

## INTERVIEW OF JOHN A. CARVER, JR.

by Howard P. Willens

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- Willens: Professor John A. Carver, Jr. has been kind enough to agree to an interview and has had the opportunity to look at some of the documents that I have made available to him. He also has made available to me some documents recording his speeches in the Pacific and elsewhere. John, if I may call you that, I appreciate your taking the time. Could you give me a little background of your education and how it came to be that you ended up as an assistant secretary at the Interior Department in 1961?
- Carver: Well, I can do that. I'm a native of Idaho, and a graduate of Georgetown University, where I spent my legal education working for the War Department during a good part of that time. That was where I first met Bob Mangan. He and I were both working for the Secretary of State back in the 1940s. When I was drafted, I served in the military in the United States Strategic Bombing Survey, in personnel work, both in Europe and in Japan, as civilian personnel officer for the survey. I came back from the military, finished law school and went to Idaho and practiced law for some years.
- Willens: When did you graduate from law school?
- Carver: 1947.
- Willens: Then you returned to Idaho to practice for approximately ten years?
- Carver: About ten years. I was active in Democratic politics there and, when Frank Church was elected to the Senate in 1956, I agreed to come to Washington as his administrative assistant and served in that role until 1961. I worked in the Kennedy campaign in 1960. I was the state coordinator for Kennedy in the State of Michigan. It was that service that put me on the list for a position in the subcabinet. I also worked with the transition team with Sargent Shriver and Adam Yarmolinski during the period from the election until the inauguration. I was nominated by Kennedy during the transition period and was confirmed on January 30, 1961 as the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Public Lands.
- Willens: Had you had any experience with the Trust Territory during your years as administrative assistant to Senator Church?
- Carver: No, but I was involved rather closely with Church in the statehood fights during that period for both Alaska and Hawaii. I was well acquainted with Bob Bartlett and Ernest Gruening and the Hawaiian people. It was during that period that Church was very active in the statehood battles of those two territories.
- Willens: Had you also met Congressman Aspinall in those years?
- Carver: I knew Wayne Aspinall somewhat during those years beginning in 1961. When I went to the Interior Department, he and I became very close. I worked closely with him during all of the time thereafter until 1966 when I left the Department. So that when I left the government in 1972, I even worked briefly on his staff. It was a matter of completing my five years of legislative service to improve my retirement. He was a very good friend of mine by the time he died.

- Willens: When you took office in early 1961, what did you do in order to become acquainted with Interior's responsibilities with respect to the Trust Territory?
- Carver: I did the same thing I did with the other of the six bureaus I had. Having quite a little bit of experience in government, particularly in the War Department, I had sense enough to call the old staff in, the inherited staff, and ask them to cooperate and stay at their desks and do their jobs and brief me and so on until the workings of politics should replace them. So several weeks after I came in, I had almost non-stop sessions with all of the bureaus, which at that time were staffed by the holdovers.
- Willens: As I recall, the head of the Division of Territories was a Mr. Lausi?
- Carver: L-a-u-s-i.
- Willens: What was your impression of him at the time?
- Carver: Well, my impression of him was that he was a politician really. He was a realist. He didn't have any great vision or goal, but he had a good understanding of the territories. And I think, most importantly, he had a good staff down there. He had a lot of good people that he kept on. A lot of those people in Territories went back to the old resettlement administration and had a lot of expertise. I got well acquainted before he changed the personnel with Dell Nucker and with the people of the other territories, because they were coming in with their budget business which we had to start dealing with right away. So it was a matter of educating myself as to what these problems or responsibilities were.
- Willens: Did you play any role in the selection of Richard Taitano as successor to Mr. Lausi?
- Carver: Well, is that the way it was? Did he come in as the first Director?
- Willens: He was the Director appointed in 1961, and he tells the story, and others have confirmed it, that he was put in that place as a Guamanian in part as a political quid pro quo for the assignment of . . .
- Carver: Bill Daniel?
- Willens: . . . Bill Daniel to be Governor of Guam.
- Carver: Well, now that you mention it, that was exactly right. I had forgotten that Dick came there right away. I don't think that he actually came into the office until May or June, did he?
- Willens: I don't remember. That could well be.
- Carver: We familiarized ourselves with the situation there, although I don't think I made any trip out there until the inauguration of the governors. But we did discuss things with people like Carlton Skinner, former Governor of Guam, and I talked to him a lot about who were the establishment out there, who in effect controlled the structure, like Bishop Baumgardener out there in the church, and Joe Flores, and these were people in the last administration. But we were looking for and identified two people from Guam who were very experienced bureaucrats: Dick Taitano and Manny Guerrero. Manny later became Governor, as you know. But as to whether I had anything to do with it, I wouldn't claim that at all, except in conversations with the Secretary along the lines of dissuading the feelings of the people out there about having this Bill Daniel, this Texas politician, sent out there. They thought they were long since ready to have somebody from the Territory as their Governor.
- Willens: Had you known Secretary Udall before you took the position?

- Carver: Only in a very remote way; he didn't select me. I was selected by Kennedy, Bob Kennedy more specifically.
- Willens: I'm familiar with how Mr. Kennedy selected people at that level.
- Carver: It was a hallmark of that Administration that the subcabinet was as important to the Kennedy Administration as the Cabinet officers. Stewart sure had a veto. As a matter of fact, this is a side story which you might find interesting. I haven't told it, I don't think, on the record before. At one point Bob Kennedy called me up and said they were looking for somebody to be Under Secretary of HEW, keep the seat warm until they could put Sargent Shriver in it, and would I be willing to give up the assistant secretary assignment which I already had and become Under Secretary of HEW. I said I don't know anything about HEW. I thought I knew something about Interior. But I agreed, and I went up and talked to the Governor up in Connecticut. He was the Secretary -Designee, and to illustrate the point I'm making, he did have a veto, and he said he didn't want me. Well, I could understand that. I can also say that the guy he got was a damned sight worse.
- Willens: That was Governor Ribikoff?
- Carver: Ribikoff, yes.
- Willens: Turning to the policy issues that you encountered in 1961, much has been written about the policies that the Eisenhower Administration followed in the Trust Territory during the 1950s and contrasted that sharply with the decision reached early in the Kennedy Administration to adopt a significantly different policy. I have provided you with a few of the documents that illuminate some of the assumptions and judgments that resulted in that policy change. Do you recall early in 1961 forming any judgment as to the adequacy of the policies that had been followed in the Trust Territory by your predecessors under the Eisenhower Administration?
- Carver: Well, my own experience was bureaucratic enough. I was focusing on, as I recall it, the capability of the Administration rather than the specifics of the program. I guess we could move away from the Trust Territory for a minute and look at other areas. We were spending more time really on the Virgin Islands and Guam than on the Trust Territory early on. A big political fight developed about who was going to be Governor of the Virgin Islands. And the selection of Ralph Paiewonsky to be Governor was a culmination of a lot of bureaucratic infighting in Washington among big contributors who had aspired to be Governor. So that, when it came to what we did in the Territories and so on, the immediate focus in 1961, as I recall it, was more on who was going to be in charge of it and under what kind of philosophy they were going to run it rather than did they have enough schools or did they have enough roads or that sort of thing, just at that point.
- Willens: Did you play a role then in selecting Mr. Goding to replace Mr. Nucker as High Commissioner?
- Carver: No, I didn't. That was Bob Bartlett's patronage, and Bob Bartlett was extremely influential. He was once a Senator from Alaska and was strongly familiar with territorial matters, having served as territorial delegate from Alaska before he was Senator.
- Willens: As I understand it, during the Eisenhower Administration when Mr. Nucker was the High Commissioner, there was rather limited funding available with a ceiling of approximately \$7.5 million, and the operation has been described by some as a holding operation designed to preserve for the most part the Micronesians in their cultural and economic circumstances without any effort to modernize.

