

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW #460-2

with

Hisao Kimura (HK)

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Waimea, Hawai`i

BY: Holly Yamada (HY)

HY: The following is a continuation of an interview with Hisao Kimura, session number two.

Okay. I think one of the things you mentioned yesterday was the formation of the home guard?

HK: Yes, the home guard.

HY: And that all you folks had to turn in your firearms. What kind of training did you get?

HK: Training as a home guard? None whatsoever. We were called into the Parker Ranch office which was used as the so-called headquarters in Waimea. And Parker Ranch management offered that office there because it was spacious and can accommodate more people. And we were just called in and given instructions. Just for the day, where to go and guard that area. And my duty for the first night was---the day of the, day or two after the Pearl Harbor attack we were afraid that they might be invading this Big Island. So myself and Thomas Liana, we were assigned to go up to Hoku`ula Hill which is on the. . . . Short distance from the headquarters here. They built a little shack there for the home guard to stay overnight. And we were able to---we were supplied two horses and a shotgun and we went up there and stayed in a little shack made of one by twelve. Stayed all night in that cool weather and guard the---and just got to observe the---the reason why [*the guard station was located there*] Hoku`ula Hill is high up above the area, enough to see down the coastal line, low lying leeward area of the island to see if we can observe any light coming in, which means that the enemy might be coming in. And that was the only duty I was asked to do. That particular one night. And thereafter we were not even asked to do anything.

HY: Was that whole---all of the home guard people or just some of them?

HK: That's a---I cannot answer that. I don't know why we were asked. Some of us were asked and some were not. But I believe that it was more of a home guard comprised of most of the Parker Ranch employees. That's the way I looked at it, yeah. At that particular night we were told to watch very carefully for any lights that coming in on the coastal area because the report came in that they saw light coming in down the Kawaihae beach area. And we didn't see any light at all.

HY: Do you remember how you felt about being asked to do that?

HK: Well, we were. . . . Hard to explain how we felt. We felt, well, we were apprehensive of

course, and we were scared. Just scared, you know, don't know what (was) going (to) happen because we not trained to protect ourselves. We're not equipped at all. Even a shotgun is no---we know that's just a dummy, you know. It's not going to do any damage. And the funny thing about it, I don't think we were given any ammunition.

HY: No bullets?

HK: No, no. Yeah, no shells.

(Laughter)

HK: And that's an unusual one. And it was just like showing that we had something, some protection, what do you call, some plan to protect this area. I don't know what happened at that particular time, our island national guards [*Hawai`i Territorial Guard*] were called away to another island. And not because of the Pearl Harbor attack, not knowing that Pearl Harbor attack, they were called to another island for training or something like that. So at that particular point we didn't have any National Guard on this island. We had no protection at all except the police department, but we had only one police officer in Waimea (laughs).

HY: Who was that?

HK: That was Arthur Akina.

HY: Oh, the sheriff.

HK: Yeah, yeah, sheriff.

HY: What do you remember about the shortages and rationing?

HK: Shortages.

HY: Were there food shortages, supplies?

HK: Shortages of food prior to the war?

HY: No, during the war.

HK: Oh, during the war, I would say during the war because of the influx of the number of military people moving in this area, we were, in a way, in a sense, fortunate. Because whatever excess food they had in their barracks, they used to share with the people in the community. And somehow we made friends after a while. And in fact, sometimes, we trade some things with them.

HY: What would you trade?

HK: Well, if they wanted a quart of whiskey, we tried to save a quart of whiskey or something like that and trade. And they used to---those people working in the kitchen particularly, they used to just throw in some slab of bacon, whatever. Food shortages I can't imagine, except we were very. . . . It was very difficult to get any choice of beef because the demand of beef was great. And so Parker Ranch was fortunate. In fact, every food producers were very fortunate because

the demand was great. Not only the beef, but the vegetables. Particularly vegetables and beef. And at one time, our disc jockey at that time was Lucky Luck, Robert Luck, his proper name I think was. He was a well-known disc jockey in Hawai`i. And he used to come up on the radio and says whenever you go into Waimea you see nothing but dollar signs because whenever he sees a cattle, there's dollar signs on the head of the cattle, see. It was such in demand because of the military, influx of large number of military people.

HY: Was Parker Ranch able to meet the demand for beef?

HK: Yes, Parker Ranch was able. In fact, that period the slaughter---the slaughterhouse was kept quite busy and Mr. Ota, as a butcher man all alone, cannot upkeep---skinning, killing, and skinning the animal. So they brought two workers from Hawai`i Meat Company from Honolulu, from the slaughterhouse. And it was something to just go and see these two men skin that animal. They were really good, fast. Whoa, professionals. Compared with Mr. Ota or any one of us. They were good. Yeah. And we used to go and just watch them how they skin the animal.

HY: Entertainment.

HK: Yeah.

HY: Was it difficult to get alcohol?

HK: Yes, we were---we got our alcohol based upon ration and we were allotted a ticket every week. And the ticket says one quart and that's it.

HY: One quart?

HK: Yeah, one little token thing. And Waimea stores didn't carry any liquor.

HY: Were they forbidden to carry?

HK: No. I don't know why, but we had to go to Honoka`a which is about fifteen-minute drive from here. So we all pool ride. Not everybody has a car here. So we all pool a ride and go to Honoka`a because you gotta go and purchase yourself. You cannot carry another person's ration. (So you need to have carpool and almost every trip to and back from going to Honoka`a town to get your ration of liquor---someone will share his quart and we all help ourselves until the quart is empty. This sharing went on like having each one taking their turn of offering his quart on rotation.)

HY: And that's it for the week?

HK: That's it for the week. Your ration is gone (chuckles).

HY: You mentioned that you might trade whiskey for something with the military? Was the military restricted with alcohol?

