she was a Japanese-American.

Marcello: How did your attitude toward the Japanese change as a result of the attack?

Mrs. Isaacs: Mine didn't change. To some of them, it didn't. There was one of the maids in the Liberty House that my attitude toward her changed. I didn't like her very well to begin with maybe (chuckle). That might be the reason I changed my attitude. I always felt that she was maybe a little . . . one of the things, you know, that kept . . . when the convoys left there after the attack or when they began to move their families out, you could see from the top of the Liberty House from the top floor, you could see where the ship was pulling in to tie up. She and one of the other janitors would get together and talk. They'd be hanging around and trying to listen, it seemed to me, and I feel that she was maybe spying or something. She probably wasn't, but that was my feeling.

Marcello: Mr. Isaacs, how did your attitude toward the Japanese change?

Isaacs: Of course, I really hated them, and I think the one thing that really sparked that hate is that sometime there in the afternoon I went back to the fantail of the ship, the rear of the ship, and we had two canvas covers. They were fellows that I had known and who had been killed during the attack. We lost three men off the ship. They were back on a . . . we had a three-inch antiaircraft gun. The moment of truth probably more than anything else and the hatred that one would feel would really come out because these were fellows that I had known from the time they'd come aboard ship, being in the personnel office. One of the men I had worked with on deck when I was a deck hand. You fell that at that point of view that anything Japanese or anything pertaining to them would be just . . . if I'd had fifty Japanese standing in front of me and they'd give me a gun to mow them, I would have mowed them down.

Marcello: What did you do in the immediate aftermath of the attack? In other words, what was your function, yours personally?

Isaacs: Well, as I stated, I reported back to the navigator, and in addition to my duties with the log, I also handled

all of the money and the financing of all the laundry receipts and the cobbler and the barber and the ice cream machine that we had aboard the ship. That was an additional duty that I had.

Marcello: What I was referring to was after the attack had been completed altogether. What was your particular function or what were you doing? Were you involved in any rescue work or anything of this nature?

Isaacs: No, I was not involved as far as shore parties or anything of that sort because we went about our regular duties.

Marcello: In the immediate aftermath of the attack, did you try to find any scapegoats or blame any particular person for what happened?

Isaacs: Well, we blamed the communications people, that it could have been . . . we felt that possibly liberty . . . the lack . . . liberty situations that we had in the Navy could have been tightened up.

Marcello: You mean on the basis of the obvious deteriorating relations between the United States and Japan?

Isaacs: And we felt that the ships should not have been in there, that all ships . . . because it was an ideal . . . it was an easy run for torpedo planes moving down the channel

there for the battleships. We felt that Lahaina Roads would have been a better berth for the fleet. It was a more of an open harbor that they could get out because after the attack . . . moving after the attack, we used to . . . as much as we loved the aircraft carriers we still had left, we hated and we shrank every time they came in because when they would come in, why, we were fighting a Japanese midget submarine because the midget submarine would come in right in under with them at the torpedo net. It's still vivid in my mind that a week or so later that the patrol boats were dropping depth charges within a hundred yards of our ships at these Japanese midget submarines. Of course, they finally did recover one of them, I think, but how many more or how many might have been false alarms, I'll probably never know.

Marcello: You mentioned something awhile ago, and I want to pursue it farther because you may know the answer to it because of a particular function you had aboard the ship. You mentioned that all of the ships were--most of the ships obviously--in the harbor, certainly all of the battleships. Was this basically an economy move? In other words, I gather that during this period the Navy was kind of strapped for money, was it not?

Isaacs: No, this was strictly a recreational move. These ships were normally operating out during the week, maybe two or three weeks at a time. Then they would bring in a certain number of them for leave and recreational and let them go ashore in Honolulu. For that reason they probably had the relaxed liberty hours that they had because I would have a very strong feeling in my own mind that they would get as many people as they could ashore into the City of Honolulu. There were quite a few . . . since battleships and carriers had been out there quite a long time, there were quite a few additional Navy personnel wives who had come into Honolulu. Whether it was paid for by the Navy or not, they were there. The battleships prior to that time had been in San Pedro, California, for years, and, you know . . . they were plank owners and maybe felt that maybe they would go out for a week of gunnery practice off the coast of California and then come in for the weekend. Then when they moved the fleet and moved all that personnel out in Honolulu, why, you ran into a different situation entirely. But the Navy knowing, and the Naval Operations knowing, what was coming about, I felt that it was a lax situation on that day. Of course, it's awful to second guess (chuckle).