

INTERVIEW OF HERMAN Q. GUERRERO

By Howard P. Willens and Deanne C. Siemer

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- Willens: Herman Q. Guerrero is a former representative in the Congress of Micronesia, a former member of the Marianas Political Status Commission, and a government leader over many years. Mr. Guerrero has agreed to be interviewed as part of our project. Herman, thank you for being available. I have explained to you off the record the purpose of the interview. I would like to begin by asking you for some basic biographical information.
- Guerrero: I was born on Saipan some 57 years ago. I went to the primary and secondary schools on Saipan, and then left for Guam for high school and two years of college at the College of Guam.
- Willens: When did you leave Saipan to go to Guam for high school approximately?
- Guerrero: In 1957. I finished in 1958. Returned to Saipan in 1960. I went to work for the Saipan municipal government right after I came back.
- Willens: For the Saipanese government?
- Guerrero: Yes. It was the local municipal government. About 1963 I went to work for the Trust Territory government in the Economic Development Office.
- Willens: Let's stop here for a moment. When were you born?
- Guerrero: 1938.
- Willens: Tell me a little bit about your parents—where they were born, their education, and their employment.
- Guerrero: Both of my parents were born here and lived on Saipan throughout their lives. They went through the Japanese primary school. The local people were permitted to go up to the sixth grade and very few people were privileged to go that far. Nobody went beyond that here on Saipan. My mother kept the family together. She did not work outside the house.
- Willens: How many brothers and sisters did you have?
- Guerrero: There were seven boys and two girls. They are all alive, fortunately. My father after the war was a baker.
- Willens: Was he a baker by training before the war?
- Guerrero: No. There is the Herman's Bakery now.
- Willens: Who is he?
- Guerrero: Herman is my father's younger brother. After the war, my uncle was given some arrangement by the military to open up a bakery.
- Willens: Which military?
- Guerrero: The Naval Administration.
- Willens: Was Herman's Bakery then the first bakery?
- Guerrero: It was the first bakery and my father and his younger brother worked there.

- Willens: What recollections do you personally have of the Japanese years and the wartime experience?
- Guerrero: I have practically no knowledge other than what I gathered from my parents and the older folks. They said that the Japanese were economically more organized whether or not it was for the benefit of the local people. They thought that the economic situation of Saipan during the Japanese years was better than it is now. But as far as freedom and liberty were concerned, the Japanese were very restrictive. For instance, the Japanese government would not allow local people to exceed the Japanese citizens in terms of education. So they were very controlled.
- Willens: Did you grow up in one of the villages or did you have an agricultural home setting?
- Guerrero: I was born in Garapan, which was the capital during Japanese time. Just before the war we and other locals were driven away to the farm land. Our family was dislocated to where we are now—our family property in Fina Sisu.
- Willens: Were you required by the Japanese to move out of Garapan to a rural setting?
- Guerrero: That's my understanding. That's what I gathered from speaking to all the people— that they were driven out to the farm land and countryside.
- Willens: After the invasion were your parents, you and your brothers and sisters interned in one of the camps for a while.
- Guerrero: After the invasion, yes. In Susupe. That's where the Civic Center is now located.
- Willens: Was that viewed by the local people as a necessary step for their own well-being or was it viewed as imprisonment of some kind by the invading Americans?
- Guerrero: No, I think the local people took it as a step toward eventual permanent relocation. As a temporary location where they could live until a more permanent area could be arranged. There was no other immediate arrangement that would be better than this camp area.
- Willens: You went to the public school on Saipan up to a certain point in high school?
- Guerrero: That's correct. There was no high school here. It was up to the 8th grade, junior high.
- Willens: I have heard reference to a George Washington High School?
- Guerrero: Yes, in Guam. That was in Guam.
- Willens: Did many Saipanese go there?
- Guerrero: That's right.
- Willens: Is that where you went?
- Guerrero: No. I went to the mission school, Father Duenas Memorial School.
- Willens: Father Duenas Memorial School?
- Guerrero: Father Duenas was a local Guamanian priest, who was captured during the war by the Japanese. The school was situated in an area where he was beheaded. They named the school after him.
- Willens: Did some of your friends from Saipan go to the same school?
- Guerrero: Yes, there were a lot of them. The present governor went there, Froilan Tenorio and his older brother, Juan, who is now in Guam. Many Saipanese went through that school. The chief justice of the Supreme Court went there.

- Willens: Mr. Dela Cruz?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: When you returned in 1960, you went to work for the Saipan municipal government?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: Had you studied government or any particular field of study like economics at college?
- Guerrero: No. No, I took general courses in public administration—very general in those days. It was not as defined as it is now. But then again this new Western-style government is brand new to us, so we are just kind of working our way through it.
- Willens: What kind of a position did you first attain with the Saipan municipal government?
- Guerrero: I came in as a clerk and stayed there for about three years.
- Willens: Who were some of the people that you remember being active in the Saipan municipal government at the time?
- Guerrero: The mayor at that time was the late Ignacio Benavente, who was also later appointed as one of the judges in the court system.
- Willens: Was he mayor after Elias Sablan?
- Guerrero: That's right. He defeated Mr. Sablan in the election. At that time the two political parties were born.
- Willens: I understand that both the Territorial and the Popular Party had been established by 1960. Does that coincide with your recollection?
- Guerrero: That's right. Mr. Sablan, the mayor who was succeeded by Mr. Benavente, was the founder of the Territory Party, and Mr. Benavente was one of the founders of the Popular Party.
- Willens: Did you become a member of one of those two parties early on?
- Guerrero: Yes, I was a Popular Party member. At that time we called it the Young Popular Party.
- Willens: What do you recall as being the principal differences between the two parties at that time?
- Guerrero: The Territorial Party at that time had the public impression of being a party of the business people, the rich rather the common people. And on the political status side, they wanted to become a part of the United States directly. The Popular Party on the other hand was a more a common citizen party.
- Willens: The party of the common people?
- Guerrero: That's right. And while we wanted to become a part of the United States, we thought that at that early time it would be unreasonable to get access to the United States directly. But Guam had the same culture and the same people, so we thought that, if we were to be placed into the United States family, they might consider us if we affiliate through Guam. Because we were the same people who were separated by the peace treaty of 1898.
- Willens: Did the experience that you and others had in Guam during your education there lead you to believe that life in Guam had some of the attributes that you wanted to share in Saipan? Let me put it another way, what was it about Guam that seemed to be attractive and to motivate members of the Popular Party to seek some affiliation with the U.S. through Guam?

- Guerrero: I think both the Popular Party and the Territory Party thought that the best way of advancing economically, socially, and educationally was through being with the United States. We saw Guam advance versus our situation at the time. But if we had other options for achieving the relationship with the United States, other than going through Guam, we did not necessarily have to go through Guam. There was no special situation requiring that we should go through Guam. The main focus was that the United States (of which Guam was a part) would be the important factor that would advance us.
- Willens: When you came back to Saipan in 1960 as a young adult, what was our impression of the quality of life here in Saipan under the TTPI Administration?
- Guerrero: There were two things that struck me at the time. One was the funding was slow. And I didn't realize until I got into the Congress of Micronesia and later how difficult it was for the Trust Territory government to administer six districts with different cultures over so vast an area. Having to work within limited funding, that was one of the concerns I had. The other—and it wasn't my immediate impression—was that I realized that the Trust Territory was not very good (and this applies even now) in developing us to face real life. For instance, take the food stamps that were first put into effect. It did not prepare us to be able to face the situation when hard times come.
- Willens: Those are two very important points. Let me go back to the funding issue for the moment. Were you aware in the early 1960's that the United States had decided in earlier years to limit funding in the Trust Territory because it was of the view that to provide more money would make the people too economically dependent on the United States and it would interfere with their social and cultural traditions? Were you aware that there was a U.S. policy that fostered limited funding and that it was changed in the early 1960's?
- Guerrero: No, I wasn't aware of that. I remember from the Solomon Report during Kennedy's Administration that, after reviewing the United Nations report on the TT and some U. S. congressional visits here, they knew the education here was inadequate. Because there was a crash program to educate the people, construct classrooms, and find additional needed staff for education. But prior to that I was not aware.
- Willens: The crash educational program has been written about to a considerable extent. There are many who point out that too much money was spent too quickly and that some of the schools, for example, were built without bathrooms. Do you have any recollections of the success or failure of that initial program?
- Guerrero: Yes. That was very clear. They were so rushed that the engineering public works people in Trust Territory at that time didn't think about electricity or utility requirements for the classroom. During the construction they were looking for plans for these utilities and there were none. These are basic necessities when you do the plans, but for some reason, whether they were so limited in time that they were trying to rush, the basic structural plans did not include them.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of the facility that was built on Capitol Hill for the training of Chinese nationals and others by the United States? What was your first understanding of what existed on Capitol Hill and what its purpose was?
- Guerrero: They were saying that the Naval Technical Training Unit, NTTU, was for training of nationalist Chinese and not necessarily for any CIA operations. This whole area was restricted—Capitol Hill, Kagman, and Marpi—and we could not go up here. This building itself was a NTTU officers club.
- Willens: The building we're now in which is occupied by the Division of Public Lands and

- formerly was occupied by the Marianas Land Corporation, you're telling me it was officers' quarters?
- Guerrero: No, officers' club.
- Willens: An officers' club—during the 1950's and the early 1960's?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Did some of the local people work up here?
- Guerrero: Yes, my younger brother worked here as a bartender. And several people served as cooks and waitresses.
- Willens: You mentioned the Solomon Commission and its report, some of which is still classified, I believe, and has generally over the years been much criticized. What was your understanding of what the Solomon Commission intended to do here?
- Guerrero: I did not get to read the report. The education emphasis is one of the things that stuck in my mind, but when they were around here I didn't get to talk to any of the members. The talk around was that the mission was to improve the situation in the Trust Territory. At the time I was not aware of a focus on any specific area for improvement. But there was talk that this was the result of pressure by the United Nations visiting missions that came out and were not satisfied of the progress being made by the United States. Also some members of Congress had visited the place to investigate and make recommendation as to what areas needed to be improved.
- Willens: Did you have any understanding at the time or perhaps shortly thereafter that the Solomon Commission was part of a United States effort to prepare the people in Micronesia to the point where they would vote favorably in support of some permanent affiliation with the United States?
- Guerrero: No, I had no idea of that.
- Willens: Even in the late 1950's and the early 1960's the Marianas, through their municipal councils and their district legislature when it was created in 1963, passed regular resolutions urging that the Marianas be given a separate political status from the rest of Micronesia. Did you play a role in some of those early resolutions?
- Guerrero: Yes. After I got back I was elected a member of the Municipal Council and at one point I was Speaker of the Council itself. And yes, almost annually, somebody would introduce and the Council would adopt a resolution urging the United States and even the United Nations to recognize this desire of the people.
- Willens: As I understand it, the Municipal Council and then subsequently the District Legislature, were largely controlled by the Popular Party in the early 1960s.
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: When the Navy Administration ended in 1962, there was an opportunity to form a Marianas District Legislature. I don't remember whether you ran for the District Legislature at the first opportunity in 1963, or was it sometime later on?
- Guerrero: No, it was later on that I ran. As a matter of fact, I never ran for the District Legislature. What happened was that I was on the staff of the District Legislature since its creation.
- Willens: You were on the staff of the District Legislature as well as a member of the Municipal Council?

- Guerrero: Yes. And at one point the District Legislature felt I might be biased, and asked me to make a decision between the Council and the Legislature. Some members felt that I maybe prejudicing the District Legislature.
- Willens: Is that because you were viewed as favoring Saipan to the disadvantage of the other islands.
- Guerrero: Not necessarily. I really can't fix what the reasons were for some of the members to try get me to make a decision either to stay with the District Legislature, and give up the Municipal Council, or leave the Legislature staff. But going back to the question. No, I did not run for the District Legislature. In 1969 I was asked by Mr. Frank Ada, then the district administrator of the Marianas District, to work for him. So I moved from the District Legislature to the District government, Executive Branch. I worked for him for about nine months and then ran for the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: In 1970?
- Guerrero: Yes. And when the Marianas got out of the Congress of Micronesia because of this political status thing, I was appointed to the Marianas District Legislature to fill a vacancy of one of its members.
- Willens: Who were the leaders in the Popular Party during the 1960's? I know that Santos was one and Felipe Salas was another.
- Guerrero: Felipe Salas, Juan Cabrera, who was a member of the Status Commission. Santiago Magofna, Francisco Diaz, and Danny Muna. These are from Saipan.
- Willens: Who were the active leaders in the Marianas from Tinian and Rota at the time.
- Guerrero: Oh, active leaders, public leaders. Ben Manglona and his older brother, Prudencio Manglona from Rota. Those were the key figures on Rota.
- Willens: Do you remember any leaders from Tinian at the time?
- Guerrero: In Tinian at the time were Antonio Borja and Felipe Mendiola. I think Joe Cruz was already on Tinian at the time, although we considered Joe Cruz always to be from Saipan.
- Willens: When you were pressured to make a choice between the Saipan Municipal Council or the District Legislature, what did you decide?
- Guerrero: I decided that I was going to stick with the Municipal Council, because I was elected there. But they didn't follow through. I guess they just dropped the whole thing. So I continued on.
- Willens: So you continued to work in both capacities?
- Guerrero: Yes. And at the time Ben Santos was the President of the District Legislature.
- Willens: Had you always been close politically with Mr. Santos?
- Guerrero: Yes, always with the same party.
- Willens: Many people on Saipan, you know better than I, change parties from time to time, but you and Mr. Santos have remained constant, so to speak?
- Guerrero: I never switched parties.
- Willens: With the creation of the Marianas District Legislature, there developed some uncertainty as to what the responsibilities would be of the Municipal Council as distinct from the District Legislature. Then when the Congress of Micronesia was created there was some

comment to the effect that there were too many levels of government for a relatively small community. What is your reaction to that line of thinking?

Guerrero: I didn't see it as a problem between the District Legislature and the Municipal Council. The problem came about when the Congress of Micronesia insisted that the Municipal Legislature (as it was called then) be called the Municipal Council. They wanted to reserve the term "legislature" for the District Legislature. The Congress should be Congress of Micronesia, the District should be Legislature and the municipal level should be Council. So it was just the name. I was the Speaker then and I said, "Gee, the name, you know, doesn't mean a thing." It was not because of too many legislative bodies, because the Council is a law making body, so it's same as the legislature. It was just the name. So they did not oppose us to continue as a law making body but insisted we use Council instead of Legislature.

Willens: Was there some competition for the available public funds?

Guerrero: No.

Willens: What kind of budget did the Saipan Municipal Council or Legislature have?

Guerrero: Very minimal. We had taxes on liquor and business licenses. We were collecting that. And, of course, we got a grant from the District Legislature similar to what the Congress of Micronesia gave to the District government. So that's how we survived. But, as much as possible, we tried to fund our operation from our own locally generated revenues.

Willens: But you felt at the time that the Municipal Council level of government played a significant role in the community?

Guerrero: Yes. As a matter of fact, at that time, we had a mayor, the Council and district commissioners. The Council was, I think, very effective. We still have municipal councils here now under the Commonwealth's system, although smaller, with no power and no funds.

Willens: There is continuing debate about whether their powers ought to be increased.

Guerrero: That's right. A lot of the candidates that ran for this Con-Con say we should abolish the Council but create a district commissioner, but not necessarily in every district. They feel the commissioner would be closer to the people than Congress members at the national level.

Willens, You mentioned the United Nations visiting mission reports. There were visiting missions in 1961, 1964, 1967, and 1970. In each of these reports the visiting mission commented on this desire it encountered in the Marianas for separate political status. The visiting missions were unanimously opposed to that kind of separatism in the Marianas. Do you remember ever meeting members of a visiting mission during the 1960's in one of your capacities and addressing this issue with them?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: Do you have any specific recollection in mind?

Guerrero: They were not very specific. At one point we were so frustrated and said that we deserve some yes or no, is it possible or not? They said we're going to look into it, we're going to check with the United States, but nothing concrete. So the same thing happened the next time around, we were not given any definite idea of whether its possible or not. So we were somewhat frustrated because, you know, if they told us that it is possible we would have been discontinued repeating our request. But they never told us that.

- Willens: The reports always took a very firm view that the Marianas could never achieve separate status since the entire Trust Territory was to remain as a single entity. Is it your sense now that the Congress of Micronesia in the 1960's served as a political mechanism for bringing people together from the various districts or did it end up being a mechanism in which the differences between the districts became more explicit?
- Guerrero: I think the effort was trying to bring people together and work together. But when I became a member, I noticed it was not practical. It was difficult. We tried our best to work in harmony, but it's natural when you have different groups, each with their own problems and are elected by their constituents in their particular area, that they will try to solve the problems of their own constituents. And what has happened, of course, was, for instance, that Truk, the most populous district in the Congress, almost always got most of the resources when it came to funding. As far as the Marianas is concerned, I felt that the cultures of the other entities were more closely linked together. They have the traditional system. Of course, in terms of physical assets, maybe we had more than the other districts because the military was here and this was the central government. So we had that. But in terms of culture, we thought that they were more closely related to each other than to us. We thought that and we maintained when Eddie and I were there that we did not think we could work together. But in answer to your question whether the Congress was a force that would bring people together from the various we realized that. Now, I think it was not a workable force to bring people together.
- Willens: Before you became a member of the Congress of Micronesia in 1970, had you met and become friends with your counterparts from other districts?
- Guerrero: No, I practically knew nobody at that time.
- Willens: During the 1960's the United States did gradually increase funding for the Trust Territory from a level of \$5 million or \$6 million per year up to \$35 or \$45 million, and ultimately more than that. What was your overall assessment of the extent to which these funds were being effectively spent in Saipan and in the Marianas in particular?
- Guerrero: I guess the biggest concern that the people had at the time was that there were too many expatriates—that most of these funds were used for salaries for people from the mainland. During the several years that I worked for the Trust Territory government, although I probably didn't realize it then, some of those people should not have been in their positions.
- Willens: There were many complaints that the Micronesians would make with respect to the Trust Territory Administration. One of those was the excessive use of stateside people and not sufficient training of Micronesians. Another was the dual pay scale. Did you experience this while working for the Trust Territory government?
- Guerrero: Yes. There were different Micronesian pay schedules. Of course, the expatriate's salary took into account the hardship differential cost.
- Willens: Was that a source of resentment to you personally?
- Guerrero: No. Not necessarily.
- Willens: Did you feel you were being paid too little for work that others were getting paid more for?
- Guerrero: I thought at that time that they were professional and were there to work for the better of the government and the people. And so, no, I didn't realize that at the time. It didn't bother me.

- Willens: Was there a reluctance on the part of the Trust Territory Administration to place Micronesians in positions of responsibility?
- Guerrero: Yes. Yes, I noticed that. They were too slow in advancing Micronesians to take over responsible positions—train them to be in responsible positions.
- Willens: District Administrator Ada was not the first Micronesian district administrator, was he?
- Guerrero: No. I think it was in Chuuk. As for Saipan, shortly after the transition from the Navy to the Trust Territory I came to realize that there some resentment by these statesiders—officials up here—against the Marianas citizens.
- Willens: I'm confused. The stateside people were antagonistic to the Saipan citizens?
- Guerrero: They did not make it obvious. But consider, for instance, Bill Nabors, who was hired from the States as an Assistant Attorney General here. The Municipal Council, where I was serving, needed a legal assistant. So he was sent down to assist us and to draft resolutions during our sessions. We told Bill, as our counsel, what we needed, one of which was to construct draft resolutions on this political status issue. Shortly after that, he was not only not available to assist us, but he was eventually terminated by the High Commissioner. I don't know if this was an instruction from Washington, but he was terminated from employment by the Trust Territory. Talking to Bill about why he was terminated, he said: "I was too supportive of your efforts and a lot of those people out there don't like you guys. You know, you're too vocal, you're too open, you know." And also that we were asking too much, when the other districts didn't have what we have, so, they felt that we were selfish.
- Willens: Bill, later on, was employed by the District Legislature, was he not?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Herman, in working with the TTPI and observing it from your other positions during the 1960's, did you get any sense whether the Trust Territory Administration was responsive to the Department of the Interior back in Washington? Or did you have any impression that they were operating very much as an independent governmental agency?
- Guerrero: No, I think they were just catering to what Washington wants. As a matter of fact, there was a law at that time that we cannot sue the Trust Territory government without its consent. And we always took the position that even if we had the consent of the government to be sued, the court would always side with the government and Washington. So personally at the time I had no confidence we would have gotten justice if we were to sue the Trust Territory government or federal government. I always thought that the High Commissioner, being appointed by the secretary, would have to always please his boss.
- Willens: Did you ever meet any of the directors of the Office of Territories of the Department of Interior? Specifically, did you ever meet Richard Taitano, a Guamanian who served in that capacity for a few years in the early 1960's?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Is he someone you have known over the years?
- Guerrero: Not at that time. But after he got out of that office, he was a deputy High Commissioner, I think.
- Willens: Yes, that's correct?
- Guerrero: Yes.

- Willens: What was your impression of him then, as a Guamanian serving in this high capacity?
- Guerrero: I think he was sympathetic, but I don't think he was effective in trying to accommodate our desires. We knew that he felt his primary duty was toward his superior and not necessarily the people whom they were supposed to be serving.
- Willens: Did you ever meet Ruth Van Cleve?
- Guerrero: I think I met her, but nothing very substantive.
- Willens: At one point, the Congress of Micronesia requested the United States government to establish a commission to investigate future political status. But the United States government never did that, and so the Congress of Micronesia created its own future status commission in 1967. Did you recall near the end of the 1960's a growing concern within the political structure here that there was a need to address the issue of future political status?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Is there anything that prompted that growing desire to confront the issue of political status and discuss it with the United States?
- Guerrero: No, we were always maintaining that in order for us to advance economically we wanted to be affiliated with the United States. Of course, we never departed from that position. When the Congress of Micronesia came up with that recommendation for a commission, I personally thought that maybe this is an avenue for recognizing and trying to resolve or address the political issues—not only in the Marianas but in all of Micronesia. Of course, I didn't think at the time that, if the other Micronesia districts opted like us to be part of the United States, whether that would be workable for us.
- Willens: Did you think there was any possibility that the other five districts at the time might agree to the same political status that you and others in the Marianas wanted?
- Guerrero: I had no reason to think that they might not accept it. I thought they might.
- Willens: They might accept it?
- Guerrero: Yes, might accept it.
- Willens: One of the things that's interesting in reviewing the documents prepared in the United States agencies is that the various agencies—the Department of State, the Department of Interior, the Department of Defense—were always expressing opinions about what the people out here wanted and whether they were ready for a larger measure of self-government. Was it your sense that, speaking for the Marianas alone for the moment, that the people here in the 1960's were ready to assume a greater measure of self-government than they had been given?
- Guerrero: Yes, I think so.
- Willens: Would you draw a distinction between the people in the Marianas in terms of their readiness and the people in the other districts, or weren't you in a position to form an opinion?
- Guerrero: I didn't know the people of the other districts. When I came on board with the Congress of Micronesia, I thought that most, if not all, of these members of the Congress of Micronesia were educated in the United States. So I thought they would have been aware of the system of Western government. And I thought that they would be receptive to becoming part of the United States. And if, being leaders, they would educate the people

and tell them all the disadvantages and advantages, that the people would go along with them. That was my thinking. As far as the Marianas, I had no reservations because the people always wanted to become part of the United States. But for the other districts, I thought that if the leaders wanted it, and I thought they would have wanted it because they were educated in the United States, the people would have followed along.

Willens: When you looked over the history at that time, you see that there was a distinction between the well-educated leaders who were in the Congress of Micronesia and the tribal organizations back in the districts and to some extent those two sources of power had different views about what should ultimately materialize, isn't that right?

Guerrero: That's correct. But at that time I wasn't aware of the tribal traditional chiefs and this magistrate system. Only after I got into the Congress of Micronesia and we were having sessions in the districts did I realize that these people were calling the shots—not the members of Congress.

Willens: During the 1960's the Peace Corps entered Micronesia in great numbers and many of them were assigned to the Marianas. The Peace Corps volunteers became a source of some controversy here because of their representation of the people, providing legal assistance and helping people frame criticisms of the TTPI Administration. Did you have any personal experience with Peace Corp volunteers in Micronesia?

Guerrero: Yes, as a matter of fact. From the first group of Peace Corps, I took a couple, a man and wife, and they lived with us a couple of months, while they were finding their own place. I didn't find any negative thing about the Peace Corps presence in the Marianas. Later on they started to grow their hair and being hippies styled and then the people began to see what was going on. At that time, we did not see men with long hair below their ears. There was only one local man who had his hair grown and he was the laugh of the town, whenever he passed by.

Willens: Do you remember any anti-American sentiments being expressed by Peace Corps volunteers—especially as the Vietnam War issue became a more divisive situation?

Guerrero: I cannot recall any.

Willens: So generally, your personal recollection is that the Peace Corps volunteers made a significant and beneficial contribution to the community?

Guerrero: I think so, yes.

Willens: One more question about the 1960's, and that pertains to the economic study that was done here by the Nathan Associates and which resulted in a report in 1966. Did you have any personal encounter with the Nathan Associates team during the process of their studying Micronesia?

Guerrero: No, I didn't.

Willens: One point that the Nathan Associates made in their report was that there was an increasingly urgent need to resolve the issue of political status, because until you resolved political status it was very difficult to plan on a long-term basis for economic development. What is your reaction now to that point of view?

Guerrero: I think that's a very reasonable approach. I'm not an economist or a financial guy, but I think it's reasonable for a person from the outside. During the Trust Territory at that time, it was so difficult for an investor to come in. It was a Trust Territory government policy that they just wouldn't allow new investors. The conditions were so strict; the investor must demonstrate financial ability to develop economically, and the projects had

to be truly needed for economic advancement. But if an investor were to invest a sizable amount of money they had to have some security in their investment—that they would not be chased out tomorrow. So, unless there's a definite status of the area, they did not feel safe to invest a substantial amount.

Willens: What did you understand to be the reasoning behind this resistance to foreign investments?

Guerrero: By the Trust Territory government? I'm not sure. I think to some extent it had some benefits.

Willens: It did have some benefits?

Guerrero: It did have some benefits. Fortunately, we have an open system now and we allow anybody with \$50 cash to open up a shop, whether it's a junk shop or what, whether it's beneficial or destructive, and whether they're financially capable or not. Then there was the Foreign Investment Board at the district level. If they were to operate for instance in Saipan, it went through the district Foreign Investment Board, membership of which was appointed by the District Administrator, mostly from the community. Then their recommendation goes up to the High Commissioner. I don't think there was a situation where the District Foreign Investment Board approved a request which was denied by the High Commissioner.

Willens: To some extent was there a desire to provide an economic environment in which the local enterprises could prosper?

Guerrero: That was one of the conditions, if an investor were to come, 51 % was to be reserved for local investment. That's a very difficult arrangement because, first of all, local people do not have the financial means to pump in that 51 %. And so, if they were to follow that, the project would never go through. And secondly, even if the foreign investor were to put in the money to cover the operational costs, he is not foolish enough to pump in his own money and have no control over the operation.

Willens: I remember some years later that the Joeten Enterprises expressed some concern about its ability to compete with foreign investors. From an outsider's standpoint, it looks as though, driving up and down Beach Road, they competed very successfully. But your recollection is that it was extremely difficult for foreign investors to come in?

Guerrero: It was difficult.

Willens: In the early 1970's I believe the policy changed—in about 1974.

Guerrero: I guess so, around that time.

Willens: Another point that the Nathan Associates report made was that the greater expenditure that the United States made here in the Trust Territory, the more they were encouraging and facilitating dependence by the local citizens on the external funds. They made the point that many others have made—that there simply was not the resources in Micronesia generally to support a modern economy and that you need to attract foreign investment. And there was this question about whether U.S. funds were engendering more dependence than is good for the people. You referred to this dependence issue a little bit earlier. This is somewhat the same issue that you raised, that people got in the habit of expecting government to sort of solve their basic problems.

Guerrero: Yes, I think that's what the government felt it had to do. It is still happening now. The government has to come up with plans to identify the real needs and prioritize the programs that would develop the people here. But instead, they are using the funds in a

very general manner and applying them in a very loose way that does not address the most critical needs of the community. And this situation still continues today, unfortunately. And so in that regard I don't think that the funding made available to this area was put to its best use.

Willens: You think there are some ongoing traditions of looking to the government for public services, like health, utilities, and other services, that in many U.S. communities have been privatized. Is it your sense that there should be less of government funds expended for certain kinds of services that could be privatized?

Guerrero: Yes, if some of these services that the government continues to operate could be privatized, the cost of the government would, of course, come down. And there'll be savings. Now the fear of privatizing is artificial, in my opinion, because we have a very good experience in this—the telephone system. Way back in 1976 before it was privatized, we had a very poor telephone system. When it was privatized, of course, everything was improved. Now the thinking of the people, of the leaders particularly—I think the leaders are mainly at fault here—is that if they were to privatize they are going to lose jobs for the people already employed. And also they would have no control over the costs. But those are solvable issues. When NTC first took over, in Mr. Canham's time, it worked out all right. NTC took over the people that were on board. And, of course, do you did not perform you were free to be fired. But the conditions were laid down. The private companies are not, you know, independent of raising fees. Those are not real problem. So, it's a lot better to privatize.

Willens: As I understand it, the election in 1970 that brought you into the Congress of Micronesia also elected Ed Pangelinan, Felipe Atalig and Carlos Shoda who were all members of the Popular Party. The only member of the Territorial Party who survived, in part because he wasn't running, was Senator Borja. All this goes back to the Future Political Status Commission of the Congress of Micronesia and the beginning of negotiations with the United States in 1969. As I recall, Dr. Palacios was a member of the Political Status Commission created by the Congress of Micronesia. I forget for the moment whether anyone else from the Marianas was. Do you remember who the other members were?

Guerrero: In the Political Status Commission by virtue of their membership in the Congress of Micronesia?

Willens: Well, this goes back to 1967—before you were part of it.

Guerrero: If I'm not mistaken, Dr. Palacios and Olympio Borja were members.

Willens: That could be. Could you just focus for a moment on Dr. Palacios, and give me your best recollection of him as a political leader in the 1960's and the 1970's?

Guerrero: Dr. Palacios was in the Popular Party to begin with. He was a leader of the Popular Party in the 1950's and early 1960's. He switched party toward the late 1960's. He was a strong person.

Willens: Did he serve in the Municipal Council?

Guerrero: Yes, he was a Municipal Council member.

Willens: Did he serve with you on the Municipal Council for many years?

Guerrero: No, before my time. He was earlier a member of the Municipal Council. But he was a firm leader.

Willens: Why did he switch parties?

- Guerrero: I have no idea why he switched parties. I remember when he was a member of the Congress of Micronesia he was leaning toward this free association status. And it was an issue why, I think, that he lost the election to Eddie Pangelinan.
- Willens: That seems to be borne out by the documents. Let me ask this about Dr. Palacios. He also was seen at the time as being a leader within the Carolinian community. Is that your recollection?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: To what extent did the Carolinians have more reservations about a future political status relationship with the United States than the Chamorro population in the Marianas?
- Guerrero: Well, let me just give some background on Dr. Palacios and this Carolinian thing. He was supposed to be a chief of the Carolinian people, but he was not regarded as the chief simply because he was not a member of the Territorial Party. Dr. Kaipat was always a member of the Territorial Party.
- Willens: Dr. Kaipat. Was he the chief?
- Guerrero: He was not the chief, but he was a doctor and so he was the highest educated Carolinian at the time. So he was always regarded by the Carolinians to be a leader.
- Willens: That's Dr. Kaipat.
- Guerrero: Dr. Palacios on the other hand was a traditional leader, but because of his political affiliation was not regarded as a leader of the Carolinians. As a matter of fact, he didn't get a big chunk of votes on elections from the Carolinian sector. Now what's that question on the Carolinian side?
- Willens: Is the point you just made then one of the reasons why he might have switched sides? In that he would have gotten more Carolinian support if he was a member of the Territorial Party?
- Guerrero: I don't know, but I doubt it. I think it was more of an association with members of the Territorial Party that caused him to switch sides.
- Willens: Well, my question went to whether the Carolinians as a group had somewhat different political status aspirations than the Chamorros as a group?
- Guerrero: Yes. The Carolinian people were predominantly members of the Territorial Party. The Territorial Party didn't want to associate with Guam under the reorganization. That's the main difference between the Carolinians and the Chamorros. At that time, most of the Chamorros on Saipan were members of the Popular Party.
- Willens: Did you feel that, because the Carolinians had some racial and historic relationship with other districts, there was some sentiment that, if one could keep all six districts together, that might be in the Carolinians' interest?
- Guerrero: That could be true. Many of the Carolinians had ties with people in Truk and Yap, particularly those areas, so there was that connection.
- Willens: In 1969 the Guamanians went to the ballot box on a proposal with respect to affiliation with Saipan and they rejected it. I've heard many reasons as to why that happened. Do you have any personal recollection as to why the Guamanians were not favorably inclined towards some affiliation with the Northern Marianas?
- Guerrero: Was it 1969? I thought it was later than that.
- Willens: No, it was in 1969. After that vote the leadership in Saipan, according to the documents,

basically said, "Well, if that's the way they want it, then we'll pursue our own alternatives."

Guerrero: Yes. I recall we had meetings months before that referendum with leaders from Guam. The impression we got from them, of course, was that they were going out to campaign, because there was almost simultaneous elections on Guam and Saipan. We were given assurances and our belief later on was that the leadership just took for granted that everything was going to go all right. And it didn't turn out that way.

Willens: Well, I've heard that, too, that there really was no campaigning effort made on Guam in support of the proposal.

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: Also, there is some indication in the materials that the people on Saipan, who were actively engaged in the TTPI government, were not particularly sympathetic to the desire by the Marianas leadership for a separate political status. Certainly District Administrator Ada was working for the TTPI government, along with many other Saipanese. Did you have any sense that Mr. Ada was neutral on the issue of political status or did you regard him as a supporter of the Popular Party position?

Guerrero: Mr. Ada at that time was a Territorial member. And there is ground for that position, because being a district administrator at that time was a very high position in prestige and in earnings. The other person, of course, was Mr. John Sablan, who was deputy High Commissioner. I cannot recall that they were openly opposing to changing the status. Thinking back, I do not think that Mr. Ada was taking a position one way or another, he was pretty much neutral.

Willens: To be fair to him (and I've interviewed him), I think he felt he had to be responsive to the administration and had to assume a measure of neutrality on such political issues. Is Mr. Juan Sablan alive and available?

Guerrero: Yes, he ran for this last Con-Con.

Willens: I thought I saw that. I have never really met him or had the privilege to talk to him.

Guerrero: Yes, he's back.

Willens: He has a very distinguished history in the Trust Territory government.

Guerrero: Yes, he's still around.

Willens: The Future Political Status Commission of the Congress of Micronesia issued a interim report in 1968 and requested another year of extension. Before I come to the final report, I guess I never did ask you specifically about Senator Borja. How you would describe him as a person and as a political leader in the late 1960's and early 1970's. He was a very colorful character, wasn't he?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: What was your feeling about him at the time?

Guerrero: (Sighs) I really don't like to talk about the deceased. But at any rate, Mr. Borja was always regarded, even by me, when I first got out from school up to the time I went into the Congress of Micronesia, as very sophisticated and educated. But then as I gained experience in terms of government, I noticed that it was hard to know what he's really after because he tried to please everybody.

Willens: Isn't that a common failing of most people in political life?

- Guerrero: A lot of people. Yes, most people are in that situation. But Oly Borja was particularly in that situation. He just went along with the tide, you know. But he was a nice person. Until several years before he passed away, he was always being elected and being trusted. But then gradually he lost the confidence of the people.
- Willens: In the first year of the Nixon Administration, 1969, Secretary of Interior Hickel visited Micronesia in May. And for the first time an official on behalf of the United States made a general statement that the United States was interested in exploring some relationship with Micronesia and invited a team of Micronesians to come to Washington later in 1969 to work out a common position. He also announced an action program addressing such problems as pay equalization, more Micronesians in the government, more land surveys, and so forth. Do you have any recollection of Secretary Hickel's visit to Micronesia in May of 1969?
- Guerrero: Yes. I remember he gave a speech at the airport upon landing here.
- Willens: He gave a speech where?
- Guerrero: At the airport when he landed.
- Willens: At the airport.
- Guerrero: My recollection is that that was a very important change of events. As far as I recall, no federal official that high—other than members of Congress—who was directly responsible for the Territory had visited the area. And Mr. Hickel seemed to be a very personal, open person; he wasn't picturing himself as a high official. He talked to persons at the same level, so he was well-received.
- Willens: Did he meet with the Municipal Council or the District Legislature and elaborate exactly what he had in mind?
- Guerrero: Not in the Municipal Council. I don't remember about the District Legislature. I think with the Congress of Micronesia, the national level.
- Willens: Is it your recollection that his pronouncement was well-received?
- Guerrero: Yes, I guess so.
- Willens: Did it send a signal to you and other leaders in the Marianas that the United States was now more prepared to deal with future status issues than perhaps it had been before?
- Guerrero: Yes. Yes, because having the head man of the Department that handles us come out here and make that announcement, you know, he wouldn't have done it unless there was some direction from higher ups. So, yes, we had an optimistic feeling about it.
- Willens: Did you have any idea that Secretary Hickel was thinking in terms of an organic act that would place the Northern Marianas in a political status virtually identical to Guam's?
- Guerrero: No, I did not.
- Willens: You had no idea that that was U. S. policy at the time?
- Guerrero: No, no. It never occurred to me.
- Willens: Well he gave here only a general pronouncement so there's no reason for you to have suspected what the details were, because they weren't spelled out.
- Guerrero: Weren't specific, yes.
- Willens: Ultimately there was a meeting in October of 1969 where representatives of Micronesia met with federal government representatives to see if there was any common ground. But

meanwhile, the Future Political Status Commission of the Congress of Micronesia issued its final report. It made a very clear statement, in my opinion, of its preference for a free association relationship with the United States, or, if that were not possible, for exploring independence. Were you personally aware through Dr. Palacios, Senator Borja or others as to what the Future Political Status Commission was thinking of when it prepared this report?