HK: Very, I believe so. But probably they did have some drinks, but hard liquor I don't know. They used to love it, you know, they used to. . . . And we as civilians made friends, some of us made friends just purely to get some things out of it.

HY: What was it like with the blackouts?

HK: The blackout was very hard to get accustomed because—of course we had kerosene lamps. We didn't have any electricity and all of the windows had to be inspected by the MP [*military police*] (and including our local guards). They come and check practically every night. See if any lights are leaking out and we all had to install a blind in each window and if the blind is not installed properly the light will leak. There's a slight leakage and they'll come and check and they'll remind you to get it fixed. Night traveling was prohibited. You can't travel in the night at all because of the blackout. However, working for Parker Ranch we had a special permit. As I mentioned, I was pumping water at that time. And pumping water at odd hours, five hours during the day and sometime all night when I go back and pump again for the whole night . . .

HY: In the dark?

HK: In the dark. So what happened is, the car that I'm driving belong to the company, belongs to Parker Ranch. And the light, the headlight had to be inspected and they have. . . . They paint the headlight black with a small little opening. Just enough for the driver to see. Just few feet beyond the car, ahead of the light, you can see the road. Not any more further than that. So when you drive the car in the night you had to go very slowly and carefully. You cannot observe, you know, wide spectral light area. And traveling was very difficult and then coming home after you finish your work at night coming home in the dark, very likely you'll be stopped once or twice on the way home by the military people to inspect, see who you were and what not.

HY: So what would they say to you?

HK: They stop and then we gotta show our credentials and say that we were Parker Ranch employee.

HY: How was the---I know there was gas rationing, how was that?

HK: Oh, yes, we had a gas rationing also, gasoline rationing. And I forgot how many gallons we were allowed.

HY: Did Parker Ranch get any kind of waiver for that?

HK: Yes, Parker Ranch as a commercial---commercial people had special rationing. They were able to get, I believe, almost, I wouldn't say any amount of gas, but they had more than what the civilians can get.

HY: What were the social activities during the war?

HK: Social activities during the war was practically, practically none. Except we do have our own family of friends get together and have a little party. And there were occasions when you have such an occasion where you have civilians as well as the marines. Because at the outset of the arrival of the marines, we didn't form the, we didn't get friendly with them (for some time). But gradually we became friends because they needed the help also because taking for instance they needed someone to do their laundry or. . . . They were very nice about it. They (became) friends with the civilians very rapidly (thereafter). So whenever we get together as a social

event, you have your marine friends there, too.

HY: When Camp Tarawa first was established [*Military camps were first set up March 1942. The site became known as Camp Tarawa when survivors from the battle of Tarawa arrived in 1943.*], this was the beginning of the first great influx of military. Initially, how did the community react to their coming here?

HK: Coming here? One of the---before the arrival of the marines we had some indication that something is going on because the army engineers [*i.e., U.S. Engineer Department*] came before them. And they took over all the, not all, but we had just limited amount of service stations. Some of the service stations where they repair cars, and what have you, were taken over by the army to do repair work for their vehicles. They brought in a lot of four-wheel drive vehicles and supplies and tents and what have you. And all these vehicles were stored up underneath the trees. Wherever there's a row of eucalyptus trees, or whatever trees, it was taken over by the army. And that's where all of this heavy equipment stored away underneath the trees. And at that particular time I felt very bad for the army boys because it was continuously (raining), having a light Waimea drizzle. And they were in the mud most of the time. Vehicles going in and out with the heavy equipment. My gosh, sometimes you can't even pass through on foot. So muddy. And that's where their (sleeping) tents were underneath the trees. Also, [*that's*] where all the vehicles were stored away. And where I was living (in the Parker Ranch house (it) was one of those locations, (with) a long row of eucalyptus trees. And (adjoining) the Oda Store, I. Oda Store, there was a garage, Ryusaki's Garage. Ryusaki's Garage was taken over by the army to repair their cars. Yeah.

HY: Is this Parker Ranch house the same one that you grew up in or was this a different one?

HK: This is the one I grew up in.

HY: Okay.

HK: And this---fortunately after the war, our home, our Parker Ranch home was the first one to be renovated. It was [*renovated from*] a single-room to a two-room and then after the war they added on three more bedrooms. We had a five-bedroom house and the house is still there. They got it well painted and one of the employees, (a supervisor and family, are presently living in it).

HY: And this is all provided for by Parker Ranch?

HK: Parker Ranch, yes. Finally after the war they renovated the house. It took quite a while before they did. Yeah.

HY: You'd mentioned earlier about your Red Cross activities when the military came or . . .

HK: Yes, the Red Cross was something that we. . . . Our lady folks, particularly the lady folks were kept busy and they began to gather together. And Richard Smart's home was open for that purpose. And every day---and as I said, I was one of the drivers on the ranch. Vehicle driving---drivers on the ranch were just limited. You can just say [*only*] so many drivers on the ranch and nobody else can drive the company car. That was a policy that A. W. Carter had always maintained that he cannot see anyone, any employees driving the company car. Had to be approved by the management. So I was one of those drivers and I used to pick up all the

ladies every day, take 'em to the Red Cross headquarters.

HY: Richard Smart's home?

HK: Richard Smart's home. And after the day's over I have to take them all home again.

HY: What would they do there?

