

INTERVIEW OF BENJAMIN T. MANGLONA

by Howard P. Willens and Deanne C. Siemer

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- Willens: Benjamin T. Manglona has had a career of public service in the Northern Marianas going back more than 30 years. He was a member of the Marianas Political Status Commission and an officer of the First Constitutional Convention. Lt. Governor, thank you very much for making your time available and for supporting this project. I would like to begin with some questions about your personal background. Where were you born and can you describe your family for me?
- Manglona: Yes. First, thank you too for giving me the opportunity to be interviewed by you, Mr. Willens. As you know, you and I both became good friends at the time when we were negotiating the Covenant. And you know we, in the Northern Marianas, have great respect for you. I should consider you also to be the founding father of our Covenant because you helped us formulate the Covenant. So we have the greatest admiration and respect for what you have done for our people. Okay, let me try to respond to your question. I was born on the island of Rota. I was born on March 31, 1938 at the former village of Tatachog. Tatachog is a pre-war village in Rota.
- Willens: How do you spell that?
- Manglona: T-a-t-a-c-h-o-g. Tatachog Village is a pre-war village in Rota. I just turned six when the war broke out there, and I ended up hiding in a cave with my parents. And right after the war, then we resettled back to SongSong, the ancient village of SongSong. So I went right after the war, in 1947 I believe, I attended Rota Elementary School up until 1950. And from 1950, I went to Guam and attended the Cathedral grade school there.
- Willens: Which school was it?
- Manglona: Cathedral, the Catholic school in Guam. In 1954, we had the opportunity where students from all over Micronesia can attend the only high school then during the Trust Territory Administration. That was in Truk Island, and they called this school the Pacific Island Central School. It's very selective; they select the students from all over Micronesia—from Saipan, Rota, Palau, Yap, the Marshalls, Ponape. So, I was fortunate to be selected from Rota, and I attended PICS from 1954 up to 1957. So that's where I went for my high school during those days. And after I completed my school, I was fortunate again to be given a special training program to become a surveyor. They have a special training in Palau.
- Willens: Who administered the program?
- Manglona: It was administered by the Trust Territory government. What happened during those days, we started our land program in the Northern Marianas, started surveying homesteads, land exchanges, and there's a need for surveyors all over Micronesia.
- Willens: Was that a program that was unique to the Marianas, or did it extend throughout Micronesia?
- Manglona: It extended throughout Micronesia. And I was very fortunate to be one of the trainees there. Probably we had maybe 20-30 people attending the first training in Palau for three months. That was back in the summer of 1957. So that's where I learned to become a surveyor. I spent three months there learning how to turn a transit, turn a label, the . . .

Willens: What are those?

Manglona: Transit, they call that transit, a surveying instrument, the label, to take elevation and to go out and practice surveying there. When we finish surveying, you come into the office, put all your rough data into computations so that you will know the bearing, the distance, the coordinates. And then when you finish that product, you make a finished map of the product. And there I learned how to do those things in the early days. After that I went back to Rota, my homeland, and began to work for the government. I started out as a junior engineering aide. I ended up becoming a supervising engineering aide within several years thereafter. And one of the programs that we were doing in Rota in the early days was that we started our homestead program there. We are surveying the private properties of pre-war properties, and also we began the so-called land exchange program in Rota.

Willens: What was the land exchange program?

Manglona: What happened then is that during the Japanese time, the people of Rota owned certain property in the southern area of Rota where the water cave is. The waterfalls. Because those areas are very productive for sugar plantations, the Japanese forced the local people to exchange their land from the southern area of Rota to an area up north in a less-fertile land, close to the airport now. So they forced the people to exchange their land so that the Japanese can use the fertile land in the southern area for sugarcane plantations and cotton plantations, papaya plantations. So what happened after the war, the leaders of Rota petitioned the High Commissioner that the people can take back their former properties. So that's where the land exchange program came about. In other words, they are going back to their former property. So that's what we did during those days, is to be able to survey those lands so that people can be getting their land exchange back.

Willens: And that program began in the late 1950s?

Manglona: Well, it began I believe in 1955 up to 1958. So I was involved with that. We have a senior surveyor that was working on the program. I was his assistant.

Willens: Was he an expatriate?

Manglona: Yes, he is an American, Elmer Gay by the name.

Willens: What's the first name?

Manglona: Elmer Gay. So I worked under him, and for some reason I tried very hard, and I was very successful to move up the ladder in my position. So what happened, back in 1962, let me just backtrack. Rota then was a District [under the Trust Territory Administration], and Saipan was under the Naval Administration. So what happened come 1962, there was a political decision made then that Rota would become part of the Mariana Islands District. In other words, they merged Saipan and Rota to become part of the Mariana Islands District. So that's where the first election of the Northern Mariana Islands District Legislature was held. I was just turning 25 then. So what happened, I went into that election. I think I had three more months to be real exact to be 25 years because my birthday was March 31, 1938. And that election was November, so I'm not quite 25 when I entered politics.

Willens: Did you have to be 25 years old in order to run?

Manglona: Yes, but for some reason I think I'm running but I am not quite 25.

Willens: Okay. Let me go back then to some of the interesting points you made. Were your parents both also from Rota originally?

- Manglona: Yes. My parents are both from Rota.
- Willens: How many generations had they lived on Rota?
- Manglona: You know, my father is a very elderly man. I think my father is about 89 years old. And my mom is about 86. So they're both very old.
- Willens: So they had grown up on Rota and survived the war.
- Manglona: Yes, they survived the war. And after the war, my father worked very hard on the farm. And he managed to send us to school. We have only three of us—my two other brothers.
- Willens: There were three children; you had two brothers.
- Manglona: Yes. So, he managed to raise us by farming. My father is an aggressive father. Same thing with my mother. My father also raised livestock— chickens, pigs.
- Willens: Did they have land in the fertile area that they were forced to move from during the war during the Japanese period?
- Manglona: Yes. My father owned a property in the southern area. We were moved up north. And finally we got our original property back through the land exchange program.
- Willens: Did the Japanese employ local people on the farms that they created in the southern part of the island?
- Manglona: Well, during those days, they used the local people to work for the Japanese company. During those days, Rota was developed economically. They had a sugar plantation there, papaya plantation, coconut gathering, the strong wood tree is used for structural purposes—homes and others. They had a lot of uses for the local population as labor.
- Willens: What was the general relationship between the Japanese colonizers and the local people? Was there a lot of antagonism between them?
- Manglona: Well, the local peoples' lives were very restrictive during those days. As I understand, we don't have much voice in the daily affairs of the government, other than they work us as laborers. I know there are some Chamorros, perhaps a handful of Chamorros, Rotanese, that more or less were used as advisors for relations between the Japanese and the local population. But otherwise, there was very little voice from the local people other than they used them as a labor force there.
- Willens: As I understand it, when the United States forces invaded Saipan, they bypassed Rota, and the Japanese remained in control of Rota for some period of time after the United States had gained control of Saipan. Is that your recollection?
- Manglona: Yes. What happened, the United States knew all along that there's not much military activity during the Japanese time in Rota. You know, there were approximately 5,000 Japanese nationals on the island and maybe 200-300 or 500 military personnel there.
- Willens: Your recollection is there were about 5,000 Japanese nationals on Rota?
- Manglona: Yes. When I say nationals, it's Koreans, Japanese, Okinawans—about 5,000 all together, yes.
- Willens: All associated with developing and managing the agricultural enterprises?
- Manglona: Yes. You know, the United States knew very well that they will be wasting their time to invade Rota when they know very little military activity is going on out there. But one thing for sure, we have a heavy bombardment during the war, because they were using Rota as a staging area to drop their bombs before landing in Guam. In other words, they

bombed Rota heavily during the war because they had to get rid of their bombs before they land back in Guam.

Willens: That would be on the way back from a mission to the Philippines or Japan or wherever?

Manglona: Yes. So we experienced heavy bombardment during the war.

Willens: After the United States forces invaded Saipan, did the Japanese retaliate or take any different action on Rota with respect to the local people?

Manglona: No. As I understand, I believe when Japan surrendered, there was a rumor that was spread on the island that Japan surrendered. So what happened, after Japan surrendered, the military just came to Rota and they didn't have any resistance. They just got in there and ran off all the Japanese military personnel there and got them on the LCU, I think, and transported them to Guam.

Willens: When you were growing up in Rota, did Rota have educational facilities that would have allowed you to complete your elementary school education on Rota, or was it limited to the first few years of schooling?

Manglona: Well, it's very limited during the early days, as I remember. We have a handful of people that got a little education to become teachers. What happened, the Naval Administration during those days sent a handful of local people to Guam to have a short training to become teachers. We didn't have people knowledgeable enough to extend the education up to high school level, so we only have during those days elementary school.

Willens: Many of the colleagues that you and I shared that I've interviewed ended up going to George Washington High School in Guam. Some went to the PICS institution that you attended. Do you remember any of your friends from the Northern Marianas as that's now defined that you went to school with?

Manglona: Yes. I can vividly remember them. You know what happened, right after I finished my schooling at Guam at the Cathedral grade school, I was supposed to enroll at the Father Duenas Memorial High School there. But I heard of the opportunity to go to PICS, and I applied for it, and I was fortunate to go there. I can vividly remember many of our friends from the Northern Marianas. One of our friends was the first Governor of the Commonwealth, Dr. Carlos Camacho.

Willens: He was one of your classmates at PICS?

Manglona: Well, I think he is one grade higher than myself at PICS. I can vividly remember like Fran Villagomez . . .

Willens: Did Pete A. Tenorio go to PICS?

Manglona: No. I don't remember him going with that group. Abel Olopai is one. Of course, he has little more seniority than myself. And Greg Sablan, the former Congressman from San Antonio, who is now I believe working for the Legislative Bureau.

Willens: Was it a good education, as you recall it?

Manglona: Well, I will not deny it. I think many of the leaders today all over Micronesia including the Northern Marianas are successful graduates of PICS. You know, the President of Palau, for example, Nakamura, he graduated from PICS. I know Bailey Olter, for example, in Ponape. I met him at PICS. And there are many other successful leaders. The former Lt. Governor from Ponape, Mr. Yoma, he died now, he's also from there. Andon Amaraich, those are successful leaders that went to PICS.

- Willens: Was your running for the Marianas District Legislature in 1962 your first effort at political office?
- Manglona: No, I was too young. I was not qualified to run for the Rota Municipal Council then. I'm just helping as a poll worker at times, and I concentrated basically as a surveyor working there for the government.
- Willens: What prompted you to run for the first Marianas District Legislature?
- Manglona: Well, there were three slots that were given to Rota. They organized the first Mariana Islands District Legislature in 1962. Rota was given three slots to represent the island of Rota.
- Willens: Three slots.
- Manglona: Yes. So what happened within the three slots, I happened to be included, and I got elected, and I became member of the first Mariana Islands District Legislature. But few years after, maybe 1965, then I was elevated up to become member of the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: At the time you first ran for political office, were there two political parties organized on Rota, or was there only the Territorial Party at the time?
- Manglona: Well, we got a little influence from Saipan. They have this, I think they call it, the Territorial Party, and the other party is the Progressive Party. And we have this influence from Saipan that led us into having our own party system, although unofficially because there's no organized party. We just used it because of the influence from Saipan.
- Willens: What persuaded you to run for office as a member of the Territorial Party?
- Manglona: Well, it all started out perhaps because of the election for the Congress of Micronesia. When I ran for the Congress of Micronesia, they divided up the election districts in the Northern Marianas. There's an election District A, B, C, something like that. And I think my election district consisted of Rota, Tinian and part of Saipan. Okay? And the fact that I'm also going to be representing part of Saipan, we have this political influence from Saipan, especially a good friend of mine, Joe Cruz. He came over to Rota, and he's the one who actually, and my good friend Olympio Borja, and he knows me and he asks me if I want to run under the Territorial Party, and that's what influenced me to run under that party. Joe Cruz and Olympio Borja and Joeten.
- Willens: So it's your recollection that your first identification with the Territorial Party was when you ran for the Congress of Micronesia?
- Manglona: Yes.
- Willens: When you ran for the Marianas District Legislature a few years earlier, was there any party affiliation?
- Manglona: No, not really. I think during those days what happened is that they pass out like a ballot to the people, and maybe if they need three slots, we put up five blanks. And they write five names. They take those five names and they put it in the general election, and the top three highest vote-getters are elected. So that's the way we do it during those days when we don't have a party system. Just like the way they also elected the Commission and the Council members.
- Willens: You made reference to the fact that in 1962, responsibility for Saipan and Tinian was transferred from the Naval Department back to the Interior Department. And at that point, Rota became rejoined so to speak with Saipan and Tinian as a single Northern Marianas District. At that point in time, in the early 1960s, did the people of Rota

welcome being rejoined with Saipan or Tinian, or was there some concern that they might suffer administratively and financially once they were no longer a separate district within the Trust Territory?

Manglona: That's a very good concern. That is very true. There was resistance. Our leaders during those days, our people during those days preferred to be a district. We felt we are better off politically being a district by ourselves. And there was a lot of displeasure, and there was a lot of concern about merging Rota along with Saipan. At the time when we were a district, we decided a lot of things locally there without having Saipan interfere, and we were treated the same way any other district in Micronesia was treated. So to us, we liked that better. We have our own District Administrator, we have separate departments there that were established, and we liked that better than merging with Saipan.

Willens: Did the people of Rota feel that they had a fair share of the available funds for infrastructure and other purposes on Rota during the late 1950s and the early 1960s?

Manglona: No. The economic development was affected or hampered by the inadequate funding we received during those days during the Trust Territory Administration. You know, we were just beginning to establish the Agriculture Department where people could be assisted in terms of equipment, services, technical knowhow, in developing crops. We just started our health care, by getting a doctor there.

Willens: Did you have a full-time doctor on the island?

Manglona: Yes. That's why we were very proud during those days when we were a district because we have our own doctors. We have our own agriculture, we have our own District Administrator, we have our own Land Management Administrator, and we feel we have more say-so and more power during those days.

Willens: Now, what happened then after the reconsolidation with Saipan and Tinian? Did Rota lose some of those benefits or advantages?

Manglona: Yes, we lost some of our political advantages, yes, that's true.

Willens: Can you remember any specific advantages?

Manglona: Well, let's take for example, we used to be sending our representative to the Council of Micronesia at that time, and they were Rotanese or somebody from Rota that represented us directly along with the other leaders from all over Micronesia. When we become part of the Marianas District, of course, we have our own representation, but we are a minority, because Saipan has the dominating factor, being the majority there, because they have membership far larger. Even if they would include Rota and Tinian together, they still dominate the decision on any issue.

Willens: What was your understanding of the function of that Council of Micronesia?

Manglona: Well, during the old days, they consider the Micronesian leaders as an advisory to the former Trust Territory government. They [the TT government] formed the Council of Micronesia where they could meet maybe annually or bi-annually in Guam, and where they get all the Micronesian leaders and discuss a common problem like economics, education, political, and there is a forum that will provide an opportunity where they can be heard. And I think during those days we had the so-called High Commissioner.

Willens: It was exclusively advisory, as I understand it.

Manglona: Yes, that's true.

Willens: And one of our colleagues has told me that one of the assignments of the Council of

- Micronesia was to try to prepare or help prepare the Secretarial Order that created the Congress of Micronesia.
- Manglona: Right. And I think that that's how it started out. It started out from the Council of Micronesia. Its product is the Congress of Micronesia, yes.
- Willens: Was it your sense at the time that the Trust Territory Administration was sympathetic to the need for more Micronesian involvement in governing the Trust Territory?
- Manglona: Well, there's a lot of concern from all over Micronesia that the leaders of Micronesia want certain involvement in the affairs of the government. And I think this has been exerted over the years, and this is like a pressure to the High Commissioner that we want more voice. We want to be able at least to have Micronesians appointed to the high level of government positions, like we have the central government here, the Trust Territory Administration. So during those days it's mostly expatriates in the top positions and, because of that expression over the years, there's a handful of Micronesians that eventually moved into a more responsible position like educational administrator, economic development officer, political affairs officers, and public works director.
- Willens: What was your assessment of the Trust Territory Administration in the early 1960s? Putting aside questions of funding for the moment, which we'll come to, did you think that the High Commissioner and his staff were effective in dealing with the Micronesians?
- Manglona: Well, it has been a real difficult period because of the logistics problem. You know, here, sitting in this office, for example, here on Saipan, and trying to take care of islands all over Micronesia with the transportation problem, even surface transportation during those days was very inadequate, air transportation then was very inadequate. And it's very difficult to administer places like Micronesian islands from here, especially because of the isolation, and you said forget about funding, but funding has always been the problem.
- Willens: Many people find it easy to criticize the Trust Territory government as being remote from the people and being occupied with positions filled largely by expatriates who didn't have any commitments to the Micronesian community. On the other hand, as you point out, it was a very difficult task to try to administer the Trust Territory government across this enormous expanse of ocean. Did you feel that the High Commissioner and the Interior Department did do their best in trying to deal with the assignment out here?
- Manglona: Yes. I think that they really tried very hard to deal with their assignment. I credited them at least for three things. I think they made a lot of effort in terms of improving education. When I say education, it could be in-service training, special training programs, plus sending some of our people abroad where they could get their degrees. I think they tried very hard, and I think I find it to be a real success story during those days. I also credit them for trying their very best to develop economic development, especially in terms of agriculture. You know, there's a lot of effort about trying to promote agriculture. Same thing also, I believe I credited them for a lot of improvement in the area of public health. They trained young, talented Micronesian people to become medical officers, where they could come back and take care of our people. Dental, for that matter, nurses. And I think that they did pretty good despite the monetary and other logistic problems.
- Willens: Another area in which they have been given some credit is for helping the Micronesians in the districts develop municipal councils, district legislatures and generally provide some training that would be relevant ultimately to self-government.