- Carver: There is no question about that, and I think the budget was a good deal less than the ceiling, \$5.9 million or something like that, and a good part of that was directed toward just maintaining the complement of administrators out there. But I don't want to exercise any hindsight about any preconceptions which I or anyone else in the Department had about what we found to be deficient in the prior Administration's policies. It was rather finding out what the prior Administration's policies were and deciding what we were going to do about it.
- Willens: Well, let's turn to that. Where did the impetus come from for changing the policies that had guided U.S. administration of the Trust Territory?
- Carver: Well, again, we have to turn to some of the other territories. There's a kind of a model of what we were up against in our briefing on the situation in Samoa, where the Office of Territories furnished me with information about the situation there, involving new schools, new roads, and so on. That's one place where I do take credit for selecting the personnel. I was the one who picked Rex Lee. This was some good fortune because he was such a dynamo and so strongly associated with the prior Administration's Indian policies that a lot of people wanted to get rid of him in the Indian Bureau. I was well acquainted with him, got well acquainted with him during that period, and just called him up and said, you've got to take this job, and he agreed to go down as the Governor of American Samoa. Well, in the process of finding out what the conditions were in that territory, that was the source of our information at the time. What we could have specifically about the Trust Territories didn't come until I went out there.
- Willens: You recall your first trip out there being sometime in May of 1961?
- Carver: I think it was May when we had that tour of the Trust Territories, and I went out with Jack Bingham and other people. I think some from the Congress, as I recall.
- Willens: Well, there are some who have suggested that the 1961 report of the U.N. Visiting Mission was a factor in persuading the Kennedy Administration that a change in policy was required. According to some of the State Department and other people I've interviewed, the 1961 Mission Report was somewhat more critical of U.S. administration than had been the predecessor reports. Do you have any recollection as to what impact, if any, the 1961 U.N. Report had on U.S. policy?
- Carver: Well, such recollections I have would be that it wasn't a major factor in our thinking at Interior. Certainly what we were trying to do out there, in the territories generally, was not reactive to the international business but was in fact part of the Kennedy spirit of their being part of the US of A and we've got to have standards out there of education and other things which were consistent with it being part of the United States. Not because we were trying to impress the United Nations. As far as Interior was concerned, as I recall it, we didn't have anything much to do with it.
- Willens: I sent you a copy of a letter dated February 26, 1962 to Harlan Cleveland signed by Secretary Udall setting forth some assumptions regarding the Trust Territory and proposing that those assumptions and a proposed program be discussed at a luncheon meeting on March 1, 1962. Do you recall attending that luncheon meeting?
- Carver: No, I don't think I attended that luncheon meeting. I'm not sure. I think I was out of town.
- Willens: Well, what interests me is that a letter of this kind obviously was sent only after there had been substantial discussions at the staff level, and I don't have any documents reflecting those discussions. So my question to you is whether you have any recollection

of discussions among Defense, Interior, State, with some White House involvement, in 1961 and early 1962, that led to this high-level decision that some change in policy was required?

Carver: Well, again, I won't emphasize a change in policy so much as a change in philosophy. Harlan Cleveland went down to the inauguration of Ralph Paiewonsky. When I went down to speak at that inauguration, he was in the party.

Willens: Was that in 1961?

Carver: That was in May of 1961.

Willens: Was that an occasion when you could discuss with him these problems?

Carver: We did discuss these problems, and the speech which I made at that time was the so-called Declaration of St. Thomas, somewhat similar to the later Declaration of Agana, and I think it's stated there about the governors not being subordinates of Interior but being independent of the kind of bureaucratic control which had marked all previous Administrations, not just the Eisenhower Administration. The Virgin Islands had always been kind of a playground, a sort of the fiefdom of the Interior Department. Bingham and I discussed the matter, and certainly didn't agree that that was the way the thing ought to be. And in my discussions with Paiewonsky and so on, all along that line. Now my speech down there at that inauguration about that philosophy was cleared at the White House. Cleveland was there. So at least in that context this idea of the territories being American was a matter which Harlan Cleveland and I had discussed.

Willens: Well, did Mr. Cleveland discuss with you on that occasion or similar occasions in 1961 or early 1962 the need to sort of face up to some future political status for the Trust Territory looking to conclusion of the Trusteeship Agreement?

Carver: That was recognized in the things that I said at the time. We knew that the Trust Territory was different; we recognized that we were bound to give them a free choice. We were at times, as I recall it, beginning to be concerned about the change in the makeup of the Visiting Mission and the Committee of 24 and so on. But I guess I would summarize it by saying that in terms of U.S. policy for the territories as administered by Interior being controlled by that, I'd say no. I'd say I was on a different ballfield. We were well aware of that, and we reacted to things like Harlan Cleveland's letter, and said that we understood all those things. But I think consistently you'll find that in all of that correspondence, we kept saying that we were sensitive to this but we could not accept their characterization or the United Nations' characterization involving the other territories as being non-self-governing. I must have emphasized that 20 times in my speeches. And within that context, we always said that the Trust Territory was different. But what we've tried to say to the State Department, ultimately unsuccessfully, was that this had to be more than a show. You couldn't have a plebiscite and then not do anything about it, and what you were going to do about it had to be in phase with what you did in the other territories. You could not leapfrog the Trust Territory or you couldn't even talk about leapfrogging the Trust Territory ahead of what the Congress would be willing to do with reference to Guam and the Virgin Islands and American Samoa, and particularly American Samoa.

Willens: Do you remember any pressure coming from the Department of Defense in early 1961 and 1962 to bring to a head some formulation of U.S. policy that would protect national security interests in this part of the world?

Carver: Well, we had conferences, group conferences, with the Assistant Secretary of Defense. I don't remember the details of it, but Defense and State were all involved. I think the

PT109 shipmate of Kennedy's in the Navy Department, McNaughton, and others were involved. Our attitude toward Defense and toward State was the same—that if Defense said we needed the area, then as far as we were concerned that resolved that part of it, and if State said that we had to conform with and deal with the formulation of things in the U.N. having to do with the status of the Trust Territory, that controlled us, too. We weren't arguing those things. What we were arguing was the integration of those things with our other territories.

Willens: On April 18, 1962, President Kennedy signed National Security Action Memorandum No. 145. It was classified and has generally been seen as stating a substantially changed U.S. policy, namely, the objective of making all of the Trust Territory ultimately a part of the United States. The documents that I've received from the government agencies indicate that there were some discussions among the agencies regarding the memo to submit to the President in advance of issuing that and to alert Congressman Aspinall and others that something like this was in the mill. Do you regard this National Security Action Memorandum as an important document that reshaped the U.S. policy?

Carver: Well, yes, it was important. But as to reshaping the policy, so far as Interior was concerned, the policy had already been reshaped. We'd already raised hell about the educational levels, and we'd already said that we've got to have a good deal more money than had been done. We'd already said we've got to start focusing on getting medical service out, and we'd already focused on getting money to the schools and so on.

Willens: But with respect to the political objective of putting the Micronesians in a position where they would vote affirmatively on a permanent affiliation with the United States, was that a policy objective that Interior supported?

Carver: Well, yes. But the framework of our support of that was I think different from what State had. We had, and I've said in those documents that you've got there, absolutely no reason at that time to have any feeling that these people wanted to be otherwise than associated with the United States. We were convinced, and I said we were convinced, that any kind of a plebiscite vote would be favorable to the United States. We said we didn't have any objection to plebiscites. What we did have objection to was a plebiscite which would promise things, or that would have as its outcome something, that could not be delivered in our judgment without the affirmative approval of the Congress. And that tied it back into the relationship with Samoa and with the Virgin Islands and with Guam.

Willens: Did you remember discussing with Congressman Aspinall early in 1962 the new National Security Action Memorandum No. 145 and the need for Congressional support to implement that policy?

Carver: Well, I recall a number of discussions. Let me look at that list of those documents. I think it could refresh my recollection here. When I got back from the territories in 1961, the . . .

Willens: I saw in there you did end up testifying in support of legislation I think in 1963.

Carver: Yes, but I had that briefing session as to what we found out there.

Willens: Would you customarily go up to visit with the responsible Committee chairman after you visited the Trust Territory to report on what you had seen?

Carver: Well, we had Jack Taylor with us, and not only that, we customarily did. I think it's all in the official records and is quite detailed, the report of what we did.

- Willens: A lot of the hearings are simply not available. Many of them were Executive Session, and, if transcribed, many of the transcripts are no longer available.
- Carver: Look at that one.
- Willens: Okay. I'm looking at a statement that you made before the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs on June 8, 1961, and this is your report on your visit to the several territories in the Pacific Islands. This is a very useful, important statement, Professor Carver, because it does give me at least something that goes back to the 1961 timeframe. I do notice, for example, that you identify the need for improved transportation there, the need to satisfy land claims that was and continued to be for many years an important issue out there, and you indicated that there would be need for substantially increased level of federal effort and subsidization, as you said. Did you find that initially the responsible people on the Hill were receptive to the need for more federal funding?
- Carver: Those people on the Hill in that Committee, particularly Wayne Aspinall and John Saylor, were very positive on the Micronesian and other territorial peoples. They'd been out there, they knew them, they were sympathetic with them, they were as critical as anybody else about some of the neglect that had happened, and they were a damned sight more informed about the territorial matters than a good many of those people over at the State Department reacting to the Committee of 24 and so on. So what I'm trying to say to you is that anybody who wants to say that our policy was kind of reactive to the pressures from the United Nations or from the State Department would have missed the point. This is in 1961, and this is a detailed outline of what became our continuing approach to the Congress. Now we were, as somebody had written, I think maybe it was Ruth or maybe it was Nevin, that we were assisted by the fact that there was a good deal of comparability between the situations of neglect and dilapidation in Samoa and that in the Trust Territory. Whenever Rex Lee would come back and go up on the Hill and have these extensive contacts (he was friendly with everybody up there, had been for years), they all admired and respected him. So when he went up and said we've got to do this and this and this for Samoa, that helped us a great deal in kind of saying that the situation has got to be improved in the Trust Territory as well.
- Willens: Everyone I've spoken to shares your views of Rex Lee and suggests that to some extent High Commissioner Goding suffered in comparison with him.
- Carver: Oh, he really did. I mean he was the ultimate slowed-down bureaucrat, and Rex was, let's do it all right now, let's build an educational TV system, let's build a tramway, let's do this, let's do that. He'd go up there and get the money himself.
- Willens: I gather that from some of the documents that when you responded to State about what kind of a memorandum to submit to the President, you were going to attach to it a memorandum coming in from the High Commissioner to amplify and to provide more details about the kind of programs that were desired out there. Did you find that High Commissioner Goding and his staff were sympathetic with Interior's policies and would provide you the kind of data and support you wanted?
- Carver: Well, yes, I would say generally speaking. He was in fact the ultimate bureaucrat, and when we asked him for things, we got them. It was somewhat later when the White House and Mike Forestall and others got personally interested in this thing, that we got to the point of having to kind of pin on Will Goding the fact that we couldn't get anything done. But at least in these early stages, when he went out there, he submitted his budgets and his proposals, and I can be very sympathetic with a man who goes out there and says, well, I can understand all these things have to be done, but I have to phase them in, there's only

so much you can get done at one time, and he had a lot more of that feeling than Rex Lee had in Samoa.

