

INTERVIEW OF ARTHUR W. HUMMEL, JR

by Howard P. Willens

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- Willens: Ambassador Arthur Hummel, Jr. has agreed to be interviewed about his tenure with the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations and his participation in some elements of the Micronesian negotiations. Ambassador Hummel, thank you for being available. I told you when we were off the record that I read some of the background material at the Georgetown Library and I understand that you received the assignment to the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiation sometime in the summer of 1971. Is that correct?
- Hummel: Yes, that's about right.
- Willens: Can you recall the circumstances under which you were asked to undertake this task.
- Hummel: Well, I don't know the circumstances of decisions made by Haydn Williams and others to put me in charge but I was nominated to Haydn Williams just as I was leaving on schedule after spending three years as Ambassador to Burma. They called me back for an interview with Haydn Williams. A brief interview, and then I went back to wind up my affairs in Burma.
- Willens: Was the termination of your assignment in Burma in the natural course of rotation?
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: Were you hoping then for another assignment in the Far East?
- Hummel: Well, yes, I would have preferred another ambassadorship or to be a deputy assistant secretary in charge of a bureau, which I eventually managed to arrange.
- Willens: Do you remember what steps you took to familiarize yourself with these Micronesian negotiations when you first became assigned to this mission.
- Hummel: I knew nothing whatever about the negotiations or the situation until I was called back for this job interview with Haydn Williams and at that time I acquired a thick packet of material that I read on the plane.
- Willens: What did Haydn Williams tell you in terms of the status of the negotiations and what seemed to be the important issues for the next round of negotiations?
- Hummel: Well, I can't remember the details, but he must have told me that he had a set of instructions from the government, from the NSC, that we had a very limited time to assemble a staff and that we had a crucial negotiating meeting scheduled for Hana, Maui, sometime in September.
- Willens: October, in the fall of 1971. There is some indication in the documents I made available to you that there was a bit of a chore involved in trying to get some financing for the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations.
- Hummel: My recollection, which is sort of flimsy, is that for reasons unknown to me Wayne Hays flatly refused to allow the State Department to spend any money whatever on the anticipated negotiations.
- Willens: Who was Wayne Hays?

- Hummel: Wayne Hays was the person, very powerful person, on the (I think) appropriations committee handling the State Department appropriations.
- Willens: Do you know why he took that position?
- Hummel: No, I don't.
- Willens: Where were you then looking for funds?
- Hummel: Well, certainly at the Department of Interior and Defense. Defense had a strong interest in the whole thing and I think they were somewhat suspicious that civilian negotiators might be willing to give away the store.
- Willens: There's some indication in the letter dated August 12, 1971 to Mr. Barie from Richard W. Murray, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Administration, that the Interior Department was also disabled from providing funds. Do you have any recollection of that?
- Hummel: I noticed that. I don't recall that. If that was the case, I think they must have gotten that rescinded because the Office did wind up in space in the Department of the Interior. And that meant money.
- Willens: And the Department of Defense did provide both personnel and funding as you recall it?
- Hummel: That's my recollection.
- Willens: Well, had you had any previous experience in working with this kind of inter-agency operation?
- Hummel: No, not ever.
- Willens: What was your sense as you tried to organize it and manage it as to the utility of setting up an inter-agency organization to deal with a task like this?
- Hummel: Well, I saw it as entirely logical, in fact necessary, because there were diverse interests in the future of these islands. The Defense Department was adamant that we had to have continued access for defense use. And that we should negotiate as strong as we could to avoid total independence. Indeed, our instructions were pointed toward a form of limited sovereignty.
- Willens: There are some materials, including ultimately a letter to Ambassador Williams from Secretary Laird dated September 9, 1971. It's the letter from Secretary Laird under tab seven in the volume I made available to you. It appears to be a restatement of the Defense Department's assessment of its needs in Micronesia and the Western Pacific more generally. Do you recall whether there was any controversy about the definition of U.S. military requirements in Micronesia.
- Hummel: No, I honestly don't recall. I would almost assume that there must have been some differences of opinion about what we could logically get from the Micronesians. But the answer is no, I don't recall.
- Willens: The U.S. policy toward Micronesia for the preceding ten years since the beginning of the Kennedy Administration had been motivated in large part by the requirements that are more or less along the lines set forth by Secretary Laird. This was one of the first times that it was set forth at this level of specificity and that seems to have been a previous concern within the State Department. Do you recall any sense that achievement of these specific requirements was attainable with the Micronesian negotiations?

- Hummel: No, I personally had no feelings at that time, not having met the Micronesians. I was very new to the whole subject. I had no idea what it might be possible to persuade the Micronesians to give up. Our main lever, of course, was continued subsidy.
- Willens: From your years of experience in the Far East did you have any independent and personal judgment as to the importance of the U.S. military interest and national security concerns in the Western Pacific?
- Hummel: I think I intellectually went along entirely with the view that we had to maintain foreign affairs and defense [authority]. The Cold War was on. We did not want the Soviets running in there and making their own arrangements, buying their own arrangements, for military access or military bases.
- Willens: From time to time in the documents concerns are expressed about the Soviet Union but also about possible efforts by China and Japan to extend into the Western Pacific. Do you recall that the concern was multi-faceted in that respect?
- Hummel: No, I don't. My recollection is that regarding the practical possibility of some country upsetting the stability of the region there, as far as I was concerned the most important factor was the Soviet Union.
- Willens: The other theme that one sees in the documents addressing U.S. military requirements in the Western Pacific is the possibility of loss of base rights in Okinawa, the Philippines, and elsewhere. In Secretary Laird's letter, for example, he defines these needs as being established independently of any possible withdrawal from those bases in Okinawa and the Philippines. Did you understand that there was a concern at the time in 1971 that the bases in those locations were vulnerable to political pressures?
- Hummel: No, I didn't see any connection.
- Willens: In preparing for the third round of the Micronesian negotiations there were some exchanges of letters between Chairman Salii and Ambassador Williams. The whole thrust of the U.S. position at the time seems to have been to try to not limit the negotiations to the so-called Four Principles, but to try to deal with the specific problems of access to land for military requirements, financial support, internal self-government and so forth. Is that your general recollection of what the overall strategy was in looking toward the third round?
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: Had you ever had any familiarity with the concept of a free association relationship before you became part of this Micronesian endeavor?
- Hummel: No, I had not.
- Willens: As you got into the materials and first met the Micronesians, what did you come to understand their desire for a free association relationship to be?
- Hummel: I don't think they had a very strong revulsion against the defense and foreign affairs parts of their sovereignty going to the United States in return for the continuing of the very large and very cushy subsidies that all of them would benefit from, that all of the officials that we negotiated with were dependent upon. I don't think they saw any philosophical disadvantage. To put it bluntly, the idea that this might be unfair or that they were missing out on something else, by not pushing for independence, came, as far as I saw it, primarily from outside sources and, in particular, American lawyers who were helping the Micronesians to formulate their positions on the negotiations.

