

INTERVIEW OF JAMES D. BERG

by Howard P. Willens and Deanne C. Siemer

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- Willens: We are in the home of James Berg in Brussels, Belgium on January 11, 1997. Mr. Berg, an old colleague from yesteryear, has graciously agreed to be interviewed regarding his involvement in the Micronesia and Marianas negotiations. Jim, thank you very much for being available under these circumstances. We appreciate your hospitality. I wonder if we might begin with some background information about where you were educated and first became employed.
- Berg: I grew up in Louisville, Kentucky. In 1967 I left there. I did my four years of undergraduate work at Northwestern University with a major in political science. Upon graduation in 1971, I left the United States and went into the Peace Corps. I was motivated to do this for several reasons. The primary one was that my draft lottery number was 30, and my status was 1A. The Peace Corps was at that point a deferment. I had tried to go into the Peace Corps in Africa, but there was some political unrest there. A number of American programs were canceled. At the very last minute, my Peace Corps program situs was shifted to Micronesia. By the fall of 1971, September 15 in fact, I arrived with my Peace Corps group in Truk, which is where I spent the next two years of my life as a Peace Corps volunteer.
- Willens: What were your duties as a Peace Corps volunteer in Truk?
- Berg: I went out for the purpose of being a teacher-trainer. In fact, after a summer of training, I went to Micronesia equipped (it was felt) to train Micronesian teachers in math, science and the teaching of English as a second language. I was immediately assigned to a small island in the Truk Lagoon called Udot, on which 800 Trukese lived. I was the only American on the island and, except for the kids in the school, the only person who could really speak English. I did engage in a training program for the teachers there. We set up a number of other activities. I ended up teaching all eight grades of the elementary school. When I look back on that, I guess I think that I probably was a little bit Type A when I arrived there, and I saw many opportunities. I didn't really think about displacing Micronesians; I just thought I could do it all. It was a very good first year for me. I learned a lot about the language. I spent most of my time on that island with Trukese.
- Willens: Did you learn the language?
- Berg: Yes. I became, I would say, as fluent as one can be in a language that is not written. There's no way that one could test one's fluency other than one's ability to participate in extended conversation, and that I was able to do with great ease. One gets to a point when one lives totally immersed in a new language; one dreams in it. That certainly was my experience.
- Willens: Did you meet any other Peace Corps volunteers stationed in Truk at that time?
- Berg: Yes. We had about 30 or 35 volunteers in Truk at that time. Truk was the most populous of the six districts of the Trust Territory, and the Peace Corps volunteers were scattered in what we call the outer island areas, which were quite remote. Truk is actually a large lagoon about 40 square miles in size. I was in that lagoon on one of the islands there. I could get into the main district center island from time to time to pick up supplies and mail, and I would see other Peace Corps volunteers there. But the first year for me was very much a

real immersion experience into Micronesia, and most particularly into Truk.

Willens: What happened during your second year?

Berg: The second year, I went to the then District Administrator of Truk, a person named Juan A. Sablan, who was a Chamorro from the Northern Mariana Islands, but who had been active for many years in the administration of the Trust Territory.

Willens: Did you know that Mr. Sablan just died within the past few weeks?

Berg: No, I did not know that. Juan Sablan was a very, very effective district administrator. He ran a well-disciplined government comparatively for Micronesia, and I think probably of the group of district administrators, Americans and Chamorros and then ultimately Micronesians who were active in that period, Sablan was probably one of the better ones.

Willens: What were the implications of having someone of Chamorro background from Saipan being a district administrator in Truk?

Berg: To the Trukese, they viewed Sablan as they would have viewed an American. His English was excellent. He acted like an American in many ways. His administrative style was quite American. He was abrupt, focused on results, wanted always to reduce head count in the government—this type of thing. So he came across really probably more like a first-rate American who could have made it in the States than the other second-raters who were in the Trust Territory Administration at the time.

Willens: I interrupted you, though. You went to Mr. Sablan . . .

Berg: I went to Mr. Sablan, and I proposed to him that for my second year in the Peace Corps I get out of the business of teacher training. I proposed a magistrate education program. In Truk there were 38 different municipalities. Each municipality might be nothing more than an island. These were the smallest recognizable, definable units of local government in Truk. My proposal was that we organize at least two conferences over the next year and that I put together a series of reports and briefing papers for these magistrates, the head of each of these local governments, on how to apply for community development grants and how to educate their people about this emerging business on the future political status of Micronesia. My interest in that emerged almost immediately upon arriving there. So Sablan agreed.

Willens: Your interest in what?

Berg: In political status. Sablan agreed. We designed a program under his auspices and with the speaker of the Truk District Legislature. We called together all of the magistrates to Moen (the district center island in Truk). It would be as though all the people of the Northern Marianas were dispersed across 39 or 40 different islands rather than just on Saipan, so the logistics were a bit more complicated. We had a five-day conference. A number of presentations were made about community development grants, how to apply for them, education programs, general municipal upgrade kinds of things. That conference having been completed, which was about in the third month of my second year, I then turned my efforts to the program that I had spelled out to Sablan, from civic or community education to political education.

Willens: Staying with the first set of meetings that you organized, was it your perception that the District Administration had failed in a way to facilitate communication among the 30+ municipalities?

- Berg: Yes, it was. It was my perception that, although I had a lot of admiration for Juan Sablan, it was my perception that all of the other people in the Truk District government (and from what I had heard about the Trust Territory headquarters on Saipan) really were doing what I considered to be a criminally ineffective job in making use of the resources that were available there for upgrading community buildings, improving education programs, and that type of thing. I felt that one of the biggest problems is that no one really communicated to these magistrates, who were the individuals at the apex point in local government, to know how to access these programs. So that was my effort at that point.
- Siemer: What was your view of the situation with respect to political status when you got out there?
- Berg: My view changed over time. It started off with looking at the question of the future of Micronesia from the standpoint of what I saw to be a very ineffective, lackluster American administration. I felt that these islands possessed the capability to move to a more simple lifestyle. I had sort of naive views about economic development at that point, I suppose, and I believed ultimately that Micronesia should become independent of the United States. I felt that the duration of our administration of the area was in fact hurtful, both to the Micronesians and to the U.S. I knew that there were better Americans, and I knew that this country, which I loved then and still do, had a much greater capability to help bring the Micronesians into the 20th Century than we were demonstrating out there. So I felt even at the very beginning that the best way to deal with the American-Micronesian relationship is to separate the two, because clearly what was going on out there was very dysfunctional. I began to sense this, particularly in my second year when I really got to know Tosiwo Nakayama and Andon Amaraich quite well, along with the late Ermes Katsura, who was the speaker of the Truk District Legislature. Ermes Katsura, like Tosiwo Nakayama, had a Japanese parent, a Japanese father, and a Trukese mother. They both felt affinity toward Japan and toward the Japanese times, but they knew that there would not be any return of a significant Japanese political relationship as long as the Americans were there. They did, however, want to keep the door open for Japanese economic assistance. I think that it was this experience that I had with those two individuals that later, when I was in the government, caused me to want to push for a change in the so-called foreign investment policy in Micronesia, where we actually would contemplate Japanese and other foreign investment legally entering into the Trust Territory. As I got to know those individuals, and as I sat at night and talked with them about independence—what it means, could they do it, why do they want it and how do they feel about it—that was probably the first formation of my own view of political status for Micronesia. It was centrist-oriented; the Trukese, like most Micronesians, felt that they were not only the center of the Trust Territory but the center of the world. Often you find that with small, weak people. I talked with them about the emergence of a Micronesian nation.
- Willens: What was their perception of the feasibility of a Micronesian nation comprising all six districts?
- Berg: They felt it was achievable, and they felt that it was what they wanted to do. They never regretted a continuing relationship with the United States. In fact, they sought a continuing relationship with the United States. They never conceived of independence as a thing that would arraign them against the United States. They willingly believed that American control over defense matters or over foreign affairs was part of what they clearly would have to have. They were realistic enough to know that they could not emerge as a nation with all normal aspects of sovereignty and self-government, that there would have to be special arrangements. But they wanted independence because they felt two things

would be denied them if they didn't have it. One, their land, clearly without question the central motivating factor for them—not surprising why. And secondly, they really did have a vision at that point of a unified Micronesia. They felt that the longer we had our headquarters on Saipan, they knew of the relationship between the Chamorros in the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam. They knew of our territorial status with Guam. They felt the Marianas slipping away. They felt that without the Marianas their revenue strength and their ability to project some sort of economic strength throughout the islands would be diminished. So during this period of time, within Truk, among the Trukese political leadership, at the Congress of Micronesia level, which is where Amaraich and Nakayama were, there clearly was a defined vision of a unified independent Micronesia.

Willens: May I interrupt just a minute. The materials do suggest that Truk was viewed as being the focal point of what was described as an independence sentiment or movement within Micronesia. Is that your recollection?

Berg: It is my recollection and I agree with you that the materials suggest that, although I would have to tell you that I think this vision which I was just talking about was not widely shared. In fact, it was only shared by the Trukese political leadership who had achieved a political level of office or an elected level beyond Truk, except for Ermes Katsura, the Speaker. He shared this view as well. The rest of the Trukese, certainly the Trukese in the Administration, who you would expect to have a conservative point of view, and the 38 municipal leaders whom I was working with, all greatly feared independence.

Willens: Even independence that retained a relationship with the United States along the lines you've defined?

Berg: The terminology was a difficult thing for them to come to grips with. I can recall the second meeting of the magistrates where the focus really was on political education. I had asked Nakayama and Amaraich if they would participate, and they did. Nakayama gave an amazing speech. It was very much from the heart, not prepared, he didn't speak from notes. He spoke to all of these magistrates. He talked about the fact that, when he arose out of Truk and achieved a position in the Congress of Micronesia, he acquired the ability to see beyond these islands. There's a use of the Trukese language—it's similar to our present tense, but it connotes that his ability to see existed before, exists now, and will always exist in a transcendent way that these guys could not share in unless they walked in his shoes. It was really quite a beautiful and articulate statement. What he was telling them was that they needed to trust their own people, i.e., their own Trukese leadership, because they saw a vision, they saw a future. If these guys could not understand, if these guys could not see, they still needed to come along, and they needed to support it. The speech was not well received. The more vocal of the local magistrates said, "But yes, you know, but okay, but where are we going to get new ships and how are we going to develop our sea walls and how are we going to build up the infrastructure of our islands?" Practical stuff—"Where's that all going to come from?" "It will come. It will come. Trust us. It will come. It will be there. The Americans are our friends. They will not go away." "How can you say that they will not go away? If we're going to stand ourselves up and be independent from them, they want to stay here, we know that they want to keep their military here, we've heard that. How can you say that if you tell them to get out of our islands and not have political control any longer, that they will continue to provide us with their money?" "They will provide. They will provide. Trust us. We know. We've talked to them. We're talking to them now. We're fashioning this." It was the classic situation of the insider and the outsider, the outsider trying to put forth a vision that the insider could not understand. So yes, although I think it is true that, if there was any center of an independence movement

anywhere in Micronesia in that period of time, which was the early 1970s, it would have been in Truk, but it was not widely shared.

Willens: There is reference also to Father Hezel and Xavier school.

Berg: Yes.

Willens: Did you have any contact with him during the time you were there?

Berg: I had contact with him, but it wasn't significant along the lines that you might be asking—did we discuss political status, did we discuss these kinds of things. No. I knew about Xavier. I wanted Xavier to continue. I felt it was an excellent institution. I prepared several of my eighth grade male students from Udot. I did a lot of preparation with them after hours of school—working on their English, working on their math—so that they could take the entrance exam and get into Xavier. I sponsored several of them, and they did get into Xavier. By the time I got into the second year, I had developed for my own reasons a somewhat negative view about Father Hezel and about the priests who working with him. Just a little bit of a self-confession here—I think it probably developed out of the fact that I was raised a Roman Catholic. I have to say that the Catholics did a very effective job driving me out of their own organization because of their inflexibility in thinking. I saw examples over the summer—the first full summer that I was in Truk—of how the Catholic missionaries regimented and controlled the lives of the islanders. I felt that this was a form of imperialism that was taking place, and I tended to blame all of the Catholic missionaries for engaging in this kind of activity, notwithstanding the fact that Hezel was propounding views that were not unlike my own politically. I felt that he was part of an organization that was not corrupt, but that was imperialistic in its reach into Micronesia. So I therefore did not seek him out.

Siemer: What about the teachers whom you worked with? What were their views with respect to political status?

Berg: The teachers whom I worked with my first year, who were just simple island teachers, were more interested in maintaining their job for the Administration. It was felt that the Administration, even down at the local island level, was the farthest extension of (but still an extension of) the central American Administration on Saipan, and that anybody who worked for the Administration needed to basically take the point of view that whatever really the Americans were going to propose in these upcoming political status negotiations is what really should be supported. There was not a lot of desire for independent thinking among anyone who worked in any aspect of the Administration out there. Some people, however, got their start in the Administration, in some part of it, and then either went into the Congress of Micronesia or went on the staff of the Congress of Micronesia, and that is when people were free to have a transformation of thought about political status. Because Truk as a geographical location and the Congress of Micronesia as a political entity really did become the locus for independent thinking—independent of what?—independent of what the Trust Territory Administration thought the United States was pushing for. I mean, true then and true all throughout, there was such a small amount of effective communication between the Americans who were involved in the administration of the Trust Territory and the Americans who were involved in representing the United States in the political status negotiations. There was really no effective communication, no transfer of thought, no sharing of goals and objectives, no sitting down by the status people and saying to the Administration people, here are the goals of the United States, therefore when you design this or that Administration program, you will take into account these goals so that all of our work will come together and be mutually supportive. Absolutely none

of that. And over time, as the Marianas began to separate and adhered to the American political status delegation because that was the entity from which they derived identity and succor, and later when the Micronesia political organizations, political status groups, split into three—the central, the Marshalls and Palau—and also adhered to the then OMSN, the Interior Department and its creature, the Trust Territory Administration, became increasingly alienated. By the time Adrian Winkel became High Commissioner, there was open warfare between the President's personal representative, Peter Rosenblatt, and Adrian Winkel, the High Commissioner, and Ruth Van Cleve, the Director of Territorial Affairs. It was like a menage a trois of hate among the three of them; and then standing apart, letting this happen, and enjoying and relishing in it, was Burton.

Willens: That's a very picturesque description of events that we will come to. During your first year in Truk, there were two sessions between the U.S. negotiating delegation headed by Ambassador Williams and the Joint Committee for Future Status. One took place in Hawaii in the fall of 1971, and the next took place in Palau in April of 1972. It was at the second of those two sessions that the United States formally agreed to separate negotiations with the Marianas. Do you recall hearing about either of those two sessions from the Trukese representatives on the Joint Committee with whom you had established a relationship?

Berg: Yes, I do. It was after the first of those two that the beginnings of an outline of a Compact of Free Association began to emerge. In fact, what existed at that time were really only in the then organization of Titles I, II and III—Title III dealing with defense and security matters, and I and II dealing with Micronesian government and that type of thing. When that documentation emerged, it was not widely distributed in Truk. I wanted to get it distributed. I felt that well, this is what's going on, people need to see this, people need to understand what's going on, why aren't we having public meetings, why aren't we reading this out on the radio. I'd gotten some of the people whom I was working with to translate it. I went down to WSCZ, the Trukese radio station, and I tried to set up a program where we would have readings of the sections of the Compact of Free Association. Because when I read the document, I saw such a tremendous disconnect between what Nakayama and Amaraich were saying they were getting and pushing for and what the document said. Maybe it was a mistake, maybe it was not a mistake. The American delegation at the time decided that it was going to get its stuff first in the Compact—all the things that the U.S. wanted—defense rights, plenary defense rights, etc., would be set out, and then we would turn to negotiating what the interests of the Micronesians were and how that would play out in the text of the Compact. So at that particular stage, the document was very one-sided. It described one side's goals. And it seemed to me incredibly unbalanced. I would not have been able to describe it that way at the time, because I didn't know really what the status process was. But the Compact as it existed at that point seemed so one-sided, so unbalanced, in favor of the United States, and seemed so distant from what Amaraich and Nakayama were talking about, that I felt it was necessary to reveal this. So, with others in the Truk Administration, we started putting on political education programs and that type of thing. This is when several of us who were doing this got into our first problem with Nakayama. Nakayama did not want this material to be widely disseminated. He felt that it was too early in the negotiations. He didn't think that the people of Truk should know about the interstices of the actual Compact document. What they needed to know he would tell them.

Willens: How about Amaraich?

- Berg: Amaraich probably did not express it so directly. Amaraich is a much more private person than Nakayama. Nakayama has a very public persona.
- Siemer: How old were they at this time?
- Berg: Oh, I can't ...
- Siemer: Approximately.
- Berg: Maybe they were in their 40s, I would guess, I would think. How old is Amaraich now, do you think?
- Willens: I don't really know. I would share your view. He might have been a little bit younger, but ...
- Berg: He may have been in the very late 30s or very early 40s at that particular point. Nakayama was always the one who would make a speech. Nakayama was always the one who was seen as the person who would emerge as the leader.
- Siemer: But Nakayama had been in that kind of position for maybe ten years at that point?
- Berg: That's right. And Amaraich was quieter, thought to be more intelligent, thought to be more thoughtful, but always let Nakayama take the lead. But there was very little difference in their point of view.
- Willens: Did you discuss with them your view that there was some inconsistency between their stated aspirations and what was reflected in these initial few titles of the Compact?
- Berg: I did. And I discussed with them my view that I thought it was necessary for the people of Truk to understand what was in these titles so that they knew what their leaders were negotiating for them. Because I was still myself of the view that my concept of independence for Micronesia at that time was much different from what I saw described in the emerging titles of the Compact.
- Willens: I wanted to ask you about that. Did your view in favor of independence for Truk differ from what you described as their views in the sense that you thought Truk or all of Micronesia might ultimately have all the indicia of sovereignty including control over foreign affairs and defense?
- Berg: I suppose my view was probably theoretically purer about independence, and I think their view was probably to some degree tempered by the fact that they knew if they were going to be able to emerge from this trusteeship status with the United States as a nation that they were going to have to trade something to the Americans. They did not want to depart from the Americans. Why? Well, they knew that there wasn't any other country around that was likely to provide budgetary support to them to the degree that we had. This was often where the annual budget for the Trust Territory would get intermixed in the political status negotiations, because they would try to use current budgetary support issues as a point of leverage in the political status negotiations. This was always the great vulnerability of the American side, because we had absolutely no discipline on our side between the two strands of American presence in Micronesia. But yes, my views somewhat differed from theirs, but it wasn't really important what my view was. It was much more important what their view was, because increasingly they were probably seen as the individuals who were pushing. They became symbolic for Micronesian independence, particularly Nakayama, and for Micronesian unity.
- Willens: Following that round of negotiations in the fall of 1971, there was some extensive and critical publicity sponsored in part by the Friends of Micronesia organization that

described the results of that session as evidencing a U.S. desire to take over Micronesia and fortify it as a military base. Do you have any recollection of that kind of criticism?

Berg: You mean after the Palau round?