Willens: To be fair to him, he also had a somewhat more complicated assignment in terms of geographic diversion, different cultures, and so forth.

Carver: Yes. I mean all Rex had was a tiny little handful of islands, and poor old Will had those damned old TBYS to go back and forth in, 14 hours from one side of the Trust Territory to the other, and ships didn't go, and communications were terrible.

Willens: You mentioned Mike Forestall, who worked in the White House on the National Security Council staff. Did the White House through the National Security Council provide any of the initiative that resulted in bringing the agencies together and recommending that the President issue National Security Action Memorandum No. 145?

Carver: Well, I don't know. I think not. You know they had that Task Force ... .

Willens: Yes, let's come to that. There was a Task Force created by NSAM No. 145, and you were the chairman of that Task Force. Unfortunately I only have a very few documents with respect to its work. It appears to have met five or six times and you had the members assigned to the various agency tasks to be done.

Carver: There are things in here [delivered documents] about that, my instructions to them and the memorandum and so on, some of those are in there.

Willens: What is your recollection of the utility of that Task Force work?

Carver: Well, my recollection is that (it maybe unfair to some of the people at the time) those people over at State and Defense really regarded the Interior Department as kind of second-class citizens in the hierarchy of things. They didn't much cotton to the idea of having an Interior Assistant Secretary from Idaho sort of in charge of them, so that the Task Force work in terms of a summit of policy people just didn't function that way. It was a coordinating group in which staffs of State and staffs of Defense and others would get these assignments and prepare these documents preparatory to submitting the reports that the Presidential memorandum called for.

Willens: I understand that the objective of the Task Force was to implement the National Security Action Memorandum No. 145. Did the Task Force develop a program of implementation?

Carver: I suppose I'd have to say that other than simply saying that Defense was responsible for doing whatever it called for about the security aspects of it, State was responsible for setting forth generalized policies having to do with options for satisfying the United Nations. I think George Milner in that stuff you sent says that he kind of summarized everything we did on it. But as far as kind of a separate coordinated program, I don't recall that.

Willens: Well, there came a time in early 1963 when President Kennedy issued another National Security Action Memorandum (this was No. 229) asking essentially for a report from the Task Force.

Carver: Well, the White House had something to do with that.

Willens: Was that a sense from the White House that this Task Force effort ought to be brought to conclusion so that the White House could evaluate what had been done?

Carver: Well, to refresh my recollection, where was the Solomon Commission's ...

Willens: Well, that came later. In fact, the ...



- Carver: The Solomon Commission kind of grew out of that.
- Willens: Well, there's some suggestion in the summary of the Solomon Mission report that the idea for such a survey mission came from the Task Force. Do you have any recollection of that being the case?
- Carver: I don't have any recollection of that being the case.
- Willens: The only thing I have about the report of the Task Force that President Kennedy asked for is a letter addressed to you dated March 27, 1963 from Assistant Secretary Cleveland. Cleveland describes the letter as being the State Department's initial contribution to the status report that the President had asked for.
- Carver: Yes.
- Willens: And it's a very thorough letter in terms of setting forth some of the international concerns and addressing education, information, economic, political development issues. Do you recall whether this letter ended up in essence as being part of a Task Force report?
- Carver: I'm sure it did, but I don't recall.
- Willens: Do you recall whether there was in fact a Task Force report. The President asked for one. Do you recall ultimately transmitting one to the White House?
- Carver: I don't recall it, but we probably did.
- Willens: Well, one of the issues raised by Mr. Cleveland that finds its way into subsequent legislation was a recommendation that federal agencies be authorized to provide technical help and services out in the Trust Territory. Ultimately, legislation to accomplish that was proposed and I guess finally adopted by Congress. Was that a recommendation that emerged from the Task Force's deliberations?
- Carver: I don't recall. It probably was, but whether it had anything to do with the legislation or not, I don't know. By this time, we had delegates, people in Congress from the territories who were fighting for this as kind of a generality all the time. I know that in 1977, when Rex Lee went back to Samoa as the last appointed Governor in connection with transition to the first elected Governor, I went down in August of 1977 as Lee's executive assistant and then stayed on as Attorney General for another four or five months after he came home. So I was back in the territorial business in 1977 and 1978. I can say from that experience that this particular piece of legislation having to do with sort of a catch-all in every federal program saying, so much of this money shall be allocated to the territories, turned out to be a very, very mixed blessing so far as the administration of places like Samoa were concerned.
- Willens: As of March and April of 1963, is it your recollection that the three concerned departments were generally agreed on the substantive programs that ought to be implemented in the Trust Territory?
- Carver: Well, I think that's quite strongly the case, because we knew that we had to have a unified front for the change in this authorizing legislation, the ceiling legislation. As a matter of fact, I think we got the White House to weigh in on that subject, didn't we, with a memorandum from O'Brien?
- Willens: I've seen one memo from Mr. O'Brien, right.
- Carver: He was the Hill guy for Kennedy.
- Willens: Right.

- Carver: Going back, you asked me earlier about whether I had discussed some of these things with Wayne Aspinall, and you asked me specifically whether I'd discussed NSAM No. 145 with him. It becomes clear in the documents you sent me, Eugenie Anderson's testimony and so on, it's quite clear that Aspinall knew a great deal about this battle which was going on among the departments for a kind of intellectual leadership of this thing. And I suppose you've suspected, and accurately so, that Aspinall's information about what was going on mainly came from me.
- Willens: Well, I ...
- Carver: I do not think I discussed with him anything that was secret, but I sure as hell told him, just as a friend, as one would, what was going on in terms of this struggle for predominance of the policies regarding territories.
- Willens: That's certainly understandable, and Ruth makes the point that Congressman Aspinall did not like to be surprised. She recalls with some vividness making a proposal on one occasion that did come as a surprise to Congressman Aspinall, and he reacted abruptly and negatively. Was that your experience in dealing with him?
- Carver: It was certainly my experience. I used to go over to his apartment and drive him in to work three or four times a month, and we'd talk about every damned thing under the sun, because his jurisdiction and mine covered an awful lot of subjects besides territories—BLM and the Parks Service and everything else.
- Willens: On that point, this letter from Mr. Cleveland to you in March of 1963 advances a recommendation that you saw on many subsequent occasions -- namely, the recommendation that a single person with Presidential backing be designated to coordinate the Executive Branch agencies with respect to the Trust Territory. Do you recall having a reaction early on to this frequently-reiterated proposal for a White House assistant to coordinate this matter?
- Carver: Well, we didn't dare oppose it openly, but we didn't think much of it.
- Willens: as it viewed by you as generally an effort by the State Department to dilute the authority of the Secretary of the Interior with respect to the Trust Territory?
- Carver: Well, the answer to that is yes, although I'm sure the way we played it was that it was an attempt by the Executive Branch to take over the legislative prerogatives of Congress over the territories.
- Willens: I don't understand that. Could you amplify on that?
- Carver: Well, Wayne Aspinall had strong feelings about Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2, giving to the Congress specific responsibilities over the territories. He regarded the matter of the policies of the territories to be peculiarly a Congressional prerogative. It was up to the Executive Branch to carry out those policies. Obviously the Executive Branch could recommend changes, and so on, but he was the ultimate legislator, as you know.
- Willens: Is it your sense that Congressman Aspinall believed that the Trust Territory was a territorial possession of the United States that was subject to legislative authority under Article IV-3-2?
- Carver: No, I don't think he went that far. I don't think he entirely threw that out, either. He certainly regarded the legislative control of the Executive Branch with reference to this as being a necessary part of the process. He accepted without question our statement (which I frequently reiterated) that it was part of the trusteeship that the people had to be offered a free choice and that included independence, that they could be cut loose. But he

nevertheless felt that up until that point it was one of the territories that was encompassed within these Constitutional prerogatives.