- Manglona: Yes. And I think they have more or less followed the mandate of the United Nations—promote the island politically, socially, economically, until such time that the people can prepare themselves to make their determination.
- Willens: Now, to be fair, then, you identified some areas in which you think the Trust Territory government made progress and demonstrated a commitment. If you had to identify any shortcomings of the Trust Territory Administration in the early 1960s, what would they be?
- Manglona: The area that they fail?
- Willens: Yes.
- Manglona: That would be infrastructure, because it required money. To develop water system, we need substantial amounts of money to improve and upgrade roads, it requires a lot of money. Transportation. Communication. I think communication is not too bad during those days. At least, we have radio communication that we can transmit messages. But I think in the area of infrastructure is where the TT failed the most. And it's all boiled down to inability, inaccessibility to large sums of money for these improvements.
- Willens: You mentioned that you met several Micronesians from other districts in the course of your schooling in Truk. Did you in your early years travel to the other districts to any extent?
- Manglona: Yes. I remember when I was a member of the Congress of Micronesia, I was selected to become a member of the special committee, select committee formed by the Congress of Micronesia to reorganize the government.
- Willens: To reorganize the TTPI government?
- Manglona: Yes. You know, Government Reorganization Committee is the name of this committee. And because of that assignment, we traveled all over Micronesia.
- Willens: When was that committee in operation?
- Manglona: I think it was in 1969. So that brought me all over Micronesia. I went to Yap, stayed there one week, a few several days at Palau, Marshalls, Ebei, Kosrae, and Ponape, Truk. So, I was fortunate at least to have a good view and feeling about Micronesia, people on the islands.
- Willens: When did you personally focus on the political status issue and the need for the Rotanese and the Northern Marianas people to ultimately make some judgment about their future political status?
- Manglona: Well, I was in the Congress of Micronesia when they established the so-called Micronesian Political Status Commission, and I was fortunate also to be selected a member of this committee representing the Northern Marianas' interests. And, prior to that, there has been a lot of discussion, plebiscite held, because there was a serious movement back in the 1950s, I believe, and it went up to the 1960s, about Guam wanting to reintegrate with the Northern Marianas. And this has been a strong feeling during that time. And what makes it strong is that Guam is more developed economically, politically, and Guam being very close to the Northern Marianas, we have people going to Guam for shopping, schooling.
- Willens: Was there a particular feeling on Rota that Guam was a model that it wanted to follow because of Rota's proximity to Guam?
- Manglona: Well, at least because of the influence of the bigger island, Saipan, during those days in the 1950s, most people want to join with Guam, and I think that has been the prevailing

feeling. Even myself, I lost that election because my feeling was I think we're better off under free association. And I know there was election held on that, I was lost.

Willens: Which election was that?

Manglona: Well, I believe there was an election held in the late 1960s about whether to become reintegrated with Guam or to become free association, and I believe most of our people during those days wanted to integrate with Guam. However, on my part, I disagree.

Willens: Yes, I remember that, and we'll come to that. I mentioned earlier that I just spent some time yesterday reviewing early issues of the *Pacific Daily News*, whatever it was called in the early 1960s, and I saw reference in 1961 to a plebiscite on Saipan about the issue of reintegration with Guam, and about 65% of the people who voted favored that alternative. And a delegation of leaders in the Northern Marianas headed by Olympio Borja went to Guam to meet with the Guamanian Legislature about the prospect for reintegration. So at the time you became a part of the Marianas District Legislature in 1963, there already was a history of votes in the Northern Marianas favoring reintegration. Were you aware of this at the time and were you an active proponent of it?

Manglona: Yes. Let me just backtrack it, because, being a newcomer there, maybe I'm not yet a politician then. We keep hearing about the movement on Saipan, and I think it was the Saipan Municipal Council movement of the people here. And I heard that was responsible in the creation of a party system in Saipan, I think the Progressive, which is today Territorial and also now the Republican, I think they advocate direct association with the United States where the other party, the Popular Party, which is now the Democratic Party, I think preferred to reintegrate with Guam. And in that way, they can achieve being part of the American political family. So that was the history behind the creation of the political party. So you're right, although I was not yet elected to be a politician, we keep hearing this from some visitors coming to my island, that there's something going on like that. But then there's several other plebiscites then, when I become member, and they continue that interest until the time when we really firm up on our new relationship.

Willens: When you became a member of the Marianas District Legislature in 1963, it was largely dominated by representatives of the Popular Party who favored reintegration with Guam. Ben Santos, Felipe Salas and other leaders of the Popular Party were active, as I recall. Did you become aware of that leadership position, and did you agree with it or disagree with it in the early years in the District Legislature?

Manglona: You know, ever since I became a member of the Marianas District Legislature, I was a minority, but being a minority I tried to work together cooperatively with members there, because I'm representing my island to see what I can do to represent the interests of my island. And by being humble and modest, sometimes it helps. And I get a lot of support all the times the politics was so emotional. Sometimes I got the sympathy of the majority there. All along when I become a member, I am beginning to develop this concept of our political system. The thing that as I recall during those days is why should we reintegrate when in fact Guam cannot make us part of the American political family, because we have to go to the second step of asking the United States to allow us to join with Guam. So I'm beginning to develop that political concept that why should we take a two-step approach rather than a one-step approach of just asking the United States to become part of the American political family. So I have kind of been sold on the idea like what the Progressive [Party] was trying to advocate at the time that maybe it's better to just have a one-step approach to become part of that family than taking a two-step approach. So I begin to develop this, and I remember during some of the meetings in Rota, in fact, to be

honest with you, I got into an encounter with the present Bishop. He was then a priest in Rota, just got out of the seminary and became a priest and he was assigned in Rota. And he attended one public meeting there at the Rota Elementary School, and I was selling the idea about why should I go to Guam and join Guam when in fact Guam cannot make us part of the American political family unless the United States will consent to that. And I was trying to explain this philosophy as a young politician in one of the meetings there, and the young priest asked me, what makes you believe that you can do that, offer direct annexation to the United States and not agreeing to go with Guam. I said, Father, what makes you also believe that if I say I want to go with Guam, that the United States will say, yes. You know, I responded to him, and a lot of people thought I was so impolite. In fact, they make it a little political thing because, oh, look at the young politician is answering Father Camacho, who is now the Bishop.

Willens: Was that while you were a member of the District Legislature, even before you were a member of the Congress of Micronesia, or can't you recall exactly when that was?

Manglona: No, that was after I became a member of the Congress of Micronesia when that encounter happened.

Willens: Well, that's a very interesting story. And of course, you and I know that ultimately your one-step approach proved to be the one that seemed the most feasible and available. The plebiscite I made reference to in 1961 was done in Saipan and Tinian in large part, I think, because the U.N. visiting mission was about to visit the Northern Marianas in 1961. As you know, the visiting missions came every three years—in 1961, 1964, 1967, 1970 and 1973. The visiting mission in 1961 produced a report that was the first report that was critical of the United States administration of Micronesia to some extent. Speaking generally about the role of the United Nations in Micronesia during the 1960s, do you think that the people in Micronesia looked to the U.N. as a way of expressing their concerns and bringing about a change in U.S. policy?

Manglona: Yes. As I vividly recall, I think we looked up to the U.N. as being an arbitrator of this issue, whatever the issue is, because there had been a lot of education going on during those days that the United States is the administering authority, and naturally the United Nations mandated the United States to do certain things for the island people. And at least on my part that has been built in my mind, and I am beginning to understand the relationship, so we feel excited whenever there's a mission coming out here.

Willens: You were excited.

Manglona: Yes, and usually the Mayor of Rota and the Council members, we sit down and prepare an agenda, what presentations that we presented to this mission, because we feel that they are our only salvation for resolving economic, political, educational problems out here. For example, let me get out an issue, like the war claims issue, for example, was really popular during those days. We want to get compensation for the damage and for those people that died during the Second World War, and that has been the most popular issue during those days. Another issue, as you mentioned, is also this issue about reintegration. I think this issue also been brought up that predominantly the people here supported reintegration with Guam. And since the Trust Territory Administration doesn't entertain to that, we kind of complaining to the United Nations why are we not given the choice? So those are real issues during those days.

Willens: When you personally met with members of the visiting mission who were ambassadors from various countries, Australia, Great Britain, France, and so forth, did you feel that they listened to the people when they expressed their concerns?

- Manglona: Well, after so many visits, we feel frustrated, disappointed. We feel our complaints are going to dead ears. And we are becoming less confident over the years because there have been many visits made by them, but then every time they come out, we discuss this, and then another mission comes, we present the same thing, and there's not really anything happening.
- Willens: Did you ever hear that the Trust Territory Administration was upset about the complaints that you and others presented to the visiting mission?
- Manglona: Well, I heard that sometimes the U.S. Administration is not too happy of the way we presented ourselves. Maybe they view some of us as critics of the Administration. But as I said, we feel that is a forum where we could at least present our views where we can resolve our problems. But you're right. Many of us are considered being critics.
- Willens: Can you think of any specific policy of the U.S. Administering Authority here in the Trust Territory that was changed as a result of visiting mission criticism?
- Manglona: Well, I think one thing that at least the visiting mission is trying their very best to help us is in the settlement of the war claims. We see reports where the Trusteeship Council make a very strong recommendation to the administering authority that they should try their best to continue a dialog with Japan so that the Micronesian or war claim compensation can be given to the people. That I think has been—the report has been positive on that. We are also seeing a strong recommendation that they plead to the administering authority to continue upgrading the educational system in the Northern Marianas, I mean in Micronesia, where people can be placed in the more responsible jobs, upgrading of facilities and that has been positive. In the area of public health I believe, also, and in economic development. Every time they meet, I think they have a very positive recommendation along in that respect. Another thing, also, I think they are also concerned about land problem, and at times they came out very strongly that. They want some of this land taking given back to the local people.
- Willens: The 1961 Visiting Mission Report reflected its awareness of the desire in the Northern Marianas for a separate political status and reintegration with Guam. That report and the reports of Visiting Missions for many years to come was very critical of the separate status aspirations of the Northern Marianas. Do you recall any discussions with U.N. Visiting Missions during the 1960s on the subject of separate negotiations?
- Manglona: Well, I recall some discussion, I think, from the United States perspective. Originally, they want us to decide our political aspiration as a whole. In other words, they don't want to see any one of the districts negotiate unilaterally or be separated from the rest of Micronesia. And I think in the early days, the United States took a very strong stand against unilateral negotiations, and I think that has been the policy of the United States. I think because also of the U.S. interest to its Ambassador and the United Nations, I'm sure, a member of the United Nations Trusteeship Council more or less, also, is in line with that kind of thinking that they would rather prefer to see the entire Micronesia making a decision as a whole rather than separating.
- Willens: One of the recommendations made by the 1961 visiting mission, as I recall, was that the United States should move the capital of the Trust Territory from Guam to Saipan. That was done, as I recall, sometime in the early 1960s, either 1961 or 1962 I believe. Did that movement of the capital to Saipan have any particular significance as far as you were concerned?

- Manglona: Well, during the Naval Administration, as I understand, I was then very young during those days, but I believe they did have the capital in Guam. I think it's over at the air base, someplace there. And, I think for administrative purposes, because Guam has a different status and Micronesia is under the Trust Territory Administration, is that since Saipan is close to Guam, and since Saipan is closer to communication and transportation area out here, that maybe it's administrative convenience [as the basis] of the decision that was made then to place it in Saipan. And I think that that was the prevailing advantage of transferring it from Guam to Saipan. I think in a way it's a blessing to Saipan because moving the capital here, we centralized the government operation here, we established our departments here, there are people that have to be centralized here, the Trust is Micronesia. And I am sure it helped us economically, and maybe that was what created the booming time for Saipan by having the capital moved up here. That also encouraged establishment of a transportation system like the Air Micronesia, for example, maybe moving a major telephone system like the MTC and others. So I would tend to agree that that may be the staging point of our economic development.
- Willens: At the time that the capital moved from Guam to Saipan, was the Naval Technical Training Unit discontinued on Saipan, as you understand it?
- Manglona: Well, I became really involved in Saipan since 1962, and I believe this training unit was long disbanded, before that period. As I remember, I think it was established during the Korean War, or something there, for training of the Chinese there that were involved in that war. You know, they send them here and they provide training here and it's operated by CIA or Military Intelligence Operations. So that was done for that specific purpose, but then after that, I think they discontinued it.
- Willens: And so it's your recollection that it was discontinued at the time the capital was moved to Saipan, and so all the facilities on Capitol Hill were available for use?
- Manglona: Yes, I'm glad you have that understanding because I'm beginning to follow you now to your line of questioning. Maybe that is one factor, as I said, for convenient administrative decision, because of the facility already here. You know, we have the headquarters, which is where we are now, plus other facility housing here.
- Willens: Another change in policy that happened in the early 1960s happened in 1962 when President Kennedy issued a directive authorizing free entry of U.S. citizens and investments into the TTPI. Do you have any recollection of that event and, if so, what was its significance?
- Manglona: Yes, I think it is very significant. I think it brings a message to the world that we have free movement into Micronesia, and it opened up opportunity for possible investment in this area here. And I think that also is very significant in itself. Another thing that you talk about President Kennedy. I think one of his great programs during his time is the Accelerated School Construction Program.
- Willens: I was going to mention that.
- Manglona: And he put out millions of dollars because he knows that we need to upgrade education. And what he did, I believe, is he put out—they call it Accelerated School Construction Program—I think he put several millions of dollars that will help us build schools as a crash program in Micronesia.
- Willens: As a what program?
- Manglona: As a crash program.

- Willens: Crash program.
- Manglona: Yes, in Micronesia to build infrastructure for our students, school children. That's one program during his time. I believe the other program is the Hill-Burton Dispensary Program for outpatient care. Building a dispensary especially in the outer islands, as they call it, where they could build dispensary for outpatient care. The other one is the introduction of a Peace Corps program.
- Willens: When do you remember being aware that President Kennedy's Administration was adopting a new policy for the Trust Territory?
- Manglona: Well, as I remember, there was a team that was appointed by President Kennedy. I think this team was headed by Dr. Solomon.
- Willens: You're referring to the Solomon Commission which visited in February 1963.
- Manglona: Yes, I think there was a group of experts consisting of political experts, economists and others.
- Willens: Did you happen to meet with any members of the Solomon Commission?
- Manglona: No, I don't recall meeting with them personally.
- Willens: Do you know what kind of investigation they conducted in the Trust Territory when they visited in 1963?
- Manglona: Well, I think they did that under very guarded conditions. They came out here more or less to provide the President with their views of how best can we formulate U.S. policy in this area, looking in terms of economic and long-term defense interests. So, I think they have a mission of going up there just for the President so that they will submit a report to the President exactly what's the status and what would they recommend to the President to implement new policy or programs out here, thinking in lines of U.S. interests in those areas, economically, defense and others.
- Willens: Why do you think the President selected a separate independent group for that purpose rather than using the Interior Department or the Trust Territory government?
- Manglona: Well, I believe the President wanted to have a first-hand report rather than coming from Interior, where during those days there has been a lot of disappointment or displeasure by Micronesian people [expressed] to their representative to the United Nations, you know.
- Willens: A lot of complaints about the Interior Department?
- Manglona: Right, and at the same time I think that it has to do with national defense interests because the Pacific area was so important militarily to the United States because of the conflict area, Asian countries. I think, it's my own personal view, I think United States have a prevailing interest in this area. They thought we've got to do something because unless we do something, I'm afraid, who knows in the future, these people will incline to think otherwise and [have] other political aspirations and not with the United States where the U.S. interests will not [be] preserved. And more or less, formulating on my own that maybe that is part of the consideration.
- Willens: You do have a recollection, though, of a crash program with respect to educational facilities?
- Manglona: Yes.

- Willens: There was some criticism subsequently that those funds were not well-spent and that some of the schools were constructed, for example, without any toilets. Did you have any recollection of that?
- Manglona: Well, I don't know about the other Micronesian islands, but I know in Rota, for example, I think we still have the two school buildings there that were built during those days, and I know as a surveyor, myself, I was very much instrumental in assisting their contractor there by using my technical knowledge and helping them out reading the plans and building that school. So, I think in the case of Rota, I think it's well-spent. We have a nice classroom, although it's a roofing tin, and sometimes gets corroded, but at least we have concrete walling, that is still there. So, but maybe that is true in terms of Micronesia because, let's take Truk, for example, they have a lot of islands. From Truk proper, and maybe they just have to squeeze the very little money they have and maybe for that situation, who knows maybe that complaint is true.
- Willens: But so far as you're concerned, based on your own personal experience, the funds were made available and were seemingly well-spent in meeting educational needs?
- Manglona: Yes, I think it's well-spent on the island proper. As far as the outer islands, that is very difficult, as I said, it's difficult in many ways. You know, we don't have the labor force, we don't have the water, we don't have the transportation, the materials. So I can see the real complication there, and I would not be surprised if the expectation is not met because of all those problems, that who knows, they may build something that will not last for many years, like if one is built in the district proper.
- Willens: The Kennedy Administration policy rejected the assumptions that had controlled federal policy toward Micronesia in the previous years. For many years the official Interior Department position was that there was no need for economic development in the Trust Territory, that the people were largely content with a subsistence economy and that there was no desire for change among the people of Micronesia. And the Kennedy Administration decided that those assumptions were no longer valid and that funding was necessary to help the people adjust to a modern world, to become more educated, to prepare for self-government, and ultimately the United States government hoped that the people of Micronesia would vote to become part of the United States. Do you have any reaction as to the kinds of assumptions that President Kennedy changed when he came into power? How do you feel about the sense that the people of Micronesia should have been left alone to develop at their own rate and without any outside interference?
- Manglona: Well, maybe let's try to isolate the other Micronesia from the Northern Marianas, okay? As far as the Northern Marianas, as I said earlier, we are close to Guam. Guam is part of the American political family, we have the military base there. It's developed economically, we've a lot of federal assistance. So to us in the Northern Marianas, our aspiration is that we want to also be like Guam. We want to develop economically, we want to develop politically, so that we could be like Guam. So in our case we like change, okay? As far as Micronesia, I think they, and being part of the Congress of Micronesia, and also having the opportunity to visit most of the islands, they are more conservative, more reserved about change. And as far as they are concerned, during the early days, they are more contented to have a simple way of life the way they are. Although we have few cases where people got educated and have traveled to the United States, and maybe they have a different view from most of the people, but Micronesia during those days had the attitude that they don't want to really change.

