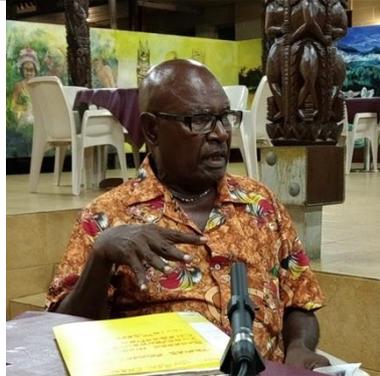


Name:	Demas Malvu Kavavu
Date of Interview:	16 May 2017
Location of Interview:	Kavieng, New Ireland Province
Chief Interviewer:	Lalen Simeon
Duration of Interview:	44:55
Main Language of Interview:	Tok Pisin
Image:	

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Time	Transcript
0:00	<p>[Interviewer]</p> <p>Alright thank you. We are with Demas Malvu Kavavu. The interview is conducted at Kavieng hotel, on 16th of May, 2017. Demas is the former deputy premier of New Ireland Province. Thank you, Demas for taking the time to be with us in this interview, and it's up to you if you want to speak in English or pidgin, mix both. It's up to you. But what we are interested in is for you to tell us your, any story if have experiences, or if you were a young man during the war. We are interested to hear anything about the war from you please.</p>
	<p>Thank and good night. Before I start, my name is Demas Malvu Kavalu. I was born in Kaskas village that is Ward 12, just near Kavieng. My birth date is 2nd of March, 1936. My father worked as an aid post orderly and so there is record showing my birth date.</p> <p>I am pleased to meet with you to tell my story. A reason is that, there is much confusion today. People have blamed the government of the day. They think</p>

foreigners, like the Aisians or the Whites rule in New Ireland province. Such arguments are happening in New Ireland.

But if we reflect on New Ireland's history, it was in 1516 that the first travellers from Europe discovered New Ireland, a Dutch did. That is very important.

But many New Irelanders think the foreigners have just recently arrived. So they think whatever developments or changes that are happening in Papua New Guinea, are foreigners' ways of doing more business. However, we have forgotten that when the foreigners arrived our ancestors had no clothes on. Many years back, New Ireland was one of the places in the world to practise hunting, horticulture and agriculture. So my ancestors were here before the foreigners arrived. So when you see foreigners bringing development they have followed their ancestors to this place. They first arrived when our ancestors lived their primitive ways; feasting, had no clothes on and killed their enemies. So that's an interesting observation comparing New Ireland's past and present. This has to be mentioned now that there are complaints about the government.

Franz Boluminski, a German arrived in New Ireland in 1900; he was the administrator. Just along the road, where the bridge is, is where his house was built. During his time, he brought Asians to be carpenters. And so this is another reflection on New Ireland's past and present. But many educated people here, even those who attended universities, still blame foreigners for dominating the business sector in Kavieng. So if you trace back into our history our ancestors lived here before the foreigners' arrival but they came and have stayed with us and have developed our province.

Well, the war started here in September 1914, but the Australians removed the Germans and so the war did not continue. They settled here then. On October 17, 1914, their administration was established in New Ireland. Then later on the 23rd of January, 1942 the Japanese arrived in New Ireland. On 24th January, 1942 the Japanese fully occupied New Ireland.

So people should not complain about Asians operating more businesses here because that is their culture. My culture is about slaying pig and chewing betelnut. And so if I have to keep up with what's happening today, I really have to work hard; which involves a change of attitudes in order for changes to happen in New Ireland. So these people arrived during the Second World War. At that time I was young.

We were weaving sago leaves for thatched roof when the first plane dropped a bomb at a plantation at Balagia- a place near Bol village. That afternoon they dropped bombs there. I was a small boy then so I grew up during the Second World War. Life was very tough then. At that time the Japanese had a principle, 'Do as I do, don't do as I say.' You have to follow orders and if you don't you will be beaten from your leg up to your head and then down again. And you must bow down like this.