Willens: Cleveland also advanced in this letter to you the suggestion that the plebiscite might be held as early as 1968. There were many documents being generated at this time in the State Department that emphasized the urgency of bringing this to conclusion and hopefully a favorable conclusion. Did you believe in 1963 that it was possible to put the Micronesians in a position where they could exercise an informed judgment in a plebiscite as early as 1968?

Carver: Well, I don't think I would say that they weren't informed enough or sophisticated enough. I never had any doubt about the political sophistication of the island people. Give us cards in spades on politics, at any given time, as you must have figured out yourself, obviously. But I did think that any vote in 1963 would be favorable to the United States or to some form of association with the United States. I don't recall having any thoughts about whether a 1968 date would be too early, but I wasn't opposed to any plebiscite per se. I don't think I had that view.

Willens: Let's turn to the Solomon Mission, then, for a moment. Did you play any role in the decision to have such a survey mission visit the Trust Territory?

Carver: I did not have any positive role in it. I think that the Solomon Mission was regarded by me and discussed by me with people over at the White House as a way to get the views of Interior about what ought to be done out there strengthened, if you will. In other words, I thought that a report out there would find the same things we had found out, and I was in favor of it.

Willens: This is consistent with the way Nevin reported your views, that essentially they came back confirming Interior's views, but there was some advantage in having an outside, non-governmental body put a stamp of approval on those views.

Carver: That's the idea.

Willens: I disagree with much of what Mr. Nevin had to say about policy out in the Trust Territory, and we'll come to some point in this interview where I'll elicit your views on that point. I did supply you with some information about a briefing session on October 22, 1963 where you had a meeting of the Task Force at which Tony Solomon and members of his Commission were present. Do those papers accurately reflect your assessment of the Solomon Mission Report, namely that it was a thorough and competently done job?

Carver: Yes. We were all at that time come about to the end of our string with Goding. He'd set his heels in. And I suppose we looked upon this thing as a sort of way to kind of pry that all out and get it changed. As a matter of fact, that's the way it turned out.

Willens: Did you have any recollection as to what specifically it was or what issues were the ones on which Goding ultimately fell out with you and others at Interior?

Carver: Well, I suppose it was criticism of Goding's administrative skills that bugged him the most.

Willens: Well, Goding was very defensive about the Solomon Mission's criticism of the bureaucracy there. Did you generally share the Solomon Mission's assessment of...

Carver: I shared the Solomon Mission's assessment . . .

Willens: ...of the bureaucracy out in the Trust Territory?

- Carver: ...of the bureaucracy out in the Trust Territory. I was so concerned about it that I went out there and spent 11 days sitting in the office out there trying to kind of make my own take of these various points of the Solomon Commission and kind of work around the High Commissioner to see what could be done.
- Willens: Well, Tony Solomon remembers that you were present at the meeting with President Kennedy ...
- Carver: I was.
- Willens: ... on October 24 when the report was presented, and President Kennedy a day later signed a memorandum asking in general terms that it be implemented.
- Carver: Put into effect, yes.
- Willens: Did Secretary Udall and you tell President Kennedy that you were favorably impressed by the report and would move to implement it?
- Carver: I'm sure we did. I can't imagine Stewart Udall, who didn't know all that much about this, telling him he wouldn't.
- Willens: Well, that's certainly what Mr. Solomon remembers, and I don't ask the question to challenge either his recollection or question your assessment of the report. As you've stated, you did then go out to the Trust Territory, and it looks to me from the documents that George Milner made available to me that really Interior wanted to conduct a much more detailed examination of specific recommendations of the Solomon Mission report before it could really make a judgment as to which could be implemented and which should be implemented. Is that fair?
- Carver: Well, I think that's fair. At least as I went over the documents, my recollection was that it was somewhat more limited in the sense that you weren't trying to figure out what we could implement but rather how to implement. What could be done that had to be done out there with reference to the report.
- Willens: The Solomon Mission report recommended that a plebiscite be held as early as 1967 or 1968 and picked that timeframe in reliance in part on the expectation there would be a Territory-wide legislative body in operation for at least three years. Did you find yourself in any disagreement with the Solomon Mission's recommendations for a plebiscite at which the Micronesians would be offered some form of affiliation with the United States?
- Carver: No, I didn't have any problems with it.
- Willens: Some of the State Department people also say they were affirmatively in support of the Solomon Mission's report, although it seemed to be recommending considerably less self-government to the Micronesians than the State Department representatives were telling you and your colleagues at Interior was necessary to meet U.N. standards. Ruth at least thought that there was some inconsistency here. Do you have any recollection of a State Department sense that more attributes of self-government had to be provided to the Micronesians than Solomon recommended?
- Carver: This is perhaps unfair to the State Department, but I had the uncomfortable feeling that all the time they were not really dealing with reality, they were just dealing with perceptions. We'd been through that sort of thing in terms of legislative power and other sorts of things, and I mentioned a minute ago that those people were politically sophisticated. When we went out there and told them they had legislative power but we would change it, I remember Goding tell me something which was kind of revealing. He said, those people know whose staff to put the breadfruit on. And they were going to

continue to go where the source of real power was. I think that the State Department in terms of self-government didn't think about what the Micronesians would do, they just thought about what we could get away with in terms of the United Nations.

Willens: I see that one of the documents you made available is a brief statement that you made before a Subcommittee of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee on October 15, 1963, at which time Solomon was going to brief members of the Committee about his Report. There is no record of this that I've been able to identify. What is your recollection as to the way in which members of the Committee responded to Mr. Solomon's summary of his report and his recommendations?

Carver: Well, I'm going to be a little tentative about that. Outside of a kind of general prickliness about the Commission, I don't think they were unfriendly to it. Tony wasn't exactly their kind of guy.

Willens: Well, actually, he recalls that Congressman Aspinall was a very acerbic person, and Solomon recalls today with the mellowness of the decades that he was rather acerbic, too. And he recalled for me on the record a rather sharp exchange that he had with Congressman Aspinall. It's unclear to me now whether it happened in this briefing session or on some subsequent occasion, but he recalls asking Congressman Aspinall, are you going to listen to me or have you closed your mind.

Carver: Yes.

Willens: Do you remember any exchange of that kind?

Carver: I wouldn't recall the occasion, but now that you mention it, I think I was there. It was perhaps the same occasion in which Harlan Cleveland pulled out of his breast pocket a copy of the Charter of the United Nations to refer to, and one of the Congressmen, I think it was Saylor, got really furious and asked him if he had a copy of the U.S. Constitution in his pocket as well.

Willens: That's right. Ruth remembers that story and said that she respects Cleveland to this day for saying promptly in response, no, he expected that the Committee staff would have provided that to members of the Committee.

Carver: Yes.

Willens: What was your general assessment Mr. Cleveland as a person and as a representative of the State Department?

Carver: Oh, I just thought he was fine. I liked him. He had a lot of practical experience in the academic world and he was a kind of low-key guy. I was very fond of him.

Willens: He was then replaced by Mr. Sisco. What was your assessment of Mr. Sisco?

Carver: Oh, it wasn't any where near that favorable.

Willens: Was Mr. Sisco taking positions that were different from those that had been taken by Mr. Cleveland, or was it simply the manner in which he presented the positions?

Carver: It was the manner in which he felt that the Interior Department was kind of a subordinate. I think he felt the State Department was superior to all the departments.

Willens: Someone told me that it's certainly true that the State Department is the seniormost of the departments and that in conflicts at the Bureau of the Budget between State and Interior it was virtually certain that State was going to prevail. Was that your experience?

- Carver: It isn't my experience, but that's the way it came out. We had our share of the victories, particularly at the Bureau of the Budget. We had friends over there, particularly our people. I don't think State was any more popular around the government anywhere else than it was with us. And Sisco was such an opinionated guy, and so positive, that he really rubbed me the wrong way, and I think he rubbed some other people the wrong way as well. I wrote this introduction to Ruth's book. Did you read that?
- Willens: Yes, I did. About some people would be glad to see they're not mentioned?
- Carver: Yes. Well, I think that's why it's written that way.
- Willens: I assumed as much. What was your assessment of some of the other people at State? Elizabeth Brown, William Gleysteen, Donald McHenry? Do you have any recollection of those individuals?
- Carver: Not personally. State Department being the State Department, there was kind of a protocol whereby assistant secretaries talked only to assistant secretaries. That was not true in a lot of other places in the government, but my impressions of those people were all second-hand through Ruth, but generally favorable to Elizabeth Brown and a good many of the staff over there. I didn't have any negative feelings about them.
- Willens: The President did request that the Solomon Mission report be implemented, and then he was assassinated in November 1963. Documents provided to me indicate that the Defense Department and the State Department did formally respond to the Solomon Mission report in response to the National Security Action Memorandum that President Kennedy issued before his assassination. I had not seen any such document from the Interior Department until George Milner made available to me a draft letter that might be considered by Secretary Udall to President Johnson responding to President Kennedy's National Security Action Memorandum. Do you know whether Interior did submit any final report to the White House with respect to the Solomon Mission report?
- Carver: No, I don't. I'd have to say that I still have in my basement all my personal files, and I haven't looked at them for 20 years. My wife insists that I go through them before I turn them over to any library, and I haven't done it yet. I expect at some time to do that, and if I find anything I'll get in touch with you about it.
- Willens: How many boxes do you have?
- Carver: Oh, I guess about 40.
- Willens: Going back through your entire public career, or going to your ...
- Carver: Well, the ones we're talking about are basically the Interior Department years.
- Willens: Well, I would certainly volunteer to assist you in going through some of those, or actually having some paralegal come out and assist at some point. I have found actually that Ruth turned documents over to Georgetown Law School that she and her husband thought should be cleared out of the attic. I reviewed those documents and found several that filled gaps in what I had obtained.
- Carver: I'm sure mine are quite organized, you know, I had good secretaries who kept files of all this stuff. My wife asked me yesterday if I was going to go through them, and I said I haven't got time to go through them before this interview, but maybe I'll get at it.
- Willens: Well, George does not remember whether his draft was ever reviewed by you or anyone superior in terms of a final report. He recalled for me that, as reflected in his draft, he thought that certain of the recommendations of the Solomon Mission were inconsistent

with others. I think he generally wanted to be affirmative but yet, in his bureaucratic way, wanted to be careful about what kind of endorsement Interior would provide.