HK: Oh, they were preparing bandages. Mainly all bandages. Preparing all bandages and packing the bandages to be shipped out. And at the same token they were taught how to do first-aid. And then the menfolks organized a first-aid squad. And I was a member of the squad and we, under Dr. [Timothy] Woo. Dr. Woo was our Parker Ranch doctor, he conducted the first-aid class to four of us in Waimea. And gave us tests and so forth. And Kona, Kona also had a first-aid squad. And we got together Richard Smart's home right out in Richard Smart's yard. The doctor will give us a competitive thing for both squads—the Kona first-aid squad and the Waimea to compete each other. And what we did was, there's a patient lying on the ground in the yard, and we as the first-aid squad, when he says go, and then we go run up to the patient and pick up the paper and you gotta read what kind of injury this person has. And you gotta do your work. And who does the proper way and the fastest way will be the winner.

HY: Who won?

HK: Waimea won, yeah.

(Laughter)

HK: We had that practice all the time here, you see. It was fun. And when I look at a photograph today, one of them is Sherwood Greenwell, (today) he's a big rancher in Kona [*Kealakekua Ranch*] and he (eventually became) a politician and he was our council member. And today he's retired and another (member of the Kona squad) was Iwao Jyo. Iwao Jyo (in later years became a) developer and he has housing development in Kona. He became quite wealthy man there in Kona.

HY: Did you ever have to put those skills to use?

HK: No. Never did. I don't think we ever did, except on the job. While you're doing on the job sometimes it comes in handy, particularly when you get, well, if you have a bleeding case, you know how to take care the bleeding.

HY: What do you mean on the job?

HK: Well, working (with fellow employees of the ranch). After when---when Dick Penhallow our assistant manager became a manager [1960], he in fact, conducted a first-aid class for all the employees. It was almost a compulsory thing that we should have, eh.

HY: Was this men and women together?

HK: No, just the employees. Just the employees. Men.

HY: Men.

HK: Menfolks. And we (even) had water safety, too. We had to go through all of that.

HY: I had read that there was an anthrax epidemic on Parker Ranch during the war. Do you have any memories of that?

HK: On Parker Ranch, on the cattle?

HY: On the cattle.

HK: Oh, oh, yeah, this---I think what you mean is this disease that attack the cattle.

HY: What is it their . . .

HK: Blackleg.

HY: Blackleg.

HK: They call it the blackleg. And we had never, never heard about it. Never had a case of blackleg disease infested our cattle here. And this was a very questionable thing. Naturally the FBI [*Federal Bureau of Investigation*] came in to investigate how this blackleg got into Parker Ranch.

And they couldn't---they thought someone within the ranch, or within the community, somebody was sabotaging the cattle industry. You know not the cattle industry particularly, but the food, the source of food for the marines.

HY: Did they ever announce their findings?

HK: I don't know what happened to that case. I think my brother was one of 'em that was asked several questions. And only, only, I believe the only solution they came through was we have influx of so many marines here from all over the country, from all over the states, they might have unknowingly brought in the disease with them. Carried them. That's the only solution, I think, they ever had at the conclusion.

HY: How did it affect the productivity of the cattle?

HK: Blackleg will kill an animal, a healthy animal dies overnight suddenly without any symptoms of sickness. A healthy animal can just die. And one of the way of diagnosing, I believe, they used to cut the animal open and usually they say blackleg because it's underneath the arm pit, you know. The blood clogs under there, comes black. And they call it blackleg. That's the reason why the name blackleg came in. But that disease is deadly. The animal will die overnight. Yeah, without warning.

HY: Did it impact on the meat supply?

HK: Did it. . . .

HY: Did it affect the meat supply at all?

HK: Not to, not to a great extent that it affected the productivity of the production of the cattle industry. But it hurt somewhat, though. I believe, fortunately, the blackleg or cattle disease does not transmit into the humans. That's one of the. . . .

HY: But humans are carriers?

HK: Humans can be carriers I suppose, yes. They could be carriers in a sense where, say if you carry with your shoes walking on the dirt, and the disease is still on the shoes and walking on the ground, you do carry the disease. And this blackleg disease, I believe was more or less, first found in the area of the pasture where the pasture was moist, so was constantly moist. Dry land is not that bad. Moist land the disease multiplies faster.

HY: How did the military---did the military respond differently to say the Hawaiian community as opposed to the Japanese community here?

HK: It's hard to say on that. When they first arrived, yes. They recognized the Orientals (without any) question. We were looked down upon. Marines didn't like Orientals (at) all when they first came in because the attack was by Japan. But eventually (the situation has changed realizing that we were all Americans). Maybe when you form some friends, you know, and they all trusted each other. And, yeah, but for a while, yes, there was a strong feeling there, yeah.

HY: Did they distinguish between Japanese and the Chinese, 'cause I know there was a small Chinese community here?

HK: I don't think they could have at the outset, though between Japanese and Chinese, yeah, yeah.

HY: Did you ever have access to going into Camp Tarawa?

HK: I did not have, except I had a very interesting two weeks going into the officers' barracks here. Richard Smart's uncle, we didn't know that he had an uncle, but we were told that he was a specialist doctor at Tripler Hospital. And he was treating all his---he specialized from the neck up. I don't know what type of doctor you call that, but he was a specialist from the neck up. This is what he told me, the doctor. And he came up about two weeks in our camp, Camp Tarawa to have his two weeks, more like R and R [*rest and relaxation*] thing. And we were told he's coming. So the management at the ranch at the time, Hartwell Carter and A. W. Carter assigned me to be the chauffeur for him, to take him around wherever he wants to go during the day for that two weeks. So I was his driver---every day I (drive) into the barracks and then wait for him.

HY: Can you describe what it was like inside the barracks?

HK: Well, it was barracks---it was well built. It's all tent. And where the officers' barracks were, the doctors and what have you. . . . The tent was over a wooden platform. The floor was wooden and there's a tent over it. Normally the marines have their tent (built) on the ground. But the officers have wooden floor. And they're well kept, neat, very neat. And every street (had) a name of one of those marines who have died in action. So every street has a name in which it's a person's name. Yeah. It was something to---there is a aerial photo as well as other photos on the stand at the Parker Ranch office of the camp.