- Willens: Was that due in part to the fact that cultural traditions and the role of the tribal chiefs were more significant in the other districts than in the Northern Marianas?
- Manglona: That's very true, yes.
- Willens: How do you explain the difference in the cultural patterns between the Northern Marianas and the other districts and in particular the fact that the Chamorros and to a lesser extent the Carolinians in the Northern Marianas wanted to emulate Guam and did not feel that that was inconsistent with preserving their own culture?
- Manglona: Well, in the case of the Northern Marianas, we have a lot of exposure to the modern world in the early days. As I said, our proximity from here to Guam is very close; our family ties, we have family ties with Guam, we have relatives in Guam, and inter-marriages. We send our children to Guam for schooling for four or five years. Every time somebody died there, we went there to be with the family. So we have this very close relationship. At the same time, we were introduced to television and movies.
- Willens: All under the U.S. Administration.
- Manglona: Right. And we were having this influence here. In the case of Micronesia, they lacked that during early days. They are very conservative. They don't have modern transportation, they don't have improved roads like the way we improve in the early days. So to them, they are contented in that kind of life. So inasmuch as we want to preserve our culture, I'm afraid that with our exposure of all this modern culture technology that somehow we are changing over the years. That's the way I'm seeing it.
- Willens: How did you personally feel in the 1960s about change? Did you feel it was a threat to the community if outsiders became eligible to invest in this community, or did you welcome change?
- Manglona: Well, I was raised up in Western life, and I think I welcome this change. You know many years back I was telling people—like if I ask my parents, my mother and my father, what life would they like, they would say I love the Japanese time. They liked that because they feel they grew up with it, they got a simple easy life. But to me, I grew in the Western lifestyle, and I went to that kind of school. I like cars, I like television, I like when you're going to make coffee just turn on the stove, I like radio, so I think it's depending on [the person to] whom are you talking. If you're talking to a generation like my generation, I'm sure most of them will say, I love this kind of life. But if you talk to the older generation like my mother and my father, they will tell you that oh, they love the Japanese time. So it depends on where you put yourselves.
- Willens: That's very, very true. One of the questions that was being debated back in Washington during the early 1960s was whether the people of Micronesia as a whole were ready for self-government. The Interior Department, in some internal memoranda, took the view that the people were not yet ready for self-government and that therefore the United States should proceed very cautiously toward any change in political status. The Department of State, on the other hand, under pressure from the United Nations, felt that the United States had an obligation to move more rapidly toward self-government. It's unclear whether anyone really tried to come out to Micronesia and talk to the people, and if they did they generally heard what they wanted to hear. What is your sense looking at about the time of the Congress of Micronesia in the middle 1960s—do you think that the people of the Northern Marianas and the people of Micronesia as a whole were ready to face up to the political status and self-government issues?

Manglona: Well, at the time when they formed the Marianas Political Status Commission, we have studied various political alternatives. We looked at the political arrangement with Guam, some of the Pacific Islands' political relationship with Great Britain and the American Samoa, the Virgin Island situation, and we try to understand their relationship. I recall at the time there was a recommendation made by this committee either to accept an unincorporated territory of the United States, become free association, independence. Those are the options. I remember I took exception to our own Commission's recommendation by arguing that that's not what our people want in the Northern Marianas. I think our people want to become part of the American political family, and I think as a compromise the [Micronesian] Political Status Committee recommended free association. The reason why they recommended free association is that going back to your concern whether they are ready or not ready, I think they feel that maybe they will stick with free association as a first step, and then if they feel they have a way of moving to the second step, they are more or less thinking of independence. And that's the way I read their minds during those days. In other words, they are not quite ready to make a final decision whether they want independence because they know it will be almost a mission impossible, but yet they want to decide on a relationship that will have some tie with the United States and at the right time perhaps they could make another decision, could be a long distance future, whether independent or still remain there [in free association]. And I think that was the decision that was made then. But then I can give you my personal view is that during the early days, I don't think Micronesia, of course excluding Saipan, Marianas, I don't think they really ready. I think they are kind of jealous because of the Marianas sophistication in [dealing with] this issue, because of the discussions we've been having about integrating with Guam, and there was a discussion that maybe we should have a separate negotiation, and that accelerated some of this feeling among Micronesian leaders that maybe we too have to try to reach that decision of deciding for our political future for our people.

Willens: That's a very interesting point. Let me see if I understand it. Certainly there was much more discussion about political status within the Northern Marianas in the early and middle 1960s than there was anywhere else so far as I've been able to ascertain. Just focusing on the Northern Marianas for a moment, did you think that the discussion of future political status, the familiarity with Guam, the development of the Marianas District Legislature put the Northern Marianas where the people here were ready to assume greater responsibilities for self-government in the middle and late 1960s than perhaps the other districts were?

Manglona: Yes, I can safely say that—that we are more sophisticated in terms of our thinking, that we are ready compared to Micronesia. Yes.

Willens: Some of the U.N. visiting mission reports went out of their way to state that the people in Micronesia were not ready for self-government, they did not understand the political status issue, they were confused about the alternatives, and so forth. Do you think that was a fair criticism with respect to the Northern Marianas?

Manglona: I think it's not a fair criticism. I think beginning in the late 1950s up to the 1960s and 1970s, our people are so determined and committed that they feel the time is right for them to make that decision. So I think in the case of the Northern Marianas, I think we are ready to make that decision in the 1960s and the 1970s.

Willens: You made reference to the Peace Corps. There was some debate about whether the Peace Corps program should be extended to Micronesia, and it ultimately was in 1966. What was your impression at the time about the role of the Peace Corps in the Trust Territory?

- Manglona: Well, we thought it's a blessing. During those days, it's very difficult to hire qualified teachers, economists, attorneys, engineers or technical people for that matter. And by having this Peace Corps program where the federal government pays them, I think we thought it's a blessing, and it really helped us accelerate improvements in education, infrastructure and for that matter our culture and provide attorneys to help us in our political development. I think to us we welcome that. In fact, during the early days, the family was so generous that they sponsored these young people, having them stay as family members, and they stay with them for years. Until after that some of them find their own house. That's how much they welcome them.
- Willens: Did you personally have any dealings with Peace Corps volunteers?
- Manglona: Oh, yes, I have two of them stay with my family in Rota, and we are very pleased.
- Willens: What areas did they work in?
- Manglona: I think in Rota the one I have is one is an agricultural extension agent, and the other one has to deal with community service area.
- Willens: So your general recollection is that the Peace Corps program in the Northern Marianas was on the whole very, very constructive?
- Manglona: Yes. In fact, after it became successful there seems to feel some impact from the federal standpoint, from the federal government. They're saying, maybe we did something wrong by getting those lawyers out there to make us understand our rights, and that's the time when the local people began to know some of their rights that they could talk about and pursue with the TT government. For example, land problems.
- Willens: You're recalling that the Peace Corps lawyers helped to advise the local citizens about the land problems?
- Manglona: Land problems and political questions. In the Congress of Micronesia, they help us make laws and make us resolutions and by having them do that for us and with passage they feel that it's a threat.
- Willens: Did the Trust Territory Administration express any criticism with respect to the Peace Corps program?
- Manglona: Well, at times I heard that some of them are very critical. In fact, I've been hearing rumors that some of them even were told that if you are going to continue to act the way you people are acting, who knows, they may suspend that training program for young lawyers.
- Willens: Well, the criticism was principally directed at Peace Corps lawyers, is that correct?
- Manglona: Right.
- Willens: Lawyers are a very troublesome group, to be sure. There came a time in the early 1970s when a report was written that I've seen indicating that the Peace Corps program in the Northern Marianas may have reached the point of diminishing returns and that many of the volunteers did not feel that they had enough to do, and some of the people in the Northern Marianas felt that it was more or less of a putdown to have volunteers helping in the Northern Marianas particularly in the main centers of population.
- Manglona: Yes, they feel that the fact that we had the headquarters here, we have more advantage than the other Micronesian islands because this is the central government and we have the departments and we have the expatriates that were brought in to do specific jobs, so that

maybe the need for a Peace Corps is not as great as those of the other Micronesian islands. There is some feeling about that in the early days, yes.

Willens: I forget when it ultimately terminated. Do you have any recollection?

Manglona: Well, I have the feeling it was eventually terminated at the time when we approved the Covenant, that's the transitional period of phasing out, and then eventually it was phased out I believe when we became a full-fledged Commonwealth.

Willens: Going back to the Congress of Micronesia, did you feel that you could best represent the interest of Rota and the Northern Marianas by serving in the Congress of Micronesia rather than remain in the District Legislature?

Manglona: Well . . .

Willens: What prompted your decision to run for Congress rather than to stay with the District Legislature?

Manglona: I think I have greater latitude in helping, not only the people of Rota, but also the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, including Micronesia, to be able to serve in a body that has a wider and greater area of responsibility, especially in dealing with the TT Administration, with the federal government, and with United Nations. I think it's more challenging to serve in that body than if I have to restrict myself to just the Northern Mariana Islands affairs. And to me it's an opportunity, and I think I can do even more greater things for my people being serving in a body that has greater line of responsibility.

Willens: Let me just get this straight, did you resign from the Congress of Micronesia in about 1970 to take a position with the TTPI?

Manglona: Yes, 1970. Let me just backtrack a little bit. Engineering has long been my interest in life. When I graduated, as I said in 1957, I was a surveyor, and I worked all the way up to the supervisor position. I was just part-time as you may remember during the early days. Same thing with the Mariana Islands District Legislature—it's not a full-time job. So I still was working as a surveyor during that time, but I was serving under that body too. My interest has been in engineering. I really would have loved to become an engineer. In fact, I took my associate degree even after I got married with a lot of children and have to leave them behind and go for training in Hawaii, one year training to get an engineering technology program there.

Willens: Did you do that?

Manglona: Yes.

Willens: When was that?

Manglona: That was 1965-66. I had three or four children that I have to leave one year just to be able to go to a special school at the Honolulu Community College. I'm taking civil engineering technology. At the same time, I enrolled in an informal night class at the University of Hawaii to become a construction estimator. And I took up construction estimating there. I'm taking every opportunity of my time while I was there. And then what happened when I became a public official—you're right, I resigned 1970—I became Director of Public Works in Rota. I took up a program in Guam, a construction inspector training program that lasted about 18 months. And this is a special well-organized inspector, construction inspector training that teaches you a wide area of engineering—electrical, building construction, masonry, painting, plumbing, you name it. But then I forced myself to even go to the University of Guam. Having taken that program I used my extra

effort of making sure that I'm a full-time engineering student at the University of Guam. So I took at my AS degree in civil engineering at the University of Guam.

Willens: That was in 1963?

Manglona: Right, about that period. So I end up shooting two birds with one stone. I go for the construction inspector course, but I manage to go to the University of Guam, even go to night school to get my associate degree in engineering. Because of that interest, that I always like to work as an engineer. That's why I resigned in 1970. That's the booming period of the Northern Marianas when they start constructing roads, airport and others, and since there was an opportunity then I thought maybe I'll try to go into the field I really love to be involved.

Willens: There's been a good deal written about the Congress of Micronesia. Some commentators have suggested that it was a great force for unity within Micronesia. What do you think was the role of the Congress of Micronesia in either unifying Micronesia or bringing evidencing some indications of lack of unity?

Manglona: Well, I know there was a lot of effort to unify Micronesia, because as I said, at the time when this happened, there had been lot of discussion about wanting to reintegrate with Guam, or maybe a direct separate negotiation with the United States. As far as the Micronesian leadership is concerned, they don't want to see the Marianas separated from the rest of Micronesia. They feel that's a threat in getting a unified decision with the United States if the United States will ever allow the Northern Marianas to secede from the rest of Micronesia and have their own separate negotiations. So it is very clear that the leaders from all Micronesia are trying their best to encourage the High Commissioner, to compel the High Commissioner and the administering authority not to allow that to happen. They take a very strong position not to allow that to happen. I think the Micronesian leaders try to come around and impress upon the Northern Marianas leaders and people that our best bet is to unite and make sure we decide on a political status that would be good for all. The difficulties we have there is that we are not for free association. We are very determined. We don't like free association. We don't like independence. We just like to become of the American political family. Either arrangement, as long as we become a part of the American family. We are very determined with that. And as I said, I was once a loser, myself, because I advocate for education along with some of my other Republican leaders. Then, naturally as a representative of the people, I just have to voice and support the people's concern, and that's what I did exactly when I was member of the Micronesian Political Status Commission—is to come out strongly and go against my own report by saying no, our people don't want this status recommended by the Committee. Our people want to become part of the American political family. I tell you the record will reflect that, I think I have a statement on the floor that says that.

Willens: In August of 1966 the Congress of Micronesia passed a resolution asking the President of the United States to appoint a commission to examine status alternatives. Do you have any recollection of the circumstances that led to that action by the Congress of Micronesia?

Manglona: Yes. I think, the Northern Marianas have a role here because, as I said, we were trying every avenue to see if the United States will listen to the desire of our people, and there had been a lot of informal discussion with U.S. officials visiting this island, and we're trying to find ways and means to pressure the United States to entertain a separate discussion. So I think that's what really prompted the Congress of Micronesia that they better organize themselves and start talking otherwise the Northern Marianas will go on their own unilateral way. They're trying to find a way to unite the Micronesian people so

that they would not like to see the Marianas separated from them. They feel that if the Marianas go into a separate negotiation, they will not be very strong in their pursuit of negotiating a political status for the Micronesian people as a whole.

Willens: As it happened, the United States did not appoint any commission to look at political status. Were you ever made aware in the period of 1967-68 of the internal debate within the federal government as to whether to have a presidential commission look at the Micronesian status issue?

Manglona: No, I'm not really aware about that. As I remember, there has been some indication from the federal government that they're willing to offer Micronesia a status similar to Guam like unincorporated territory, for example. I remember seeing a draft of that proposal about that period.

Willens: You remember seeing a draft of something called a draft organic act or something of that kind?

Manglona: Yes, right.

Willens: Do you remember the circumstances under which you saw it?

Manglona: Well, I think that was passed on to us from either the Trust Territory Administration here and maybe sent to them from Interior from the U.S. government. And I remember during those days also there have been efforts from the Hawaii legislators like Senator Dan Inouye and Congresswoman Patsy Mink, and there seems to be great interest in Micronesia during that period, and they too are instrumental in trying to assist us attain a political relationship that will fall in within the U.S. system. I think they have some persuasion from the U.S. Congress to the federal government in trying to sell that idea to us.

Willens: Did you ever hear of any views attributed to Congressman Aspinall about Micronesian future political status?

Manglona: I think that brings to mind, yes.

Willens: Congressman Aspinall was the head of the committee that had responsibility for the Interior Department, and there are some who say that the Interior Department's position on Micronesia was largely influenced by Congressman Aspinall. Do you have any recollection of his name coming up in discussions?

Manglona: Yes, I think he's pretty much involved in Micronesian affairs. That name seems to ring pretty well in my mind. I'm sure his committee is somewhat concerned and interested in the Micronesian affairs, and I agree with you. I think he's pretty much may be involved in that.

Willens: Did you ever meet him?

Manglona: I think so in the early days, yes.

Willens: You think you met him back in Washington?

Manglona: In Washington.

Willens: There was a Congressional visit in January 1968 where the records indicate that the senators who came were Senators Burdick, Metcalf and Moss. I don't seem to have the names of the members of the House of Representatives who came, but it did apparently get considerable publicity out here in the Northern Marianas. Do you have any recollection of a meeting with that Congressional delegation in early 1968?

- Manglona: Yes, I think I remember them visiting the Northern Marianas. I didn't meet with them specifically, individually. But I remember they came out here and visited the Northern Marianas. I think Guam, for that matter.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection that the visit accomplished anything?
- Manglona: Well, usually, we took every opportunity of Congressional visits here, especially our leaders, especially in our movements in the political status issue. I would not be surprised if there was some discussion with maybe President Santos and some of the legislative leadership from our Northern Marianas Legislature. They may have presented the issue to them because we are serious about this political issue during those days. So I would suppose there may be some issues they brought to their attention, like war claims and others.
- Willens: The U.N. visiting mission of 1967 issued a report that addressed many areas of concern. The report indicated that the mission had been told by many Micronesians that the visiting mission should not hurry them into deciding their own political future and that many Micronesians said in private that they needed more preparation before they could make any decision with respect to their political future. Do you have any reactions to that aspect?
- Manglona: Yes, and I'm sure that is coming from our fellow Micronesian leaders. They are worried that the Northern Marianas is really pushing hard to achieve political sophistication during that period, and I think in the efforts to prevent that from happening they further disunite Micronesian leaders and people and the Northern Marianas. They talk to them on more or less a private basis saying that, please, we should not like you to encourage that. So I think that may have happened at that time.
- Willens: The visiting mission commented on some aspects of social and economic development that you and I have discussed today. With respect to economic development, the visiting mission identified the need to build up economic infrastructure, especially in the field of transport. Was that a recommendation that you would agree with, based on your experience then?
- Manglona: Well, as I said, transportation and communication had been a real problem during those days because of the isolation of the islands in Micronesia, so that there is a lot of emphasis of improving transportation between the islands.
- Willens: The report was very critical of the medical care situation in the Trust Territory and commented that more could have been accomplished if Congress had appropriated funds that had been requested during the previous year. The report said that medical personnel in the Trust Territory "are in some cases working in substandard conditions." What was your assessment of the quality of medical care in or about 1967?
- Manglona: There had been a lot of complaints in those days that our dispensary or hospital is very inadequate in terms of medical equipment, in terms of specialists. Many of our medicines are outdated. Essential medicine is not readily available. So we have those complaints, and people usually are very critical when we were visited by the members of the United Nations visiting mission and, as I said, we took every opportunity to air out our displeasure and complain to them. And health is a primary concern of the Micronesian leaders all over the districts, and we complain about the inadequacy of medical service in practically all of the islands.