Carver: That would generally be his approach. He's staff of course. And my approach. We weren't about to go picking any fights with the State Department or with the Solomon Commission or with the President or anybody else. We weren't insecure. We had one ally most of those other people didn't have. We had the Congress on our side.

Willens: That point comes through loud and clear from the documents.

Carver: We knew that that was our ace in the hole. They couldn't do a damned thing. Our lines of communication with the Congress were good.

Willens: There is suggestion in one State Department document that I may not have provided you reporting State's view that, with the assassination of President Kennedy, Interior concluded there no longer was any sense of urgency with respect to the Trust Territory. How do you respond to that suggestion?

Carver: Well, I was devastated as anybody else about the death of President Kennedy, but it wasn't more than a week afterwards that everybody in Interior knew that this new President was going to be President in his own right. Furthermore, we knew that in many ways he was going to get through the Kennedy program. So I would find it hard to believe that we thought well, now, we can sit down on this thing. I think we may have felt that we weren't going to be badgered so much by some of these people in the White House and others who had taken such an interest in this thing for personal and other reasons.

Willens: Do you recall any occasion on which President Johnson took a personal interest in the Trust Territory?

Carver: Didn't Johnson make a tour down in the territories? He went to Samoa, I know.

Willens: And I think he went to Guam, but I'm now maybe getting confused with President Nixon. I'm uncertain.

Carver: Oh, no, Johnson made a trip. I can't recall any specific instance involving the Trust Territory. I know that the cooperation that we had from Johnson having to do with the typhoon and things like that—there was very strong support from the White House on that.

Willens: With the new Administration came some personnel changes at the Office of Territories. Mr. Taitano was replaced by Ruth Van Cleve. Did you have any role in the designation of Ms. Van Cleve as his successor?

Carver: Oh, I was strongly in favor of that. Dick had been pretty much a cipher in terms of having any kind of policy control. Particularly he was absolutely at a loss to get anything done with Goding. Goding didn't pay any attention to the Director of Territories.

Willens: Do you think that was influenced by the fact that he was a Guamanian?

Carver: No, I don't think so. There's lots of strong Guamanians. I think it more had to do with Dick. He wasn't assertive. He got his nose out of joint, but he just wasn't in any position, wasn't the kind of guy who could assert himself.

Willens: Under those circumstances, then, it seems somewhat odd that he ends up going out to be Goding's Deputy.

Carver: Taitano...

- Willens: Taitano went out to be Deputy High Commissioner under Goding and then lasted in that position for a considerable period of time, apparently much longer than many anticipated that he would or wanted him to. Do you have any recollection of how that appointment came about?
- Carver: No. I suppose it was just a matter of Ruth taking care of Dick and putting him in a place where he could be close to home or something like that.
- Willens: Well, his personal letters to Ruth do suggest some ongoing tension with Mr. Goding, and ...
- Carver: From being his nominal boss to being his subordinate, I mean it wouldn't be surprising.
- Willens: Ruth remembers candidly that President Johnson also had sent out to members of the Cabinet a directive that if possible they find talented women to be promoted, and she concedes that she may well have benefited from that impulse. Is that your understanding?
- Carver: Well, that is my understanding. That had to furnish Udall the opportunity to do something which otherwise might have been a little bit more difficult.
- Willens: Were there people who were competing for the position at the time?
- Carver: Well, I think that was one of those things where we just decided to announce it before anybody could get in their application.
- Willens: That has proven to be quite successful over the years as a way of dealing with governmental problems. And stepping back for a minute, how would you evaluate Ruth's performance both as a lawyer when she was on the Solicitor's staff and as Director of the Office?
- Carver: Superb, absolutely in every way.
- Willens: What were her strengths that you found of particular importance?
- Carver: Well, she was in the first place a very, very knowledgeable woman, and she was smart. Also very politically wise. Knows a good deal about the art of the possible. She works well with people. Gets things done. Just an engaging person, top-flight person.
- Willens: She recalls that her relations with Congressman Aspinall were on the whole good, in large part because she came before him under your sponsorship and that that was very helpful. Do you recall how she did in fact interact with the Congressman?
- Carver: Well, I think that would be an accurate statement. I know he thought a lot of her, and I'm pretty sure that after the first time or two, she didn't need me to take her up there. She was a person in her own right, particularly after I left the assistant secretaryship and became Under Secretary. Some think that's a promotion, but that's the worst demotion I ever had.
- Willens: Why was that?
- Carver: Hubert Humphrey was talking one time, and he said something that applied to me. He said: "There's nothing the matter with this job a little power wouldn't cure."
- Willens: Oh.
- Carver: As Assistant Secretary, I was in charge of a lot of things, as you can tell from all this stuff. When I was the Under Secretary, I was in charge of nothing.
- Willens: I see. In late 1963, actually just a few weeks before his assassination, President Kennedy sent a memo to Secretary Udall saying that he was shocked by the spread of polio in the



- Trust Territory and asking for a prompt investigation in response. I think I got these documents from Ruth's files. There was a response prepared for Secretary Udall's signature that seems to have gone out on November 29, 1963. Do you recall that particular event and the White House interest in it?
- Carver: Only as this kind of rang a few bells. It wasn't very strong in my recollection. But I do know that, whether at that time or earlier, we were really concerned about the nature of the medical services which were being furnished. They were almost non-existent.
- Willens: I gather from the documents that next to education, medical services out there were an important issue. I hadn't realized that before until I'd seen some of the recent documents and talked to some of your former colleagues. Some of these criticisms led ultimately, as I gather, to the World Health Organization investigation that some people at Interior thought was stimulated by the State Department. Do you have any recollection of the World Health Organization report that was in I guess 1965, and Ambassador Anderson testified about it in her visit before Congress in early 1966?
- Carver: No, I recall that part of it, Ambassador Anderson going out. By that time, I was in fact Under Secretary and not involved very closely with this. But I do recall that it was one of our major, major policy arguments with the local people out there. It was a question of getting stateside-type medical officers out there.
- Willens: I don't understand what the resistance was in the Trust Territory to getting American-trained doctors and so forth.
- Carver: Money.
- Willens: Your answer is money.
- Carver: Money. Those people that were trained in Fiji were working for nothing, and the doctors we wanted commanded doctor salaries. The kind of doctors that we got to send out there were the kind of people that were running away from the State health director in this State or that, because they were drunks or something and it was just a terrible dilemma which we were acutely aware of. But nevertheless we felt about the medical services like we felt about education, that we could not justify from a policy standpoint adhering to any lesser standards of public health than we would at home.
- Willens: It appears from the documents as though your determination to improve medical services out there in the early 1960s were not successful enough to defuse some of the criticism. Was that because of the bureaucratic opposition out there?
- Carver: Well, I don't know whether it was bureaucratic opposition. There was a good deal of resentment on the part of the local people that we were replacing something with nothing in many cases. That they were in fact many times satisfied with the Fiji-trained medical officers—or whatever they called them. But as I recall, it had to do with the enormity of building hospitals and the kind of the underlying infrastructure which was necessary for American-trained doctors to practice there. I think about going out there in the bush and setting up in a hut and practicing medicine, and we never were able to get over that hump.
- Willens: Was Congress supportive of the desire to provide more funds for that purpose?
- Carver: No, I think that that was one area where we didn't get as much cooperation as I thought we should have. Perhaps it was in part because we could see the problem involved in it ourselves. But as to the dynamics of it leading to the World Health Organization and so on, I don't have much recollection of that.