HY: What happened to the local Japanese farmers here with the demand for more produce?

HK: Oh, Waimea farmers---I can't recall how many farmers we had, but just a limited number. And most of the farmers at that time in the [19]30s and [19]40s, they were aliens from Japan. These are the Japanese who had went through their contract [*as contract labor*] at the plantation [*sugar plantations of Hamakua and North Kohala*]. After the contract they went out to farm, acquire leasehold land [*from*] the Hawaiians and they were farming here in Waimea. And the---it was a very, it was a struggle for our farmers because the transportation to marketplace was very, very primitive way. There's no definite transportation where you can ship your produce. And to begin with, the farmers didn't know what kind of produce to raise for market. (Variety of vegetable crops were limited.) The main crop was head cabbage and corn. Corn was mostly---every farmer had corn. (At which time) we didn't know there was sweet corn. (Field corn was the only variety known to farmers.)

HY: When you say field corn, does that mean for cattle feed?

HK: Cattle feed, yeah. And you have a limited time to consume (for human consumption) because it gets matured so fast. Sweet corn you can leave it for a little longer. I think the field corn is tasty, I live(d) with field corn, I like(d) it. But they get tough and hard very rapid. If it's ready to be eaten, you better eat that week because the next week it's going to be over matured. And I don't know why they were raising lot of pumpkins, (at that time). They had *daikon*, yeah, lot of *daikon*. And the marketing was (on the cattle boat) to Honolulu of course. And Parker Ranch had a little steamer called, *Humuula*, [*owned and operated by Inter-Island Steam Navigation Co.*] and it comes into Kawaihae at least once a week. And this is a way farmers used to ship their vegetables to Honolulu. And another product they used to ship was chicken, live chicken mind you. They raised the chicken in the backyard on the ground. Nobody knew how to raise chicken above the ground. It was raised on the ground, young chickens. Put 'em in the crate and ship to Honolulu, to the market. And (there) was one of the marketing person [who] would go around (observe) and select the chickens as he goes house-to-house. And he buys the chicken and ask them if they want to ship (them). And buy the chicken and he does all the preparing, put 'em in the crate and ship to Honolulu. And I used to go along with that man when I was a little boy. [*Kazuo*] Fukushima [*of Fukushima grocers*]. Fukushima was a man that goes around and ship this chicken out. And somebody's chicken would be shipped even to Hilo but I didn't see any---how a local chicken could be shipped to Hilo because there's no transportation. It's hard to believe, but from Waimea to Hilo, mind you, we didn't have any transportation. The only source of---a way to get into Hilo, when I was going to Hilo [*High*] School, you go to the Pa`auilo sugar plantation train station. And you get on the train from Pa`auilo station and travel to Hilo on the train. And I didn't see anybody shipping chicken or vegetables through that train.

HY: What kinds of vegetables did they start producing---because of this new demand---that they hadn't previously?

HK: Yeah, just prior to the war, just prior to the Pearl Harbor attack, [*Yasuo*] Baron Goto and Judge [*David McHattie*] Forbes of Waimea, Baron Goto is a native of Puako, which is right beyond Kawaihae. Baron Goto was a county extension agent [*with the University of Hawai`i*] and they were trying to help the farmers improve a variety of vegetables to be grown for commercial use. For human consumption, you know. And they were introducing a new type of seed. And one of the new ones was the head lettuce. The farmers in Waimea didn't know there was such a vegetable as head lettuce. And so Baron Goto had brought in the seeds through someone else and then taught them how to raise head (lettuce), carrots, and celery. And broccoli was not too

well known either at that time. It was sort of a new vegetable out here. (Both Judge Forbes and Baron Goto were instrumental in sponsoring the Waimea Community Fair.) The fair was an incentive for the farmers to show what they were producing on their land and bring it out to the fair. And then it was very competitive and they took great pride in that. And in that way they were, the extension service people, were promoting the farmers to improve their productivity as well as the type of variety of vegetables to be grown. And then war broke out. So it was timing, was just about the timing, where the farmers didn't know what to grow and here they were just beginning to learn what to do. And when the war broke out, they were, I would say, almost ready to meet the demand. And as we look back, about the farmers in Waimea, as well as the Parker Ranch employees, these are the people who comprised the population of Waimea. The farmers, the employees of Parker Ranch, and few county road department workers. The farmers, as well as the Parker Ranch employees, with a low income they were having, need to have someone to support them whenever they need some help financially.

(At the time) we didn't have any bank. No bank was ever thought about those days. So we used to form, *da kine*. Well, we had a general store, I. Oda Store was one of 'em that really helped the farmers as well as the ranch employees. In my case, as a ranch employee, my father depended upon Oda Store. Whenever he need food we always purchase on charge account. And farmers were the same, similar things. And whenever we needed cash, we even borrow(ed) the cash from there. In our case, ranch employees, we go to the ranch office and ask for advanced payment in cash over monthly salary. They'll deduct from your payroll every month. And I would say that maybe, probably about 90 percent of the farmers as well as the ranch employees had some sort of a debt, either to the ranch office or to the store, I. Oda Store. And when the outbreak of this war and all the demand of these vegetables and what have you, people began to see some money. Lots of money. I would say lots of it. Even myself when I was pumping water, I pumped water five hours during the day, I come home and I have so much time, daylight hours was, you know. . . . So much time I had during the daylight hours, I did part-time farming. I went into raising celery. And when I was raising celery, we used to compare notes, we used to visit another farmer, get together with a farm agent and learn how to raise this vegetable. Nobody knew how to really---way of raising this celery. And it was a lot of fun. And the income was so good. And then all of a sudden you would hear a story, news go around from one to the other: "Oh, this month I had a \$1,000 check come in." That kind of deal. Then the next time you hear, "No, I had a \$2,000 check." Income, you know. And not only from the celery but from the income from all the vegetables they sold. So every farmer became---they begin to see money. Of course, the first thing they did, most of them I'm sure, was take care the bills they owe to the store, whatever. You know the debts were all paid up. And some of them after the war, naturally with the money they had acquired during the war, they build a new home. Some of the farmers, as I said, some of the farmers didn't have a home (that's painted). Unpainted home. After the war things have changed a lot. So while some people were suffering from the war, some areas they were benefitting from the war. And this is one of the benefits this small little community (experienced).