- Willens: You are thinking particularly of American lawyers who were representing the Micronesian delegation?
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: Because there certainly was some debate at the time about the Micronesian legal services program and Peace Corps lawyer volunteers who were in the districts and were viewed by many people back in the Administration as being agitators and complicating life a good deal. The Micronesians during the period that you were engaged in this matter did sort of link foreign affairs and defense together as areas in which they would be willing to delegate authority to the United States. Did there ever come a time in your tenure where you began to sense that the Micronesians wanted more control over foreign affairs than perhaps you had originally anticipated?
- Hummel: I don't remember clearly a challenge to that. But, yes, I have a feeling that as they examined the issues more closely and began to put the focus in a way on what kind of negotiations were going on, I think they must have had some preference for more control. The alternative, of course, was the cessation or reduction of American financial inputs that would have affected the personal incomes of those involved in the negotiations as well as the society that they represented.
- Willens: With respect to the individual negotiators, are you referring to the fact that almost all of them were employed by the Congress of Micronesia or the Trust Territory Government in one respect?
- Hummel: They or family members were employed in one way or other with the government. We had, for right or wrong, a difficult history of administering the [Territory]. First the Navy. It seemed to me that we botched up on a number of things. Including a big mistake in giving American-style salaries to everybody out there employed by the government. Also, we did not find ways to prevent the influx of alcohol and alcoholism, which was quite a serious problem among the young people as well as the adults. It spoiled the whole society.
- Willens: When you are speaking about salaries you are referring to salaries paid to Micronesians as well as salaries paid to expatriates who came out to the Trust Territory?
- Hummel: No, I am concerned with the salaries paid [to the local people]. It was worried about the destruction of the society. I assume you are familiar with the "zoo theory," that they should be preserved as they were and not allow foreign contamination to change their idyllic way of life.
- Willens: Had you had any familiarity with the so-called "zoo theory" before you became actively involved in 1971?
- Hummel: No.
- Willens: You had never gone through Micronesia in the course of your work in the Far East?
- Hummel: No.
- Willens: Well, as you suggest, that theory was the operative one during the Eisenhower Administration and it was rejected for better or worse quite abruptly in 1961. I suggest from what you say that it was a serious issue on which reasonable men and women could disagree.
- Hummel: Well, the issue had already been resolved by the time I got involved. The Micronesians themselves seemed to be insisting on it, while at the same time bemoaning the ways in which their society was changing.

- Willens: Did you have any opportunity to meet the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory and his staff during your work?
- Hummel: I must have but I don't remember the people I was dealing with. Was the High Commissioner still...?
- Willens: Yes, the High Commissioner was still Mr. Johnston, and Coleman may have been his deputy at the time. One gets the impression from the documents and from my own personal experience that the negotiations for the most part under Haydn Williams were conducted quite separately and independently from the work of the Trust Territory government. That was a matter of deliberate policy to try to segregate the two assignments. Is that your recollection?
- Hummel: Yes it is.
- Willens: Do you remember any issues that arose during the negotiations that prompted some tension between the status negotiations on the one hand and the Administration of the Trust Territory on the other?
- Hummel: No, I don't.
- Willens: In the letter that Lazarus Salii wrote to Ambassador Williams before the Hawaii third round of negotiations, he indicated his desire to consult with members of Congress in advance of that round of negotiations. The documents reveal some internal discussion within the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations, including you and Ambassador Williams, as to what the significance of Salii's desire to do this was and how the U.S. delegation should respond to it. Did you personally ever participate in briefing of members of Congress with respect to the negotiations, either before or after the third round?
- Hummel: Yes, I did, sitting alongside of Haydn Williams. I can't remember the names of the Members. It was virtually a hostile environment.
- Willens: Was it, if you can recall, before the session or after the session or perhaps both?
- Hummel: I don't recall. Probably Haydn Williams had to do both.
- Willens: From time to time there is some difference of view reflected in the documents as to whether the members of Congress felt that they had been adequately briefed. Certainly I know from Haydn Williams that he made a major effort to do that. From time to time the Congressmen or their staff people would suggest that the Executive Branch was going off in directions that would ultimately not be acceptable to Congress. Do you remember any specific issues on which the members of Congress or their staff placed major importance?
- Hummel: No, I don't.
- Willens: A few names are reflected in the documents, and I just want to mention them to you and see whether you have any recollection of their role. Lindsay Grant seems to have authored some of these documents, I guess while he was at State Department. Was he in the Far East?
- Hummel: Yes. He was assigned to my office, and I must say, he chaired and organized most of the inter-agency meetings that produced the precise negotiating instructions. And that's a gem, doing that. He knew much more about doing this than I did.
- Willens: But he had been engaged in this project before you entered the scene, is that correct?
- Hummel: I don't recall that he had. I can't remember. But he may have been.