- Willens: Some of the materials suggest that some Americans who were engaged in medical services in the Trust Territory became agitators for change and very outspoken critics of Trust Territory policy in this area. Is that your recollection?
- Carver: That's my recollection, yes.
- Willens: Turning to education for a moment, I know you and some of your colleagues were interviewed by Mr. Nevin for his book that was published I think in or about 1977. Nevin is very critical of the U.S. policy that was adopted and implemented in the early 1960s that involved two important changes. First, the teaching of English at a very early age, and secondly, bringing in American-trained teachers rather than depending on Micronesians to teach Micronesians. There apparently was a Director of Education there named Dr. Gibson who finally resigned in protest, it's reported, against these policies. Nevin for the most part seems to take his side and suggests that these changes in educational policy were ill guided, poorly implemented, and something just short of a disaster to the Micronesians. What is your judgment today about those educational judgments that you made?
- Carver: Well, my judgment today is that I wouldn't do anything different. I certainly can't accept his premise that we should leave these people in sort of a tropical-type zoo, I think is the term he used, somebody used. I can certainly see the point that education is necessary, but you've got to follow it up with jobs, and I don't suppose you have to look any farther than the inner cities of the United States today to see that dilemma coming to the fore, that education by itself doesn't do it. But I cannot for the life of me see how you can avoid your responsibility to people who live in the modern world, whether you fall down on some other responsibilities or not, so I adhere strongly to what I thought then, that we have to do it.
- Willens: Did you have the judgment then that the Micronesians themselves wanted to learn English and have that made part of their educational system?
- Carver: No, I don't suppose that I reacted to it on the basis of what they wanted so much as what any kind of American administration had to furnish. We'll have to remember that in parallel to our concern for the policy in Micronesia was our concern in the Indian Bureau. It was almost an identical type situation, which had been met earlier in terms of the responsibility of the United States government to furnish an educational opportunity for all the Indians, whatever might be the economic situation in a particular reservation. It had to be a government responsibility. It was just one of the things that we have to give to the Indians.
- Willens: Actually, that reminds me. In one book I read recently, a comparison was made between the per capita expenditure on Indian reservations with the per capita expenditure in the Trust Territory. The author concluded that much more was being spent per capita on Indians than on Trust Territory citizens and thought that reflected critically on the United States. Do you recall any such comparison being made?
- Carver: I don't recall any financial comparisons. I do recall the kind of anthropological kind of arguments that prevailed in the Indian Bureau, which kind of spilled over into the Trust Territory. Margaret Mead and others felt: we got to leave these people alone, don't mess with them, don't interfere with their bucolic life and that sort of thing. And that just wasn't any premise we could accept. Now there's one point that's come up, not much in your documents or anywhere else that I've seen much of, but we had one policy which we had no control over, which I thought would have done more than anything else to have avoided a lot of the substantive problems. That was a matter of barring these people from free entry into the United States. I from the start said we should just limit all barriers,

- permitting these people to move from Truk or anywhere else to Honolulu or to San Diego or San Francisco would have relieved many of the political and other kind of pressures down there.
- Willens: Providing for free entry was one of the provisions contained in the legislative proposal that was addressed by Congress in 1963. Did Congress ultimately enact the provision permitting that kind of entry?
- Carver: Free entry going into but not out of, as I recall. Isn't that right?
- Willens: I have not checked that, so I don't really know. You mean free entry into the . . .
- Carver: I mean allowing U.S. citizens to come and go without...
- Willens: In the Trust Territory?
- Carver: Into the Trust Territory.
- Willens: Yes. But how about the free entry of Micronesians into the United States?
- Carver: I do not recall that that was ever worked out. They could not move as readily to San Francisco as the American Samoans in my experience.
- Willens: Because certainly it was recommended, I think both by State and Interior, that free entry of that kind would give them more access to American educational institutions and provide more familiarity with the society here.
- Carver: I may be entirely mistaken in retrospect thinking about it, but it's my recollection that the situation which existed in Samoa, which I can summarize this way, that their biggest export was children, humans. The excess population drains off to Honolulu, San Diego, San Francisco in the United States. Whereas we didn't allow that safety valve in the Trust Territory.
- Willens: I see.
- Willens: There is some support for the proposition that U.S. policy was resulting in a large number of educated young Micronesians who could not find employment in the Trust Territory. During your tenure in the Interior Department, did you think of any ways to develop the private economy in such a way that might have helped absorb some of that manpower?
- Carver: Well, I think one of the recommendations of the Solomon Commission had to do with a cannery, as I recall, didn't it?
- Willens: Yes.
- Carver: We moved in that direction but it didn't go anywhere. We saw the potential for tourism, particularly down in the Carolines, in Palau. I'm frank to admit I didn't ever see that Saipan would far exceed that in terms of tourist attraction, but I think we saw developments of that kind when we built an airport down at Babelthuap and otherwise did some things down there. Copra and other things we gave up on I guess long, long since. We were well aware of the fact that, as in Samoa, the government was the main employer, the U.S. government was. That brings up the other subject, the whole question of equal pay schedules, all that sort of thing that has gotten so tense later.
- Willens: During the time that you were at Interior, did you become aware of the fact that the political leaders in the Northern Mariana Islands really were different in terms of their status objectives than the other districts in the Trust Territory?
- Carver: Oh, sure, we recognized I think from our first visit out there that we were really on two tracks from a policy standpoint. The policy was a territory-wide proposition involving

some kind of homogeneity, and nobody could go out there without being instantly aware that the situation in Truk was different than the situation in Yap or in the Carolines or anywhere else. There were really quite different forces at work.

Willens: Why was it, in your judgment, that the United States continued for so many years to insist that the Trust Territory be considered as a monolithic entity with respect to its future political status?

Carver: Well, I don't know that we felt that we had under the trusteeship any other kind of a mandate. It was one territory, and in terms of cost and efficiency and other kinds of administrative problems, that was the dominant factor, I don't recall any discussion of it except in terms of compromises which I favored in terms of going along with the Micronesian people about the structure of their legislature and that sort of thing. But we were acutely aware that you don't talk to a Micronesian, you talk to somebody from Saipan or somebody from Truk or somebody from Palau or Ponape or somewhere.

Willens: During your visit to Micronesia in November of 1963, you participated in an opening session of the Council of Micronesia, and it is clear from the documents that Interior's thinking with respect to a proposed Congress of Micronesia was well in process by that time. Where did the impetus for a territory-wide legislature come from? Was it from the Council of Micronesia, was it from Interior, or from some other source?

Carver: Well, I suppose if we're speaking more broadly, it was our general objective to give the territories a good deal more self-government experience as fast as we could. Of course the relationship with the legislative body is kind of the starting point, to even do that without fooling around with the Congress and so on. If all legislative and executive and judicial power is in the High Commissioner, the High Commissioner can turn some of that over to a legislature. And it was a part of the general philosophy about government which we all had, self-government. And no High Commissioner out there wants really to give it up. I can remember a lot of discussions with Goding about how can he do his responsibilities if the legislature's going to go over the budget and that sort of thing. Then of course he came up with all these compromises, saying we could make these recommendations but wouldn't change them and all that sort of thing. But from our standpoint, it was a philosophy of government with an idea of, as I said on a couple of occasions, let them make their own mistakes. We're not smart enough to be Big Brother for them.

Willens: Do you have any recollection of the members of the Council of Micronesia and how they responded to the proposal for a territory-wide legislature?

Carver: No, I don't. I confess that I wasn't very good at utilizing the little time that I had out there in one-on-one conversations with any of the local leaders. I met most of them, but my information about what they thought had to come with the more knowledgeable and experienced members of Goding's staff who worked with them for years. They kept me informed, told me (I think mostly honestly) how they felt about this or that or the other thing.

Willens: The documents suggest that a few issues developed as the proposal for the Congress of Micronesia worked its way through these discussions with the Micronesians on the one hand and within the Executive Branch on the other. One of the issues was bicameral vs. unicameral, and there were issues about compensation and so forth. Do any of these seem important in retrospect to you?

Carver: Well, I think looking back over it, we were aware that if we went along with all of the recommendations of the local people about what kind of a job being a legislator was, we'd

be borrowing a lot of trouble for ourselves in terms of budgets and salary scales and the kind of a hierarchy in the government down there. We had a lot of people in the Office of Territories who got to making comparisons with how much money the legislators in Vermont got and that sort of thing. But the argument about whether this ought to be their only job or not: there were so few trained people down there that you had to kind of use them as administrators as well. Those were tough problems for us.

Willens: And the final Secretarial Order represented compromises on some of these issues.

Carver: Yes.

Willens: There was an exchange of correspondence with the State Department, and I gather from Ruth many meetings at which the State Department tried to make its contributions to this Secretarial Order. Do you have recollection of any kind as to what State's views were on these issues?

Carver: Yes. I suspect they were probably negative.

Willens: Well, one of the issues that State raised (and also the 1964 U.N. visiting mission) was that the Micronesian legislators ought to be given more authority with respect to the budget, which was comprised as you recall primarily by funds appropriated by Congress. Did you think there was any point at which Congressman Aspinall and others might be willing to grant to the Micronesian legislators some control over disbursement of those funds?

Carver: Never was. It was all unrealistic discussion on their part to that. Hell, they haven't changed their mind about that yet, so far as I know, have they? Congress.