Willens: Well, there was some after the October 1971 round that prompted some concern among the U.S. representatives, and they were very disconcerted by the fact that Chairman Salii and the members of the Joint Committee didn't rise to defend the negotiations.

Berg: Right.

Willens: That happened from time to time. Do you have any recollection of that kind of public discussion?

Berg: I do have some recollection of it, but not a lot of it got to us in Truk. In fact, my first real recollection of that kind of discourse, and particularly of the organization Friends of Micronesia, did not occur until a couple of months after the Koror round.

Willens: Let's turn to the Koror round then. What was the reaction of the Trukese representatives to the decision of the United States to engage in separate negotiations with the Marianas?

Berg: Well, it was viewed as a significant disaster.

Willens: Were they surprised?

Berg: They say they were surprised. They acted as though they were surprised. They felt that the United States never could do this, that it had really let them down. It had created a unified administrative structure. They knew that from having gone as advisors to the United States delegation to the U.N. Trusteeship Council; even in the early days they knew that there was a feeling within the United Nations Trusteeship Council that the Trust Territory should remain united. They were given context on how to think through this issue by some of the Americans, including Peace Corps volunteers, who would work in the sessions of the Congress of Micronesia and who would advise them. There was almost a competition among those Americans to be more radical in the point of view that they expressed in order to get the attention of their Micronesia patrons. So I would have to say that they were surprised and they were disappointed, because the United Nations was a very distant thing to them. It wasn't real. The United States was much more real. And here we had, after these years of an enforced or a created administrative unity, all of a sudden a new type of Americans, not living in the islands, coming in from Washington, having meetings, having an Ambassador—highly-ranking people who they didn't really know about. A new breed of Americans were coming in, and they were making statements that this is what the U.S. wants. These are what our goals are. It was a very different kind of relationship with the Americans than they had ever sensed before. People in the districts who had no familiarity with these people had no way to deal with them. And so when their leadership (this was particularly true in Truk, less so in the other districts I would guess, particularly Palau and the Marshalls), but when we agreed to separate negotiations with the Northern Mariana Islands, it was something that Nakayama and his group had no effective way to communicate what exactly the Americans were up to, what they were doing, because it went so much against the twin objectives that they had been articulating in Truk to their own people.

Willens: Do you think that they considered any effort within the Congress of Micronesia or elsewhere to try to reverse the United States position to conduct these separate negotiations?

- Berg: In those early days, I suspect, I don't know for a fact what their specific steps might have been that they contemplated, but I conclude that they must have contemplated them.
- Willens: Go ahead.
- Berg: In the aftermath of the Koror round, when it became known that the United States would entertain separate discussions with the Marianas, that fact fueled I think the radicalism of a number of the American advisors in the Congress of Micronesia. This was the first real sign that this group of Americans who were negotiating political status were not out here as the same sort of nice-guy, slightly-incompetent, Trust Territory Administration types. These guys were playing for keeps. They were representing the U.S. They knew what they wanted, and they were going to go after it. So this was the beginning of talk that the U.S. is engaged in a divide-and-conquer strategy. I began to hear that kind of thing over, say, the summer of 1972. I personally was a little bit out of the picture in the summer of 1972. I spent that entire summer in the way outer islands of Micronesia, really the remote ones, working with their schools and getting them set up for the next year and trying to get some programs.
- Willens: That was still within Truk?
- Berg: Still within Truk. I can remember being on one. I went to the island of Onari. Total population 38 people. The Onari municipal budget was \$15. Five dollars was paid to the chief magistrate, and then they had a \$10 capital improvement fund. I mean this is the most basic level of government that exists. I spent my summer out there in those little islands, so I had very little contact with what was going on in the real world, because you just get no news out there. It's very, very isolated. A ship every three or four months, and that's basically it. There were some Peace Corps volunteers out there. I went out on one ship called the M.V. Truk Islander, and we went all around. I spent the entire summer out there. We dropped off new and picked up older Peace Corps volunteers, older meaning at the end of their tour, to bring them back into the district center, and then they would leave. So I had gotten into the political education activities much more intensively after that tour.
- Willens: How did you end up your tour then in late 1972 and 1973?
- Berg: Well, having gotten involved with the magistrate education program and political education during my second year there, Juan Sablan, the District Administrator, asked me if I would be the on-site coordinator in Truk for the United Nations Visiting Mission. So I did that, and that really was for me the first opportunity that I had to meet with anyone from the outside. During that period of time, I met a woman named Mary Vance Trent, who was the then State Department liaison officer on Saipan. By this particular time, I was coming near the end of my period. I liked Mary Vance Trent. She and I spent quite a bit of time together in the spring, or the winter, January, February, March period of 1973. She sought a lot of information from me about the Trukese, and I knew the Trukese very well. I guess I somehow knew that what she was talking to me about would be reported back to the United States. But my own thinking was undergoing a fundamental shift at that point. I was contemplating my return to the U.S. I had come around to the point of view in the preceding six months that I did not believe that the original vision to which I had been attracted (that Nakayama and Amaraich were putting out) was realistic or even possible. I think probably the decision of the U.S. to negotiate separately with the Marianas indicated that whatever was going to happen was predetermined by the U.S. in any event. I had a feeling of tremendous inequality between the Micronesians on the one hand and the U.S. on the other. I was very willing and interested in making sure that the

U.N. visiting mission had a good visit to Truk, and I was willing and interested to share my point of view and my knowledge of people with the people from the State Department who I was meeting then for the first time. What I subsequently found out is that I, too, saw some cables that were written, and I saw a lot of the reporting that Mary Vance Trent and others did about their conversations with me in Truk and then later when I was on Saipan.

Willens: Were they accurately reported?

Berg: They were accurately reported. Mary Vance Trent is one of the great professionals. She has long been a good friend of mine. Yes, they were accurately reported. There were not other Peace Corps volunteers who were doing this around then.

Willens: On Truk or elsewhere?

Berg: Throughout Micronesia. Who had managed to have a foot kind of in both camps, who were friendly with their local political leadership, and who also developed a relationship with the State Department people who were out there (it was really only Mary Vance Trent). Most Peace Corps volunteers either stayed the hell out of politics, which is what we were told to do, or left the Peace Corps and went to work for the Congress of Micronesia or something like that. I may have been one of the few, and Adrian de Graffenried may have been one of the few others, who maintained a good relationship with the local political leadership but who also developed at some point a view that was conducive to ultimately joining the U.S. side in negotiations.

Willens: I'd be interested in any recollections you have about the U.N. visiting mission. In particular, did you have the sense that they truly were engaged in a fact-finding mission when they visited Truk?

Berg: Yes, having been the one to set up their meetings for them and accompanying them in all of their meetings. They toured schools, hospitals, public works activities, and I think they were exposed to anything they could have been exposed to in terms of the Administration side, the bricks and mortar side, of the American presence, certainly in Truk. I can only assume that was true in the other districts as well. In terms of what were they exposed to politically—it was an interesting mission because there was a Soviet, Viktor Issraelyan—I think it was the first time any Soviet had served on a visiting mission. It certainly was the first time the Trukese had ever seen an actual Russian. I can remember the Trukese family I was living with at the time. Ruth was the name of the mother, and she knew that I was working with these people, but she would not let her children go to the airport to see the visiting mission arrive because she literally thought that the Russian would come and get her children.

Willens: Who do you recall as being on the visiting mission other than the Russian?

Berg: The members of the visiting mission were the four powers who were the members of the Trusteeship Council. The Trusteeship Council, as you may recall, was set up so that it had as its members the five permanent members of the Security Council and any other country which was an administering authority. By this particular time, only the United States (this was the last trusteeship) was an administering authority. So therefore the members of the Trusteeship Council were France, the U.K., the United States (but being a self-interested administering authority couldn't participate as a member of the visiting mission), China (who for ideological reasons refused to participate in the work of the Trusteeship Council) and the Soviet Union. So the three members who were there were a Soviet, a Brit, and a French person. There was an American escort officer from USUN, and Mary Vance

Trent, the status liaison officer, who traveled with them, and I was in the in situ logistics coordinator for Truk. And there was a group of people from the Trusteeship Secretariat who were there. The permanent member of the Secretariat—Abebe of Ethiopia—I don't know if you have interviewed him?

Willens: No. Do you want to try to spell his name?

Berg: Abebe. He was the Secretary General or the administrative head of the Trusteeship Council. And finally, as a special added attraction for this mission only, the Under Secretary General of the United Nations for Decolonization Affairs, who was Chinese, came along on this trip. They refused to participate as members of the Trusteeship Council, but they did have a Chinese on the U.N. staff. Remember that mainland China had just really acquired Taiwan's seat not long before that. So they had a guy named Mr. Tang, and he came along with the Visiting Mission in his capacity as Under Secretary General. The French delegate was the Chairman of the Mission, but we had this high-ranking Chinese guy along, and it became even more complicated because whatever meeting the Chinese guy went to, the Russian refused, and vice versa because of the differences in view between the Soviet Union and China at the time. Finally just to add a little note of humor here, the last name of the Chinese guy, Tang, which is like the American breakfast drink used by astronauts, also is the Trukese word for male genitalia. So whenever he was introduced as Mr. Tang, the whole audience would lose it. So it was a fun mission.

Willens: Did you recall any discussion with them individually or as a group about the subject of fragmentation?

Berg: There were many discussions about fragmentation during the period of time. The visiting mission people, particularly the Soviet in almost any meeting he participated in where there were translators, would ask the Micronesians, would ask the Trukese, what do you know about these political status negotiations? And they would say well, we don't know anything, or nobody tells us anything, you know how they are, we have no information on that, can you tell us what's going on, what should we do. Then he would become embarrassed -- well, I can't really tell you what to do, I'm trying to see what you know. The meetings would go very much like that. But Nakayama and Amaraich were very much present at the time, and they had a separate meeting with the visiting mission members outside of the company of any of the Americans obviously.

Willens: Including you?

Berg: Including me and Mary Vance Trent and anyone. And there was great concern by the U.S. government types, not Trust Territory but U.S. status types, as to what might transpire in the meeting.

Willens: Do you know what did transpire?

Berg: Well, I know some things that transpired. And then there was a separate meeting with the Russian only that took place there. For Truk, it was about the most highly-charged set of political events that had occurred since the end of the War. Essentially what happened was that the Russian asked the Trukese political leadership what they felt about political status. What he was told is that they wanted to become independent and they felt that the Americans were dividing and conquering these islands by chopping them up and taking the part they wanted the most. I mean it was always felt by the Trukese that Saipan and the Marianas were the prize. Why? They were the most developed, that's where we had put the headquarters, the infrastructure was better, it was closer to Guam, richer, etc., etc.

Siemer: Had a significant number of Trukese been to Saipan by that time?

Berg: All the Congress of Micronesia members had, of course. And other ones had too. I even took several of the magistrates up to Saipan one time when there was a meeting of the Congress of Micronesia so that they could see the Trust Territory headquarters. They sat in the back in special VIP seats during meetings of the Congress of Micronesia so they could watch their legislators at work. These guys were people who had never really been off of little tiny islands other than to come into Moen, the District Center. And getting them on the airplane and then for them to actually see Saipan—it was, you know, how do you keep them down on the farm once they've seen Paris, because Saipan with all of its [glories]—the Royal Taga Hotel was the big deal at that particular point. It had a swimming pool, you know, with a lookout over the beach, it would have these parties there, and it was more than they could assimilate. It really was. I can remember I would stay with them at night, and they would go back in these little Trukese settlements, and they'd sit there and they'd get real Trukese again—you know, down sitting on their haunches, eating breadfruit, because they all brought pounded breadfruit with them up to Saipan. I could just see them get back to do things familiar because the sights and sounds of Saipan that they had seen were so shocking and amazing to them. So therefore, it was obvious to all of the Micronesians that the U.S. was going to come in and adopt a policy of breaking the place apart and achieving a political relationship with it, by parts, and it was always felt that the U.S. was afraid of independence, didn't want independence, and was going to try to drive the Micronesians to a different kind of outcome. When we agreed to open separate discussions with the Northern Mariana Islands, and particularly when it became known that the subject of those discussions was some kind of political union, some kind of territorial arrangement not otherwise further defined, but clearly not independence, it appeared to people outside of the Marianas that well, this is the part they want the most, and they're going to take it. And they're going to negotiate it, and we've lost them, and those people on Saipan want to be Americans, they want to go that way, and we are without power and influence to pull them back.

Siemer: That's always been a question whether there was a vision of any concessions or compromise or way of dealing with the Marianas that could have enticed the leadership there to change its view about whether a Micronesia-wide entity was viable for them and better than the alternative that the United States offered. Was there any discussion about how to approach the Marianas leadership or how to entice them back into the fold?

Berg: Yes, there was, but I think I would have to say, and this very much comes from the view of the Trukese delegation whom I talked to, that they felt that there really wasn't anything that they had. I mean, who was their competition. I mean, okay, the contest is win the hearts and minds of the people of the Marianas and their leadership. You've got two competitors—Truk and the U.S. They just did not feel that they had the capability. Knowing the history of the Marianas as they did—the expressions of desire to separate, to become part of the United States, which we put together ultimately for the Covenant hearings that created the baseline for the fact that this was not some recent event but that there's a long history. This was known to these guys as well, to the national political leadership throughout Micronesia. They did not feel that they had anything to offer that could meet the aspirations of the Marianas people. So there was some discussion about trying to keep it together, but for the most part, I think over the period 1973 and 1974, as the negotiations in the Marianas progressed and ultimately concluded, there was an inevitability that was felt. And instead of turning to a creative way to engage the Marianas and to keep them in the enterprise, thoughts turned to what can we do to make it more complicated, can we put roadblocks and obstacles in the way, can we stop it somehow, can we make it more difficult, can we delay it, can we rely on our own legal institutions

such as they are to try to prevent this from happening. One other thing. To the degree that anybody ever engaged in thinking of a creative engagement sort to keep the place together, it was not with the Marianas. It occurred later in the long and arduous debate over revenue sharing as a way to keep the Marshalls in. Because really when you come right down to it, if you are sitting in Truk, this is of all the districts in Micronesia the one with the least land and the most people. It's poorest in resources, has the greatest social problems, and societally the Trukese are not the most loved of the Micronesians. In fact, arguably they are the least loved of the Micronesians among themselves. And you see first the prize, the real prize is the Northern Marianas, and you see that stripped away from you. Then you're left with these five districts. The next richest one is the Marshall Islands. Why? Well, Kwajalein is there, and the fisheries are there, and so you see that. You see Amata Kabua moving out of the orbit. You see losing them, and the Americans are right there to catch it because they want it. Then on the other end, although small in number, you see the Palauans. The Palauans are the most economically active, clearly the most aggressive personalities, always the best business people. The Palauans always could achieve political leadership, economic leadership, business leadership, whatever they wanted to achieve.

Siemer: There's always Yap.

Berg: Well, so you see Palau being lost, and what are you left with? You're just left with Yap, you're left with Kosrae, and then Ponape. And really, in the end, it was all they could do to keep Ponape in. But that was the perspective from Truk, and it was one of danger and inevitability and loss and frustration and powerlessness.

Willens: Your characterizations of the different districts are very significant. Various documents in our possession attempt to do that and identify some of the factors that contributed toward the fragmentation that ultimately developed. When you brought the outer island people to Saipan and they saw the differences between the way the Saipanese or Chamorros were living and the way of their own Trukese customs, did that engender within themselves a sense that they wanted to preserve their own traditions and cultural practices and that those differences were so great....

Berg: Yes.

Willens: ...that going separate ways was perhaps to be desired?

Berg: Well, let me try to respond to that along two axis. First of all, the cultural one that you posit. This was a comparison of the largest extremes that could possibly exist in Micronesian culture—outer- island Trukese versus urbanized Saipanese. It is true that those Trukese when they looked at Saipan, what existed there, how these people got along, the clothes they wear, the cars they drove, the way they conducted themselves, they no sooner thought they could be part of that lifestyle than they could move into Brooklyn. So they did not see, they could not see in front of them the makings, if they even thought this way, which I doubt they did, but they could never have seen the fact that these people and we could be in the same nation, we could be citizens of the same nation, we would have the same goals. It was black and white. But the other thing that they saw is, they knew that the Marianas, or it was becoming known at that time, that what the Marianas wanted was not only separation from the rest of Micronesia but also that they wanted to become part of the United States not further defined. These guys looked at the Marianas, and they thought, these people could be part of the United States. I can remember talking to them about this, to the Trukese. They said: "You can just talk to these people like they're other Americans, can't you?" And I said: "Well, it's a lot easier", and I said their English is better, because I would talk to these guys in Trukese. So what they saw was, they were afraid of

independence on the one hand, but when they saw Saipan and they saw the Chamorros and their state of development and their seeming likeness to Americans, they also did not feel that they, the Trukese, could become a territory either. They just weren't ready. They couldn't handle it. They'd get absorbed. They actually felt that the Saipanese perhaps were familiar enough with the ways of the outer world that they could make it as Americans without losing their identity completely. I'm interpolating a lot, but I had the impression that for this group of people it wasn't until they saw Saipan that they developed an even more complicated and frustrating view about their political future, which is not only don't we think we're ready to be independent, but we could never make it as part of the United States either, because these are the kind of people who can make it as part of the U.S., certainly not us. We'd get flooded. We wouldn't know what to do. And that was always the big dilemma in political status for them. They didn't want to lose the Americans, but they didn't want to become the Americans either.

Siemer: The visiting mission must also have perceived these very substantial differences in economic development, in social development, and in style. What was your sense about the visiting mission's conclusion at that point as to whether this could become one entity?

Berg: I had absolutely no sense of any conclusion on their part. They were very strict, except for Viktor Issraelyan the Russian, in terms of what they said—we are not here to tell you what to do, we are not here to recommend anything to you, your political leadership is in discussion with the administering authority (they never referred to us as the United States, they always referred to us as the administering authority), we are not part of those discussions, we don't seek to be part of those discussions, we will not comment on those discussions, we are going to reach no conclusions about those discussions, we are simply here to look at the manner in which the administering authority is discharging its responsibilities under the Trusteeship Agreement.

Siemer: So from the local point of view, it was played very straight?

Berg: That's right. There was a lot of curiosity about the celebrated meeting that Nakayama and Amaraich had, and that certain other Trukese leaders had, with the Visiting Mission and with Issraelyan. There was a real radical guy from an island called Tol named Hans Williander. Have you ever heard that name?

Willens: Yes.

Berg: He was a member of the Congress of Micronesia for a while, and even more than anyone, he was felt to be the real fountainhead of independence thinking in Micronesia. So Hans Williander, also a member of the Congress of Micronesia at that time, had a meeting with Viktor Issraelyan, which was thought to be a very dangerous development by the Americans, because he symbolized in many way what I guess euphemistically could be called the most radical thinking about Micronesian independence—a complete split from the United States. There was some thought that he was even going to make a proposal to the Russian that they enter into some sort of future political relationship with the Soviet Union, which I think in global politics, looking back on it, we all would realize is sheer madness and fantasy. But at the time in Truk, given the circumstances that were so politically charged, and in the immediate aftermath of the American decision to negotiate separately with the Marianas, it was felt that he really could make such a proposal and that the Russian might even listen and agree to it. Of course, no such thing happened.