Guerrero: Yes, but let me go back. I remember Mr. Hickel coming over and I think it was after Harrison Loesch. Do you have that in your notes?

Willens: Harrison Loesch came over in 1970. Loesch worked for him. I've interviewed Loesch, who's very impressive.

Guerrero: I thought he was the one that offered us commonwealth.

Willens: He did. But that was in the 1970's.

Guerrero: This was after the Congress of Micronesia rejected it? I thought the rejection by the Congress came after Harrison Loesch made that definite offer.

Willens: That's true, too. What happened in the chronology (just to refresh your recollection) was that the Congress of Micronesia issued its report in 1969. But the United States was unsure whether this the Micronesians really wanted free association or whether they could be persuaded to accept an organic act. So at the first round of negotiations, in late 1969, they sort of talked about an organic act and there was no meeting of the minds. Then there was some internal discussion with the United States. And then they sent Assistant Secretary Loesch out with a proposal, and it was at that time and for the next several months that the Micronesians made it clear that they would reject that proposal. That then prompted some developments in which you were personally involved.

Guerrero: Okay.

Willens: My question goes to whether you personally were aware that the Congress of Micronesia Future Political Status Commission was going to recommend a free association status as the preferred outcome?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: You were aware of that?

Guerrero: Yes. As a matter of fact, that was the issue that differentiated Dr. Palacios, from Mr. Borja. And that was a big issue here.

Willens: In your opinion, where did the idea of a free association alternative come from?

Guerrero: We had no idea. We always thought that free association, first of all, is an independent status away from the United States. So that's completely unacceptable to us. Secondly, if it was to be some kind of relationship with the United States, which was not clear at the time, we would have been together with the other Micronesian districts. Because of the ethnic differences, that may not be workable for us.

Willens: Well, you made this point earlier. When it comes right down to it, is it your recollection that the Marianas people wanted to be separate from the other five districts, irrespective of what the status was that the other districts wanted?

Guerrero: After I got into the Congress of Micronesia—seeing how the districts worked and the chief system—I concluded it would not be workable for us. We have no such system here and I don't know how we're going to be treated if we work together. So that was one of

the concerns we had. Even if commonwealth status were to be accepted by the Congress of Micronesia, I don't think we would have accepted it.

Willens: The Future Political Status Commission, I think, had some consultants. I forget whether Professor Davidson of Australia was involved with that at the time or not.

Guerrero: Yes, he was.

Willens: Was it your reaction then that the Commission's recommendation of a free association relationship meant that it was not likely to be a course of action that the Saipanese and the Marianas people would agree with?

Guerrero: That's correct.

Willens: Was it your understanding at the time that the Future Status Commission, including Dr. Palacios, really felt that the free association relationship was the most desirable alternative or do you think they were using it as some kind of a bargaining mechanism in order to get a better deal in negotiations with the United States.

Guerrero: During the Micronesian political status deliberations, I became convinced that they wanted some kind of attachment to the United States. But they still wanted independence—similar to what they have now. But at one time it (I think it was in Hana, Maui) that Yap (I think) and Palau and Ponape were almost deadlocked as to whether we wanted to go with the Micronesians. Because the Marianas were still participating in the negotiations. And Yap delegates, John Mangefel and Petrus Tun, and . . .

Willens: John Mangefel?

Guerrero: Mangefel. And Petrus Tun, and Dr. Olter Paul, a member from Ponape, were saying, "Gee, we're not going anywhere with this deal." I didn't think that we had a good consultant to begin with. We had two consultants. There was one guy from California. He was a short guy, balded.

Willens: Professor Eugene Mihaly?

Guerrero: That's it.

Willens: What was your impression of him?

Guerrero: He was kind of low key. Davidson was the one that was mostly calling the shots.

Willens: Then there was someone called Professor Gladwin.

Guerrero: Gladwin, yes.

Willens: Who I think was viewed as an independence advocate.

Guerrero: Yes, he was older. But I think they were not consistent. They were divided among themselves. We were kind of confused, so these members of the delegations were saying, "Gee, I think we'll try to reconsider the offer of the United States." But, of course, there was Lazarus Salii, who was the chairman, and I think he was having some reservations.

Willens: The reason I asked about the Future Status Commission Report in 1969 and its seriousness in advancing the free association alternative is that the U.S. documents indicate that the United States officials were uncertain about what the Future Status Commission Report meant. Their internal deliberations suggest that maybe the Micronesians weren't truly serious about a free association alternative and that's why they thought they could continue to press for an organic act of some kind. When I read the Report of 1969, I think it is fairly straightforward and strongly worded. I wanted to get your reaction whether

you felt at time that it was a serious and well-thought out proposal, even if you personally didn't think it served the interests of the Marianas people.

Guerrero: I don't think they had a clear idea of exactly what they were going into. They wanted semi-independence. How they were to go about it in terms of practical operations, I don't think they had an idea. I think the main problem was with their early consultants. Later on, Mr. Paul Warnke became their legal consultant. But prior to that, the consultants were not talking in the same language as far as their future aspirations were concerned. They were not specific as to what problems the people might encounter if they were to have this independence status. They were not specific.

Willens: One point the Commission report made was that the Micronesians needed more time and more political education before they could really consider the kind of alternative that the Commission was endorsing. Was it your sense at the time that the Marianas wanted to proceed more rapidly to resolve its political status than the other districts?

Guerrero: The Marianas wanted, as early as the late 1950's to be part of the United States. Whether or not that was a practical move or not, nobody knows. But we were ready to accept that status, if it were offered, at that time.

Willens: So you personally didn't think that there needed to be more time and more political education for the Saipanese and the Northern Marianas people to make a decision?

Guerrero: No, not as far as deciding on the basic relationship. We didn't expect this really. This idea of negotiations didn't occur to us earlier. Had the United States said "All right, we will take you as a territory, separate from Guam or with Guam," making us completely at the mercy of the United States, we would have accepted this status on their conditions. Maybe the Micronesian negotiations gave us good leverage for our negotiations. When the United States finally decided that they would consider us separately, we continued the negotiation process and that turned out to be to our advantage.

Willens: I think there's a lot of truth to that. I think it came up subsequently during the negotiations in which we were both involved. One other point that the Micronesian Future Status Commission made in 1969, and that was to express the hope that the Marianas would stay together with the other districts. Was this a subject that you discussed from time to time with Dr. Palacios and Senator Borja?

Guerrero: No, it was completely out of the question. The issue of continuing with the Congress of Micronesia or the Micronesians in forging a political status with the United States was not an issue. It was not a question for us to discuss. It was very obvious that we would not be able to work together. Their cultures were completely different from ours, and it would not be workable.

Willens: The Congress of Micronesia met in July and August of 1969 and basically ratified the conclusions of the Future Status Commission. The Congress also enacted a resolution urging the President and the Congress of the United States to deal with their status issues, and a copy of their resolution was delivered to President Nixon when he was in Guam. I know you were not in the Congress of Micronesia at the time, but did you have an awareness of the fact that the Congress of Micronesia was basically endorsing the work of its Commission?

Guerrero: No, I don't think it occurred to me at that time.

Willens: Another thing the Congress did was to create what they called their political status delegation that was going to be charged with the responsibility of going to Washington and sitting down with federal officials to discuss the generalized Hickel proposal. And as

I recall, Ben Manglona and Dr. Palacios from the Marianas were designated to sit on this delegation. Is that your recollection?

Guerrero: I don't remember that.

Willens: This is the second interview of Herman Q. Guerrero. Today is Saturday, March 11, 1995. Herman, just to clarify your employment as of late 1969, were you then employed by the TTPI?

Guerrero: Yes, with the Marianas District government under the Trust Territory.

Willens: Then you were working for District Administrator Frank Ada?

Guerrero: That's correct.

Willens: What were your responsibilities there?

Guerrero: My position was Public Affairs Officer, which was an assistant to the District Administrator. The position included anything that related to the public, except for public works.

Willens: At one point did you say you had worked for the TTPI Administration up on Capitol Hill?

Guerrero: That was earlier. That was earlier, for a short time in the mid-1960s.

Willens: In your capacity as Public Affairs Adviser, did you help Mr. Ada write his speeches and make his reports to the District Legislature?

Guerrero: Not write speeches. I reviewed some of the comments that were going to be provided to the District Legislature.

Willens: Now at this time, you were an active member of the Popular Party?

Guerrero: That's correct.

Willens: Were you, Mr. Santos and others assuming a leadership role in trying to achieve some separate political status for the Marianas?

Guerrero: Correct.

Willens: Was Mr. Ada aware of your status views?

Guerrero: I guess he was.

Willens: Do you recall any discussions you and he had about whether or not the Marianas should go separately from the other districts or whether it should try to stay together?

Guerrero: No. I don't think that ever happened. Mr. Ada never brought up any political discussions including political status.

Willens: You made the point earlier that, for the most part, he tried to stay neutral on that subject?

Guerrero: That's correct.

Willens: Did you run for the Congress of Micronesia in 1970?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: And the new session began in early 1971.

Guerrero: 1971.

Willens: What prompted you to run for the Congress of Micronesia at that time?

- Guerrero: Well, it wasn't the political status issue. I thought I would just try to be of help in terms of the economic and social problems of the Marianas, as they relate to Micronesia as a whole. I don't think I had political status in mind when I ran. It was a very big issue at the moment but I don't think that it was the prime reason.
- Willens: Was there a lot of competition within the Popular Party to run for the Congress of Micronesia?
- Guerrero: No, I don't think so. I think there were very few.
- Willens: As I recall, this was the election where several members of the Popular Party got elected including Felipe Atalig, Carlos Shoda.
- Guerrero: Yes. That's correct.
- Willens: And Eddie Pangelinan.
- Guerrero: As a matter of fact, at that election all the Popular Con-Con members who ran won the seats. There was only one senatorial seat open at that moment. That was the seat of Dr. Palacios, and Eddie won that. And I think, the previous membership from the Marianas in the Congress of Micronesia were all Territorial.
- Willens: And Senator Borja was the only one from the Territorial Party who remained?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Did you have any discussions with Senator Borja about status issues early on?
- Guerrero: Yes, before the election.
- Willens: And after you were a member of Congress?
- Guerrero: When we became members of Congress we worked very well with Senator Borja. He was pro-Commonwealth—different position from that of Dr. Palacios.
- Willens: Was he motivated largely by economic issues?
- Guerrero: I don't think so. I think his views were in line with what the Territorial Party was aiming at in earlier years. They thought this commonwealth status would be the right alternative. So we worked very well with the Senator. He voluntarily declined membership in the Congress of Micronesia Status Commission, and suggested, with the concurrence of the other members of our delegation, that Eddie and I were to represent the Marianas in the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: You're talking now about the composition of the twelve-person Joint Committee that was created by the Congress in 1971 or thereabouts?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: You mentioned earlier that you had heard of Harrison Loesch from the Department of the Interior and the delivering of a so-called Commonwealth Proposal in early 1970. What is your recollection of that event?
- Guerrero: He was representing the Secretary of the Interior at the time, proposing to the Micronesian Congress that they could open talks on the commonwealth option for all the Micronesian islands. He was a very likeable person, very easy to talk with, a down-to-earth person.
- Willens: I was impressed with him when I met him. He seemed like a straightforward Western-type of person, who might be able to communicate easily with people.
- Guerrero: That's correct.

- Willens: Is that your recollection?
- Guerrero: That's exactly right. He was easy to approach. He was open.
- Willens: Did you personally meet with him along with others of the Marianas leadership?
- Guerrero: No, I didn't have the opportunity to meet with him personally. I observed him when he was discussing issues in groups and making presentations. But I never had a personal discussion with him.
- Willens: What was your reaction to the Commonwealth Proposal as it was presented by Assistant Secretary Ioesch?
- Guerrero: We thought it would be acceptable for us. Of course, we didn't know the details as to what were involved, but just the idea of becoming part of the United States appealed to us. That was before the Congress of Micronesia officially rejected the idea of commonwealth status. I remember that in our appearance before the United Nations Trusteeship Council, Senator Borja, among others, made presentations and, at that point, we mentioned that we would like to be given the opportunity to voice our desire on that U.S. offer.
- Willens: Do you remember when you first went to the U.N. Trusteeship Council?
- Guerrero: When was it? I'm sorry.
- Willens: Was it after you were a member of the Congress of Micronesia?
- Guerrero: Yes. I think it was. It was around 1971.
- Willens: In that period of time?
- Guerrero: I think my resume indicates that.
- Willens: There were two rounds of negotiations that took place with the United States before the Congress of Micronesia created the Joint Committee on which you were a member. One took place in the fall of 1969 where Representative Ben Manglona and Senator Palacios were members of a delegation from Micronesia. I assume that they also participated in the second round in May of 1970 when this Commonwealth Proposal was rejected. Do you recall having any discussions with Representative Manglona and Senator Palacios during the course of these first two rounds of negotiations, before you personally became involved?
- Guerrero: I think there was at least one that I can recall. Only with Dr. Palacios—that we would like for him to reconsider his position on commonwealth status for the Marianas. I don't quite remember what was his comment. But, yes, I personally commented that we ought to look into that option.
- Willens: Both he and Congressman Manglona were members of the Territorial Party at the time. isn't that correct?
- Guerrero: Yes. So to some extent they were not representative of the majority view in the Marianas which was reflected in the Popular Party. I'm not sure what the position of Congressman Manglona was at that time—whether he was with Dr. Palacios on this freely associated status. Definitely Dr. Palacios was departing from the position of the Territorial Party to be part of the United States through direct affiliation.
- Willens: But he also seemed to have a view that the Marianas should stay with the other districts. It may be that that was the critical difference between him and the position that you, Ed Pangelinan, and others ultimately took. Isn't that right?
- Guerrero: Yes.

- Willens: I do have something that I can use to refresh your recollection about Congressman Manglona's views, because he, Senator Palacios, and Senator Borja gave speeches in the Congress of Micronesia later on in 1970. After the United States presented its Commonwealth Proposal, the delegation of the Congress of Micronesia made a long report to the Congress that was very critical of the U.S. position, and they articulated for the first time these four so-called principles. Do you remember when it was that you first became aware that the Micronesian delegation, speaking on behalf of the Congress, was articulating four principles that, to some extent, seemed very much contrary to aspirations of the Marianas for a Commonwealth status?
- Guerrero: I knew there were several issues that were before the Congress to consider. I just don't remember when that was.
- Willens: In July 1970 the Micronesian delegation submitted this hundred-page report to the Congress of Micronesia and it reviewed the two sessions of negotiations that had taken place. It basically characterized the Commonwealth Proposal as "almost totally objectionable." Do you remember any debate in the Congress of Micronesia in 1970 about the Commonwealth Proposal, and what positions the Congress ought to take for the future in dealing with the United States?
- Guerrero: When I became a member of the Congress, our positions were almost completely brushed aside; they were just not entertained. The focus of the discussions regarding political status was free association, and they wouldn't even hear our views on the commonwealth issue. So we were pretty much left out. Down the line, Eddie and I, in consultation with our delegation and members of the District Legislature, even thought that perhaps it was useless for us to continue to be part of the Micronesian Status Committee because it was almost impossible for us to push our agenda. But thinking back, I guess it was good that we didn't pull out, because it was in Palau when the Micronesian Commission said that we would have the opportunity to push our agenda. And, of course, that was after the U.S. delegation felt that it was not possible for us to be forced to accept a status that is not to our desire and that we would be forced into accepting if we would continue to be part of the group. So, yes, we were discussing that at the time.
- Willens: I forgot to ask you about Ed Pangelinan. Had you known Ed Pangelinan while you were both growing up here on Saipan?
- Guerrero: Yes, I was two years senior to Eddie. But we are second cousins.
- Willens: You are second cousins?
- Guerrero: Yes, Eddie and I are second cousins.
- Willens: Were you surprised when you both ended up running for the Congress of Micronesia as part of the same ticket?
- Guerrero: No. Because prior to Eddie running for that office, when he got back from school, he worked in the government and his parents were all members of the Popular Party. So I wasn't surprised that he just followed along the parents' political life. Thinking back, before he actually ran he was pretty active in expressing his desire and interest in helping out and, I think, he felt that being in a political position would be a better way to accomplish that.
- Willens: Was he well-regarded because he was the first local person to achieve a law degree?

- Guerrero: Yes, that was one of the factors, and the other one, of course, is that Eddie is a very down-to-earth person. He's very outgoing and easy to deal with, so he was very well liked.
- Willens: Did you find that you and he were able work together as a team within the Joint Committee when you became members of that group?
- Guerrero: Yes. We were sharing thoughts throughout.
- Willens: I see that the Representative Manglona did take issue with the Congress of Micronesia rejection of the Commonwealth Proposal. He said that his constituents wanted to join with the U.S. in some way and that the Commonwealth Proposal had merit, which justified its careful consideration by the Micronesians. Does that seem consistent with your recollection?
- Guerrero: I guess so, yes. I think it was only Dr. Palacios that was very, very open about his opposition. And I recall the late Joeten was not enthusiastic of endorsing it.
- Willens: Joeten was not only a founder of the Territorial Party but also Saipan's most substantial businessman, isn't that correct?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: Did the business community generally support the Territorial Party?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: And that goes back to the point you made earlier about some of the differences between the two parties?
- Guerrero: Correct.
- Willens: Why do you think the business interests in Saipan were less enthusiastic about separate commonwealth status for the Marianas?
- Guerrero: I guess one of their concerns, if not the biggest concern, was that they were afraid, if we become part of the United States, that the area would be opened up and more sophisticated business people would come in and interfere with their local establishments. So I guess that was the main concern, if not the only one.
- Willens: Did you think that Joeten, before his death last year, might have come to a different point of view in light of what's actually happened here in Saipan?
- Guerrero: I do not think so. Particularly in light of the most recent developments here regarding the Marianas negotiations. When the Ambassador was here in January of this year, we had dinner with the members of the Commission. Whenever the Ambassador comes we get the negotiators together just for a reunion. And it was Pete Tenorio {and we were so surprised} who was telling us and the Ambassador that after the negotiation, up to the signing, they were instructed—he didn't say by whom but higher ups in their party—to not agree to the Commonwealth, the negotiation.
- Willens: He and who else?
- Guerrero: He didn't mention who else. But he was instructed not to concur up to the very last minute and Pete said that this was bothering him. So he had to vote his conscience. But he was directed not to concur.
- Willens: That's interesting. You may remember that it was the election of 1974 when you and Ed were defeated.
- Guerrero: In 1974?

- Willens: In 1974, in the last stages of the negotiations and there was a lot of debate about what that meant and whether the negotiations were going to collapse because of that change in the membership of the Congress of Micronesia. After the Congress of Micronesia rejected the Commonwealth Proposal and it created a Joint Committee, the Marianas District Legislature passed a series of resolutions. In one of those it suggested that if, “bloodshed is to be avoided, the officials of the United States are urged to submit the Commonwealth Proposal directly to the people of the Marianas.” Do you recall what the reaction was in the District Legislature once the Congress of Micronesia had so clearly rejected the Commonwealth Proposal?
- Guerrero: Yes, the position of the leadership, in the District Legislature and including us in the Congress, was that it was unreasonable for the Micronesian entity to force the Marianas, or any district for that matter, to go against their desire. It was very clear to them as well as to the United States and the United Nations what the Marianas wanted. That position remained constant throughout, and so they were very concerned, they were very disturbed.
- Willens: There are several members of the Congress of Micronesia and its staff whose names come up frequently in the documents. I would like to mention some names to you and get your best recollection of what kind of people they were and what their views were with respect to political status. For example, Bethwel Henry served as Speaker of the Congress of Micronesia House of Representatives for a while during this period.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: What is your recollection of Speaker Henry?
- Guerrero: He was a very nice person. Very friendly.
- Willens: Where was he from?
- Guerrero: Ponape. But he’s not a person that would take a controversial position that would upset people. He tried to work among everybody. A very likeable person.
- Willens: Did he become active in political status negotiations?
- Guerrero: No. He was a very quiet person. In his position, he had to go along with the Micronesian group. But he wasn’t very vocal.
- Willens: He was not a leader within the Micronesian group?
- Guerrero: He was a leader in terms of being a presiding officer, but in terms of being for a position or direction, he really wasn’t calling the shot.
- Willens: At various points in this period of time, the Truk delegation is viewed as having a very significant pro-independence point of view. I see very little in the materials about what the people of Ponape wanted. Was there any position that you think that Mr. Henry and his constituents wanted to have in terms of future political status?
- Guerrero: No, the independence status was more strongly supported by Truk and Ponape—Ponape to a lesser extent than Truk. The leader of the Ponape group at that time was Bailey Olter.
- Willens: He was a member of the Joint Committee, was he not?
- Guerrero: That’s correct. He and Olter Paul, who was a member of the House and represented Ponape in the Joint Committee. But the strong person regarding political status was Bailey Olter, who is incidentally now the President of the Federated States of Micronesia.

- Willens: I read that recently.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Was he a strong member within the Joint Committee?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Another name that comes up frequently is Amata Kabua from the Marshalls. What is your recollection of Mr. Kabua?
- Guerrero: Mr. Kabua was a very diplomatic person, very intellectual. Very mature.
- Willens: Very mature?
- Guerrero: Mature, yes. Very intellectual. But very diplomatic. He would not try to embarrass you. And reasonable, too.
- Willens: Was he a leader within the Congress of Micronesia on status matters?
- Guerrero: No, he wasn't. I don't know whether he voluntarily declined to be a Marshalls delegate. One of the delegates was Ekpap Silk and Dr. Isaac Lanwi was the other.
- Willens: Silk. He was the Vice Chairman....
- Guerrero: That's correct. But Amata Kabua was always the person calling the direction that the Marshalls were to take.
- Willens: He came from one of the more important clans and had great status in the traditional community. Isn't that correct?
- Guerrero: I think he was the top chief.
- Willens: Was he someone that you could talk to about the differences that might exist between the Marianas on the one hand and the other districts on the other?
- Guerrero: Yes, you could talk to him. He would try not to openly encourage you or support the Marianas. Yes. I think he sympathized with us, but he was still within the commitment that the Micronesians should try to be one entity.
- Willens: Later on there were representatives from the Marshall Islands that began to take a stronger position with respect to the Marshalls negotiating a separate status. Did you think that was a sincerely felt desire on the part of the Marshall Islands or was it more of a tactical effort within the Congress of Micronesia?
- Guerrero: Well, I think it was genuine. I think sometime between 1972 and 1973 that the Marshalls began to feel that they would have a better economic advantage if they were to go their own way because, you know, the missile site was of importance to the United States. And also the Palauans were beginning to feel that they would have a better deal going their own way.
- Willens: During this period shortly after you became a member of the Congress of Micronesia, the United States seemed very uncertain about exactly what the Micronesians really wanted with respect to future status. There are many internal government documents that acknowledge that the Marianas wanted to have a separate status. But many of the people who reported back to Washington said that most of the Micronesians in the other districts really did not have any firm idea of what they wanted to achieve, and many of them wanted to proceed very slowly to making a decision about future political status. Do you have any reaction or feeling about what the sentiment was in the other districts during this period of time?

- Guerrero: I don't think that there was ever even an informal referendum taken in Micronesia during those times to give the Congress of Micronesia an indication of just what the people wanted. It was pretty much the leadership that was taking positions, unlike here where we have a record of endorsements. It was our position (with Eddie) that whenever we finished a session of negotiations in the Congress of Micronesia we always visited the District Legislature, the Municipal Council, Rota and Tinian, and the leadership. But, no, I don't think there was ever a joint expression of the Micronesian people themselves as to their position.
- Willens: One of the sources of information for Washington about Micronesian sentiment was John Dorrance, a foreign service officer who was assigned to Saipan in 1970. Many of the reports written by Mr. Dorrance have been provided to us as part of our project. On many occasions he interviewed people here in the Marianas and reported the substance of those discussions. Did you regard Mr. Dorrance as a competent observer of the Micronesian scene?
- Guerrero: Yes. He was very involved in listening to what was going on, at least here on Saipan.
- Willens: Was he a good listener?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Do you think he had any particular bias or axe to grind?
- Guerrero: No, I don't recall any confrontations or us taking a position of forcing an issue. It was just merely listening in. I don't recall any confrontation or disagreements because of his reports.
- Willens: After he visited Truk, Ponape and the Marshall Islands in early 1971, he submitted a long report back to Washington. He stated that, in his opinion, over 95% of the people did not understand the status questions under consideration in the Congress of Micronesia. Does that surprise you?
- Guerrero: No, it doesn't.
- Willens: He reported also that, although there was some independence sentiment in all three districts particularly in Truk, that by and large those that were aware of the status issue favored some kind of an association with the United States. What's your reaction to that?
- Guerrero: I was unaware of that.
- Willens: He stated that most of those people favored a loose association like free association, although he and many other U.S. observers took the position that even the members of the Joint Committee didn't really understand what a free association relationship was all about. What's your own recollection of whether free association was a well-defined alternative when it was being discussed?
- Guerrero: No, I don't think it was. Maybe I wasn't paying too much attention, but even in the presentation by consultants to the Joint Commission, it was hazy and not consistent.
- Willens: What is your recollection? Is it that the consultants themselves seemed to conflict somewhat as to what its content was?
- Guerrero: That's right. They weren't unanimous in particularly what were the advantages and disadvantages of being an independent state. There weren't specific details as to the capability of the Micronesian entity if—in terms of economics—they were to become independent. What were their resources? No, they were very loose. As a result, we noticed that some members of the Committee were divided as to the best future status. At one

point, representative of the island of Ponape, one member from Ponape, Olter Paul, he said to John Mangefel from Yap and, I think, Senator Lanwi at one point, very casually, to Eddie and me that maybe we should reconsider commonwealth status. I wasn't sure whether they were serious about it, but just to throw that statement around was not healthy for the Micronesian group as a whole.

Willens: Did you feel that you and Eddie were able to participate fully in the work of the Joint Committee even though everyone recognized that you had somewhat different objectives on behalf of the Marianas?

Guerrero: No. Both Eddie and I, after consulting with the Marianas district leadership, which includes the Mayors and the Councils here in the Marianas, concluded that our participation was only to protect the interests of the Marianas. That is, whenever we had the opportunity to oppose the inclusion of the Marianas in a status that was not desired by our people, we would raise our objection for the record.

Willens: Did Chairman Salii consult with the members of the Joint Committee before he would have private meetings with Ambassador Williams and report back to the Committee after he had those meetings?

Guerrero: Yes. As far as I can recall, he always tried to present what the discussions were with the Ambassador from the U.S. side. I think, whenever he had a private conversation with the Ambassador or representatives, he always brought along at least his vice chairman.

Willens: Yes, he did. Let me have your general impression of Chairman Salii as a person and as a leader of the Joint Committee.

Guerrero: Senator Salii was a very, very intelligent person. Tried to be very fair. I think he tried not to be controversial. He keeps his temper. It was a difficult position he was in. From the very beginning of my participation, I do not think that the independent status that the Micronesian delegations were considering was totally supported by him.

Willens: What do you think his own personal views were as to the best possible status for Micronesia?

Guerrero: I think he wanted to have some relationship with the United States, more closely than what the Micronesian group was entertaining. So I felt that he was disturbed, to some extent, but the mandate of the Congress of Micronesia was to pursue semi-independence, so he had to abide by that. But I personally felt that he was not comfortable with the position that they were pursuing. But he was a very diligent, very capable leader.

Willens: Some people have commented that he was a very private and intense person and, difficult to get to know. That's all very vague, but do you have any impression of him as a private person?

Guerrero: Yes, he was not a simple person. But even though both Eddie and I were junior members, we had no difficulty in talking with him.

Willens: Did you think you and Eddie knew as much about what he was doing on behalf of the Joint Committee as the representatives of the other districts?

Guerrero: Yes, I think he was being fair as far as we were concerned. Of course, I never to some extent, difficult to get to participated in any private meeting between him and the Ambassador. But he was strong in taking a position if you were giving him a mandate, a direction to follow. I did not think he would deviate from it.

Willens: Is it your recollection that typically when he would be given a mandate, either from

- the Joint Committee or the Congress, that he would stick to it when he went to visit Ambassador Williams?
- Guerrero: I think so, yes.
- Willens: In most of these meetings with Ambassador Williams where both Salii and Congressman Silk were present, Mr. Silk never, or rarely, spoke up.
- Guerrero: That's correct. That's his style.
- Willens: What's your impression of Representative Silk?
- Guerrero: That's his style. Mr. Silk has always been the quiet type. But that's his personality. He would as much as possible just keep quiet and wouldn't raise an issue.
- Willens: There was some suspicion on the U.S. side that Mr. Silk was there to keep track of what Chairman Salii was doing and to make certain that he adhered to whatever mandate he was given. Does that make sense to you?
- Guerrero: I don't think it does. I guess one of the reasons why Salii was named Chairman, was because of his fairness and his ability to lead. I feel that maybe Silk was put there because the Marshalls was an important group in the Micronesian entity.
- Willens: In early 1971, when the Marianas District Legislature convened there were a series of speeches and other events of some significance. Going back to something we discussed earlier, in a speech to the Legislature President Santos emphasized that the creation of the Congress of Micronesia had resulted in reducing the budget of the Saipan municipal government from \$300,000 in fiscal year 1965 to less than \$30,000 in the next year because the Congress of Micronesia took responsibility for import and export taxes. He was making the point that Saipan contributed much more by way of taxes to the Congress of Micronesia than it got back from the Congress. Is it your recollection that this issue of revenue sharing and taxation became very important within the Congress at about this time?
- Guerrero: That was one of the issues. There were several things that we were in disagreement with the Congress of Micronesia about. One was the revenue, both the taxation and the appropriation or rebate back to the Marianas. And another was gun control, where they determined only a 22 rifle would be authorized throughout Micronesia and, of course, the Marianas was used to bigger guns—12 gauge shotguns—used for their hunting. These two were major issues. We always felt that if they wanted to control guns, for instance, in Micronesia, let the District Legislatures authorize legislation—put it on a district to district basis. We thought that there were areas that they should have authorized the districts to legislate—and not necessarily the Territorial Congress.
- Willens: It was in February 1971 that Senate and House chambers of the Congress of Micronesia were burned as a result of arson. What is your recollection of that event?
- Guerrero: I remember that very vividly. There were several issues of recognizing the Marianas political status, the revenues, and gun control. Although gun control would appear to be a small issue, at that time it was very, very serious to the Marianas.
- Willens: Were the Marianas the only district that was opposed to Territory-wide gun control of the kind the Congress of Micronesia was sponsoring?
- Guerrero: Yes, as far as I am aware of. In the Congress I cannot recall any district delegation that was opposing that law. It passed and only the Marianas voted against it.

- Willens: Although the act of arson remains unsolved to this day, there is widespread speculation that it was done by some enthusiastic advocate of separate status for the Marianas. Do you think that was an appropriate act?
- Guerrero: I guess if it was, in fact, arson, and if it was done by one of the Marianas people, it was done out of frustration caused by the insensitivity of the Congress of Micronesia to the plight of the Marianas people. I guess that was the issue.
- Willens: To some extent there seems to be a good deal of anger and frustration that was directed at the High Commissioner as well as at the Congress of Micronesia. What was the general view of High Commissioner Johnston at that time?
- Guerrero: I was one of the few persons that were not in favor of the High Commissioner, for several reasons. One is that I filed suit through the Micronesian Legal Services against the High Commissioner because they were giving leases of public lands along the beaches to developers. While we welcomed developments, I felt that, if these developers were interested in putting up hotels and resorts, that there other undeveloped beaches that they had the money to develop. And if they utilized private properties, it would generate income for the private owners. Also they would extend utilities to those areas and benefit people along the area. That's one of the concerns I had. The other one was that, if it was like Micro beach and the Hyatt Regency and those hotels were leased out to these developers, local people—the public in general—would have, although the lease specified that the beaches were to remain open, reservations of merging with the guests. So those were the two issues that I raised. And I personally didn't like the High Commissioner Johnston. As far as I was concerned, he was not a very good high commissioner.
- Willens: Did he make any effort to meet with the local people and try to understand their concerns?
- Guerrero: No. He was not a person that would want to address the concerns of the common people. I thought his predecessor was a better one—what's his name?
- Willens: Was it Norwood?
- Guerrero: Norwood, yes. Norwood would go down and even play pool with the local people.
- Willens: The lawsuit you make reference to, of course, was a very significant one. It ultimately resulted in a holding that people here had legal rights under the Trusteeship agreement. Did the High Commissioner and his staff grant these leases to the major hotels or developers without consultation with the local leadership?
- Guerrero: Yes. As far as I can recall, there was no consultation. You know, we had the foreign investment board, but I cannot recall going through the board. It was an application directly to the High Commissioner's office, as far as I know.
- Willens: You don't think that it went through any formal processing with the foreign investment board?
- Guerrero: No.
- Willens: After the events in February 1971, including the burning, there was a visit by some U.S. congressmen. There was a Special Ambassador Kennedy who came at one point. Do you have a recollection of any specific meetings that you had personally with representatives of the U.S. Congress when they came to this island?
- Guerrero: Yes, I remember several. Jesse White, a congressman from Texas. Neiman Craley before he took the position up here, was a congressman from Pennsylvania.

- Willens: Did you find those meetings useful?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: How so?
- Guerrero: To some extent, you know, they at least took the time to come out here. Even up to most recent time, I never blamed the U.S. Congress for the failures out here. I always blamed the high commissioners and Interior. Whenever we requested things, you know, the U.S. Congress always seemed to be very sympathetic—I guess overly sympathetic, overly generous.
- Willens: It certainly was when Phil Burton was involved.
- Guerrero: Even prior to that, when there was a poor presentation or justification from the Trust Territory government, who themselves were the cause of the problems. But I never faulted the U.S. Congress.
- Willens: Did you find that the visitors from the U.S. Congress were receptive when you and others tried to articulate the Marianas desire for separate political status?
- Guerrero: I think they were sympathetic, although they didn't express it one way or the other. You know, they had to work this through a certain authority out there. We were hoping, of course, that they would tell us if it was possible or not. I remember especially, I think it was Danny Muna, he said—you know how Danny is, he's very straightforward and sometimes very forceful—"You tell us. You don't want us, tell us." And thinking back, I thought that that should be the situation, but it never occurred to me that it wasn't that easy.
- Willens: The congressmen were probably never going to tell you exactly what was on their minds under the circumstances.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: In May of 1971 the Marianas delegation mounted a short boycott of the Congress of Micronesia session, which I guess was scheduled in....
- Guerrero: Palau.
- Willens: In Palau?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: What prompted that boycott?
- Guerrero: That's hard.
- Willens: Do you remember that taking place?
- Guerrero: Yes. Let me see. I think the instruction was for us (the members of Congress) not to participate in that session. And I'm not sure if everybody complied.
- Willens: No. One of your members did not.
- Guerrero: Atalig, I guess it was?
- Willens: Congressman Atalig....
- Guerrero: Felipe Atalig, yes.
- Willens: ... broke the boycott by arriving a few days after the special session began which was in Truk.