- Willens: Well, I know from the documents that as soon as you came on board you ascended to the position of chair of the interagency committee, in fact that came with the task I gather. But it's your recollection that Mr. Grant was your principal staff assistant in that regard?
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: Do you know where he is now, and if he is alive and where he might be?
- Hummel: He lives in Arizona. He's now retired from the State Department.
- Willens: You know where in Arizona?
- Hummel: No.
- Willens: Another name that has appeared over the years in the late 1960s and early 1970s is an NSC staff member named John Holdridge?
- Hummel: Oh, sure.
- Willens: What was his involvement in these matters?
- Hummel: He and others represented the NSC's interest. He often got the NSC to break a logjam among the different views of Defense and [the other agencies]. Holdridge is still here.
- Willens: Is he?
- Hummel: His last jobs were ambassador and as assistant secretary.
- Willens: Do you think he is retired now?
- Hummel: Oh, yes.
- Willens: But he is in the Washington area?
- Hummel: Yes. His phone number is unlisted, but I can give it to you.
- Willens: I would appreciate that. You mentioned the NSC and the documents that I have seen of course spell out the way in which the NSC organized itself under Dr. Kissinger and the use of the Under Secretaries Committee. Before you became involved with OMSN, the Under Secretaries Committee had been the vehicle for reviewing the work of the Inter-Agency Committee and then passing recommendations up to the President through Dr. Kissinger. Did you have any personal dealings with Dr. Kissinger with respect to the Micronesian negotiation?
- Hummel: No.
- Willens: Do you recall that Mr. Holdridge did serve as a mediator from time to time on differences that arose between the agencies?
- Hummel: No, I don't.
- Willens: Can you remember any particular differences? You mentioned the Defense Department from time to time, but I would have assumed that by the time Mr. Laird wrote his letter in 1971 that I made reference to earlier, that the issues would largely have been resolved.
- Hummel: Yes. But we envisioned, of course, quite a number of negotiating sessions and there were matters of technique as to which issues would be exposed immediately and, in other words, a scenario for the negotiations built on the basis of the policy decisions, but also on the basis of techniques of negotiations. And there were things that were left out of the instructions, what kind of arrangement did we wish to have and hoped to have in Palau for maneuvers, or possible maneuvers or training exercises on other islands.

- Willens: Right, I think that's probably what's referred to in the redacted portion of this letter from Ambassador Williams dated September 10, 1971 to Secretary Laird. There seems to have been some continued debate about whether U.S. military requirements included basing rights to large scale acreage in Palau. Is that your recollection?
- Hummel: Yes, or whether they should be contingent. I don't think DOD had the money or the intention to occupy the land in Palau.
- Willens: Well, that had always been one of the main issues before 1971, whether the Defense Department was seeking land for concrete immediate purposes or trying to preserve the option for contingencies.
- Hummel: Preserve the option was basically what we came up with. I think that there probably was disagreement about how to go about that—just an option or stake out some territory.
- Willens: One of the issues that the Defense Department constantly raised in the internal deliberations within the Executive Branch was the question of eminent domain. As the Defense Department understood the term, they hoped to preserve, under whatever future relationship there was, the authority within the Executive Branch to appropriate land as required for national purposes. Is that your recollection?
- Hummel: Yes, that's what we had hoped for—what the Defense Department hoped for.
- Willens: So in fact when the instructions were ultimately approved by the President, the question of eminent domain loomed large. The first negotiating position did contemplate some restraint on the exercise of eminent domain, but only if U.S. military requirements could be met by a treaty or other binding agreement. Is that how it ultimately was resolved?
- Hummel: Yes. I think it was our realistic assessment that we couldn't get any more than that from the Micronesians. They would not give us an open-ended eminent domain claim.
- Willens: The people in the Defense Department at the lower levels were constantly lamenting the loss of this opportunity to have uncircumscribed authority to condemn land and it became an issue as well in the very different negotiations with the Northern Marianas. I see that there were numerous papers prepared for you (and I've provided you just with a few examples) in the months or weeks before the third round negotiations. There was, for example, a paper dated at September 21, 1971, from Mr. Grant to you outlining various alternatives with respect to plebiscites for Micronesia. It's under Tab 9 in the volume I made available to you. Was it generally your mode of operation to identify a variety of subjects and solicit think pieces of this kind with respect to them in advance of the negotiations?
- Hummel: Yes, they were not so much for me as for Haydn Williams, who kept a very close eye on everything, and also for the other members of the Inter-Agency Committee so that they would have a feeling as to what the Micronesians [would do].
- Willens: What was the role of the interagency committee once the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations was established? Was it still the policy-making body that you chaired and was to oversee the work of Haydn Williams and you?
- Hummel: Very much so.
- Willens: What kind of liaison was there with the Department of the Interior after the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations was established?
- Hummel: They were full members of the Inter-Agency Group.
- Willens: I interviewed a few weeks ago a former Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Harrison

Loesch, and he had been actively engaged in the first two rounds of negotiations. He's frank to concede that he was somewhat piqued by the developments that resulted in the appointment of Haydn Williams and the creation of OMSN. He said in retrospect it was a good idea and probably should have been done at some point earlier, given the multiple agency interests involved. Do you recall any effort to keep Mr. Loesch and Interior substantively involved in the negotiations or did you and Ambassador Williams feel that that was now your mission and there was really no role in it for him?

Hummel: No, I don't recall anything like that. I don't recall that there was any challenge to Haydn Williams' primacy as the head negotiator and the person who had direct access to Kissinger and the NSC on any contentious issue. I don't remember hearing in that connection any threat to that authority.

Willens: Did Interior provide personnel that contributed to the work of the office?