HY: I think we're about out of tape here.

HY: Okay you were saying that you had begun to grow celery and found it was very profitable. Who would you sell to? Was it primarily to supply the military?

HK: Yes (and no). We, at this particular time, began to—particularly the farmers—began to see how business is run. What makes a good businessman. Any kind of type of business had to be well planned and organized. And fortunately, the county agent had a lot of input in this, (when) they

saw the importance of getting a co-op. Farmers must get together and form a co-op. Well, some of the farmers were quite skeptical at the time. But they had no choice because unless they get organized, they cannot meet the (market) demand(s). Nobody to plan, co-op will make all the plans, receive all the demands, and they will give this information to the farmers, what to raise because these are the demands you have to meet, you know. So they formed a co-op and this was one of the best things they ever done. So every month, you go to the co-op office and they'll tell you this week, "Hisa, it's your turn to supply, since you have only celery, this is your opportunity, your chance to supply the celery for this month, this week rather." If you have any other vegetable, they'll assign you what you should be bringing out. So you don't have to go and look for the market, you just go to the co-op office and they'll tell you what you supposed to be supplying this week. And over and beyond that now, if it's not my turn to supply the local market here which is the marines, then I ship my produce to Honolulu. You know, you have a--because we formed a co-op, the co-op will make all the marketing arrangements for you and it was so convenient as a grower. Your duty was to just grow, don't worry about marketing. Somebody else going to take care that which was very well planned, coordinated. Of course, we looked for a local market first. When your turn comes in to supply the local market, the reason in back of it is you get (high) net profit, practically everything is net profit. (No shipping cost.) You don't have any further expenses. So you look forward (for local market). And the price is good, locally.

HY: Was this co-op affiliated at all with Parker Ranch or was it completely separate?

HK: It's separate, it's a private, yeah. And what (was) sad---I feel very sad after that. After the war, now, some of the farmers became very rich, all right. The big farmers, we call them the big farmers, broke off from the co-op because they established their own market in Honolulu after the war. And they formed another co-op in Honolulu and which eventually didn't last too long because something went wrong with the co-op in Honolulu. Middleman supposedly was accused of making all the money and the growers were not getting their fair share, and all that. Some internal problem came in so they dissolved that co-op in Honolulu. Yeah, they dissolved it. So now at the present time, the big farmers who are well established have their own market and they practically control the market. The small farmers---a new farmer come in the picture---(does) he ha[ve a] chance to market his vegetables? This the problem they're facing today because they not organized. The farmers have always been---ever since the war money have changed a person's attitude of doing business. Money has power in other words. And they begin to follow that pattern. And so the small fellow stays small and the big fellows gets big. And then the big farmers would try to---they would never encourage or help the small farmers. "I'm looking after myself, you look after your own." Everybody so independent. So what happened here, still to today, you cannot have some self-sustaining state to supply your needs of the state in terms of produce, vegetables. They still have to import. They not well organized as yet.

HY: What happened to the original co-op then?

HK: Yeah, it just dissolved because of the internal problem, again, comes in.

HY: How soon after the war, then?

HK: Oh, it didn't last too long after that, yes. It carried on, though, it did carry on after the war for a while. And then, you see, a farmer capable of producing, outproduce the others feels that, "Say I'm producing much more than you do and why can't I have more. . . ."

HY: Profit.

HK: “Profit or marketing privileges, you know. Why should I let the small ones cut in and I have to withhold my produce. I have to sell my produce, too.” So they say, “Well, I might as well be on my own.” So everybody is on their own. But till today I find one of my good friends down here just purchased the land, very expensive farmland—and yet [*he has a*] FHA [*Federal Housing Administration*] loan. And he has his obligation to meet his mortgage and yet he's having a difficult time because he's a new farmer. You as a new farmer, where can you find a market? You gotta get down to Honolulu and see some of these people and open up a market. But they say, “Well, we already have so-and-so to buy from.” So they're having a really tough time. But farmers are---it's not only farmers, I believe anybody else when they become rich, they do have a very independent way of thinking. Yeah, they take care of themselves first. And we always say that we need to—big farmers should look after the small farmer, too sometimes, because they (are) in the same business.

And we are---unusual thing happening today on this island, just on this Big Island. Honoka`a [Hamakua] Sugar Company, [*Inc.*] just folded up. There are thousands of ag [*agriculture*] land there. Now, what are we gonna do with the ag land? And what kind of produce---if they going to ag, and I'm sure major portion of the land will be used as ag, diversified ag, maybe. So now they must be told what type of produce to plant. They gotta do all the research here. So basically, we starting all over again like before the war. It's coming to that point again. And if we do get to that point, do we need to get organized and form a co-op again? This will be an interesting thing. And I think it's gonna follow that same pattern. I was just at the---I was just in the office yesterday and discussing about it. And they say, “Eh, we coming to the same point.” Because we talking about a Waimea [*Community*] Fair how we promoted quality vegetables, we promoted variety of vegetables that farmers didn't know existed and these are the type that public demands for food. And now this Homokua Sugar [*Co., Inc.*] land will be on the same basis. What are we gonna raise over there? They gotta find that out. What is suitable to be raised over there? Once they find the answer to those things, they have to get together to market. You cannot go independently. I don't think you can ever do it because the big stays big and the small is gonna suffer, yeah.