Willens: Well, I don't know. It certainly did remain an issue for many years.

Carver: I don't know what's happened since, but I know when 15 years ago when I was in Samoa, you weren't going to get the Congress to turn loose of the control of the funds they appropriated. That was just a given.

Willens: Do you remember attending the opening session of the Congress of Micronesia?

Carver: Yes.

Willens: Ruth or someone recalls for me that you found it a very impressive and important occasion.

Carver: It was. Yes.

Willens: Did you remain with Interior long enough to sort of form some judgment as to how well the initial members of the Congress of Micronesia performed their functions?

Carver: In very general terms.

Willens: There have been books written about the Congress of Micronesia, as you probably know, one by Professor Meller from the University of Hawaii. Some people comment about the extent to which the Congress of Micronesia was designed as a way to create some sense of Micronesian unity and to perhaps provide the basis for accommodating or reconciling the differences among the various districts. Was that one of your thoughts at the time, that it might serve this unifying function?

Carver: I think it probably was. We recognized the reality of central administration of one Trust Territory and it would have been very difficult administratively to have set the thing up to follow the ethnic and other kinds of developmental differences among districts.

- Willens: In early 1965, the Task Force was terminated. Do you have any recollection as to whether the Task Force continued to have any utility during 1964 or what may have prompted President Johnson's decision to terminate it?
- Carver: I don't recall. It was terminated.
- Willens: As you can see from some of these documents, during 1965 and 1966 there was a series of correspondence and meetings between State and Interior, all designed it appears to look toward some common Executive Branch policy that could be put to the President to implement National Security Action Memorandum 145. The State Department generated some staff studies which they submitted to Interior. Interior generated some staff studies that they submitted to State. At one point, the State Department appears to have gotten approval from George Bundy in the White House for the concept of a White House assistant. No such assistant was ever appointed, however. Did you participate in any discussions with White House representatives or others as to whether somebody ought to be appointed to fill that function?
- Carver: No, that was Sisco's . . .
- Willens: One of the memos does suggest that he got Secretarial approval at the State Department to go over and talk about it and that he got . . .
- Carver: He talked about Max Taylor and so on.
- Willens: Correct, but I asked him what happened, and he basically thinks that although there was some favorable indication, that didn't mean it was going to be done.
- Carver: I can see Sisco coming over there, and I can see Bundy or anybody else just saying: "Well, yeah, it might be a good idea, who'd you have in mind?" And that discussion going on but not ever culminating in anything.
- Willens: There are two letters in the file from you to the State Department that I'd like to review with you briefly. One was a letter dated October 8, 1965 to Mr. Sisco, and it responds to a State Department study with respect to the Trust Territory, and you summarized certain of the assumptions underlying that study. You basically agree with two of the premises and then take issue with two of them. You state that the State Department takes the position that the people of the territories now yearn for a greater measure of self-government, and you basically suggest that that's not the case as you understand it, at least with respect to the Trust Territory. You said something about this earlier. Was it your view in 1965 that the Micronesians themselves really were not pressing for more self-government?
- Carver: Well, that's my recollection, that they were not pressing for more self-government in the same way that the other territories traditionally were. They wanted to elect their own governor, and they wanted more legislative power and more control over that sort of thing. But Samoa is kind of again the classic case in point. It was, what, 12 years after that before they got an elected governor, and somewhat less time before they got a delegate in Congress. But that was the way we tended to think about these things. We tended at Interior to think about their yearnings to be nearly like the United States or to have their citizens have more of the rights of citizens. Puerto Rico is another kind of a case in point. We were aware that in Puerto Rico there was a kind of a statehood party and an independence party and so on, but it was in that general context that we dealt with these issues, not in any kind of a broadly based movement for independence or cutting free from the United States or voting against further association.
- Willens: The other point that you take issue with is State Department's assertion that there are pressures within the American territories for a new status and to clarify their relationship

with the United States. And you suggest that really that is not true, in your judgment. I guess you make the point in your letter that you've made here today and that is that in order to have a plebiscite you have to have some assurances from Congress that in fact the preference of the people as expressed in the plebiscite has to be acceptable to Congress so that it can be implemented.

Carver: Yes. The State Department seemed totally unwilling or unable to deal with that fundamental aspect of American political setup, the role of the Congress in this matter.

Willens: Well, there was then a series of meetings, and there's a report of a meeting that you had with Mr. Sisco on January 19, 1966, and the State Department people provided Sisco of course with briefing papers to prepare for dealing with your points and based on the staff discussions. Do you have any recollection of meeting with Sisco on these issues and your efforts to reach some kind of a compromise?

Carver: Oh, I don't think there were any efforts to reach any compromise. I was every bit as stubborn as he was. Nobody changed anybody's mind at that meeting.

Willens: You think basically those meetings were necessary perhaps but not useful in producing any change in views or compromise?

Carver: Yes, that's what I think.

Willens: Well, there seemed to come a time in 1966 where at least at the Secretarial level, at least Under Secretary of State Katzenbach, and I forget whether Secretary Udall got involved, where people seemed to think they had reached some compromise, at least the effect that, when Secretary Udall testified on the Hill, he would defer to the State Department as to what the needs were with respect to the Trusteeship Agreement. Do you recall discussions that you had with Udall as to how to deal with the State Department's views on this subject?

Carver: Well, you'd have to go back. In 1966, I was Under Secretary, still personally considerably emotionally engaged with what was going on the Territories. But that made me something of a thorn in the side of Udall, who didn't like this kind of controversy and who felt that I was being obstructionist in many ways. And I guess for all practical purposes when it came to the Peace Corps and other kinds of things, Udall just took it out of my hands and overruled me and went the State Department route. And it wasn't very long after that that I was out of the Department. I don't think this had anything particularly to do with it, but the end of my effectiveness in any kind of policy control had come somewhat earlier.

Willens: Well, there was a meeting which Udall attended with Katzenbach, I believe, where Udall suggested that the staff give further consideration to absorbing the Trust Territory as part of the state of Hawaii. Do you have any recollection of that idea being proposed by Secretary Udall?

Carver: I don't recall it specifically, but Stewart is kind of a broad thinker, and that kind of idea he would lay out just sort of on the spur of the moment. There wasn't anybody around the Office of Territories or anybody that knew anything about territorial administration that saw any real possibility that you could get through an amendment to the Statehood Act of Hawaii for any kind of change along this line. I suppose it's a decent enough intellectual idea, but it wasn't taken very seriously. Why in the hell would Hawaii want that responsibility? Crazy.

Willens: That's certainly would have been my reaction.

- Carver: It was my reaction, too. But it was an intellectual idea, fine, that solves the problem. They're a member of the State of Hawaii, so that's the end of the problem. But that's just nonsense.
- Willens: The State Department seems to have changed its position on the leapfrogging issue. As you said earlier today, they for many years wanted to link the Trust Territory with the other three principal territories, and you and others at Interior saw no sense to that. The State Department seems to have changed its view by 1966 so that they recognized that maybe it was best to just deal with the Trust Territory alone and let the situation in Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa work its way out over time. Is that your recollection?
- Carver: Yes. I don't have any specific recollection of their changing or giving up or anything like that, but I think by that time the United States wasn't as frightened of the Committee of 24 as it had been.
- Willens: Well, that's an interesting point, actually. Mr. Cleveland made that rather dramatically when I talked to him—in that he said that it's hard for people to realize today how important a role the U.N. assumed in our foreign policy in 1961 and how much that had changed a decade later. I think you're making the point that it happened gradually over time.
- Carver: Yes. They were so extreme, so intemperate, and in many cases so wrong, as I pointed out in one of those speeches. They told us we had to remove the Navy garrison in Pago Pago which hadn't been there for 15 or 20 years, so that people couldn't pay any attention to them, I think.
- Willens: So is it your recollection then that those meetings that you had basically didn't move the problem toward solution in any useful way?
- Carver: No, I don't think so.
- Willens: Certainly the record seems to suggest, and the people I've talked to more or less confirm, that an impasse had been reached here by 1966 and that prompted people to start looking for another alternative which was then discussed in the years after you left Interior, namely the idea of a Presidential Commission.
- Carver: Yes.
- Willens: Do you recall that idea being aired at any point before you left Interior?
- Carver: No, I don't recall. That came up later.
- Willens: You wrote a letter (I think it was on April 13, 1966) to Mr. Sisco again setting forth your views as to this problem in light of the staff papers that had been prepared. It's in this letter that you make reference to areas of colonial Africa and Asia that have taken the reins of their own affairs through the process of complete independence or lesser forms of autonomy and suggested that that was not a useful or desirable model. Do you recall having some concern that State was urging a policy that would possibly expose the United States to letting the Micronesians assume independence or the trappings of self-government at a time when they might be susceptible to some of the same tendencies that we saw then and have seen since in Africa?
- Carver: I didn't have any prescience about the matter, but we were concerned, whether at that time or not I'm not quite sure. I think that the situation in Western Samoa was kind of a model for my thinking on that, because they had become independent, and were then subject to the kind of bidding war between China, Russia and so on for economic development



and so on. I recall being very concerned about that kind of pressure being put upon the Samoan people who I knew down there. It was a problem which we ought to avoid. There was no sense in it.