- Guerrero: Oh, Truk?
- Willens: According to my records.
- Guerrero: That could be Truk, yes.
- Willens: Atalig said he did not support the boycott as an appropriate tactic; although he endorsed the secessionist movement to join the United States. Well, as a result, everyone else ultimately showed up.
- Guerrero: Showed up, yes.
- Willens: And there were speeches given.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Is it your recollection that the political leadership here in the Marianas instructed the delegation to boycott as a sign of dramatizing the displeasure that the Marianas had?
- Guerrero: Yes. It was instruction of all the leaders here.
- Willens: According to a report that Mr. Dorrance made, the Marianas delegation regarded Congressman Atalig as, "a political lightweight," and they retaliated against him by removing his office files and other belongings out of the common building which the Marianas delegation had been using as their office. Do you have any recollection of those actions being taken?
- Guerrero: I'm not sure if we physically removed him from that one office building used by the five of us. I don't remember if we physically took him out of the office...
- Willens: It might have been a threat to that?
- Guerrero: Could be. But we were very dissatisfied with Felipe. Not only in this area, but in other things where he was just too unprofessional. We were very, very disappointed with him.
- Willens: Why was that?
- Guerrero: Well, not only with our dealings with the Congress of Micronesia, but even with our own leadership here. I remember one time we invited the Director of Public Health for an informal discussion of health problems. We were trying to get the Director to educate us, and see how we can be of service, what the problems were, and how can we help. From the very beginning, here was Atalig directing the Director to do this, or do that. We thought the Director knew better than all of us here about health. But that was Felipe's personality. He's just trying to be on his own. So we were disturbed.
- Willens: At the Trusteeship Council meeting in 1971, three people went from the Marianas: President Santos, Dan Muna, and Jesus Mafnas, who was representing the Territorial Party and was supposed to represent a different point of view. Is that the same Mafnas who is currently active as Vice Speaker?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: In the House of Representatives?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Here in the Commonwealth?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: He has survived many years as a political figure?

- Guerrero: Yes, he was always a Territorial and Republican member.
- Willens: Looking back, is it your sense that these appearances before the U.N. Trusteeship Council served a useful purpose as part of an overall strategy to achieve separate status.
- Guerrero: Yes. I think it was. It did us more good than bad than if we were not to appear.
- Willens: That may be so. It certainly is true that no member of the Trusteeship Council ever openly gave you any support, at least before 1973, I believe. Isn't that correct?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: But it's your view that, if you did not keep going and asserting your position, your position would not be taken as seriously as you wanted it to be?
- Guerrero: That's right. We wanted to take advantage of all avenues and opportunities that were available to us. So we were glad we did that.
- Willens: The Joint Committee added Professor Gladwin to its staff of consultants in the spring of 1971. Professor Davidson and Professor Mihaly were already on board. And Gladwin was known to be an advocate of independence and served as an adviser to the Truk delegation. I learned from Professor Mihaly that, as you suggest, that there were very significant differences of view among these advisers. Did Professor Gladwin try to persuade the Joint Committee to elect the independence option, or push for it?
- Guerrero: I'm trying to remember.
- Willens: Did Professor Gladwin continue to advocate independence when you were a member of the Joint Committee?
- Guerrero: Yes, I'm just trying to picture the two guys—which is which, you know. One is Australian. But, yes, the independence adviser was trying to emphasize the advantages of being independent, without being specific about it. I remember once that one of the Micronesian members (I can't recall who) during a negotiation in Hana, Maui....
- Willens: Yes, that would have been in 1971.
- Guerrero: ... at a resort that it was very nice place. And it wasn't cheap. You know, the Micronesians are suspicious that if the U.S. suggests an area for these negotiations, we always think, "What are they after? They're trying to buy us out," and things like that. So when this question of Hana as a location came up, that was exactly what we thought. So the Micronesians politely suggested to the Ambassador that we could not afford it, that we did not have the money. And so he said that the U.S. would take care of it. One or two members of the Micronesian Committee said, "You know, we can't understand this." Mr. Gladwin doesn't like the U.S. money and wanted us to be independent, but he surely enjoyed the Maui experience.
- Willens: He was having a good time?
- Guerrero: He was definitely having a good time! He certainly enjoyed the favors that the U.S. was providing.
- Willens: Well, that seems to be human nature. It was about this time that a publication called the Young Micronesian was published by students of the University of Hawaii. They published a summary of the Solomon Report. This was seized upon by critics of the United States as being evidence of its desire to absorb all of Micronesia and turn it into a part of the United States. What were your own reactions when you saw portions of the Solomon Report publicized?

- Guerrero: Let me just go back a little. These Micronesian students were independently inclined and had assisted when we were there during or after our negotiations.
- Willens: During your negotiations in Hana?
- Guerrero: I think it was in Honolulu. We had a different session at Barber's Point in Honolulu. Yes, I guess so.
- Willens: And you met with some of the students?
- Guerrero: Yes, the late Cisco Uludong, his brother Moses Uludong and some Micronesians. Particularly Cisco was very, very vocal in opposition to U.S. involvement. Gladwin was, of course, very close to them. They always put out negative comments about the U.S.
- Willens: What prompted their anti-U. S. feeling?
- Guerrero: I really have no idea. During our debate one of the biggest issues that they were concerned about, the students, was that if we become part of the United States, our culture would disappear. We would be Westernized and all those other things. I always thought that it's only us that
- Willens: Let me understand this. Your view was what?
- Guerrero: Eddie and I always said, "If we allow our culture to disappear, then its our fault." We don't have to be associated with anybody for that to happen.
- Willens: Going back to the Solomon Report itself, did the publicity come as a surprise to you or change your views as to whether the Marianas should become part of the United States?
- Guerrero: No. It didn't disturb us.
- Willens: It didn't what?
- Guerrero: It did not disturb us. It did not bother us.
- Willens: The United States was quite concerned that it would become an issue. John Dorrance wrote back to Washington asking for the instructions. Do you remember the Solomon Report becoming an issue at the Congress of Micronesia?
- Guerrero: It may have been but I just cannot remember.
- Willens: At about this time, in 1971, there was an announcement that Ambassador F.H. Williams was appointed to be the President's personal representative to conduct these negotiations. What was your reaction to the appointment of Ambassador Williams?
- Guerrero: I don't think I had any position about him up to the time of his appointment. I did not know him.
- Willens: Shortly after his appointment, he met with Chairman Salii and Vice Chairman Silk in April of 1971, and then he visited Saipan in July of 1971. Do you have any recollection of the report that Chairman Salii and Vice Chairman Silk brought back to the Joint Committee after they met Ambassador Williams for the first time.
- Guerrero: No, I don't. I don't remember anything of that.
- Willens: One of the principal issues in those discussions with Ambassador Williams was whether the United States was prepared to respond explicitly to the four principles that the Congress of Micronesia had endorsed. Chairman Salii seemed to take the position that, unless the United States responded to those four principles, there was no purpose in having another session of negotiations. Do you recall any discussion within the Joint Committee as to establishing preconditions for a meeting with the U.S.?

- Guerrero: I guess there was, yes. I guess it was, now that you mention that. There was some discussion among us whether or not to continue to have discussions with the United States if the mandates of the Congress of Micronesia were not considered by the United States. Whether there was any useful purpose to continue on with it. I think there was in the Congress of Micronesia, if I'm not mistaken, talks in the Congress as a whole to the effect that "maybe we need to be little bit more flexible and not be too strong about the mandates that was initially taken by the Congress." And in the Committee itself there was some confusion about whether to strictly adhere to that or just continue on a very low key basis—not completely cut off but also not showing any enthusiasm for continuing. Yes, I now remember that.
- Willens: There certainly was some desire on the part of the Micronesians to make clear to the United States that the United States should no longer put the Commonwealth Proposal on the table. Is that your recollection?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: The Joint Committee, of which you were a member, seems to have had a meeting during the Truk session of the Congress of Micronesia. The United States, at least, was under the impression that there was some pressure on the part of the Micronesians to try to finish these negotiations within the next year. Do you have any recollections looking back that the Joint Committee felt that it had a limited period of time within which to try to reach some agreement with the United States?
- Guerrero: I think there was some direction on that. Whether for some economic or strategic interest, they were trying to give us a deadline as to when to try to conclude the negotiations. Yes.
- Willens: Where was the pressure coming from if you recall?
- Guerrero: I don't recall whether there was any particular district that was forcing this. But I think Salii himself was getting frustrated with the slow movement of the negotiations. And then again, I don't know. Unfortunately, the Congress of Micronesia had not taken a position at that time that would enable different districts to have the opportunity to address their own concerns separately.
- Willens: There was some intelligence reaching the United States side of the negotiations that, unless the negotiations were resolved quickly, the pro-independence group in the Congress of Micronesia would achieve more strength. What is your reaction to that?
- Guerrero: That may have been a reasonable approach. These students in Hawaii were very, very vocal. There weren't many Micronesians studying abroad, so only a few of them were considered to be important factor because of their education, which the Micronesians. So that point has merit, I think.
- Willens: Was it your view, though, that at any point there was enough support for independence within the Congress of Micronesia that it might have carried the day?
- Guerrero: No, I don't think that the Congress of Micronesia, the membership at that time, would have accepted full independence. I don't think they were prepared for that.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of Ambassador Williams' first trip to Saipan in July of 1971?
- Guerrero: Very vague. I cannot pinpoint any specifics.
- Willens: He met with a representative group of the Territorial Party and they presented him a position paper, which was described as somewhat confused. He met with a group

consisting of Jesus Mafnas, Joe Tenorio, who you previously have described, and Joe Screen, who was then Joe Tenorio's business manager and a former TTPI assistant commissioner for administration. What was your impression of Joe Screen?

Guerrero: Joe Screen was an intelligent man, and very outspoken. When he was with the Trust Territory government he was in charge of administration, including budgeting, and he was not liked by the Congress of Micronesia.

Willens: Why not?

Guerrero: He was insensitive as far as the Micronesians are concerned. He was not sensitive to the concerns, the problems, of all the Micronesian people.

Willens: How come?

Guerrero: He wasn't polite. He was very arrogant.

Willens: I recall he was a very outspoken and sometimes intemperate man. How did someone like him achieve a position as assistant commissioner?

Guerrero: Well, he was appointed by the High Commissioner, maybe through recommendations from Washington. And then he moved out to Joeten. I remember very vividly one of the foreign investment board's meetings, where the Bank of Hawaii was applying to open up an office in Saipan. And Screen and one of Joeten's sons were present and totally opposing the application of the Bank of Hawaii. And one of their points was that the population on Saipan was too small to support two banks. The Bank of America was then operating here, and leasing Joeten's property. So I said, "I don't know, Mr. Screen, the Bank of Hawaii seems capable of determining whether they are going to make money or not."

Willens: Regarding the meeting about the Foreign Investment Board at which the Joeten interests were opposing the application of the Bank of Hawaii, I gather that the application was ultimately granted?

Guerrero: That's correct.

Willens: Approximately how many banks are there now on Saipan.

Guerrero: There are three major U.S. FDIC-approved banks, three or four, and one or two non-FDIC certified banks, about six banks.

Willens: When Ambassador Williams came to Saipan in 1971, he did meet with the Territorial Party representatives. The Popular Party representatives basically said his visit was helpful but not necessary, because the people in the Marianas had made clear their desire for permanent association with the United States. I gather you have no personal recollection of Ambassador Williams' first visit here.

Guerrero: Not the first one, no.

Willens: What is your first recollection of dealing with Ambassador Williams? Was it at the Hana, Hawaii third round of negotiations in the fall of 1971?

Guerrero: It was during the time he took over the negotiations representing the U.S. side during the Congress of Micronesia time.

Willens: That was the third round, and it did take place in Hawaii. You mentioned it earlier. The U.S. delegation included several people besides Ambassador Williams. His number two person was Ambassador Hummel. What was your impression of Ambassador Hummel?

Guerrero: Ambassador Hummel was a quiet person, as were the other members of the U.S. delegation. It was only Ambassador Williams who was making presentations and

expressing the position of the U.S. side. But Ambassador Hummel was a friendly person, as I recall. But he would not advance any thoughts about the U.S. or even suggest whether or not we should doing this, or should be thinking about this or not. No, he was very, very formal, but friendly.

Willens: It was at this third round of negotiations that the United States for the first time set forth its military requirements with respect to land in Micronesia. The United States documents reflect that the Joint Committee representatives were generally pleased with the limited nature of the U.S. military requirements. Do you have any recollection of your response and that of the Joint Committee when you heard the United States for the first time state what its military requirements were in Micronesia?

Guerrero: No, I don't remember that. I know that they had expressed interest in the Marianas and Palau. I am not sure whether the Marshalls were mentioned.

Willens: Another issue that was discussed during the third round related to the degree of self-government that the Micronesians would have under some future status. The United States agreed for the first time that the Micronesians should have their own constitutional convention. This had been an issue that the Micronesians had emphasized in earlier sessions. Was the issue of a constitutional convention and self-government an important issue during these negotiations?

Guerrero: I don't recall it being a major concern. I don't remember that.

Willens: There was a statement made by Chairman Salii during this session that I want to read to you. It was during his opening statement, Chairman Salii stated: "We recognize the aspirations of the Marianas District to share in the benefits that independence bestows on your great country by becoming more closely affiliated with the United States, and we recognize that the people of the other districts will prefer to live in a Micronesian state." There's some indication in the documents that you and Ed Pangelinan undertook a major effort to get Chairman Salii to include such a statement in his opening remarks. What is your recollection of that?

Guerrero: Yes, there were instances where we were discussing among ourselves that the Micronesian Committee should put out some statement about the Marianas aspirations. And it was almost at the moment that they agreed to some soft statement about the Marianas. But in the very beginning they were just completely against it. They just wouldn't entertain any such thought.

Willens: Were you trying to get the Joint Committee at the third round to support your desire for separate negotiations?

Guerrero: Practically in every discussion before we had a formal session with the United States, we always proposed that the Committee present the unique position of the Marianas. And we always said that the Marianas would support whatever the other districts wished. Yes, we always did that.

Willens: But there was opposition within the Joint Committee to making a statement even as mild as the one that was ultimately made?

Guerrero: Yes, particularly from the Truk delegation. The Truk delegation was just adamantly opposed.

Willens: Why did the Truk delegation in particular express such opposition to the Marianas desire?

- Guerrero: I think that, first of all, they did not want any fragmentation. Secondly, I think that they knew that the Marianas would provide important leverage to achieve whatever position they would want to take. So, for us to be excluded would diminish their power of pushing for whatever they want. So, I guess, it was a question of strategy and economics.
- Willens: As the record unfolds, there does seem to be a difference between the districts of the Marianas, Palau, and the Marshalls on the one hand and Ponape, Yap, and Truk on the other. The last three districts have often been described as having the least potential in terms of resources and attractiveness for investment. Is that a fair generalization?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: One of the more colorful documents that we obtained from the United States government describes a meeting that you and Ed Pangelinan had on October 9, 1971 with Ambassador Hummel. The reason it's colorful is that the memo describes the three of you as "sitting on tombstones behind a Congressional church at Hana, Maui in Hawaii." Do you remember a meeting with Ambassador Hummel in a cemetery?
- Guerrero: Yes. It was friendly. Although it wasn't expressly explained, I think that meeting was the beginning of the redirection on the U.S. side towards the Marianas.
- Willens: Well, I'm going to come to that, because it does seem important in some respects. But did you personally play a role in deciding that the meeting would take place at this off-the-beaten-track location?
- Guerrero: I don't remember how that came about. You know, Ed and I always tried to be seen as often as possible with the U.S. side. We tried to grab whatever opportunity we had. Of course, we always were aware about being members of the Congress of Micronesia, so we still felt obligated to try as much as possible to be with them. On the other side, of course, we had the mandate of the Marianas people and the leadership. We tried therefore to see what opportunity we may have with the U.S. side and to try to advance our desire. But I don't remember exactly how we planned that meeting with Ambassador Hummel,
- Willens: He wrote a memo about this meeting and let me just touch on some of the points he made and get your reaction. According to him he told you that the comments made by Chairman Salii at the opening session were a help, but he asked that the Marianas delegates themselves should go on the record regarding their status aspirations. And I think your response was that it would be very difficult for you to do that.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: What's your recollection of that point?
- Guerrero: Yes. It was always very difficult. Eddie and I tried to be as polite as possible, and work within the forum and established procedure of the Committee. We tried to get the consent of the Micronesian group to allow us to present our views in the formal session. But we were always voted down. Finally, just before the U.S. openly accepted us, we had some feeling that it would not be too long before the U.S. would say we have to recognize the Marianas aspirations separately if the Micronesians continue to take this approach. It was then that we exerted pressure. What Eddie and I did at that point was to say that we just could not take this anymore. We have tried to work with you cooperatively and as fairly as possible and we just cannot continue.
- Willens: Another point that Ambassador Hummel made in his report of the meeting with you and Ed Pangelinan was that he inquired of you what kind of future status you had in mind for the Northern Marianas and you told him that you no longer desired reintegration

with Guam. Ambassador Hummel reported that Senator Pangelinan told him that the Marianas people were seeking something like the Commonwealth Proposal and that the Marianas people wanted to be U.S. citizens. Ambassador Hummel reported that he was negative in responding to your position and continued to urge that you pursue an affiliation with Guam. Do you remember any discussion with Ambassador Hummel about the need to look toward some relationship with Guam?

Guerrero: I don't remember that. Our position from the time that the U.S. offered commonwealth status to the Micronesian people was that it was what we were going to get. Of course, we didn't know the details but we knew it was separate from Guam.

Willens: Ambassador Hummel says that he told you that the Commonwealth Proposal was made for all of Micronesia and that the U.S. Congress might not want to create a new status for just the Northern Marianas.

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: Do you remember that point being made?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: Did you have a response to that point at the time?

Guerrero: Yes. Our position was that this commonwealth status was not acceptable to the Micronesians as a whole, but we wanted it. But I don't remember him suggesting that the only way was for us, the Marianas, to go through Guam.

Willens: Another point that he reported on in his memo was that you and Ed Pangelinan asked him whether the United States could take the initiative regarding the separate negotiations with the Marianas, pointing out to him that you had difficulties as members of the Joint Committee in taking that position. And according to his report, Ambassador Hummel said that any initiative by the United States would very likely generate criticism in Micronesia and in the United Nations. And he said that you and Ed now had a chance to speak up along these lines because of what Chairman Salii had said. Do you have any recollection of that discussion?

Guerrero: Yes. Specifically that he wasn't prepared for the U.S. to open up this thing. They were hoping that, of course, the Micronesian Committee itself would recognize that and allow the Marianas to go on its own. He wasn't amenable at all on this point.

Willens: Well, you're exactly right in terms of his instructions. I have seen what his instructions were in conducting this discussion with you. At the end of the meeting Senator Pangelinan, according to Ambassador Hummel, asked him directly whether the United States would agree to a close relationship with the Marianas and Ambassador Hummel responded by stating that that request pressed him beyond his instructions, but that he was confident that such a request would be viewed sympathetically by the United States. Do you have a recollection of the question being put directly to him at this meeting?

Guerrero: Yes. Like I said, that was the beginning of us trying to exert more pressure on the Micronesian side to recognize us because we always thought that, if the United States did not want to give us commonwealth, only they, the United States, would have the power to deny us. But we always felt that the Micronesian entity would not force us to accept something that we don't want. So when we felt that there was this opening on the U.S. side, easing up on separate negotiations, we thought we were beginning to get a head start on this.

- Willens: You basically, in retrospect, regard this meeting with Ambassador Hummel to be a key development in the opening up of the United States to the prospect of separate negotiations.
- Guerrero: Yes, yes.
- Willens: This third round of negotiations was regarded as generally successful, but the parties disagreed on the issue of unilateral termination. Unilateral termination was one of the four principles that the Micronesians were espousing and the United States was unwilling at this session to agree. Some of the people that I've talked to say that the parties were very close to agreement at the third round of negotiations and Ambassador Williams certainly thinks that the parties were very close to agreement. Although I know you were focusing principally on the Marianas aspect of the matter, did you think that Chairman Salii and the majority of the Joint Committee might give up on the principle of unilateral termination in light of the other concessions that the United States made at the third round?
- Guerrero: No, I didn't. I do not recall that.
- Willens: Did you feel that unilateral termination was something that Chairman Salii and the Joint Committee were obligated to stick to.
- Guerrero: I don't think it was very important as compared to the other points, other factors.
- Willens: You say it was not important?
- Guerrero: It wasn't very critical. Unilateral termination? I don't remember that to be a very focused issue in discussions.
- Willens: Really? That's interesting
- Guerrero: I don't remember that.
- Willens: ... because the documents indicate that the parties reached preliminary agreement on other aspects, but that they could not reach agreement on the termination issue. But you do not have any present recollection that this was a key issue?
- Guerrero: Unimportant. I don't remember that.
- Willens: Do you have any feeling that the United States delegation and the Joint Committee were very close to reaching agreement on all the issues that were on the table at the third round?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: You do have that feeling?
- Guerrero: Yes, I do.
- Willens: Well, what do you recall as separating the parties from agreement as of the Hawaii session?
- Guerrero: I think the Micronesians were tired. The leaders were tired of prolonging this. Like I have said, there were feelings among them about having different positions. I mentioned earlier that one Ponapean, one Yapese, one Marshallese, whether jokingly or seriously, were saying that maybe we should have accepted commonwealth status. So, although it was never expressed during Joint Committee meetings, where that sentiment was never presented, it wouldn't surprise me if they, like the Marshallese, would talk this over with their colleagues. So I guess they were concerned this might break up unless they tried to

resolve the status issue earlier. The independence sentiments may also have played a role trying to expedite the process.

Willens: After the negotiations were concluded, Chairman Salii gave a speech that generated some publicity critical of the United States. Ambassador Williams and the U.S. representatives became upset with that and had a meeting with Chairman Salii. Chairman Salii agreed that the stories were somewhat prejudicial but said that he did not intend to make any effort to clarify the facts. Do you recall any publicity after the third round that was created by statements issued by Chairman Salii?

Guerrero: I don't recall any specifics on that.

Willens: There was a long memo written by Ambassador Williams about this meeting. He reported that Salii told him that the Joint Committee was going to report to the Congress of Micronesia that the United States had refused to agree to free association and that the Congress should opt for independence. Do you remember any discussion within the Joint Committee after the third round along those lines?

Guerrero: I don't recall.

Willens: Does that seem consistent with your recollection of what happened?

Guerrero: No. My thoughts were that, not necessarily the Truk delegations but the other four districts, were tired and wanted to get to some conclusion. But I don't remember that the United States was not receptive to free association, and that therefore the Committee was going to recommend independence. I don't remember that.

Willens: Well, this was apparently an interesting meeting. According to Ambassador Williams' report, "At this point Salii began to get very agitated and nervous. He charged that the U.S. side had refused to discuss termination in Hana and to answer Micronesian questions on the U.S. negotiating mandate." Do you think the U.S. refused to discuss termination at the Hana meeting?

Guerrero: I don't remember.

Willens: Ambassador Williams speculated that Chairman Salii was taking the position he took during the meeting because he might have had exposure with "radical elements" since Hana that might have influenced his view about the talks. Do you have any sense that after the third round there was a lot of criticism of the Joint Committee and Chairman Salii for the positions that your committee had taken?

Guerrero: There might have been some strong opposition to the position of free association. And, you know, the Micronesian group that was pro-independence in Hawaii was spearheaded by Palauans. The Palauan students were very vocal and were leading the movement for independence for Micronesia. So I wouldn't be surprised if Senator Salii was, you know, kind of pressured into being more proindependence.

Willens: So he might have gotten pressure from the Palauans who supported independence, even if they were the younger people rather than the chiefs, and he might have gotten pressure from the Truk advocates of independence after the session?

Guerrero: Could be, but I don't think he would. Senator Salii may have sensitivity to all these views, but his principal concern I'm sure, was for the Palauan position that was pro-independence.

Willens: The next session of the Congress of Micronesia was in January in 1972, and it was agreed to put off the next session of negotiations until after the Congress had its session. Ambassador

Hummel visited the TTPI in December of 1971, and he visited all of the districts and did come to Saipan. Do you have any recollection of meeting with Ambassador Hummel, as part of a larger group perhaps, when he visited Saipan in December of 1971?

Guerrero: I don't remember that meeting.

Willens: You do or do not?

Guerrero: I don't.

Willens: Let me try to refresh your recollection. He apparently continued to emphasize that the Marianas leaders should look towards some association with Guam. He had a meeting at the Chamber of Commerce at which he said that if the Mariana Islands District had the approval of the Congress of Micronesia, then the U.S. negotiating team would be willing to discuss separate status with the people of the Marianas. Did you think it was ever possible that the Marianas District could get approval from the Congress of Micronesia?

Guerrero: No, I didn't.

Willens: You did not think that would be possible?

Guerrero: I didn't think it was possible.

Willens: Did you think of making an effort, but decided not to because you thought might lose.

Guerrero: Yes, I didn't think that we would be able to be successful, even with the Joint Commission permitting us to express our position to the U.S. side. But we didn't believe the Congress as a whole would have allowed us to go on our way.

Willens: Ambassador Hummel reported that he did state again that it would be desirable for the Northern Marianas to Con-Con with Guam. And he reported that, "the Marianas fully understand that there is very small chance indeed that the United States government will arrange a separate commonwealth status for the Marianas different from Guam." Do you remember him emphasizing that point?

Guerrero: Not him. No, I do not remember him making that point.

Willens: Now apparently there were some discussions in early 1972 between Ed Pangelinan and you on behalf of the Marianas with the Lt. Governor of Guam. In early March 1972, Lt. Governor Moylan reported that both you and Ed decided not to pursue the question of union with Guam and you wanted to wait until after the next round of the status negotiations. Do you have any recollection of the meeting with the Lt. Governor of Guam?

Guerrero: Yes, I remember that.

Willens: What do you recall? Who initiated the meeting? Let's start there.

Guerrero: I do not remember that.

Willens: What?

Guerrero: I didn't remember how we got there. I don't know whether we requested it or Lt. Governor Moylan requested that we meet with them, very informally. Thinking back, his only interest was that he wanted to know what the developments were in these negotiations between the Micronesians and the U.S.

Willens: Did Lt. Governor Moylan or anyone else representing Guam in early 1972 express any interest in a reintegration with the Northern Marianas.

Guerrero: 1972.

- Willens: This is before the separate negotiations were agreed to. I'm just wondering whether you ever got word from Guam that there might be an interest in reunification?
- Guerrero: Even after the rejection by the Guam voters of being united with us, the Guam leadership always felt that we should be united. There was no question about it. It was we who said: "Now wait a minute. You have rejected the idea and it's hard for us leaders to convince our people to continue on with that movement." So the rejection strengthened our desire to continue the Commonwealth status that was offered by the United States to the Congress of Micronesia. We thought that we should pursue that course.
- Willens: The decision you and Ed made to meet with Lt. Governor Moylan was a good tactical decision because then you could tell the United States that you had, in fact, had a discussion with Guamanian officials. Do you recall that you and Ed decided that, strategically, it might be useful for you to at least have such a meeting before the fourth round of negotiations in Palau so that you could firm up your position that you wanted to have separate negotiations and not reintegrate with Guam?
- Guerrero: No, personally I don't remember that.
- Willens: At the Congress of Micronesia's session in early 1972, the Joint Committee submitted a report in which Chairman Salii was quite positive about the progress that had been made during the last round of negotiations. He did report there was substantial disagreement regarding the question of termination, but he reported that the U.S. had come a long way in terms of its proposals and asked that the Congress reevaluate the new proposals and give the Committee new instructions. You and Ed Pangelinan prepared a minority report for the Joint Committee and at one point you considered proposing a resolution to the Congress of Micronesia that would support separate status negotiations for the Marianas. What was your strategy at that session of the Congress and why was it that you ultimately decided not to introduce the resolution?
- Guerrero: We thought that we had never attempted to formally introduce any documents to the Congress of Micronesia as far as our status was concerned.
- Willens: You never had done that?
- Guerrero: We never had. But we thought the time had come when we should take all possibilities to express ourselves. I think the reason why we didn't proceed with that, was, first of all, I don't think we had discussed this approach with the other leaders of the District Legislature. I do not remember that. We thought that we should try to continue to work within the Joint Committee, because we felt that if we could get some kind of consent, no matter how small it may be, from the Joint Committee, we would have a better position in pushing that through the Congress. But if we were opposed by the Committee that was charged with responsibility political status, we would have very limited chance. Foremost was the fact that the forum was in that Joint Committee.
- Willens: What?
- Guerrero: The forum for us to pursue our desires was in that Committee because they were negotiating with the U.S., and they were charged by the Congress to do just that. So we thought that we should try to stay within that arena to advance our political desires.
- Willens: But you did submit a seven-page statement as an attachment to your minority report. You submitted a separate statement to Chairman Salii and stated that the two of you "find ourselves no longer able to concur in the actions of the majority of the members of the Joint Committee on future status. We feel that the views contained in the attached statement represent the majority views of the people of the Marianas and the members

of the Marianas Congressional delegation. That is a very eloquent, seven-page statement. Did you and Eddie write that statement?

Guerrero: Yes, we initiated that. I'm trying to think whether there must have been some input from the District Legislatures.

Willens: Did Bill Nabors help in the preparation of that statement?

Guerrero: I doubt it.

Willens: Who would you have looked to help to draft such a statement?

Guerrero: I'm trying to think at that time who was the counsel. I cannot remember. Most of the work was done by us.

Willens: You did this yourselves?

Guerrero: Yes, but we worked with the District Legislature. Just exactly who was the consultant at that time, I cannot remember.

Willens: Okay. Your recollection is that the statement, because it was such an important policy statement, probably was worked out with the leadership in the Marianas District Legislature before you presented it?

Guerrero: Yes, all those positions we took were cleared with the leadership.

Willens: In the statement you said that the two of you could not sign the Joint Committee's report and you recommended that the Congress of Micronesia enact legislation authorizing a separate commission for the Marianas District to conduct negotiations with the United States. And you recommended, also, that the Marianas representatives remain on the Joint Committee but participate only in matters affecting the Marianas District. But the documents suggest that after you consulted with your colleagues on the Joint Committee, you decided not to submit the minority status report or to introduce any resolution on separate talks. My information on this subject comes from a report that John Dorrance sent back to Washington reporting on interviews with unidentified people, but which must have included you and Ed Pangelinan. He reports that other members of the Congress of Micronesia persuaded the two of you that any resolution endorsing separate talks would most probably be defeated. Is that your recollection?

Guerrero: Yes. And also we were told that our concern would be entertained by the Committee itself.

Willens: Well, you already had what was called a mild endorsement by the Joint Committee in view of Chairman Salii's statement at the third round. Did you hope that you might get a stronger statement from Chairman Salii and the Joint Committee at the next round?

Guerrero: We were sensing that, if the Committee were to continue on its, I don't like to use the word stubbornness, but, you know, continue to just overlook our desire, they were not going to be accomplishing much. They were beginning to be open to allowing us either to express ourselves in the formal session or to permit the Committee to present the views of the Marianas in the formal session.

Willens: Did you think there was a chance that the Joint Committee might express the views of the Marianas specifically during the formal negotiations?

Guerrero: Yes, or allow us to. They had never permitted us to express our position in a session of the U.S. and the Micronesian Joint Committee.

Willens: Why did you think they would change their position?

- Guerrero: Well, in the Hawaii meetings we were sensing that this coalition wasn't working. We thought it was going to break up sooner or later, resulting in an easing up on the firm position that the districts have to be united.
- Willens: Let me ask you then about your views about fragmentation generally. During the Congress of Micronesia session in early 1972, there were several important issues that came to a head, including revenue sharing, and the Marshall Islands for the first time talked about opening up separate negotiations. Was it your feeling that the unity of Micronesia was being weakened, if it ever existed, to such an extent that the next negotiations might involve individual districts expressing their separate views to the United States?
- Guerrero: Yes. It was very possible. And not only the Marshalls, but in other districts, Yap and Ponape, that were pro-independence, at least one of their members was saying that perhaps we should consider commonwealth status.
- Willens: After you decided, for the reasons that you've outlined, to not pursue a resolution by the Congress of Micronesia but to pursue the effort within the Joint Committee, you may have still have had some desire for more assurances from the United States that they would respond affirmatively to a request for separate status negotiations. Dorrance sent a telegram to Washington reporting that the Marianas leadership was now thinking of conducting separate status negotiations on behalf of the Marianas wholly outside of the Joint Status Committee. Now that's something different from what you just said and both can be right. I mean, you were harboring the thought that there might be separate negotiations within the confines of the Joint Committee, but you certainly wouldn't be opposed to separate negotiations outside of the Joint Committee. Is that correct?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: Do you recall that you and Eddie after the Congress of Micronesia session went to Dorrance and said, "We want to move this along, can you give us more assurances that if we make a formal request, the United States will respond affirmatively?"
- Guerrero: I don't remember that, no. Not that specific request to John Dorrance.
- Willens: Williams instructed Dorrance to give you these messages. The first was that the United States considered itself obliged to take into account the freely expressed wishes of the people involved and that this obligation extended to the views of the Marianas. Is that a message that you recall getting back from the United States?
- Guerrero: Not through John Dorrance. It may have happened, because we wanted to, of course, take whatever was available to us to advance our interest. And that could have happened, I just don't remember it.
- Willens: Okay. I mentioned that John Dorrance received direction from Ambassador Williams to pass on to you a certain message. The first was that the United States considered itself obliged to take into account the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned, and that this would extend to the Marianas. As I understand it, you don't have any particular recollection of that point being made to you?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: The second point that Dorrance attributed to Ambassador Williams was that Chairman Sali's statement at the last round of the negotiations meant that the Marianas did not require any further authorization to pursue a separate course. Do you remember hearing any message back from the United States, informally perhaps, in advance of the fourth round along those lines?

- Guerrero: The more definite indication from the U.S. side that they would entertain the Marianas separately was just before the Palau negotiations.
- Willens: Were there some private conversations that took place just before the fourth round that gave you the reassurances that you needed?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: With whom did you have those discussions?
- Guerrero: I just cannot remember which individuals from the U.S. side told us that. But it was at that time, I remember, and in our Micronesian meeting prior to that we pressed the Micronesians about allowing us to make a formal presentation during the session. And I think at that time we were allowed to go ahead and do so. I cannot remember that Chairman Sali's go ahead because the U.S. is agreeable to that.
- Willens: You say you don't remember that?
- Guerrero: I don't remember. I don't think he did. But they consented to our making a separate presentation at that Palau session.
- Willens: The message that Dorrance says he received from Ambassador Williams was to report to you that no further authorization was required, would have been a fairly important message, because up to this point, you thought that you needed some further authorization from the Joint Committee or the Congress of Micronesia. Is that correct?
- Guerrero: Yes, correct.
- Willens: But ultimately, at some point before the fourth round, you got the impression that no further authorization was required, you could just make your separate statement, and it would be responded to appropriately by the U.S.?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: Another point that Dorrance reported that he was instructed by Ambassador Williams to communicate to you was that any request by the Northern Mariana to have separate negotiations would be strengthened if the Marianas District Legislature authorized such discussions. There came a time when the Marianas District Legislature did ratify separate negotiations, but did that take place before the fourth round?
- Guerrero: If I remember it was either during or just before the formal session.
- Willens: Of the fourth round?
- Guerrero: We were already in Palau, Eddie and I, and we communicated the need for them to act promptly. And I think that they did pass a resolution almost immediately expressing the position of the Marianas while we were in Palau.
- Willens: Did you and Ed play any active role as members of the Joint Committee in planning for the fourth round and what issues would be pressed by the Joint Committee, or were you focused, for the most part, only on the issue of separate negotiations.
- Guerrero: Eddie and I always throughout our participation were focused on protecting the interests of the Marianas. As far as the other districts were concerned, we would support whatever they wanted. We would not object. If that's what they wanted, then we would support it. In the Palau negotiations our focus was to advance our position. We thought that's the time we should express it openly.
- Willens: Was that the fourth round of negotiations when Paul Warnke was hired and attended for the first time. What led the Joint Committee to retain counsel?

- Guerrero: I don't know if he was after the Palau round. We were in Washington in one of the sessions, and Paul Warnke was entertained or introduced to the Commission.
- Willens: You don't remember him being present at the fourth round?
- Guerrero: Yes, yes, I do. I'm just saying whether that was the formal time that we got him involved, or whether it was prior to that. I don't remember. I think Mr. Mihaly was a lawyer. I'm not sure about that. I don't know how Mr. Warnke came into the picture, whether Mr. Salii and Mr. Silk were the ones that looked for somebody to represent them, but I think he was a good selection.
- Willens: Well, there's no doubt about that. There's some suggestion in the documents, and from the interviews that I've had, that the Joint Committee became aware that ultimately it was going to have to present its case to the U.S. Congress as well as to the Executive Branch, and that it might be well to have Washington- based counsel who was experienced and could advance the client's cause before the Congress. Do you remember any discussions along that line?
- Guerrero: No, I don't remember.
- Willens: Another issue that came up during the fourth round, separate from the status issue, related to the financial aspects of the negotiations. I believe it was during the fourth round that the Micronesians advanced a very large figure of \$100 million what they thought was an appropriate rental and support payment. Ambassador Williams at the conclusion of the negotiations told them that he thought there'd have to be further negotiations because that was not a reasonable request in his opinion, although he was very tactful about it. Did the Joint Committee ever conduct, to your knowledge, any economic analyses of the needs of the districts in the future political status that would provide support for a particular amount of money that they wanted to obtain from the United States?
- Guerrero: Recalling back, I think, the thought came about from the leases that the U.S. paid for bases in foreign countries, and it should be perhaps equivalent to that. I think that was the basis of the proposal. The U.S. could afford a couple hundred million dollars for bases in the Philippines, you know. I think that was the basis for coming up with this kind of figure, but not specifically for the economic development of the area.
- Willens: Is it fair to say that the amount of money was sort of advanced without any detailed support, but was some indication of the bargaining objectives that the Micronesians had?
- Guerrero: Yes. I guess it was.
- Willens: You did submit a formal request for separate negotiations by letter dated April 11, 1972, and Ambassador Williams responded on April 12. Did you review the draft of this letter with any representatives of the U.S. delegation before you submitted it?
- Guerrero: No, I don't think so. No, I don't remember that.
- Willens: It reiterated many of the points that you and Ed made in your earlier February statement. What is your recollection of the submission of that letter and the Ambassador's response?
- Guerrero: I think we presented, if not the full text, the general content of that presentation to the Joint Committee of the Congress. We kind of reviewed it very generally. I don't think it was the text itself.
- Willens: Did you review the substance of what you were going to put in your April 11 letter with the other members of the Joint Committee?