HY: Did you continue to raise celery beyond the war?

HK: Good question. You know my whole family knew that I had made so much money and so much of it out of this small little patch of celery patch. And I was working at the ranch, where like a young man I was not the type to break my back and make money (chuckles). I stopped farming. It was a backbreaking thing. Although my neighbor was a farmer, he loaned his tractor to me whenever I needed it to clear up the land. But (when) that was done, I did everything by hand, yeah. But it was a backbreaker.

HY: So you gave it up?

HK: I gave up. I stop altogether, yeah. And yet, at times after that I felt kind of regretful because I thought, I should have kept up a few more years after that.

HY: What kind of wages were you earning at Parker Ranch?

HK: Parker Ranch wages, you'd be surprised. The dollar value in those days was much, much, of

course, how many times better than today. We all know that. We were being paid about that high, I would say the medium salary was just about fifty dollars a month. The high, next step above that was about seventy-five dollars. And the top bracket about \$100, \$125. And that's about it.

HY: I remember you saying something about everybody had to take a 10-percent cut and this was before the war.

HK: Before the war.

HY: As a result of the depression I guess. So this would have been the 10-percent cut of somewhere between . . .

HK: Yeah, when you first start on the ranch, you would get somewheres around dollar, dollar quarter [*\$1.25*], dollar half [*\$1.50*] a day. Yeah, amazing, yeah. It would go into---and then if you go through the probational period, so-called—they never say you on probation, though—but when you pass the stage then the normal standard wages would be about \$45.75 [*per month*] somewhere around there—\$45.00 or \$47.50. That's the standard. And if you get to the next bracket, you going to the 50, and 75, and 100 [*dollars per month*].

HY: What about the piggery that was established as a result of . . .

HK: Yes, when the marine camp---marines moved in, there were several mess halls in the camp, of course. Not just one big one, you know. They had their own mess hall. And Parker Ranch had the first opportunity, I think. They were offered—if Parker Ranch needed all of the scraps or garbage that comes out of the mess hall, so Parker Ranch took it. And one of our Parker Ranch employees, with a truck of course, goes take daily route and pick up all the garbage, scraps, table scraps, you know, every day from all the barracks and feed to the pigs. We establish a big piggery. And right below the camp, mind you. Right below Richard Smart's home, in fact. Richard Smart wasn't here of course. He was a young man yet. He was away. He hardly come home. Anyway, right below the present Richard Smart's home, there was a big area. A beautiful spot (warm and dry) and the natural barrier there with (four-sided) stone wall(s) and the pigs were in there.

HY: Who bought the produce from the piggery? Or the product from the piggery, was that again supplied back to the military?

HK: Yeah, yeah. And the slaughter . . .

HY: It was sort of a cycle . . .

HK: And then yeah, yeah, right, right. And then, of course, beyond that, excess pork will be shipped to Honolulu or wherever the market. And we had---as I said, they brought in two expert professional slaughter men from Hawai`i Meat Company. They were something to watch, how they work.

HY: Did they slaughter pigs as well [*as cattle*]?

HK: Yeah, yeah.

HY: Oh, I see. Now, with Parker Ranch making more of a profit with the war, did it affect your wages?

HK: Well (laughs).

HY: Did they stay the same?

(Laughter)

HK: That's an interesting question. They should have, but we didn't see much of a change (laughs). But however, right after the war they really improved all our living conditions. Our houses, particularly our living quarters, our homes. Parker Ranch homes were renovated.

HY: You think that was a result of the profit they made?

HK: That's right I'm sure.

HY: So, you continued to do the water---work with the water pump job during the war?

HK: Yes, I did. And not too long after that I was transferred back to the agronomy departments.

HK: And then, and then I went very, very---I was kept quite busy with the reforestation program. Yeah, 1960 on under (manager) Dick Penhallow, but unfortunately he left us in 1960 (same year). Up to 1960, from 1950 to [19]60 he was the assistant manager, when Hartwell Carter retired he became the acting manager. But, however, he didn't finish the year, he resigned. And this is the year Richard Smart came back from the Mainland to stay. And evidently there was something that went wrong between him and Richard Smart. He left. But prior to his resignation, he and I worked on reforestation program. Our goal was 100,000 trees per year to be planted throughout the ranch because we get so many barren areas on the ranch and we needed some trees. And Richard---Dick Penhallow was a great one for that, he loved trees. And as I mentioned yesterday, we worked together with the state department, forest department, they raise all the seedlings for us and we tried all kinds of pines. And we established some beautiful trees on the ranch. After Dick Penhallow left us, the program just dissolved---faded away. Then---so my work for the reforestation program has just been limited. At which time now, the problem came up on the ranch where 1960 to 1970 was a very bad year. Very, very---just the opposite of the war years. We were not making money. All ranchers were [*not making money*]. And we were at the mercy of the middleman, you know. The grower always suffers. Somebody else on down the line making the profit I suppose anyway. And all ranches were not making money including Parker Ranch. And this is the time that Signal Oil came in, 1960s and helped the ranch. They helped the ranch (temporarily). And that kept the Parker Ranch going again. And then the latter part of 1960, we had a new manager on the ranch coming in. After Mr. [*Radcliffe*] Greenwell, our new manager came in from Phoenix, Arizona. The consulting firm [*Rubel-Lent & Associates*] took the management position, which was an unusual setup. A consulting firm meets his contract after three months. And the consulting firm---they were asked to be the manager, manage the ranch, by Mr. Smart. And one of the consultants, members of the consulting firm, said it to me that it was a very difficult decision to make because the result of the study they made on Parker Ranch. The book was that [*Hisao Kimura indicates about two inches*] thick and made all kinds of recommendations. And he telling me, "If we gonna take the managementship that was offered to us by Richard Smart, we gotta eat all the words in there [*the study*] and live by what we have written in there which is an unusual