Hummel: Oh, yes.

Willens: And did they bring to it some background based on the history of the Trust Territory and other elements that you found useful?

Hummel: Yes, the history. Actually the history was outlined in the background documents that were used to construct the negotiating instructions.

Willens: Yes, there were some very substantial options papers prepared in that process. Let's turn to the third round of negotiations with the Micronesian delegation in October of 1971. There are some memoranda that I have provided you reflecting private conversations between Ambassador Williams and Lazarus Salii. You had the opportunity to meet Mr. Salii and deal with him, is that correct?

Hummel: Oh, yes. During the Hana negotiations, yes, of course. Also, I made my own trip through the region.

Willens: Later that year.

Hummel: Yes.

Willens: What was your overall assessment of Mr. Salii as a politician and as a negotiator?

Hummel: I found him understandably quite naive about American government and, I think, about Micronesia itself. He represented really only a single district and, in a real sense, the negotiations pulled the districts together in an way that they had never been together before. Nobody had had any serious negotiations with the group. I found him a pleasant person—mercurial in that he would change his mind sometimes in a rather irritating way. When I made my own personal trip to the region later on, they all reminded me very much of minority tribes people that I have met in other societies who were confronted with a powerful (and they considered) adversary that they were not sure they knew how to deal with or to be comfortable with their position. I found him nice enough, except that he had no compunctions about changing his position about everything.

Willens: Did you have the sense that he was from time to time operating on his own agenda or that he was subject very much to the control and mandate coming from his delegation and ultimately the Congress of Micronesia?

Hummel: I think it was mostly the latter. His mandate had to be approved by the members. At the same time, he made efforts to be a leader in his own right—in a personal way. Sometimes that worked, and sometimes it didn't. This accounted for some of his mercurial decisions,

- I think—trying to assert his own authority occasionally and then being reined in by the members of the committee.
- Willens: Is there any particular example that comes to mind as evidencing that mercurial attitude?
- Hummel: I don't have a clear enough recollection.
- Willens: The Palauans were generally regarded at the time as being among the more sophisticated and politically adept of the Micronesians. Did you have the sense that there were other members of the Micronesian delegation who were strong-willed and had independent views about what the outcome of the negotiations might be?
- Hummel: I don't remember well enough. I have a vague recollection of the Truk representative.. He had a rather strong personality. And, of course, the Marshall Islands representative with his bags full of money.
- Willens: What was he carrying a bag full of money for?
- Hummel: Not for the negotiations. He ran a fiefdom in the Marshalls at that time. The subsidy to the displaced Bikini folks and the others. The American subsidies would be delivered to him, and then he would [go] around and dole them out at his own whim.
- Willens: When the negotiations began (as summarized in the overall report that was ultimately issued), many topics were discussed. There is some suggestion in the materials that the Micronesians were on the whole reassured by the specific requests for land that the U.S. delegation made at the time. Do you have any recollection of the negotiations as they related to U.S. military requirements?
- Hummel: Yes, my impression is that none of the group was really surprised or upset. It was Palau that was the problem, because at that time we didn't even know how much land or what the land looked like. My successor, Captain Crowe at the time, did the first on-the-ground survey after I left. But we did not really know what we were talking about with respect to Palau, and that upset the Palauans. Otherwise, I don't think that the committee members were upset with our requirements.
- Willens: But it is your recollection that the U.S. delegation alluded to some interest in an unspecified amount of land in Palau and that prompted some questions and concern among the Palauans?
- Hummel: I guess that's the way I would remember it.
- Willens: The issue of a survey in Palau became a political obstacle that went on for many months, long after you left the Office. The subject of finances seems to have been alluded to only in the most general terms, with the Micronesians seeking some kind of guarantees and the U.S. delegation wanting to address, for the most part, other subjects first. Was the U.S. delegation prepared to make any kind of an offer of financial support to the Micronesians at this round of negotiations?
- Hummel: I don't recall we had that authority, partly because the amount of American subsidy would depend upon the shape of the agreement.
- Willens: That does bring us to the question of unilateral termination and the fourth of the Four Principles that the Micronesians emphasized in the months preceding this round of negotiations and during the round of negotiations. What is your recollection as to the firmness with which the Micronesians were insisting on unilateral termination as a critical element of the future relationship with the United States.

- Hummel: Say it again.
- Willens: What's your assessment of their determination to insist on unilateral termination?
- Hummel: It's hard to say. I think their ideas frankly were rather fuzzy. Everything depended on everything else. I don't think this was a *sine qua non* for an agreement. They tried to contend that it was, and their negotiating documents were fairly effective. But I don't have a clear recollection.
- Willens: Let me stay with it for a while and try to help refresh your recollection. Your comments about it have been shared by many of your colleagues in the sense that the Micronesian concept of free association was perceived on the U.S. side as being vague and uncertain in its parameters. The Micronesians maintained that from their report in 1969 it was made clear that free association involved unilateral termination. Some of the papers that I've shared with you indicate that during the third round you and Ambassador Williams perceived within the Micronesian delegation some wavering on the issue of unilateral termination. Do you recall having that sense?
- Hummel: I don't recall clearly enough the details. I think that's probably correct, but my memory is very hazy on that point.
- Willens: What's interesting about it is that the instructions under which Ambassador Williams was operating did provide him with the authority to adopt a position that would reflect a concession on unilateral termination. And he elected not to do that. That's one of those interesting historical questions as to, you know, why did he elect not to do it? It may well be because, as the documents indicate, he had the sense that there were some Micronesians who were not attaching the same importance to that principle of unilateral determination as others were.
- Hummel: There's another conclusion or guess that could be advanced. I think this is correct. DOD insisted that we try very hard first to avoid any mention of unilateral termination. They insisted that we try as hard as possible before giving way on this very important point.
- Willens: I think that's certainly fair comment and supported by the documents. This was, as you recall, the first round of negotiations in nearly a year and a half. Ambassador Williams was now operating under a new and substantially revised set of instructions. So it does seem logical to want to press as hard as one could to achieve the principal objectives, especially since it was the first session for which he was responsible.
- Hummel: I remember discussions and looking through the record of the previous negotiations, which I don't think were really negotiations at all. And being somewhat appalled by what we were trying to get the Micronesians to agree to. The round that I was personally involved in seemed to be completely new and [on a much more] achievable and rational basis than anything that had gone before.
- Willens: Was it your sense at the time that the U.S. in previous rounds of negotiations had tried to demand too much?
- Hummel: Yes, and without much regard about how to get it or how to negotiate it or what the sensitivities of the people were. We felt that we were engaged in the first real negotiations—real, practical, perhaps achievable negotiations that had never been done before. A whole new slate, it turned out a rather wise and astute and rather suitable set of negotiating instructions that we were urging as policy that we were confronted with. I don't recall who did this or how exactly it was done, because it was a rather sensible document.