- Guerrero: Yes. We let them be aware of this intent and we sensed that they weren't happy. But at that point they indicated that it was okay for us to make a separate presentation or express ourselves as far as the Marianas was concerned in the upcoming session.
- Willens: So you felt that 1) they were aware of what you were going to do, and 2) they did not oppose it.
- Guerrero: They did not oppose it.
- Willens: On the very same day, April 11, 1972, there was a letter on behalf of the Joint Committee signed by Paul Warnke and Michael White, who was also serving as counsel to the Joint Committee. That letter questioned the propriety of any such presentation of the Marianas viewpoint by the Chairman of the Joint Committee, when that position was at variance with the Committee's position, and they contended that the Marianas District Legislature did not have the authority to authorize the separate negotiations with the United States. I guess the point is that you decided to make the presentation by yourselves rather than through Chairman Salii because Chairman Salii's lawyers had told him he could not do it on behalf of the Marianas. Is that your recollection of what happened?
- Guerrero: Yes. I guess it was, yes. That if we were to present our position that it had to be us. Of course, thinking back, we would have preferred it if the Joint Committee Chairman did the presentation.
- Willens: Would you have rather Chairman Salii present the case, rather than you and Ed?
- Guerrero: Yes. That would clearly show that the Committee favors it rather than just us.
- Willens: Ambassador Williams responded in executive session on April 12 and told the Joint Committee that he received the request, that the U.S. government had considered the matter carefully before coming to Palau, that they reviewed the history, and had concluded that the United States was willing to enter into separate negotiations with the Marianas. Did this come as a surprise to Chairman Salii and the other members of the Joint Committee?
- Guerrero: It didn't appear to me that they were surprised in that session because we had indicated that we would want to have the opportunity to make the presentation. And I felt that they may have had some advance indication, maybe not very specific, about an easing up on the U.S. side as far as entertaining the Mariana request.
- Willens: You think that Ambassador Williams might have told Chairman Salii before the executive session what he was going to do?
- Guerrero: I would think so, because, before the formal session the members of the Joint Committee permitted us, whether enthusiastically or not (I don't think it was very enthusiastic), to go ahead and make a separate presentation. They never had allowed us to do this.
- Willens: Well, there's some thought that's been expressed to me that the Joint Committee thought that your request was going to be denied.
- Guerrero: Denied?
- Willens: By the U. S.
- Guerrero: If we were to present it in the formal session? Could be.
- Willens: You and Ed were very confident that it was going to be accepted?
- Guerrero: Yes. Yes. We were informally advised to go ahead with it.

- Willens: Were there any recriminations or criticism by the other members of the Joint Committee of you and Ed for doing what you did after the U.S. agreed to separate negotiations?
- Guerrero: The most vocal person there was Andon Amaraich from Truk. He and John Mangafel of Yap. Of course, John, at one point, was easing up on the commonwealth issue, Commonwealth status, but that's John's style. You cannot really predict what he has in mind. And Tosiwo Nakayama, also of Truk, wasn't enthusiastic about it, but he was very low key in opposing. Andon Amaraich of Truk was the one who was very adamantly opposed to us, the Marianas, being considered separately.
- Willens: Do you think they saw that this was a first step that was almost certainly going to lead to fragmentation of Micronesia?
- Guerrero: Yes, I think that's his thinking, and maybe the other members of the group too.
- Willens: Well, just to step back from the situation for a minute, do you think that the six districts of Micronesia could have stayed together in some form of loose federation with a central government of limited powers given the differences between the districts?
- Guerrero: No. I thought all along that it would not be a workable arrangement. And it shows now, with Palau and the Marshalls having their own status. Right now even the FSM is having problems in its four former Micronesian districts. They're having problems among themselves. So, I did not think it was going to be workable.
- Willens: Following that session of the Micronesian negotiations, you and the other leaders in the Northern Marianas realized that the Marianas District Legislature had to take some action to implement the decision to have separate status negotiations. Is that correct?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: The documents indicate a decision was made to call a special session of the Marianas District Legislature to meet in May of 1972 rather than wait for the normal session of the District Legislature that would have been held in August. What prompted that decision to call a special session?
- Guerrero: The leadership of the District Legislature felt that it was necessary to act or react to the response of the United States, that is, agreeing to consider the Marianas request for separate negotiations. That issue has always been highly regarded by the leadership here, and they felt that they should try to establish the mechanism for creating the status commission for the Marianas.
- Willens: There was a proposed bill to create a Marianas Political Status Commission and there were two days of public hearings. Do you remember any controversy about the creation of such a commission and in particular who would serve as its members.
- Guerrero: I cannot recall. I don't remember that there was any strong opposition to creating a commission so long as it was broadly representative of the people of the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: Was it generally recognized by you and your colleagues in the Popular Party that the Commission should include representatives of the different interests on the island that might have somewhat different views about political status than you and the Popular Party did?
- Guerrero: Yes, we thought it was important. These issues have to be decided by the entire people of the CNMI. We thought that the best way of considering the issues was to include as widely as possible representative groups.

- Willens: There was some concern about the limited amount of money that was available to support the Commission's work. The legislation, as enacted, provided \$25,000. What is your recollection about the resources that were available to the Marianas District Legislature to help support the Commission's work?
- Guerrero: Financially, it was tough in those days. The sources of funding from the District Legislature were limited, and we weren't anticipating getting any grants from the Congress of Micronesia particularly for this purpose.
- Willens: You say you were not anticipating grants?
- Guerrero: That's correct. We were not anticipating or making requests from the Congress of Micronesia for political education. So it was difficult.
- Willens: The next thing that happened of some significance was that the Marianas District Legislature did endorse the statement that you and Ed Pangelinan had made on behalf of the Northern Marianas to the United States at the Micronesian session. Was the Marianas District Legislature in those days composed almost entirely of Popular Party representatives?
- Guerrero: No, there were some Territorial members, but the majority were Popular Party members.
- Willens: But you don't remember any dissent or disagreement within the District Legislature regarding the statement that you and Ed Pangelinan had made?
- Guerrero: No, I cannot remember any sentiment against it.
- Willens: Shortly thereafter, in late May 1972, four representatives from the Northern Marianas appeared before the U.N. Trusteeship Council. You were one of the four. Was this the first time you attended the U.N. Trusteeship Council?
- Guerrero: That was my first appearance before the Trusteeship Council.
- Willens: There's some suggestion in the documents that you and Ed Pangelinan proposed that Senator Borja be added to the delegation in order to provide a bipartisan composition. Do you have any recollection of doing that?
- Guerrero: Yes, definitely.
- Willens: Did you have the sense at about his time in 1972 that sooner or later Senator Borja would change party affiliation and become a candidate on behalf of the Popular Party?
- Guerrero: No, I had no idea he was changing party, or he had plans to change party.
- Willens: That did happen eventually though, did it not?
- Guerrero: It did, yes.
- Willens: There were statements made by each of you before the Trusteeship Council and they were, taken as a group, a very eloquent statement of the Northern Marianas position. Do you have any recollection of how the four of you collaborated in putting together your statements?
- Guerrero: Well, each one of us shared the same objective, but the whole idea was to try to present our position from a different perspective. Ben Santos, if I recall, was to present the point of view of the District Legislature. Senator Borja was to speak as a representative of his party. Both Eddie and I were, as representatives of the Congress of Micronesia and members of the Micronesian Political Status Committee, were to discuss our efforts within that Committee.

- Willens: In your statement you made the point that the Marianas did not have any specific political arrangement in mind in looking forward to negotiations with the United States, and you mentioned numerous possibilities, including reintegration with Guam, incorporation as a separate territory, commonwealth status, or other possible arrangements. Did you at that time have any specific ideas as to what kind of status you wanted to have and what kind of status you wanted to avoid?
- Guerrero: Well, it was very definite that we didn't want a status that is not affiliated with the United States—direct as a territory or a commonwealth. That was certain and, of course, what we liked was to be part of the United States. But like I have said, from the 1969-1970 period, commonwealth status appealed to us. We didn't know the details as to what was involved in this commonwealth relationship.
- Willens: I noticed that you did mention in your statement that reintegration with Guam was one possibility, but you and your colleagues were pretty firm at this point in your desire to have a separate and independent relationship with the United States rather than an affiliation with Guam. Is that correct?
- Guerrero: Yes, I guess I mentioned that. I'm not sure in that statement before the United Nations why the reunification with Guam was considered.
- Willens: You and Ed Pangelinan, in particular, were cross-examined by members of the Trusteeship Council as to the efforts you had made to secure permission from the Congress of Micronesia before seeking separate negotiations. Do you remember some antagonism from members of the Council as to why you had proceeded to seek separate negotiations without the explicit endorsement of the Congress?
- Guerrero: That was some time back there could have been. But overall I cannot remember if there were antagonistic members of the Council. You had the Soviet Union representative there, but I cannot remember that they were harsh to us. It didn't relate to me, but when we were sitting there at the front table Senator Borja was posed a question whether if the Micronesians (including the Marianas) were to accept the commonwealth status, what would be Senator Borja's position? "I guess," Senator Borja said, "we'll take it."
- Willens: He did?
- Guerrero: He was having a hard time there, but then I guess Eddie kind of redirected the discussion and said, "We know, we don't think we could fit in, into a system with the other districts."
- Willens: There was apparently a question by the Soviet Union delegate as to whether the Marianas delegation fully accepted the 1970 Commonwealth Proposal that had been rejected by the Joint Committee. The record indicates that Senator Borja responded by stating that the U.S. proposal was not completely satisfactory but provided a starting point for further negotiations. Was that more or less your personal position as well?
- Guerrero: I guess it was, yes.
- Willens: The Soviet Union representative charged that the United States was "fanning flames of separatism" and was in "gross violation" of the prerogative of the Congress of Micronesia. Do you remember language of that kind?
- Guerrero: Yes, it wasn't really directed to us, it was more toward the U.S. administration authority.
- Willens: The U.S. representative at that time was Ambassador Sacksteder, whose name I've not seen elsewhere in the documents. He was the one who defended the decision of the

United States to agree to separate negotiations. Was it your impression at the time that the United States was mounting an effective defense of the position they had taken?

Guerrero: I guess so, yes.

Willens: Before you went to New York for the Trusteeship Council, you and your colleagues visited Washington and had a meeting in Washington with some U.S. representatives, which included Admiral Crowe and some of the other members I think you had met previously. One subject that came up at that time, and in several other meetings, was the question of separate administration of the Northern Marianas. Did you and your Northern Marianas colleagues attach a high priority to try and get the administration of the Northern Marianas separated out from the rest of the Trust Territory?

Guerrero: I don't remember that we were pushing that position very strongly, although I think that it may have come from us that it would be more advantageous for us in terms of the negotiations for separate status for us if we had separate administration. But I don't remember if we were very strong on that.

Willens: It came up later that year in 1972 when the Congress of Micronesia was considering a Constitutional Convention and the question, both a legal and political question, was whether that Constitutional Convention would necessarily include the Northern Marianas. Do you have any recollection of the issue of a Constitutional Convention for all of Micronesia coming up later that year?

Guerrero: No, I don't remember that.

Willens: During 1972 there were two additional rounds of negotiations with the Joint Committee. There was a fifth round that took place in Washington in July and August of 1972 and there was a sixth round that took place in Hawaii.

Guerrero: In Barber's Point.

Willens: Now, as I understand it, you and Senator Pangelinan continued to function as members of the Joint Committee.

Guerrero: That's correct.

Willens: And so you and he attended both of these rounds of negotiations. Is that right?

Guerrero: I'm sure we did, yes.

Willens: Did you tend to restrict your participation in those negotiations to only issues that affected the Northern Marianas or were you present at all of the significant meetings that took place with the U.S. delegation.

Guerrero: No, we were participating whenever there was a session, even among the Micronesian Committee members themselves. They never indicated that our presence was not necessary, so whenever there was a meeting we attended.

Willens: Did the other members of the Joint Committee ever make an effort to exclude you from internal meetings of the Joint Committee?

Guerrero: Not that we were aware of, no.

Willens: To the extent that you have any recollection now, it would be based on the meetings that you attended with the Joint Committee and across the table with the U.S. delegation?

Guerrero: That's correct.

Willens: Apparently, at the fifth round of negotiations, there was a discussion of some draft sections

of a Compact that had been worked on during the recess. Did you personally have any role in drafting portions of the Compact of free association, or in reviewing it as a member of the Joint Committee?

Guerrero: The process during our discussion was that whenever there was any draft or working papers, every member was given copies to make comments. Eddie Pangelinan and I decided not to raise any objections or comments when it related to the Micronesian side. So, but we were participating in the reviews.

Willens: One issue that was discussed at some length during the fifth round of negotiations was the level of financial support that the United States would provide under a proposed free association relationship. As we discussed before, the Joint Committee had previously set forth the figure of \$100 million. Do you recall Ambassador Williams on part of the United States suggesting that that was more money than could be justified?

Guerrero: Yes. The Ambassador was saying that, first of all, he needs detailed justification or explanation as to why the Micronesians were suggesting that level. Secondly, I am not sure it was at that point, but there was some comment that it was an excessive amount. Even territories that were part of the United States were not given that level of funding. So he said that without adequate justification it was very difficult for him to support that level of funding for the Micronesians.

Willens: Why was it that the Joint Committee never retained an economic consulting firm to give it some technical input that might have enabled it to better support its request for financial assistance?

Guerrero: I cannot remember an occasion where the importance of having professional studies in economics, financing and all those things was discussed. Even in the whole Congress of Micronesia, the fiscal necessities had a low priority. I have no idea why we, the Congress, didn't put more emphasis on getting people that were knowledgeable on money issues and management.

Willens: It's interesting because subsequently the Marianas Political Status Commission attached a high priority to hiring an economic consultant who could help the Commission frame its positions. Did you and Ed ever discuss the need for economic consulting advice and contrast the recommendation that you made to the Commission with what the Joint Committee had done?

Guerrero: Well, we were not disturbed by this at this point in time, because even our present government, in the Executive Branch and the Legislature, did not see the urgency of having this kind of people on board. You know, it disturbs me, but I agree that the political movement will not be as effective if you don't have people that are good on taxes and revenue-generating issues.

Willens: The Congress of Micronesia had a session in August of 1972. Some significant opposition to the draft Compact developed at that session of the Congress of Micronesia. According to the records that I've seen, numerous questions were raised with respect to infringements on Micronesian sovereignty and possible limitations on trade. In addition, supporters of independence were particularly vocal during the session and took issue with many of the provisions in the draft Compact. Do you remember that kind of opposition developing within the Congress of Micronesia in August of 1972?

Guerrero: I am not sure about the timing, but, yes, there were disagreements. And the Micronesian Status Commission had a hard time.

Willens: Did the opposition come as a surprise to you?

- Guerrero: Yes, to some extent. I thought that the Committee was given a mandate by the Congress and it was operating under that mandate. And that mandate came about as a result of inputs from the general membership of the Congress. So I wasn't sure really why they were so upset about it. On one hand some members were frustrated that these things were dragging on but, when it was about time for the conclusion, there was still dissatisfaction by some members. So it was disappointing.
- Willens: Do you feel that the delay in the Micronesian negotiations had any impact on the Northern Marianas prospects for its own negotiations?
- Guerrero: It could have. Any delays caused by the Congress of Micronesia might have had an impact on us, because I felt the U.S. would not push something, as far as the Marianas was concerned, if it was reasonably objected to by the Congress of Micronesia. So, I was concerned.
- Willens: There also was the point that came up on many occasions that the United States would terminate the Trusteeship agreement only for the entire Trust Territory at one time. Do you recall the United States taking that position?
- Guerrero: That's correct. Yes.
- Willens: So to some extent the ability of the Northern Marianas to achieve what it wanted to achieve ultimately depended upon the other districts reaching some agreement with the United States?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: The most significant action the Congress of Micronesia took at this session relating to political status was Joint Resolution Number 117. This Resolution directed the Joint Committee, of which you were a member, to conduct simultaneous negotiations with the United States on free association and the establishment of Micronesia as an independent country. Do you remember this resolution which directed the Joint Committee to conduct negotiations with the United States on both tracks at the same time?
- Guerrero: It may have happened, but I cannot remember the particular details and discussion of the resolution.
- Willens: It became quite important to the United States at the sixth round of negotiations, which you recall was at Barber's Point in Hawaii. Ambassador Williams on behalf of the United States questioned Chairman Salii both in private and in public meetings whether the Joint Committee had changed its negotiating objectives. Do you remember being present at any meetings during the sixth round at which Ambassador Williams raised serious question about the Congress of Micronesia's action?
- Guerrero: I cannot remember those specifics.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of the sixth round of negotiations at all?
- Guerrero: Unfortunately, those were times when Eddie and I were paying very little attention, as far as the Micronesians' future was concerned. Do you have a recollection that the sixth round was adjourned at the request of the United States because of its uncertainty as to where these negotiations were going in view of the Congress of Micronesia's actions?
- Guerrero: I remember that this may be an instance where that occurred.
- Willens: Let's turn to the work of the Marianas Political Status Commission. Pursuant to the legislation that the District Legislature had approved, fifteen members of the Commission were appointed by August 16, 1972. I am going to identify some of the members of

the Commission and I would like you to give me your impression that you had at the time to their being asked to participate in the work of the Commission. The District Legislature nominated its president, Vicente N. Santos. What was your assessment of the appointment of Ben Santos to the Commission?

- Guerrero: I think it was a good selection, not only because he was the presiding officer of that body, but also he had broad knowledge and experience in government functions, and was very active in political matters in the Marianas from the late 1950's, early 1960's.
- Willens: Ben Santos, like many other leaders in the Northern Marianas, began his career as a teacher.
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: What is it about the culture in the Northern Marianas that brought to political leadership positions so many local people who had become teachers?
- Guerrero: During the Navy Administration and, of course, even when the Trust Territory came about, the major emphasis was in education. There were a lot of people that were encouraged to take training, or receive scholarship grants for educational purposes—that and agriculture through the Ponape Agricultural Training Center. During the Navy time most of these people were sent to Hawaii for education. Let me just go back a little bit. The Navy had two areas of emphasis: education of teachers and political science—those were the two major things. Then during the Trust Territory time, it was education and farming. So, I guess, all those were emphasized by the administering authorities at the time.
- Willens: Would it be fair to say that many of the brightest students from the local community set out to become teachers because of the prestige and responsibilities that teachers had in the community?
- Guerrero: Yes, and, I guess, the teaching professions were in big demand in those days, There were practically no government positions other than teaching during that time. So, the people were going for training in education, because of their interest in future employment.
- Willens: The second individual nominated by the District Legislature was Felipe A. Salas. He had been a leader within the Popular Party for many years. Had you worked closely with him?
- Guerrero: I did some, yes. He formerly was a school teacher right after the war.
- Willens: He was somewhat older than you were at the time?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: What was your sense of him as a person, in terms of his leadership potential and his ability to make a contribution to the work of the Commission?
- Guerrero: He was a reasonable person. Non-controversial and tries to stay within reason.
- Willens: Was he someone who would make up his mind on issues, or did you think he was largely going to follow the majority?
- Guerrero: No, he speaks out and has his own agenda. But he tries to be open about suggestions. He wasn't close-minded.
- Willens: Did you remember him being a fully participating member of the Commission?
- Guerrero: Yes. He contributed.

- Willens: From Rota, Benjamin T. Mangiona and Joannes R. Taimanao were selected. You had worked with Ben Manglona for many years, is that correct?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: What was your assessment of his ability at the time?
- Guerrero: Ben has always been a person that speaks out when it comes to the interests of his constituents. He fights for their rights; he's very strong on that.
- Willens: But did you think that his interests were consistent with the Popular Party's interest in terms of future status or did he have some different point of view as you recall?
- Guerrero: I think he shared the same thinking, along the line that was well known at the time, pushing through the status with the United States.
- Willens: Did you anticipate any problems within the Commission because Tinian and Rota each had two members? Did you anticipate that the three islands would have some major differences?
- Guerrero: Not at the early states of the negotiations or discussions. No, we did not anticipate any major difference among them.
- Willens: The second member from Rota was Mr. Taimanao. Had you had any prior experience with him?
- Guerrero: I had little knowledge of him, how he's thinking and how he works.
- Willens: You had a little knowledge?
- Guerrero: Very little, although I observed that he was kind of a quiet type.
- Willens: Your recollection is that Mr. Taimanao was a quiet member of the Commission?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: Do you remember any particular issue on which he spoke out?
- Guerrero: I cannot think of any. It was mostly Ben Manglona that was speaking when it comes to his island's concerns.
- Willens: Now the two members appointed from Tinian were Herman M. Manglona and Francisco A. Hocog. Had you had any prior experience with Mr. Manglona?
- Guerrero: Yes, Herman was in politics, and more active in politics than Mr. Hocog.
- Willens: Was Mr. Manglona of Tinian affiliated with the Popular Party?
- Guerrero: He was a Republican or Territorial Party member.
- Willens: What was your reaction to his appointment to the Commission?
- Guerrero: I had no problem. I think he was a selection by the Tinian leadership, and more so the Republican Party. So, I think it was a good choice.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of Mr. Hocog?
- Guerrero: I've had little knowledge of Frank. He was a quiet person.
- Willens: Was he also a member of the Territorial Party?
- Guerrero: I think he was a member of the Popular Party.
- Willens: Was he a teacher?

- Guerrero: I think he was working for a government agency, not a teacher; I don't think he was a teacher.
- Willens: Do you have a recollection of any contribution that he made to the work of the Commission?
- Guerrero: Nothing significant. Nothing, I don't remember.
- Willens: The Saipan Municipal Council designated Vicente T. Camacho and Daniel T. Muna. What is your recollection of Mr. Camacho as a member of the Commission?
- Guerrero: Mr. Camacho was a good selection. He was knowledgeable in terms of past movements in politics.
- Willens: You served with him in the Municipal Council?
- Guerrero: Yes, I was with him at one point in time. He was a good, workable person.
- Willens: Was he someone you would regard as a leader?
- Guerrero: He was regarded, in Saipan, as one of the leaders. He was a member of the Popular Party.
- Willens: Were some of the members of the Commission more comfortable in dealing with these political status issues than others?
- Guerrero: The trend at that time was to put people on the Commission that had some involvement in politics. That's my observation.
- Willens: Do you think the assumption was that if you put politically successful people on the Commission that the work of the Commission would then generally be easier to win the approval of the people when it ultimately came to that point.
- Guerrero: Oh, definitely. Definitely. The people look to their leadership for direction and highly regarded leaders would easily be supported in their views by the people.
- Willens: Did you and Ed Pangelinan or others have any private sessions at which you considered possible candidates for the Commission and came up with some of the names that we have just reviewed?
- Guerrero: I don't think we, Eddie and I, were involved. I don't think we went to that extent. We pretty much left it to the individual groups that were to select their membership.
- Willens: The Popular Party designated Joaquin Pangelinan as its representative on the MPSC. He was a Peace Corps official at the time, but had been active in the Popular Party for many years. What was your impression of Mitch Pangelinan at that time?
- Guerrero: Although I am two or three years older than Mitch, he was very active in the Young Popular Party in the late 1950's. He was a very aggressive, hard working guy. Very vocal. He speaks out his mind. He has no reservations. So he was a highly regarded member.
- Willens: Is speaking out aggressively something that's relatively unusual in this community, or at least at that time? Was it unusual to speak out vigorously on subjects?
- Guerrero: Yes. That's the tendency of Micronesians as a whole. Not many of the Micronesians, including the Northern Marianas people, were used to speaking out openly. So it was rare to find people that just speak out their mind.
- Willens: Did you consider that to be an advantage to have some people like that on the Commission?

- Guerrero: Yes, I guess it was helpful.
- Willens: Why?
- Guerrero: Because that's the only way you could try to gauge what the people they represent were thinking, or what their positions were. Yes, that's very important. Although we had previous references in terms of referendum, we were specifically appointed by a group and it was important that the members speak out what their interests were.
- Willens: The Territorial Party designated Dr. Palacios as its representative on the MPSC. Did that come as a surprise to you?
- Guerrero: I don't think it was, no. Dr. Palacios was highly regarded as a public leader, not only as a Territorial, but also as a member of the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: Did you anticipate that there was going to be a possible conflict because of his previously-taken positions, which seemed somewhat in conflict with the mission of the Marianas Political Status Commission?
- Guerrero: It could have, but I guess we were thinking that both the Popular and the Territorial Party had the same ultimate objective, that is, becoming part of the United States. If he were to continue his separate intentions that he expressed while he was a member of the Congress of Micronesia—that is, being with the other Micronesians—I think he could have been easily redirected by the Territorial Party. And, of course, the other one is that if he were to vote in that direction in the Marianas Commission, he would have been outvoted, even within his own party's membership in the Marianas Status Commission.
- Willens: Who were other members of the Territorial Party?
- Guerrero: There was Benjamin Manglona, Herman Manglona, for instance. On the Carolinian side there was
- Willens: Felix Rabauliman. Your point's an important one, and I'd like to come back to that. What was your impression at the time with respect to Felix Rabauliman.
- Guerrero: Felix was a schoolteacher, although he's a person that doesn't speak out. Even on controversial issues that we knew he was concerned about, it was very difficult for him to just come out openly and say, "No, I don't like it." He would try to go around the issue and it was hard for us to decide just what he was after. He's a likeable person, but he wasn't outspoken.
- Willens: Did you feel that he was a shy person who didn't feel comfortable in the use of English?
- Guerrero: He has a good command of English.
- Willens: So its not a question of shyness.
- Guerrero: No.
- Willens: Or inability to use the English language?
- Guerrero: No. And I don't like to use this to distinguish the Carolinian and the Chamorro, but normally the Carolinians are more shy than the Chamorros. I guess they regarded themselves, although we don't want them to feel that way, as lower than the Chamorro. Only one or two Carolinians that I can think of were outgoing and would speak out, but not Felix. That could be a factor in why he's hesitating, or it could be his own personality, too.
- Willens: Did you anticipate that Felix would be a primarily a spokesman for the Carolinian community?

- Guerrero: Mostly, I guess, he was there primarily to protect the interests of the Carolinians, much less for being a member from the Territorial Party.
- Willens: Did you have the expectation that the positions he took would be the positions that he was instructed to take by the Carolinian association?
- Guerrero: Yes. I had a feeling (and not only me) that he may have, if not an objection, some reservations to our movement, because the Carolinians here are more tightly linked to the Micronesians, particularly Yap and Truk, than to the Chamorros here. So that's the reservation that the Popular Party particularly had of Felix.
- Willens: The last member of the Commission that I wish to ask you about was Jose C. Tenorio, better known as Joeten, who was one of Saipan's most successful businessmen. What was your personal acquaintance with Joeten at the time?
- Guerrero: Joeten was, beside being a businessman, a very influential member of the Territorial Party. As a matter of fact, he was highly regarded when he spoke out, not only on political issues but on other issues, by the Territorial Party. And he wasn't afraid to speak out. I had no personal association with him.
- Willens: Did you expect that he would share in the objectives of the Marianas Political Status Commission or did you feel that he might have had some reservations about separate political status for the Northern Marianas?
- Guerrero: Personally, I thought all along Joeten wasn't in any rush for any change for the political status. I thought that he would try to slow down as much as possible the process.
- Willens: What do you think was motivating him?
- Guerrero: I think Joeten was afraid that if we were to change our status that his success, economically in his business, would be somewhat impeded by competition coming in from areas other than from Micronesia. He was regarded at the time as the biggest businessman in Micronesia as a whole. So opening up to the U.S. side would mean that people from the mainland (and maybe Guam) would come in easily and set up businesses. That would, he felt, obstruct his successes.
- Willens: In advance of the first round of negotiations, the Commission hired several consultants. Did you have any role in the selection of Jim White as the Executive Director?
- Guerrero: I don't remember. I know Jim. Not personally, no.
- Willens: Did you know why it was decided to retain Jim as Executive Director?
- Guerrero: I knew that Jim was a close associate of Eddie in law practice when Eddie Pangelinan was here. They were associates. Eddie may have, and it wasn't a very bad idea, either, looking back.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of Jim and his contribution to the work of the Commission?
- Guerrero: Nothing significant that I can think of.
- Willens: Another consultant who was identified early on was Joseph F. Screen, who was also an employee of Joeten's enterprises and a former assistant commissioner for the TTPI. If you know, how did he get selected as a consultant for the Commission?
- Guerrero: I really don't know how it came about, although I wasn't pleased of his participating in these negotiations. Maybe I was biased, but I just didn't like Mr. Screen.
- Willens: Did he, in fact, perform any services for the Commission?

- Guerrero: He could have. I cannot remember anything specific.
- Willens: Well, I don't remember, and I think he sort of withdrew shortly after negotiations began. Do you have a recollection of anything he did for this Commission?
- Guerrero: I cannot remember. He could have, but I was just too negative of him, and I didn't focus too much on his work.
- Willens: The Commission did hire James R. Leonard, who was an economist in Washington and had been previously associated with the Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc. Do you recall any discussion within the Commission about hiring an economic consultant and in particular hiring Mr. Leonard?
- Guerrero: The need for economic assistance was very important at the time, not necessarily the individual? I guess one of the reasons that he was selected was because of his participation in the TT-wide economic studies. So, in the Commission, I think it was felt that he was knowledgeable, and the scope of the studies might be more limited (or focused) because he had previous background information. So that could be the reason why he was hired.
- Willens: Apparently within the Commission there was some debate about whether a lawyer from the United States should be retained. Dr. Palacios expressed concern that a U.S. lawyer might not be able to represent the Commission in dealing with the United States and that a lawyer from another country should be selected. Do you remember any discussion along those lines?
- Guerrero: Yes. Yes, that was very critical. As a matter of fact at the very start there were law firms, or lawyers from Guam, Chamorro, that wanted to assist. Eddie and I, and maybe some other members, were very strongly against this. We thought this is very crucial, this process is very important for us, and we need to get the very best we could. Although we liked the person from Guam and knew him personally, we thought, not necessarily because of the fear that we may be influenced for affiliation with Guam, that we needed to get the best package in these negotiations and get the best person. I guess Dr. Palacios' concern was that a U.S. consultant might feel that he wanted to protect the best interest of the CNMI by moving more closely to the United States. That was the major concern that some members had. But Eddie and I were very, very strong about wanting to get the best person. I also felt that if we were to advance either politically or whatever, that the person who knows the system would have an advantage. And on the other side he could be regarded as more on a friendly basis rather than an adversary. So in those two areas we thought we should get advice from the United States.
- Willens: Ed Pangelinan interviewed several law firms, including mine, and I don't know this for sure, but I have a suspicion that the list of firms may have been supplied by Paul Warnke. Do you know whether Mr. Warnke gave Ed some law firms to consider retaining?
- Guerrero: Yes. We were in Washington at one time. Mr. Warnke was then consultant to the Micronesian Status Commission. It was at his home in Washington that we asked him for assistance, for recommendations on good law firms. We were having some uneasiness about that because here was Mr. Warnke advising the Micronesians and, you know, we were trying to get some help from him. But, Mr. Warnke was very professional, and he gave us some recommendations.
- Willens: Did Ed ever report back to you and other members of the Commission about his interviews?
- Guerrero: Yes. He recommended your firm.

- Willens: What is your recollection of the first round of negotiations which was largely ceremonial? What was your personal feeling when the negotiations finally got under way at the opening ceremony at Mount Carmel auditorium?
- Guerrero: It was a good day. Although down the line, we found out it wasn't easy, but our first impression was here we start and we thought it was going to be smooth sailing. But it was an exciting ay.
- Willens: You and many others had worked so hard to bring this about for ten years or more. You must have had some sense of accomplishment in at least seeing the process begin?
- Guerrero: Oh, we did. Our party felt satisfied that not only had we finally succeeded in being considered to be part of the United States, but also we had succeeded in having the Congress of Micronesia give us some blessing regarding the course we wanted to follow. So, it was a good feeling.
- Willens: As it happened, the various consultants were asked to come out to participate in the first session on very short notice. Do you have any recollection of first meeting the consultants and what your impression was?
- Guerrero: Very, very little.
- Willens: One specific recollection I have is that we basically met with the Commission and then Ed Pangelinan, as Chairman, gave us direction to try to write a draft opening statement for the Commission to present. Did you have any views as to what initial statement the Commission should make and what its positions ought to be on such things as political status, land, finances and so forth?
- Guerrero: No, Howard, we pretty much relied upon our consultants and that's the way that I e have had so-called consultants who, when we tell them to do something, just went ahead and did it because they were told to do so because they were being paid, even if they felt it could not be accomplished or might not be legally possible. We wanted somebody that would tell us, "No, that's not right." You know, after all, they're there as advisers. We relied upon the professionals because this area is new to us. We just wanted a change of status and to be part of the United States—that's what was essential. But, of course, we wanted the best possible status, but exactly what those points were, you know, we were very limited in our background.
- Willens: One recollection I had and still feel is that the consultants who come to a community like this have to get to know the people and earn the confidence of the client. My sense was that there were some members of the Commission with whom one could deal more easily than others and some had never dealt with U.S. lawyers before. My sense was that it took some time for Jim Leonard, for me, or even Jim White to gain such confidence of the members of the Commission as we did, in fact, gain, Is that your recollection?
- Guerrero: Yes. There were some members that had reservations. I think especially those that first of all, were not continuously following these political movements, and those that perhaps were not too strong about expediting the process. I noticed that some of them were trying to put some kind of a stumbling block before the Commission in order to delay the process.
- Willens: The Governor of Guam, Go ceremony in what was called a "strictly ceremonial" role. From the very beginning of the Marianas negotiations the Guamanian newspaper and political leaders were very interested and, to some extent, apprehensive about these new negotiations. Did you personally maintain any regular contact with friends in Guam

and discuss with them what you were doing as a member of Marianas Political Status Commission?

Guerrero: No. We did not make that a point. We maintained friendly relationships because we had known most of the leaders at the time. So we were friendly with them, but we did not make it a point of discussing what had happened in our negotiations. If they were to ask information, then we would share it with them.

Willens: Did you ever have the concern that the Guamanian leadership might make it more difficult for the Northern Marianas to achieve its objectives because the Guamanians would complain to the United States that the Northern Marianas was getting a better deal than Guam.

Guerrero: No, it did not occur to me.

Willens: After the exchange of remarks at the opening ceremonial session, there was a working session that afternoon at the Royal Taga Hotel. Chairman Pangelinan made an overall statement that had been largely drafted by the consultants but reviewed with the Commission and revised in light of the Commission's concerns. (4n the subject of political status, Chairman Pangelinan said that the Commission was going to examine the experience of Guam and the other insular areas to see what the alternatives were. And he went on to say "that it may be necessary to develop a totally new political status for the Marianas." That particular statement got some publicity the next day and it raised some concern within the U.S. delegation. Did you as a member of the Commission want to be fully advised as to what the possibilities were by your consultants so that you could decide what was best for the Northern Marianas?

Guerrero: Yes, we wanted our consultants to go through the whole range of status alternatives that the U.S. may consider: commonwealth, territorial, unincorporated territories, incorporated territories. What were the differences, what were the advantages, the disadvantages, the problems, and the difficulties. Then we wanted the consultants, after going through those, to give us the best, as far as the Marianas was concerned, the best option.

Willens: To some extent the desire for separate negotiations in the Northern Marianas was stimulated by what you saw on Guam in terms of the civil liberties and its economic development. But were there certain aspects of the Guamanian relationship with the United States that you wanted to avoid?

Guerrero: Yes. One particular area was the immigration issue. Being so small, we here wanted to be given the flexibility of deciding which people from the outside, other than the U.S., should come in. We also wanted to be able to have more opportunities to realize our economic potential. So, yes, definitely, the whole idea of negotiating was to enable us to see what was good in Guam and take those features, but try to avoid those that we thought may slow us down.

Willens: Even before the first round of negotiations, a group from the Marianas Political Status Commission and Jim White went to meet with Guamanians to discuss the relationship with the military on Guam and what the MPSC should be concerned about. It produced some advice that proved to be very useful to the Commission later on, when they began to negotiate seriously about Tinian and other land that the U.S. desired for military purposes. As I recall you were not part of the delegation that went to Guam?