situation we facing.” So it took them quite a while to make a decision to accept that offer from Richard Smart, but however, they took that offer. And the consulting firm assigned this person, Gordon Lent as a manager. The head of the consulting firm was just the head, he has nothing to do with the ranch. But however, this man who took over the ranch as a manager, he's still a member of the consulting firm. So he's dual type of a duty. He's still obligated to the consultant firm to make further---keep their business going on. They have other areas to work on and he was involved with it. That's why [*tape inaudible*] managing Parker Ranch. And it was quite interesting. Yeah. At which time, this is the time 1970, the new management under this consulting firm, promoted me to be in full charge of the agronomy department. All the work that the consulting firm had done on the ranch was coordinated by. . . . I was the middleman, more like. And whenever they needed any information, and I worked together with them. And whenever they needed to look over the land, we hired a fertilizing company. They have---what do you call---fertilizing [*crop dusting*] the plantations. They have planes and they took us, hired them, and in fact they offered the service to take these consulting people over the air, on air, and see the entire ranch. And we went down to the airport and Richard Smart came down and he was supposed to go with 'em. And he look at me and he says, “I hope you can go instead of I go. Would you mind taking my place?” I went with 'em. I enjoyed it. We went all over the ranch. So I learned a lot through the consulting firm. Then after a while they promoted my position from the tree nursery to overall Parker Ranch agronomy work.

HY: Just to go back a little bit, when the military started leaving, how did that affect your work, then?

HK: How did that affect?

HY: After the war, the military began leaving. I don't know if they left all at once or gradually. . . .

HK: It---when the military left us, it left us sort of dumbfounded-like. In our minds we thought we were left---our minds were just blank-like. What are we gonna do now, you know? A lot of unanswered questions comes to our mind. The major one is that, where's our friends? They didn't come back. They went to Iwo Jima and the heavy casualty. We didn't know. Nobody, this all---military secret is so tight. Not even your closest friend within the barracks down here, marine, won't tell you. In fact, I don't think they (knew) where they (were) going from here. They won't tell them. And we didn't know where they went. When they left this area to go to the battleground---of course not all of them went, some of them were left back to look after the camp here---but major one, they all went to the battleground. We all know they went, but where to we don't know. But after everything settled down, we all heard about Iwo Jima. The heavy casualty that incurred over there was so heavy that naturally we began to realize that our friends probably died there in action. That's why we didn't see them. (Some of them) came back once, you know. They came back. But we don't see (a whole lot of) them. Sad. That's the feeling we had, the sadness comes in and the emptiness comes in and all (of a sudden we wonder): Is this the result of the war? And the close relationship we had with those boys sort of was a---it's a sad ending. It was sad.

HY: So you did get very close to . . .

HK: Yeah, some of them were very close, very close, yeah, yeah. And one of the---and then for the people of Waimea, for us, for particularly. . . . For we've been here for all our life, we felt that we've broadened our mind quite a bit because we got associated with people from all over the States.

And some of them were college graduates, you know. And some, they were good athletes and what have you. And our minds became broader, we learned more. And a small, little sleepy town became a little more of (chuckles) a cultured people now. That change had occurred and with that, with that change now, this is what happened when I work at the ranch, we used to have an annual *lu`au*, beautiful *lu`au*. Parker Ranch *lu`au* was one of the best, in fact the best. We all say that I don't think there's another *lu`au* like that. All voluntary workers, all willing workers that come out and help for two weeks preparation, at least two weeks. And we used to enjoy the fellowship, you know. And again, I was the driver. The workers, I go and pick 'em up and drop 'em off. And then I begin to learn how to decorate, so me and my Boy Scouts were the people who decorate that *lu`au*, the hall. And I wish I had some pictures of that *lu`au*. Anyway, what happened was after the war we had couple more *lu`aus* continue on same, the same way. But now, the workers want to get paid. They learn something from the war: that whenever you do things you supposed to get paid. If not paid, well, they want something in return, you know. This is something that the war had taught our sleepy-town people (chuckles). And so what happened, the management of the ranch says, "Well, it's causing too much problem. If this is the case, well. . . ." This is one of the reasons, not only the reason. The other reason was lot of crash-in people used to come in to the *lu`au*. They heard about the *lu`au*, oh my God they crash in, you know. "Oh, I'm a friend of the Kimuras here, that's why I came. I mean his guest." They come and using an employee's name and try to crash into the party. So the management says, "Let's stop the whole thing." Then we don't have anymore *lu`au*. We miss it. I really miss the *lu`au*. But people change their attitude now. Whenever you do things now they want to get paid.

You see during the war, what the ladies have done at home, housewives made money by doing the laundry (for the marines).

HY: Did your wife do laundry?

HK: No, I think she did sometimes. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. My mother was with me, too, you see. You know if get 25,[000], 30,000 marines, by gosh, that's a heck of a lot of laundry. Women you need. So housewives were making money, too, you know. Yeah. And these are some of the same women who used to go to the *lu`au* and work. And they know when they do those things they get some money. And they get paid for it (laughs). People begin to change. And the more you think about it how, really, humans are unusual creatures. Money can change a person's attitude, character a lot. And you often wonder which is much more important the money or. . . . you know, yeah. Here we missing the big *lu`au*, wonderful *lu`au*, because of this type of things. The people attitude changed. So we not getting the benefit of the *lu`au* anymore (chuckles).