- Willens: The visiting mission also made reference to a difficult land tenure situation, and I know land has always been a problem here. What aspects of the land tenure situation were of particular concern during the late 1960s?
- Manglona :In Saipan?
- Willens: It's unclear whether it refers to Saipan in particular or Micronesia in general.
- Manglona: I think in Saipan, for example, there is a red line here—they call it the red line—[marking off] the land taken by the Naval Administration for military purposes or military use.
- Willens :Is that the same as military retention land?
- Manglona: Military retention land, right. And they call it the red line. At times our people are critical of some of these military retention areas—our land that was owned by certain individuals on the island and, for military purposes, the military just say, well, it's within the military retention area. So people are very critical and they are petitioning or they are asking the High Commissioner during those days if that could be returned to the people. We also have land cases where people are being under duress during the Japanese time. Their lands were taken, and we petitioned the High Commissioner that those people will be permitted to take back their original property. So, during the war, most if not all of the people lose their land documents, and there's no well-defined property lines. And people are asking the High Commissioner if we could survey all the private properties, identify them, issue out a certificate of title. And those are the complaints during those days, so naturally we're pushing very hard to have the land title administrator start issuing out a quick land deed to these people that own property because they lost them during the war.
- Willens: The visiting mission commented about the powers of the Congress of Micronesia. It was generally complimentary of the Congress of Micronesia but said that its authority was limited because it didn't have any control over the budget that was expended by the TTPI government. It recommended that the Congress of Micronesia be given increased fiscal authority. What was your feeling, as a member of the Congress of Micronesia, with respect to its limited power over the budget?
- Manglona: As I recall, during the early days, the Congress of Micronesia didn't have override power over the High Commissioner's veto over the budget. And we are very critical of that, if the High Commissioner will disapprove a budget and we cannot override over his disapproval. I think that is one of the criticisms we had as members during that time there.
- Willens: It was also true that the Congress of Micronesia had no authority at all with respect to the funds that were appropriated by the U.S. Congress to be expended here in the Trust Territories.
- Manglona: There we don't have authority at all. Any money given to the High Commissioner from the federal government is at the disposal of the High Commissioner.
- Willens: What other aspects of the Congress of Micronesia's powers did you feel needed to be changed in the late 1960s? For example, there came a time when recommendations were made that the District Administrators should be appointed by the Congress of Micronesia or that the Congress should have authority to advise and consent with respect to the appointments of the High Commissioner or some of his chief officials.
- Manglona: Yes, during those days the High Commissioner was given the authority to appoint the District Administrator in the respective districts in Micronesia. I think there was a strong feeling among members of the Council of Micronesia that perhaps we should give an advise and consent to those appointed positions—not only District Administrator, but

maybe Director of Public Health and Environmental Services, administrators of the education system, and there are other sensitive positions in government during those days.

Willens: The visiting mission commented on the lack of Micronesians at high levels in the Trust Territory civil service. The report said that great strides had been made in bringing Micronesians into the legislative area, but that very little progress had been made within the Executive Branch. Wasn't it a policy of the Trust Territory government at the time to bring Micronesians into Executive Branch positions and train them to replace the expatriates?

Manglona: That has been the policy, but for some reason it was never fully implemented, not until many years and not after so many efforts and concerns raised by Micronesian leaders.

Willens: Why was that?

Manglona: I think because during those days there's a lot of influential members of Congress in the United States, maybe some influential members that associated with the federal government in Hawaii, for example, that use their influence by recommending somebody there in Hawaii to come and take over certain high positions here. And in most cases, most of the expatriates were given the top level government positions on the island, rather than identifying individuals in Micronesia that possessed the same qualifications. I think they give heavy consideration or major consideration to recommendations that come from members of Congress recommending somebody that they know would fit into a certain specific job here. Or during that time, as I said, the senators from Hawaii and the congressmen or congresswomen from Hawaii are very instrumental in some of these decisions of placing people out in the Pacific because they consider them to be in the Pacific area and they give their recommendation very strong favor. They take their words for any recommendation—like I know in Rota, for example, we have a lot of administrators coming from Hawaii.

Willens: The High Commissioner in the late 1970s was from Hawaii.

Manglona: Yes, so I remember those days. Mr. Kobayashi was our District Administrator at one time. He's from Hawaii.

Willens: What was his name?

Manglona: Kobayashi. Edward Kobayashi. Another guy is Tewkesbury from Hawaii. So, during those days, I believe since finding a job is somewhat difficult, when you are in a position that you can inject influence, you usually send names to the High Commissioner or to a member of the Interior Department that you recommend sending certain officials to work in Saipan or in Micronesia. And in most cases they will honor those recommendations.

Willens: Were the jobs in the Trust Territory Administration attractive to local Micronesian people, and particularly from the Northern Marianas, even though the salary scale was substantially lower than the salary level at which the expatriates were employed?

Manglona: The expatriates were given a higher salary because I think they were giving the GS rating.

Willens: Right.

Manglona: If we have to occupy that position, we just have to take a Micronesian pay scale.

Willens: The differences were very great, were they not?

Manglona: Yes. In fact, that's why at one time they established the so-called C Scale.

- Willens: The C Scale.
- Manglona: Yes. They call it the C Scale. C Scale is a rating for higher positions where a Micronesian can fill. In other words, if you are a very talented Micronesian, successful Micronesian in government position, and in order to give you a little higher pay you have to go to the C Scale rating.
- Willens: When did that come into effect?
- Manglona: I think that's somewhere in the 1960s.
- Willens: In the late 1960s then?
- Manglona: Yes, I think so. They call it the C Scale.
- Willens: Was that a promising development then?
- Manglona: Yes. When you reach the C Scale, you're getting a dollar-something an hour.
- Willens: A dollar?
- Manglona: About almost 80 cents to a dollar-something an hour. I myself got the C Scale because of my sophistication and my position. I was aggressive and I proved myself that I can do the job of the expatriate.
- Willens: Give me an idea then of what an expatriate would have been paid doing your job, what the C Scale would have been, and what the normal level would have been.
- Manglona: Okay. Let's say my boss in Rota, maybe he is a GS-9. I don't know how much that gets. Okay. When I reach a C Scale, I think I probably may have been making under the C Scale about a dollar-something, about \$1.25, \$1.35.
- Willens: An hour?
- Manglona: Yes. So that's very good pay in those days.
- Willens: And the lowest scale?
- Manglona: The lowest scale, some people were making 24 cents, 35 cents, fifty cents.
- Willens: An hour.
- Manglona: An hour. Eighty cents is almost above our bids during those days.
- Willens: I heard an example from one of our colleagues who said he took over a job in the TTPI government for which the expatriate received \$30,000 or \$35,000 and the Northern Marianas person received \$2,000.
- Manglona: Yes.
- Willens: Or some extraordinary low amount.
- Manglona: I think \$2-\$3,000 was the highest during those days. It's high. But some of them are getting \$800, \$500; some of them \$1,000, per annum.
- Willens: The point you make about political influence I think is a very interesting one. Were there some examples where the officials of the TTPI government did in fact honor the policy and find talented Micronesians to become trained and fill their positions? Can you think of any examples along that line?
- Manglona: Yes, I remember a very talented Micronesian by the name of Dwight Heine from the Marshalls. He was a very successful young educator then. I think he's a college graduate, and I think he was really successful in the area of education. And I believe he's one of the

- first Micronesians to ever get an executive job in the central government to become I think Education Administrator replacing an expatriate, as one example. Followed by somebody like a guy from Palau, who became the Education Administrator when Dwight became the Special Assistant to the High Commissioner. Another example is John Sablan. You know, he became Acting Deputy High Commissioner one time.
- Willens: That was fairly late . . .
- Manglona: That's fairly late, right, but, like my brother in Rota that took over the job of Kobayashi to become a District Administrator when Rota became a district [of the Trust Territory].
- Willens: When was that?
- Manglona: That was back in, I believe, prior to 1962.
- Willens: Your brother?
- Manglona: Yes, he became a District Administrator in Rota replacing Kobayashi. So see, we started placing, like Frank Ada for example. You know, Frank Ada became the District Administrator in the Northern Marianas. I think that was after 1962.
- Willens: Yes, that was. Were the district administrators regarded as representatives of the High Commissioner?
- Manglona: Oh, yes. You know, he's accountable to the High Commissioner.
- Willens: What would you say was the relationship between District Administrator Ada here in the Northern Marianas and the Marianas District Legislature?
- Manglona: Okay. What happened, the High Commissioner has disposition of the budget money, and I think a certain amount of money will be allocated to the District Administrator. Like for the Northern Marianas, for example, how much money will it need for the education, public works, police . . .
- Willens: Well, would that be decided by the High Commissioner, or would that be decided by the Congress of Micronesia?
- Manglona: Prior to the Congress of Micronesia, it was decided by the High Commissioner.
- Willens: I see.
- Manglona: You know, Joe Screen, for example, was the director of administration. I don't what was the real title then. They will allocate so much of money for expenditure in each district. And then the District Administrator more or less knows how much money he can play around with for his own operation. But he's accountable to the High Commissioner. After that, of course, when the Micronesia was fully established and given the authority to appropriate, then the High Commissioner made a budget to the Congress of Micronesia and the Congress of Micronesia allocate this through an appropriation act.
- Willens: Do you remember whether District Administrator Ada had any views with respect to future political status for the Northern Marianas in the late 1960s and the earlier 1970s?
- Manglona: Oh, I'm sure he has some views, and I'm sure he's been sharing these views the U.S. officials, with the High Commissioner . . .
- Willens: Was he sympathetic, in your opinion, to the separate aspirations of the Northern Marianas people?
- Manglona: I think so. I think because Ada, I believe, is coming from the Territorial Party. I think as far as he's concerned, he's one of the most informed individuals in our government during

those days. In fact, he was assigned to the District Legislature right after completing his college education because he was the political affairs officer, and he was assigned to assist us with the District Legislature, as I recall.

Willens: One reason I ask is that I've seen some documents from the U.S. files that reflect the view of some U.S. officials here that the district administrators throughout Micronesia were not generally in favor of moving toward a future political status because they had prestigious jobs and may have wanted to stay in that position as long as possible.

Manglona: Well, I'm not aware of that. But knowing Frank and knowing his exposure in helping us with the District Legislature, I have a strong feeling that he shares the aspiration of the people of the Northern Marianas to pursue a political status different from that of Micronesia.

Willens: I mentioned earlier that the Congress of Micronesia passed a resolution in August 1966 asking the President of the United States to appoint a Commission and nothing was done in response to that resolution by the federal government. A year later the Congress of Micronesia created the Future Status Commission in August of 1967. What is your recollection about the debate that led to that decision?

Manglona: Well, as I said, there were several proposals that were transmitted to us. I think there must be one or two or three proposals that were transmitted to us. The United States offered us incorporated territory of the United States almost similar to that of Guam, maybe some modifications, and because of that recommendation I think we feel that it's time that we should form the Micronesia Political Status Commission so that we would have formal discussion with the U.S. government as to the kind of political future that we want to pursue. So I think that was what happened, what prompted the creation of the Marianas Political Status Commission.

Willens: No, I was speaking about the Micronesian Political Study Commission that was created in 1967. It's your recollection in part that the Congress of Micronesia decided it ought to have its own Commission looking at the alternatives in order to better respond to some of the initiatives from the United States.

Manglona: Yes, and I believe, if I'm not mistaken, there was also a resolution passed giving the mandate to this committee, what area they should be looking on. I think the mandate is that they should look on independence, free association and incorporated territory, and they were giving a mandate and direction what to pursue and to report to Congress their findings and recommendations, so I think that's what happened.

Willens: Was Dr. Palacios one of the original members of the Future Status Commission?

Manglona: I think he is a member.

Willens: Was anyone else from the Northern Marianas . . .

Manglona: I am a member. I represent the Northern Marianas on that committee, yes.

Willens: Can you give me your personal assessment of Dr. Palacios as a colleague of yours in the late 1960s? What was your impression of him?

Manglona: I think Dr. Palacios is more or less a person with a philosophy. I think he's very independent in a way. He has his own thinking. The way I assess him—I think Dr. Palacios is a dreamer of maybe he wanted to see the Northern Marianas become independent, but he compromised on free association. I think he's merely the advocator of free association for the Northern Marianas.

- Willens: Did you and he have different views then as members of the Future Status Commission?
- Manglona: Yes, I think we have a different view. I think he's a person who is independent in his own mind and tries to sell his own idea. On the other hand, on my part, I like to follow what the people wanted of me as their representative. I think that's the difference between us. I more or less like to follow what actually the people want.
- Willens: Were his views on status influenced by his involvement and relationship to the Carolinian Community?
- Manglona: Well, in a way I think yes. In fact, I believe he's instrumental in getting some of the unique provisions in the Covenant as you may recall because of his "but," you know Carolinian "but." I think they are more conservative. The Carolinians here in Saipan are also people that are not to eager to really change and they almost like having the same attitude also with our other fellow Micronesians in terms of dealings on the political issue. So it may have some influence maybe in his own independent decision as far as the political status issue is concerned.
- Willens: The Future Status Commission of the Congress issued an interim report in 1968, and then they got a year extension and then produced its final report and 1969. In its interim report the Commission commented that the people of Micronesia still lacked understanding of the present institutions of government, the political contexts under which the present government is cast and the suitability of the present institutions of government in relations to their needs. The Commission recommended the need for much more political education in Micronesia. Do you remember debating within the Commission the need for more political education?
- Manglona: Yes, I think there is serious discussion on that, that perhaps the thing is to educate them. For your information, we even went up to the District doing that ourselves. We were putting all these alternatives before the people. I remember visiting Micronesia. I was surprised to hear that despite the Micronesian people are conservative, I think many of them come out openly and support or wanted to become part of the United States, and I was surprised.
- Willens: Really? Going back to 1966?
- Manglona: Yes. I was surprised, knowing that they are very conservative and knowing especially their leaders. My view is that it's their leaders that really don't want them to look up to the United States because they have a different philosophy in terms of addressing the political issues. But the people in the villages, many of them came out proudly and said, why not, we like the United States. So I remember that vividly to hearing from the people directly. In fact, let me just backtrack in terms of your question you asked me about Dr. Palacios. I think, if I'm not mistaken, when we finalized our report, I think he's more in line with the committee as a whole, and I think that's why I came up with my statement there representing the House side that I disagree. I took exception to the committee recommendation of saying that no, we in the Northern Marianas don't support the recommendation of the committee.
- Willens: You're speaking of the final report?
- Manglona: But I think Palacios more or less is fully in line with the intent of the report, while I take exception because I feel that that is contrary to the wishes of the people I represent. So I came up with a statement there, saying that no, this is not what our people want, our people want this. And I can assure Congress that our people would not support that

because our people want differently from what is recommended by the Micronesian Political Status Commission.

Willens: Another issue that the Future Status Commission considered was the so-called fragmentation issue and whether the Marianas should go its separate way.

Manglona: Yes, I think they recommended we should not fragment, yes.

Willens: Yes, that's correct, and the interim report emphasized the fact that both the United States and the United Nations had come out against fragmentation. Do you remember a debate on that issue?

Manglona: It was seriously debated because they just don't want to see the Northern Marianas leave. The United States entertained the Northern Marianas on this fragmentation issue. They took a very strong position.

Willens: Now, did you feel that even though the United States and the United Nations had taken a position against fragmentation, that you on behalf of the people should still argue for it?

Manglona: In fact, I did. I did it secretly.

Willens: You did it secretly?

Manglona: Yes, I was quoted on that. I don't know whether I was talking with the CIA or FBI at one of the Washington parties, because I was a member of the Micronesian Political Commission and we had a party there, and here in the party you talk with a lot of people. So, I was confronted by one gentleman who said, "What do you think about the Northern Marianas? What you're negotiating is shared by the people of the Northern Marianas?" I said, "No, this is not what we want. We want a separate status from what has been negotiated." And I was quoted in one of the books that was written.

Willens: One of the books that was written?

Manglona: Yes, and they said that here the Northern Marianas representative, who is with the Congress of Micronesia Political Status, he tells this man that what they negotiate is not shared by his people. So I was quoted there.

Willens: Well, why did the Commission decide that it needed a second year to complete its job? The Future Status Commission was given a life of only a year, but then the Commission decided it needed a second year . . .

Manglona: Yes, I think out of the concern that perhaps we need more time to go out to the various islands and do a mass education in terms of the alternatives.

Willens: Who were the consultants that you remember working with during your assignment on that Future Status Commission? Was Carl Heine assigned at that point, or did he come in later?

Manglona: Well, he may have access to the Chairman. Because, I was just a member.

Willens: Well, was Lazarus Salii the Chairman?

Manglona: Salii was. There's a lot of other players here, like Andon Amaraich, and Bailey Olter.