	<p>We make gardens at night because the main airfields were destroyed by the Australians, New Zealanders and Americans which resulted in shortage of food supplies and so we concentrated on making food gardens in the bush. We made gardens for their survival. So at nights we made gardens and on Sundays we attend school. We learnt two things at schools; how to count and sing. We were taught to count in Japanese: ichi, ni, san, shi, go, roku, sichi, hachi, kyuu, juu, juuichi, juuni, juusan, juushi, juugo, juuroku, juushichi, juuhachi, juukyuu, nijuu. They repeat this only for five times and we must listen and repeat after them. After the fifth time we must stand in line for the oral test. So whenever they tell us to stand in line, I would be the second last in line. The reason why I take the second last place in line is so that when those ahead of me count, it helps me to remember to count correctly. So when it's my turn, I say it well. That's it. Their songs are about the war. After they teach us the songs, they tell us to demonstrate. "You must stand straight. (Words of the Japanese song). After the song we say, "Australia, America and New Zealand are number 10, Japan is number 1).</p>
	<p>[Interviewer] Do you sing a choir with these songs?</p>
	<p>Yes of course. So whenever they come to this camp, we stand in line and sing these songs.</p> <p>Their laws are tough. You have to strictly follow their laws. If they say, 'do this,' you must do it. If you don't you're beaten. That's important. And you must always tell the truth and not lie. The other thing they emphasised was to work hard. You are not allowed to sit down, not to sleep but to always work hard.</p> <p>There's a place outside Kame. Richard may remember a sago palm near the road at Kame which is not there anymore. Lebiroma is somewhere there and it is where submarines brought the American, Australian and New Zealand armies. Whenever they came, they used the rubber boats to come on shore. As soon as they reach land they deflate the rubber boats, folded them and went into the bush. That's how hard the spies worked. And my parents hid spies by taking turns with America, then Australia and New Zealand spies. They did this to know what was happening with the way they approached and attacked the Japanese and their planes. One time someone found out. He was a police and was also my uncle (Judas Laken); he reported my parents to the Japanese.</p>
	<p>[Interviewer] So which of your parents was Judas related to?</p>
	<p>My maternal uncle.</p>
	<p>[Interviewer] From your mother's family?</p>

	<p>My mother's family. However my step father is from Aitape, West Sepik province; his name is Yamok. His village is Limien. I frequently visited that place. Anyway, the Japanese police came and arrested both my parents; they handcuffed and took them to court. I went along with them to Sumaroro which used to be the Japanese base.</p> <p>When we got there in the morning, father was questioned. I stood between my parents, in the middle. First father was questioned, "Is it true that you've been hiding spies at home?" standing straight, father replied, "No, I have not been." Father was searched and questioned again for about three times. And each time he was asked, he replied, "No." So they beat my father starting from his feet to his head and down to his feet again. Mother was not beaten. I was so scared that I cried and even urinated- the place I where I stood was wet. Very sad. That went on for three weeks.</p>
	<p>[Interviewer] Everyday.</p>
	<p>I was imprisoned together with my parents. So for the three weeks that he was questioned he denied that he had hidden spies. When the three weeks were over, we were sent home.</p> <p>Now back at home, God blessed us with many fish during the Second World War. There were lots of fish, especially the tala. And when it's low tide I would make a basket and collect fish to take home. So one time father caught a tala and some coconut juice for mother to cook. As soon as food was cooked mother called, "meal is ready, come let us eat." But I told them that I would go and chop some firewood first. I only went to check to make sure no spy was around- like Judas Laken.</p> <p>There was none so we went ahead with our meal. As we were eating father said, "this meal is to say thank you to you mother. Because when I denied the truth when I was questioned about the spies, you also denied the truth. And when I was badly beaten to make you answer, you still denied. So this meal is to celebrate for the way we stood for each other in denying the truth during the trial. The truth was that certainly we had hidden spies at our home but we denied that to the Japanese."</p> <p>Then father said this, "Demas, we denied the truth for your sake." We wanted you to live." Had we admitted the truth, father, mother and I would have been beheaded at Luburua. That's the place where people were beheaded.</p> <p>So at the end of the Second World War, the planes dispersed the magazines in the bushes and villages to say that the war was over.</p> <p>But one thing is that if you did something wrong and if you lied about it, and a witness confirmed you would be beheaded. Their discipline was very tough (the Japanese) and so they beat people.</p> <p>Another thing I noted was that they envied New Ireland so much that a big cave was dug in Namatanai. This cave was meant to get all the men, put them</p>

	<p>inside and bomb them to death, leaving only the women, so they could get New Ireland. This was serious.</p> <p>But God is good so the war ended quickly and that Papua New Guinea restored peace for its people, even New Ireland. Had the war had not ended as it did then, all the male population would have vanished on New Ireland. I think this big cave is at Namatanai and people there would know.</p> <p>One of my observations about the Second World War is my life's journey from birth to the war time, then to Papua New Guinea's self-governance and and later to its independence. So I am interested in New Ireland's governance since my childhood to this day. New Ireland Province is pursuing 'autonomy.' So I am usually interested in comparing how Japan ruled New Ireland compared to the current governance of the province and Papua New Guinea's governance since it gained independence in 16th September, 1975.</p> <p>I note that we have a big problem in terms of leadership; leadership at all levels starting from the homes to the national level. That's why it's difficult to achieve key developments at all 22 provinces where the 'little people' in rural places could benefit. That's important to note.</p> <p>But we usually sit and complain, "oh, why didn't the Japanese govern New Ireland province?" but I do not think we would have been like the Japanese either in the way they lead the country.</p>
<p>[Interviewer]</p>	<p>What's your experience about the Luluai?</p>
	<p>In the German administration there were three leadership categories. One is known as 'tultul.' The tultul has a hat and red mark. The other is 'Luluai.' There are two stripes on the luluai's hat. Then there is the 'White Pus' above these two. The White Pus wears a white cap like the navy.</p>
<p>[Interviewer]</p>	<p>Is the luluai above the others?</p>
	<p>Yes he is. And at Melik and Kraivia where I am from, we have the luluais including these areas: Fotmilak, Medina, Kunak (this is Kunak), then from Lemakot.</p> <p>We had a good White Pus, he was very good leader. But during the Japanese rule, he was still wearing the White Pus cap and they became suspicious of him wearing that white cap so they took him to prison. They asked him, "Is this your cap?" and he said, "no it belongs to the German, it's Boluminski's. "OK, so why are you wearing it?" they further asked.</p> <p>"They told me to wear it to show my status as the boss," he replied. Sorry for the boss. They brought him closer to home at Lakurumau then at Luburua where the plantation is and there they imprisoned him. While he was in prison, they continued to interrogate him. "Why do you keep wearing this cap or hat? Then he would reply. "Well, I must honour the leadership role the</p>