Willens: Was there any other aspect of your Peace Corps service in Truk that related to political status before you concluded your tour of duty?

Berg: No.

Willens: Looking back then on the Peace Corps experience, do you have any generalized comments in terms of assessing the effectiveness of the Peace Corps in Truk or in Micronesia more generally?

Berg: The overall effect of the Peace Corps in Micronesia, I can only speak to the period I was there. I don't have a lot of knowledge about the size, style, and competence of the Peace Corps in more recent times. Micronesia became a training ground for the Peace Corps, and Truk itself was very heavily used. At one point, there were hundreds and hundreds of Peace Corps trainees located in Micronesia, and a lot of them right in Truk, because that was a training site for them. This probably had a disastrous effect on the future of the Peace Corps, because all these people were out there, they would not get engaged in the community, but they brought a lot of American stuff with them. It was felt afterwards that every Peace Corps volunteer who came should bring a house, or possibly a vehicle or that type of thing. So when those of us arrived later on after this, just to engage in a Peace Corps program in Truk versus this big training effort, we could only disappoint, because the expectations were so high. Our numbers were much smaller, and we lived like the Micronesians. I cannot tell you the number of times that Trukese on the island of Udot where I lived my first year said to me, why are you here, what possibly could cause you to want to come here and live with us. They did feel as though maybe we were people who couldn't make it back in the U.S., that's why we were there. The Peace Corps volunteers developed a different point of view. We felt that way about the Americans who were out there as contract workers in the Truk government—the high school teachers, the administrators of the Education Department, the administrators of the Economic Development Department. These to us were the people who couldn't make it back in the States and who came out to Micronesia. They were part of the Trust Territory in part. Was the Peace Corps effective? First of all, the Peace Corps was never used in Micronesia to my knowledge as an instrument of American foreign policy. I never was told by anyone when you go out there you are representing the United States, here is our point of view, we'd like you to get this point of view put across, in any way. Any relationship that I developed with any one official in the United States Government (I mentioned Mary Vance Trent and others) was done purely because I personally wanted to do it. I was in no way driven or instructed to do that. And none of my colleagues were. That was just not a part of it. We were effective as a group of people in providing an alternative point of view to what the Micronesians normally would encounter. Yes, in teaching in their schools and working in their economic development departments, we maybe accomplished a few things. But mostly for a group of 800 Micronesians who lived on an island, 800 Trukese, to have an American live among them who had been to college and who had grown up in the United States and who could speak to them, I could provide them with a point of view that they never otherwise would have seen. And they did the same for me, frankly. So kind of as a window to the outside world, as another data point, that was the real value for the Peace Corps. Did the Peace Corps engender a positive attitude by Micronesians toward the United States? Maybe, maybe not. That really was very much a function of the times. In the times that I was there, Peace Corps volunteers were still viewed somewhat as curiosities. Remember, the Peace Corps really was only ... I guess it started in what, 1964? 1965? 1966?

Willens: In Micronesia, 1966.

Berg: Yes. So when I got there in 1971, we'd gone through that big training period, we'd been there for five years, and we were still not really fully understood, I don't think. No one

(among the Micronesians) quite knew exactly why we were there. They were glad we were, I mean we did useful things (I suppose), but it was something of an unusual kind of experience.

Siemer: What about it viewed from your later experience—the Peace Corps as a vehicle that brought people to the region who never would have had an interest, never would have settled there, or never would have been active there but for their first exposure as Peace Corps volunteers?

Berg: Well, for those who went out as Peace Corps volunteers and who ended up staying in Micronesia somehow, marrying Micronesians or continuing to work there, they retained their technical skills. I mean there were some lawyers, there were some teachers. They retained their technical skills and continued to ply their trade as just citizens who lived there. But I think they ceased to be anything more than Micronesianized Americans at that point. They didn't provide any kind of enduring contribution, so I don't have a negative assessment of these people, but I think they ceased, very quickly after leaving the Peace Corps and integrating into the society, to be anything more than just another foreign resident.

Willens: Let's turn then to the conclusion of your Peace Corps tour and your employment by the Department of the Interior. How did that come about?

Berg: My intention when I left the Peace Corps was to go to Japan and live there. I had secured a job in Japan teaching American political science to entry-level Japanese foreign service officers and people going into corporations in Japan at a private university in Tokyo. My intention was to go back to the United States for about 30 days to just fool around and visit friends and then go off to Japan and live there, probably for the rest of my life. When I returned to the United States, I went to Washington, D.C. to visit some friends of mine. While in Washington, I wanted to go and see this Interior Department which was administering the islands I just came from. Mary Vance Trent had then transferred (I think) from her position on Saipan into OMSN, and she had written to Bill Crowe, who was then office director of OMSN and indicated that I was coming to Washington and if I called them that they should talk with me. So I went in and met with Bill Crowe and Steve Loftus, and even Haydn Williams was there at the time, and I was introduced to the great Haydn Williams. And I set up an appointment to go and meet with some people in the Interior Department. I met with Stan Carpenter, who was a foreign service officer and then the Director of Territorial Affairs, Fred Radewagen, another individual, and Tom Whittington. Tom Whittington is an attorney, and he was the staff assistant for political affairs, and he was the Interior Department representative on the American Political Status Delegation. You probably met him in the early rounds of talks.

Willens: Yes. I've interviewed Tom.

Berg: Right. Okay. I liked these people. I thought they were interesting people. I liked the people at OMSN in particular. And I found myself within not a short period of time being offered a position in the Interior Department as a research assistant. Since I had some friends in Washington, it seemed like an interesting thing to do, so I wrote a letter to my Japanese employers and told them I wasn't going to come. And I joined the Interior Department in around June of 1973.

Willens: Were you then working under Mr. Carpenter?

Berg: Yes. Stan Carpenter was the head of the office. He was the Director of the Office of

Territorial Affairs, and I joined as a research assistant working with Tom Whittington and with Fred Radewagen on Micronesian political issues.

Willens: But you were not assigned to the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations?

Berg: Not at that time, no.

Willens: Did there come a time when you officially became a part of OMSN?

Berg: Yes. There was a time later. You know OMSN could not hire anyone directly. You would work in another agency and be assigned to OMSN. Later on, after Ruth Van Cleve came into the Office of Territorial Affairs, I shifted my employing agency from Interior to State, and I became an officer of the State Department assigned by the State Department to OMSN, so that would have been in the Let's see, when was Carter elected? 1976?

Willens: Yes.

Berg: So that would have been in 1977, the 1977-78 period. Up until that point, I worked as a staff member of the Department of the Interior.

Willens: But your initial duties were oriented toward political status?

Berg: My initial duties were certainly oriented to Micronesia and toward political status, that's right.

Willens: From whom did you receive your assignments?

Berg: I received my assignments from Stan Carpenter and Fred Radewagen, who was the staff coordinator of the office.

Willens: What was the relationship between Carpenter and Radewagen on the one hand and Ambassador Williams and the OMSN on the other at that time?

Berg: At that time, the relationship was showing the first signs of stress. Haydn Williams and OMSN clearly had a Presidential charge to accomplish a certain mission. The Interior Department had a less well-defined mission toward the Trust Territory. It was that of administering authority. The High Commissioner reported to the Director of Territorial Affairs administratively. The relationship was increasingly one of competition, I think, between the two offices. The leadership of OMSN felt that the American administration of the Trust Territory should be bent toward American political status goals. We had a set of objectives in the political status negotiations. We had a set of instructions which provided us the tools we thought to achieve them. But here was this other bureaucratic entity of the American government administering Micronesia, and it was felt in OMSN that the way we administered the islands, the way we put together the budgets on an annual basis, the way we developed a capital construction programs, all could be and should be linked inextricably to the U.S. negotiating strategy. Whereas at Interior, the feeling was we have been charged under the Trusteeship, and the Department of the Interior has been charged to administer these islands in an apolitical, workmanlike manner. And that status crowd down there has got its particular set of goals and objectives, but they're not ours. We need to build bridges, build hospitals, administer schools. That's what we do. It would be inappropriate if we withheld administrative services from the Trust Territory in some kind of ransom transaction trying to produce a particular outcome in the political status negotiations. So we will resist that. I mean I'm speaking by way of illustration—there was never any discussion that was quite this pointed or defined. I'm trying to capture the different bureaucratic and political initiatives that existed in the two offices.

Siemer: How many folks were there at OMSN at the time?

- Berg: OMSN at the time had well, Haydn Williams, Jim Wilson, Bill Crowe, Adrian de Graffenried, Mary Vance Trent came in there, and I guess there might have been one other Army officer named Col. Athol Smith. So that was about OMSN at the time. The Office of Territorial Affairs was a much bigger organization. We had a desk officer for Guam, a desk officer for the Virgin Islands, a desk officer for American Samoa. I ultimately emerged as kind of the desk officer for the TTPI.
- Willens: Had there been one before?
- Berg: Not really. Micronesia was kind of dealt with by everybody. And then there were some functional officers in the Interior office as well, one for educational and social programs, another for economic development, a guy named Richard Miller, a woman named Jan Johnson for educational and social programs. Then there was Whittington, who in addition to working on political status issues, also was kind of the liaison with the Hill. He had worked on the Hill before for a Washington Congressman whose name I cannot recall. There was Radewagen, who was effectively the number two, and Stan Carpenter, who was a career foreign service officer assigned to the Interior Department.
- Siemer: What was the corresponding organization at the State Department? How were they organized to deal with these issues in that period, from 1973-76?
- Berg: There really was no single (and this was a big issue throughout until the Office of Freely Associated States emerged) entity in the State Department that would deal with it, but there were several offices with diffuse responsibilities. The Bureau of International Organization Affairs quite clearly was interested because of the U.N. angle, the Trusteeship Agreement, etc. As a result, the Legal Advisor's Office and the individual in the Legal Advisor's Office who dealt with international organizations was very interested. The Geographic Bureau in State, then the East Asia Bureau, had an office called Australia New Zealand (EAANZ at that time) Affairs. They really didn't deal with the islands, even those in the name of their office. The Trust Territory was clearly under the jurisdiction of the Interior Department, so State did not have an office or an officer that said we're the Micronesian desk, because they didn't have responsibility. Nor did they have responsibility for American Samoa, Guam or the other domestic American territories. The Australia New Zealand Office of the East Asia Bureau had general geographic purview of that whole area, but they really didn't involve themselves at all functionally in those early days.
- Siemer: Where did the status liaison officers come from?
- Berg: The first status liaison officer was the indefatigable John Dorrance. Have you all interviewed him?
- Siemer: He died.
- Berg: He's deceased, isn't he? Yes, that's right.
- Willens: He wrote a very extensive volume about this subject which we've now reviewed.
- Berg: Yes. The first idea was that Haydn Williams wanted somebody out in the islands who could report to him what the hell was going on out there. He certainly couldn't rely on the High Commissioner or the Interior Department people to do that, because they were out there building bridges and hospitals, and they couldn't pay attention to the most important stuff going on, which is what the political developments were. So he wanted to put somebody out there, and the idea was that we would put a political advisor out there. There's a longstanding tradition in a military organization that a guy like the CINCPAC would have a State Department guy who's the political advisor. So we were going to put

a political advisor out there to the High Commissioner, and that person could also help translate what was going on politically back to Washington. That arrangement never worked out for a number of reasons. First of all, Haydn Williams distrusted the High Commissioner, and the High Commissioner returned the favor. That was Edward E. Johnston at the time. Secondly, John Dorrance, who did go out there first as the political advisor to Ed Johnson, he and Ed just didn't get along; it was a fire and water situation. So that didn't work. So ultimately we created this arrangement of status liaison officer. We got the assignment of a foreign service officer out to Saipan, and that person ultimately ended up reporting exclusively and directly back to OMSN, not to the High Commissioner.

Siemer: Not necessarily to State either.

Berg: No, not to State either. In fact, it was only because of the identity of all the individuals as foreign service officers that they maintained any kind of feeling of need to report back to their mother Department, the Department of State. But it really wasn't an OMSN person.

Willens: Many of the reports that came back over the signature of the liaison officer were circulated as a matter of routine . . .

Berg: Oh, yes.

Willens: . . . to all the Departments that were participating in the Inter-Agency Group.

Berg: The normal status reporting would always come in "Action OMSN Info State, Interior (and I would get them at Interior), Defense (and within Defense both OSD and the JCS side would get them) Justice (for Marcuse)"—the normal Inter-Agency Group.

Siemer: But the idea was that because the State Department had experience in reporting on political affairs and analyzing those kinds of things, that it was that kind of activity that would be useful?

Berg: Precisely.

Willens: Your recollection is that you went with Interior sometime in the summer of 1973.

Berg: That's correct.

Willens: That would be something less than two full years of your Peace Corps tour.

Berg: Yes. I did not stay in the Peace Corps for the entire two years. The reason I left a few months early is because I had secured for myself this teaching position in Japan, and the Japanese wanted me there at the beginning of the summer in 1973. So I left in time to go back and tour around the U.S. a little bit and then was going to go off to Japan. But my plans changed, as I described.

Willens: Do you remember what your initial assignments were at Interior that were directed to political status?

Berg: Yes. I do. My very first assignment was to develop an analysis for use within the Interior Department of how we (the administering authority) were discharging our responsibility for political and civic education of the Micronesian people, which was right up my alley, obviously. So what I did is deliver myself of a paper describing the players in Micronesia, who they were, what groups and individuals were active in political education, what were they saying, what was the texture of the political education movement, and what recommendations I had for what role the United States Government should play.

Willens: Was there a TTPI program in place at the time?

Berg: Not really. Not at that particular time. Later there were several, but at that particular time there was not really one.

Willens: What were your basic conclusions and recommendations?

Berg: My conclusions were that the Micronesian people were not well informed about the choices that might ultimately be available to them and that if we were to ultimately have an act of self-determination by the Micronesian people that would be considered legitimate internally by the United Nations, quite clearly it would have to be shown that the people who participated in that act of self-determination were informed. So I made recommendations, very elaborate recommendations, for a major thrust in public and political education. This particular thing launched me into a discussion with OMSN.

Willens: Did they share your views as to the level of political sophistication in Micronesia?

Berg: They did, but they also did not necessarily believe that the program of political education that I was talking about was really more the kind of thing you would expect a non-self-interested administering authority to come up with. In other words, it was civic education, education for citizenship, this type of thing. OMSN felt that yes, there needed to be political education, but that it needed to perhaps treat the issues a little bit more with an outcome in mind.

Willens: Did that offend you?

Berg: No, it didn't. This was, let's put it this way, an eye-opening time in my life.

Willens: Did your judgment about the level of political sophistication or education extend to the Northern Marianas citizenry as well?

Berg: Yes, it did, but I think at that particular time I took it for granted that we were launched off on a separate course with the Northern Mariana Islands.

Willens: So your conclusion did not pertain to the Northern Marianas?

Berg: No. The very early work that I did in this regard at Interior was geared toward the other districts.

Willens: What else do you remember about that period?

Berg: Well, I was saying that I self-selected myself into working more and more on the political status issues. I said that I emerged in many ways as a Trust Territory desk officer. Ultimately after Tom Whittington left, I became the staff assistant for political affairs within the Office of Territorial Affairs, and my primary responsibility was to be the Interior Department representative to the so-called Micronesia Inter-Agency group and to the American political status delegations. The first opportunity I had to participate as such occurred in late 1993 at what I guess would have been the third round of Marianas political status negotiations.

Willens: That's correct. In preparing for that particular round of negotiations, did you review the communique that was issued after the second round in June of 1973 or other materials to acquaint yourself with the issues?

Berg: Yes. I reviewed the materials that had been produced at the first two rounds to date. Plus also at that time there were three studies that were being undertaken within the Inter-Agency Group.

Willens: What were they?

Berg: Study 2 (so-called) related to the separate negotiations with the Northern Mariana

Islands, and it was the on-going study that reviewed and set out our goals and objectives in negotiating instructions for the Northern Marianas negotiations. So it was a document that continued to be recreated and rewritten as the imperatives of the negotiations changed. I got involved working with others in the Interior Department in drafting sections of that. The way the Inter-Agency Group functioned at that time and later is that these analytical studies that we prepared which were intended to cover all aspects of the American negotiating instructions were divided into functional parts -- economics and finance, the political relationship, the legal relationship, etc. Different ones of us within the Inter-Agency Group were assigned responsibility for handling a chapter or a subject matter. Obviously as the Interior Department representative, the areas that I would be expected normally to work on would have to do with the economics issue, anything having to do with transition from the current arrangement to any future arrangement. Because of my background and knowledge in Micronesia, I would often get involved in writing or advising on political aspects of those documents and those studies. So my initiation into the status of American documentation with regard to the Northern Marianas negotiations occurred during that period in the work that I was doing on what was then called Study 2.

Willens: You mentioned two other studies that were being done.

Berg: Study 1 was the basic study about overall Micronesia. Study 3, which never really was completed, at that time had to do with transition. Looking to the period after the completion of the political status negotiations, what steps would we take to get the new arrangements put into effect, what would become of the Trust Territory government, those kinds of questions.

Willens: Were you aware that after the second round of negotiations with the Northern Marianas that three members of the Political Status Commission were interviewed and expressed criticism of the way in which the negotiations were going forward?

Berg: Three member of the Micronesian Joint Committee?

Willens: I'm sorry. Three members of the Marianas Political Status Commission, Dr. Palacios, Felix Rabauliman and Joe Tenorio, were interviewed in June or July of 1973. They suggested that the negotiations were proceeding too rapidly, that the United States was better prepared than the Marianas Delegation, and that the United States was trying to impose its own priorities on the Marianas people. Do you remember hearing any discussion of criticism along those lines?

Berg: Yes, although I must say that it did not figure prominently in anything that I did during (let's say) the last half of the year 1973.

Willens: In the various documents that Ambassador Williams wrote to the President and to the Under Secretaries Committee following the second round, he made reference to some discussion about self-government and the extent to which self-government in the future commonwealth could be reconciled with Federal control under Article 4-3-2. When did you first become exposed to that issue and what was your reaction to it?

Berg: I first became exposed to that cluster of issues during that period in the second half of 1973 and then beyond that. It was not an area that I was personally involved in drafting any of the work on. The question of the relationship of whatever we were doing with the Marianas and 4-3-2, the constellation of territorial legal issues, were in my view handled by the Justice Department representatives and by Brewster Chapman. So I did not feel that I had a complete brief for the negotiations at that time, just getting into it. So I was

aware that these issues were being discussed, but I really did not have much of a developed point of view on them.

Willens: Did you have the basis for forming any judgment with respect to the quality of legal advice that the Interior Department and OMSN was getting from Brewster Chapman and from the Justice Department?

Berg: No. I didn't have any independent data points on which to make any kind of a comparative judgment.

Willens: In the letter dated June 29, 1973 from Ambassador Williams to the President reporting on the second round of negotiations, he did refer to his concern about the impact of these negotiations on the relationship of Guam with the United States. He did so on several subsequent occasions as well. What in your judgment persuaded him that this was an important issue to continue bringing to the President's attention?