Willens: Many of these people ended up on the Congress of Micronesia negotiating delegation in subsequent years. Like the ones you just named. But, the Commission did conduct studies of Puerto Rico and other alternatives before it issued its final report. Do you recall any discussions with U.S. officials about the work of the Future Status Commission before it issued its final report?

- Manglona: I know there were several meetings in Washington, sitting with the U.S. side on this, and I know there have been some trips made to the South Pacific area, we're studying those which are under the British government political arrangements. They studied the Puerto Rico situation just like we did with the Northern Marianas, the Virgin Islands, Guam, for that matter, but I think there has been some discussion with the U.S. side also on that.
- Willens: When did you first hear of the free association alternative, and what was your reaction to it?
- Manglona: Well, I think that was discussed because of some of the islands in the South Pacific . . .
- Willens: Cook Islands, in particular?
- Manglona: Yes, and they kind of get up a kind of concept, adopted from there. And as I remember, Lazarus Salii, he's a very idealistic person . . .
- Willens: Very what?
- Manglona: Idealistic person, and I believe that he more or less is an advocator of free association or independence. I think that's where his people are coming from, but they just try to see if they can blend this together with having an association with United States so they will let Northern Marianas stay in with the group so he would not fragment them. But that is my view—they tried to find a compromise point.
- Willens: You said earlier that some of them thought that free association was a half-way step toward ultimate independence.
- Manglona: Yes, those are the reasons that the half-way step maybe to get the Northern Marianas in because that is more sellable, perhaps to the Northern Marianas, to have a free association and in a way have a relationship with United States.
- Willens: One important difference was that free association did not involve U.S. citizenship.
- Manglona: Right.
- Willens: And citizenship is very important?
- Manglona: And our people are after the citizenship, that's true.
- Willens: One of the interesting aspects about the Commission's final report is that there were those in the United States who were surprised by its recommendation of free association or, in the alternative, independence, and some people in the agencies said that the aspirations of the Micronesians were unclear. I read the report and I think that it's quite clear. Do you remember any sense on the United States' side that they didn't truly understand what free association was meant to be?
- Manglona: Well, I would not be surprised if they have that feeling. As I said, some of our fellow negotiators at the time already made up their mind. I think what they really want is independence, okay? But even among Micronesian people, they said they would never be independent, and they too are trying to find a way to compromise them into something that will be more acceptable, which in my view is that maybe free association is more sellable, even to their own Micronesian people, rather than outrightly saying we want independence. Because people will resist that, even I believe among Micronesian people. A lot of them said, no, how would we be independent with the very limited natural resources we have? So I think that they tried to find a mid-point.
- Willens: What would the Micronesian leaders say to that kind of concern about economic development and the lack of resources. Did they feel that in fact the Micronesians could

be a viable and independent country, or did they think that the United States or Japan or some other foreign country would ultimately provide the needed economic support?

Manglona: Well, I think they kind of said that maybe Japan and some other country may help them provide the needed economic support.

Willens: Do you think that the desire for independence was a real desire, or was it a tactical maneuver to bring pressure on the United States to contribute funds and support a free association alternative?

Manglona: Well, I think they're really concerned of self-pride, sovereignty, they just want to decide their future, their destiny. They reassessed, they take self-pride, we want to make a decision ourselves.

Willens: Ben, I want to direct your attention to the period around 1969 when the Micronesian Future Status Commission issued its final report. Earlier in 1969, Secretary Hickel visited the Trust Territory. In advance of his visit, there were many newspaper articles saying that the United States was going to make a major announcement in Micronesia that it wanted to annex Micronesia and make it part of the United States. Secretary Hickel denied any intention to annex Micronesia but did make a public statement during his visit that the United States was interested in a permanent relationship with Micronesia. Do you remember that particular visit and the publicity that accompanied it?

Manglona: Yes, I think I remember the time when Secretary Hickel visited the Northern Marianas and, you're right, Howard, I think there is some speculation that maybe his visit has to do with trying to annex Micronesia to the United States, and I believe during his visit, also, there was a policy discussion at that time about trying to provide equal opportunity for local qualified Micronesians to that of the expatriates. I think there was some policy announcement that equal work for equal pay, or something like that, and I think that generated a lot of interest at that time. And I believe that also as I remember 1969 is the time when the Congress of Micronesia was also deliberating on their political future. Maybe that also coincided with the proposal made by the United States to offer the Micronesian people incorporated territory status like Guam.

Willens: That's correct. Your memory is very good. Do you remember personally meeting with Secretary Hickel? Do you recall how he made his announcement?

Manglona: Yes, I believe there was a ceremony. I think it's in front of these headquarters, a simple ceremony where he spoke to the leaders and to the Cabinet members of the Trust Territory, and I think he made some positive announcements as I recall. At that time he made it like he supported policy where equal pay for equal work. I remember, I think, that was the prime thing of his message.

Willens: Well, he did announce an action program that was designed to win the support of the Micronesian people in the hope that they would then vote in a plebiscite at some point on a permanent relationship with the United States. One of the proposals was to revise a dual wage system, as you recall. When was the dual wage system revised, if you can recall?

Manglona: I think that's the time that the Wage Review Board met and more or less reflected that policy decision into the Trust Territory Wage Scale. And I wonder whether that's what led to the conversion of many of the Micronesian top-level positions to the one that I described to you the other day about the C Scale category. And also I think maybe that's the time when they have identified certain qualified Micronesian people to occupy top-level positions in the Trust Territory and in the District.

Willens: Yes, another specific element in the action program was to bring more Micronesians into

high-ranking and responsible positions. Subsequently, the Interior Department filed a report on these various proposals, and they said with respect to Micronesian participation that a Micronesian had been appointed as District Administrator for the Mariana Islands.

Manglona: And that was Frank Ada, right?

Willens: That was Frank Ada, and they also reported a certain movement forward on economic development. Secretary Hickel announced that he was going to recommend legislation to remove the tariff barrier against Micronesian products, to recommend legislation that would give Micronesians travel access to the United States, and to establish incentives for industries here that needed development encouragement. Do you recall whether any of those proposals were, in fact, implemented?

Manglona: Yes, I think that was put out. I think that was implemented, and I believe during those days there were copra production and . . .

Willens: Copra production?

Manglona: Yes, in Micronesia, and maybe that would need support.

Willens: You were referring to copra production as one of the industries here that needed support. Was there, in fact, an economic development loan fund in existence at the time? I spoke recently with Bill Stewart, who arrived here as an economist in 1970, and he recalls playing a role in either creating or enlarging a development loan fund.

Manglona: Yes, there was an economic development loan fund that was established to permit Micronesian business people to apply for loans so that they can develop certain types of small scale industry in their own respective districts, yes, that was established about that period.

Willens: One of the results of Secretary Hickel's visit was what was called the first round of Micronesian negotiations that took place in October 1969 in Washington, and a delegation came from Micronesia. The United States had been preparing a draft organic act that, as you recall, was very similar to the status in Guam. Do you remember hearing that the United States had proposed a draft organic act to the Micronesian representatives?

Manglona: Yes, and I believe in our meeting in Washington because, as I said, I was a member of the Micronesian negotiating team. I think we flatly rejected that proposal, and we more or less presented our view on the proposal of political status, and I think our view there is that we are inclined to support the free association type of status.

Willens: You recall that you were then in Washington in the fall of 1969 as a member of the delegation.

Manglona: Yes.

Willens: Who else was with you on that occasion, if you remember?

Manglona: Well, as I remember, we have Lazarus Salii, who has died many years ago. I think we have the former Governor of Yap, John Mangefel. We have Andon Amaraich from Truk. We also have Ambules Yeshi from Ponape.

Willens: What's his last name?

Manglona: Ambules Yeshi, from Ponape. And Ekpap Silk representing the Marshalls, and I represent the Northern Marianas, and there may be a few others.

- Willens: The documents that I've seen about that session indicate that the Micronesian delegation came with a list of 11 topics that they wanted to discuss with the United States. It included topics like banking, currency, and postal laws, shipping, aviation, communication, citizen entry into the United States, U.S. laws that would apply to Micronesia, and so forth. Do you remember how the agenda was put together from the Micronesian side?
- Manglona: Yes, I think what we did there is that we digested the proposal made by the United States on making Micronesia a U.S. incorporated territory, and we used that as a basis of formulating our agenda.
- Willens: Do you remember that the United States actually handed you physically a draft organic act, or did they just discuss it in general terms?
- Manglona: No, I think it was never officially presented. I think it's a draft that more or less may be given to the High Commissioner and then ended up with us. I don't think there was a formal presentation, because I believe during those days they don't want to be accused of pushing this to us, and through some channel I think there was a proposal that ended up with someone saying to us that the United States may be willing to offer you this. So I think that's exactly what happened during those days.
- Willens: So your recollection is that you knew generally what the United States was considering offering and you among yourselves developed a list of issues that you thought were important.
- Manglona: During those days the top-most mind is local self-government. That is very strong. It's predominantly occupied our attention,. Whatever our future status, we've got to have a voice in running the government. We are also very much concerned about the ocean resources there. I think we've come to a time when there was a serious discussion about the resources of the sea, and I think there is a U.N. convention, conference that was held almost about that period, 1969 or 1970. And we're very concerned about that group because we feel that we have a huge ocean area in Micronesia and it abounds with marine resources, the fish, other minerals, and we want to make sure that we also protect that. I think due to the fact also that we have a very small land area, that we want to have full control of our own land here, and perhaps if the military or the United States needs land that would be a subject for negotiation, so those are our real concerns at the time. One other concern, also, I think that we attach to this condition is that if we ever reach a political consensus, is that the war claims must be paid. I think I was one who wanted to make a condition to that.
- Willens: There's some reference in the documents to a draft that had been prepared for the Micronesian representatives by a Mr. Kirkwood, a lawyer that had been recommended to the Micronesians by the Interior Department. Does that name strike a bell?
- Manglona: Yes, correct.
- Willens: Kirkwood is the name I have, and it's unclear to me from the documents whether he was employed by the federal government or whether he was a lawyer in private practice. Do you remember?
- Manglona: I think he may be a lawyer from private practice. My memory is not too clear on that.
- Willens: The head of the U.S. delegation was Assistant Secretary Loesch. Did you remember dealing with him?
- Manglona: Yes, I remember dealing with him, and he is representing the U.S. side on the table.
- Willens: What was your impression of his ability?

- Manglona: Well, I think he's a person who is very competent, he is very knowledgeable, I believe, in the federal government. He's friendly, I think I found him to be friendly. We have a lot of friendly conversation, and overall I think he's a man who is with experience and knowledge in dealing in this political issue.
- Willens: There is some suggestion in the material that you and the other representatives made it clear to Assistant Secretary Loesch that the basic concept of eminent domain was a foreign concept to the Micronesians and was unacceptable. Do you recall any discussion with Mr. Loesch or other U.S. representatives about that?
- Manglona: Yes, we are worried that whenever we reach a decision on our political status that the United States may come around and try to use the eminent domain process so that they can get more land than what's to be agreed, and we want to make sure that that application should not exceed under whatever new agreement that we will reach because we are worried that United States being a super power, some day they may use that to take more land. And as I said, land is very precious to the Micronesian people because we have a small land area, and it's so symbolic to the hearts of our people. We almost come out flatly and say, we should not give you land unless we agree on where to get and after that there's no way that we can give you land because we don't want United States to continue to take land from the Micronesian people. So that's why we are very careful about the application of this eminent domain process.
- Willens: Another subject that seems to have been discussed at length was the Micronesian desire for authority with respect to external affairs and defense, and the Micronesians made certain proposals that the United States representatives thought looked like independence, or something very close to independence. Do you recall any reactions by the U.S. delegation to proposals by the Micronesians that they wanted to have nearly full authority over foreign affairs?
- Manglona: Yes, and the United States really does not favor our proposal because we take a tough bargaining position, that we just have to practically protect everything internally. And you're right, I don't think we are thinking at a time for a close affiliation with the United States. I think we are thinking of a loose federation with the United States, somewhat like free association or independence. That's for sure that our proposal is not getting close to what United States is trying to propose to us because our thinking all along is that we don't want to really make our relationship close to the United States, at least for most of Micronesia with the exception of the Northern Marianas. But during those days, we deal with the Northern Marianas informally and not on the bargaining table.
- Willens: Did you feel that you and the other Micronesian representatives were working within the confines of the Future Status Commission's report, with the objectives being free association, if that could be negotiated, or independence as a fall back?
- Manglona: Well, because of the Northern Marianas concern and I know the other Micronesians know that, that the Northern Marianas have made known their desire many years prior to the existence of the Micronesian Political Status Commission and they know that we want to become part of the American political family, so they too know that in order to include the Northern Marianas, we have to find a mid-point in the discussion. And that's why I think they are inclined to accept the free association type because that is a status that may lure in the Northern Marianas as a mid-point position and not going to extreme of independence because the Northern Marianas is just bluntly saying we cannot become independent. We don't have the resources. We don't have the land masses, the population

to achieve independence, and many of the Micronesians may be the people also feel the same thing.

Willens: Near the end of this session, there is some indication that the two parties, as you recall, were very far apart. There's a suggestion that Interior proposed some kind of a compromise which went generally along these lines. If the Micronesian delegation would agree to permanent association with the United States, Interior said that Secretary Hickel would agree to the land position of the Micronesians and try to obtain approval from the State and Defense Departments on that subject. Do you remember any discussion of a possible compromise near the end of this very first session of negotiations along those lines?

Manglona: No, I don't think we are close to agreeing to anything because of our bargaining position. The United States on the other hand is here, our position is on the other side. I think we are very far from getting close to each other's position, but there is a serious discussion about trying to trade off where it could get us closer, but I believe the Micronesian people are very firm in their decision on those and major issues like land, self-government, ocean resources. They're very firm on that.

Willens: Was it your sense at the time that the Interior Department, at least, really was trying to reach some kind of an agreement with the Micronesian delegation?

Manglona: Yes, they are trying, they're trying to give consideration that would lead to a compromise, but as I said, because of the Commission members are dominated by most of the islands, naturally that's where the real objection is coming from because even if the Northern Marianas would have agreed to that, I think we are minority anyway.

Willens: One other subject that seemed to be important at the time was the desire by the Micronesians to have a constitutional convention, to formulate a constitution for all of Micronesia. The United States seemed to have some sympathy with that general objective. Do you remember whether that subject matter was discussed at the session?

Manglona: Yes, I think that was discussed, and I think the United States at least would not object if we want to have our own Micronesian constitutional convention to adopt our own constitution. But, of course, the United States is coming around that whatever constitution that we will be adopting should be consistent with whatever agreement we should reach on political status. It's got to comply with the U.S., consistent with the U.S. Constitution and naturally that's where the United States is coming from to make sure that, okay, go ahead, you may have your own constitution but make sure it's consistent with the U.S. Constitution, especially on the Bill of Rights because those are very, those are the hearts of the U.S. Constitution, the rights of their citizens.

Willens: One of the interesting aspects of that first discussion, based on the documents that I have seen, is that the United States representatives with whom you met seemed to have some uncertainty about what the Micronesian objectives were. It seems to me in light of the Future Status Commission report and the positions you take, you took, that your positions were very clear. Do you recall hearing U.S. representatives asking you questions designed to explore what you really meant by free association?

Manglona: Yes, I can see at the time when we were negotiating that even among the negotiating team, they are not too certain as to what they mean with free association. Because we are just new, we depend on consultants, and we depend on our knowledge of examining and evaluating the South Pacific political entity there, and I don't think we have all the answers, other than to rely on some of our consultants' word there. And the United States will come around and try to ask us questions to see where we're coming from, and I will

not be surprised if sometime they are confused because maybe the answer they're getting back from us is not really defined as to what we really want. Plus I think there are times also even among ourselves we don't have consensus in the way we're responding, and that really confused them because here a delegation that even among themselves they're not always agreed, so, maybe that's true.

Willens: As a result of the first session, the various federal agencies in the United States met and deliberated about what should be the next step to take. Over the dissent of one of the departments, the Executive Branch decided to present to the Micronesians a draft organic act that was called the Political Status Act and it was subsequently revised to be known as the Commonwealth Proposal. And Assistant Secretary Loesch went to Micronesia in either late 1969 or in January of 1970 to present this approach. Do you have any recollection of the presentation to you or other Micronesian representatives of a draft organic act in early 1970? Just to help you place this in time, there was a subsequent round of negotiations in May of 1970 when Loesch actually came out to Micronesia to discuss the matter, but do you have any recollection of seeing a draft organic act at an earlier point?

Manglona: Well, I believe what happened is that after that round of discussions, it could be one or two, I'm not too sure, but I'm sure what the United States did then is that they tried to see if they can get the proposal closer together, by maybe using the discussion as a means of developing this paper. And I remember there was a paper submitted to us, proposed to us, but I believe what happened is that we have our political status group examine that instruction of presiding officer, the President of the Senate, and the House Speaker to have the Marianas Political Status Commission review those, and I believe our position is that it's still far from our position, and I think we come out saying that it's unacceptable to us.

Willens: Chairman Salii wrote back to Mr. Loesch in February 1970 stating that the U.S. proposal was basically unacceptable to the Micronesian representatives. He also emphasized the need for a constitutional convention, and his letter says: "At this time, I simply wish to inform and let you know that unless the United States is willing to let the Micronesians draft and adopt their own Constitution, I do not see much chance for successful negotiations between your group and ours." Do you remember the deliberations that led to that kind of a response?

Manglona: Yes, because we deliberated seriously on that issue, and I think we came up with a response that told them that what they're proposing is unacceptable.

Willens: As a result of the Micronesian position, the United States agencies again reevaluated their proposal, and it was at this stage that they decided to label it as a Commonwealth Proposal. There then was a second session of negotiations in May of 1970, at which point Assistant Secretary Loesch and others represented the United States. Did you participate in that round of negotiations also?