	<p>Germans appointed me to.” They replied, “but this time it’s not the Germans who are ruling that you continue to wear this cap. It’s we the Japanese ruling now, so why do you wear this cap?” they demanded.</p> <p>Then took him to a big, dug hole and covered his eyes before giving him a cigarette to smoke. As he smoked they waited for him till the cigarette reached its butt. Then they beheaded him. Such happened. The other person captured for was John Knox’s father. Have you seen John?</p>
	<p>[Interviewer]</p> <p>Mmm. Yes, yes.</p> <p>He told us about his parents.</p>
	<p>Yes, but his father escaped. He was lucky because there was another exit in the middle of the cave. So when she finally came out he saw the road so he ran away. He was one of our leaders so his life was at risk because he still wore the hat given to him by the Germans. And although he was beaten for that and told not to wear it, he still did so. He told them, “I am not afraid of you beating me. I must continue to maintain my integrity and the power given by the Germans to be a White Pus.”</p>
	<p>[Interviewer]</p> <p>Did the Japanese make salt? Or use salt do do other things?</p>
	<p>Yes, one important thing the villagers learnt to do from the Japanese was how to make salt and soap. To make salt they cut kwila woods and made canoes to paddle out into the deep sea to collect clean sea water. The salt water was brought back home, boiled until the water dried up, leaving salt.</p> <p>To make soap, one one hundred coconuts were grated into a half drum. The drum was cut in half so one half is where the coconut is grated into and coconut milk is squeezed into the other half and boiled until soap is formed. So that’s it.</p> <p>And at that time, there was no food. The planes and ships couldn’t bring food supplies so they depended on food gardens. So gardening was essential for survival.</p> <p>But I saw that the Second World War kind of prepared Papua New Guinea to be a self-governing nation then later gain independence. So I see that if there was no war, then Papua New Guinea today wouldn’t be what it is today. There would not be unity.</p> <p>And our governor- Sir Julius Chan – was a child during the Second World War. He has written a book, ‘Play the Game,’ request a copy from Monica and read; you will note the history and his life as well as his vision for the province.</p> <p>As for me, I think that if I had not experienced the Second World War, I wouldn’t be what I am today. The tough times of the war made me to be the</p>

	<p>man I am now. I adopted their (Japanese) principles, 'Do as I do, and not as I say.'</p> <p>The Second World War taught my people to be self-reliant. There was no ignorance or laziness. You know, obedience was very important. Do not lie. We survived the war because we were taught about commitment, dedication, openness, obedience, respect, loyalty, honesty and trust.</p> <p>So if you did something wrong, this was ignored if you were a honest person who built that trust with them. With this trust, if you worked hard and was seen as reliable and not told what to do all the time you would win their favour. The Japanese did not consider qualification as important; they counted on values. However, on instances where if you complete set tasks and you use own initiative to do other tasks that need to be done, they will be pleased with you. However, if you do not do so, you will be beaten for asking them what to do. They usually say, 'use your brain, not your skull.'</p> <p>Another thing to end our discussion; many view the Second World War as a bad experience; especially the hardships imposed by the Japanese on local people but I see it has something with a positive impact. They seem to show some aspects of Bible teachings. There's time for everthing under this earth.</p> <p>I think I also have two cousins still alive at home who experienced the war. I think one is almost hundred years old and the other about ninety. We survived the war and are still around.</p> <p>I was quite fortunate enough to gain some education to be able to write down details of the war experiences; of how we were treated as Papua New Guineans or in New Ireland and even about me and my family's experiences.</p> <p>But over all, whatever hard disciplines received from parents, I appreciate them because it helped me to be a better person. So these are just some of my reflections and experiences shared with you.</p>
	<p>[Interviewer]</p> <p>That was a tremendous support. Thank you so much. It means a lot to us. Thank you for this story.</p>