Guerrero: No, I don't remember going there.

Willens: Was it your impression at the time that the Guamanians did have a series of problems

- involving U.S. military use of their land that you wanted to be careful to avoid if at all possible?
- Guerrero: Yes, the common thought there was that the military always had the upper hand in terms of selection, the best site area, and the amount of public land. And it was very hard for the military to give up even excess lands for local people's use. So we wanted to have, not control, but some say so in the military use.
- Willens: There also seems to have been some discussion about so-called joint use of facilities in terms of infrastructure, educational services, health services, and so forth. Is that something you recall being of importance?
- Guerrero: Yes, definitely. We thought that if the military, or the federal government, were to have activities in the Commonwealth that we should try to benefit also from such activities.
- Willens: On the subject of land in his speech, Ed Pangeiinan mentioned that the Commission wanted to explore possible restrictions on the sale of land in the Northern Marianas to those who were not citizens of the Northern Marianas. There's been some discussion in the years since as to whether these restrictions on land alienation that ultimately were achieved and implemented were first proposed by the United States or were they first proposed on behalf of the Marianas by the Commission? What is your recollection as to where this idea of land restraints on land alienation came from?
- Guerrero: If I'm not mistaken, it came from us. And the U.S. side endorsed it, but not very openly. There were some concern on the U.S. side that although they sympathized with our concern about limiting the control of land to local people because of the limited land availability, this may not be constitutionally possible. So, in that regard they were sympathetic, but I don't think they were the ones who initiated this.
- Willens: What factors do you thi
- Guerrero: Not only because he was member of the Future Micronesian Status negotiation team, but he was selected also because he was a lawyer. He had more experience in terms of politics and the laws.
- Willens: Were there others within the Commission that you think wanted to be Chairman?
- Guerrero: There could be, but I don't think there were. I think they were all supportive of Eddie.
- Willens: Was the selection of Mr. Santos as Vice Chairman viewed as important way to keep the Legislature informed and keep the Commission fully supported by the Legislature?
- Guerrero: Yes, because he was the presiding officer, and he was highly regarded as a leader. We wanted also to please members of the Legislature. They were funding these negotiations, so we thought he would be a good advocate for funding if he were in that leadership status.
- Willens: What would be your description of Chairman Pangelinan's style of dealing with members of the Commission. To be somewhat more specific, my observation was that he was extremely patient in giving every member of the Commission an opportunity to talk and trying very hard not to push the Commission as a whole to make a decision on issues until everyone felt comfortable. What is your observation about the way in which the Commission functioned under his led to the selection of Ed Pangelinan to be Chairman? leadership?

- Guerrero: Eddie was very diplomatic. He tries to accommodate their concerns as much as possible. So he was well liked. He was having problems with those people that weren't too strong about pushing this through, but he was patient. It was difficult.
- Willens: Ed has told me, and I think others have too, that the goal was to try to bring everyone along, and that, if at all possible, you and he would have hoped that all fifteen members of the Commission would ultimately agree with whatever had been negotiated. Is that your recollection?
- Guerrero: Yes. Eddie and I were members of the Commission by virtue of our membership in the Congress of Micronesia. But when we lost the election in 1974, I got out of the Commission. Eddie stayed on because, I think, it was Ben Camacho or Danny Muna that sacrificed his position and gave it to Eddie. It was a very generous gesture, and it was a good one. But I was more concerned about the replacement members on the Commission.
- Willens: At the second day of the first round of negotiations, there was one issue raised by Ambassador Williams as to the authority of the Marianas Political Status Commission. He wanted assurances from the Commission that they would support whatever agreements were ultimately reached. His request, I'm sure, was based to some extent on his experience with the Joint Committee. Do you recall the Ambassador expressing some concern about the Commission's authority.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Well, what do you think prompted that?
- Guerrero: I have no idea. Eddie, of course, at times allowed other members of the Commission, unlike the Micronesian group, to speak out. And some members were outspoken, like the late Dr. Palacios. And that could have raised an issue with the Ambassador, who may have wondered whether he (Palacios) was speaking on behalf of the majority of his group.
- Willens: When the Ambassador raised that issue, the Marianas Political Status Commission took a recess and then subsequently advised the U.S. delegation that the Commission had adopted a resolution to the effect that "when the final product of this Commission is approved by the Commission, those so approving shall support the entire product through the District Legislature and to the people at a later date." Do you recall any debate within the Commission as to the adoption of such a resolution?
- Guerrero: No, I don't remember anything specific on that.
- Willens: The only other issue that came up at the first round that I wish to mention to you was some debate about the use of the word "permanent" in the joint communique. Dr. Palacios took objection to use of the word "permanent" and the U.S. delegation was very upset by the Commission's suggestion that some other word should be used rather than the word "permanent." Do you recall that difference of view?
- Guerrero: Yes. Yes, that was an issue that Dr. Palacios was disturbed about. Some other members were also concerned about that—they were going to be locked in forever. But going back to the history of the political movement, we always had in mind that permanent relationship with the United States.
- Willens: The documents indicate that there was some compromise, but the fact is that in the joint communique as ultimately approved without dissent, the word "permanent" was still used.
- Guerrero: Yes.

- Willens: My guess is that the compromise amounted to putting quotation marks around the phrase “close and permanent affiliation with the United States” and that they may have been sufficient to appease Dr. Palacios. This issue did come up subsequently, though, in the work of the Commission, did it not?
- Guerrero: It could have been Dr. Palacios’ concern that what would happen if the people of the Commonwealth would someday say, “Gee, we want to have the opportunity to change the status.” I think Dr. Palacios was concerned that we would not have given these people, generations to come, this opportunity. He felt that—and this is similar to the land alienation provisions in our first constitution, the 25-year time, because some members felt that we don’t have the right to tie up forever the generations to come on important issues. So once we decided our future relationship was permanent, nobody can change that. Of course, we have the mutual consent provision. I always felt that the United States, if they were satisfied that our people did not want this relationship to continue, would agree to change it.
- Willens: Was it your understanding as a member of the Commission that the instructions from the Legislature to you as member of the Commission was to negotiate a permanent relationship with the United States?
- Guerrero: Permanent? By that you say it means to be part of the United States, its a close relationship with the United States, yes.
- Willens: After the formal sessions were over, there was a fair amount of publicity and interest in the work of the Commission. Did you and the other members of the Commission feel that the opening session had been successful?
- Guerrero: Yes, we did. I was pretty satisfied. Of course, I was beginning to realize that it was not as easy going as I thought it was going to be.
- Willens: You mentioned that before. Did you, as one of the more experienced members of the Commission because of your work on the Joint Committee, have any sense that this was a negotiation that was going to be over within a year, or did you come to realize that it might take longer than that?
- Guerrero: No, I was thinking that it’s going to be maybe within a year’s time because, in my thinking, there shouldn’t be too many things to discuss other than to say, “okay.” There were some conditions, but I did not regard it as a major concern for the United States to object if we were to ask something. So, I was thinking it should be fast.
- Willens: You thought it might well be done by the end of 1973?
- Guerrero: Yes, within a year.
- Willens: In fact, there are some documents reflecting a United States view that they hoped it would be over within 1973. Do you personally have any recollection of conversations with Ambassador Williams or other members of the U.S. delegation about the desire to complete the negotiations as quickly as possible?
- Guerrero: No, I don’t remember that the Ambassador was trying to push us to complete this early. I don’t even remember whether the Marianas Commission was setting a timetable. It was only my observation that we should have gone through this faster.
- Willens: Okay, but you do not now have any recollection of feeling rushed by the United States to reach a decision about the specifics of the proposed relationship?

- Guerrero: No, there were times that they were a little disappointed, perhaps because of our slowness in agreeing to a certain position because we were taking too much time in reviewing and responding to it. I understand that, because the time they were away from home was somewhat difficult for them. But they did not present any sense of rustiness to me that I can recall.
- Willens: Because the United States made clear its interest in negotiating use of land on Tinian for military purposes, there was considerable publicity and interest on Tinian after the first round of negotiations. Many of the people expressed their support for a substantial U.S. military presence on the island because they anticipated there would be many benefits to the population. Did you have any idea in early 1973 exactly how comprehensive the U.S. request would be for land on Tinian?
- Guerrero: No, I wasn't aware of how detailed or big it was going to be.
- Willens: Was it your view in early 1973 that most of the residents of Tinian would support a substantial military presence or did you anticipate a good deal of opposition to the U.S. military being there?
- Guerrero: No, I, too, felt that they would be welcome, not only in terms of employment but also the other economic benefits that the military would bring in. So, I expected that they would have easy going.
- Willens: The Congress of Micronesia met in early 1973 and adopted Joint Resolution Number 38. This Resolution opposed the separate status negotiations with the Northern Marianas and maintained that only the Congress of Micronesia through the Joint Committee on Future Status has the authority to negotiate future political status. Do you remember any debate within the Congress of Micronesia on the subject of this Resolution?
- Guerrero: Yes. There was that reservation. Our position, of course, was that every district's people have the right to decide their own destiny. We thought that if any district wants to go on their own way, we in the Marianas would support it.
- Willens: Senator Pangelinan responded to this Resolution and opposed it on the grounds that you and he had previously stated. He complained that the debate in the Senate took place when the visiting mission from the United Nations was in the gallery. This was 1973 and it was again the time when there was a visiting mission from the U.N. Do you have any recollection regarding this particular visiting mission and its meeting with you and other Marianas representatives in either February or March of 1973?
- Guerrero: I do not remember that.
- Willens: You have no recollection of the visiting mission?
- Guerrero: Not that time.
- Willens: One issue that was coming up as an important issue in the Micronesian negotiations was the whole question of the return of public lands. What is your recollection of the importance of the public lands issue in the Micronesian negotiations and also in the Marianas negotiations?
- Guerrero: What was the importance?
- Willens: Yes.
- Guerrero: We always regarded the public lands to belong to the people of the area. During the negotiations for the Marianas that was one of the issues, like the immigration and land alienation issues, that we eventually incorporated into our constitution. In the Marianas

and Micronesia land is regarded very dearly. We're not decreasing the population, you know. It is going to be increasing and land would become scarce, so we wanted to make the best use of the land.

Willens: The United States had always, through the Trust Territory government, taken possession of so-called public lands and made decisions as to how those lands should be used. Was it your sense that getting those lands back in the hands of the local community was one of the foremost objectives of the status negotiations?

Guerrero: One of the important objectives, yes. I had no strong feeling that we were not going to get it back. But also we had to be able to reasonably make our case that even with the land under our control and we being part of the United States, if there were legitimate needs for the federal government, we should be accommodating and sacrifice to some extent. But look what had happened in Guam, where in many areas there seem to be no military needs, and the U.S. just continues to hold on to the public lands. I think that is not acceptable.

Willens: Just one last set of questions about the Congress of Micronesia session in early 1973. Chairman Salii had recommended that the Congress enact a constitutional convention bill. That constitutional convention legislation failed to win the support of the Congress of Micronesia, and that failure to act prompted various speeches about what the Micronesian sentiment was about its own future. Senator Salii emphasized the need for unity and expressed a growing concern that Micronesian unity was becoming more fragile. Senator, was it Senator Basilius?

Guerrero: Basilius.

Willens: From?

Guerrero: Palau.

Willens: He expressed the view that it was too soon to begin considering a governmental structure for Micronesia and that more time was needed for Micronesia to wean itself away from the United States and to take its economic development into its own hands. Was that a sentiment that you remembering hearing in the Congress of Micronesia back in 1973 or thereabouts?

Guerrero: I remember the constitutional issue. There were objections, at that time, to having a Micronesian convention.

Willens: Why would there be objection to it?

Guerrero: I think, in my observation, there were two reasons. One is that—I don't like to use it—I don't think they were doing their homework, educating the people, letting them know what was going on. I thought they were not keeping the people informed of developments during the years of negotiations. So, even if the Congress were to enact a constitutional convention bill, it would take time, and the people would just have no way of knowing what was happening.

Willens: But wouldn't the people send the same representatives to the constitutional convention that they were presently electing for the Congress of Micronesia?

Guerrero: Possibly, they would.

Willens: But your sense is that whatever came out of that convention wouldn't be understood?

Guerrero: By them.

- Willens: By the people?
- Guerrero: They were supposed to understand it and vote on Secondly, some members of the Congress of Micronesia felt that this constitutional issue and political status would be in conflict with the traditional way of governing. I think that's one of the major concerns why these members thought free association or independence were best for them.
- Willens: Did you feel then that in the early 1970's there was growing evidence that the various districts would not be able to remain together?
- Guerrero: I always felt that they would not be able to stay together. Mostly because of the leadership.
- Willens: Following the first round of negotiations in December of 1972, there was some publicity a month or two later based on an interview with Dr. Palacios. In his capacity as president of the Territorial Party he stated that the United States delegation was emphasizing the permanence of the proposed relationship and he was suggesting that was inconsistent with his party's view of self-government. He also expressed some concern about the adverse impact of the negotiations on the remainder of Micronesia. Do you have any recollection of Dr. Palacios going public with those views following the first round?
- Guerrero: Yes, there was some concern on the part of Dr. Palacios to what you have just said, Howard. However, I was somewhat, not disturbed, but confused because during the earlier years when both parties, the Popular and the Territorial parties, were looking into the political future of the Marianas, both wanted a lasting association with the United States, except that the method of how to achieve it was different. So this statement of not being consistent with the Territorial Party caught me by surprise, because I thought the approach that the Marianas side was taking was in compliance with the Territorial Party's position.
- Willens: Do you think that Dr. Palacios was expressing his personal views rather than those of the party that he represented?
- Guerrero: He could have been. When he was in the Congress of Micronesia and the commonwealth status or some relationship with the United States was offered to the Micronesian entity, he took a different view. He often supported an independent status rather than an association with the United States, which was a departure from the mandate of the Territorial Party. So it could have been only his personal desire.
- Willens: In preparation for the second round of negotiations which took place in May of 1973, the various consultants, including my law firm, prepared working papers for the Commission members to consider before they actually met with the U.S. delegation. My law firm prepared a very substantial memorandum that analyzed various status alternatives, and made reference to the Puerto Rico precedent, the need for self-government and so forth. Do you have any recollection of receiving these various papers from the consultants and having the chance to review them.
- Guerrero: Yes. We had lot of detailed documents, both from the legal consultants and the economic consultants. Having worked previously with the Congress of Micronesia's Political Status Committee, we were fortunate, I would say, to have more background information on political issues from the Marianas consultants than what was available to the Micronesians during their negotiations.
- Willens: To some extend you and Ed Pangelinan were familiar with the process of negotiations and the need to develop positions in advance of meeting with United States. Do you think that the other members of the Marianas Political Status Commission were able to

- understand the issues, and do you think they spent the time to review the written material that was supplied them?
- Guerrero: Maybe not the whole package. Because those documents were a lot. Most of us, including myself, were relying at times on the verbal presentations based on those documents. We had a very good briefing by the consultants on all these documents.
- Willens: This was really the first time that the consultants and the Commission worked together in developing position papers that would be submitted to the U.S. delegation. As I recall, the reports were circulated in advance, but it was the consultant's responsibility to review them with the individual members of the Commission and to respond to their questions. Did you think that kind of working relationship was successful?
- Guerrero: Yes, it was very, very useful, because not only were the consultants able to outline the documents, they were able to answer questions that were raised during the discussion by the members of the Commission. So, yes, the presentations was very useful.
- Willens: Then, as I recall, after we had that kind of a discussion, the Commission would provide direction as to what kind of position it wanted to take and it was then the consultant's responsibility to draft a position paper which would be reviewed by the Commission and revised. Is that your recollection?
- Guerrero: Yes. Yes, definitely. And one thing that I was particularly appreciative of was the fact that, if there was an approach that members of the Commission wanted which might be unachievable or would have legal complications, the consultants would say so and openly discuss it with the Commission. In other words, they just did not accept whatever we asked for, whether it reasonable or not. So those were very good exchanges.
- Willens: Did you ever hear any criticism from members of the U.S. delegation that the Marianas Political Status Commission was relying too much on its consultants?
- Guerrero: I don't remember anything. There could have been, but I don't remember that.
- Willens: Before the formal meetings began in May, there were some informal sessions including a presentation for the first time of a U.S. position by Mr. Wilson, who was sort of the second-in-command of the U.S. delegation. What was your general impression of Mr. Wilson based on your observation of him during the negotiations?
- Guerrero: Mr. Wilson was, like you said, a deputy to the Ambassador. He was very experienced, very thorough. I found him to be approachable. In other words, he's a pushy type of individual. He was also involved in the Micronesian not the negotiations.
- Willens: Did you find him more approachable than the Ambassador?
- Guerrero: No, the Ambassador was okay. No, I guess no. The Ambassador was more—what you call it? how do you put it? -friendly, more personality than Mr. Wilson. Mr. Wilson is more like a career diplomat, but he was cooperative, and I didn't find him difficult to work with.
- Willens: After the Commission did its preliminary work, it delivered a position paper to the U.S. delegation, recommending a commonwealth relationship based in large part on the Puerto Rico precedent, but also making explicit its desire for some form of mutual consent that would limit the ability of the United States in the future to change the relationship unilaterally. What is your recollection of any differing views within the Commission, if there were any, about seeking commonwealth as an objective?

- Guerrero: We were generally in agreement as far as I can remember. The critical thing is that the label of commonwealth is similar to Puerto Rico. The provisions that would be included in the compact or covenant were to be negotiated. And those issues were very important to us.
- Willens: Had you thought about the concept of mutual consent before this second round of negotiations?
- Guerrero: Yes, we thought that we should have whatever we negotiated. With respect to many of the provisions governing the status, we should have the option to agree or not to agree if changes were necessary.
- Willens: When Mr. Wilson made the initial presentation on behalf of the United States, he emphasized to you and the other members of the Commission that the United States wanted to have a simple and straightforward relationship and was suggesting that some of the proposals that the Commission seemed to be thinking of tended to be more complicated. Do you recall any representations by the United States along the lines of favoring a simple and general statement of a relationship?
- Guerrero: Yes. They wanted to simplify it. I guess they were having some concern whether the U.S. Congress, which would ultimately have to approve the agreement, would be amenable to creating another commonwealth similar to Puerto Rico. And so, their concern was that if we were to complicate it even further beyond what Puerto Rico had, it might face a real problem with the U.S. Congress.
- Willens: Do you remember that Mr. Wilson and the United States delegation originally opposed the concept of mutual consent?
- Guerrero: I don't recall. I cannot remember that.
- Willens: Do you recall that Mr. Wilson still made reference to the fact that somewhere down the line the Marianas might want to consider a relationship with Guam?
- Guerrero: I don't remember that.
- Willens: After he summarized some general views about the political relationship, Mr. Wilson summarized for the first time in general terms U.S. military requirements in the Northern Marianas. Do you have any recollection about how you first became aware that the United States was essentially seeking the entire island of Tinian?
- Guerrero: No.
- Willens: The formal sessions began on or about May 15 of 1973. There were some opening statements on the 15th by Ambassador Williams and Mr. Pangelinan on the part of their two delegations. But the big event happened not in the negotiations, but on the front page of the *Pacific Daily News* on May 16, 1973. The headline which was an inch and a half or two inches in very black print stated, "SAY NAVY SEEKS ALL OF TINIAN" It seems that the *Pacific Daily News* had gotten access to a still classified report outlining the full dimensions of what the United States intended to seek from the Marianas with respect to Tinian. Do you have any recollection of that development and the consequences that followed?
- Guerrero: No, unfortunately not.
- Willens: One thing that happened is that people on Tinian got very upset by the dimensions of this request because they hadn't been consulted. Originally both Ed Pangelinan on behalf of the Commission and Ambassador Williams refused to issue any statement on the subject, but ultimately on May 17, 1973 they did put out a statement that tried to stop some of

the controversy. Do you remember that the initial story with respect to Tinian required a relocation of the village of San Jose?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: What was your initial sense of the proposal to relocate the village of San Jose? Did you think that was going to be a benefit to the people of Tinian or a disadvantage?

Guerrero: Well, the suggestion was made that, if it was necessary to relocate the village, the U.S. should fully develop the new site with better facilities than were available at the old village. As far as whether the people were not agreeable to that, I don't remember that we had gone to that extent of explaining.

Willens: As a result of the publicity, the Marianas Political Status Commission decided it ought to go over to the island of Tinian and meet directly with the people. They did so on Friday, May 18, 1973, when a public meeting was held in the evening. Two weeks later Ambassador Williams went over and made a presentation. Do you remember being at either of those meetings.

Guerrero: I could have been in the Marianas visit. There was a lot of trips between Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, and I cannot remember just which one I attended.

Willens: You don't have any personal recollection of hearing the people on Tinian express either their support of the U.S. military proposal or their opposition to it?

Guerrero: Generally, the idea of having the U.S. obtain some lands, that some exchange was necessary to achieve the new status, was well-received by most of the people. There were a few individuals that had anti-military sentiments.

Willens: Some of the people who spoke up aggressively at these meetings included the then mayor of Tinian who was Mr. Borja, and Municipal Council Speaker, Felipe Mendiola, and then Joe Cruz, who was not yet a member of the Commission but was a former Mayor of Tinian. All three of those Tinian political leaders were opposed to the moving of San Jose. Although they were generally sympathetic to military development, they were opposed to moving the village and thought that the U.S. was asking for too much land. Do you have any sense whether that represented their views or were they positions they took for political purposes so that they would appear to be protecting the people?

Guerrero: I think that those were genuine concerns. Mr. Borja and Mendiola from the very beginning had reservations about this relationship. Down the line Mr. Borja seemed to be easing off. Mr. Mendiola on the other hand was very slow in agreeing to these negotiations.

Willens: Were they members of the Popular Party or of the Territorial Party? Do you remember?

Guerrero: I think they were both Territorial members.

Willens: I see. So they did not feel any particular allegiance to the Popular Party leadership on Saipan?

Guerrero: No. But Joe Cruz, as I recall, was a member of the Popular Party. But Joe Cruz switched sides once or twice, so at that particular time I'm not sure what party he was in.

Willens: Was it your sense that the Tinian representatives on the MPSC were the ones that had to deal with their constituents or did you feel that Ed Pangelinan and other members of the Commission could play a role in educating the Tinian residents and trying to bring them along to support what you were in the process of negotiating.

- Guerrero: Well, we always thought that it would be most effective if the representatives from the particular island were to spearhead discussion among their people. We were there, of course, to lend support, but we took the position that each island's leaders were to initiate or lead the movement.
- Willens: On the subject of political status, the United States did respond to the formal position paper that the Commission put forward. They did express some reservation about mutual consent and some of the other aspects of the Commission's proposal. But it appears as though Ambassador Williams hoped, even during the second round, that it might be possible to reach some tentative agreement on language of a proposed relationship in the very near future. Did you have any sense in May of 1973 that the negotiations were going to go on for another year and a half, or did you think there might be a prospect of an agreement perhaps as early as the end of that year?
- Guerrero: I personally wasn't putting any deadline on when to achieve what.
- Willens: Did you feel under pressure either from the U.S. delegation or from your own constituents to move the negotiations along?
- Guerrero: Not from the U.S. nor from my side. I always felt that we should be cautious. We should take all the time necessary to make sure that what we were aiming at meets the peoples' desire. So I wasn't pressing, although I wanted to have this relationship procured at the earliest possible time. But I thought we should take all the time necessary.
- Willens: At some point during this round of negotiations, the MPSC on advice of counsel told the United States that it was unwilling to accept the plenary power of the United States Congress under Article IV(3)(2) of the U.S. Constitution. Do you have any recollection of the differences between the two delegations that arose early on about this question of Article IV(3)(2) which is sometimes referred to as the Territorial Clause.
- Guerrero: Yes, I think there was some concern that we really did not want to be treated uniformly together with other U.S. territories or even states. In some areas their situation was different from ours and we just did not want an arbitrary decision made to include us with them.
- Willens: A concern expressed by the Commission and pressed by your counsel was that, unless Congressional power was limited in some way, the Congress might legislate on local matters here in the Northern Marianas and that would interfere with the concept of local self-government. The U.S. delegation tried to reassure the Commission on many occasions that it need not worry about Congressional interference because Congress technically had not interfered in the affairs of the insular areas. Do you remember those kinds of reassurances and what was your reaction to them?
- Guerrero: Yes, yes. My position was that, if Congress doesn't normally get into those matters, then what was the problem with specifying this in the agreement. We never can tell what might happen, so we might as well be protected from the start. If, in fact, Congress had no problem with us, why not include it in the first place?
- Willens: On issues like this, I think it's fair to say that your lawyers took the lead to discuss the issues in private with the lawyers representing the U.S. delegation. Did you have any reservations about your counsel trying to work these problems out and advance the Commission's views in these private meetings with the counsel for the other side?
- Guerrero: No, no. I had no problem with that. After all, it has to come back to us for decision. I had confidence with our counsel.

- Willens: Let's turn to the economics and finance side for a moment. The Commission did receive a lengthy report from its economic consultant, Mr. Leonard, in advance of the session, where he set forth his preliminary views of what the proposed commonwealth would require in terms of funds for government operations, funds for capital investment projects, infrastructure and so forth, and funds for transitional planning. Do you recall having any reaction to Mr. Leonard's analysis and his proposal, for example, that some forty-four or forty-seven million dollars would be required in terms of capital improvement projects over a five-year period of time?
- Guerrero: No specific recollection on that. I'm sure there was some discussion back and forth as to how that figure came about and what were the justifications. But I don't have the specifics.
- Willens: Did you personally feel based on your experiences in the Marianas and in your various other roles over the years that there was a pent-up need for major capital improvement projects in the Marianas?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: There had been planning documents going back into the 1960's on many occasions and, in fact, the U.S. delegation subsequently said, why don't we use all these planning documents? I have one quote in a document attributed to you where you said that they were outmoded, had been overtaken by events, and weren't very competent to begin with. Did you have any judgment at the time about the quality of the planning that had been done for the Marianas by the TTPI?
- Guerrero: Well, a lot of these studies that were assigned by the Trust Territory Government were not shared with or originate from, the local level. The Headquarters pretty much dictated what they thought was necessary, so the studies did not reflect, in many case, the true situation of the area.
- Willens: So, even if the TT Administration decided to have a study conducted, it might not consult with the local politicians, businessmen, and community groups to ascertain what their desires might be at the time?
- Guerrero: Yes, that's correct.
- Willens: Is that your recollection?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: One of the interesting issues that came up in the exchange between the parties about financial support was that the United States kept emphasizing the financial benefits that would result if and when a major military facility was built on Tinian. Do you recall the U.S. delegation emphasizing the benefits in terms of employment, and so forth, that would result to the Northern Marianas?
- Guerrero: Yes, yes, yes.
- Willens: What was your assessment of those assurances at the time?
- Guerrero: Well, I thought that the military was not too far away from coming into Tinian. So I pretty much took them at face value—that the base was coming.
- Willens: Was it really your sense at the time that the United States was serious about building a major facility, if and when the Commission agreed to it and it was approved by the people?

- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Looking back at 1973, was it your sense that there might be a facility under construction within, say, two years?
- Guerrero: I don't know about two years, but certainly within five years time.
- Willens: In your assessment of the future of the proposed commonwealth, did you see very significant employment and other monetary benefits flowing from a U.S. military presence?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Do you think that view was generally shared by other members of the Commission?
- Guerrero: Yes. As a matter of fact, particularly on Tinian. The people who were opposed to giving two-thirds of the island to the U.S. were concerned that it would be occupied by the military. We were anticipating the establishment for many years. According to a position paper on the subject of economic and finance relating to this subject, the Commission emphasized that it could not really take into account these military expenditures. It said "that any benefit from military operations which might reduce the level of required budget support should be provided in some other form in the event military plans are not implemented." So there seems to have been some discussion within the Commission that, even though the military facility looked like it was feasible within the relatively near term, one had to protect against the possibility that it might not develop on schedule.
- Guerrero: Yes, I guess those observations were pretty much, if not mistaken, at the suggestion of the consultants, including a contingency to that effect. The Commission based on Mr. Leonard's work did propose a capital improvement budget of \$47.7 million over a period of approximately five years. It proposed some \$8.6 million for government operations and a larger sum if the salaries were increased, and they proposed some money for economic development. In response to this very specific Commission paper, the U.S. issued a very general statement. They offered no specific figures by way of counter-proposal and it looks as though they may not have been prepared for this kind of a presentation by the Commission. Do you have any recollection of how the U.S. responded to the Commission's economic proposals?
- Guerrero: I don't think I have.
- Willens: The Commission was dissatisfied with the failure of the U.S. to respond in specific form, and it indicated that it wanted some more specific information on this subject. In fact, at some point near the end of the negotiations, there was a joint press release that announced that the parties had initially discussed financial needs. But Chairman Pangelinan issued a special statement saying, "the Commission is of the unanimous view that the commitments by the United States in the area of economic and financial support in this release are not as specific, definite or generous as the Commission believes appropriate." Do you remember any sense of frustration within the Commission as to the inadequacy of the U.S. response?
- Guerrero: I don't have that recollection.
- Willens: Turning to the subject of land. When it was finally reached at these negotiations, the U.S. did lay out its detailed requirements and they were subsequently presented to the Tinian population in a public meeting on June 1. What was your initial reaction to the request by the United States that it be allowed to purchase the entire island of Tinian, and then it

- would lease back to the civilian community one third of the island? Do you recall that the initial request?
- Guerrero: Yes, yes.
- Willens: What did you think of that?
- Guerrero: Well, you know; these lands are ours. Although we're part of the United States, it made us feel as if we were immigrants to our own islands. I didn't think it was a wise approach.
- Willens: You're making a two point comment. With respect to the U.S. desire to purchase rather than lease, did you believe that ultimately the United States would agree to lease? Or did you think they were going to insist on purchasing the land?
- Guerrero: No, I didn't think they would prevail on that approach. If we did not agree, I did not think they could force us into agreeing.
- Willens: Did you feel the Commission members felt so strongly about the purchase versus lease issue that this could have been a sticking point in the negotiations?
- Guerrero: Definitely. Definitely, it leave us landless, more or less.
- Willens: Do you remember discussing the strength of the Commission's position on that point with members of the U. S. delegation—perhaps at some of the receptions or informal meetings that we had?
- Guerrero: Yes, I do not recall who it could be. I mean, this would be an area that the people, particularly those on Tinian, would just say, "no, no."
- Willens: The second aspect of the original U.S. position was to request the entire island, which was clearly more than they needed, in order to exercise control over the civilian community, to keep out undesirable elements, and so forth. Did you think that was a proposal that the United States thought might ultimately be accepted by the Marianas, or did you have some sense that it was some sort of an opening position for negotiation purposes?
- Guerrero: I think they were just testing us. I don't think they seriously believed that we would buy it.
- Willens: There was much discussion about the sharing of medical and educational facilities by the military and civilian communities. Did you attach much importance to trying to work out these kinds of civilian-military issues during the negotiations?
- Guerrero: No, I didn't.
- Willens: Some members of the Commission felt quite strongly on these issues, did they not?
- Guerrero: Yes, but I never believed that we could fully participate in the facilities established for the military. I've seen the experience in Guam, and they're so protective. No, I never believed that we would have more than very limited access.
- Willens: You were basing your judgment on what you had seen on Guam?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Were there some members of the Commission who were more optimistic than you were that there might be meaningful sharing of facilities?
- Guerrero: I guess so. I guess there must be some that felt that this is a good way to take advantage of the commissary there and the low prices that they offer. Yes, there must have been some members who thought so.

- Willens: In addition to the Tinian request, the United States initially sought some acreage around Saipan, in the Tanapag Harbor area and around Isley Field. Did you have any reaction that you can recall regarding their request for land in those two areas principally for contingency purposes?
- Guerrero: Not in the harbor area, not so much there. I thought that a limited and reasonable amount of land in the harbor area and later on in the Memorial Park was not a bad idea.
- Willens: Well, eventually the United States withdrew its request for land around Isley Field
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: ... in part because the Commission emphasized its objections and wanted to get a fair price for that land. I don't know what in fact has happened to the land in issue.
- Guerrero: It's part of the present airport.
- Willens: So it was needed by the civil community ultimately?
- Guerrero: The old Isley Field.. no, those lands were converted into housing areas.
- Willens: Is that right?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Ambassador Williams did spend six or seven hours explaining the U.S. proposal for a military facility on Tinian at a public meeting on the evening of June 1, 1973. As I understand it, you don't have any personal recollection of being at that meeting and listening to him respond to questions?
- Guerrero: No, I don't remember.
- Willens: Do you recall ever seeing Ambassador Williams respond to questions from the public and try to deal with antagonistic people?
- Guerrero: I guess there were occasions, yes.
- Willens: What was your general assessment of his ability to perform effectively in that confrontational setting?
- Guerrero: Generally he tried to be patient and understanding. There were times where it looked as if he was losing his temper. Some people were pretty strong in opposing the U.S. military land requests, particularly the land size, and there were some very forceful comments. I recall the Ambassador turning red.
- Willens: I think most of us would probably turn red or some other color under those circumstances. One aspect of the Tinian debate, which some of the newspaper reporters commented upon at the time, was that there seemed to be some difference between the generations. Some of the younger participants, many going to college at the time, strongly opposed the U.S. demands for land on Tinian, whereas many of the older residents, some of whom were poorer, welcomed the prospect of new homes and jobs. Did you get any sense that this was a generational problem, in part at least, with respect to Tinian?
- Guerrero: Yes, the older folks, other than the former two mayors, Mendiola and Borja, were generally for it, but the people that were against the U. S. proposal were mostly younger.
- Willens: The second round negotiations ended with the issuance of a joint communique. The communique basically set out some of the understandings that had been reached preliminarily regarding political status, but it indicated that other important issues, like the level of financial support and the response to the U.S. request for land for military

requirements, were open and under discussion. Do you have some sense, in retrospect, as to the success of that second round of negotiations? Or were you disappointed at what had not been discussed?

Guerrero: I don't think I had a position one way or another, whether encouraged or disappointed.

Willens: Did you feel that the Commission was getting to work together as a reasonably effective body?

Guerrero: Yes. We did have disagreements, but we had adopted a system that provided generally whenever there was a controversial issue we would vote and the majority carried. That was the approach we took.

Willens: Let's stay with that for a minute. I got the sense that the Chairman tried to resist putting questions to a vote and that there would be an effort to reach consensus before there was a vote.

Guerrero: Yes, as much as possible we tried to do that. But when it became difficult to come to a consensus, then there was a vote.

Willens: While the second round of negotiations was in progress the U.N. visiting mission of 1973 was submitting its report. It was extremely critical of the United States and the Northern Marianas for embarking on these separate negotiations, and, in fact, recommended that the negotiations come to a halt. This report was subsequently considered at the Trusteeship Council meeting, where the Commission sent Mitch Pangelinan and Ben Manglona as its delegates. I went with them as counsel to the Trusteeship Council meeting. One of the issues that came up at the Trusteeship Council meeting was whether you and Ed Pangelinan would continue to work as part of the Joint Committee. It was believed quite important by members of the Trusteeship Council that you and he would continue to function as members of the Joint Committee, because that seemed to hold out the possibility the ultimately that all the districts would agree on some common future status? Do you have any reaction to that?

Guerrero: Yes. Our reaction was that, so long as we are members of the Congress of Micronesia representing the interest of the Marianas and are appointed to serve on the Future Status Committee of the Congress of Micronesia, we would participate, but only to the extent that we were there to protect the interests of the Marianas. We would not get involved with the affairs of the other districts as far as their status was concerned.

Willens: The members of the Trusteeship Council reached somewhat more temperate (or less critical) conclusions about the separate negotiations than had the visiting mission. The representative from the United Kingdom emphasized the long, historic desire of the Marianas for separate status, and he and others also pointed out that much progress had been reached at the second round of negotiations. In fact, there seems to have been some surprise that the United States and the Commission had basically outlined the general terms of a relationship as a result of that round of negotiations. So the ultimate result was not to request that it be halted. Do you recall having any report from Mitch or Ben Manglona about their participation at the Trusteeship Council meeting?

Guerrero:: Yes, they thought it was very successful.

Willens: It was also made clear by the United States on this occasion that the United States would terminate the Trusteeship only as to all the areas at one time. Did you think at the time that that was going to be an important problem because the Marianas might reach a

status relationship far in advance of the other districts ultimately agreeing to their future status?

Guerrero: Yes, that was a concern. I don't know if I mentioned that earlier. But that was a concern to us, that if the Micronesians were to continue to prolong their decision we would be stuck even if we had concluded our negotiations.

Willens: Was there any way that you and the other members of the Commission could deal with that problem?

Guerrero: I guess we just had to be persistent and continue to impress on the U.S. the unfairness of this approach.

Willens: Following the second round of negotiations, some members of the Marianas Political Status Commission met with the relatively new Guam Political Status Commission. There was a meeting in July of 1973 that was described as an informal opportunity to exchange views with respect to the negotiations. Do you recall participating in any such meeting or hearing about it?

Guerrero: I could have participated. I'm not sure, but I could have participated.