Manglona: What date was that?

Willens: This would have been in May of 1970, at which time the Commonwealth Proposal was presented, and also the Micronesians introduced for the first time four non-negotiable principles regarding a free association relationship between Micronesia and the United States.

Manglona: Well, I believe I resigned from the Congress of Micronesia in 1970. I'm not too sure on the date that I resigned, but let me just backtrack a little. I believe when the Marianas Political Status Commission flatly rejected the U.S. offer of a Commonwealth . . .

Willens: Excuse me, you mean the Micronesians?

- Manglona: The Micronesian, I'm sorry, yes, rejected the U.S. offer. I think I have spoken on the floor in that session, and I have made myself very clear that I represented the Northern Marianas, and the Northern Marianas disagreed with the position taken by the Marianas Political Status Commission. I want to voice our concern that as far as the Northern Marianas is concerned, we'd like to become Commonwealth. We'd like to become part of the American political family. I think that is the time where I draw the line myself as representing the Northern Marianas. We take exception to this rejection as I recall, and I think I aired this during a House debate as a representative from the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: So is it possible, then, that you stayed in the Congress of Micronesia through the session that took place in August of 1970?
- Manglona: It could have been, because I remember making that strong statement. I believe I had a written statement that I delivered. I made it very clear that as far as the Northern Marianas, I'm afraid that we will not support the Micronesians. I think that's the first time that we ever came out openly that we are not supporting what is negotiated by the Micronesian Political Status Commission.
- Willens: The Micronesian delegation submitted a 100-page report to the Congress of Micronesia in July of 1970. It was a very good document that reviewed the history of the negotiations and the differences that had developed, and it reaffirmed the rejection of the Commonwealth Proposal.
- Manglona: So probably it would be anytime within that period, that we have a debate at the House.
- Willens: And then there was action by the Congress of Micronesia that ratified that report of the delegation, and it was at that time that a Joint Committee on Future Status was established in the August session of 1970. But, as you recall, there was a reaction in the Marianas, and here I have before me a statement that representative Benjamin Manglona "expressly sought to disassociate himself from that portion of the report, stating that the Micronesians do not want to become Americanized or become part of the United States. He also disagreed with the report's statement that the Commonwealth Proposal was unacceptable to the delegation and referred to a recent plebiscite in the Marianas District and said that his constituents wanted to join the United States in some way and that the Commonwealth Proposal had merit that justified its careful consideration." Is that essentially . . .
- Manglona: That is essentially what I have said, and that's the time when I spoke openly about the issue. We flatly disagreed with our fellow Micronesians' position, and I came out because I represent my people, and I came up very candidly and openly and said this is not inconsistent with the desires of the people of the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: What's interesting from that particular session is that two other Marianas representatives in the Congress also spoke on this issue. One was Senator Palacios, and the other was Senator Borja. Senator Palacios seemed to take a position that was much more supportive of free association, and he pointed out some of the disadvantages of the Commonwealth Proposal. What is your recollection of his position at the time?
- Manglona: Well, I think we covered this in the last session. You asked me a question about what do I think about Senator Palacios. I think I told you there that I think he's more in favor of a free association concept than the Commonwealth concept. And I think he developed this through his relationship with other members of the Congress of Micronesia, maybe because of his attachment to the Carolinian people on the island, [a view that] more or less favored the Micronesian position.

- Willens: Now, Senator Borja, though, took issue with Senator Palacios, and he pointed out some of the advantages to the Marianas that would result from the Commonwealth Proposal or some version of it. Did you and Senator Borja have any differences between the two of you, or were you basically of the same point of view?
- Manglona: Well, we have a lot of things in common. The distinguished Senator Borja and I, we practically share many things for our people. We have great respect for each other. Sometimes I consider the two of us as twins. He's a good friend, I respect him a lot.
- Willens: Now, shortly after the Congress of Micronesia or the majority of the Congress ratified the report of its Commission, notwithstanding the statements that you and Senator Borja made, the Marianas District Legislature entered the situation here and basically endorsed the Commonwealth Proposal and asked the Administering Authority to submit it directly to the Northern Marianas people for their endorsement. Did you play any role in the decision to get the Legislature involved?
- Manglona: Yes. I played a significant role. I had a lot of personal consultation with our leaders during those days. I had a lot of conversations with the Mayor of Rota, the leaders of Rota, and I told them that since our fellow Micronesians do not accept to become close family or to affiliate with United States in a close relation, it is to our best advantage if the Northern Marianas would unite and start looking on a way to push Commonwealth or an improved version as presented so that we'll take that as our status. In fact, during my many informal discussions with officials of the United States, I kind of relayed a feeling that why don't you separate the Northern Marianas with Micronesia, and we are willing to come along and discuss your proposal with our leaders. So, I've been doing a lot of outside contacts during those days. In fact, I insisted to our Legislature it should take a strong position urging for a separate negotiation.
- Willens: Do you remember any particular individuals in the Executive Branch of the United States Government that you had such conversations with? I'm looking to the period before Ambassador Williams was appointed which was in March of 1971. Going back to 1970, do you remember any conversations there?
- Manglona: Well, I spoke informally with, as you said, Loesch.
- Willens: Assistant Secretary Loesch?
- Manglona: Assistant Secretary Loesch. I have spoken whoever was the OTIA representative at the time that dealing with our government. I spoke with the High Commissioner here and whatever followed after any opportunity when these high officials coming from Washington to here, I usually take the opportunity to discuss that now.
- Willens: Were you part of a leadership group including Popular Party representatives as well as Territorial Party representatives that pursued this common strategy?
- Manglona: Yes, because during those days I was always in a minority, but I was able to mingle with the majority. We have a good working relationship. Despite me being a minority, we have mutual respect between ourselves, and people know my position and people a lot of time respect my decisions and we work together with the majority members. In fact, if I may say this also because this could be real interesting, I believe at the time when we were about ready to have a separate negotiation, I think there was a lot of influence from Micronesian leaders to Rota—trying to get our delegation to support the Micronesian position. In fact, they offer us a district, separate district, and I talked to the mayor, to the District Administrator who happened to be my brother Prudencio Manglona and said, well, this is a lot of temptation, and inasmuch as I wish this could have come long before

we make our decision because we want to be a district then. But then I think to me it's better if we become Commonwealth of the United States. But there was a real temptation of informally saying, if you support us we'll make you a district, you and Kosrae.

Willens: That is interesting, and there is some evidence in the materials that the Joint Committee made a special effort to separate Rota off independently of Saipan and Tinian. Since you did participate it appears in the summer session of the Congress in 1970, your resignation must have taken effect sometime thereafter.

Manglona: After that. Yes.

Willens: And so for a period of approximately two or so years, you did not have any official political position, is that correct?

Manglona: Yes, other than I became a public works superintendent, it's almost like director of public works on Rota. That was my position.

Willens: During the next two years, the newly established Joint Committee had several rounds of negotiations with the United States delegation. There was a third round of negotiations in October of 1971, which was more than a year after the speeches in the Congress that we have made reference to, and by that time Ambassador Williams had been appointed. Then there was a session, a fourth round of negotiations, in April of 1972. Did you have any personal knowledge at the time as to what the Joint Committee was doing on behalf Micronesia in these negotiations, or were you for the most part out of the picture during that period?

Manglona: No. I believe I was still corresponding with our leaders in the Northern Marianas, and I made an effort of corresponding to the Hawaii senators who are very influential during those days—it's almost like our spokesman in Congress and the federal government. And I remember, I believe, writing several correspondence out of my own initiative encouraging them to pursue discussions with the Northern Marianas on a Commonwealth status. And I started out to be a friend of Patsy Mink, the Congresswoman, and Dan Inouye and Matsunaga during those early days because of my correspondence to them, and I became like a close friend through correspondence. And I did that while I am a public worker. I still had the access of writing to them.

Willens: During the third and then the fourth round of Micronesian negotiations, Ed Pangelinan and Herman Q. Guerrero were the Marianas representatives on the Joint Committee. They were conducting informal discussions with the U.S. delegation, looking toward separate status negotiations. Were you generally aware at the time as to what strategy Pangelinan and Guerrero were following in trying to get the U.S. to agree to separate negotiations?

Manglona: Well, we know that they are representing our interests in that our interests are different from that of Micronesia. I think as far as the Northern Marianas, we are determined. We want to become a Commonwealth since after that report was written. Although I don't know specifically what was discussed, at least we give them our blessing of discussing, presenting to the United States our position that we are firm.

Willens: Well there actually came a time at the fourth round where they submitted a formal written request, and the next day, if I recall correctly, the United States accepted the request for separate negotiations. My question is whether you knew in advance that the Marianas representatives on the Joint Committee were going to take this final step and that the U.S. was prepared to accept it?

Manglona: Well, more or less we are unanimous that we want to have a separate discussion, so we

- knew that will be the position our delegation should take with them and we are pursuing that. In fact, even after I became the Director of Public Works in Rota, we have been visited by members of Marianas District Legislature plus our own member representing Rota. We are in frequent communication, and we know all along that we are pursuing that course.
- Willens: Did you know that the United States delegation was prepared to respond favorably to a request for separate negotiations?
- Manglona: Yes, we are aware because of the publicity that they are prepared, and as I recall, there was a meeting that took place—I don't whether it's in Palau—where the U.S. representative, who was Ambassador Williams, announced that the United States is willing to entertain a separate negotiation with the Northern Marianas or something like that.
- Willens: That's correct. The negotiations took place in Palau, and it was at that time that the United States announced its favorable position with respect to separate negotiations. Shortly thereafter, in April of 1982, Ambassador Williams came to the Northern Marianas to ascertain that in fact there was public support for separate negotiations.
- Manglona: Overwhelming public support as far as the leaders.
- Willens: Do you remember that particular visit and how the Northern Marianas leadership communicated their support for separate negotiations?
- Manglona: As I said, I was in Rota, but everybody embraced that support to Ambassador Williams. We welcomed it and I think that's what prompted the creation of our Marianas Political Status Commission after that discussion.
- Willens: That's correct. The Ambassador made it clear that the Northern Marianas had to take the next step, and the Marianas District Legislature in May, I believe, of 1972 enacted legislation creating the Marianas Political Status Commission. Did you have any views with respect to either the size of the Commission or its mission?
- Manglona: No, because I was not a member, but it was decided I believe that Rota will have two representatives and Tinian will have two, and I believe the rest are all from Saipan. And they formulated that through legislation.
- Willens: How did it come to be that you were designated to serve on the Commission?
- Manglona: Well, for some reason the Mayor of Rota during those days maybe felt that they needed somebody that would represent Rota's interests in that Commission, and I was fortunate that I was asked or appointed to represent Rota along with one other person, who was Joannes Taimanao.
- Willens: Were you the only political leader on Rota who had served in the Congress of Micronesia at the time?
- Manglona: Yes. In fact, I am the only one who served throughout the duration of a term in the Congress from Rota. After I left Congress 1970, the person that took over was Joe Mafnas and then Felipe Atalig after that.
- Willens: That seat in Congress involved representation not only of Rota, but also Tinian and a portion of Saipan?
- Manglona: As I said, my election district is the island of Rota, Tinian and a portion of Saipan.

- Willens: So one of the reasons for your appointment obviously is your former experience in the Congress of Micronesia and the fact that you had some background in status negotiations.
- Manglona: Plus, politically I have the support, local support, by the leaders, by the people.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of how the Commission prepared for the first round of negotiations? I mean, specifically the Commission met in I guess September and it elected its chairman and vice chairman. Do you recall any debate within the Commission as to who should be the chairman and who should be the vice chairman?
- Manglona: Well, it's a matter of consensus. We don't go into a lot of debate like organization of the Senate, we just thought we have a person who is very knowledgeable person. I believe he's the first attorney on Saipan, and he was serving also as a member of the Congress of Micronesia, and everybody feels that he'd be the best person for that job. So I think, if I'm not mistaken, it was made by unanimous decision that we should make Eddie Pangelinan to be the chairman.
- Willens: Did you know the people who were appointed from Tinian before you worked with them on the Commission? Herman M. Manglona and Francisco Hocog were designated by the Tinian Municipal Council to serve on the Commission. Were these individuals that you had worked with before?
- Manglona: No. I never worked with these individuals before. That is my first time of dealing with them.
- Willens: One of the organizational task for the Commission was to hire consultants. Ben, do you have any recollection about the identification and hiring of consultants?
- Manglona: Yes. I think when we did our first organizational meeting, the first thing on our agenda is how best can we formulate our position to start the negotiation. And one of the first discussions was that in order to embark into a negotiation, naturally we have to get the necessary people to assist us in gathering all necessary information. We decided then that we got to start reviewing the Commonwealth Proposal, various proposals that are being surfaced then. At the same time, we want to be able to know exactly what is this Organic Act for Guam. Is it good? Is there any problem with it? We also want to look into the American Samoa relationship with the United States, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico. And some members, because maybe of our exposure with the Micronesian political status, like Palacios and myself, some suggested that perhaps also we should go beyond American Samoa and start looking at the other South Pacific areas. And there is a real need for a legal assistant to make sure that we make all the studies and present it to us to review and evaluate in order to make an intelligent decision. So, I think there was a lot of discussion as to who should we hire, whether we should hire somebody from the United States, perhaps somebody that is expert in the South Pacific area government entity there, maybe somebody outside of the United States. There's some little suspicion that if we get somebody from the United States they may not be really representing us because they are Americans and we were worried that who knows they are more sympathetic to the U.S. delegation side than the Northern Marianas side. But after serious deliberation, we leave this issue to the chairman. We need good people that could help us, a good attorney, and knowing Eddie, he's a very constructive person, he's very intelligent, and he knows very well that even if we get people from the United States, they can be objective. They can protect our interests. As to why they should go to your firm, I'm not sure. That is a job that we trust him that he will come up and later on maybe to his contacts with some people in OTIA, Interior and Trust Territory Administration. I think he may have heard

of a very reputable law firm there. And to be honest with you, we are very fortunate to have that company help us, and we are blessed by that to have you represent us.

Willens: Well, I thank you very much for that. I remember the first round of negotiations was a two-day event. The opening session was, I think, at Mount Carmel Auditorium. It started there, and then it recessed to a working session at the Royal Taga, which was then the only hotel that had a room big enough to hold such a session. Stepping back from it and trying to recall that opening session, what were your impressions when you first met Ambassador Williams and his staff of ten or more advisors? Do you have any recollection of feeling intimidated by the experience?

Manglona: Well, as far as what we want, we already more or less firmed that up. We want to become part of the American political family, so that is not hard. We already know what we want. Okay? The only thing we're looking is how best can we improve this relationship that will be better than Puerto Rico, better than Guam, better than American Samoa, Virgin Islands. So our goal is to make it better. But we already made up our minds we want to become part of the America, it's just how do we make it better. And another concern we have then is that we also want to have a say-so, internal voice in our government, because of the goals and objectives of the Trusteeship Agreement that says the United States is obligated to develop this island—promote and develop these islands—until just time as they may be ready to either become self-government or independence. One thing we know, we don't want independence. That is very clear in our mind that we are not out for independence. But we want maximum self-government. We want to make sure that whatever political future that we are going to end up with must have a maximum self-government. We're concerned about land, the sea, and we are concerned about funding. That is one of our major concerns, funding, because we need to upgrade the infrastructure [on the islands]. And we know very little progress is going on during those days. So we want to justify financial assistance. Basically, those are our concerns and, on my part, representing Rota, a sister neighboring island, always top in my mind is how best can I make sure also the interest of a small island is protected. And I always guarded that because we have a bad experience during the Trust Territory Administration. Being part of the Northern Marianas District, we always felt that we are being neglected. So I have to guard that every decision made is in the interest of what is good for the people in Rota and Tinian. And that is also foremost in my mind during those days.

Willens: You touched on most of the general topics that Ed Pangelinan referred to in his opening statement. You and Ed Pangelinan and Herman Q. Guerrero had some experience in dealing with negotiations because of your work in the Congress of Micronesia. Many of the other members of the Commission, though, had never participated in such negotiations. How did you feel that the Commission initially began to work together? Did you feel that there was a shared interest in that people were open in expressing their views?

Manglona: Yes. We have a series of meetings among ourselves, as you may remember. Since all of us are Chamorro, Carolinian, we conducted this meeting in our local vernacular. And everybody had an opportunity to air out whatever they want to say, and we have an open and candid discussion. And we kind of brainstorm all of these issues, and we came to a consensus as to what will be our position.

Willens: These were meetings held before the actual negotiations began?

Manglona: Yes. And as the Chairman gets what we want, I'm sure the Chairman dealt with you as our consultant, and that's how we formulate some of these position papers.