HY: Did you feel---did you experience a drop in income then with---I guess, they wouldn't be doing laundry anymore and there wouldn't be a demand, as much, for beef and produce?

HK: Yeah, drop in income is yeah, yes, yes. That's, yeah, that's a big drop. As far as people's way of lifestyle of living you had to make adjustment after the war. That's another adjustment that you had to face. And what happened---a very interesting thing happened after the war, I think I should mention this, is that we (had) a limited area of social life because of the blackout, because of restrictive martial law that we have to abide by, as far as---we didn't have a really, totally freedom of doing things as we want to do, as far as socially, social life. After the war it took a few years after the war, though, people began to splurge and have get-togethers. And then (in) this community we formed, like any other community, like Hilo, our neighbor

Honoka`a, Kohala, Kona formed a dance club, social dance club. And we called it---and then ballroom dancing came in. Every community had, and we used to visit club by club, make our rounds. And I---when you look back today, we don't have anymore of that now, but when you look back, this was a wild party. We went wild, yeah (laughs) yeah. It's more like when you release the animals, eh, they went just wild like.

(Laughter)

HY: What would you do that was so wild?

HK: Well, I tell you, it was---social life is lots of. . . . Well, liquor was flowing freely for one thing. Because you can buy any amount of liquor now, you know.

HY: The ration's over.

HK: The ration's over (laughs). And drinking is heavy. Oh my gosh. And the hours, the crazy hours we used to go. And during---we used to have dance class, of course, to learn how to dance. And the instructor used to come all the way from Hilo. And in-between, after the instruction, we had to practice what we learn. So we go to individual homes, now. "This is my turn now, you folks come to my home." Next time his turn and we go practice before the next session. Then when the instructor come, at least we had some practice. That's home social hour. Each individual home used to open their home, now. And when you open your home for practicing session, you have to have refreshment, drinks and what have you. Cost money, yeah, yeah. And that thing went for a while but it just broke down, stopped right away. Getting nowhere. It's just spending money.

HY: Why do you think there was this big splurge after the war?

HK: I think we were just, let's say, we were just craving for something. Craving for something different, the way we were just restricted was---several years. And we want something different.

HY: The release.

HK: Yes, the release from ourselves.

HY: How soon after the war did electricity come to Waimea?

HK: Oh, almost immediately. Nineteen forty-five the war ended and we suspected we gonna have that electricity because the military had established a big, big generator here. You know, erected a big generator. Supplied the marine camp. And if . . .

HY: They had electricity?

HK: Yes, they had, yeah. And so we knew that if that generator can supply that many people. I'm sure that Waimea, our (small) community (can easily be supplied with the same generator). And then fortunately Hawaiian Electric Light Company took it over. And then gave us the electricity.

HY: They took over the same generator that the military had been using?

HK: Yes, they took over. So (folk) like us (who) were working for Parker Ranch, naturally we have Parker Ranch homes where we cannot wire our own unless we request (and) Parker Ranch will get the (electrician) and do the wiring. And then we were allowed only so many floor plugs. I think floor plugs was just limited. And then (no) wall switches—no, none. They won't give you that, because of the expense I guess.

HY: Oh, so you have to unplug?

HK: No, (to light you need to pull a cord attached to the socket).

HY: Oh, I see.

HK: You gotta pull string. Later on, individually, we put our own switch later—on the wall.

HY: Parker Ranch told you not to put in switches?

HK: Yeah, yeah. If you want to you have to pay your own type, I think.

HY: What about the water supply? Was there a demand for . . .

HK: Oh, this is one of the. . . . Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned about the water supply because with the influx of 25,[000], 30,000, 35,000 marines—where do you get that drinking, domestic water? Because we didn't--this community with 6[00] or 700 or 500 population, inhabitants of that small a population, we had very primitive type of water system. All surface water, no reservoir. The water comes down and they block the river and build up the dam. And this is how we were getting the water. This is--that would never supply 25,000 marines, or whatever. So when the marines--prior to the arrival of the marines, the army corps engineers, Seabees were here. They were preparing all of these things. And we didn't even suspect the marines were coming in. They were preparing and they built that reservoir. They built two reservoirs. Not the huge one. I don't know how many thousands of gallons in there. Anyway, they built that. So when the war ended, we got that. We are fortunate to have that now. (However, by 1970, even before 1970, the reservoir the marines built was not sufficient.) This community grew so rapidly now. So they built two more big, big reservoir over 50-million-gallon reservoir. So percentage of growth in Waimea on the Big Island--I just got some news the other day was that, South Kohala has the highest percentage of population growth (on this Big Island).

HY: So you've grown beyond . . .

HK: Beyond that level when the marines left us that water supply. Yeah, beyond that. Another good thing about the war that benefitted this part of the island was, they built the Saddle Road over the mountain to Hilo. That's a big plus. And our water system again, going back to the water system, we never could have gone with a vehicle into the watershed area, you know, forest where our water come from. We had to walk in, get as far as you can go with the car. No four-wheel vehicles, so you had to walk into the (watershed to reach the) water head—(source of the water intake). Parker Ranch has water rights up in the Kohala Mountain. And we had to monitor that waterline and take care of the maintenance of that waterline. We had to walk. And this was one of my Boy Scouts' duty. Every summer we go and work in there and clean up, clean the pipeline we call it. All the brushes and whatnot growing over the pipe. We had to

clean all of that. Due to the war, now, when Seabees came and they made a road through that. We can go right in with the car, now. Yeah. Some things are. . . . Also, the [*dirt*] road right around Mauna Kea was built by the Seabees.

HY: And was the airport. . . .

HK: Oh, the airport was built---none, none, we didn't have. After the war, I'm sure it was after the war. Yes.

HY: Okay, I think we're coming close to out of tape again.

END OF INTERVIEW