Berg: I would say that he had a couple of reasons for doing that. I think the feeling was that the Guamanians were capable of unpredictably affecting the progress of the Northern Marianas discussions. It was conventional wisdom that for a long time the Guamanians didn't really care what we were doing in the Trust Territory or even in the Northern Mariana Islands and that the Guamanians felt that they had a longer, more superior relationship with the United States (they were, after all, citizens) than any of the Micronesians either did have or could ever have. But when the United States took the decision to treat separately with Saipan and Rota and Tinian, it captured the attention of the Guamanians. They did not expect this move, and there was a feeling, I suppose, by some of them that they might end up actually standing in line behind the Marianas. Haydn Williams believed (and I think correctly) that the Guamanians could derail, or at least delay, the Northern Marianas discussions. They had a strong relationship with Congress and Congress could very likely say well, why would we create a territory here when we already have one there and they are basically the same people, shouldn't we put them together. As Haydn perceived it at the time, the separate negotiations with the Northern Mariana Islands could unpredictably in his view come unglued or derailed as a result of the Guamanian activities. On the other hand, he had no ability to influence events in Guam. It was outside his purview. His efforts to bring this to the attention of the President were, I think, not only an effort to get the national security side of our Government to focus on the emerging Guam status issue, but also to use that as a way to compel in some manner the Interior Department to more realistically align its administration policies for Guam with what the imperatives were in the status negotiations. This was a fundamental piece of, shall we say, misunderstanding I think by OMSN. OMSN felt that Interior administered Guam and the Virgin Islands and American Samoa. In fact, that's not true. No Director of Territorial Affairs could call up the elected Governor of Guam and say do this or do that. There was no effective control in any kind of line sense by the federal government over the territories. And there's nothing wrong with that. There doesn't necessarily need to be. They're not as self-governing as a State of the Union, but they are Americans (this is true for Guam and the Virgin Islands; what I'm saying now is not true for American Samoa or was not true then for American Samoa). They had non-voting delegates in Congress. Federal law applied completely to them. But OMSN was of the view that Interior had more influence, more power and more direct control than it ever had. One of the big issues between OMSN and Interior always was why don't you make the Guamanians come around to a point of view that is consistent with what we're doing in the Northern Mariana Islands. And this was one of Haydn's ways of doing that, I think.

Willens: There had been over the years a view within the Interior Department that the territories

should all proceed in some orderly sequence of increased self-government and so forth. From that followed some reluctance to provide for the Micronesians any greater or more attractive status. At the time you joined Interior, was there a view by Carpenter and others than OMSN should proceed very cautiously and not extend to the Northern Marianas any status that was different from that that existed in Guam?

Berg: There was that view. Because from the standpoint of Interior, it was not only a question of the fact that the Guamanians deserved “a superior status” or a “more advanced territorial status” than these parvenus in the Northern Mariana Islands, but to the degree that the Marianas did achieve a favored or perceptibly favored political status, that would create demand within Interior that Interior would have to respond somehow to upgrade the political status for Guam or for the Virgin Islands. And there really was not within Interior any mapped-out plan. There was no road map that after five years you do this, after seven years you do that, in your progression as an American territory. The Office of Territorial Affairs itself emerged as the office that had dealt with the territories in the West. Its two only successful graduates were Alaska and Hawaii, which became States. No one really felt in the Interior Department that Guam, the Virgin Islands or American Samoa had the critical mass to become States. So there was no sense of what would be their next step. Everything was handled incrementally without any kind of overarching vision. So when a newly-defined territorial status began to emerge, in Interior there were big questions about how this would fit with the existing territories and how would we administer it, what would it mean and that type of thing. And it was OMSN and the Inter-Agency Group and not Interior who were the architects of what was going on for the Northern Marianas. The position that I was in, which was the liaison between the Inter-Agency Group and OMSN on the one hand and Interior on the other, was, I must say, a somewhat difficult one, because OMSN always felt that it had its most difficult and unproductive, dysfunctional bureaucratic relationship with the Interior Department. And I felt a certain degree of responsibility for that. I wanted that relationship to work. But the bureaucratic imperatives of the two organizations were and became even more so fundamentally different.

Siemer: What was the relationship between Ambassador Williams and the head of the Office of Territorial Affairs?

Berg: Well, between Williams and Stan Carpenter, the relationship was somewhere between cordial and chilly. I think it reflected the different initiatives and bureaucratic requirements that the two offices had. Stan Carpenter was more inclined in his thinking toward what Haydn was up to because he was a career foreign service officer, and he understood how inter-agency groups work. He had a national security or foreign policy bent to his thinking that a domestically experienced Interior Department bureaucrat would never have had. The real fireworks, though, began after Carpenter left and ultimately when an individual named Fred M. Zeder became the Director of Territorial Affairs.

Siemer: A Texan.

Berg: Yes. And a close friend of Gerry Ford, Bush and me. That added the additional dimension of “this town’s only big enough for one of us” kind of thing. They both were strong personalities, and they got off to a bad start. And it got worse from there. All aggrandized by the very different points of view between the Office of Territorial Affairs at Interior and OMSN.

Siemer: What caused the bad start?

Berg: Fred Zeder came in, assessed the situation, and essentially determined that OMSN was

not necessary. There was no reason that the political status negotiations could not be conducted by the Interior Department, by him. He felt that OMSN and Haydn Williams were nice people, no problem there, but they just were not necessary.

Siemer: He would have run right up against the National Security Council as well.

Berg: Absolutely. Fred's view never would have been accepted. The structure of the government never would have allowed such a thing.

Willens: Did he pursue an effort to force that decision?

Berg: Oh, yes. He constantly did. There was a constant effort by Zeder to, as he put it, untruss Haydn Williams, and it never succeeded. Haydn knew about it. It was legendary. But you're right on the point. What happened was that as OMSN became institutionalized and as the inter-agency structure became institutionalized in Washington, State, Defense, Justice and the rest of them— just as Interior would have never sat still for the emergence of State as the primos intra pares—neither would any of the rest of them stand for Interior to do that.

Willens: To what extent did you personally have dealings with the National Security Council staff?

Berg: Very, very rare.

Willens: Do you remember any specific instances where the National Security Council staff either at the direction of the National Security Advisor or whatever overturned some decision of the Under Secretaries Committee or the Inter-Agency Group?

Berg: No, I do not. Not in this early period. My own involvement with NSC staff became much more direct and much more extensive later on in the 1980s period, but in this early period, I don't even know that I could tell you today who was the NSC staff person. I think perhaps it was an individual named Jack Froebe.

Willens: I've seen that name. Just to finish up with respect to Guam for the moment, are you aware of any reaction either by the President or the National Security Council to his repeated requests that some attention be paid to Guam and that perhaps Guam's status ought to be revisited by Interior as the Northern Marianas relationship began to take form?

Berg: Again, not in this immediate period.

Willens: But later on were you aware of anything?

Berg: Yes. Later on there was an effort. This occurred really more in the 1980s than in the 1970s. There was an effort for the federal government to organize and deal with Guam political status. I guess you could say that the interest in the Guamanians to come to grips with this issue may have had its seeds in this period. Haydn would tend to go and meet with the Guamanians and keep them briefed on what was going on and seek the guidance of the CINCPAC rep, the one-star admiral who was based on Guam. The first one I remember was the father of Jim Morrison, the Doors singer, Admiral Morrison, himself an accomplished musician. Haydn would spend a lot of time with those individuals and bounce ideas off them, seek their views about what was happening in Guam politically and what impact it might have. I was not aware at the time (and the period of time I'm talking about is essentially 1973 through let's say 1976 or 1977) of any serious effort to engage with the Guamanians on the question of their political status.

Willens: I've heard some speculation to the effect that the Guamanian leaders were told that, if they remained quiet with respect to Congressional approval of the Covenant, ultimately they

would have the very same form of political status available to them.

- Berg: I think particularly during the period of Congressional consideration of the Covenant, Burton and Won Pat were explicit about that. I think they held out to the Guamanians the possibility of an ultimate unification. The feeling was at the time, if you said to the Guamanians that there could be a unification ultimately of the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam and nothing we were doing now would foreclose that possibility, that would be viewed positively by the Guamanians. I think they knew then, and they were assured then, that in any unified Mariana Islands arrangements they, the Guamanians, would clearly be the dominant players. Even though the Marianas were getting a political status that might have some legal features that were superior to what the Guamanians had, which was sort of a plain vanilla model—a generic version of territorial status—the Guamanians were very confident that they would be able to control any amalgamated entity. I mean, look at the difference in population, the difference in economic development, and the difference in infrastructure. So the promise of unity or the promise that unity is not foreclosed within the Marianas (I thought at the time) was enough to keep the Guamanians at bay.
- Willens: Some of the people who were making those representations were aware, I suggest, that the Northern Marianas leadership was not at all interested in reintegration with Guam for the foreseeable future.
- Berg: Absolutely.
- Willens: There was some not deliberate misleading of the Guamanians but some...
- Berg: Some placation of them.
- Willens: Yes. I'm surprised that your recollection is that the Guamanians on the whole would be, and were in fact, satisfied with those representations at the time.
- Berg: I'm not necessarily saying that they were satisfied, but I will also say that during that period of time I think the Guamanians could have done much more to express dissatisfaction than they did. My knowledge of any of the islanders is if you ever at any one point in time walked up to them and said are you satisfied with what's being offered to you today, you're never going to get yes for an answer. But the Guamanians were relatively (I think) quiescent during that period of time.
- Siemer: Did you go out there at that time?
- Berg: Yes. I was in Guam a lot. I participated a lot with Haydn in his briefings of the military leadership. As an Interior Department officer, I had no direct responsibility for a relationship with Guam, but I knew the Guam government people. Often they were surprised to find that I worked in the Interior Department. Most people felt all along that I really worked at OMSN, because I spent so much time on the political status issues. But it really wasn't until (the date that I mentioned—1978 or something like that) after Carter was elected that I switched over to State and into OMSN.
- Siemer: How did Ambassador Williams deal with the military folks who were not directly a part of his organization?
- Berg: You mean the ones who were assigned to OMSN itself?
- Siemer: Other than those people, how did he deal with the military, for example, in Guam and elsewhere. He briefed people in Hawaii, and he visited the Pentagon.
- Berg: I would have to say this. I think he viewed the military as his primary customer. The

JCS had articulated its requirements. OSD, through the NSC structure and the Under Secretaries group and the Inter-Agency Committee, had articulated its view of what should be the nature of the defense relationship under the Covenant and then ultimately subsequently with the rest of Micronesia. Haydn is interesting. He was inclined to push hardest in negotiations to secure American defense and security rights, and he viewed the military, and particularly the uniformed military, as his primary customer. But on the other hand, he reserved his most ferocious criticism for the activities of certain members of the uniformed military. He would criticize them for being intellectually unsound and all this kind of thing. His relationship was generally positive, and he certainly felt it was. He always would go out of his way to brief the CINCPAC structure in Hawaii, as well as on Guam. Looking at it from the other side, however, I think it's probably true that the individual players in the military, senior uniformed military players, viewed Haydn with some degree of curiosity, I guess I would have to say.

Siemer: They viewed the entire subject with some degree of curiosity.

Berg: Right.

Siemer: Had Haydn had significant contacts with the military in this kind of context before?

Berg: Yes, he had been in OSD. I just don't know whether he at a previous time had sustained contact with senior uniformed military leaders. Haydn, though, had experiences in his life right during and after the Second World War that related directly to these islands. He was out there during that period. He in fact had some personal mementos which he buried on some of these islands and vowed to return to achieve control over these islands by the United States so that they never again could be used as aggressively against our country.

Willens: Did he tell you that?

Berg: Yes.

Willens: Did you ever see him retrieve any of the items that he had buried?

Berg: No.

Willens: Did he in fact retrieve any items?

Berg: He may have retrieved some items, but I was not with him when he did. But Haydn and I became very close, and he told me some of his early experiences, which were formative for him. He had as strong a sense of mission about these negotiations as anyone that I know—obviously more than any one else involved. When Haydn finally retired, he wrote letters to several of us. I don't know if you've ever seen any of those letters.

Willens: No, I don't think I have.

Berg: The letter he wrote to me talked about how I stood with him at places like Saipan and Koror and Barbers Point, which were some of the negotiations rounds that he chaired. He viewed himself as conducting a multi-year, highly-complicated campaign to re-achieve something for the United States, and it was tremendously wrapped up in a sense of personal mission. The thing he told me in the letter that was clearly the most important thing to him about my participation was my loyalty to the United States. He chose to comment on and make explicit his views on that point in his parting letter to me. And he wrote letters to almost all the rest of us, and they were each different. He clearly sat down and thought through what contribution did Jim Berg make—what was most important about his role as I saw it—and he expressed that in his letter. I have very rarely run across people in life who have that kind of sense of mission and who carry it to every last expected action, and Haydn is clearly one of them.

- Willens: Referring to your reference to his consultations in Guam and with military officers elsewhere, the materials do confirm that he was very assiduous in his briefing of the relevant departments, and I would suggest to you that that was one of his important strengths in serving in the capacity that he was given. Is that your view?
- Berg: It is my view. And I would have to say to personalize it—that my own understanding of the importance of consultation in a collegially-managed enterprise like an inter-agency group, what I learned of that I learned from Haydn, because I thought he did it extremely well.
- Willens: Do you think he in fact permitted his views to be shaped and formed by these consultations?
- Berg: No. I think he saw these consultations as a way to amalgamate and forge a corporate view consistent with his own. Now I mean consistent with his own, he was not completely free to make up his own mind. Haydn had negotiating instructions which set out his goals and objectives and he either had to comply with them or get them changed. But Haydn viewed his negotiating instructions as something that could be changed only if, when and how he felt they should be changed. And his effort in consultation was to keep people with enough information so that when next he wanted to make adjustments, the proper attitudinal structure would exist to get support. I mean it was a dynamic and a changing thing for him. I think Haydn knew all along that the first set of negotiating instructions he got either for the Marianas or for Micronesia never would last him through the full negotiations. But you have a choice when you're doing something like that. You can either get something and get going, or you can sit there until forever trying to get the perfect set of negotiating instructions, and all of a sudden the Micronesians are in bed with the Russians or something. So his effort at consultation was always an effort to keep people involved in the changing dynamics of his levels of authority. Plus he wanted outcomes, you know. Interior was a very powerful player in all this. State not so much so. Defense certainly. And he felt that he needed to keep these people informed and involved so that they would do things that would support his effort.
- Siemer: The National Security Council really was a separate player. It perceived its own interests at times.
- Berg: Yes. That's right.
- Siemer: How did Haydn deal with them? What was his principal approach to that structure?
- Berg: Haydn would tend to use senior members of the other Departments when he needed to in order to influence the NSC and Henry the K. Haydn had some strong supporters around the government. Irwin, was it John Irwin?
- Willens: Yes. Under Secretary of State.
- Berg: Yes. He was a great supporter of Haydn's and helped him when Haydn needed to get a decision or wanted to influence some kind of decision with the NSC. I think we mentioned Gleysteen at an earlier point. But I guess that was even in earlier times.
- Willens: Yes, because he had left by this time.
- Berg: Haydn had relations with senior people in the Defense Department that I think were generally productive. In that period of time, I did not accompany Haydn or participate with him in any of his close-in relations with the NSC, so it's not an aspect that I have a lot of personal involvement with at that time.

Willens: How did Haydn select and deal with his staff?

Berg: OMSN always selected its staff in a somewhat curious way. We had billets that were assigned to us. There would be a Navy captain. We established a tradition that a Navy captain would always be Director of the Office. There would be an Interior Department OMSN person, and that was Adrian de Graffenried, who was paid by Brewster Chapman actually. No one in Interior thought of Adrian as an Interior employee. Everybody really thought, you know, he had really gone over to the OMSN. State had the status liaison officer. What would happen is that an individual would be assigned for two years or so to this OMSN slot and then would go off to something else. The parent agency would usually give Haydn a choice of one or two people, and he could interview them and choose among them. It wasn't always quite that straightforward, but that's generally how it worked. The U.S. Deputy Representative for Micronesian status negotiations was an interesting position. That was provided by State. The first one was of course Art Hummel, and Haydn and Hummel had a very good relationship. Haydn felt that Hummel was of the desirable stature; Hummel was a very senior guy obviously, and in his time as Deputy Representative was quite effective.

Willens: What do you recall about his contribution?

Berg: By the time I got involved, Jim Wilson was already over there. But Hummel had a great reputation within the government, and also the Micronesians whom I talked to really liked him. They felt very positive because he's got great people skills, and he was one of their favorites. Jim Wilson was I think a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the East Asia Bureau at the time, and he had heart trouble. The story that I was told is that as a result he and Hummel kind of traded jobs, and Jim came over to OMSN. By the time I got back to Washington in the summer of 1973, Jim was already at OMSN, so I never saw Hummel involved. But clearly the idea was that State would provide the Deputy Representative. Haydn fashioned this job for himself so that he could do it part time too, because he was also of course president of the Asia Foundation. The idea of setting it up that way was so that there would be a senior State Department officer who was of a rank, FS1 class, to be able to deal on a peer basis with other senior agency officials -- the Director of the Office of Territorial Affairs at Interior, assistant secretary-level people at the Pentagon, State Department, and at Justice.

Siemer: So things wouldn't deteriorate when Williams was away.

Berg: So that OMSN would have bureaucratic heft, which was very important. Haydn was smart to see it that way, and I think OMSN would have quickly become very ineffective had it not been set up from the beginning the way it was. OMSN's an amazing little organization over the years. It really became quite influential and quite powerful in its small pond.

Willens: Did Ambassador Williams feel free to delegate to members of the staff?

Berg: Oh, certainly I think he felt that if he wanted to delegate he could, but it was not his way to delegate. During that period of time, though, in between negotiating rounds, the primary work of OMSN was really done by Jim Wilson. Haydn was in San Francisco for the most part. Rarely was he in Washington. And if you've ever seen OMSN in those days spatially, it had one very large office and then a little tiny office in the back, the second largest office, and then a bunch of normal-sized offices. Jim Wilson occupied the big office, and when Haydn came to town he was in the little back office. It was sort of like the most impenetrable, sacred, holy little outpost of OMSN was way in the back where Haydn sat. Bill Crowe was in the second-largest office guarding the entry to Haydn's little

alcove. But when I as a returned Peace Corps volunteer walked into OMSN for the first time, the person who I encountered, the magisterial presence who I encountered, was Jim Wilson.

Willens: What was and is your general assessment of Mr. Wilson in that capacity?

Berg: Jim was extremely effective in forging a disciplined U.S. position. He was absolutely willing to knock heads together, to discipline errant members of the American Delegation when that was called for, to manage the development of multiple studies that were going on most of the time at OMSN, to secure for OMSN the resources it needed to carry out its work, to effectively advocate the positions of OMSN in the constant bureaucratic battles that were going on. Jim was very good in a Washington setting. Jim comes across well. Is he deceased?

Willens: No, he's alive. We've not yet opened up contact with him to see whether he would be interviewed.

Berg: But you might.

Willens: Yes, we probably would follow up on that.

Berg: Good. Jim was also able to manage his involvement well with Haydn. I mean these were two strong-willed, high-ranking senior individuals, but Jim was not a show-stealer or anything like that. Haydn clearly was the number one, and Haydn got to be that when the two of them were operating together. I suspect, well I know for a fact, based on the Northern Marianas negotiations, that Jim was not the kind of individual who would develop close buddy-buddy relations with his negotiating opposites in the MPSC. That was just not his metier.