- Willens: Well, that's what I remember. Initially, I came out and Jim Leonard came out a few days in advance of the opening of the negotiations, and we had only maybe two days with the Commission before we had to put together an opening statement. The United States delegation had been preparing for these negotiations for months, if not years, and the Commission had been recently appointed. I got instructions from the Chairman, but also based on participating in meetings with you, and then it was my job to draft something for the Chairman to review and then ultimately for the Commission to review. Is that your recollection too?
- Manglona: Yes. And let me say this, Howard, that made our job really easy, and believe me, I lost my materials, but I remember during those days you provided us a very thorough study of the various political alternatives in the insular areas, like Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. And that information is put in simple language, a summary where we could just read it and understand it. And I think you simplified to the point where all we need is just to make a decision. I remember those kinds of things. Here is the incorporated territory. This is what all the benefits are. Then I think you outlined the disadvantages. Same thing also with American Samoa and Puerto Rico. And with that kind of evaluation and summary, it allows us to make a decision faster than if it's a technical writing. So I think that was really helpful, the material you provided us that make our discussion very easy.
- Willens: Well, some of the issues, like sovereignty, are very complicated and amorphous, and lawyers have different views about them. So it was a challenge to try to develop the materials in a way that would be clear to us as lawyers and clear to the members of the Commission. That was a real challenge. At the first round of negotiations, Ed Pangelinan on behalf of the Commission made a statement that sort of touched the major bases of political status, economic support, land issues (including some restrictions on land alienation as a goal) and transitional issues. Ambassador Williams responded briefly on each of these subjects, and he made general reference to a plan for development of a joint military base on Tinian. Were you aware before this opening round of negotiations that one of the principal objectives of the U.S. delegation was to obtain agreement to use of land on Tinian?
- Manglona: Well, we know all along that the location of the Northern Marianas is very important to the United States. There have been a lot of discussions even in the early days. You know, Howard, let's take Saipan, for example, we have the so-called military retention area here that has been reserved and not released to the people because of the national security interest of the United States. We know all along that the United States has a great interest out here because we also have Guam, and we have a lot of conflicting nations around our area here. So we know that, although we don't know the specifics prior to the unveiling of what the military wanted for Tinian. But we know for sure that they have interests out here for a military purpose. And we know that they may be asking for some land, but we are not aware of the specifics, like their proposal of taking the entire island of Tinian, not until that time when they unveil that.
- Willens: That came at the . . .
- Manglona: It's caught by surprise.
- Willens: On the subject of political status, in his opening statement, Ed Pangelinan stated that the Commission wanted to examine all the available alternatives in Guam and the Virgin Islands and other insular areas to see if there were problems or difficulties that the Marianas ought to try to avoid. And then he went on and said that "it might well be

necessary to develop a totally new political status for the Marianas.” That was treated with a headline in the newspaper the next day and probably caused some anxiety within the U.S. delegation. Did you have any reaction from the U.S. delegation early on as to what kind of a political status the Marianas Commission really was seeking to have?

Manglona: You mean from the U.S. perspective?

Willens: From the U.S. perspective. Did you begin to hear from the United States some concern that you should not seek a new status?

Manglona: Yes, my personal opinion is that the United States figured out that the status like Guam will be very acceptable to us. They figure out these people want something like Guam. And probably what they are offering is, we’ll make you like Guam. But to us, we know that we want a status better than Guam. And at that time, because we always read about Puerto Rico has the best status. So, even from that very basic understanding, we wanted better than Puerto Rico. So that’s our goal, our target—that we want to target it after Puerto Rico’s experience, but maybe on a much improved status. And I think we told you that.

Willens: On the second day of the negotiations at the first session, there were private working sessions, and one of the issues raised by the U.S. delegation was whether the Marianas Political Status Commission had the necessary authority to speak for the Northern Marianas people. This was raised both by Ambassador Williams and by Deputy Representative Wilson, who asked the Commission whether it had the necessary authority. The Commission asked for a recess (the Chairman did), and then after the recess Ed Pangelinan read a statement reaffirming the fact that the Marianas Commission was created by the District Legislature and that it would support whatever agreement was reached with the United States. Do you remember that issue coming up?

Manglona: Yes, and I think we defend that—you’re right—by saying that, yes, we think we have the legal authority. One, we have a duly-created Mariana Islands District Legislature. Secondly, the creation of the Marianas Political Status Commission is by the Marianas District Legislature enactment of a district law creating or establishing the Marianas Political Status Commission. Third, there have been numerous expressions made by our people through plebiscite expressing their desire to become part of the American political family. And this was expressed by resolution, by meetings, by presentation to the United Nations, to the visiting officials of the United States and, last but not the least, is that the Micronesian people negotiating the Micronesian Political Status Commission rejected commonwealth, and the people of the Northern Marianas don’t accept what they adopted to be what they want because we wanted to become part of the American political family. And we take that as a reason why we thought we have the authority.

Willens: One of the concerns, I think, that the U.S. delegation had was based on their experience with the Joint Committee. In some of the negotiations with the Joint Committee, tentative agreements would be reached, but then those agreements would not be supported by members of the Joint Committee when they were discussed in the Congress of Micronesia. And so one of the U.S. delegation’s concerns, I think, was whether members of the Marianas Political Status Commission, if they agreed to a relationship with the United States, would in fact support it to the District Legislature and to the people. Do you follow me?

Manglona: Yes. I think the reason why the United States is concerned is because of our Micronesian leaders’ position at that time. The Congress of Micronesia they felt that the United States cannot unilaterally entertain the Northern Marianas, because in their views it would

fragment the Northern Marianas from the rest of Micronesia. And I think they are arguing further that we cannot unilaterally separate the Northern Marianas, because if we have to terminate, we have to terminate the entire islands of Micronesia from the United Nations. Right? And I think that was their argument. Maybe the United States wanted to make sure that our response will be so that we could be allowed a defense because, naturally, the Micronesians will be coming to the United States arguing that the United States must make that together, so we can find arguments that will support us.

Willens: I made reference to the fact that Chairman Pangelinan called for a recess when the U.S. delegation put this question of authority to the Commission. Ed Pangelinan remembers that he used the recess technique throughout the negotiations in order to permit the Commission to meet by itself, to talk in the vernacular if they wanted to, to confer with the consultants, and not be pressured by the United States into responding without the opportunity for deliberation.

Manglona: Well, one of our in-house understandings is that whenever we are caught by surprise for something that we are not ready to respond, it's always better if we recess and consult each other rather than each member having the opportunity to comment on certain concern or question that may look, in the eyes of the other side, that we are disunited on the issue. So, that's the understanding we have, that if we ever have something that we are not ready, why don't we just call for a short recess, caucus among ourselves and try to agree, and then go back into the discussion.

Willens: Were there any informal understandings reached within the Commission about when to use the vernacular in the presence of the U.S. delegation?

Manglona: Well, we are very suspicious, Howard, as you may know. We don't want to speak English. Some of our members still have suspicious review, you being a consultant, and sometimes we speak in a local vernacular so that you will not understand what we are saying. It's not that we distrust you, maybe I'm just faulting some information that you may be asking me later. But that's what prompted Ambassador Williams to get this guy Blas from Guam, because he never thought that we know Blas. And since Blas is a Guamanian, is a military marine general, and he knows Chamorro, and maybe Ambassador Williams thought we don't know Blas, so he gets him out here one time just to make sure that if we speak Chamorro he knows what we are talking about and then reports it.

Willens: I heard that. I also heard from, I think, Ed Pangelinan that Blas turns out to be a relative.

Manglona: Yes, right, so I think that was a miscalculation on the U.S. side.

Willens: And then I think Ed told me that he consulted with the Commission and you decided not to speak Chamorro anymore during the sessions.

Manglona: You're right.

Willens: There was a Joint Communique issued at the end of the first round of negotiations and that became a practice. One issue came up, though, in drafting the Joint Communique, and it was raised by Dr. Palacios. He objected in a caucus to the reference in the draft communique to the use of the word "permanent" in describing the future relationship between the Northern Marianas and the United States. And Chairman Pangelinan went back to the United States and requested that the word be changed to "lasting" instead of "permanent", and the United States delegation got very upset about this and they wanted the Commission to work this out. Do you recall any discussion within the Commission as to the significance of the use of the word "permanent?"

- Manglona: Yes. I think after the evaluation of what was written, I think a few members caught that up and are very concerned about the use of the word “permanent.” There was a discussion that maybe it’s better if we can avoid the word “permanent” so that sometime in the future, distant future, we can switch our relationship to a more loose relationship and it’s always boiled down to maximum self-government. And I think that is the real intent behind that discussion. We feel that maybe we could have more say-so in the future if some differences arise as we begin our relationship and we can use that as a means of negotiating for some modification in the agreement itself or for some, maybe, who knows, free association in the future. But you’re right, I think there was also a serious concern on the part of the United States that either you accept this or no relationship and this effort on both sides that at the end we just have to compromise on getting that in.
- Willens: I think it was compromise by putting the word “permanent” into quotation marks and then referring it to some resolution of the District Legislature. There were several other consultants that were designated by the Commission. One was Jim Leonard, who was the Commission’s economic consultant. Had you ever met Mr. Leonard before the negotiations began?
- Manglona: I think we have, yes, because I think there was a study made for the economic development of the entire Micronesia, and I think that this was undertaken by the Nathan & Associates group. I believe Leonard was part of the team, and I think somebody recommended that perhaps he will be a good person to hire as an economic consultant.
- Willens: As you got to know him through the negotiations, what was your assessment of his personality and his contribution?
- Manglona: Well, we find him to be a person who is very knowledgeable in the area. He’s knowledgeable because of his involvement with the Micronesian islands in formulating the economic development for the entire Micronesia, including the Northern Marianas. So he has all this experience and background even prior to having us hire him. And I think he has a very good credentials, and I think he’s really trying his best to help us project our needs, future needs, and taking into consideration the number of years of neglect under TT and try to project that onto the future. So far from what we have developed on the financial assistance based on that projection, I think we should credit him and you for all our prosperity, at least in the last 16 years.
- Willens: Joe Screen was also retained as a consultant, and when Joeten resigned from the Commission in 1973, Joe Screen really no longer served as an consultant. Did you have any familiarity with Mr. Screen?
- Manglona: Yes, he is a real hatchet man during the TT Administration. He is a person, a firm believer of running the government effectively. Unless you come around and really justify for money, he will not just give you money for the sake of just asking.
- Willens: What was his relationship with the Micronesian community?
- Manglona: On a personal basis, I don’t think he is a very likeable person. He’s tough. Overall, he’s been very objective. If you sell your program and if your program will work, he will give you money in it. So, that’s the kind of person he is. He is a tough administrator.
- Willens: And the last consultant was Jim White, who was a lawyer who had been on the island, I guess, for a few years and had previously served in Palau. Had you worked with Mr. White before?
- Manglona: Yes, I’ve one way or the other worked with him as a member of the Congress of Micronesia. Yes, I know him.

- Willens: The next round of negotiations was quite important. It was during that time when my law firm produced the major study of the status alternatives that you referred to earlier. But, as soon as the negotiations began, there was an enormous interest in Tinian, and proposals for economic development were brought to the forefront for two large hotels, a coconut oil processing plant, a petroleum refinery. There was a considerable speculation about what was going to happen on Tinian. Do you have any recollection of what the impact was of these negotiations on land development and speculation in Tinian?
- Manglona: Yes. At the time when we were negotiating, there's a lot of land speculation. I think we are reaching a point where a lot of people start looking in for potential development on the island of Tinian. I think there were people [on Tinian] during those days who were somewhat desperate for money for gas [for their cars]. I believe some people from Saipan were more developed, more fortunate being able to buy land [on Tinian] maybe five hectares for just \$500.
- Willens: Is that about what it would cost?
- Manglona: Yes about that. Sometimes \$200. Some people take advantage of that.
- Willens: One of the other consequences of the Marianas negotiations was increased publicity in Guam about the Northern Marianas negotiations, and many news articles emphasizing that the Northern Marianas were enjoying an opportunity to work out a new political status with the United States whereas Guam had many complaints about its status and the United States was unwilling to deal with them. Did you have any friends or colleagues on Guam with whom you were in contact as these Northern Marianas negotiations unfolded?
- Manglona: Yes. I believe our response to that is that it is a very unfortunate situation because our people wanted to reintegrate with Guam but we were turned down by the Guamanians themselves. I don't think there is anything to regret. They turned us down. Another thing that we always use as a reference, we believe that you are a part of the American family I think since 1898, about that time. We are under the Trusteeship arrangement and maybe it's just a blessing that we are under the Trusteeship arrangement that would permit us to choose on political status that we were able to bargain with the United States and negotiate, and maybe it's a blessing that we have this opportunity to negotiate.
- Willens: The Congress of Micronesia met in early 1973, and they enacted a joint resolution introduced by Chairman Saliu opposing the separate Marianas negotiations and maintaining that the Congress of Micronesia had the sole authority to negotiate future political status. Did you recall that action by the Congress of Micronesia, and did you regard it as an obstacle to the Commission's efforts?
- Manglona: Yes. I think I recall that time, and I think it met with a lot of public outcries. Our leaders, our people are really react to that idea of trying not to allow us to go on a separate negotiation. That has prompted an occasion where true emotion came out. There's a group of people that came up here in the parking lot and burned the TT flag, as a protest.
- Willens: There was one occasion where they burned the TTPI Code.
- Manglona: Yes, I think TT Code also, yes.
- Willens: That was all part of the very outspoken emotional conduct by Marianas representatives?
- Manglona: I know we feel disappointed, because we don't want them to block our initiatives.
- Willens: Ed Pangelinan was still a member of the Congress of Micronesia, and he spoke out against

the resolution. One interesting aspect of the debate was that it occurred when the U.N. visiting mission in 1973 was actually at the Congress of Micronesia and heard the debate. The visiting mission reports, as you know, always opposed separate negotiations. And the visiting mission, in fact, met with the Marianas Political Status Commission in, I think, early March 1973. Do you recall participating in a meeting with the visiting mission in early 1973?

Manglona: Yes. I recall meeting them in Rota.

Willens: You met them in Rota, rather than on Saipan?

Manglona: Yes, in Rota because they were visiting all of the islands. And I remember pulling out our agenda for them. I think on top of the agenda was the political status issue, which we want to continue to affirm the wishes of our people to become part of the American political family. We want separate negotiations from that of the Congress of Micronesia. I think we are reaffirming that in a very strong words and statements.

Willens: The visiting mission members appear not to have been persuaded by the arguments you and other members of the Marianas leadership made. Did you get any sense when you met with them personally as to what in fact was motivating them to try to keep Micronesia together as a single unit?

Manglona: Well, I believe the United Nations, in my view, is a little suspicious that maybe it's the United States that is really pushing the separate negotiation, but it's just to the contrary. It's us that push it. They have that suspicion on their part. Another thing also, is that since the United Nation deals with the entire Micronesian islands to them if they start accepting separate negotiation it would fragment them—the Micronesian islands. As a policy, looking from a policy standpoint, they would prefer not to approve that undertaking but to look at the status of the entire Micronesia as a whole. So maybe they are coming also from that perspective, plus the fact that Russia was not a friend of the United States during those days. They had a representative in the United Nations that really making a issue, why are you doing this? Maybe you are trying to put more military bases into those islands. So, these are some of my observations.

Willens: I think that you are right. I see a reference in my materials to the fact that when the visiting mission went to Rota, they were presented with a petition urging that Rota be separated from the remainder of the Northern Marianas District and form its own District. The visiting mission was also told that the citizens of Rota did not agree with the separate status talks between the Northern Marianas and the United States. This was reported in the *Marianas Variety*, but then a few days later there was a letter from the Mayor of Rota, who was Atalig at the time, and he reaffirmed the desire of Rota to work with the remainder of the Northern Marianas in separate negotiations. Do you remember how these conflicting reports developed?

Manglona: Well, I believe we have some members of the Council that because of their feeling about the way that Rota was treated by Saipan they still have this feeling of wanting to negotiate separately. But, as I said, I was instrumental during those days to unite, work with our fellow Northern Marianas Legislature, we always come around and we have a very good working relationship with the Mayor of Rota, Atalig as you mentioned, and I think that is basically why we turned it around,. I am sure you are referring to maybe some expression by Council members.

Willens: Yes, I don't have any names.

- Manglona: I don't know if it is Apatang, you are probably referring to this guy, Apatang—Alfred Apatang.
- Willens: How do you spell his name?
- Manglona: Apatang. He's one of the critics.
- Willens: He was one of the critics on the Rota Municipal Counsel?
- Manglona: Yes.
- Willens: Well, if you were present when the visiting mission was there as you recall, you must have been surprised or offended when the position was presented.
- Manglona: That's why as I said, that's what the turnaround was. You know, you said there was a little revision.
- Willens: Yes, there was a little revision of positions within a few days. So you had a role in bringing that about?
- Manglona: Right.
- Willens: The visiting mission report did come out critical of the separate negotiations.
- Manglona: Let me just see. Because of the criticalness of the United Nations report, there is an occasion when we send our delegation to the United Nation as a petition to tell them that, no, this is our reason for wanting to be separate.
- Willens: Yes and you and Mitch Pangelinan, accompanied by me, went to the Trusteeship Council to present what I thought were eloquent statements. Let me just pause for a minute. In the early months of 1973 that we have been talking about, there were developments on Tinian,. There was the visit of the U.N. visiting mission. And there was the opposition in the Congress of Micronesia. Shortly after the first round of negotiations, Dr. Palacios gave an interview that was publicized in the *Marianas Variety*, and he renewed here publicly his opposition to the concept of permanent association with the United States. He expressed concern about the impact of the negotiations on the remainder of Micronesia, and this was one of the first airings in the public domain of differences within the Commission. Did the expression of that kind of dissenting view cause you any concern about the Commission's work?
- Manglona: Well, of course, we don't need that. We like to have a unanimous consensus on all of the issues, but knowing Dr. Palacios is a leader who has always been outspoken, I am sure he is free to air out his own opinion. But what prevails is the great majority of our delegation that has agreed on practically all of the issues.
- Willens: My recollection, to jump ahead a bit, is that Dr. Palacios did have these reservations in the early meetings of the Commission but that over time he became a strong convinced supporter of the Commonwealth relationship that was defined in the Covenant and assumed a positive role in defending it during the political education campaign.
- Manglona: And let me say this also. I always admire and respect him. He is an individual who is very independent in discussing issues. He always has his own idea, good or bad, and that is really good. It helps us look carefully and seriously into some of the provisions because he is very articulate in the details, and sometimes it is good to have a delegate like him who can always have an opposing view where it gives us time to take another look to the issue. I admire him. He is one of our philosophers during the negotiation, and I always admire him for that.