- Willens: It was the product of many months of deliberation within the interagency committee which was then chaired by Assistant Secretary Loesch. It produced a series of four negotiating alternatives which became six at some point later on. The documents have suggested that the negotiations in Hana ended somewhat abruptly. What is your recollection of the circumstances under which the negotiations were recessed?
- Hummel: I don't recall feeling any disappointment or anger or abruptness on the part of the Micronesians. It seemed to me that we accomplished quite a bit, not as much as we had hoped, but the disarray among the Micronesians and the fact that they had to go back and talk to their own people seemed obvious. We had reached the point where we might as well break it off for the time being and set a new time and negotiate again.
- Willens: There are some indications in the documents that the U.S. delegation anticipated that the Micronesian delegation would consult with the Congress of Micronesia in January of 1972 and perhaps then be given more flexibility on the subject of unilateral termination. Is that your recollection?
- Hummel: My recollection is not very good. But, from what I can remember, I would think that was quite logical.
- Willens: There are some reports from Micronesia that found their way back to Washington
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: . . . authored for the most part by John Dorrance. Did you know John Dorrance before you got involved in this matter?
- Hummel: No.
- Willens: He became the political reporter, so to speak, for the Executive Branch agencies in Washington. What in retrospect was your assessment of the accuracy and utility of his reports?
- Hummel: I think they were very accurate and very useful. He reported as a State Department political officer would report, on political attitudes and events. I think he was quite good.
- Willens: His reports provide a unique contemporaneous view of what was going on at the time, which really goes far beyond the formal documents that, you know, were generated during the negotiations.
- Hummel: That's right. And he was the only one we had. The Commission itself was a non-entity, so far as reporting outside about what was going on in that Territory.
- Willens: One of the reports that Mr. Dorrance submitted after the third round was that the Trukese leaders, who were allegedly supporters of independence, were unhappy with the negotiations and were critical of the United States. Do you recall any advice coming to your attention that the Trukese were still advocating a status of independence?
- Hummel: No. I don't have any recollection of that.
- Willens: There also was some modest disagreement after the third round regarding the release of certain documents that had been exchanged by the parties during the negotiations. Mr. Salii apparently gave some public interview to the media that was not wholly consistent with the tenor and substance of the negotiations.
- Hummel: I guess I do recall that. Yes. We were upset with Lazarus because he shot his mouth off in a way we thought was inconsistent with the agreement we had.

- Willens: Was it generally your sense and Ambassador Williams' sense that the work product exchanged during the negotiation should remain in confidence and not be released except through the media of a joint communique?
- Hummel: I don't recall how we got that. We certainly did not want all the details of who said what, on what day, to be chewed over by the Congress of Micronesia. I don't recall how we solved that.
- Willens: Do you remember any of the consultants that were advising the Micronesian delegation during the third round. To refresh your recollection, one of them was Dr. Eugene Mihaly, who was a political scientist from Berkeley who had been retained a few months earlier. Do you recall any discussions with Dr. Mihaly during the third round of negotiations?
- Hummel: No.
- Willens: Do you recall a Professor Gladwin or any other consultant?
- Hummel: The name Mihaly is familiar. I don't recall having any direct contact with any of the advisors. In a way, it would have been rather odd. We were in an adversary position. You're a lawyer and understand the situation better than I do.
- Willens: I gather from what you say that you and Haydn Williams had generally felt that the third round had been a very successful opening of a new dialog under new instructions and that both parties achieved something of value during the round.
- Hummel: Oh, yes. Very much so. We opened up ground that had been frozen for quite a long time. And frozen by inaction and inattention on the American side.
- Willens: It was interesting that it did take about a year and a half to get the United States side of the negotiations reorganized, to have the negotiating instructions reexamined, to get Ambassador Williams appointed and your Office operational. I guess in the "musings" category, one has to wonder what would have happened if all this could have happened sooner and whether or not all the districts of Micronesia might have stayed together if a more acceptable proposal had been made to Micronesia as a whole at an earlier date.
- Hummel: I think that some of us in my office felt that we had missed exactly that kind of an opportunity at an earlier time.
- Willens: Turning to the Marianas specifically, there was (as the documents reflect) some considerable evaluation within the Executive Branch as to how to deal with the Marianas request for separate negotiations. I have reminded you of this by giving you some of the "talking point" papers that were prepared and which provided the basis for a meeting that you had with the Marianas representatives in Hana. This happened to be one of the more colorful government documents only because it indicates that you met in a graveyard, sitting on a tombstone. How did it happen to be that you ended up in a graveyard to discuss the Marianas subject?
- Hummel: Well, the Marianas delegation needed to have a place that they could go to without being noticed by the rest of the delegation. I can't remember who suggested it. It was probably our side. We thought of various places that they could logically go at whatever time of day it was. I don't remember.
- Willens: It was on October 9 at 11:00 in the morning. Someone had a macabre sense of humor in selecting the location. As I understand it, by the time you met with Senator Pangelinan and Representative Guerrero, Mr. Sali had already made some generalized statement recognizing the desire of the Marianas for a closer relationship.