Willens: Do you think Haydn had more success in that regard?

Berg: I think Haydn had more success in that regard, but Haydn's success in that regard was tempered by the fact that he was the head of the Delegation. Haydn perceived (and I think probably correctly so) that he needed to maintain a certain distance.

Siemer: How much control did Williams and Wilson have over the selection of the other members of the Delegation as other agencies filled those slots from time to time?

Berg: You mean the expanded Delegation that would go to a negotiating round? No one would go to a negotiating round unless Haydn and Jim wanted that person to go. And that worked in both ways. If Interior tried to send Person A rather than Person B, Haydn would just say no, they will not go. Haydn had the ability to enforce that. Also from time to time, Haydn saw people in the government who he positively wanted to be on the Delegation, and he would go after them. He would go and talk to their boss, and he was very aggressive about this. He seemed to believe that the make-up of the personalities of the Delegation was very important.

Willens: Why was that?

Berg: Haydn sought to use us to perform certain functions while we were at the site. There were several of us who were younger guys, myself included, and Haydn felt that we could and should achieve friendships or out-of-meeting relationships with younger-guy types on the MPSC, in your particular case. At one point later on in the process, when Oscar Rasa became involved, I can remember we were sitting in the Delegation and he said, you know, the fact of the matter is you young guys are really letting me down. Why don't you all go out and organize a spaghetti feed and get Rasa and these guys together. You have things in common to talk about. Get to know these people and influence them.

- Willens: Did you have any particular assignments in terms of members of the MPSC?
- Berg: Oh, yes. When we came out to Saipan for those talks we all stayed at the Hafa Adai Hotel. We can put this on the record or not. I can remember at one point I had heard that the Howard Willens strategy to confuse the American Delegation was that in the middle of the night they were going to get up, and we all had little 3x5 cards on our doors—Col. Kenty, Jim Berg, etc.—and you were going to change our nametags so we would forget who we were and we would be very confused at the next meeting.
- Willens: Your fears were reasonably well founded. We did have a strategy. Jay Lapin and I during the afternoon would go by the pool, and we could see you up with the Ambassador in the Hafa Adai, and you were involved in what I heard were referred to as “tasking sessions”.
- Berg: Yes, that’s right.
- Willens: . . . where various tasks were given individual members. We thought it was of great psychological value to luxuriate by the pool reading the newspaper clearly within your sight so that you would become disenchanted with the tasking process and envy those working for the other side.
- Berg: No.
- Willens: This strategy resulted in us working late at night.
- Berg: That’s right. No, I don’t think that helped. That did not help you at all, because even though we did a lot of these taskings we actually set up a little office. We had a com center right there, you would do your task, we would write them out in longhand, we would put them in the In box, the secretariat staff there would type them up. There was a little distribution system, and all these papers were produced right on site in advance of the next meeting.
- Siemer: What kind of tasks were these?
- Berg: Oh, you know, well you can remember, we would have a session and we would agree at the next session we would be discussing Title VII or something like that, some aspect of financing, a federal programs issue or something. I often would get tasks in those areas, and I would be required to write up talking points for the U.S. to use in that upcoming meeting—what our position was, what our strategy was, how far I thought we should go, should we offer this, what did the Marianas expect, what did they want, what would be a path to agreement. So I would scope out that session, get the paper written, it would be submitted to Jim and Haydn, they would read it. It was at this point if (let’s say) one of (for lack of a better term) the “robot colonels” was given a tasking and then he was supposed to plot out what was going to go on in a meeting, they would write these very, very dry [unimaginative] kinds of papers. Haydn would become infuriated at them and send them back, make them do it again, that type of thing. But that’s basically how we ran the Delegation when we were out there.
- Siemer: There seemed to be a considerable turnover in the military members of the Delegation, although some of the civilian members from other agencies seemed to be quite constant. Was that a function simply of other military assignments?
- Berg: Yes. You had several different rotations going on at the same time. The uniformed military guys, like say for example, Ed Whalen or Bill Kenty, they were not members of OMSN but they would come out as members of the Delegation, and the only reason they did is because they happened to be occupying one of the positions in the JCS that was billeted to be a member of this particular Delegation. They each were on different time clocks, so

there apparently much more turnover, whereas in the civilian members, I mean there was zero turnover in the Department of Justice representative. There was no turnover for me. I stayed involved during the whole period of time. State was only tangentially involved as an additional member of the Delegation. There were State people within OMSN obviously. Then we would bring in some odd agencies from time to time. But you would get the impression that it was the military turnover was the most, it was for that reason.

Willens: During the period before the third round of negotiations, one of the major issues was the moratorium on Tinian homesteads and economic development. Both Williams and Wilson visited Saipan in the summer of 1973 to explain this decision and try to placate the critics. Did you play any role in the formulation of the U.S. position papers on that subject?

Berg: Of the Tinian moratorium?

Willens: Right.

Berg: No, because I was really just getting involved at that time. I knew about it, and I dealt with it in other land issues in the aftermath of it, but in preparation for that, no. That was all done I think within OMSN. But see, this is a good example of a point that I was talking about earlier. The question of homesteading, the right to homestead, and the mechanics of homesteading. That is quite clearly something that you would think would be within the purview of the government department that is administering the Trust Territory. But here is an area where, for the imperatives in the political status negotiations, Haydn and OMSN intervened and articulated this moratorium and did so really (I think this is true) without Interior Department approval. It was an initiative from OMSN, it was not an initiative from the Interior Department, or certainly from the Trust Territory Government, or from the Saipan or from the Marianas District Government. So I think it's a good example of where the bureaucratic imperatives of the two sides of the American face really collided.

Willens: During this period there also was an effort to get the Defense Department to reassess its requirements on Tinian and reconsider whether the United States needed to have the entire island available for its use or whether it could limit itself to two-thirds of the island, leaving some portion in civilian control. Did you participate in any discussions either within OMSN or with military representatives as to the desirability of reassessing DOD requirements?

Berg: I did participate with some of the military representatives in those discussions, but I would not say that either I or that the Interior Department generally played a central or even a marginal role in that thinking. I mean when issues of that sort were discussed within the Inter-Agency Group, clearly there was a lead agency for the subject at hand, and this was one that Interior did not view that it had any particular competence to address. I talked about these issues with the DOD representatives and with the OMSN staff and was myself of the view that a reassessment and downgrading, shall we say, of the extent of land we wanted would be more amenable to producing an outcome for us, but I was not a player in any central way in that decision.

Willens: By letter dated October 29, 1973, Ambassador Williams wrote to the then Secretary of Defense Schlesinger and requested some reassurances as to the Department's resolve in developing a base on Tinian. Do you know what precipitated this particular inquiry?

- Berg: I think there were several things that precipitated it. Quite clearly the effect of our initial stated requirement to have the entire island of Tinian was quite strong. Haydn and OMSN perceived that it may be very difficult to secure agreement for this on the Hill, because although he did from time to time talk with the Armed Services Committees, the House Interior Committee and the Senate Interior Committee were always thought to be the primary players and the committees that would have primary jurisdiction when the results of the negotiations went to Congress. My recollection of the time is that there was discussion within OMSN and the Inter-Agency Group that the Interior Committees were not necessarily going to be able to be supportive of this requirement for the entirety of the island of Tinian.
- Willens: Why not? Because of Micronesian opposition? Or for some other reason?
- Berg: Well, either Micronesian opposition, Marianas opposition, or it seemed that these were not the Committees of Congress that viewed themselves to be the keepers of the keys regarding American basing structure. These were the people who viewed themselves as even possibly the advocates for the Micronesians, or the caretakers of the Micronesians. So the perception that was being told to us (I at this point did not participate in going up to the Hill to do briefings) was that there seemed to be some concerns expressed up there about the Tinian land requirements. Obviously it was a matter of intense consideration in the Marianas. There were people who were saying that the only way that we could get approval for this is that if there was a tremendous show of support and a clear articulation by the Defense Department, by the Secretary of Defense, that we absolutely had an unalterable national security requirement for this, because it was perceived as such an extreme requirement.
- Willens: Did Ambassador Williams think that he got that from the Defense Department in response to this letter?
- Berg: I don't think he did. I recall the letter. I recall it being drafted. I recall the period in which he was drafting it. And then I recall the answer. And the perception that existed within OMSN is that the answer was robotic and thoughtless. It was this is our requirement; therefore this is our requirement. And it didn't give Haydn I think what he was looking for. I think in the letter, if I recall correctly, he actually asked for some rationale that could be used to support this demand, and he didn't get anything in response in the letter back from Schlesinger along those lines, other than this is our requirement. And ultimately obviously we fell off of that requirement.
- Willens: Well, one year later, as you know, in December of 1974, just on the eve virtually of what was supposed to be the last round of negotiations, the Defense Department informed Ambassador Williams that it no longer was planning to build a facility on the island of Tinian. Do you think Ambassador Williams was to some extent misled by the Defense Department in the sense that they had reached a judgment to go forward with the base and that they subsequently had to withdraw from that position?
- Berg: No, I don't think he was misled. I may have a more ungenerous view of the thought and decision process in the Defense Department than others have. But my view of the situation was (and has always been) that the inter-agency process in this arena (Micronesia and the Marianas) was one that gave the Defense Department (both sides, the OSD side and the JCS side) much more freedom to articulate their requirements in an undisciplined and uncritical manner. There was no one else who provided a quality check on what DOD was asking for. The original articulation of the Palau land requirements was nothing short of ridiculous, and I would have to say (and this is with benefit of hindsight in retrospect,

I've got to admit) that the same would have to be true for Tinian. Now quite clearly we were disengaging from Vietnam at the time. There was a lot of thought going on about where we would deploy, how we would fall back, but points made I think even in Haydn's letter and elsewhere about how we had all this land on Guam not fully being put to use, why wouldn't that be a more appropriate location. On the other hand, I'd have to say that the Tinian land requirements lent incredible strength to the imperatives for the Marianas status negotiations. It was not an easy decision for the U.S. to negotiate separately with the Marianas. I would have to say that but for the perceived importance at the time (and this goes back even earlier, to 1971) of the Tinian land requirements and the fact that the quickest, most direct way to achieve them would be through a route of separate negotiations, bringing the Marianas into the sovereignty of the United States rather than this some curious, quizzical free association relationship which seemed to be emerging with the other Micronesians, the fact of the land requirements and the fact that Haydn was out there with a charge to secure them gave a lot of bureaucratic power to the Northern Marianas political status negotiations and to OMSN. I mean it's curious, because I think they were overstated, but it wasn't intentionally misleading Haydn. Defense thought this was what they wanted at the time, and there was no one else in the government who was checking the quality of their work or their thought process. They articulated it, and there it was.

Willens: Jim, what is your assessment then of the way in which the matter was presented to the Marianas Political Status Commission?

Berg: I think it was presented by the United States Delegation and the head of the Delegation as being an immutable requirement. The United States had to have this. It was critical to our forward policy at the time. Tinian was the only area of land large enough to accommodate what our plans were. They clearly related not only to a training area but also to the construction of a multi-service base at the time. My recollection is that we set this out as a minimum requirement.

Willens: Was the Ambassador or any other member of the U.S. Delegation aware that the Department of Defense had not yet made the final programming and financial decisions that were necessary before such a base could be presented to Congress?

Berg: I cannot say that for a fact. I do not know exactly what was in Haydn's mind or not in his mind or the other members of the Delegation. My perception at the time was that I thought the demand seemed extreme, but I had no independent basis on which to judge the seriousness of the intention of the Defense Department to go forward with the construction of a base there.

Siemer: That would be one purpose of Haydn's consultations with the military in Guam and Hawaii, because they are the ones who would be generating this kind of requirement in the first instance, and they would be the ones who would be required to support it. So it would seem fair to assume that he was looking for some feedback there and taking some soundings there as well.

Berg: That's right.

Siemer: To what extent was [later] Admiral Crowe important to the ability to assess what the military was doing now, and would do in the future, and how much flexibility there was in the position?

Berg: I think he was a very important player in that. Bill Crowe, both with regard to the Marianas and with regard to the Palauan requirements, chaired the survey for Palau

and articulated for the first time a defined Palauan land requirement beyond what was originally stated. My observation at the time in the year 1973 is that he had credibility and influence back within the Defense Department and could effectively on behalf of OMSN try to get clarity on what the actual requirements were. I will also have to say, however (again, this is my own perception and not from one who was directly involved in that particular set of transactions), that there never really was a strong sense within the Delegation that we had clarity on what the minimum requirements were. I think Haydn felt that he had to portray them the way that he did in order to achieve credibility with his negotiating offices. But I guess in the end when we fell off of the requirement (of course I knew what some of the internal deliberations were) it did not seem illogical or surprising that we would fall off. Even to the people who saw for themselves in their own careers ultimately a position in this big base, Kenty probably being one of them, there was always something of an air of unreality about it, that it might never really happen. But that's only a perception on my part, because that's clearly an area of the negotiations that I was not responsible for or directly involved in.

Willens: In the course of your subsequent work with the Congress, did you personally hear from Congressional members or staff some skepticism about the military need for the option on Tinian?

Berg: Yes. And I would say that that same skepticism was true for land requirements in other parts of Micronesia, with the exception of our continued use of the missile base on Kwajalein. But that was a whole different thing, because we had billions of dollars already invested there, some highly complicated scientific equipment, we clearly were using it, and that's very different than contemplating a green fields investment like the base on Tinian would be or like any kind of construction in Palau would be.

Willens: Just to go ahead a decade, I've been told that in fact Defense would not have sought the money from Congress to fund the lease provided for under the Covenant if Congressman Burton hadn't insisted that they seek the money. Or to elaborate on it—they would have preferred using the money for other purposes but Congressman Burton was insistent on the Marianas getting the money, and so he reportedly used his influence to make sure that the Department of Defense would not be disadvantaged in its overall financial needs by leasing the land on Tinian.

Berg: I cannot say that that didn't happen. In fact, I would suspect that it probably did. I don't know what additional tradeoffs Burton might have worked out to protect DOD. I think we all knew at the time that perceptions of the United States in the Pacific were undergoing fundamental and quick change during that early 1970s period. And what in one period of time looked like a sure thing—Tinian fall-back there—not long thereafter seemed to be an irrelevant consideration. The same drama was to play itself out years later with regard to Palau. Kenty and Ed Whalen and those people saying—and did you ever know a Marine colonel named Jock Craig?

Willens: No, I didn't.

Berg: He was really more involved in the Micronesian side, to be honest.

Willens: Jim, in advance of the third round of negotiations, there had been a working group on economics and finance. The United States representatives on this were Mr. Silver and Mr. Miller. The Marianas Political Status Commission was represented by Jim Leonard and me to a lesser extent. Do you recall participating or hearing about these discussions with respect to what was called Phase 1 funding?

- Berg: Yes.
- Willens: What is your recollection now of the discussions between the Delegations looking toward the development of a transitional program that was to be funded by the United States?
- Berg: Well, Sol Silver was an employee of OMSN, and the Miller in question is probably Richard Miller, who was an employee of the Department of the Interior Office of Territorial Affairs, which is where I was from. Rich Miller was the staff assistant for economic development. And the charge for that group, as I understand it, was to prepare a plan both for the economic support that would be provided to the Northern Marianas pursuant to the Status Agreement, but also to look into issues relating to funding of the Marianas during the remaining period that they were under the Trusteeship Agreement. There was not a lot of clarity within the United States government at the time as to when the Marianas might emerge from under the Trusteeship Agreement. It was all linked together with the rest of Micronesia. Progress on the other political status negotiations was unsure and subject to fits and starts at that particular time, so therefore at least OMSN felt the need that transitional funding for the Northern Marianas as well as funding under the Status Agreement should be addressed. OMSN and Rich Miller, who was a long-time employee of Interior, were the individuals who were working on this. I did not participate as a member of that group, but I worked with Sol and with Rich inside Washington as they prepared their position papers and did some research and some analysis for them.
- Willens: Did you come to have an opinion as to Jim Leonard's contribution to the Marianas side of the negotiations?
- Berg: Yes. I can't say that during the second half of 1973 I did, but certainly in the period after that through the remainder of the negotiations and even later I came to develop a good amount of admiration for Jim Leonard. I thought his participation was always positive. I found him to be reasonable. He was not ideological or intransigent in his thinking. And he impressed me as an individual who had a good amount of relevant experience for the tasks that he was given.
- Willens: One of the issues that developed early on was the need for physical planning for the Commonwealth in the future. The United States Delegation took the view for a considerable period of time that there had been an ample number of studies done by the TTPI and that those studies should be looked at and relied upon rather than spending money for new studies. Did you have any view on that issue?
- Berg: Yes. I must say that I sought to try to prove the hypothesis that sufficient physical or infrastructural planning had been done by the Trust Territory Administration. I recall encountering some of the people within the Trust Territory government and certainly in the Marianas District government who were charged with that task and I must say that, contrary to what I had hoped to find, I found that the work they had done to be of marginal quality. Really there was no vision, I would have to say, no cohesive vision, no defined plan for physical or infrastructural development for the Marianas. There were collections of proposals, I guess one could say. I recall a particular meeting when I went out there between rounds one time with Jim Wilson and with Rich Miller. The purpose of that trip was to try to assess the state of physical planning. This related not only to the entire system of infrastructure—the sewer system, roads, the buildings, utilities, water, electricity, etc. The Trust Territory government had been given information by me and by others in advance to put together the state of physical plans. I recall getting a presentation from them that was presented in a very attractively bound volume. It looked very impressive, with a lot of papers inside of it. As we opened up this volume and began

to page through it to look at the plans that were being presented, they were again nothing more than half-baked proposals on this or that, and it did not constitute anything that you would consider to be cohesive or defined national planning or physical planning. My own recommendation internally was that we had to somehow structurally address this question because we couldn't rely on what had been done, or in this case not done, by the Trust Territory government.

Willens: Were you aware of the drafting effort that the lawyers were engaged in to produce a draft status agreement to present to the Marianas Delegation at the third round?

Berg: I was.

Willens: What was your understanding of the strategy involved with respect to that?

Berg: You mean the American strategy?

Willens: Yes.

Berg: My understanding is that we would seek to manage our discussion of the political nature of the relationship through the aegis of a jointly-produced draft (or skeleton if you will) of an agreement. I recall discussions within OMSN that the best way to move the procedure forward now is to get something jointly done down on paper that people could react to that could lend substance to these discussions, and that perhaps for too long they had been somewhat more ethereal and we needed to concentrate on concrete things. Again, it was not an area that I was involved in directly, but that's what I recall to be the surrounding discussion about it.

Willens: Was there any tentative timetable within the Office that suggested that these negotiations might be concluded as early as the end of 1973 or early 1974?