Willens: This letter impressed me as a highly personal statement...

Carver: It was.

Willens: ...of your views.

Carver: It wasn't the ordinary bureaucratic staff-written letter.

Willens: No, your colleagues down the line sort of looked at it and said that they think John Carver probably wrote this, especially when you suggested at the conclusion that if "our respective staff representatives reach a more optimistic conclusion, I will be highly suspicious of their methodology." And Ruth or George or someone suggested that that was more likely your language than theirs. You really did feel very strongly that the Micronesians were not ready for the level of self-government that Guam and the Virgin Islands were attaining. Yet you told me a few minutes ago that you depended very heavily on High Commissioner Goding and his staff for their assessments of Micronesian sentiment. What was it that led you to this strongly held view at the time?

Carver: Well, I guess now looking back on it, it was indeed a strongly held view that we could not make a nation out of it, at least I thought so. Maybe they have since. This takes us afield, but at one time the Congress decided they were going to terminate the Indian Bureau's responsibilities for a tribe of Indians in Wisconsin and make them self-sufficient. They had their own lumber mill and so on. And I went up to Congress, and I said in ten years they'll be back here wanting to be put back under the Indian Bureau. I predicted it accurately.

Willens: Is that right?

Carver: And fundamentally, it was this relationship between the economic base, the educational base, the size of the population and so on, that just was not consistent with the kind of political arrangement which was being urged as one of the alternatives.

Willens: Well, one of the issues that interests me is, in light of this impasse that I've identified, what would have happened if in fact a plebiscite had been held as early as 1967 or 1968 and the Micronesians voted overwhelmingly, as was predicted, for some close and permanent relationship with the United States. Would that status have survived the next two decades in light of the increased sophistication of the population and the divisiveness that subsequently led to the creation of four separate entities out of what used to be the Trust Territory? Do you have a judgment on that hypothetical?

Carver: Well, I've thought about the same thing. I was going to ask you that.

Willens: Well, I have views on that. Actually, I don't think it would have survived. I think from my review of the documents and interviews that the tensions, at least between my clients in the Northern Marianas and the other districts, were so profound and deeply felt that they would have not been able to survive over time in a common political framework. And then as the Congress of Micronesia unfolded, the Marshall Islands began to assert their independent views with respect to revenue-sharing and so forth, and it would have taken a measure of leadership that I don't think could have existed in Micronesia to have kept it together and created a Micronesia out of what of after all had been imposed on these peoples by four colonial powers.

Carver: Well, I think you've got two models to look at. The Samoan situation, as we've pointed out, is in fact a great deal different, and they've had fits and starts and so on, but they remain indelibly American nevertheless. The other is the cross-cultural model which the United States has and that's the Indians. We had a unitary approach about Indians for 100 years, and now we're breaking that up more and giving them more sovereign power and so on, but still accommodated within our system. I think that it would have been in the interest of the United States more to have dealt with the pressures and the pulls and the haws of these ethnic forces within some general overall U.S. framework rather than making these people members of the United Nations and subjecting ourselves to all these pressures. I think we would have been better off as a country, and probably the people of Micronesia might have been themselves better off. That's my thought. It's easy to look back on it and kind of identify places where just a little bit of change would have made things a lot better for us. One of them is a negative one. I think if we hadn't sent a bunch of trouble-making Peace Corps people out there who got these people stirred up, we wouldn't have had the legislature burn down and all kinds of things.

Willens: Well, I know that you're quoted very strongly on that subject in the Nevin book, and you mentioned it earlier. The Peace Corps proposal came to fruition I guess in 1966 while you were Under Secretary and just a few months before you left. There are some documents expressing your concern that the announcement of the Peace Corps program was going to have an adverse affect on the pending funding request or appropriation bill before Congress that was designed to increase the ceiling yet again for the Trust Territory. I've gleaned from some of the materials that Congressman Aspinall may have been offended by the Peace Corps program. Do you have any recollection of that?

Carver: Yes, he was. I may have influenced that.

Willens: Were you opposed to the idea of a Peace Corps program for Micronesia, or more generally?

Carver: We were opposed to the volume of it. The enormous number of Peace Corps people sent out there. By this time, we already had had experience with Peace Corps people in the Indian reservations.

Willens: Is that correct?

Carver: We'd come up to a point where we had these Peace Corps or other Office of Economic Opportunity-type people going on and setting up kind of offices for opposing the Indian Bureau or opposing the tribe or so on, just get the people stirred up. I was very aware of that problem. And I think it came to pass, too. I mean these kids would go out there (they were idealistic and smart) and would listen to the local people tell about their troubles and see that the people were right, say all right, we'll get something done about it, and so they start organizing them. It was a deeply held view on my part that you can't put an alternative type of government on top of the existing one, an alternative line of authority, if you will, to get to the top, without terribly eroding your existing structure.

Willens: There is a document that I've seen reporting on Interior Department personnel going to a Peace Corps training site in Florida, I believe, and hearing the training being presented in such a way as to make it seem clear to the volunteers that they were being asked to go out and challenge the Trust Territory Administration and correct all the deficiencies that the U.S. Government had been unable to address. Is that your understanding?

Carver: Well, I didn't know anything about that, but that was my understanding that that was what was going to happen, that in fact did happen. Ruth was a good deal more kind to

- the Peace Corps in her book. I think that's justified because Harry Van Cleve was a Peace Corps official himself.
- Willens: You left in September or October of 1966?
- Carver: September 13, 1966.
- Willens: And you served at the Federal Power Commission then for six or seven years?
- Carver: Six years.
- Willens: And did you have any dealings with the Trust Territory while you were at the Commission?
- Carver: No.
- Willens: And then you told me that you went back to American Samoa for a limited period of time in 1977 and 1978?
- Carver: Yes.
- Willens: Did you have any occasion to visit or review the situation in the Trust Territory as it existed in 1977 and 1978?
- Carver: No.
- Willens: Congressman Aspinall really then continued to play a key role in this until he I guess he retired from Congress?
- Carver: He got beaten in the primary in 1972.
- Willens: In 1972. What was your judgment about other members of the Committee—Representative O'Brien and Representative Saylor are two names that come up frequently in the documents. Were they influential in providing oversight?
- Carver: John Saylor was part of a kind of an Aspinall/Saylor team. They would get together and decide what the Committee was going to do, and that would be about it. Saylor was of course representing a minority, but I don't recall very many differences between the two of them having to do with territorial policy. O'Brien was the Subcommittee Chairman and an affable and very nice guy, but Aspinall and Saylor ran the policy.
- Willens: There's some suggestion in the materials that Interior viewed the State Department as embarked on a program to transfer authority for the Trust Territory from Interior to some other location, whether it was the Peace Corps, the State Department or the White House, and some of your former colleagues suggest that Ambassador Anderson, the State Department, and Mr. Pritchard of the Peace Corps were all part of an effort to undercut Interior's responsibilities. Do you give any credence to what has been termed the "conspiracy theory" in this connection?
- Carver: I don't know anything about the conspiracy. Pritchard is a total ass. He was out here as Chancellor of this University and ran it into the ground shortly after I came here.
- Willens: The University of Denver?
- Carver: Yes. He'd gone to the Peace Corps, he'd gone down to Arkansas, and then he came here. I recall telling the prior Chancellor that that was the biggest mistake he'd ever made, and I think they later came to agree with that. But I would say it was more a factor of the individual personalities of Pritchard and others than a conspiracy—Pritchard and Sisco and people like that, I don't think Eugenie Anderson had anything to do with it. I mean she went out and did a fine job.

- Willens: I found an interesting document in Ruth's files that seems to have been prepared in early 1966. It's unclear to whom it's addressed. I think it probably went up the line to Assistant Secretary Anderson and perhaps to your office. It identifies 11 or 12 instances where the State Department appeared to have taken some action with respect to the administration of the Trust Territory without advance consultation with the Office of Territories at Interior. I don't know whether she was being asked to document this concern, but if those instances are accurate, and I have no reason to doubt that, it does appear as though State was quite busy in trying to meddle or interfere (or "participate" to be more neutral) in the affairs of the Trust Territory without really conferring with Interior.
- Carver: I have to confess, therefore I can recognize it in others, there's something enormously attractive about being the proconsul of this kind of a policy area, and the State Department had little enough to run, so guys like Sisco, they think they can run it better. Telling other people how.
- Willens: Well, speaking about running it. Did you play any role in the selection of Mr. Norwood to replace Goding? I think that happened in about 1966. I'm not sure.
- Carver: I was out there when Bill took over, and that's when I was involved. But as to where Bill came from or what his political background or so on, that's escaped me now. So I would say that I probably didn't have any role in the selection.
- Willens: All right, on that note, let us conclude. I thank you very much for your time.
- Carver: You're welcome.