- Hummel: That's in the documents. His opening statement, which the Marianas delegation had fought very hard to get included. The rest of the delegation didn't want any such thing said, but the opening statement did reflect the different views of the Marianas.
- Willens: Was it your sense, as the subject of separate negotiations came under active consideration, that Salii was essentially neutral on the prospect of separate negotiations? There's debate in the material and among some of the people I've talked to as to whether he ended up being ultimately surprised by the U.S. decision to conduct separate negotiations, or whether he had been informed continually of the fact that this prospect was a real one. Do you have any sense on that issue?
- Hummel: Again, I can't be very precise. But my fuzzy recollection is that, because there had been an argument by the Northern Marianas which they had won, that their different approach to the negotiations had to be acknowledged in Salii's opening statement and that was a contentious issue that they argued about openly.
- Willens: Openly meaning in front of the U.S. delegation?
- Hummel: No, among themselves. Salii (and the others) was persuaded only by vigorous representations by the Northern Marianas group.
- Willens: What was your assessment of Senator Pangelinan at the time?
- Hummel: I didn't think he was one of the movers and shakers. We were disappointed that he backed away from what had been an earlier position of joining Guam. He backed away during my discussion with him. I have no recollection of the meeting.
- Willens: There is some discussion in the documents and in a Dorrance memorandum on that subject. Do you have any personal recollection of Herman Guerrero, who was the second of the two Marianas representatives you met with?
- Hummel: No.
- Willens: They were both very young. In retrospect, I guess, as we all were. One of the important points that you just referred to in the U.S. position on this subject was a very decided preference for directing the Marianas representatives to work out some joint status with Guam.
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: There's some suggestion in the materials that this was in part the result of a perceived adverse reaction in the U.S. Congress if the Marianas sought a commonwealth status separate from Guam. Do you recall having any views on this subject from members of Congress?
- Hummel: No, I don't recall it. We may have.
- Willens: Why, in your judgment, was it important to try to steer the Marianas representatives, if it could be done, into some consolidated relationship with Guam?
- Hummel: Because the alternative of having a third kind of status would have been very complex and inevitably involve another kind of negotiation that we did not want on our hands and would have been contentious in the Congress.
- Willens: There is some awareness within the materials emanating from the State Department in particular that Guam was not regarded as a self-governing entity by United Nations criteria and that consolidating Guam and the Northern Marianas would simply prompt some difficulty in the U.N. Did you recall any concern along that line?

- Hummel: I don't recall it. But it sounds logical.
- Willens: How important, if at all, were U.N. concerns to this problem at the time you became involved in 1971 and early 1972?
- Hummel: Quite important. We had to go through an arduous session every fall in the U.N., with the Soviets and others criticizing our position in the TTPI. We wanted to get rid of the whole issue.
- Willens: Was it still the sense, as you recall it, that the Soviet Union was continuing to seize upon U.S. administration of the Trust Territory as a sore point which they could build on to win favor among Third World countries?
- Hummel: Oh, yes. It came up in the Third World meetings that were heavily influenced by Soviet views.
- Willens: When you met with Senator Pangelinan and Representative Guerrero, they did inform you of the difficulty they had in trying to raise this subject during the negotiations? They were very anxious to have the U.S. make some statement publicly on the record during the third round. As I understand the situation, you and Haydn Williams decided it would not be appropriate in the third round to make any statement.
- Hummel: That's right.
- Willens: What was your thinking at the time? Specifically, did you think that ultimately you might be able to arrive at a status with all of the Micronesians that would preclude a need for any separate negotiations with the Marianas?
- Hummel: No, to avoid, and I think I said so, to avoid the accusation that we were trying to split the Territory up in order to have easier negotiations with parts of the Territory.
- Willens: How did you think the U.S. should manage this matter most effectively in order to avoid that kind of criticism? The emphasis clearly was on having the initiative come from the Marianas representatives.
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: But there was no doubt but that the initiative had been coming from the Marianas representatives for more than a decade?
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: So, I don't understand what more you needed to have from the Marianas in order to face up to the question whether as a matter of U.S. policy you should engage in separate negotiations?
- Hummel: Well, facts are one thing and the record is clear that the Marianas had been talking for a long time about joining with Guam. But that would not have prevented elements in the Soviet Union, Soviet friends, at the U.N. and in the Congress of Micronesia, from accusing us unjustly of splitting the negotiations and accusing us of having similar plans for a different kind of status for other regions. The possibility for distortion of the facts was quite great.
- Willens: It will come as no surprise to you to know that irrespective of how carefully the U.S. handled this (and I think they did handle it very professionally), all of that criticism emerged in any event.
- Hummel: Yes, but it would be better (I'm quite sure) if these differences of opinion would not be reported during the first negotiations, as we saw them. The first ones we ever had.