Willens: There was continuing Guam concern about the Marianas negotiations. There was the growing sense, reflected in Mr. Murphy's editorials as well as, in the news reports, that the Marianas Political Status Commission was negotiating a better status than Guam had. Do you recall hearing of that complaint from Guamanian political leaders?

Guerrero: I think there was some sense of concern or jealousy, whatever, that we were given the option to negotiate. I guess that was the key there. In their case, they were just given a status not necessary to their liking, you know, or of their making.

Willens: Following the second round of negotiations, three members of the Commission did go public with criticism of the negotiations. The three members were Dr. Palacios, Joeten, and Felix Rabauliman. They responded to questions that had been presented to them by the press, and they basically expressed real concern over any vesting of sovereignty in the United States, and Mr. Tenorio complained that the U.S. delegation was fully prepared and unwavering whereas the Marianas Political Status Commission was "unprepared for the most part" and wanting to get agreements on the basic fundamentals in the form as proposed by the United States. In other words, he was quite critical of the Commission's performance and implicitly critical of the consultants. Do you have any recollection of the publicity that accompanied those dissenting views?

Guerrero: Not specifically. But I know Joeten and Dr. Palacios particularly were not happy with all the positions that we had been taking.

Willens: There were some political developments on Tinian following the second round. The Speaker of the Municipal Council, Felipe Mendiola, was ejected from office and more than half of Tinian's registered voters signed a petition to the U.N. stating the conditions on which they might agree to U.S. military development of their land. Herman M. Manglona was one of the leading forces behind that petition. Do you have any recollection of events on Tinian casting some doubt as to what the Tinian residents really would agree to ultimately?

Guerrero: They were just negotiating, that's all.

Willens: There were during the summer of 1973 some hearings of the Joint Committee throughout the various districts of Micronesia. Chairman Salii, responding in part to actions by the Congress of Micronesia, conducted hearings. I recall that Ed Pangelinan was part of one

- group of Joint Committee members that went to various hearings, and I assume that you also must have been assigned to a group of Joint Committee members that attended hearings in other districts. Do you have any recollection of those hearings, which were designed to learn what both the leaders and the public at large felt about the way in which the Joint Committee was representing them in the negotiations with the United States.
- Guerrero: Yes, I think I went one time to Truk or Ponape, and the meetings were not well attended. I don't remember any strong positions or statements made by the people.
- Willens: You do not have any recollection of any consensus or strongly held views being presented at those hearings?
- Guerrero: That's correct.
- Willens: But as you recall you were not present at the hearings that the Joint Committee held within the Northern Marianas? There was a hearing on Rota, on Tinian, several on Saipan, including meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, with the District Legislature, with the Municipal Council, and so forth.
- Guerrero: No, I don't.
- Willens: Do you remember any of those?
- Guerrero: No, I don't remember those.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection as to what Chairman Sali's motivation was in organizing and conducting these hearings?
- Guerrero: No, I thought those meetings were the suggestion of the Commission itself to begin getting the sense of the people regarding the mandate of the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: I notice from my notes that the Joint Committee did actually meet with the Marianas Political Status Commission on Saipan. In the course of that meeting, Dr. Palacios, in contrast to his public statement, urged the Joint Committee to give its blessing to the separate political aspirations of the Northern Marianas, and stated that it was a fact of life that there was no unifying factor supporting Micronesia as a single political entity. Do you have any recollection of attending that meeting?
- Guerrero: No. But I remember that Dr. Palacios almost instantaneously became a hero, you know, to the people here because of that change of position. But I did not attend the meeting.
- Willens: It might be that you were busy with another group of the Joint Committee members in Chuuk and elsewhere.
- Guerrero: It could be.
- Willens: It was then in this set of meetings where Chairman Sali tried to really find out whether there were any conditions under which the Marianas people would go along with a status that would involve the other districts. For the most part he was told that there basically were no terms on which that unity could be preserved. The notes of some of these meetings reflect participation by David Sablan, Pedro A. Tenorio, Joe Screen and other names that you and I are very familiar with. Do you recall whether David Sablan at the time was a supporter of a separate status?
- Guerrero: No. Let me see, maybe in the early or mid- 1960's at the Municipal Council, when we were discussing reunification with Guam, Mr. Sablan, David M. Sablan, a resident of Guam, attended that meeting. He said, "Why do you want to be part of Guam, or become part of the United States, you know, for that matter?" And one of the attendees, I'm not sure

who he was, said, "Gee, we're not sure what you're after, because you're saying why are we aspiring to be part of the United States when you are already there. If you don't like it, why are you still in there?" So, I don't think Mr. Sablan was genuinely concerned with the interests of the people here.

Willens: There were two changes in the membership of the Commission between the second and the third rounds. Herman M. Manglona resigned as one of Tinian's two representatives, because he stated he was "tired of politics" and he was quickly replaced by former Tinian mayor, Joe Cruz. Do you have any recollection as to why Mr. Manglona left and Mr. Cruz replaced him?

Guerrero: Not first hand, but I wouldn't be surprised if Mr. Cruz was behind this effort so that he could participate actively in the work of the Commission.

Willens: Well, why was he not originally appointed?

Guerrero: I have no idea why that came about. I wasn't sure just how the appointments for Tinian came about.

Willens: Now he was viewed as colorful and you've described him briefly before. Some of the documents from the United States indicate that some people had "raised eyebrows" because he had some previous encounters with the law in the United States, and others described him in rather uncomplimentary terms. What was your assessment of his political skills and the extent to which he used those skills within the Commission?

Guerrero: I knew Joe Cruz right after he came here from the States. That was, I guess, that was in the late 1950's. He was very persuasive, he knows how to approach issues. He was a very effective negotiator and would try every possible means to achieve his objective.

Willens: Well, he went public very strongly with the fact that his Tinian constituents would not agree to more than one-third of the island to be made available to the military. He told the *Marianas Variety* in late 1973 that if he were speaking only as an individual he would agree to military development of two-thirds of the island. So, to some extent, he was distinguishing between his personal view, which would be largely accommodating of the United States request, as opposed to his view representing his constituents, which he thought at the time would permit only one-third of the island. My own sense at the time, and later in reviewing the materials, was that he was taking these positions in order to gradually bring his people along to support what ultimately he thought, and a majority of the Commission thought, was in the best interest of the entire Northern Marianas. Do you have a reaction to the kind of strategy that he might have followed in order to bring the people of Tinian along?

Guerrero: It wouldn't surprise me if he truly believed that, if it was up to him, it would be agreeable to even half. I think it was less of a strategy in convincing the people, because he could be very, very controversial. I mean, he'll confront opponents if he feels that they are becoming unreasonable.

Willens: Well, confrontation, though, on the whole is not usually a successful means of persuading people here in the Northern Marianas. Was Joe Cruz an exception to that generalization?

Guerrero: Well, Joe has a way of presenting himself and a very appealing approach. But there are times where people would step backward if you're forceful and appear to be reasonable, then they'll respect that. And Joe has that approach of being firm and very convincing.

Willens: Just a few weeks after the resignation of Mr. Manglona, Joeten also resigned. In a letter

to the District Administrator, he identified his substantial business commitments as a reason for his withdrawal, but he also expressed some concern because members of the Commission, he felt, believed that he was biased because of his economic interests. He thought that someone else could, perhaps, replace him who wouldn't be handicapped by this perception, namely that he was in there to protect his business interests. What was your reaction to Joeten's concern at the time that he was perceived as biased because of his economic interests?

Guerrero: Well, I don't really buy that. I think there were, in my opinion, two other factors that suggested that he move out. One was that it was taking lot of his time. You know, this was something new to Mr. Tenorio. Of course, he could negotiate but his ability to communicate was limited. The other one, I think, is more applicable and was that he seemed to be not able to put his objectives through the Commission. He was used to having the ability of achieving what he pursued, but did not in the Commission.

Willens: You're making the point that he typically got his way in achieving what he set out to achieve in his business.

Guerrero: Normally.

Willens: But he found himself very definitely in a small minority among the members of the Commission?

Guerrero: I guess that's more the reason why he wanted to get out.

Willens: Are you suggesting that he was not particularly effective in articulating his position and persuading people.

Guerrero: Yes, in this Commission.

Willens: He was not as articulate or persuasive as he was in other settings?

Guerrero: Yes, normally he was regarded as a leader, and especially in his party what he wished to go through would.

Willens: He was replaced by Pedro A. Tenorio, who had been an unsuccessful candidate for a senate seat in the Congress of Micronesia in 1972, and had been previously designated as an alternate by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce. Did you know Pete Tenorio well before his appointment to the Commission?

Guerrero: I knew him very briefly when he got out of school, worked for the Trust Territory government, and got initially interested in politics. When I was Chairman of the Popular Party he asked me how he could become a candidate for the Congress of Micronesia from the Party. At the time the seat was being held by Oly Borja, and Oly was the person he wanted to challenge.

Willens: Oly was in the Territorial Party at the time?

Guerrero: No, well, at the time when Pete was first introduced in the political area, Olympio was with the Popular Party and was our candidate.

Willens: And did Pete Tenorio want the Popular Party to endorse him instead of Senator Borja?

Guerrero: Yes, and I told him how we worked within the Party, that we had this steering committee and he has to work initially within that steering committee. He was very upset because he thought we betrayed him. He apparently spoke with some key members of the steering committee of the Popular Party and thought that he had their endorsement, but when it

come to the actually voting he lost out to Mr. Borja.

Willens: Is that the time he ran as an independent?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: That was one of the first times anyone had done that. Isn't that true?

Guerrero: That's right.

Willens: Now during what years were you Chairman of the Popular Party.. approximately?

Guerrero: I guess it was in the early years. You know, that part of my political affiliations: Popular Democrats, Young Popular—I didn't include that in my biography.

Willens: But you definitely remember you were Chairman of the Party in 1972 when Pete Tenorio tried to get the endorsement?

Guerrero: No. It was earlier than that.

Willens: Oh, it was earlier

Guerrero: Much earlier than that. It was in the early mid-1960s

Willens: Mid 1960s?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: I see. During the interval between the second and third rounds of negotiations, considerable controversy arose over a United States imposed moratorium on homesteads in Tinian. This was announced without consultation with the Marianas Political Status Commission and was very controversial, because it looked as though the United States was unilaterally stopping economic development on Tinian. Do you have any recollection of this so-called moratorium.

Guerrero: No specifics on that.

Willens: Do you have any general views going back to that period of the TTPI Administration of the homestead program? Let me just amplify that a bit. There are some materials that suggested that the TTPI officials, including Maynard Neas (spells out) N-E-A-S, were never particularly sympathetic about the homestead program and thought the land was being poorly used by the homestead program. So as a result, in part, applications were pending for many, many years for homesteads. Do you recall any concern with the homestead program at the time?

Guerrero: There were concerns that not many of the homesteads were being utilized or improved according to the regulations or policies of homesteading. Yes, but Pm not sure just how strong this was, but there were concerns.

Willens: The United States defended its moratorium on the grounds that it would be unfair to have people get homesteads in the area that might ultimately be leased by the United States. They also expressed concern about land speculation on Tinian, including some alleged to have been done by members of the Commission. Did you have any personal knowledge of land speculation going on in Tinian?

Guerrero: At that time I didn't. I guess it was later in the negotiations, or after I got out of the Commission, that I noticed that some members had, in fact, taken advantage of that.

Willens: And they had bought land on Tinian in the area that might ultimately be used by....

- Guerrero: By the military, yes.
- Willens: By the United States. Was that viewed as acceptable behavior at the time?
- Guerrero: It wasn't thought to be of concern at the time.
- Willens: Would people look at it differently today?
- Guerrero: Yes, definitely. I mean they would think that those that participated in the negotiations took advantage of it. They knew the value of those lands and some of those lands or owners were exchanged for prime properties here on Saipan.
- Willens: So they bought land on Tinian that increased in value and subsequently they were able to exchange it for land on Saipan. Was it one of the responsibilities of the Marianas Public Land Corporation to decide what land should be given on Saipan in exchange for land that had to be surrendered on Tinian?
- Guerrero: Yes, the Public Lands Corporation was by Constitution supposed to administer public lands fairly and prudently for the interests of the people of the CNMI. There have been abuses and those exchanges from Tinian which took areas here [in Saipan] were very serious actions taken by the Public Land Corporation.
- Willens: Was there ever an effort in the last ten or fifteen years to try to correct those inequities or is it something that's simply a matter of historical interest?
- Guerrero: Very, very unfortunate, because until very recently there has been talk of mismanagement in the MPLC but nothing was done to correct it. And not only in land but even in fundings. A lot of abuses.
- Willens: Were those some of the reasons why the Legislature ultimately decided to terminate the Marianas Public Land Corporation and absorb its responsibilities within the Executive Branch?
- Guerrero: There was that talk. But there also was speculation that, if they were to put it under the Executive Branch, the politicians may have more influence over it.
- Willens: Some thought they were motivated by the desire to exercise more control over its operations than they could have when it stood as a corporation?
- Guerrero: That's right.
- Willens: So it wasn't necessarily a desire to eliminate abuses?
- Guerrero: Not necessarily.
- Willens: It was during November of 1973 when the United States did issue its policy on the return of public lands. You mentioned earlier, I think, that you fully expected the lands ultimately to be returned. When the concept of a corporation was first set forth, did you have any reactions one way or the other as to whether that was a good idea or a bad idea?
- Guerrero: Well, I always thought that its better to have it in the hands of our people, the power to decide the fate of those lands. However, on second thought, now looking back, it wasn't a very effective method.
- Willens: Maybe what one learns is there are no effective methods if you don't have the proper people administering the structure and being held responsible.
- Guerrero: Correct.
- Willens: There was another round of Micronesian negotiations at about this time. November of 1973 the seventh round of Micronesian negotiations took place in Washington, D.C.

There were apparently many speeches in the Congress of Micronesia about whether the Joint Committee should continue to negotiate. Senator Mangefel, (spells out: M-A-N-G-E-F-E-L), of Yap, who was a Joint Committee member, gave a speech and cited the separate Marianas negotiations, the unilateral moratorium in Tinian, the refusal of certain TTPI employees to provide documents to the Congress of Micronesia, the delay in the political education program, and so forth, as the basis for challenging the sincerity of the United States. What were Senator Mangefel's general views about status, and what was your assessment of him as a political leader?

Guerrero: Yes, John was a very colorful guy. He's regarded as a person, that is, who would speak out his mind in a sometimes joking manner, but it fits into the realities. As far as status was concerned for Micronesia, John, I felt, wanted one entity, so he was concerned whether, first of all, this was achievable and would be a working entity. I don't remember specifically those issues that you mentioned, but if he mentioned those he was really concerned.

Willens: Another speech was given by a Senator from Palau whose last name is, I can't pronounce it, (spells it out: T-M-E-T-U-C-H-L).

Guerrero: (Pronounces it) Me-tool. Roman Me-tool. Roman.

Willens: Is that how you pronounce it?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: He apparently questioned whether the Congress of Micronesia could "safely continue to negotiate" with the United States given the apparent lack of sincerity negotiations quickly focused on the differences between the parties about the level of financial support that the Micronesians were seeking. I know that you and Ed Pangelinan were there primarily as observers and to protect the interests of the Northern Marianas, but I would like to ask whether you remember the impasse that was reached over financial support and the fact that the negotiations concluded rather abruptly because of these differences.

Guerrero: I don't have that.

Willens: You don't have any recollection?

Guerrero: No recollection on that.

Willens: The Marianas Political Status Commission had to prepare for the next round of negotiations, which included a good deal of work done by the consultants in working groups that had been established at the last round. There was a working group of lawyers, and there was a working group on economic and financial matters. But the Commission made an interesting decision in the summer of 1973 when it had to request funding from the Marianas District Legislature. It realized that it did need funding for consultants and expenses incurred by the Commission. The Commission made a decision to release the position papers that had been exchanged during the negotiations. This was something that the United States was opposed to. Do you remember any discussion within the Commission as to whether it would be useful to publish the papers that had been exchanged during the second round?

Guerrero: I don't recall that, Howard.

Willens: Do you recall any concern about whether the District Legislature would grant the necessary funding?

Guerrero: Thinking back, the District Legislature was faced with difficult decisions in terms of

funding. They had other projects to finance and some members, although receptive to this ongoing negotiations, were in my opinion, somewhat jealous of not actively participating in the negotiations.

Willens: Only two members of the District Legislature were officially part of the Commission, as I recall.

Guerrero: That's correct. So most of them were pretty much in the dark in terms of the actual negotiations. So there's this sense of personal feeling of not being overly generous with funding.

Willens: The Marianas Political Status Commission, as I recall, was requesting about 95,000 dollars or maybe even more, which was a very substantial percentage of the total resources available to the District Legislature. As it happened, the position papers were all attached to a report made by the Commission to the District Legislature and, as might have been expected, they ended up in the hands of the press very shortly thereafter. The result was a series of articles in the *Pacific Daily News* and the *Marianas Variety* relying on the position papers. Although I must say I had some reservations at the time about the Chairman's position to go forward with the publication of the papers, it turned out to be very useful because the publicity was on the whole favorable and demonstrated to the Legislature and to the people that the Commission was taking its duties seriously and protecting the interests of the public. Do you have any reaction to the kind of publicity and coverage that was given to the position papers at the time?

Guerrero: I didn't mind giving out the papers. After all, all these issues were subject to discussion and eventually approval if it was adopted by the two sides. So it's like an educational process.

Willens: That's one of the points I was going to ask you about. What other means did the Commission have available to inform the members of the public generally about what it was doing?

Guerrero: Well, you know, we had some public meetings. But the Commission itself was making strong use of the radio and televisions.

Willens: There came a time when the Commission did really feel that it had to embark on a public education program. Were you generally satisfied at the time that the people in the villages knew what you and the other members of the Commission were trying to do?

Guerrero: Generally, yes. At least on the Popular Party side, we were having, if I'm not mistaken, quarterly meetings of the general membership and, of course, anybody that's interested. The purpose of those meetings was to discuss political status. We would have other elected leaders make a report to the members about what was happening and to invite their comments.

Willens: At the beginning of the third round of negotiations, which took place in late 1973, the Chairman, Mr. Pangelinan, was quoted in the newspapers that the Commission basically had several priorities and it wanted to avoid any deadlock and keep the negotiations moving along. Did you and he and other members of the Commission have some sense, based on your experience with the Congress of Micronesia Joint Committee, that you could keep the negotiations going along and that you wanted to avoid any impasse of the kind that had hurt the progress of the Joint Committee's negotiations?

Guerrero: Yes, we always thought that there's no use in delaying movement on issues that we were not able to resolve at that time, so we thought let's go on to next step and then we could come back on the remaining issues.

- Willens: At the beginning of the third round of the negotiations there was another set of meetings within in the Commission. There were voluminous legal memos submitted on topics like income tax laws, customs areas, U.S. citizenship and nationality, local self-government, and so forth. Let me just touch on some of the issues in these various categories and see what your recollection, if any, is with respect to them. The Commission did develop a position on U.S. citizenship to the effect that, in essence, any citizen of the Marianas who wanted to become a U.S. citizen would be able to do that under the terms of the proposed status, but that the option of nationality was available for those who wanted it. What is your recollection of the Commission's deliberations of this citizenship-nationality difference?
- Guerrero: Well, I guess that legal counsel had presented very little difference between the two and some of the members said, "Why do we have to have a national status as well as citizenship when the benefits are almost identical for both categories?" I just wasn't sure what the reason was for suggesting also national status.
- Willens: My recollection is that the Carolinian community and some of the elderly residents of the islands felt that becoming U. S. nationals was less radical a change than if they became U.S. citizens. There seemed to be some desire to have that option even though you recall correctly the legal explanation pointed out that there was very little difference between the two different statuses. Do you have any recollection of the views of the Carolinian or any other segment of the community that wanted to preserve the national option?
- Guerrero: No, not specifically. I thought it had to do with American Samoa or something.
- Willens: Well, American Samoans, for years and maybe still do, believe that you have to be U.S. nationals rather than citizens in order to preserve the control of land alienation that they wanted. But as we argued years ago, and as time has demonstrated, one doesn't have to have national status in order to achieve certain objectives on land.
- Guerrero: That's right.
- Willens: Well, the other point that came out that has even greater relevance today is that the Commission proposed that residency in the Northern Marianas for citizenship purpose should be permitted for "immediate relatives" of those in the Northern Marianas and there was concern expressed about whether resident aliens could come here and establish residence to become U.S. citizens. What is your recollection of the Commission's deliberations about aliens and the extent to which it wanted to take safeguards so as to prevent the community from being a haven or entry point to the U.S. for aliens from other countries?
- Guerrero: Yes, that was a very difficult subject. On the one hand we wanted to be fair to certain people who considered this to be their permanent residence. On the other hand, of course, we were concerned that this may involve, you know, a sizeable number of other people. But one thing that is very clear in my personal recollection was that those people who are here for employment either with the Trust Territory or the Navy or whatever should never be considered and be eligible for citizenship.
- Willens: For U.S. citizenship?
- Guerrero: For U.S. citizenship. Unfortunately, as early as 1976, 1978, 1979, I know that there were people that came here for employment, particularly from the Philippines, who were granted certificates of identity and eventually through the court system achieved that interim status.
- Willens: Yes, I represented the Commonwealth in the late 1970s in trying to resist the

determination that they were entitled to citizenship based on their certificates of identity and their renunciation of Philippine citizenship. But the Commonwealth lost that. It was before Judge Laureta.

Guerrero: As a matter of fact, I was with the first Administration in its last year. There was something like close to eighty individuals who were declared by the court to be entitled to U.S. citizenship. All the documents were prepared by the Immigration and were before the then first governor, Camacho, for him to sign. And I remember a call from Mike [White], who asked, "When is the governor going to sign those documents?" or certificates of identity. And I said, "He doesn't want to sign them." And the governor said, "I'm not going to sign them, they can send me to jail, but I'm not going to sign them because I know that this was not the intent of the people when they negotiated it." So he never signed them. Apparently the new governor, Pete P. Tenorio, I understand, went ahead and issued them.

Willens: This happened right at the end of the Camacho Administration?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: Before Governor Pedro P. Tenorio took office?

Guerrero: Yes. It was before the election though.

Willens: That's a very interesting story. Did you or other members of the Commission have any sense in the early 1970's that the economy would develop here in such a way as to attract, and be based on, so many resident aliens?

Guerrero: No, even our economic studies did not project this advancement.

Willens: I remember distinctly that you and some other members of the Commission expressed concern about the fact that there were two thousand plus aliens on the island at the time. You were expressing concern about the impact of that relatively small number on the culture and the community, and fifteen years later it was in the tens of thousands.

Guerrero: I never expected this boom. I knew that investors would be enticed to come here because we have permanent status under the United States, so they'll be encouraged to come in. But I did not expect this. Of course, its all our own making.

Willens: That's another subject.

Guerrero: That's another subject.

Willens: One of the other issues related to income tax laws and whether the Marianas would have the authority to impose its own income tax laws. Was that a subject to which you attached any particular importance?

Guerrero: I felt that we should be given the opportunity to assess our needs, how fast we should develop tax and other financial systems. And, you know, this includes the property tax.

Willens: Were you disappointed when ultimately the United States retreated from a preliminary agreement and said that the U.S. Congress was insisting that the Marianas have the same kind of mirror-image tax as exists in Guam?

Guerrero: I was a little upset about it, because I felt that we should have our own system. I was not attaching too much importance between that and the direct grant from the United States for support here that we were asking for. I wasn't connecting those two issues together. Foremost, we should be given the opportunity to advance at our own pace, a reasonable pace, because this whole system was new to us and we may be unprepared.

- Willens: How about the authority that the Commonwealth ultimately achieved to have a rebate system which allows the Commonwealth to rebate a substantial percentage of the taxes paid. Does that not give the Commonwealth the kind of discretionary authority that you thought was important?
- Guerrero: I did not give that much thought at the time.
- Willens: Another issue that came up in the political status area was the question of customs duties and whether or not the Marianas would be part of the customs areas of the United States. Was that an issue that you personally attached much importance to?
- Guerrero: Not much. I thought it was an important thing but, not very strongly, I wasn't well-versed in this area.
- Willens: Another area was the question of which U.S. laws would apply in the Commonwealth, and the United States basically took the position that all the applicability issues ought to be reserved for the future after the status had been agreed to and then you could have a Commission that could decide which laws applied. The Marianas Political Status Commission, in part because of our recommendation as counsel, took the position that these issues ought to be resolved before the status was finally agreed upon. The system was new to us.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: And ultimately a formula approach was developed that carried the day. Was that an issue that you felt was important to the future Commonwealth?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Well, why was that?
- Guerrero: I always prefer not to put something in the future that may or may not occur, so I would rather like to see up front what I'm getting into.
- Willens: The major issue that came up in the political status area, of course, related to local self-government and whether or not there should be some limitations on Article IV(3)(2) [of the U.S. Constitution]. The Commission made a presentation that tried to emphasize to the United States that some limitations were required and the United States came back by saying there was no need to fear of Congressional interference. They were afraid that the Commission, of which you were a member, was seeking a new and different status from Guam and that it would be difficult to implement in Congress. Did you attach importance to the self-government issue at the time?
- Guerrero: I wanted a system where internally we could decide what we wanted to do. I was very skeptical of the Trust Territory system, with the High Com being appointed rather than elected by the people here. We always thought that he would bow to whatever his superior would tell him to do rather than siding with us, the Micronesians. So I felt it was very important to have local autonomy.
- Willens: In the economic area there was considerable discussion about transitional planning. Jim Leonard and I had worked in a working group but had not been very successful in getting agreement from the United States during the recess as to the content and the level of funding for a transitional program. Did you personally attach much importance to the concept of a twelve or eighteen month program that would address such things as government planning, a constitutional convention, and economic and social planning, which would help the new Commonwealth government prepare itself?

- Guerrero: Yes, I always believed that we should have a smooth transition, and we had to have good planning to accomplish that. The transition, at first, was pretty well established.
- Willens: After a lot of negotiation, an ad hoc preparatory committee was created at this third round of negotiations. It ultimately yielded a proposal that was accepted at one of the later rounds and it was implemented reasonably well. One question is whether, when Governor Camacho came into office, he and his Executive Branch officials rejected all these proposals out of hand or whether he took advantage of them? I have heard from some sources that the plans never were seriously looked at for implementation.
- Guerrero: Well, maybe I was thinking of a different transitional approach, you know, the transition during the separate administration time. Of course, I was with the Camacho Administration during the last two years of his term. The first two years Mitch Pangelinan was there.
- Willens: Did you replace Mitch Pangelinan?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: As sort of an administrative person?
- Guerrero: Like an administrative assistant. In those days, it's pretty much a battle between the Legislature and the Executive, getting the programs going and the services provided. It's also a battle for the resources, financial mostly, between the two branches.
- Willens: But you did think the transitional planning and funding was a legitimate subject for the Marianas Political Status Commission to raise and to press on?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: With respect to the Phase Two Funding, as it was called, the U.S. did make a presentation and finally made a first proposal of financial support. They proposed a five-year multi-year support program that involved \$11.5 million for government operations and CIP and an estimated \$3 million of federal programs. They presented this to the Commission and emphasized that it was fifty percent more than was available under the TTPI. When you first heard the U.S. proposal in these terms, do you remember having any reaction as to whether it was a generous proposal or an insufficient proposal or something in between?
- Guerrero: I did not have any reaction.
- Willens: On the military land requirement, the United States just stated its position again. There had been no working group on the subject of military land between the second and third rounds. Although the consultants on behalf of the Commission requested additional information, the U.S. delegation refused to provide it. The U.S. delegation really made no changes in their position with respect to land requirements at the third round. It was during the third round that the Marianas Political Status Commission became aware for the first time of this idea of a Memorial Park in the harbor area. What is your recollection of this suggestion and how did you respond to it?
- Guerrero: I did not take that seriously. The reasoning for that is to memorialize the efforts of the Second World War, both the U.S. and the natives so I did not put too much importance on that.
- Willens: Did you think that it was a bargaining tactic or did you really think it would ultimately materialize?
- Guerrero: No, I didn't think too much about it.

- Willens: It was a proposal that Ambassador Williams became very attached to.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Isn't that correct?
- Guerrero: Yes. But you see that has been on the drawing board for years—until very recently when the U.S. Congress was able to provide the funding.
- Willens: One issue that came up during this third round of negotiations pertained to so called military retention land. I don't know whether you recall that term being used, but it was land that the U.S. military had under lease, negotiated with the TTPI government at an early date. They thought that they had some claim to this land the Marianas Political Status Commission had to honor. Do you have any recollection of the dispute over military retention land?
- Guerrero: Yes, those lands were very controversial because a lot of them were privately owned during the Japanese time, and right after the war the TT administrators unilaterally determined which should be declared military retention land. So they just prevented the people from claiming title to those lands and were given lands in exchange. I always felt that a lot of those arrangements were, if not unlawful, not fair.
- Willens: The U.S. did make one change in its position with respect to Tinian. It agreed for the first time to limit the land it wanted on Tinian to two-thirds of the island. In other words, it backed off from its proposal for the entire island and said it would leave the one-third in the hands of the civilian community. Do you recall having any reaction to that change in the U.S. position?
- Guerrero: You know, I remember that Joe Cruz was saying, "Gee, you know, because you people refused to accept the U.S. offer—not the Commission but the people of Tinian—you lose out on improvements that the military was offering."
- Willens: As the third round ended, there had been some more details with respect to political status. The United States for the first time offered financial support, and they had slightly modified their position on Tinian. That was in December 1973, and the next round was going to be in the spring of 1974. During this round the United States handed across the table a draft covenant. We had not really anticipated that they would do that. They asked for the Commission's reaction to it. And the Chairman said, after we had discussed it within the Commission, that he should say that we would respond to this in due course. Do you remember receiving the U.S. version of a covenant?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: What was your reaction to the fact that they had a document that they wanted you to read and sign up to?
- Guerrero: Well, I don't know if it surprised me, but my reaction was in line with what Eddie, the Chairman, said, "We need time to go through this." I don't know if I was surprised, though.
- Willens: It was my advice that we as lawyers had a responsibility of looking at this in detail during the recess. We did that and as we proceed I will be able to discuss exactly what happened in the spring of 1974. I think that concludes discussion of the third round.
- Guerrero: Okay.
- Willens: After the third round of negotiations, there was a change in the membership of the MPSC. Mr. Hocog of Tinian resigned and Bernard Hofschneider came in to replace him. Did you

- have any recollection of Mr. Hofschneides's participation in the work of the Committee?
- Guerrero: Very briefly. Bernard is always a quiet person. He rarely speaks. In the open he rarely speaks, but in between sessions, he speaks out. He was a former member of the District Legislature.
- Willens: You say he was a former member?
- Guerrero: Yes. Marianas District Legislature. So, he's quite a capable person, although his style is quiet.
- Willens: He was teamed with Joe Cruz from Tinian, who, I think its fair to say, was not a quiet type.
- Guerrero: That's correct. Joe is pretty outspoken, very moving, and Bernard on the other hand is slower, more cautious, I guess.
- Willens: You remember that the Joint Status Committee of the Congress of Micronesia in 1973 held hearings in the various districts to ascertain the sentiments of the people in those districts regarding their future political status. Based on those hearings, the Joint Committee submitted a report to the Congress of Micronesia in early 1974, and the report, which was criticized by your colleague, Ed Pangelinan, raised a few important issues with respect to the Marianas negotiations. First, the Joint Committee suggested that many people on the island of Rota did not support the separate negotiations. That led to a meeting that Ed Pangelinan, and perhaps others, attended on Rota to try to ascertain to what extent that report was true. Do you have any recollection in early 1974, or thereabouts, that there was any concern as to whether Rota, in fact, was supportive of the separate status negotiations that you were engaged in?
- Guerrero: I cannot remember any strong opposition to the movement. Of course, even on Saipan there were people that were against these efforts. And I'm sure Rota also had some people who were opposed. I cannot remember anything of concern that would affect the position that the islands had.
- Willens: Rota was represented on the Commission by two individuals, one of whom, Ben Manglona, was a very strong political leader on Rota. Isn't that correct?
- Guerrero: That's correct. Yes. Ben, from that time on and up to the present is a very, very influential man. I have no doubt that the Rotanese people always regarded him as a good leader.
- Willens: Did you feel throughout the negotiations that Mr. Manglona and his colleague from Rota were fully in support of what you and the other Saipan-based leaders wanted to accomplish?
- Guerrero: Yes. Even further, that he had the support of his people, Ben Manglona and Joannes Taimanao, yes.
- Willens: The other issue that was raised in this Joint Committee report to the Congress of Micronesia related to whether or not the Carolinian community supported the separate status negotiations. The Joint Committee quoted Felix Rabauliman, who was a member of the MPSC, to the effect that the Carolinian community really wanted to stay part of Micronesia. The leaders of the Carolinian community at the time were Felix Rabauliman, Ben Fital and Joe Lifofoi. Did you have any feeling at about this time that your effort was not supported within the Carolinian community?
- Guerrero: Yes. The Carolinian community was always following their leaders. And their leaders were

predominantly in the Territorial Party. They wanted to be part of the United States from the late 1950s forward, there was no question about it. But, as we mentioned earlier, they wanted a direct affiliation with the United States. That was the goal in our negotiations. So, I don't think it was a valid position that the Congress was making as far as the Carolinian community was concerned.

Willens: Did you think that Chairman Salii and some of the members of the Joint Committee were trying to instill some doubt or confusion with respect to the separate status negotiations in order to preserve the possibility that all six districts would remain together?

Guerrero: Yes. The Micronesian delegation and the Congress itself wanted the Marianas not to move out. Anything that could disrupt these efforts would be in line with their interests. There's no evidence to show that, in fact, the people of the Marianas, including the Carolinians, were against these efforts of the Marianas Political Status Commission. They cannot establish anything to document that this was, in fact, the situation.

Willens: The Marianas Political Status Commission, after the Third Round, felt that it was time to go to the constituents in a series of meetings. They organized a series of political education meetings in early 1974, including meetings on Rota and Tinian and several separate meetings on the island of Saipan. Do you have any recollection of participating in these village meetings, including meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, in order to explain what the Commission was doing and to determine what reactions the people had?

Guerrero: Yes. We made that routine when Eddie and I were in the Congress of Micronesia. We always tried, as part of the leadership of the Marianas, to have regular meetings with the people. When it came to commonwealth status for the Marianas people—that's even more directly of their concern. So, as we negotiated with the United States, we communicated what had transpired in previous sessions in meetings with the community and wanted to hear from them about any concern that we may have overlooked and they may want us to address.

Willens: Do you remember any single concern that came up during one of these public meetings that persuaded you and perhaps other members of the Commission to take a different posture with the United States?

Guerrero: No, what we have been pursuing and discussing with the United States were pretty much accepted. There may have been small things, but not critical ones.

Willens: The newspaper stories at the time report that some issues were raised at the Chamber of Commerce meeting that are of some interest. For example, the reports I've seen indicate that some members of the Chamber of Commerce expressed concern that if the Marianas became a separate commonwealth, many people who worked for the TTPI Administration would lose their jobs. Did you personally have any family members or friends who worked for the TTPI Administration?

Guerrero: Yes. Yes.

Willens: Was there a concern that if the TTPI was dispersed or moved to another district that there would be a significant loss of jobs?

Guerrero: Not the jobs. The issue that I remember was the revenues from these TT employees from the districts and from the mainland. If the headquarters were to be relocated, the incomes from these people would be lost and local businesses would suffer. But not on the employment side.

Willens: Well, was it generally the assumption, even if not made explicit, that the local people who

- worked for the TTPI would find similar jobs with the newly established Commonwealth government?
- Guerrero: Yes, because we were negotiating the financial and operations side of the government. And, of course, in our economic study we took into account this possible displacement of our employment. We tried to deal with those losses in our negotiations. We thought that instead of losing jobs, we might have, not necessarily in government but in the private sector, excess job opportunities for our people.
- Willens: So you thought that the new status would generate more jobs, both in the private sector and in the government, for local people?
- Guerrero: Yes, definitely.
- Willens: One of the issues that came up during these political education efforts was a degree of confusion because the TTPI was engaged in its own political education program that was called "Education for Self-Government" (ESG). Some of the local people who were actively involved were David Maratita and Jack Torres, who I think may both have been employed by the TTPI at the time. I'm definite that Mr. Maratita was, but I'm not sure about Mr. Torres. The TTPI program of public education emphasized all the possible future status arrangements ranging from independence, to free association, to commonwealth, to the status quo, or whatever, whereas the Marianas Political Status Commission wanted to educate the people about the commonwealth objective that it was negotiating toward. So there was some considerable confusion about the two programs. Do you have any recollection of a TTPI program of the kind that I have described?
- Guerrero: Yes, I remember that Education for Self-Government program. I cannot remember the details, but I remember that there were these efforts to expose the people to all the possibilities. And particularly the ongoing Micronesian negotiations.
- Willens: Well, how did you feel about that? Did you feel that program was consistent with what you were doing or would you have preferred that they conduct that program in the other districts and not conduct it in the Marianas?
- Guerrero: No, I had no problem with that. After all, there were Micronesians here, so I had no problem.
- Willens: Another issue that came up related to the Tinian military land issue and the moratorium on homesteads that we discussed earlier. Under the leadership of Congressman Atalig and perhaps others, it was proposed that there be a referendum on Tinian to ascertain whether the people on Tinian would support the two-thirds request that the United States had put on the table. And, indeed, even Joe Cruz was reported as supporting a referendum on the grounds that he had to follow the dictates of his constituents. This caused considerable consternation back in the United States and ultimately the question of a referendum was put before District Administrator Ada and he vetoed it. Do you have any recollection of this proposed referendum and why it was vetoed?
- Guerrero: I don't remember why it was vetoed, but I remember that movement. I have no thought as to why it was disapproved by Mr. Ada.
- Willens: Well, Mr. Ada issued a very literate message emphasizing that the issues were before the Marianas Political Status Commission, which included representatives from all the islands, and that issues of this kind ought to be decided at the final stage when all the details of the relationship are set forth. Are you aware of any effort that Ed Pangelinan or other members of the Commission made to persuade Mr. Ada to veto the proposed referendum?