Berg: I think early 1974. I think we felt even during the third round in 1973 and after that as we entered into 1974 that 1974 could be and would be the concluding year for the negotiations. And we didn't see that there was any particular reason why the Marianas could not meet that schedule as well. It was difficult I think for the U.S. to juggle both sets of negotiations, and although we did not want to indicate that we were putting the Micronesian negotiations on hold to concentrate purely on the Marianas negotiations, in the case of the Marianas negotiations we had a joint vision with the Marianas where the outcome was going to be. I don't think any of us at that point could have described to you in detail what we finally came up with in the Covenant, but we knew that we were looking for a "territorial" status of some sort. In Micronesia, we were creating things from nothing. We had no particular model to go with. There was no functioning free association going on anywhere in the world except what the New Zealanders at one time had with some of their territories, but that was not of interest to us as a model. So I think the feeling was that, even though we wanted to keep the Micronesian negotiations alive in spite of all their trouble, we could move quickly to sew up the Marianas negotiations.

Willens: Do you recall participating in the third round of negotiations in December 1973?

Berg: Yes.

Willens: Was that the first occasion on which you met the members of the Marianas Political Status Commission?

Berg: It was certainly such in their capacity as the MPSC, yes. Some of them I had met in advance of that, even back in the days when I was in the Peace Corps. I've referred to bringing a group of Trukese magistrates up to visit the Congress of Micronesia, and I met several members of the Congress of Micronesia during that period. I think Olympio Borja

was a member of the Senate at that time. Eddie Pangelinan was a Senator as well.

Willens: Based on your experience with the members of the Marianas Political Status Commission over time, not just in 1973, could you give me your characterization and assessment of some of those members, beginning perhaps with Senator Borja.

Berg: Yes. I think the Marianas Status Commission I would say as a group (let's discuss it as a group first) came across to me really over the entire period of the negotiations (except at the very end when there were membership changes that were very important) as quite a cohesive group of people. Olympio Borja had a very unique and special personality, and a lot of people had stronger reactions to him. There was always the discussion surrounding about Olympio Borja, that he might be engaged in some sort of illegal activities. He gave a lot of people the impression that he was not necessarily to be trusted. People spoke suspiciously and darkly about business relationships of an unknown nature that he might have had with the Japanese and even with Japanese Mafia-types. So he was viewed (I think) as somewhat of a suspicious character, but as a classic sort of ward heeler politician type as well. Clearly the Chairman of the Delegation, Eddie Pangelinan, was everybody's favorite in the American Delegation. He was friendly, had strong people skills, excellent English, talked like another American, he was easy for the "robot colonels" to get along with, and he was a very positive, leadership type of guy. We often wondered about the pairing of him with Haydn Williams, who was old enough to be and acted as though he were his father. But he was liked by everyone in the American Delegation.

Willens: Did Ambassador Williams think that he could in private meetings, one-on-one with Chairman Pangelinan, cause him to change his views on matters?

Berg: I don't know. Change his views might be a little strong. I think he felt it was appropriate from time to time that the two Delegation heads would meet alone and that it was their right and responsibility as heads of the Delegations to have such meetings and to decide on important policy issues. I don't know that Haydn felt that he had a magical ability to change Eddie's way of thinking, but I think he felt he had some influence and that he could at least influence directionally what Eddie might be thinking about. But I will also quickly say that it was clear to all of us on the American side, including Haydn I believe, although he may from time to time have chosen not to recognize it, that Eddie could have any number of private meetings with Haydn but that in the aftermath of those private meetings, Eddie would counsel with other members of the MPSC and with the advisors to the MPSC and might develop an entirely different point of view on the subject than Haydn would have wanted. That happened time and time again. It didn't stop Haydn from wanting to meet privately with Eddie. I cannot recall a time when in any truly fundamental way a private meeting between the two Delegation heads shifted the position of the Marianas side.

Willens: What was your collective assessment of the Vice Chairman, Mr. Santos?

Berg: It was not altogether a positive one. Mr. Santos of course was Speaker of the Marianas District Legislature at the time, so we knew that he was an influential and important political figure. But again, I think we felt that there were business dealings, possibly corrupt ones, which were closely associated with his activities. Not unlike the situation with Olympio Borja.

Willens: So far we've discussed three members, and we have two members who were viewed as potentially engaged in suspect activities.

Berg: That's right.

- Willens: Shall we try for a fourth?
- Berg: Nothing was ever proven. This was just talk around and that type of thing. And I would have to say frankly that I think that a lot of the rumors that surrounded people like Ben Santos or Oly Borja were groundless and in fact were propagated by whom? They were propagated by other Marianans who were members of the Marianas District government, because they saw in Ben Santos or Oly Borja people who had achieved prominence or positions of power and influence, not through the route of the Administrative organ but through elected politics. And I think you know Saipan is a small place, and island jealousies are very rife there. Anybody who achieves a level of prominence like Borja did or like Ben Santos is going to have detractors and is going to have enemies. And of course we in the U.S. Delegation dealt a lot with people (I in particular) who were in the Marianas or the Trust Territory Administration, and we would hear from them their assessment of these guys. "Oh, my God, you're really dealing with them," and you know.
- Willens: Did that reveal to you some sense within the TTPI hierarchy that they basically were not in support of the separate negotiations with the Marianas?
- Berg: Yes. But I didn't need those kind of rumors to make me come to that point of view. The members of the high command of the Trust Territory government were perfectly willing to state that explicitly.
- Willens: Were they opposed to negotiations at all with any part of Micronesia, or were they specifically directing their opposition toward the separate negotiations?
- Berg: I would have to say probably both are true. It is not possible to conclude that there was any outcome to the political status negotiations other than their collapse that would have any effect other than the end of the Trust Territory government.
- Willens: That was something they were not in sympathy with.
- Berg: That's correct, because the Trust Territory government was their employer and, if it weren't for the Trust Territory government, they would not be employed. And I don't think any of these people felt that there was much of a significant opportunity awaiting them when they returned to the United States. So as a consequence, there was a lot of inertia, and there was a lot of desire for job security at the Trust Territory headquarters. This same kind of mentality built up in the Marianas District government, which was then under the firm but inspired administration of one Francisco Ada, the District Administrator.
- Willens: What was your assessment of Mr. Ada's attitude toward the negotiations?
- Berg: He had a negative attitude toward the negotiations as well, because I think particularly for the Marianas District government, those guys—Frank Ada, David, oh, what was his name, the public affairs guy, David was his first name?
- Willens: Maratita.
- Berg: He ultimately made the transference over, and he ran for (I think) the Constitutional Convention or something in the Marianas. But for most of those guys, they did not see how the political status negotiations were going to lead to anything positive for them personally. Whereas if we would just not rock the boat, leave the Trust Territory infrastructure set up the way it was, these were the guys in charge of it. A new group of political leaders were emerging at that time.
- Willens: Did you have personal conversations with either of those individuals in which they more or less stated the sentiment that you attributed to them?

- Berg: I would have to say that none of them ever stated so directly what I am interpolating here, but I certainly have had many, many conversations with all of those people and believe that these were their views.
- Willens: Jim, continuing with our discussion of the MPSC members, what was your assessment of Benjamin Manglona from Rota?
- Berg: Ben Manglona was felt to be a very effective representative of his constituents, which were the Rotanese. He was thought to be honest, sincere, and deeply caring about the responsibilities that he had as a representative of the Rotanese people. He projected himself as a representative of Rota—not as a representative of the greater Marianas. I think I would have to frankly say that we talked about Ben a lot within the American Delegation and always felt him to be a person who would listen to reason, who we could trust, who would not betray confidences, and who could be depended upon to aggressively push for what he thought the Rotanese people wanted.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of the other Rotanese representative, Joannes Taimano?
- Berg: Yes, I do remember him, but he's not one of the individuals who was prominently discussed and thought about within the U.S. Delegation.
- Willens: Turning to the Tinian representatives, what is your recollection of Joe Cruz?
- Berg: Joe Cruz had a very outgoing personality. No meeting that involved Joe Cruz would ever take place without his presence being certainly acknowledged and commented upon. It was not thought that he was the architect of much of the complicated thinking that went on within the Marianas Political Status Delegation, but he seemed to us to be a force to be reckoned with within the group. We talked about it a lot. His behavior was unpredictable. There were lots of stories that surrounded Joe Cruz. When the various announcements over time about American land requirements for Tinian were revealed, I think there was a feeling that some of the members of the Marianas Political Status Commission were looking for ways to gain personally from their possession of this information. They had been given some insider knowledge and they might go and try to buy up land only later to sell it or to be the beneficiary of a subsequent sale or lease of that land to the United States. I don't know that anybody actually did that, but there were certainly a lot of rumors going around in the Marianas fueling that kind of thought. Certainly the Tinian representatives would be the ones most likely to be able to capitalize on such an arrangement if in fact they were doing it at all.
- Siemer: What was the Delegation's assessment about whether Joe Cruz spoke for the people of Tinian and could influence their views with respect to these various alternatives on land?
- Berg: You know, I don't think that we believed that anyone spoke for or could ultimately really influence the people of Tinian. Neither the mayor nor Joe Cruz, certainly not Eddie Pangelinan. This was a small group of people. What were there—700 inhabitants of Tinian at that particular time? And you know we were talking at various stages about taking the whole island, about taking part of it and leasing it back, about relocating San Jose Village, then not relocating San Jose Village. There were many shifts in our own position. At one point there was a meeting that we had on Tinian. Haydn Williams, Jim Wilson, and I were there, as well as several other members of the U.S. Delegation.
- Willens: A public meeting?
- Berg: A public meeting on Tinian. I can't quite place in time when that took place.
- Willens: I think it was probably the next round in May of 1974.

Berg: It would have been probably then, because I think some big questions relating to that had to do with the relocation of San Jose Village . . .

Willens: That's correct.

Berg: . . . or the not any longer required relocation of San Jose Village, and in fact disappointment by the Tinianese that they weren't going to get a new village. If I recall correctly, the mayor of Tinian had a proposal whereby: "Okay, even though you're not going to relocate the village, can we have the money instead?" But the political leaders, those who came from Tinian, would jockey for position vis-à-vis one another, but there was not a social contract between the 700 inhabitants of Tinian and one or two or three political leaders where okay, here's what our position is, you guys go out and negotiate for that on our behalf. I don't think any Tinianese would ever have ceded that much authority or responsibility to any of their leaders. I think in the end we would almost have had to negotiate that deal with all 700 of them.

Willens: Was it your view then that essentially you had to depend on the Marianas Political Status Commission to get sufficient assent from the Tinian residents as to permit the Commission to go forward with agreeing to the lease of two-thirds of the land?

Berg: Yes, but we didn't know exactly how that transaction would take place, and it was a matter of great concern to us.

Siemer: Did the U.S. Delegation have what it regarded as reliable ways of ascertaining what was the current opinion on Tinian apart from talking to the Political Status Commission?

Berg: No, not really. Of course we had a status liaison officer, and we could talk to people in the Trust Territory government. But if the people in the Trust Territory government or the Marianas District government were Chamorros, we would not view them necessarily as an objective source of information. The Trust Territory government didn't concern themselves with these kinds of issues. So no. On this issue and generally on the issue of what were the Marianas people thinking, not just the Tinianese, but generally what was the normal Marianas work-a-day person thinking about the political status negotiations, we did not have good solid intelligence. We did not have a sense. We had no way to get any sense of what the attitude was. So although I think we did not believe that the Marianas Political Status Commission was directly and immediately and constantly in touch with the pulse of thinking in the Marianas, we had no other institution to turn to other than the MPSC, which frankly the American Delegation did a lot to authorize the existence of. I mean the fact that this was the group that the United States chose to meet with legitimized them. Nonetheless, we had no other organization to deal with out there. We couldn't deal with the Marianas District government. We couldn't go and deal directly with the Legislature; it was not set up to deal with us that way. So we only had the MPSC, although I don't think we believed that the MPSC could convince the Northern Marianas people to do something they ultimately did not want to do. Another way to state that is that we believed that the MPSC in its own way as a general matter was articulating what they thought the people of the Marianas could support or would support.

Willens: So you ultimately thought that if the Commission agreed to something, they would be able to bring the people to a favorable vote on the outcome?

Berg: Yes. Now whether we actually believed that or whether we had to think that, it's probably a combination of both. But we felt that if in the end the Commission signed off on something, whether it had to do with Tinian land or whether it had to do with the nature of the political arrangement, that they would sign off on it only if they felt that the people

of the Marianas ultimately would approve it. But even then, I mean right up until the day after the votes were counted in the plebiscite, it was always an open question as to how things would go. I mean I personally felt that we would win in the plebiscite, but there were others who held just as strong views within the U.S. government that the Marianas would not vote to approve this.

Willens: Let me mention a few other names of Commission members. Pete A. Tenorio. What was your assessment of his contribution?

Berg: Pete A. Tenorio was viewed even with some alarm by a large part of the American Delegation, because it appeared as though he was undercutting at a certain time the leadership role of Eddie Pangelinan, and we felt that there was a very positive feeling toward Eddie Pangelinan. So if we felt that there was a power struggle going on within the MPSC between those two, you know it comes down in the end to the devil you know versus the devil you don't.

Willens: He was on the Commission for more than a year before he ran against Eddie for the Congress of Micronesia and defeated him in November 1974.

Berg: That's right.

Willens: Did you have the feeling he was undercutting the Chairman even before he ran against him?

Berg: We knew that there was a competitive relationship between the two of them. Probably not everybody in the Delegation. Those of us closer to the Marianas and to the TT and to the personalities knew that there was a competitive relationship emerging. That having been said, however, I think the work that Pete A. did and the positions he took were thoughtful. I think he's a smart guy. I think his contributions in the end drove us to a higher-quality outcome. And I think the work that he did later in transition was really quite positive and quite good.

Willens: What is your recollection of Felix Rabauliman?

Berg: Felix was an individual who we felt was important because he had links to the so-called Carolinian community within the Northern Marianas. They were certainly a minority in the community, but an important one, and for any number of reasons we wanted to make sure that the Carolinians who lived on Saipan felt that their aspirations for future political status could be achieved within the context of the Marianas negotiations, rather than having them oppose those outcomes to link back to the Trukese or the Ponapeans or the Yapese in other parts of Micronesia.

Willens: Did you or other members of the Delegation make an effort to reach out to other representatives of the Carolinian community to find out the extent to which they might be distancing themselves from the Commission?

Berg: To a limited degree, and I am probably one of the ones who did the most in that regard. I do recall going to little community meetings in the Carolinian areas of Saipan and talking to people who I knew through Trukese connections and finding out what their feelings were and talking to them about the American position and things of that nature. None of us lived on Saipan. I and a few others were probably out there more than any other member of the American Delegation. But there was only a limited amount that one could do—to try to not proselytize but to at least make known the views of the U.S. and what we felt were important things to communicate.

- Willens: What conclusions, however tentative, did you come away with after having met or discussed these issues with some Carolinians?
- Berg: I guess I concluded that the Carolinian community in the Northern Marianas was really there to stay and didn't really see a future for itself apart from living in some sort of modus vivendi with the Chamorros and that, as long as there were no objective discriminatory features in the future status, they would be able to continue to find a comfortable life there. It was a small community and not a particularly vocal one. But I think we felt it important that there be some effort to reach out to that community, so that it wouldn't be said, or so that they would not feel as though, they had been completely ignored or that their existence wasn't even known to us.
- Siemer: It didn't seem from the status LNO reports that that was kind of on their beat, so to speak.
- Berg: No, I don't think it was. There was not any direction that I was aware of from the leadership of OMSN or anyone else to go and accomplish any discrete set of objectives vis-a-vis the Carolinian community.
- Siemer: There were relatively few Carolinians in the TT government as well, so there wasn't that avenue for contact with the Carolinians.
- Berg: That's correct. I mean the Trust Territory government was primarily made up of Palauans.
- Willens: Were there any other members of the Marianas Political Status Commission that you have a recollection of that you can share with us?
- Berg: Yes. I can just offer a few observations. Mitch Pangelinan is certainly one. I had a very friendly relationship with him. He was an easy individual to talk to. He seemed to have a good idea of what he wanted future outcomes to be. He seemed quite positively inclined toward the direction that the talks were going, and we viewed him, I certainly viewed him, as a very positive force within the MPSC. Who else? Well, at a later point Oscar Rasa became involved.
- Willens: Let's jump ahead and talk about that. As a result of the election in November 1974, both Pete A. Tenorio and Oscar Rasa got elected to the Congress of Micronesia, and Ed Pangelinan and Herman Q. Guerrero were defeated.
- Berg: Herman Q. is another one who I can comment on, too.
- Willens: Why don't you comment on Herman first then.
- Berg: Herman Q. was an individual who a lot of people (in the U.S. Delegation and status liaison) spent a lot of time talking to. Herman was friendly to the American Delegation. We felt he was an individual who we could seek out and talk to if we wanted to try to influence a point of view or seek some information about attitudes. Herman was an individual who we felt was approachable. So I would say that as a general matter that the American Delegation had a positive view toward him.
- Willens: Which ones of the members you've named were you personally assigned to mentor?
- Berg: Mentor is a strong word.
- Willens: To communicate with.
- Berg: "Buddy-up with" might be better. Oh, at various times, different ones. I actually had some assignments toward Eddie because he and I got along well, plus also his logical buddy was

not always available for this kind of activity, and that would be Haydn. Mitch Pangelinan was one. Later on Pete A. Tenorio. Never really Herman Q. I was the nominated sacrificial lamb to become buddy-buddy with Oscar, but that never worked.

Siemer: Did anybody work with Rasa?

Berg: Not to my knowledge, no.

Willens: The documents show considerable concern within the U.S. Delegation after the election that status may have been an important issue in the election and that the voters were showing their dissatisfaction with the pace or substance of the negotiations. Do you recall having any impression yourself as to what this election meant in terms of finishing the negotiations?

Berg: I was one who immediately after the election was of the point of view that the outcome was status-related. But I later came to a point of view that status, although it may have played some role, was not really the driving thing that caused these guys to get elected. And it's sort of like saying all politics is local. I mean I think that Eddie and Herman Q. were replaced because the guys who ran against them did a better job of going out and collecting votes and dealing with the constituents, whoever they may have been. In OMSN and particularly in the U.S. Delegation, there was a tendency to analyze Micronesian and Marianas politics exclusively through the prism of the political status negotiations and that everything that happened, happened either because of the negotiations or was going to influence the negotiations in some way. But that simply was just not the case. The negotiations for a great period of time were a truly, truly peripheral event to most people in the Northern Mariana Islands. They become important from time to time when there's something like a plebiscite or a Constitutional Convention or stuff on TV, but during the long rounds and the working group sessions and stuff like that, this was a peripheral sideshow to the daily life of the Northern Mariana Islands. I think that status may have had some influence on the election of 1974, but I think it was predominantly other things that got those two guys elected. Now Rasa is no fool and obviously used his election and his so-called links to the rest of Micronesia, to the local "Brown Power Movement", as he used to call it. He aggrandized all of that after he got elected. I think we were fairly worried about the effect he would have within the body politic in the Marianas. As it turns out, I think his effect over time was really quite marginal.

Siemer: Did you see or hear Pete A.'s campaign theme about slowing down the progress of the negotiations and taking a more careful approach?