- Willens: I can understand that point. At the time you were considering this issue in the meeting with the Marianas representatives in October of 1971 and during your subsequent visit to Saipan in December of 1971, did you continue to believe that the Marianas could be persuaded to associate themselves with Guam?
- Hummel: I don't recall having a firm opinion at the time.
- Willens: Were you aware at the time that two years earlier the Guamanian electorate had turned down a plebiscite that would have favored consolidation of the Northern Marianas with Guam?
- Hummel: Yes, I'm sure I was aware of that background.
- Willens: There is some indication in the materials that, and perhaps it's in a report from John Dorrance, that the Marianas leaders did have some meeting with the Guamanian leaders to discuss this subject. When did you come to know that the prospect of consolidated status between Guam and the Northern Marianas was unlikely to be achieved?
- Hummel: I think we had a sense of it right at the time that I talked to them for the first time in the graveyard.
- Willens: After that conversation in October and the negotiations with the Micronesians were recessed, there was further consideration given back in Washington to the separate negotiations with the Marianas. Under Tab 18 I've provided you with a copy of the document from John Armitage to you, dated November 22, 1971, which he prepared in response to your request for talking points that might be used during your forthcoming visit to Micronesia. Do you have any recollection of what kind of conversations you ultimately did have with the Marianas people when you visited with them in December of 1971?
- Hummel: Oh, yes. I have a recollection of a setting which was almost ludicrous.
- Willens: How so?
- Hummel: The local leaders, sometimes people who were not in fact members of the Congress—tribal leaders, very tribal, sober, solemn. I thought that my indoctrination in India served me very well. I was very proud of myself. We would be introduced, and we would sit on the floor. There would be an exchange of greetings. Then I would just sit. I'm sure the tendency of most Americans would be to say something to get something going, but I would wait them out. Eventually, the leader on the other side would say something like, "Why have you come here?" Then I would open up, discuss the negotiations, try to get them to open up, to elicit some reactions. Very few reactions. Their style there was sober, impassive, weighty.
- Willens: Interesting. Did you visit each of the six districts on that trip?
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: So the scene you were recalling so vividly, I expect, did not occur in the Marianas but in one of the other districts.
- Hummel: Yes. I can't remember.
- Willens: Was it your sense that the people with whom you met in the individual districts did not really have very much information about the substance of the negotiations that were taking place?
- Hummel: That's absolutely correct.

- Willens: I think I've seen that in some of the material....
- Hummel: I would definitely take some pains to say as simply as I could, and as comprehensively as I could, why [we] were there.
- Willens: It must have been nearly an impossible task to try to deal with what was, after all, a relatively complicated set of negotiations with a group of representatives whose educational level and political sophistication were quite remote from what one might expect. As you met the Micronesians, and especially met them in their individual districts, did you begin to formulate some judgment as to the inevitability of separatist movements within the Trust Territory. I don't want to prejudge the question. I mean I don't want to ask a leading question. People have said that after visiting the various districts, you begin to get a sense of the differences among the districts. And I'm just trying to elicit your recollection as to whether you observed differences and how important at the time you thought they were.
- Hummel: Oh, yes. The same kinds of differences that anyone writes about. The Trukese were totally different from some of the other districts, the Marshalls, culturally. I was astounded as a matter of fact by the entirely different cultural background, the housing, social organization and superstition. The Trukese when they visited the United States would always keep the lights on in their hotel rooms because they were afraid that demons might attack them in their sleep. Most of them had a fear of [scaring] spirits. Others had no such thing, sunny, open, easily amused. I did feel that, having got together to have a Congress of Micronesia and understanding that they needed support in order to deal with this colossus, the United States, that we probably could work something out at the time.
- Willens: One of the debates in the historical literature is the extent to which the Congress of Micronesia proved to be a unifying factor that bridged over these differences or whether it became a forum in which these differences were accentuated and came to the foreground. I gather from what you say that, irrespective of the differences you observed, that you still thought there was some overriding status relationship that might be negotiated between the United States and the entire Trust Territory or Micronesia.
- Hummel: I guess mostly because I felt that they understood that they were tiny entities confronting a colossus and that they had been in a united front with others, with their neighbors, even though [they had to talk with these neighbors].
- Willens: Did you have some meetings of that sort in the Marianas during that trip in December of 1971? Did you meet with political leaders in the Northern Marianas on Saipan, I expect, during that visit?
- Hummel: Yes, I did.
- Willens: And do you recall whether it was on that occasion that you became more or less convinced that an effort to associate the Northern Marianas with Guam was probably not going to be achievable?
- Hummel: Yes, I think that confirmed my impression that it was most unlikely that a confederation would take place.
- Willens: Do you have any other recollections of the meetings that you held in the Northern Marianas on that visit?
- Hummel: No.
- Willens: Did you find the leaders with whom you met in the Northern Marianas to be more politically literate or familiar with the negotiations than you had encountered in other districts?

- Hummel: To some degree, yes.
- Willens: To some extent, it's a smaller community. There are outlying islands, but 90 percent of the population is on Saipan.
- Hummel: Also, they had very intimate relations with Guam and so their view of the world was a little wider than some of the more isolated districts.
- Willens: Sometime between the time of your visit and the spring of 1972, the deliberations within the Executive Branch seemed to have changed in the sense that the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations and Ambassador Williams were now planning for separate status negotiations. It seemed a little unclear to me what factors contributed to this somewhat different shading of meaning as between the third round of negotiations and the fourth round (in which you did not participate) where ultimately a request was made and acceded to by the United States. There are some Defense Department documents that continue to emphasize the district-by-district alternative that's included in the negotiating instructions and with increasing emphasis on the desirability of a joint service base on Tinian. Did the Defense Department play an important role during that recess in emphasizing the desirability of separate negotiations?
- Hummel: I have a very dim memory of that period. I was doing my best to get back into the mainstream of the State Department.
- Willens: Do you have any sense now as to, based on this conversation and reviewing some of these documents, as to what happened generally during the recess that placed the United States in a position where it was committed to respond affirmatively to a request for separate negotiations?
- Hummel: No. My recollections dwindle down to almost nothing after my trip to Micronesia.
- Willens: From an abstract standpoint, it would appear as though if the U.S. delegation believed that there was some hope that the Micronesians would change their position on unilateral termination during the next round, then it would be premature to agree to separate status negotiations until you had a firm Micronesian position expressed to you during the fourth round.
- Hummel: I don't remember any [such] discussions.
- Willens: You suggested after your visit to Micronesia in late 1971 that your memory is somewhat dimmed, in part because of your desire to find another assignment. That ultimately did happen when, I guess then Captain Crowe was designated to be your replacement. How long did you actually stay with the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations, if you remember?
- Hummel: I'm pretty sure that I left officially in late February, just about the time that Nixon went to China.
- Willens: The two events did not have any relationship, did they? You did write a letter to John Dorrance dated January 27, 1972, which is under Tab 24 of the volume I made available to you. In this letter you make reference to some decisions by the Department of Defense, specifically a desire to press very hard to acquire all of Tinian by purchase rather than by rental. Does that refresh your recollection as to any input from the Defense Department during this recess?
- Hummel: No, I would not have remembered this except for reading this memo.