- Guerrero: No, I'm not aware of that.
- Willens: The veto message caused great anger in Tinian and it subsequently was the subject of petitions to the United Nations and so forth, but ultimately nothing came of it. In early 1974, Congressman Burton and other members of Congress visited the Marianas and they did have at least one meeting with the Marianas Political Status Commission on January 8, 1974. Do you remember being present at a meeting with Congressman Burton at about this time?
- Guerrero: Yes, as a matter of fact, I think it was during that visit that we celebrated his birthday.
- Willens: Celebrated what?
- Guerrero: Congressman Burton's birthday at the old Legislature's beach area.
- Willens: Was it a surprise for him?
- Guerrero: He was kind of surprised; he wasn't expecting it. I don't know how we learned about it. But the details of that meeting I cannot remember.
- Willens: One issue he raised then and raised also in Washington with me and others related to the U.S. tax laws, which he strongly urged be made applicable in the Marianas to the same extent that they were in Guam. Do you have a recollection of that coming up?
- Guerrero: Yes. Yes. As a matter of fact, if I remember correctly, he was not concerned about giving flexibility to the CNMI people because it is something new and they need to be educated and proceed at their own pace. His concern was that some of these big businesses from the mainland would take advantage of this tax break. That was his concern—that they would not be paying tax here because of this break and they wouldn't be paying tax back in the mainland.
- Willens: Did you think he was persuasive on that subject?
- Guerrero: He tried to be very reasonable, very understanding of our situation.
- Willens: Do you recall it as an amicable and friendly meeting?
- Guerrero: Yes. Yes, he wasn't pressing. He understood our position but he was also concerned about the other people that would try to use this as a loophole.
- Willens: The reports indicate that he informally advised you and other members of the Commission that you should hold "tight" on your position that the land should be leased, and he expressed confidence that the United States would ultimately agree to that.
- Guerrero: Yes, he was a man who understands peoples' needs. I cannot be specific on that leasing thing, but he was trying to be helpful.
- Willens: The Congress of Micronesia met again in early 1974. There are two items that I want to mention to you to see if you have any recollection. First, the Congress of Micronesia finally did enact legislation authorizing a Constitutional Convention for all of Micronesia, which would be held some time in 1975. Did you have any feeling one way or the other as to this Con-Con legislation and whether or not the Marianas should participate in it?
- Guerrero: I don't remember that.
- Willens: You don't remember that?
- Guerrero: No. I remember there was a Micronesian Constitutional Convention. Of course, that would only come about as a result of the Congress's enactment. But I guess I wasn't paying too much attention to that.

- Willens: The other point may elicit the same reaction. The Congress of Micronesia failed by a very narrow margin to enact certain revenue-sharing legislation that the Marshall Islands in particular had been pushing for. The Marshall Islands reacted very strongly with the threat of separate status negotiations. Were you surprised by the decision of the Congress of Micronesia with respect to the revenue-sharing legislation?
- Guerrero: No. No, I wasn't surprised. That's the old idea of trying to—maybe not take advantage—but not reasonable.
- Willens: What was not reasonable?
- Guerrero: Congress demanded that the Marshalls and the Marianas provide money for use in the other districts. In the earlier years, we in the Marianas did not think we were getting a reasonable, fair return from the revenues that we were generating. As for the Marshalls, I wasn't surprised that they were upset about it. But also I wasn't surprised that the Congress of Micronesia tried to insist on that.
- Willens: When it came down to it, did it end up being a numbers game in the Congress of Micronesia in the sense that delegates from Ponape, Yap and Truk had sufficient votes because of population to either pass or reject legislation like that?
- Guerrero: Yes, they had more members.
- Willens: Did you have any concern that an effort by the Marshall Islands to open up separate negotiations with the United States might interfere with the Marianas negotiations?
- Guerrero: No, I wasn't concerned about that.
- Willens: At some point there was a concern about fragmentation generally. And you had heard of concerns in the United Nations and elsewhere about fragmentation and, to some extent, the documents indicate that, as far as the Marianas leadership as concerned, they wanted to move as quickly as they could to their objective and hoped that nothing in the other districts would stand in their way. Is that a fair characterization?
- Guerrero: Yes. But as far as the other districts breaking off and going their own way, that's their prerogative. Of course, we were concerned that if this approach were to delay this one, then that would have some repercussion on our side. But as far as having them decide what they want to, that's their right.
- Willens: And that was completely consistent with what you had been stating for many years on behalf of the Marianas?
- Guerrero: Yes. Yes.
- Willens: Turning to the negotiations themselves between the United States and the Marianas Political Status Commission in the spring of 1974. This is the Fourth Round of negotiations and many issues had already been resolved. The negotiations were increasingly getting down into the nitty gritty of what the proposed relationship would be. But one major development at the Fourth Round was an announcement by Ambassador Williams that the United States had made a change in its land requirements for Tinian. It had reduced the amount of acreage needed by about 1200 acres and it had changed the location of an ammunition loading facility so that it was no longer necessary to relocate San Jose village. What was your reaction to this announcement?
- Guerrero: I was most sympathetic to the people of Tinian. The plan had been that, if major installations were to be located in the San Jose area, the people there would be relocated

with improved and even better facilities at the expense of the U.S. Of course, there were objections to that. But we thought that was a fair and better arrangement than the present condition. So I was most sympathetic to them that they would have lost this opportunity.

Willens: But there had been opposition to the relocation expressed by some?

Guerrero: That's right.

Willens: So the U.S. delegation, to some extent, thought it was accommodating the Tinian people by not relocating the village. But your recollection is that the Tinian residents would have profited more from the relocation?

Guerrero: That's right. At least the majority of them, a majority of them. You see, Howard, if they had opted for that, although the military's not there yet, maybe that option of relocation and improvement would have settled the people in better facilities anyway.

Willens: That's an interesting question to speculate about. Whether the relocation would have taken place under the circumstances that ultimately developed—under which the United States has not elected to use the land on Tinian.

Guerrero: But had we agreed to go ahead and commit to relocated San Jose, it would have been better, I think, than the present situation.

Willens: Yes, I think you have a point. The Marianas Political Status Commission now had the obligation of responding in specific terms to the U.S. request for land for military purposes. It had been made clear to members of the Commission that until there was some agreement basically on these issues there was not going to be finality on any of the other issues that were on the table. So the Commission did engage in detailed discussions internally. It also visited Rota in May of 1974 over a weekend, and visited Tinian for a public meeting two days later on May 22, 1974. Do you happen to remember the meetings in Rota? There were meetings at the Municipal Council and a public meeting. Do you have any recollection?

Guerrero: No.

Willens: Do you have any recollection of whether you were in a hotel bar one evening when there was a physical encounter between the Executive Director of the Commission, Mr. White, and a large-sized colonel from the U.S. delegation?

Guerrero: I don't remember that. Maybe I wasn't in the bar.

Willens: The materials that I have with respect to the internal deliberations indicate that finally every member voted in favor of accommodating the land request of the United States, but there was one member abstaining. All of us who were present at the meeting recall the seriousness with which people entered into this discussion. Do you have any recollection of those deliberations and what individual members of the Commission brought to the debate?

Guerrero: No, the concern we had on the land issue has always been the size of the area—small. And Tinian particularly, when you think of two-thirds of an island, we were concerned with the people's reaction. So it was a sensitive, difficult decision for us who were mostly elected leaders. You know, we were there by virtue of our elected offices. So we were concerned that, if all these commitments for land were to be made and reserved for uses other than by our people, we were very concerned about the long-range needs of the people and our future developments.

- Willens: That really brought home the historic nature of the negotiation you were engaged in, because you were being asked to make decisions that were going to be to your advantage or burden, and your children, and your children's children and so forth for many years. Had you come to realize at any particular point during the negotiations the historic significance of what you were engaged in doing?
- Guerrero: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, years after when we were in the First Constitutional Convention, this land issue—the non-alienation of land and the 25-year commitment—came up. In the back of our mind we always thought that we should make a decision that would protect the generations to come indefinitely. And on the other hand we thought we should not be making decision for the next generations. And so it was very difficult.
- Willens: After the Commission voted on the U.S. military requirements it informed the U.S. delegation of its readiness to agree, although recognizing that the issue of lease rather purchase was still open, and the question of price was still open. The Commission told the U.S. delegation in a position paper that this was a highly sensitive matter and the Commission stated, and I'll read one quote to you, "Many of the residents of Tinian, perhaps even a majority, would be opposed to the Commission's position. Tempers run high on this issue and threats of physical violence have been heard. The members of the Commission must be concerned about popular sentiment on this issue at the same time that they recognize the Commission's responsibility to all the people of the Marianas and their descendants." The Commission asked the United States not to release any public statement about the Commission's agreement with U.S. military land requirements until the Commission and the United States had reached agreement about the financial terms on the grounds that it should be presented to the people as a package. Did that make sense to you?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: How so?
- Guerrero: Because we would be in better position to justify our action if we were able to present, you know, the benefit side to the people. They may better understand why we were making that approach, because there were benefits in return for these commitments. But if the U.S. were to proceed and announce that we got agreement on the commitment on land, we might not have a Covenant. You know, it could be; that's very possible. So we thought that we should have— from our side in particular—grounds to justify the action on the commitment of lands to the U.S.
- Willens: It also was a way of putting some pressure on the United States delegation to agree on the financial terms in order that the whole package might be presented and move the negotiations along to conclusion.
- Guerrero: True.
- Willens: It was during this Fourth Round of negotiations that the United States indicated for the first time that it might give up on the purchase question; and they began to ask the members of the Commission what kind of a lease might be acceptable.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: I gather from what you said before that did not come as a surprise to you?
- Guerrero: No. It wasn't.
- Willens: Well, one issue that took up some time during the Fourth Round pertained to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transitional Planning. This Committee was one

that worked during the recess. Jim Leonard and I represented the Commission in trying to negotiate a transitional planning program that would have sufficient funds to do the kinds of things that we and the members of the Commission thought needed to be done. Although there was a lot of controversy during the recess about it, and particularly the role of the consultants, by the time it came to you and the other members of the Commission there was an agreement, and it provided for a fairly significant transitional planning program. I think the figures were over a million dollars, as I recall, something like \$1.2 million, and it contemplated a Joint Commission on Transition, a Secretariat of six highly qualified professionals, and so forth. Do you have any recollection of receiving that report and agreeing to go forward with that kind of transitional planning effort?

Guerrero: I'm sure we received it, but I don't recall any details of the report.

Willens: The other, more important financial issue during this round pertained to what was called the Phase Two financial support—the level of support for several years that the United States would agree to. The United States had made an offer at the last session of \$11.5 million plus an estimated \$3 million of federal programs. The Commission was obligated to respond to this, and the Commission basically went back with a proposal of \$16 million—consisting of \$4.5 million for capital improvements, \$10 million for operations and \$1.5 million for economic development. At that point, the Commission also wanted protection against inflation. Do you remember that inflation protection issue?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: Was that something you'd had any experience with elsewhere?

Guerrero: No. No, that was new to me. I'm not good in financing, but, yes, I remember the need to meet inflationary costs.

Willens: Do you remember any members of the Commission as being particularly interested or outspoken on these financial issues?

Guerrero: If I'm not mistaken, I think Pete A. and Manny Sablan, Manny being an economist by profession.

Willens: It was an area in which the Commission leaned heavily on its economic consultants?

Guerrero: Yes. Yes, and I think Manny, of the Commission members, was one of the guys that was very concerned about that.

Willens: After the Commission made its proposal of 16 million dollars, the United States responded with these agreements. First, they agreed to provide inflation protection; two, they agreed to extend the multi-year commitment from five years to seven years; three, they agreed to increase the amount of government operation support from \$7.5 million to \$8 million; and four, they agreed to increase the level of economic development fund from \$1 million to \$1.5 million, with the additional \$500,000 to be used for small loans to farmers and fishermen, and agricultural and marine cooperatives. Do you have any recollection as to where the idea for the small loan program came from?

Guerrero: I think the reason for that was that we wanted to protect these beginners, so that the small, maybe not-recognized people would have an opportunity to tap into that. In the TT time you had an economic development loan fund where most of the borrowers were government officials, elected leaders. So we wanted to give an opportunity to the common people to be able to tap into a reserve for them.

Willens: I see. Well, the U.S. proposal amounted to an amount of \$12.5 million. So the bargaining began with \$11.5 million from the U.S. and then Commission offered \$16 million and

the United States came back with \$12.5 million. It was quite clear the principal issue was the amount of money the United States would commit for capital improvement projects or CIP. And I remember that there was a session where the members of the Commission were each asked to speak about why they needed more money for CIP projects. I recall several members speaking very eloquently about the health deficiencies, the need for better education, the need for better roads, or the deficiencies of the Trust Territory.

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: Do you have any recollection of speeches of that kind by the members of the Commission?

Guerrero: Yes. All those things that you mentioned were true. And, you know, it would have been maybe a little bit different had the TT just kept whatever equipment that was here and not distribute it to the other districts. When the Navy's responsibility was to be transferred to Interior there was a lot of equipment left here by the Navy Administration. The TT Administration took the equipment and distributed it to the other districts.

Willens: At the outset of the civilian administration?

Guerrero: That's right, when the Trust Territory moved here.

Willens: But, to some extent, what you're recalling is that the Marianas were worse off during the first years of civilian administration than they had been under the Navy Administration?

Guerrero: That's correct.

Willens: In part because the equipment that the Navy had concentrated here was turned over and then dispersed?

Guerrero: That's right.

Willens: Do you recall making any speeches on the subject of economics and the need for more money for capital improvements?

Guerrero: I don't remember. But I was sharing the same concerns that the other members had.

Willens: What were your two or three principal concerns at the time in terms of the need for capital improvements?

Guerrero: If I'm not mistaken, my main concern was the utilities. Although we were agreeing to a number of years of economic assistance, we have to down the line plan for eventual economic self-sufficiency. And it would be very difficult to entice developers to come in here when you don't have good water or power.

Willens: So you were worried about power?

Guerrero: Power and water particularly.

Willens: And the infrastructure that would support economic development?

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: The effort of the Commission was quite successful. The United States increased its offer to \$13.5 million with an additional million dollars for CIP efforts to be divided evenly between Rota and Tinian. I have a recollection of Ambassador Williams at some point after one of these discussions, at an earlier stage of the discussion about economic support, stating that, "After all this was the best offer the United States could make. And we are not Armenian rug traders." And "Armenian rug traders" is a phrase I'm sure you've heard; it suggests people haggling over the price of a large item or, in this case, capital improvements

projects. I have told the story that he said we weren't Armenian rug traders but, in fact, we were engaged in Armenian rug trading and ultimately a preliminary agreement was reached on \$13.5 million. At that point, indeed, the Commission had obtained a commitment of money beyond what its economic consultant thought was necessary. Do you have any recollection of Jim Leonard at some point telling the Commission that he basically was unable to support any further request by the Commission for U.S. support?

Guerrero: Yes. I think in the negotiation we tried to pick the highest amount, and then tried to allow ourselves the flexibility to meet midway. So, yes, I remember that. For practical purposes, of course, we kind of inflated our request.

Willens: The last issue of this round of negotiations that I wanted to raise with you pertains to the draft status agreement that the Commission had prepared by counsel and presented to the United States. You will recall at the Third Round the United States had delivered a draft Covenant and that the Commission decided to direct counsel to review it and prepare an alternative version to present back to the client and then after necessary changes submit it to the U.S. delegation. The materials were delivered across the table to Ambassador Williams on the first or second day of the negotiations. It included a draft commonwealth agreement, a long explanatory memorandum pointing out the differences between the two drafts, and a legal memo on the self-government issue. My recollection is that the Ambassador and his colleagues were very upset by the fact that the Commission had decided to submit its own draft rather than respond to the U.S. draft. Do you have any recollection of the circumstances under which the draft agreement was presented across the table and prompted some kind of reaction from the United States?

Guerrero: No.

Willens: Do you have any recollection of conversations with the Ambassador or members of the U.S. delegation following that event where they tried to persuade you that the Commission had adopted the wrong strategy and you just ought to react to the draft U.S. document and everything would be okay?

Guerrero: I don't know if they had gone to the extent of suggesting exactly that. And, of course, they had their own interests, we have our own interests and, if we find their proposal reasonable, we have no reason not to accept it. But obviously there are areas that need improvement and that's why I'm sure there was that kind of exchange.

Willens: You do not have any recollection though of having any second doubts about the strategy of presenting the Commission's own version of a status agreement to the U.S. delegation?

Guerrero: No.

Willens: The U.S. was particularly concerned about whether draft agreement threatened the sovereignty of the United States. They were concerned about making too many exceptions from what Guam had, and they thought it was too long and legalistic. Do you have a recollection of the discussion of any of those points?

Guerrero: Yes. Of course, they always tried to model us after somebody. And that just defeats the whole purpose of these negotiations. I mean, if the model of Guam had been acceptable to us, you know, there's no need for all this discussion. So, yes, I remember those. Of course, they were concerned about cost and time, and it would be better for them to have a very simple agreement. But then, of course, on our side we have to protect our needs.

Willens: One of the objectives of the U.S. delegation was to try to have a short, simple, general status agreement that would be drafted by the members of the Commission themselves. That was one of the reasons why they were so strongly opposed to this more detailed, and

- admittedly legalistic, document, because we felt we were being asked by the Commission to protect its interests to the extent that we could do so.
- Guerrero: Yes. And now thinking back I think there was a discussion, or a very casual mention about our consultants and whether they were just confusing the members. And, you know, I said, "We hired the consultants, we have faith in them, and I have no problem with the consultants." As a matter of fact, the majority, if not all, of the members were very satisfied with the representation of counsel.
- Willens: Well, thank you. I felt that we had a good relationship with the Commission. The last issue that came up was the land alienation issue that you referred to earlier. In reviewing the documents I see that the United States at this Fourth Round of negotiations was proposing to the Commission that the Marianas be required to impose restrictions on land alienation. In other words, the United States did not want to leave it in the hands of the Marianas citizens, it wanted to require in the Covenant that the Northern Marianas impose restraints. The Commission took the position that this was ultimately a decision for the Northern Marianas citizens to make and it wanted to have the authority to impose them. It was out of that discussion that the compromise came that you made reference to earlier with respect to the 25-year period of time. Were you surprised by the fact that the United States delegation was taking the position that the Northern Marianas should be required to impose these restrictions on land alienation?
- Guerrero: Not necessarily. Not necessarily because, like I said, land would be the key to our economic development. And we just have to have that right to decide on the fate of our lands. If we could not agree on that, you know, this whole thing may just have to be halted.
- Willens: Did you think that the U. S. delegation was sincerely concerned with the exploitation of the local community that might take place in the absence of meaningful restraint?
- Guerrero: I'm not sure about that. I'm not sure. You know that there is this genuine concern.
- Willens: That's what sort of interests me about this particular point in time, when they were coming on with the proposal that the Northern Marianas be required to impose these restraints as distinct from giving the Marianas the discretion to impose them if the Northern Marianas people wanted to have them. But the compromise hinged around 25 years. Do you have any recollection as to how the figure "25 years" ended up in the Covenant?
- Guerrero: I think we were kind of judging it from our age. We were anticipating that maybe 25 years from now we'll be gone, and then we're going to be limiting the people's authority to decide on the land issue if we extend the restrictions indefinitely into the future.
- Willens: Well, it's almost 25 years.
- Guerrero: Were still around. I hope I'll be around for another 25.
- Willens: After the Fourth Round of negotiations, actually in the summer of 1974, there were a whole series of elections. There was an election for the Saipan Municipal Council in early June 1974, which was swept by the Popular Party, and Ben Camacho was reelected as President.
- Guerrero: Speaker.
- Willens: Speaker. Did this reflect some sense that the Popular Party was still in the ascendancy politically in the community?
- Guerrero: Well, you recall that, while the Popular won in the Saipan election, we lost the Congress of Micronesia. Eddie and I lost out on that.

- Willens: Well, exactly, we're going to come to that.
- Guerrero: But there were reasons for that.
- Willens: I want to hear your views on that because I've heard some different opinions that I will share with you. There also was an election on Tinian and Felipe Mendiola, an outspoken opponent of the U.S. military requirements on Tinian, was elected Mayor over the incumbent Mayor Borja. Now there apparently were the usual alleged scandals and so forth, but did you take the election of Mr. Mendiola as Mayor to be any expression of opposition on Tinian to what the Commission was trying to complete?
- Guerrero: Not necessarily, no. Even Mr. Borja earlier was not totally in support, although in lesser degree than Mr. Mendiola. But Mendiola was a more articulate politician than Borja. He is more outspoken, more dynamic than Mayor Borja. There might be some issue related to the negotiations or the movement of the military to Tinian, but the election was not entirely based on that.
- Willens: So you personally did not view it as a referendum, so to speak, on the work of the Commission?
- Guerrero: No, not necessarily.
- Willens: And you didn't see that it was going to require any reexamination by the Commission of its tentative agreement with the United States as to military land requirements?
- Guerrero: No.
- Willens: There was an election also for the Constitutional Convention for all of Micronesia, which was going to be held in 1975, and the Marianas elected four delegates: Joe Cruz, Mitch Pangelinan, Larry Cabrera, and Luis Limes. Did you have any sense that these Marianas delegates would, in fact, participate in the Constitutional Convention?
- Guerrero: Come again?
- Willens: Did you and the other leaders care one way or the other who was going to go to the Micronesian Constitutional Convention since you hoped by the time it took place to have your status negotiated?
- Guerrero: No, we didn't. I didn't put much importance in that.
- Willens: The other election took place in December of 1974 for the Congress of Micronesia, and it was at this election that you and Ed Pangelinan were defeated by Oscar Rasa and Pete Tenorio. What did you understand to be the issues that you were faced with during that reelection effort?
- Guerrero: I know why I lost, but not necessarily on the issues.
- Willens: What do you think accounted for your loss?
- Guerrero: I was running from San Jose, midway on Saipan, all the way north and there were, at that time, if I'm not mistaken, over one hundred nurse students from the other districts were residing there.
- Willens: One hundred nursing students?
- Guerrero: Nursing students attending nursing school here from the other districts. And there was a nurse who was a strong Republican, the supervisor of the nursing school.
- Willens: Were they registered to vote?

- Guerrero: Some of them registered to vote. And they voted and just turned the election results to Oscar Rasa's favor.
- Willens: Do you remember the margin?
- Guerrero: I think somewhere around 20 votes.
- Willens: It was only around 20 votes? So it might have indeed ...
- Guerrero: Oh, definitely.
- Willens: ... been accounted for by the nursing students?
- Guerrero: Yes. Yes, because the nursing students were—not necessarily Republicans or Territorial—but you know they're more aligned to the Micronesians and Oscar, of course, was advocating unity. So he was more appealing to them. That issue, of course, was raised, at least in my election, that I was anti-Micronesians.
- Willens: Well, that was sort of my question. To what extent the status negotiations and the separate aspirations of the Northern Marianas for Commonwealth figured in this election? Much of the newspaper coverage suggested that your defeat and Eddie's defeat amounted to a decision by the voters that the Commission should go more slowly in the status negotiations. Now Pete Tenorio, when I interviewed him, said he didn't think it was status that dictated the result. He thought that to some extent it was a question of one party being in power too long and people wanted change. Ben Santos told me the turnout was low and that people didn't really care any longer who went to the Congress of Micronesia. So there are many different views and they're not necessarily inconsistent. Do you have any reactions to those explanations?
- Guerrero: I'm not sure about the percentage of the returns, but it had to do with status. In my case, both Eddie and I, were considered anti-Micronesian. And also that we were pushing this too far. If I'm not mistaken, the opponents were saying we were not preparing our people for this eventuality and we're pushing it too fast. So it had to do with these Micronesian and status questions.
- Willens: So it was at least two separate points that are status related. One is that there were some Micronesians and people like Oscar Rasa who wanted to keep all the districts together. And there was another group that might have favored separate Commonwealth status but wanted to proceed more cautiously.
- Guerrero: Yes. And the emphasis there was that, yes, the territory was for the United States affiliation, but you should not be pushed too fast and you should be prepared. That's a very, very reasonable and credible argument.
- Willens: Did you have any response that you felt comfortable with?
- Guerrero: My response was that this issue has been long in the process of defining what we want. Its now just a matter of conditions and terms. And, of course, this is the purpose of these negotiations, to try to come to some kind of agreement and then educate the people. Then it's up to you and the people to eventually decide.
- Willens: Did you take part in the discussions after the election whereby Senator Borja gave up his seat on the Commission so that Ed Pangelinan could remain on and continue to serve as Chairman?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Did that initiative come from the late Senator Borja?

- Guerrero: Not sure.
- Willens: There is a report in the paper at one point that Ben Camacho volunteered to give up his seat.
- Guerrero: Yes, that's right.
- Willens: But ultimately what happened there is that Senator Borja gave up his seat representing the Northern Islands, I guess, and letting the Chairman take that seat over.
- Guerrero: Yes, I remember that about Speaker Camacho. I don't remember just why the good Senator volunteered. That's normally not his style. So it could be he was trying to get away from his Party's—what do you call it?—not opposition but pressure to go slowly. Or there may be another reason. Recently I learned from Pete A. Tenorio that he was being pressured not to sign the status agreement.
- Willens: Did you think that once the Commission membership was changed, with the addition of Oscar Rasa and Pete Tenorio and some of the other related changes, that the Commission might not be able to reach agreement with the United States?
- Guerrero: Yes, I was kind of concerned at that time.
- Willens: Even though you were no longer a member of the Commission when the Fifth Round took place in December of 1974 and February of 1975 did you remain in touch with Chairman Pangelinan or other members of the Commission?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Were you generally aware of what was going on?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection, for example, of the demand presented by Tinian and Rota in February of 1975 for a bicameral Legislature?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Do you remember the circumstances under which you heard about that and what your reaction was?
- Guerrero: Well, the reason behind that is that they argued that the District Legislature was composed of members from Tinian, Rota, Saipan and the Northern Islands, they only had few members, and they were controlled by Saipan representatives. So they were afraid that this same situation would exist in a unicameral legislative where they may have no voice in getting a fair deal. So that was their argument.
- Willens: Do you think there was any factual basis for their complaint that Tinian and Rota had not been treated fairly over the years by the Saipan majority?
- Guerrero: No, as a matter of fact. They have reasons to be concerned about it, but in fact it related to the distribution of funds. They're getting a fair share—even better in terms of more appropriations going to these islands than Saipan on a per capita basis
- Willens: Did you think that the Commission basically was correct in accepting the demand by Tinian and Rota for a bicameral Legislature, or looking backwards would you wish that the Commission had rejected that even though the Tinian and Rota members of the Commission might not have supported the Covenant?
- Guerrero: I didn't want the two houses. At that time, of course, I was concerned that they may just block the agreement. But thinking back, I don't think that if we had agreed on a

unicameral House they wouldn't block this.

Willens: You don't think they would have agreed to the Covenant?

Guerrero: I think they would agree to the Covenant.

Willens: You think they would have agreed even with a unicameral legislature?

Guerrero: Yes. I think we misjudged the sentiments of Rota and Tinian at the time.

Willens: I forget what the rules were of the Commission, but I know that Ed Pangelinan, and I think others, felt that they wanted to get as much of a majority as possible. They knew they had ten votes, which I think was all that was required but they wanted, if they could, to get thirteen, fourteen, or even fifteen votes from the Commission.

Guerrero: I don't remember exactly. But I don't think that just because of that unicameral issue, Tinian and Rota, particularly Rota, would have rejected the agreement. You know, they had nothing to give really, yet a lot to gain from this status. So, I don't think they would say, "No, well, you don't agree with two houses, we're not going to sign."

Willens: Well, that's one of those questions that historians will wrestle with for decades, if not longer. The day before the Covenant was to be signed a lawsuit was filed by a Congress of Micronesia representative, Jose Mafnas. He was represented by Michael White, and there was a court proceeding the next day before the Covenant was to be signed in which I participated on behalf of the Commission and the District Legislature. Do you remember that lawsuit?

Guerrero: Yes, I remember it. I didn't go to that because it was the same day, I guess, that we were having some kind of ceremonies or preparing for that ceremony. So I did not go—as much as I wanted to—but it turned out very well to our favor.

Willens: Did you ever come to understand why Congressman Mafnas filed this lawsuit?

Guerrero: He was, of course, a member of the Congress of Micronesia at that time representing the Marianas in the House of Representatives. And, you couldn't I couldn't understand why he took that position, but now, with this new development, I wouldn't be surprised that it could have been instigated within his own Party by some, not necessarily all, key leaders in his Party.

Willens: In the Territorial Party?

Guerrero: In the Territorial Party.

Willens: Did you have any specific assignment during the political education campaign that preceded the plebiscite on the Covenant?

Guerrero: Yes, I was doing translations of the section-by-section analysis from English to the vernacular, to the Chamorro language.

Willens: Were you employed at the time? Once you lost your position in the Congress of Micronesia, where did you work at that point if you remember?

Guerrero: I think Eddie asked me, I wasn't clear whether it was the Commission that retained me to do that translation.

Willens: Or it might have been the Transitional Group.

Guerrero: It could have been the Transitional Office. I am not sure. But I was asked to translate the negotiation documents.

- Willens: What was your assessment of the leaders that were opposing the Covenant? I know Oscar Rasa was one of them. What were the principal bases for urging that the Covenant be rejected?
- Guerrero: Oscar, not necessarily because of the Territorial leadership, not only had some sentiment of not agreeing to the Covenant, but also, in my opinion, he wanted to retain the status quo and continue with the Micronesian entity. His father, of course, was from Ponape. So those must be the reasons why he wanted to oppose commonwealth. And it could be that he was anti-U.S. to begin with.
- Willens: Was the Carolinian community divided into segments that both supported and opposed the Covenant?
- Guerrero: There could be more that were opposed to the Covenant.
- Willens: Within the Carolinian community?
- Guerrero: Carolinians.
- Willens: Dr. Palacios by this time had turned out to be a very outspoken advocate of the Covenant, if I recall correctly.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Did you have any doubt that the Covenant would ultimately be approved? Were there any developments in early 1975 that were of concern to you with respect to the people's decision with respect to the Covenant?
- Guerrero: No, I was pretty confident that it's going to go. I didn't expect, you know, that high a vote.
- Willens: You did not expect 78 percent to approve the Covenant?
- Guerrero: I was more on the two-third thing, around 60, 70 percent, because from our Party alone almost 99 percent were in support and maybe half of the Territorials were also in support.
- Willens: There was some criticism at the time and subsequently that the people of the Northern Marianas had not been given sufficient time to understand the complexity and the seriousness of what they were being asked to vote upon. What is your reaction to that charge?
- Guerrero: Some may be valid.
- Willens: To some extent you think that might be a valid observation?
- Guerrero: To some, yes.
- Willens: To some people?
- Guerrero: Some people truly did not understand. You know, this was difficult even for us that were in politics so it's a reasonable point. And of those that spoke out, many were generally not well-informed. Many also were not informed, but were counting on the leaders and had confidence in us that we will do our best. Especially in our Party, they put their faith in us.
- Willens: Do you think three or four additional months of political education would have made any difference?
- Guerrero: No, no. It would not. When we went out to public meetings, you know, in a community

of say 200 people, it would be lucky if you had 50 people present. And, you know, TV wasn't well used. It's so hard—even if you were to explain the agreement in detail, it's hard for them to stick to the main points. So it's pretty much relying on us.

Willens: What was your assessment of Erwin Canham in his capacity as Plebiscite Commissioner?

Guerrero: He was very fair. He wasn't trying to pressure anybody or prejudice the issues. No, he was a very fair person.

Willens: After the Covenant was approved by the people in the June of 1975, the matter was presented to the U.S. Congress both in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. Did you play any role in hearings that took place in Washington when one or more committees were considering approval of the Covenant?

Guerrero: Yes, we visited particularly key members whom we thought would initially review the Covenant.

Willens: The matter of the Covenant went through the House of Representatives rather quickly because of Congressman Burton's leadership. Are you recalling principally meetings that you had with Senators or members of their staff, or do you recall some meetings with Congressman in the House of Representatives?

Guerrero: I remember meetings with some Senators.

Willens: Do you recall specifically who you meet with?

Guerrero: Yes, Senator McClure of Idaho and Ted Stevens from Alaska. I think we tried with Senator Kennedy, but I don't think we met with him.

Willens: Do you recall what particular issues or concerns were important to those Senators that you met with?

Guerrero: From their side, what they raised as concerns I think to those that eventually approved this Commonwealth, the tax issue was a concern.

Willens: The tax issue was an important one?

Guerrero: Was important. I don't remember anything about the military from those that supported.

Willens: But there were several senators who became public opponents. And they justified hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee, I believe.

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: Did you have any meetings with any Senators who were opposed to the Covenant?

Guerrero: Yes. We had a discussion personally with Senator Hart or his assistant and Senator Pell, Claiborne Pell from Rhode Island. And I think they opposed the financial assistance and also the general idea of a colony. You know, colony, they were having a problem with that.

Willens: How would you respond to the statement that they didn't like the colony and that you and your colleagues out here in the Northern Marianas were being characterized as a colony.

Guerrero: Well, first of all, I said, you know, we came under United States Administration through the United Nations. You trained us and educated us under your system, and we like it. We thought that we surely were going to benefit from this relationship but we also were

willing and prepared to take responsibilities as well. Under the United Nations we were given the options to decide our future to which the United States, of course, agreed to. And here we were ready to make a decision on that.

Willens: Did you feel that some of the senators were basically opposed to any status for the Marianas alone because they wanted to try to keep all of Micronesia together, if that was possible?

Guerrero: I don't remember that. But there must have been something I don't remember specifically, and it could be that this territory should remain as one group. I don't remember specifically though.

Willens: Do you remember any other meetings or issues that you discussed with members of the Senate or their staffs?

Guerrero: We made visits before the actual scheduling of these hearings. I remember one trip before the actual process.

Willens: In the Senate side?

Guerrero: Both houses.

Willens: Did you personally testify?

Guerrero: In the Congressional committees when this was up, there were a lot of us that that were available to testify. There were time limitations on the Congressional side, so they just allowed us, most of us, to submit our testimony for the records. And, of course, it was at that time that good old Joe Cruz stood up and made spontaneous remarks about his family, his parents being killed, and in spite of that he still feels that the United States is the best, most democratic, fair country. oward the end, of course, he asked us to all stand—we were in the gallery in the back side—and led us in singing “God Bless America.”

Willens: Was this in a public hearing?

Guerrero: Yes, in that Committee hearing. In the Gallery.

Willens: In the Senate side or the House?

Guerrero: I cannot remember exactly where that was.

Willens: But, typically, Ed Pangelinan and the Ambassador were asked to testify?

Guerrero: Yes, yes.

Willens: Did you and the other Marianas representatives coordinate your lobbying efforts with Executive Branch representatives who were also supporting the Covenant?

Guerrero: Yes, we kind of broke up into, if I'm not mistaken, two or three groups and were assigned to visit specific Congressmen or Senators.

Willens: Were you surprised that the Covenant became a major issue in the Senate?

Guerrero: We were concerned on the Senate side.

Willens: Did you that think the U.S delegation was doing as effective a lobbying job as it could?

Guerrero: I think the Ambassador himself was trying to inform key members of Congress. Whether it was efficient, I have no idea, but he tried to keep them advised.

Willens: Turning to the first campaign for Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Legislature in the Commonwealth, were you active in the Popular Party in 1977 when it selected its candidates to run for office?

- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: Were you Chairman at the time?
- Guerrero: Let me see. Was I the Chairman? No, I was probably not the Chairman at the time. But we had a hard time there.
- Willens: Did you run for office yourself in 1977?
- Guerrero: No.
- Willens: After the Constitutional Convention, did you go to work for the government or did you go into private life?
- Guerrero: I worked for a private company and stayed there until half the term of the first Governor.
- Willens: Then you replaced Mitch Pangelinan?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: In Governor Camacho's Administration?
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Willens: How did it happen that Carlos Camacho and Frank Ada were selected as the candidates for the Democratic Party in 1977?
- Guerrero: There were a lot of candidates at the time.
- Willens: And Senator Borja was interested in running at the time, was he not?
- Guerrero: Yes, but, of course, Senator Borja was in the opposition party. But from our side, of course, Dr. Palacios was one.
- Willens: He was in the Popular Party? He was still Territorial Party wasn't he?
- Guerrero: No, no,—I don't know whether officially he was with us—but he was with us. Frank Ada. At one point David M. Sablan. And Juan A. Sablan, the former Deputy High Commissioner. I think we drafted Dr. Camacho in. His first involvement in politics was when he ran for the Congress of Micronesia, but after that he was within our Party.
- Willens: He had run for the Congress of Micronesia?
- Guerrero: The Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: Had he been elected to the Congress of Micronesia?
- Guerrero: Yes, lower House.
- Willens: And he served there for how long?
- Guerrero: Two years.
- Willens: So we drafted Dr. Camacho, who pretty much got the endorsement of the Party.
- Guerrero: So we were looking around for his running mate. At one point Pete A. Tenorio was to run with him. Pete A. was with this independent group—what did they call themselves? Anyway, we finally narrowed it down to Pete A. Tenorio. We were negotiating with his group and our group and it's pretty much a done deal. It was at Pete sister's house and Pete and Carlos were sitting at the head table. And all of us, their followers, were just chatting. So it was agreed upon. All of a sudden his sister, while she was serving, says, "How come?" Prior to that, John Sablan was going to be the running mate. But John had a problem with his position as Deputy High Commissioner so he withdrew. Then we came to Pete. So

Camacho had already had some T-shirts printed with him and John being the team, and all the give-aways. Pete's sister says, "What is this, all set up with John and now you're—what you call it?" I don't know what—trying to make fun out of her brother, Pete. All of a sudden Pete got upset, and he was very irritated.

Willens: Well, did he know about Juan?

Guerrero: Of course! Sure! He should have known. But he immediately sided with the sister. And I said, "How can this be?"

Willens: It was his sister and not Camacho?

Guerrero: No, his sister! And, you know, if I were him I would have said, "Don't, you know, this was done, and this is now." But at that very moment everything collapsed. So I was very, very surprised at Pete. Then we started again the process of looking for a running mate, and it was Dr. Palacios that suggested Frank Ada, for us to check Frank Ada, and that's how Frank came to be the Lieutenant Governor.

Willens: Did Frank Ada and Governor Camacho work effectively together as Governor and Lieutenant Governor?

Guerrero: Its hard, you know, to be Lieutenant Governor. Maybe only Benjamin and Larry worked well.

Willens: Well, what were the principal issues in that first election other than family and politics? That may be all there was. But did the Parties have a different view as to how the new Commonwealth should be organized and run?

Guerrero: No. The main issue that we used against the late Joeten because he was running with Senator Borja, was that if Joeten were to be the Governor he was not only going to be catering to the higher-ups and disregard the low people, but Joe Screen was going to be the Governor not Joeten. Joe Screen wasn't well-liked in Saipan and in Micronesia as a whole. So, I guess that was the turning point.

Willens: But at the same time the electorate decided to elect a principally Republican legislature, so that the first term of the new Commonwealth had a Democrat as a Governor and Republican majorities in both houses, as I understand it.

Guerrero: Yes, correct.

Willens: And I've been told that divided government was a major problem in the first few years of Governor Camacho's term.

Guerrero: Yes.

Willens: What was your assessment of the situation?

Guerrero: Yes, that was the real sense. That was very true.

Willens: Were there issues that divided the two parties or was it strictly a matter of politics and personality?

Guerrero: Politics. Mostly politics. It was hard because in those years, you know, we had to take into consideration the movement out of Saipan of the TT, and some of these obligations were transferred own to the Commonwealth government. So that's one problem.

Willens: Did you have any preparation for the reassignment of governmental responsibilities from the TTPI to the Commonwealth?

- Guerrero: There was an arrangement, but the mechanics of actually doing it were more difficult. They were not immediately prepared for us to just move in and accept responsibility. It was made more complicated by the Legislature not being supportive, because these were administrative functions, many of them requiring some financial support from the Legislature.
- Willens: Can you give me an example or two of the kinds of administrative responsibilities that the new Commonwealth government had to take over?
- Guerrero: The functions of utilities, for instance. On the education side, the funding for education. I remember that it wasn't too long after Camacho came into office that the teachers at the Marianas High School went on strike because they demanded higher salary. So these were the issues, and for political reasons the Legislature wasn't, you know, behind the Governor on these.
- Willens: Looking back at it and with the charity of hindsight, did you think Governor Camacho handled the political problems as well as he might have?
- Guerrero: Yes, Camacho was a good administrator, a good manager. But he was tough. I remember when I moved in, and I didn't know this before I actually joined his administration, he instructed his Director of Finance along these lines, "When you are preparing the budget for the Legislature, make sure that you reserve ten cents out of every dollar. Don't tell them that everything is available. Take away 10 percent." The idea was that, if there was an emergency, then we have 10 percent to work with. So he was tough, but you would know what he's driving at. Screen was like Froilan here. Unfortunately, some previous governors were not like that, you know, but were trying to vacillate. But he'll let you know and he'll argue with you.
- Willens: Okay. Herman, as we reach the end of this interview, I wonder whether you can give me your assessment of whether from your perspective the people of the Northern Marianas were prepared for the measure of self-government that was negotiated for in the Covenant and implemented by the Constitution?
- Guerrero: Yes, my personal observation is that at that very moment, like I mentioned earlier, it was difficult for them to really understand all the terms and conditions of the relationship and even more so its practical consequences. It's one thing when you heard about it or read it on the paper, but when actually practicing, it may be a different story. It's up to the leadership, of course, to try to continue the process and let them understand, and our leadership up to now hasn't done a good job on that, unfortunately. So, I blame the leaders.
- Willens: Why don't we leave it there. I thank you very much for your time and your good humor and I can't tell you how much this meant to us. We'll just have a few more questions about the Constitutional Convention.
- Guerrero: No, I appreciate it, Howard.
- Siemer: Mr. Guerrero, you were in the District Legislature in 1975 when the Legislature first began to think about Constitutional Convention bills?
- Guerrero: Yes, I was there.
- Siemer: What do you recall about the District Legislature's decisions about how the Constitutional Convention was going to be held?
- Guerrero: Well, pretty much it was similar to the setup we had with the Political Status Commission in that we wanted local representation. We put in the provision that the Convention

should be nonpartisan, but as subsequent conventions demonstrated that really didn't work out. Right after we organized the Constitutional Convention we split up along party lines. So that's the whole idea—to try to be as fairly represented as possible of the community.

Siemer: When the first Constitutional Convention bill was passed by the District Legislature, Frank Ada vetoed it. Do you recall that?

Guerrero: Not exactly.

Siemer: When the Legislature tackled the Constitutional Convention bill again, by that time in 1976 Erwin Canham was here, and he vetoed the Legislature's bill twice. Do you recall that?

Guerrero: Unfortunately not.

Siemer: Well, maybe we can refresh your recollection a little bit. One of the issues that Canham was very concerned about was the decision of the Legislature to have an election on Saipan island-wide, instead of district-by-district. Canham was afraid that no Carolinians could be elected in an island-wide election. The Legislature passed a bill calling for island-wide elections twice and seemed to be very convinced that Carolinians could be elected. Do you recall any debate about that?

Guerrero: I have no memory about that.

Siemer: There were Carolinians in the District Legislature at the time, were there not?

Guerrero: I don't remember if Felix Rabauliman or Dr. Kaipat were there. I am not sure just when Carolinian representatives were in the Legislature or whether in time for this Con-Con debate. But there were occasions when Carolinian representatives were elected.

Siemer: What were the circumstances under which you decided to run for the Constitutional Convention?

Guerrero: Well, I thought that I might be able to help since I was involved with this political movement—the Municipal Council at an earlier stage, then the Congress of Micronesia, and then the political status proceedings. So I thought I would try.

Siemer: Did you run for the District Legislature again while the Constitutional Convention was meeting?

Guerrero: Let me see, I may get confused here with timing. I was in the Congress of Micronesia when the Marianas were administered separately. There was a vacancy in the District Legislature and I was appointed to fill the remaining term of that vacancy. I didn't get elected to the District Legislature; I was appointed. Earlier I was staff for the District Legislature, and I was on the Municipal Council here on Saipan.

Willens: Just to get the dates straight. As I recall the election that you and I talked about where you were defeated for the Congress of Micronesia was in November of 1974. That's when the Marianas Political Status Commission had to be reconstituted to reflect the results of that election. Was it shortly after that election that you were appointed to fill a vacancy in the District Legislature?

Guerrero: No, it was little later. It wasn't almost immediately, no. After I got out of the Congress of Micronesia and out of the Political Status Commission membership, I was helping out in the administrative work of the Commission, the Political Status Commission. I was in private employment at that time.

- Siemer: When you ran or the Constitutional Convention, can you describe how people campaigned back in those days?
- Guerrero: We campaigned as a group but we didn't identify ourselves as members of the Popular Party or the Territorial Party. But we pretty much grouped ourselves with people that belonged to our party and vice versa for the other side. There may have been criticism at the time; we were complaining about the other side running as a political group, but nothing too strong about it.
- Siemer: Did people have strong positions at the time as to what should be in the Constitution?
- Guerrero: No. This whole idea was new. As a matter of fact, most of us who were running and then became members of the Con-Con were just kind of feeling out our way blindly. Basically what we wanted was a good form of government. Of course, we had to pattern it on the Covenant, but this whole concept was new to us.
- Siemer: The Popular Party was less successful in that election than the Territorial Party. Was there a reason for that?
- Guerrero: I don't remember exactly why it turned out that way. Normally, up to that time or even shortly beyond that, we in the Popular Party were almost always taking the majority of votes. I don't know what happened. I know I was telling Howard that I knew why I lost that 1974 election for the Congress of Micronesia, but as for the Constitutional Convention, I'm not sure.
- Siemer: Did the Popular Party have more new, younger candidates than the Territorial Party?
- Guerrero: Yes, there were a good number of new members.
- Siemer: The Territorial Party seems to have run as its candidates quite a number of its very established politicians?
- Guerrero: Correct. Looking back, yes. While on our side, particularly no one from the District Legislature ran. In the District Legislature, maybe a good 75 percent were members of the Popular Party from Saipan.
- Siemer: After the election was over, did you have any contact with the pre-Convention Committee before the Convention started?
- Guerrero: I could have, but I don't remember anything specific.
- Siemer: Do you remember how you came to be appointed to the Governmental Institutions Committee?
- Guerrero: It was pretty much a leadership decision, the leadership's selection. The Popular being the minority in that Convention, we were not given any leadership positions, even vice-chairmanship of a committee. We tried to persuade the leadership from the other party to give us meaningful participation, but it was pretty much their own. We were caucusing among ourselves knowing that we could not get any leadership position in area of interest to us. I think I kind of volunteered for the Government Institutions Committee. I was known to have been extensively involved in governmental operations.
- Siemer: When the Popular Party delegates decided among themselves that one of them had some interest in a particular committee, did the Territorial Party respect those requests?
- Guerrero: Yes, pretty much. After all, they always made sure that they maintained control in any particular committee. You know, I cannot recall any instance where they went against our recommendation.

- Siemer: There was one instance in which a Popular Party delegate, Ramon Villagomez, was suggested for the vice chairmanship of the committee and he declined to serve, indicating that the Popular Party was upset with the division of chairmanships. What do you recall about that?
- Guerrero: I think I remember that point. Yes, basically we were trying to indicate our disappointment, our displeasure at how the committee leadership was constituted. I am not sure that was a good move though.
- Siemer: One of the things that Dr. Camacho said in the press at the time was that the Territorial Party had made a deal with Rota and Tinian to give them substantial powers through various constitutional provisions. He seemed to be quite vocal about that. What was your view about that?
- Guerrero: I don't know if that really happened. These other islands, Rota and Tinian, incline more toward the Territorial Party. We hardly get any support from those islands. As a matter of fact, up to that time we never got any elected position from Rota. Tinian, all in all, was most of the time on the other side. I don't remember whether there were specific issues where the Territorial Party tried to get support from Rota and Tinian by favoring those islands on a particular issue.
- Siemer: During the Convention, did the Popular Party delegates meet together to take positions on various issues that came before the Convention?
- Guerrero: Occasionally, yes, we got together.
- Siemer: When the Convention first began there were a number of amendments to the rules that were brought up by the Territorial delegates, and a number of the Popular Party delegates asked for more time to look at those. Do you recall that?
- Guerrero: Yes. We usually did not get our way though. There were times bitter exchanges. But the whole concept of nonpolitical and whatever was unrealistic. At the most important time for getting politics out of the system; there we were actually debating on party lines.
- Siemer: Numerous speeches were made on that subject.
- Guerrero: Yes.
- Siemer: There were a number of delegate proposals that you made that I wanted to ask you about because some of them were quite key with respect to the work of the Convention. I brought with me the proposals so you could see some of them. One of them is No. 123, which has to do with employment and labor conditions. Why did you think that was important to put into the Constitution?
- Guerrero: First of all, like I said earlier, I wasn't really certain what issues should be addressed in the Constitution and what should more appropriately be in a legislative enactment. But I always wanted to make certain that employment was on a fair and reasonable basis and that everybody was given a fair opportunity. Let's go back to when I first of out of school and the system here. Sometimes we local people blamed the Administrating Authority about mismanagement, inefficiencies or unfair treatment within the work force. A lot of times it was our own making, our own people. I wanted to make sure that everybody got a fair opportunity.
- Siemer: What was your view about the minimum wage at that time?
- Guerrero: Let's see. It's hard. I don't think I had made any in-depth study as to what was the right wage structure. I'm not very good on these economic questions, so I just hope that the

wage system is reasonable and as much as possible adequate to meet the needs of the people. Of course, I realize that until now we have not generated our own revenues and, even if we do, it would not be adequate to meet our basic requirements.

Siemer: Was the minimum wage a political issue in the District Legislature back then?

Guerrero: There were debates on minimum wage, yes. But I always felt that, while it's nice to decide \$4 or \$5, or \$6, we have to be practical whether we were able to meet that requirement. It's really hard—here we are trying to artificially establish a rate that we have no control over.

Siemer: Do you recall what became of that proposal?

Guerrero: I don't think it ever went through.

Siemer: The next one is right there on the next page, it's No. 124. It has to do with imprisonment of children. Do you remember making that one?

Guerrero: No specifically, no.

Siemer: Somebody must have worked hard to get it on the agenda because the chairman of the Personal Rights Committee brought it up, a special report was written about it, and the Convention just before the public hearings decided to add it to the Constitution.

Guerrero: I was doing some lobbying on the quiet side.

Siemer: Proposal 125 had to do with child labor. What was the origin of that proposal?

Guerrero: I don't really know exactly. When I was brought up, we had all these protections for children who were growing up. With the culture's deteriorating, we are losing the traditional family-type environment. When I got back from school I noticed that, unfortunately, a lot of these youngsters were under very loose control. Just because they went out for schooling they lose respect for their elders. So I wanted to provide an environment where the kids are protected and disciplined. We were all working for that. Unless we can protect them, you know, we're just wasting our efforts. So that's the whole idea of my concern for children.

Siemer: Had there been any child labor abuses in Saipan at the time.

Guerrero: No, nothing.

Siemer: You were looking forward?

Guerrero: I was. I was looking forward and I wanted, like I said, to provide that protection for our children.

Siemer: This one was sent to the Personal Rights Committee and that Committee decided it was really a legislative matter. Was that outcome acceptable to you?

Guerrero: Not exactly.

Siemer: Did you still think it should be in the Constitution?

Guerrero: Yes. I wasn't sure whether, you know, it's a rightful place, but I wanted it in an area where it is not easily abolished. So this did not sit well with me. Of course, maybe I was biased because everybody wanted their proposals adopted.

Siemer: Do you recall making any efforts on the floor to get this put back in after the Personal Rights Committee decided not to include it in their language?

Guerrero: I may have debated some. You know, by this time, my approach and style of argument

were somewhat diminished. When I was in the Municipal Council and then in the Congress of Micronesia, I was pretty vocal and pretty forceful. And I noticed over time that, whether it was the result of this or not, I felt it should not be my style to be seen as pushing too hard. Because even though you may have a valid point the others may just push you aside and say that you are showing off too much or trying to dominate things. So, I was going to try to work behind the scenes. After the Congress of Micronesia, I was the awfully quiet type, trying to work among the delegations and committees. So from there on up to now, I kind of shed my whole debate style. So I don't think, going back to the question, I was very strong on the floor.

Siemer: The next one is No. 126. It has to do with reorganization of the executive branch, and your proposal suggested that that be the prerogative of the legislative branch. What do you recall of the discussions about this proposal with respect to who should have the reorganization power?

Guerrero: I think it was endorsed because later on, I think it was in the time of the Commonwealth legislature, the assigned functions of the executive departments was made by the legislature. It was generally supported.

Siemer: The Committee did report out the language that you suggested. They did two things to it. First, they imposed a limit of 15 departments so that the Legislature just couldn't go on creating departments. Was that acceptable to you?

Guerrero: Yes.

Siemer: And the second thing they did to it was that they provided that the Governor could also exercise reorganization powers by executive order. But he would have to put that executive order before the Legislature for 60 days and they could modify it or delete it. Was that addition or that compromise acceptable to you?

Guerrero: I don't think I had any strong opposition to that, although its merits were not apparent to me.

Siemer: That provision got reported out and included in the draft Constitution. But there seemed to be a considerable amount of discussion of it in the Committee of the Whole. Do you recall any of the debate on that subject in the Committee of the Whole?

Guerrero: No, unfortunately not.

Siemer: Were there people who thought that the Governor ought to have the prerogative to reorganize the Executive Branch and that the Legislature should stay out of this?

Guerrero: I think that up to that time the Territorials were confident, if there was an election for governorship, that they going to be getting that office. So they put more emphasis on the power of the Executive Branch, yes.

Siemer: And this would be a significant one with a new government—the power to organize and reorganize—would it not?

Guerrero: That's right, yes.

Siemer: The last one is the census proposal. That's 148. Why were you concerned about having that in the Constitution?

Guerrero: Well, I thought that we should know how many people, and what kind of people, we have. After all these negotiations, we were very concerned about the possibility of overwhelming outside influence within the Commonwealth. We were concerned that, if we have no control over this, we would be outnumbered. So we thought that we should have some

way to deal with this concern. During Trust Territory time there was a census but it was very general. We thought we should be more concerned, in this new government, about how many people we have. As you can see, we're not doing a good job on this. I guess we have more non-CNMI than CNMI people. At least we have a way of knowing the numbers.

Siemer: That one went to the Finance Committee, and they thought it was a legislative subject and not a constitutional subject. What efforts were there to revive the census as a constitutional subject on the floor, if you recall any?

Guerrero: I don't really remember the argument there, except to indicate the reference to the negotiations and that we have to know the things that happen within our own place. And the Legislature may take this issue up, but we don't know if they are going to do it, and when, so we thought we should make the issue that we raised in the negotiations meaningful and be able to enforce what we were concerned about, if we get this kind of requirement in the Constitution.

Siemer: Your own committee, the Government Institutions Committee had a lot of proposals that it decided were legislative matters and, therefore, it decided not to take those up.

Guerrero: Yes.

Siemer: It was a very efficient Committee in disposing of proposals.

Guerrero: I guess we didn't want to get into all these headaches, so we took the easy way out.

Siemer: Let's talk for a minute about the consideration in your Committee of some of the key issues in the Constitution. Can you describe for us basically how the Committee worked together, how it functioned?

Guerrero: It was pretty much general deliberations. But there were times, I don't know if I can say unfair, but when it was a proposal from members on the Territorial side they'll try to be more receptive to it and support it than proposals coming from our side. Personally, I didn't have much problem with members from the other side. But sometimes, of course, they don't side with you or your group.

Siemer: Do you remember Ben Manglona brought the basic Rota and Tinian proposal for a governor and lieutenant governors from Rota and Tinian to the Committee?

Guerrero: Yes.

Siemer: That proposal took a long time for the Committee to consider it.

Guerrero: It did, and again, the Saipan members on our side always thought that that wasn't a good, practical proposal. The other members from Saipan, I think they wanted to—not to approve it—be nice to the Rota and Tinian people as much as possible. They tried to compromise with them.

Siemer: What was Chairman Mafnas' approach to that issue?

Guerrero: I don't remember exactly what Mr. Mafnas' position was.

Siemer: Do you recall some of the younger members speaking out against this?

Guerrero: I don't remember the details specifically, but like I said, we knew it was not only expensive but it was almost a nonworkable arrangement. It was going to be very difficult and we see it in the Legislature now. Can you imagine what would happen if we have governors and vice governors? We have enough—with the Governor and the Mayors having problems. I know they meant well; they wanted to try to get as much assurance as possible to protect

their people. But on the other hand, I guess, we sometimes lost track of the cost and the efficiency of the system.

Siemer: The Finance Committee was coming at this lieutenant governor issue from another perspective. That was the question of mayors and what power the mayors should have. They were debating mayors while your Committee was debating lieutenant governors. I wonder if you can tell us what you recall about the differences between those two approaches?

Guerrero: I never liked either proposal. I didn't like the proposal that mayors have almost complete jurisdiction over the governmental operations in their islands. And I didn't like all those separate lieutenant governors. I felt it would never work.

Siemer: Was there any threat or suggestion of a walkout by the Rota or the Tinian delegates back in those early days when the Committee on Governmental Institutions was considering this proposal?

Guerrero: I didn't remember that in the Committee. There may have been; there were heated debates from the other islands. I don't remember whether there was an attempt to walkout from the Committee work.

Siemer: What was your own sense at the time about whether there was a need to compromise on those issues?

Guerrero: Particularly with regard to Rota. Rota's representatives were strong men, highly regarded, very vocal, and very forceful. I was very concerned that they would make every effort to push through with their demands. I was concerned.

Siemer: How cohesive did you think the Rota delegation was at that time when you first began to debate these issues?

Guerrero: Initially I think they were very cohesive. They were together on practically every move in the Committee, until some divisions appeared as we moved to the floor. But at the beginning of the Convention, Rota representatives were pretty much together, working jointly. Of course, the entire group was from one party. But it was only toward the latter or middle part of the Convention that some members, some of these independent thinkers from Rota began to voice objections or take positions contrary to the majority of members from Rota. I don't know whether it was because they realized the problems that some of these proposals may face or whether they were concerned that there would be deadlocks.

Siemer: Did you have any discussion with the individual delegates from Rota about these issues?

Guerrero: I think I talked to one or two of these members. I remember one particular conversation with Pete Dela Cruz and Greg Calvo. And they were ones that did not walk out at one point during the Convention.

Siemer: What was your sense from your discussion with them?

Guerrero: One point that some of these people mentioned was that they begin to realize that some of the positions advocated by, say, Benjamin Manglona and Prudencio Manglona from Rota, reflected pretty much selfish interests. So I said, you know, they had gone far enough supporting them. Particularly Greg Calvo was pretty much an independent thinker.

Siemer: One of the issues that the Governmental Institutions Committee took up was the salary for the governor and the lieutenant governor. What was your view about those issues?

Guerrero: I didn't put too much importance in salaries. You know, all these salaries and expenditures are dictated by the times and our condition and I didn't see why we should put those kind

of things in the Constitution.

Siemer: When it finally came down to the final vote on the Constitution, you voted No on that provision with respect to the salaries of the governor and the lieutenant governor. Why was that?

Guerrero: That's because I thought that we might have to wait for six, eight, ten years before we had an effective Constitution. And then, of course, if we could afford it, we wanted to give good salaries to our highest leaders. But then again, depending upon our capability to pay, there's no sense in putting in a salary level when we cannot afford it and, you know, get stuck. We're just playing around with the Constitution.

Siemer: One of the other issues that was tackled by the Government Institutions Committee, which seemed to last a very long time during the Convention, was the issue of whether the heads of the executive departments should be confirmed by the Senate or by the whole Legislature. And you seemed to have made a number of comments about that. Ray Villagomez was very concerned about that. Delegate Villagomez wanted the confirmation to be by the whole Legislature, not only the upper house. What do you remember about the debates on that subject?

Guerrero: Let's see. I don't recall what position I took.

Siemer: This is another provision where, when it came down to the final vote, you voted No. In the final provision the confirmation power was in the upper house and you voted No and I thought you might remember why you did that.

Guerrero: Well, I don't remember specifically. First of all, I didn't like this two house legislature. But since we couldn't avoid that, we had to have two houses under the Covenant. I always looked at the two houses as equal. Why should one have that authority and not include the other one? So I guess that was the whole idea.

Siemer: When the Governmental Institutions Committee first considered the Legislative Branch, your committee approved quite a large Legislature. In the lower house, there was going to be 25 representatives for Saipan, 3 for Rota, and 2 for Tinian. You had approved a 3-3-3 combination for the upper house and that never seemed to be much of an issue, but the lower house became a very difficult issue. What do you recall about the public hearings on that issue, the size of the lower house and the size of the Legislature generally?

Guerrero: I don't really remember why we picked that number of lower house members. I know now what I want, but at that time I wasn't sure whether I was in favor of that large a body. I couldn't think of that.

Siemer: Did you go to any of the public hearings after the draft Constitution was approved? There were hearings here on Saipan, and there were hearings on Tinian and Rota and then Guam.

Guerrero: Yes, I think I did.

Siemer: Did anything that you heard at the public hearings affect your view about what would be a proper size for the legislature?

Guerrero: I don't think there was any strong indication as to the legislature's size.

Siemer: What concerns were there at the time about the cost of the legislature?

Guerrero: I think there was a concern on that.

Siemer: What was your view about that?

Guerrero: I was concerned about the financial resources we had for general operations, and particularly for infrastructure. Even during the Trust Territory time, the bulk amount of the budget went for payrolls, and still is now, and I thought it was not a good way of providing public service.

Siemer: Did you see any way back then in the First Constitutional Convention of cutting down the size of the government?

Guerrero: Not at that time. On the two houses particularly, not necessarily only because of the cost, but also because of the efficiency and the problems I perceived and the number of people that we had to have in the two houses. I didn't know at that time whether I was ready to take a position on downsizing the government. To be honest with you, I thought that based on the political status efforts we would be able to work with the delegates. Based on that experience, I thought that we would be acting more responsibly. So I didn't have too much concern on the size of the government at that time.

Siemer: The Government Institutions Committee worked for quite a long time on the size of the legislature. It came up with a proposal that would cut down the size considerably—to 16 for Saipan, 2 for Rota, and 1 for Tinian. And the question of 2 delegates for Rota seemed to be a sticking point for the Rota delegation; they seemed to quite insistent on that. And then Delegate Villagomez, who was not on your Committee, came along with a proposal on the floor for 12 for Saipan, 1 for Rota, and 1 for Tinian. What was your position among those various proposals, if you recall?

Guerrero: Deanne, I cannot remember what position I took on that.

Siemer: Were you aware that the Rota people were thinking about walking out over this issue before they did?

Guerrero: Yes. Well, I wasn't sure whether they were ready to walk out, but they were, you know, very dissatisfied. I don't whether if at that point they were ready to walk out.

Siemer: What do you recall was your own view about whether the work of the Constitution was in danger if the Rota delegates walked out?

Guerrero: Well, if Rota particularly walked out or Tinian, I thought we going to have a helluva mess. We had that concern during the Covenant negotiations, you know. Tinian representatives pointed to us and said if we don't get this, there will be no two-thirds for the military land and no Covenant. So we were concerned. Here we were one district, its not going to be healthy, it's going to be a real problem. Even with all these concessions, we were having problems. And I wouldn't be surprised if we just went ahead and close our eyes on these demands from Rota, so that when the ratification of the Constitution was voted on, I wouldn't be surprised if maybe two-thirds of the people on Rota wouldn't vote for the Constitution.

Siemer: Were you aware at the time that the Rota delegation was beginning to have some splits as you described earlier?

Guerrero: These younger, more independent members were beginning to see that some of these thoughts for a strong mayorship were an effort to perpetuate the power control on Rota of one group, one party, and particular individuals, who would have control over the government almost indefinitely. They thought it was a selfish intent.

Siemer: Were you there the day that Ben Manglona, Joe Cruz and the others actually did get up and walk out?

- Guerrero: Yes, I was.
- Siemer: Were you surprised?
- Guerrero: Not exactly. Joe and Benjamin and his brother, the Mayor, have their own temper. They just don't care what the hell happens. So they're kind of characters.
- Siemer: Did you think that any of the other Tinian delegates would walk out with Joe Cruz?
- Guerrero: They might, because Joe was a regarded leader. Joe was a political leader but not economically empowered as in Rota. Rota is different; the Mayor there controls not only politics but the economy.
- Siemer: By the number of government jobs that there are there?
- Guerrero: Yes, and being the head of the government structure there. So there was concern and fear by the people of Rota in those days. If they were to go against the Mayor, you know, they may lose their job.
- Siemer: Lose benefits, or things like that?
- Guerrero: That's right.
- Siemer: Once the Rota and Tinian delegates walked out, was there any effort to get them to come back?
- Guerrero: Yes, I think we tried mostly on the other side, to get the Territorial president, Larry Guerrero, to talk and persuade them to come back. I'm sure they tried their best to persuade them. But this was pretty much a Territorial play.
- Siemer: Were you concerned at the time when some of the delegates did not sign the Constitution?
- Guerrero: Not so much. No, I wasn't. It's nice to have, but I wasn't surprised and I wasn't disappointed.
- Siemer: Were there other issues that your Committee, the Governmental Institutions Committee, was considering that you were particularly worried about at the time that you recall now?
- Guerrero: Well, the only thing is I don't like this thing about Carolinian and ethnic identification in the Constitution, including flags and seals. It intends to—well, maybe not intends—but surely it tries to segregate races, and I didn't like that.
- Siemer: Did you think that if that was not included in the Constitution there was then a danger for the referendum?
- Guerrero: No. But there again, the Territorials were involved. This came from a Carolinian representative, he was a leader of the Carolinian people and, of course, the Territorials were going to pacify him. I didn't like that.
- Siemer: Let's talk about the work of the other committees. Now, what was your view of the way that the public lands issues were resolved in the Constitution. Were you satisfied with that?
- Guerrero: Generally, I think it was okay.
- Siemer: How about the issues with respect to how "Marianas descent" was going to be defined in the land alienation provisions. Were you satisfied with those?

Guerrero: I don't think I had a problem with that. Although during the debate in that Committee I was concerned. I always wanted to have the land controlled by the local people. But on the other hand I look at it on the other side. I was saying its nice if I knew I needed desperately to release my land and I have to go up to someone of my Marianas descent. Now that's nice and dandy, but here I am and I need the cash. I very reluctantly have to relinquish the land and this descendant can only offer me say a dollar per meter and an outsider offers \$5 a square meter. Of course, financially I'd be better off with the outsider. The end result, of course, as far as I'm concerned personally, is that I'll be landless regardless of what's available so I might as well take the best deal. So I was proposing then that, for a local individual that has to sell his land, the government should try to buy back the land from the individual, from the local bank, and give the guy an option, because, at that time and even now, only a handful of local people have the money to buy and they were really taken advantage of in those days. I know lands that have be sold just for a pickup truck. So here we are, we got a guy that has some resources taking advantage over these poor people. And that individual most likely would never sell back the land to that same guy who's landless. He goes back to the government, that land is always there for homesteading and so forth.

Siemer: How did you feel about the restrictions on homesteads that were put in the Constitution? There was a restriction that you had to live on your homestead for a certain amount of time before you get title, and then you had to hold title for a certain amount of time before you could sell it.

Guerrero: I was in support of that. As a matter of fact, now that I'm there I'm seeing lot of these problems, there are still abuses. But I wanted a stronger homesteading program—and this may not be in the Constitution, of course—but I'm in support of that, of those policies.

Siemer: Were there any other provisions other than the Carolinian affairs one that caused you particular concern as the debates went along?

Guerrero: I can't think of any except those two areas. I don't like to be racist and I don't like any suggestion that may lead to racism. Those two things are very, very disturbing.

Siemer: Toward the very end of the Convention, a decision had to be made on election districts in Saipan. And that was an issue that affected the Popular Party a fair amount. Did you work on that at all?

Guerrero: I don't remember whether I put too much emphasis on that election district issue. I may have.

Siemer: When you were in the District Legislature, what district did you represent?

Guerrero: In the Congress of Micronesia almost the total part of the island of Saipan.

Siemer: That was when you were in the Congress of Micronesia. How about when you were in the Marianas District Legislature?

Guerrero: Well, I guess I was an island-wide representation.

Siemer: Were you?

Guerrero: Island-wide representation. Thinking back, I think I prefer that, even now. Island-wide. Not because there's a better chance of winning, although it's more costly. Oh, how do I put it? You know, I don't like this idea of representing one district only. A lot of times it happens that this representative would only work for programs in his district, even if there are more important demands for other districts. And I don't like that. I think whoever needs it, we should prioritize, and work on a priority basis.

- Siemer: Back in those days in 1976 what would be the approximate difference in cost per candidate to run from the district as opposed to running island-wide?
- Guerrero: When I was running, of course, the value of the dollar was stronger. But in the past politics involved more community support and the groups supporting you were putting out drinks and all those things. Well, when I was running we got to spending over two hundred dollars—very, very minimal.
- Siemer: How much do you think a party would spend on island-wide campaign for a particular representative as opposed to running a district?
- Guerrero: In those days?
- Siemer: Back in those days.
- Guerrero: In those days, for island-wide, a thousand dollars is big. By district, like I said, a few hundred dollars, four hundred dollars.
- Siemer: Back in those days when the parties spent money on campaigns, what proportion of the money went to things that were printed, like posters and photographs, as opposed to drinks, refreshments, parties and things like that?
- Guerrero: If we were to split up a dollar, maybe sixty, seventy cents would go to media and thirty, forty cents would go to drinks. Because in those days, we just go out with pots and lemonade and all those things. There were no canned goods, draft beer, nothing, and no meals. Just cookies and sandwiches. But right now, even in pocket meetings you have a cooked, full course meal. And beer! When I was in Oregon and I came back here for a vacation and somebody asked me to run for an office, I said, “For sure, if I were to run, I’m not going to go along with this, you know, fancy meals in pocket meetings.” We just talked and left it at that. So spoiled, its just unthinkable! The politicians are really spoiling the people, you know. Like I said, it’s of our own making. All these problems are our own making and we shouldn’t blame anybody.
- Siemer: At the very end of the convention, after all the work was done, you made quite an eloquent speech about the necessity to keep on working for ratification of the Constitution and the referendum. Were you concerned at this time that there was going to be a real problem with the referendum and that the public education campaign was high priority?
- Guerrero: Well, the education process, I thought, was very, very important. But I don’t think I was concerned that the Constitution would not be ratified.
- Siemer: Did you work on the public education campaign?
- Guerrero: I don’t remember if it’s an island-wide campaign, but I certainly did within the party.
- Siemer: When all the work in the Convention was done and the document was finished, were you satisfied with the work that you had done?
- Guerrero: I was generally satisfied, yes.
- Siemer: Was the process what you had expected?
- Guerrero: I know it was a long process, and tiresome, but I don’t know if I expected all those details. But I felt good.
- Siemer: How did the debates compare to what you had experienced in the Congress of Micronesia or the District Legislature? Were they more heated in the Constitutional Convention or more partisan?
- Guerrero: Yes, more partisan, of course. What upset me in a lot of instances is that they politicize

issues and, just because its not coming from their own party members, they were reluctant and did not take issues on their merit. I remember a delegate from the other side, he was so sarcastic and had to be so personal, so that upset me.

Siemer: Anything else we should record about the Constitutional Convention or your particular memories or participation in it? It certainly was an enormous accomplishment and all of you delegates worked incredibly hard and long, long hours to get the job done.

Guerrero: No, nothing in particular, except that, you know, not because Howard is here, but we had good legal and professional people helping us, both in the political negotiations and the First Con-Con. And one thing I always say is this: I always regard a consultant to be a consultant. I remember in the Legislature when I had somebody to advise me, I expected him to tell me if I'm wrong or not and not just take my instructions. There are a lot of consultants who do things which I think they know darn well are not practical and not good for us. But because he's the guy or the person you work for you, you just agree with and that's very bad. It's happening now, it has happened in the past, but in our Con-Con, Howard told us the good and the bad and said it's up to us to decide. Unfortunately, the Second Con-Con didn't have that privilege of good professional people helping them. I hope this upcoming convention will have. I've spoke to some members about the importance of getting real professional people to help them out and they were agreeable to it. I just hope they have the money to do that.

Siemer: Well, thank you very much for taking the time and recalling this Constitutional Convention with us. We appreciate very much the interviews that you've given us with our book project.