Berg: Yes. We had a lot of debate about that. There were people inside the U.S. who argued that that's what he had to do in order to differentiate himself from Eddie but that, if he were elected, it wouldn't really make too much difference. And there were others who argued that no, he's really trying to derail the negotiations, but I think they were wrong. I think history proved that they were wrong. Basically it was a debate that we never resolved inside the government. There were just opposing views. But Pete A. was no favorite of OMSN obviously, because of the positions that he took during the campaign. There was a feeling among some that how dare he oppose Eddie Pangelinan and what is he, not patriotic or what. So it constituted a step change in the political constellation when that election occurred, and things that become institutionalized, like these negotiations, do not adapt well to change. So it was a shift, a paradigm shift to some degree, for us.

Willens: When did you first meet Congressman Burton in connection with these negotiations?

Berg: I don't know that I would refer to that encounter as a meeting as much as a lecture.

Willens: When did this experience take place?

Berg: Howard, I cannot exactly give you the date. I don't know that I can even give you the year.

Willens: Let me come at it this way. In early 1974, Burton went out to Saipan with Tom Foley, who was a Congressman from Washington. I think that you may be thinking of earlier. And they visited in Guam and Saipan. They met with the Marianas Political Status Commission. Congressman Burton had been debriefed by Ambassador Williams about the third round in December 1973, and he subsequently reported to the U.S. Delegation what he had told the Commission. In fact, he told the Commission according to his memo that he would support them on certain respects like lease rather than purchase with respect to Tinian, but he also told them among other things not to let their lawyers screw things up by asking for a lot of exceptions. He was urging the Commission members (or so he reported to the United States) to stick as closely to the Guam, Virgin Islands status as possible. What is your recollection of Burton's influence on the U.S. Delegation with respect to what he wanted to see in a final status agreement?

Berg: Well, if you say on the U.S. Delegation or on the Inter-Agency Group, Burton was viewed differently. He was extremely influential on Interior, because of course he was the Chairman of our authorizing subcommittee. The view that he expressed that you were just talking about, which is okay, you want to be a territory, here's what a territory means, is a view that resonates well within Interior, because that means that the Marianas can be easily (shall we say) pigeonholed or categorized, and that Interior did not have to try to manage several different kinds of territories with several different kinds of political arrangements. Plus also, Interior would very much be of the view that the Northern Marianas or any other recent addition should not get a political status superior to the more senior territories. I think the people in the Department of State and in the Department of Defense in the Delegation probably viewed Burton as much less important than he ultimately proved to be, simply because he was not an individual who authorized any of their departmental activities. He was in this backwater committee that dealt with territories and Indians. And besides that, he had strange and curious personal habits and demeanor that rendered him unimportant. As for Haydn Williams, Haydn I think knew all along that Burton would play a critical role in anything that we did. Plus also Haydn and Burton were both from San Francisco, so they had many opportunities to meet when they were in San Francisco. Haydn, as I said earlier, consulted carefully with all of the important players in the constellation and Burton was certainly one of them. Haydn knew that Burton wanted the Marianas and ultimately the rest of Micronesia to become a territory. And it's true; Burton did. That is the outcome that Burton and the Interior Committee sought for all of the Trust Territory. The question of unity was not particularly important to them except if it stood in the way of this place's ultimately becoming an American territory. The reason they wanted them to become American territories is because that's what they knew. It was their world. If they became independent countries or something like that, they would come out of their jurisdiction and go somewhere else, God knows where. But the view I think that emerged over time (and Burton was the fountainhead for this point of view) is that we the United States have almost like a welfare obligation toward the people in these territories, and it would be discharged by the appropriate organs of the United States Congress, which are the Interior Committees. So that was Burton's vision, and I think for Haydn and for OMSN in the Marianas negotiations, it was very clear that the objective of OMSN and the objective of Burton were the same. Now you can argue about details, as Burton is quoted in that report as saying don't let your advisors screw it up by putting you

know special hubcaps on this car or an 8-cylinder engine when a 6-cylinder will do and all that kind of stuff. But the basic point of view was the same. So Haydn felt that he was operating not only with the mandate of the Administration, but he felt he was operating with the mandate of the single most important member of Congress, and he was not about to screw that up. Now when you raise the question of the consultants, as the quote from Burton did, Burton very much took the point of view that the wellspring of authority and responsibility for the people of the territories was the Congress—and more particularly the House of Representatives, and most particularly the House Interior Committee, and most particularly him. He did not suffer gently the emergency of alternate loci of power and influence. This is why later on he so violently opposed the emergence to power of Amata Kabua in the Marshall Islands, of Nakayama in the Federated States of Micronesia, and of Salii and other Palauans in Palau. Because these people emerged as having a power base deriving directly from the people, and they were holding out a separate vision for those people separate—don't look to Phil Burton and the Interior Committee anymore—look to me, look to this government, look to ourselves, we will provide for ourselves. Yes, we'll do it in conjunction with the United States, but we have emerged as a new generation of leaders, and no longer is the old dependency on the House Interior Committee still there. That transaction never occurred with the Northern Mariana Islands, because it happened more quickly and a power elite outside of the “American political structure” did not emerge; and the Marianas launched itself off into a political union arrangement with the United States. Just as Burton opposed the emergence of Micronesians into power positions, he also opposed and disliked the emergence of other Americans who advised the Marianas or advised the Micronesians—their legal advisors, their economic advisors, their Peace Corps advisors, what have you. Burton felt that there was no need for these people. Why would these people need to have advisors? Why couldn't they just come to the Interior Committee and say: “Oh, great Bwana, please provide for us,” and then he would. I mean that's a somewhat pejorative description of his point of view, but I frankly have told him that personally, so I don't mind saying it right now. And I think that to the degree that you, as advisors to the MPSC, felt that you were underappreciated by the American side. First of all, you were correct in your perception. But secondly, a lot of it really comes from the Hill and from Burton, as much as or more than it comes from the Administration. So a conversation between members of the American Delegation and Burton could often turn to the role of the American advisors. This is not restricted to the advisors of the MPSC; it included all of the Micronesian advisors—Warnke, Stovall, Copaken for the Marshallese—any and all of them. These people are not necessary. They were only confusing matters. It could be much easier. Besides that, they're all lawyers and they're billing Micronesians huge amounts of money which in the end we have to pay. So the whole thing is corruptible and damnable and shouldn't have been allowed to take place in the first place.

Willens: That explains why no one on the U.S. Delegation was assigned to butter me up.

Berg: That's true.

Siemer: Were there any efforts this early in the May 1974 timeframe with Burton about how the resulting document or documents would get through the Congress?

Berg: I would say that such efforts that existed at that time were the consultations between Haydn and Burton, which were reasonably regular.

Siemer: Did Haydn take people with him on those ventures?

Berg: Rarely. And often those ventures took place in San Francisco rather than in Washington.

- Willens: There's some reference in the documents to one occasion in late 1973 where Ambassador Williams received a "dressing-down" by Congressman Burton. I have no further detail about it, and it seems as though whatever encounter they had was subsequently smoothed over, and it looks as though Congressman Burton was ultimately satisfied by the briefings that he received by the Ambassador. What was your sense of that?
- Berg: I have a vague recollection of some big ripple in the water around the time of the third round, but I can't for the life of me (I'm sorry, Howard) recall the subject matter. I would have to say though that Hayden and Burton had a very productive relationship. Any relationship between two people with their two personalities is going to have some sparks fly. And they had different constituencies to which they were responsible. But they had a productive relationship, and I think that the ease with which the Mariana Islands Covenant and its technical agreement and associated documents were heard by and enacted by Congress, particularly on the House side, is a testament to that relationship. I think Burton saw what he needed—and this goes back even to the period we're talking about. You say was there planning on the part of the U.S. Administration as to how this would get through. Probably not, no. I would say basically that the transaction was essentially this. As long as Phil believed that the outcome of the negotiations was consistent with his view (and that would be territorial status not mucked up with a bunch of specials), he would get it through. I mean, because I know; he used to do this to me. He would say: "Jim, don't worry about it; it's not your job. Be happy in your work. You go do your work and be happy in it; I'll take care of this." And that was basically his view with regard to the Covenant. And he did it.
- Siemer: What did he think he was going to do with respect to the Armed Services Committees? Did he think that they just would not have a role?
- Berg: I think in this period of time that we're talking about, my guess is that he felt that any role they had would be secondary to his role. They would not have primary jurisdiction, and they may have a hearing, they may want to review the document . . .
- Siemer: But it wouldn't be a threat.
- Berg: But it wouldn't be a threat. In fact, it would be supportive. It would show even more support or more broadly-based support for what this was. I think what Burton did absolutely not predict was what emerged in the Senate with the Marianas Covenant—you know, the Gary Hart positions and that kind of stuff. But Burton takes a very dim view of the Senate anyway; its very existence he thinks is completely unnecessary. So he cannot be held responsible for that, he would say. But he certainly didn't predict it.
- Willens: In March 1974 there was a major conference held in Honolulu in which you participated. There was an extensive briefing book prepared for Ambassador Williams, and there were meetings scheduled with TTPI officials, with Frank Ada, with Pangelinan and Santos.
- Berg: Oh, this was the meeting at Makalapa.
- Willens: Right. 39 Makalapa.
- Berg: The Guest House. Right.
- Willens: Do you recall playing any particular role in developing position papers for the use in these meetings?
- Berg: Yes.
- Willens: What subjects did you direct your attention to, if you remember?

- Berg: Well, we had people from the TTPI (including Emmitt Rice I think), and my role was to help and participate in discussions that related to transition issues, the manner in which the Marianas would be separately administered from the rest of the Trust Territory, how would that be handled.
- Willens: There were several papers prepared on that, but it looked as though although the Marianas people wanted it, they also realized the political limitations. It looks to me from the historical record as though it was much thought about, but ultimately a decision was made that nothing could be done until the people actually adopted a separate status agreement.
- Berg: I think the feeling in the U.S. was that any act we took at that point, before an irretrievable conclusion of the negotiations and even possibly a vote, to administer separately the Northern Mariana Islands would be seen in the U.N. (for example, at the Trusteeship Council) as some kind of bifurcation or splitting off of the part of the Trust Territory that we wanted for our own political or military reasons.
- Willens: Well that seems a perfectly understandable position. Going back to this meeting, it seems like a very unusual meeting. Was it precipitated by some event or issue that persuaded the Ambassador that he should assemble all these people and try to get them working together on some of the pending matters?
- Berg: Haydn was concerned up to and before that time that the Trust Territory government in the Northern Marianas and the Marianas District government were not supporting the efforts of the negotiations. In other words, they were not cooperating as we looked at pending issues. There was a land cadastral survey that was going on at the time, if I recall, or that we needed to have go on at the time; there was perfection of title; there was a big issue going on during that period referred to as the return of public lands, not just for the Northern Marianas but for the rest of the Trust Territory . . .
- Siemer: The Secretarial Order.
- Berg: Yes. 2969. And all of these were current Administration issues, but they were placed in the lap of OMSC by the Micronesian and Marianas negotiators. Yes, we realized that this is all very interesting political theory about the nature of our relationship and our future with you, but what about our public land. So Haydn perforce was seized with these kinds of issues and could really only turn to the Marianas District government, the Trust Territory government and/or the Interior Department to help to resolve them. And so if I recall correctly, I think that a lot of the issues that came up in this meeting here were issues that fell along the axis of current Administration issues as they related to the status negotiations. I remember at one point Haydn called me down to OMSN and he was troubled; he felt that progress was diffuse and he couldn't get a handle on all of these Administration issues. So he said maybe we could get the important players together in a meeting and just talk through these issues. We had discovered some people in the Trust Territory government, like Emmett Rice, and in the Marianas District government there was a young guy there—a planner who seemed to have some capabilities that could be very helpful. So we invited those guys to come to see if we could fashion some kind of approach that would take into consideration physical and infrastructural planning, the land cadaster issues, that were under the purview of the Public Lands Office, Maynard Neas, Yamata, and Emmett Rice in the Trust Territory government. We knew that the Marianas wanted somehow to have the military retention lands down by Tanapag Harbor addressed. But OMSN really had no particular way of dealing directly with it, and so the effort here was to try and get the Trust Territory and Marianas District people sitting

down with Haydn and with the leadership of the Marianas. I know Eddie was there, and I think Ben Santos was there, too.

Willens: Yes, they were. In fact, I have a detailed agenda here of the discussions with Pangelinan and Santos. Did you participate in those discussions?

Berg: Yes, I was there. I cannot say that I participated in every meeting, but I was certainly there and in fact stayed at the Makalapa Guest House.

Willens: Without belaboring things that don't really have direct relevance to this interview, there was a major discussion about things that had happened in the recent session of the Congress of Micronesia. This is under Tab 26 beginning at the bottom of page 2. The land legislation, the Constitutional Convention Bill, and other issues of that kind. And then on the next page it turns to some of the Commission activities relating to the referendum, moratorium, self-government. It has an interesting issue there under (e) referring to the role of Commission counsel, quality of advice, relations with U.S. Congress and the sovereignty issue.

Berg: Which page are you on?

Willens: That would be page 3. My point is, do you have any recollection that's refreshed by this agenda as to the exchanges that took place between the Ambassador and the Commission Chairman and Vice-Chairman?

Berg: Yes, I do. Would it be helpful to go through the points?

Willens: Just real quickly, if you have sort of a thought about what the point of it was and how it worked out.

Berg: Okay. I think the point of it was (as I said earlier) to address a number of the crossover issues between the political status negotiations and the Administration. That's why all these Trust Territory people were there. In looking at the agenda, I see that obviously we were still involved in dealing with the Tinian homesteading restriction issues. One of the agenda items here is to reach an understanding with the High Commissioner and the District Administrator regarding their active support of the separate Marianas talks and for their cooperation and participation in the transition phase activities. I've said many times in our interview today that there was a concern always felt by OMSN that the administrative organs of the American government from the Interior Department on down through the TT government did not see a stake in the success of the political status negotiations. In the case of the Marianas negotiations, which were moving forward much more quickly than the Micronesian negotiations and in which OMSN and the U.S. Delegation were seized with many Administration issues, over which they had no authority and which they had no ability independently to resolve, the effort was to try to bring the Trust Territory organization into this, not necessarily on the American side, but as an entity that could facilitate resolution of issues that had been raised within the context of the status negotiations. I think the land cadaster issue, the return of public lands, and Tinian homesteading were three good examples of that. That is my recollection of the primary objective of the meeting. Clearly we were between negotiating rounds. It was always troublesome between negotiating rounds. The U.S. side always wanted the meetings to take place sooner rather than later. So I think during the period of time Haydn Williams and Eddie Pangelinan would have exchanged views on how quickly we could get the Delegations together again to make forward progress on the status agreement. But Haydn felt that a number of these collateral issues, which he would call them, had entered into the picture here, and the purpose of this meeting was to try to

get responsibility for resolving these issues in some manner effectively delegated to those people who could handle them, and that is primarily the Trust Territory infrastructure. There's a lot of material here in the agenda relating to briefing on the rest of the political status negotiations. There was a desire here to discuss what was going on in the Marianas District Legislature that was meeting. You know we've had these civic action meetings, Seabee teams, that have been active in the area, and that is another area that had figured in the political status discussions that we wanted to try to get some decisions on. If you slip over to page 4 of the agenda, you'll see that there's a whole area of discussion with Ed Johnston and Emmitt Rice relating to activities that the Trust Territory government was involved in. See this land legislation? The Congress of Micronesia was attempting to deal legislatively to compel the return of public lands. You may recall that. But in the meantime, the Interior Department was seeking to manage that manner administratively through a secretarial order which ultimately is what happened. So those issues were being discussed.

Willens: Was the High Commissioner responsive to these direct requests when made by Ambassador Williams?

Berg: My recollection, Howard, is that there was a positive change in the aftermath of this meeting, and that there was more constructive engagement by the High Commissioner and his people and by the Marianas District government and Frank Ada's people to try to resolve the issues that had been surfaced by the Marianas side in the status negotiations.

Siemer: Was there any discussion at this relatively early point about possible problems in perception that the U.S. was going to try to influence the outcome of the plebiscite by granting certain things or taking certain action, public lands for example, before the vote occurred in order to make the vote more likely to come out in a positive way?

Berg: Not so explicitly. Some people may have thought that. I think in terms of public land return, and particularly as it related to the public lands on Saipan or in the Marianas, I think there was an awareness in the U.S. government agencies in Washington that these issues would have to be dealt with before we could effectively deal with the plebiscite. It would not be prudent to go into the plebiscite with these issues unresolved. But I don't recall a discussion that we have to resolve this in a certain way in order to produce a positive outcome for the plebiscite.

Siemer: Or that you cannot take action on the public land because it would be perceived in the U.N. and elsewhere as being directed toward a positive outcome.

Berg: No. I was never exposed to that line of thinking at all.

Willens: Let me just raise a few questions about the fourth round of negotiations, and then we'll move on to the conclusion of the negotiations. At the fourth round, early in the negotiations, the Marianas Political Status Commission delivered to the U.S. Delegation a draft status agreement, a long explanatory memorandum explaining it and contrasting it with the draft Covenant that the United States Delegation had made available at the previous round in December of 1973. It looked as though there was a rather strong reaction to this delivery of a totally new draft prepared by the Commission's counsel and reviewed by the Commission. What is your recollection of that event? Specifically the documents suggest that this came as some surprise, because the U.S. Delegation thought they had a firm undertaking by the Marianas Political Status Commission to accept the U.S. draft, and after reviewing it basically sign off on it. Do you have any recollections?

- Berg: I do, but it's not different from the way you've characterized it. It was an NIH kind of reaction. I think initially it was viewed as not at all constructive and something that would cause continued delay and a setback in fact in the forward progress of the negotiations.
- Willens: What prompted any change in sentiment if such a change took place by the end of this round of negotiations?
- Berg: I think probably (if you will) that the initial reaction was overtaken because over the course of the round it became clear again that to the U.S. that the form of the document was perhaps less important than the demonstrated commitment of the Marianas Political Status Commission to a positive outcome for the negotiations. It really was quite a shift if I recall over the course of the fourth round. But I recall—do we have a copy of the Communique, a press release or something for the fourth round?
- Willens: Yes. It's early in the book. It's under Tab 3. On page 3 of this Communique under paragraphs 16 and 17, there's a reference to the presentation of the draft Agreement and other legal material. It says "Tabling of draft in face of earlier agreement to consider the U.S. draft not only raised procedural problems but also reopened some fundamental political issues which the U.S. thought had been resolved at Marianas 2 and 3." Then it goes on to say that although it seemed inflexible, "some personal diplomacy and open challenges in open sessions resulted in a retreat and instructions from MPSC to its counsel to seek compromise and accommodation." Do you remember any personal diplomacy and open challenges of the kind referred to?
- Berg: I certainly don't remember any open challenges. And as to the personal diplomacy, I don't have a personal recollection of that either. My recollection of the dynamics of that round is that we got off to this bad start and this surprise because of the presentation of what we felt was an alternative draft, but that after we got into the dynamics and the logic of that particular round of negotiations, we got back down to our subject matter. And I remember having a positive feeling at the end of the fourth round.
- Willens: It was at the fourth round where there was essentially agreement to the U.S. military requirement and an agreement on financial support, and the two issues had been linked by the Commission. And the Ambassador agreed reluctantly to the linking.
- Berg: That's right.
- Willens: So it did work out substantively.
- Berg: But that linkage, however, is a linkage that was fought against or opposed by the U.S. side to the Micronesian negotiations, but it is the most obvious linkage. And I would say that in the Micronesian negotiations, it wasn't until the U.S. embraced that linkage, and in fact structured the new Compact (this was after Rosenblatt came in) to be framed against that particular linkage, between the U.S. economic assistance on the one hand and the defense issues and land requirements on the other hand, that we got really an effective and working Compact of Free Association. But it's the same linkage as here.
- Willens: Okay. Jim, turning to the fifth round of negotiations that took place in December 1974, two issues with respect to military land were still outstanding at that round. One was the question of purchase vs. lease. The other was the price. When did the United States finally decide that they had to yield on the purchase issue and agree to a long-term lease?
- Berg: Well, I must say that I don't exactly have a recollection of the precise timing of when that occurred. I can tell you, though, that there was quite a bit of dissension within the U.S. Delegation leading up to the period here on that particular question. There were always shifting alliances inside the Inter-Agency Group and inside the U.S. Delegation. On this

particular issue, I know that we in Interior and the people who were following this within the State Department both felt that the purchase position could not be sustained and in fact would not position us well vis-a-vis ultimately the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. That was a usual argument for the State Department people particularly to use when they were opposed to one or another position—that we would never be able to get United Nations assent to the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement, even though we had no idea how we would ultimately do that in the U.N. But we felt that an arrangement under which the United States actually acquired title to land in the face of some kind of opposition among the local community (which clearly there was over this entire period even if not necessarily from the official MPSC; other collateral groups within the Northern Marianas and elsewhere were using this as a cause célèbre), that it would seriously cripple, shall we say, the acceptability of this outcome with regard to the U.N.