- Willens: It also reflects your concern that there not be forward movement to actually acquire land on Tinian before negotiations with the Northern Marianas in fact began.
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: Do you recall some concern along that line?
- Hummel: No. Sounds logical, but I don't recall.
- Willens: Do you recall whether Dorrance in fact came back to Washington to consult with Ambassador Williams and his staff before the next round of negotiations?
- Hummel: No, I don't.
- Willens: The next document in the volume is a memorandum for the President from Ambassador Williams. I think it's in draft form, but it requests slight revisions in his negotiating instructions. In particular there's a request that he be authorized to negotiate an agreement with Micronesia that recognizes that sovereignty resides in the people of Micronesia. Do you recall any discussions on the very abstract subject of sovereignty—what it is and where it resides?
- Hummel: Yes, I do recall that. That was a thing that came up many times during our negotiations, at very early stage, with the insistence by the lawyers that sovereignty was indivisible.
- Willens: What did you take that to mean?
- Hummel: Well, that the various . . .
- Willens: On the sovereignty issue, were you getting legal advice from the State Department or Interior or Justice at the time?
- Hummel: The State Department mostly, as I recall.
- Willens: Was it their sense that the concept of sovereignty was an obstacle to negotiating the kind of free association relationship that the Micronesians wanted?
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: As I understand the situation from the documents, Ambassador Williams' requests for revised instructions, I think, ultimately prompted some internal debate among the agencies. I think it took place after you left the office. I see from one of the documents that you did go back to State on a full-time basis as a deputy assistant secretary to replace Mr. Wilson?
- Hummel: Yes.
- Willens: How long did you remain in that capacity?
- Hummel: Off and on for a good many years until I left to be the Ambassador to Ethiopia in 1975.
- Willens: 1975, and then you went from that Ambassadorship to subsequently . . .
- Hummel: To be Assistant Secretary in 1976 and 1977.
- Willens: In the Far East? Far East Bureau? And then back to.—was it Pakistan or China?
- Hummel: To Pakistan for four years and China for four years.
- Willens: And then you retired, when was that?
- Hummel: 1985.
- Willens: In the course of your positions in the 1970s, did you ever have any other contact with the Micronesian situation?

- Hummel: Yes, as a deputy and we had a long period where there was no assistant secretary, so I was acting assistant secretary. I would have to be knowledgeable about what was going on with the negotiations. But I can't say that I paid very much attention to them.
- Willens: Do you recall any issues that were presented to you with respect to the separate negotiations that ultimately began with the Northern Marianas in December of 1972?
- Hummel: No, I can't recall any issues. I'm sure that I was given memoranda and told of the progress, but I put it all behind me.
- Willens: As you probably know, the Micronesian status issues were finally resolved as recently as this year with Palau finally becoming, I guess, a freely associated state having approved the compact after many efforts to do so and approving a constitution. So there are now four political entities out there in that part of the world which reflects the separatist movement and the instincts that you saw during your years there. On the other hand, U.S. security interests seem for the most part to be protected through these various agreements. Do you have any sense of how well or poorly it ended up? You had thought it would end up the way in which it had. If it ended up 20 years ago, would you have expressed a concern? Would you have thought that this was a reasonable way to accommodate the interests of the Micronesians on the one hand and the interests of the U.S. on the other.
- Hummel: I think it is a reasonable result, given the situation as it was seen by me in 1971. I think a great many mistakes were made in the years before that. We spoiled the society in many ways. The problems there are still enormous.
- Willens: Yes, they are, certainly.
- Hummel: Social problems, alcoholism, the whole problem of dependence on hand- outs.
- Willens: The Kennedy Administration issued a National Security Action Memorandum in 1962 that articulated a new U.S. policy to place the Micronesians in a position where they could vote affirmatively on a permanent affiliation with the United States. It was hoped that that plebiscite would take place before 1968. But in the following six years after 1962, the State Department and Interior, and to some lesser extent Defense, debated the issues and really found it very difficult to work in a coordinated way toward achieving that plebiscite. The question I'm going to put to you is an unanswerable one. Assuming that there had been a vote early in the 1960s or 1968 and the Micronesians had voted for a close relationship with the United States, could it have withstood the test of time, given the diverse elements in the society and the growing political sophistication of the ensuing 20 years? I said it's unanswerable, so you don't have to answer, but if it does strike me as presenting an interesting problem.
- Hummel: I really don't know. Once again, the glue that held these people to the United States was the financial subsidy. As they became more sophisticated and knowledgeable, the awful thought that the subsidy might be lost was more and more important to them. At the same time, other countries could have intruded. The Soviets tried to, as you remember, in Tonga.
- Willens: Where was it? In Tonga? I forget what they did.
- Hummel: They put pressure on them. They were going to build up airfields, ports, help build tourism.
- Willens: Really? Was that in the 1960s?
- Hummel: In the 1970s, 1972.

Willens: Well, there's certainly some information in the documents of occasional intrusions by Soviet vessels into Micronesian waters that prompted some concern. We'll end the interview here, then, Ambassador Hummel. Thank you very much, sir, for your time.