Willens: Did the military resist the change in position?

Berg: My recollection is that they did in the Inter-Agency Group. They seemed still to feel at this time that the only way that we could assure the quality of use that we needed with regard to Tinian was if we outright acquired that land. That there was too much uncertainty with regard to how a long-term lease could be structured and that it wouldn't give the U.S. the security it needed. I must say that there was a lot of dissent, I guess I would just go back and say, within the U.S. Delegation on this issue.

Willens: Was Ambassador Williams aware that Congressman Burton had told the Marianas Commission that he would back them on their insistence that it be by a lease rather than purchase?

Berg: Yes, he was, but I cannot recall, Howard, when he became exactly aware of Burton's position. I often thought that it would be unlikely that Burton would go out there and make such a statement to the Marianas Commission without having first discussed it with the Executive Branch, but that was not Burton's way. Burton didn't feel under any such compunction, so I am almost positive that Haydn became aware of this after the fact, but how much after the fact I do not know.

Willens: Turning to the price issue, the Commission had argued strongly in favor of using a professional appraiser and had in fact used an appraiser. What was the U.S. Delegation's thinking in terms of how to come up with an appropriate price for a lease of the land?

Berg: I think we had indicated displeasure with the idea of a third-party appraiser on the feeling that we couldn't predict what the outcome might be, and it might be beyond what we felt we wanted to, or had the authority to, provide as compensation. I think the U.S. view normally in these negotiations (and clearly here) was that the subject of the price should be left to mutual agreement between either the heads of the Delegations or the Delegations themselves, that we in other words should negotiate the price without any necessary reference to fair market value or that type of thing, because that way we could have the strongest ability to keep the price within a ballpark that we would be comfortable operating in.

Willens: After this round, both parties essentially approved a draft Covenant with a few reservations on the U.S. side that required clearances back in Washington. After several weeks there was the final session in early February. At that time, the islands of Rota and Tinian, supported by the Commission, requested that the Covenant expressly provide for a bicameral legislature in which one house would give each of the three populated islands equal voice. What was the reaction of the U.S. Delegation when you first were presented with this request?

Berg: I think there were a couple things that the U.S. Delegation had to try to think through. One was because of the disparity in population concentration among Saipan, Tinian and Rota, quite clearly we would be contemplating a representational outcome not hitherto existing in our own federal or constitutional system. So it was a conceptual difficulty when originally presented. The other thing that we had to try to assess was just exactly how serious this was. Was this a make-or-break issue in the negotiations if we decided that we could not contemplate allowing such a thing, would that act itself propagate a complete breakdown in the negotiations, and were we prepared to risk taking that position? If I recall correctly, we came to the conclusion (and this is one area where I think we relied on a feeling that we could get the straight story from a guy like Ben Manglona) that this was for the Marianas a make-or-break issue, that if the people of Rota and Tinian were not satisfied by this, quite clearly the people of Saipan alone could carry any plebiscite just because of their numerical advantage, but if we had two of the three main islands, even if they're very slightly populated comparatively, ranged in public vocal opposition to the outcome of these negotiations, we didn't think that we could sustain a positive plebiscite if everyone knew that Rota and Tinian strongly opposed this and felt they were being discriminated against and the rest of it. So as a consequence, there was an effort within the U.S. Delegation to try to develop ways that we could conceive of this somewhat unusual method of representation so that it could be contemplated within a political union kind of outcome.

Willens: Did you personally participate in any discussion with Ben Manglona or any Tinian representative on this subject?

Berg: Yes. I remember talking to Ben.

Willens: Where just the two of you in the meeting?

Berg: Yes, at one point there were just the two of us. We were at a bar.

Willens: And was it based in part on that conversation that you reported back to the Ambassador that this was a request that the U.S. Delegation probably should go forward with because of the reasons you just outlined?

Berg: I was one who recommended that this was a make-or-break issue for the Marianas and that we would not be able to move forward probably without addressing this. I don't recall saying that the only way the issue could be resolved would be to accede directly and completely to the proposal put forward by the Marianas side. But I recall believing and expressing my belief that in some manner the Rota and Tinian representation issue had to be addressed because we couldn't sustain going forward with these two islands ranged in opposition to the outcome. It would cause the Marianas to fly apart.

Willens: Turning then to the final vote by the Commission on the Covenant, what did you and the U.S. Delegation hear about the Marianas deliberations on the Covenant and the final vote on the Covenant? The process took several days, as I recall, and I've been given to believe that the Ambassador and other members of the Delegation were somewhat apprehensive about the outcome.

Berg: Yes, I think that's fair. I think we felt it was not a foregone conclusion, that there were enough issues afoot within the Commission and within the politics of the Commission that we did not take it as a foregone conclusion that the Commission would line up behind the Covenant.

Willens: Were you told that there was a unanimous vote in favor of the Covenant?

Berg: I'm trying to remember what I was told at the time, and I cannot.

- Willens: Do you remember the court action filed the day before the signing?
- Berg: I do.
- Siemer: What do you recall, Jim, about the preparation for the plebiscite?
- Berg: Well, the feeling was that we had several things to deal with. We had to have a credible education program that would be seen as such and that would pass some kind of international purview. There was quite a bit of debate, as I recall, relating to the actual language of the ballot. We felt it was important that the conduct of the plebiscite, in other words, its administration, be handled by, if you will, some sort of third party, some kind of organization or entity that could withstand subsequent scrutiny for having administered the vote in a free and a fair way.
- Siemer: Who came up with the suggestion with respect to Canham?
- Berg: The suggestion with regard to Erwin Dain Canham came through OMSN, and I don't know this for a fact, but my suspicion is that the individual who suggested him was Mary Vance Trent.
- Siemer: What connection did she have with him?
- Berg: She is a practicing Christian Scientist.
- Siemer: Oh.
- Berg: And she knows the Canhams quite well. Well, I guess I know that to be the fact, because I subsequently became quite close to both Erwin and his wife, Patience "Sue" Canham, who still lives in Hawaii. And I did that through Mary Vance. Now Haydn may well have also known Erwin Canham before this.
- Siemer: Who broached the subject to Canham?
- Berg: It was either one of the two of them. It was either Mary Vance or Haydn Williams. It may well have been Haydn himself. I knew this was going on, but I was not part of the group who called up Canham and said will you do this. But he was a person of great renown obviously, and so quite equally obviously when it emerged that he would do it, it seemed like a natural.
- Siemer: When did you first meet him?
- Berg: I would have first met him—let's see, the vote was in February, was it not?
- Willens: On the Covenant? No, June.
- Siemer: In February it was approved by the Commission.
- Berg: It was approved in February, and the vote was the subsequent June. I can't remember exactly when. It would have been in that immediate early period. My recollection is that I was one of the people who he met with on his way out to the Marianas the first time. He stopped in Washington and got briefings by several of us, and I was one of the people who briefed him about the situation.
- Siemer: Who was in charge of paving the way for Canham in the Marianas?
- Berg: Well, that kind of really fell to the Interior, Trust Territory-Marianas District organization, because he needed to rely on existing governmental structures for office space, for his logistics, and for printing and all that kind of thing.
- Siemer: Who for example designated Neiman Craley to help Canham?

Berg: Neiman Craley was well thought of by Congress, by Phil Burton in particular, because Neiman was a Congressman and served on that Committee. My recollection is that the suggestion of Neiman Craley, who must have then been working at the Trust Territory Government Headquarters, was discussed also with Burton and Company, and they had suggested that Neiman would be a good individual to work with Canham. It was felt that Canham, because of who he was, would bring a lot of credibility to the process, that it would be seen if Erwin Canham was in charge of administering the vote and signed off on it, certified it as he did, that he was a person of such stature and reputation that it would really mean something.

Siemer: Did it in fact work out that way?

Berg: My recollection is that it did. There was a lot of debate at the time, and probably up to this day, on the wording of the ballot and on what that wording impelled the voters to do or not to do and whether it played on a latent—some would say that it played on a latent racism, the way the ballot was worded.

Siemer: This is in particular the “no” option?

Berg: The way the “no” was phrased, sure, because it was just “Yes, I approve the Covenant,” which is easy enough. But “no,” I guess the debate essentially could be stated this way: should you have had the right to vote yes or no straight on the Covenant. That may have been, some would argue, a fairer way to do it, because then the Covenant would be approved or not approved purely on its own merits. In fact, the “no” alternative was phrased in such a way that not only were you voting against the Covenant, but you were also arguably stating that you don’t want the Marianas to pursue a separate course of action or pursue a separate relationship with the United States. Rather that what would happen if the Covenant is disapproved is that the Marianas would be lumped back together with the rest of the Trust Territory, and in that context these people were still citizens of the Trust Territory at this time, the people of the Northern Marianas. They were not citizens of anything else, not citizens of the U.S., not citizens of the Marianas. At some future point with the rest of the Micronesians, you would have an opportunity to engage again in an act of self-determination, but that you wouldn’t necessarily have an opportunity in the future to engage in another act of self-determination relating only to the Northern Marianas. If you just didn’t like this Covenant but you did like the idea of Marianas separatism. So you were, no matter whether you wanted the Covenant or whether you wanted separatism or whether you just didn’t care what you had as long as you didn’t have to deal with the Yapese and the Trukese, you were forced into the “yes” camp, it was argued. So the question is, in the face of an arguably biased question on the ballot, was the plebiscite seen as a legitimate act of self-determination by the people of the Marianas. And I think ultimately it turned out that it was so seen, even though many argued about the ballot language. And the conduct of the education program in advance of the plebiscite, the actual conduct of the vote, the counting of the vote, its tabulation and its announcement—all of that was under the purview of Canham. And he certified that it was fairly done, and I think that added a lot of credibility to it.

Siemer: Once Canham got out there, how did he relate to Interior and OMSN?

Berg: Canham did not view himself, nor did we view him, as our agent. He took seriously the charge that he was sort of an independent, objective party who was sent out there to run an accelerated education program, conduct the vote, and then certify its results. Although he dealt with us in Interior quite well, and it was a good and productive relationship, it was restricted to, for example, I need this bit of logistic support, I need this, I need that,

and what should I do here, and how should I get this done, and the rest of it. Of course, by having Neiman Craley work for him as kind of his number two and coordinator, Neiman, who had been out there for some time, knew what buttons to push within the Trust Territory government organization, so that worked out fairly easily for him.

Siemer: Now Gary Hart had come right out of the box after the Covenant was signed with a fairly substantial opposition and had seemed to rally a lot of support for that, at least in the press. What was Burton's reaction to that?

Berg: My recollection is that it made Burton very angry.

Siemer: Did Burton think this was going to be a serious challenge?

Berg: My guess is (I don't know this for a fact) that Burton was surprised by it. He had not predicted it. I don't recall ever hearing from him in advance that, you know, we're going to have big problems in the Senate, guys.

Siemer: How about Hart? Had you folks heard from Hart before?

Berg: I had not, no. In fact, to this day I've got to tell you that I don't really know why he chose this issue with such vigor to make a stand on. I never was able to figure out why he did this.

Siemer: What did OMSN do when he came out, when he made that speech and when you saw the resulting editorial support in the *Times* and the *Post* start appearing?

Berg: You mean the support for him?

Siemer: The support for the position.

Berg: Well, refresh my memory. Did those editorials begin before the plebiscite?

Siemer: They did, and that was one of the problems that Canham had. The Covenant was approved in February, and within a matter of a week, Gary Hart had a position and had made a major speech, editorials had appeared, and it was unclear what was going to happen. Then Burton apparently contacted OMSN and said let's have an informal briefing.

Berg: Yes.

Siemer: And you began to get Ambassador Williams ready for that briefing. And at that time, several people from the Marianas appeared and other people appeared, and there was a real effort (it seemed) to deal with Hart. Who was in charge of dealing with Hart?

Berg: It was OMSN. No one outside of OMSN felt charged with the authority or the responsibility to coordinate Congressional relations for the Marianas Covenant.

Siemer: What happened to you right after the Covenant was signed? You were still at Interior, right?

Berg: I'm still at Interior. I have other things to do. I continue to relate to OMSN, but the responsibility for Congressional relations very much was an OMSN issue vs. Interior or State or anyone else. So it really was Haydn Williams who would then swing into action and try to deal with this issue. My involvement at that point (and I think this is basically true for all of the Interior organization) was to focus on the continued administration of the Marianas and of the TT to work with Canham on making sure the logistics of the plebiscite were dealt with—things of that nature.

Siemer: Did you ever meet with Hart?

- Berg: No. I met one time by chance with his staff assistant, who had an unusual last name (it started with a B) who wrote a lot of his speeches. And I asked him why they were taking such a strong and vigorous position in opposition to the Covenant, and he just said well, you know, pay attention to what we say. It was a very abrupt, haughty Congressional staff kind of answer, and I got nothing out of it. But no, I never personally met with Hart.
- Siemer: What was your understanding of why, after the plebiscite, there developed such a problem in the Senate with getting the Covenant approved?
- Berg: I have just a few points of view on that. I think that there did not exist in the Senate any champion the way there did in the House in the form of Burton. There was no ideological desire to bring another territory in. The Senate as a body I think was a bit less inclined to take on additional overseas responsibilities of this sort, and on the Armed Services side, as I recall, there was a lot of skepticism expressed as to whether or not the stated objectives and requirements by the United States were in fact really necessary.
- Siemer: Had Haydn not been working the Senate side as he had on the House side?
- Berg: Not as assiduously as the House side.
- Willens: Isn't it true that you thought that Senator Jackson was a strong supporter of the Agreement?
- Berg: My recollection is that it was sort of conventional wisdom that Jackson, who always had sort of a reputation of being a defense-oriented guy and who had (for lack of a better term) somewhat hawkish or conservative views on defense issues. Who was also Chairman of the Interior Committee, which is the mate to Burton's committee, and would play sort of a leadership role and do in the Senate what Burton would do in the House. Clearly he was not inclined to demonstrate that kind of leadership, and the Senate is a different kind of organization. I don't know that anyone really ever can be successful in the Senate in the same way. If Burton had been a Senator rather than a Representative, I don't know that he could have gotten away with half of the stuff he did in the House of Representatives. But the other thing is that we had paid less attention to the Senate, and that's because in many ways the squeaky wheel theory. Burton was always making a lot of noise and demanding a lot of care and feeding, and he got it. But really other than Haydn's occasional briefings, which were not easy to set up, I mean this was not exactly a matter of compelling urgent interest to most members of Congress, and it was not easy. I can recall several times when Haydn wanted to get an appointment up there, and you know, no, the Senator would not need a briefing on that subject at this particular time would be the answer.
- Siemer: Did you meet with anyone on the Senate side?
- Berg: I met with Senate staff people, but I did not have one-on-one meetings with any of the members. I recall going to some of the hearings, particularly the Armed Services hearings on the Senate side. There was a Senator named William Scott from Virginia who was another one of the opponents. Senator Byrd, I think was an opponent, if I recall correctly. When we actually got into the Congressional part of it, several of us did what things we could. I flew to my home town of Louisville, Kentucky, and I met with the editorial board of the *Courier Journal*, a relatively well-known newspaper in those days (it was while it was still under the control of the Bingham family). And on the day of the Senate vote, which I believe was February 24, 1976, they did run an editorial, and it's in my office here in Belgium, framed—"It's a good reason to make the Northern Marianas a commonwealth." And it actually swung one of the two Kentucky Senators. In fact, it actually swung both of them—Ford and Huddleston. But Ford went back after the vote and got his vote changed

from yes to no, because you may recall that the way the question was phrased in the Senate is that a “no” vote meant you were in favor of the Covenant, and the opposite. He did not know that, and he voted “no” because Harry Byrd, his friend from Virginia, had told him to vote “no.” “Harry, how am I supposed to vote on this?” “Vote against it.” So he voted “no.” Then he found out later that that meant “yes,” and so he went back and formally changed his vote. But the other one, I’m told, Huddleston, was influenced by the *Courier Journal* editorial. So several of us did those kinds of things.

Siemer: Did Haydn make an effort with the *Washington Post* and the *Times* to turn their editorial boards around?

Berg: You know, I think he did, but I was not involved in that, so I can’t tell you for a fact what the outcome might have been or what exactly he might have done. I remember the morning of the vote. Haydn was sitting in his office, and he got there very early, and he said “Jim, today is the second battle for the Marianas.” His sense of mission was really piqued by that.

Siemer: Who was the principal person who helped Haydn with lobbying the Senate?

Berg: It would have been the immediate OMSN staff. Adrian did a lot of the drafting.

Siemer: Was Wilson still there at this point?

Berg: I was just trying to remember. My thinking is that Wilson was not still there at this particular time.

Willens: I heard that the White House and Department of State had liaison offices that were very active. Do you have any recollection of that?

Berg: I suspect that’s true for the White House. I have no recollection of the legislative bureau at State, which is called the H Bureau, being engaged actively at all. State was only a reluctant support of the Marianas negotiations all the way through. This made life for State more complicated at the U.N. because of the separation. The Northern Marianas was achieving a political status which State felt was not really defensible in the international community. The view in the United Nations world is that the logical outcome of a trusteeship is that the trusteeship area becomes independent. That was true in all other cases. The other logical outcome of a trusteeship is that the territory stays together. There was only one example, in one of the African trusteeships, where that didn’t happen and it’s not a parallel example either. So the outcome for the Marianas was not viewed as a positive one by the State Department. So I would be surprised if State participated much.

[Equipment failure near end of interview]

Willens: Thank you, Jim, for helping us with this project.