- Willens: One of the reports that the Commission received before the second round of negotiations was put together by Jim White, and it related to a variety of land issues. It summarized the problems of inadequate land records, the lack of a land survey, deficiencies in the homesteading program and the public land and military retention land issues. One thing it also did was report on a meeting that members of the Commission had with a group of Guamanian representatives that took place shortly before the first round of negotiations. Commission members Muna, Rabauliman, Hocog and Salas accompanied by Jim White went over to Guam, and they met with the Governor and Lt. Governor and many of his high officials to discuss the relationship between the Guamanian people and the U.S. military. And Jim White reported to the members of the Commission on what the group had learned. The Guamanian leaders were very helpful in identifying a series of specific issues that you and the other members of the Commission would want to raise with the United States. Do you recall reviewing the report and developing some view as to what was going to be important to you as a member of the Commission in negotiating military land requirements on Tinian?
- Manglona: Let me just backtrack and address the concern on land. Land has always been a real concern to our leaders, to the people of the Northern Marianas during those days. You know very well that a lot of people during the war lost their titles and their maps on the property they own. There is some land taken by the U.S. military for military use, and we had a disrupted land program over the years during the TT Administration. And I think we consider land to be one of the major issues in the negotiations because we insisted the United States government must make sure that before we reach agreement that we should be able to have a complete survey of all of the private properties, land exchange, perhaps homestead and make sure that we have proper title given to the people. If I remember, that is what prompted, I think, the Trust Territory government in awarding a contract to this so-called Asian Mapping Group during those days is to be able to make sure that we have a cadastral survey of practically all private properties. Then with land exchanges it will facilitate the turn over. Now going back to this other concern you have on the delegation that went to Guam, I have mentioned to you our suspicions about the United States trying to get some land for our national defense, and I think the purpose of this delegation is to have a firsthand knowledge of the situation in Guam being our closest neighbors, how would the military affect them there so that they will better prepare to address that issue when the United States will come and ask for more land. So I think that it is basically the idea behind that of the delegation going there.
- Willens: Jim Leonard submitted two working papers to the Commission before the second round of negotiations. One addressed the economic aspects of the negotiations and the level of financial assistance that the Commission should seek from the United States. A second paper looked at investment requirements. Leonard's assessment was based on TTPI planning documents, operating budgets of the District Legislature, CIP projects that had been talked about for years. Did you recall having any impression about the quality of the work and the thrust of his recommendations?
- Manglona: Well, Howard, to be honest with you, during those days, we are not very knowledgeable, fiscally, economically other than to more or less rely on the experts on those issues. To be honest with you, as we begin our Commonwealth and now begin to realize that perhaps that is an area that we should have pushed harder. You know we are under the Trust Territory Administration for many, many years. There has been a lot of neglect in infrastructure developments and improvements.

- Willens: What would you say were the principal deficiencies at the time? Does it cover everything from roads to power to water to sewerage?
- Manglona: We don't have that vision and sophistication to really try to imagine the kind of improvements that we need other than to talk about bad roads, bad water. Let's take water, for example. Even if we have put \$50 million say into water, it is very difficult to have a water system that will give us water regularly in the faucets. And I don't think we really have the focus of the magnitude of the infrastructure problem during those days. We rely on the judgments of our professionals. I wish I could have been as knowledgeable then as now. We should have identified the mileage of roads that we need to improve, the problem in the water that has to be improved, the school buildings that we need to build, the hospitals that we need to build, the roads that we need to build, the power that we need to build. I wish we could have projected these and really have a good idea of how much it will cost us.
- Willens: You put together a program of future capital requirements in the range of \$47.7 million for a period of five years beginning in 1975, and it allocated \$20 million to public roads, about \$7 million to water, about \$4 million to power facilities, and so forth. It was a very ambitious program, and as you recall, it then became whittled down and subject to negotiations with the United States.
- Manglona: And this is the problem. I think in the first seven years we used the inflationary adjustment which was dropped, I believe, during the second seven years. And this is a real problem here. To get a mile of road today, one mile of road will cost almost over a \$1 million for one mile of road. The other problem is that when you work on the road, you are faced with land acquisition. There is a military takeover of land after the Second World War. They just come in and bulldoze and they just put the road. Now we are fighting with these people because the road encroaches their properties. We have to buy them off—exchange them. And see all the problems we inherited of the local government. You know it makes it very expensive to take care of the problem that was done during the TT time, the Naval Administration, now we inherit with this government, so this is making this extra cost that some people, perhaps, have not seen during those days.
- Willens: We talked about the second round of negotiations with the United States delegation in May of 1973. After that session, you and Commission member Pangelinan went to the United Nations Trusteeship Council and, as I recall, I accompanied you on that occasion. Had you ever been to the United Nations before?
- Manglona: Yes, I was there several times representing the Trust Territory government as an advisor to the High Commissioner.
- Willens: That was during your time in the Congress of Micronesia?
- Manglona: Yes, and I probably may have been there two or three times then.
- Willens: I remember that you seemed to know exactly where you were going and what the purpose of our mission was.
- Manglona: Yes. I am a little familiar with the State Department, across the street from there. I know my way to get into the Trusteeship chamber.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of the actual appearance before the Trusteeship Council?
- Manglona: On this last one as a petitioner?
- Willens: Yes. We were anticipating opposition to the separate negotiations and, in fact, the visiting mission recommended that the negotiations be stopped.

- Manglona: Yes, since we know that the visiting mission more or less is not in support of our movement, and since we don't want the United Nations Trusteeship Council to block our initiative and to come up with strong recommendation to the United States being the Administering Authority, it is very important that we go there as a petitioner to express the wishes of our people in terms of their political future—that it is not through the influence of the United States but their own free will. And that is the kind of message that we want to bring before the Trusteeship Council body as a whole and try to convince them that we were promised internal self-government. We feel we are ready to make that decision because our people have expressed themselves through meetings, through plebiscites, and through discussion, and it is not something that has just been passed on to us to agree with the United States. So our whole mission is to discount any speculation that we have been forced to take that route of separate negotiations by ourselves because someone influenced us. And we went there. I think we made a good presentation. I am sure they hear what we have to say and they understand, so I think we have accomplished our mission at that time.
- Willens: Did you feel comfortable in appearing before the Trusteeship Council?
- Manglona: The only thing than that is critical to us at the time is when they are going to start raising questions by various representatives of the Trusteeship Council. The Russians at that time were critical of the United States, and they asked a lot of leading questions and critical questions, and we just have to be prepared to respond to those questions. So that is the only worry we have, is to be able to respond effectively to whatever questions may come around.
- Willens: As a result of your appearance and I am sure the efforts of the State Department, the Trusteeship Council issued a report that was somewhat more favorable to the Northern Marianas than the report of the visiting mission, and the United Kingdom representative, Mr. Hinchcliff, said that so many things had changed since he visited the Trust Territory as a member of the visiting mission that he thought that the negotiations were a fact of life and that the Council should accept that fact of life. Following the visits to the Trusteeship Council, there were many events back in the United States and in the Northern Marianas that related to the next round of negotiations which took place in December of 1973. One of the controversies that developed between the second and third round was the moratorium on homesteading and economic development on Tinian in particular. Do you have any recollection of that controversy?
- Manglona: Yes, I think there are two reasons for the moratorium. One is we are facing a major decision in terms of achieving self-government, and the other one is not to further complicate defense interests if we are going to proceed in giving more homesteads in Tinian. I think there is speculation at that time that maybe we should try to get more land through the homesteading program, and since at that time the homestead program is not only in a defined, subdivided area but you can own a homestead by just applying to any place. It is scattered all over the island, and we don't want people to start taking homesteads on the area that will be proposed by the military to lease. That is, I think, part of that consideration.
- Willens: The Marianas political leadership objected to the fact that the Commission had not been consulted in advance before this moratorium was declared. Is it your sense that there was probably a legitimate need for some kind of moratorium?
- Manglona: Well, I have been working in land management for many, many years and I know during those days that there is a land program that is not based on a defined land policy and

homestead policy. I believe there is a lot of problems arising during those days, one of which is the lack of funding to survey private land—to delineate private land from government land so that we don't have to encroach on private property in giving our homesteads. So those are problems during the early days. To me, the decision may be logical in a way. We want to avoid giving land to somebody that is owned by a private owner. To me I think that is a reasonable request, plus knowing the interests of our national security, I am sure the United States maybe have in mind is that if we are going to continue this, it will compound complications in future negotiations. So maybe it is a decision that I think could be viewed as reasonable.

Willens: It became a very hot political issue with Congressman Atalig and others on Tinian taking very strong positions and criticizing the United States. As a result, Mr. Wilson came out and met with the District Legislature, and Ambassador Williams came out in August of 1973. Do you recall having any discussions with Ambassador Williams about the moratorium?

Manglona: Well, there was a move at that time in aggressively to start making the cadastral survey of all private properties, and at the same time, if we can also, on public lands. I think that is where the Asian Mapping contract was consummated by the Trust Territory government to do exactly that so that we can expedite the land survey at the time. Going back to those concerns, I would not be surprised if that concern came from some of the Tinian leadership, the Mayor for that matter, because they air a strong opposition against the military taking Tinian.

Willens: Between the second and the third rounds, there were two changes in the membership of the Commission, Herman Manglona from Tinian was replaced by Joe Cruz. Had you worked with Joe Cruz before?

Manglona: Well, I worked with Senator Cruz. He is my colleague in the Congress of Micronesia. In fact, I would tend to say that he is the person that really influenced me to get involved in the Northern Marianas politics. I think he and Olympio Borja more or less are the two people who really pushed me to run for member of the Congress of Micronesia.

Willens: How would you characterize Joe Cruz looking back from today's vantage point to how he came across as a political leader in the early 1970s?

Manglona: Well, not taking the side of his personal involvement because a lot of people were criticizing him for some personal involvement. Other than that, I characterize him as a person who takes the interest of his people to heart and he really works hard for the people he represents. I am glad that I win his support in defending the rights of the geographic minority, like Tinian and Rota, and that is something we both share in common. That even if I am not there, he is there to protect the interests of Rota and Tinian both and the islands up north and even if he is not there and I am there, I will help him represent interests of Tinian with Rota also and the islands up north. So that is something that is very common in us—that we almost have the same feeling about how best can we represent a neighboring island ensuring that to our negotiation that we should protect their interest, and I respect him for that. Plus, I think he is a very strong advocator of our negotiation of the Commonwealth status. He is really strong in advocating economic development for the Northern Marianas, and despite his personal involvement, he is very well-respected at the time when I was working with him.

Willens: Just a few weeks after that change in membership, Joeten also resigned from the Commission and was replaced by Pete A. Tenorio as the designated member from the Chamber of Commerce. In his resignation letter, Joeten said that he was resigning not

only because of business commitments but also that he was perceived by some members of the Commission as being too much interested in preserving his own business interests, and he felt that that was unfair but maybe someone should replace him who wouldn't labor under that kind of a difficulty. Did you have any feeling when you worked on the Commission that Joeten's views were being taken by some members of the Commission as designed to protect his own economic interests?

Manglona: No, I don't have that view. I always have great respect for Joeten. He has been very modest to admit the fact that maybe in the interest of achieving a better status that it would be better if he could step aside so that he will diffuse criticism from people labeling him as self-interest member there, and I respect him for that. But I think knowing Joeten, while he may have a view, I don't think he is too insistent of having his view accepted by the majority of the Commission members. I think he always respected the majority decision of the members. He is not too insistent in trying to change it. I don't think it is too much self-interest at the time when he was serving. I have the feeling also that who knows, maybe the deliberation of the Commission was too much for him since he is very much involved in business dealings and activities. At the time, I think he is on the verge of expanding and maybe he needed more time because he traveled a lot. So who knows, maybe also he is resigning because he may be spending too much time with the Commission work and he didn't have much time to take care of his business.

Willens: One of the views that he is associated with and I have heard from other of our mutual friends is that he and other members of the Territorial Party at the time, particularly those from the Carolinian community, felt that the Commission was proceeding too rapidly and that the people of the Northern Marianas needed more time to be more educated and to be able to make a more serious evaluation of different political status relationships. And people who have that point of view say now that the whole process of negotiations proceeded too rapidly.

Manglona: Yes, a few people have that impression. In fact, to be honest with you, even Pete A. when he joined the Commission, I think he's been criticized for trying to delay the negotiation process. A lot of people said that he did intentionally try to delay the negotiation, but I don't blame him. I think it is good to have a combination of people who have pro and con views in the negotiation, and I am sure that helps.

Willens: Do you think it would have made a difference if the negotiations had been deferred for three to five years and there would have been opportunity for more citizens here to get college degrees and to think more about alternative relationships with the United States?

Manglona: I don't think it would differ much. As I said, I think our people have already made up their minds. Even if there are some educated people who may have the view a little differently from what was expressed by the majority of the people, I don't think that would make a difference. I think it is not in the best interests of the Northern Marianas to delay that decision for several years. I think the time is right. We will proceed expeditiously on the status issue since our people have long aspired for it for maybe over ten years.

Willens: Had you worked with Pete A. Tenorio before he became a member of the Commission?

Manglona: No, I only know Pete as a friend when I was in Hawaii back in 1966. I went to East-West Center on a special training program, and I attended the Honolulu Community College Civil Engineering Technology. I was then a surveyor, and I was given an opportunity to upgrade my skill in surveying, not only surveying but even went as far as dipping into engineering training course, and I took up a nine-month training, one school year training program. Pete was in Hawaii. He married a Hawaiian lady there, and being a

Northern Marianas citizen, he is taking care of our students there. I became associated with him when I was a student there. We get together at times, having a barbecue in his house, in his brother's working place because his brother, Manny Tenorio, Dr. Tenorio and Manny are also both are educated in Hawaii. At times he took us to the place where he was starting out to become an agriculturist and is taking care of livestock there. They have a ranch and we used to spend weekends at his company's ranch, and that is where we become associated. Pete is a very sociable person, he likes to sing and play the guitar so that is how we became friends. So I know him from there.

Willens: What political views did he have at the time? Were they similar to yours, or were they different in some respect from yours?

Manglona: I don't think his political view is very far from my own political views. Pete is educated under the American educational system, and I think practically he is pro-American. Other than that, he is more careful, perhaps, in the detail of how best can we put this language so that in the future, it will protect the Northern Marianas people, so he is more articulate in details I think I should say.

Willens: One of the subjects of study during the recess was a financial program, and particularly a program for transitional planning. This was the subject of a paper by Mr. Leonard, the Commission's economic consultant. It was discussed at the third round, and then ultimately it was referred to a so-called ad hoc preparatory Commission, and an agreement was finally reached at the fourth round between the parties that the United States would fund a transitional program in the amount of approximately \$1.2 million. Do you remember any of the discussions between the two delegations on the subject of transitional planning?

Manglona: Well, yes, because during the negotiations there has been serious discussion about the need for proper planning, planning in terms of master planning, water, power, roads, conservation areas, study on agriculture, so we see the need for those studies. Pete A. was instrumental particularly because Pete is a very educated person. I think he is the owner of two master degrees and he got his bachelor degree in Hawaii, so I think he likes to be involved in this master planning. I am sure he got this exposure in Hawaii because Hawaii was a sophisticated state at the time, and so Pete has this insight and he was very much instrumental in pursuing this.

Willens: When the subject was discussed between the two negotiating parties at the third round of negotiations, the Commission was initially dissatisfied with the U.S. response to the Commission's proposals. Did you have any personal conversations with members of the U.S. delegation on the subject of transitional planning that you can remember?

Manglona: I think one of the main concerns I had at the time is on land. To me personally, we need to survey all private properties and to identify them and at the same time also give them a certificate of title so everybody will know what they own and also to proceed with the homestead programs with the land exchange program which was temporarily suspended because of the moratorium, and I am very much interested along that line.

Willens: The Commission did take a position that there should be a substantial sum, I think it was in excess of \$4 million for a cadastral survey, and the United States delegation seemed to agree with the fact that there were problems but they wanted to fund it in a different way. Did you feel that the United States delegation understood the serious problems associated with land in this community?

- Manglona: Yes, I tend to agree that they are interested, because through our discussion, they seem to give greater priority in the land problem.
- Willens: The other issue that came up in connection with transitional planning was a debate over the need for physical planning. The United States delegation took the view that there were many master plans that had been developed by the Trust Territory Administration and at the district level by outside consultants and that one needed to look at all of those plans before deciding that additional physical planning was required. Was that an important issue to you?
- Manglona: I think there are two sides of the view here. Even even among us Micronesians, we always criticize the Trust Territory government, that they have made so many studies and those books are gathering dust on the shelves. Even local people are very critical about that, but I am sure that the planning we had during the early days is only restricted to certain areas. I am sure the planning that the Marianas Political Status Commission envisioned is planning in terms of development over the years that would tell us the needs for power, water and maybe resources to run our government. So, we are interested in getting the specifics down so that we know what are the needs over the years. What are our projections over the years in terms of population growth and others.
- Willens: The other financial issue that came up at the third round was a discussion of multi-year support by the United States and the level of that support, and after an exchange of position papers and considerable discussion, the United States for the first time made a specific proposal that totaled \$11.5 million plus an estimated \$3 million for federal programs. The Marianas Political Status Commission said it would take this under study but indicated that that was short of what the Commission thought was required by way of future support from the United States. Do you recall any of the discussion with respect to the level of future financial support?
- Manglona: As I said, during those days I don't think many of us are that knowledgeable to really determine how much money do we really need to run our government over the years and at the same time to be able also to assess how much money do we really need for improvement of infrastructure—like roads, schools, water, power, sewerage, etc. We depend on the best judgment of our economic consultant. As I remember, I think what he did is that he evaluated and studied the reports that were done in the past plus consulted with the High Commissioner in terms of how much money is spent in the Northern Marianas, maybe in Micronesia, and the consultant more or less took that projection and he projected against the population against growth over the years, and I believe he came with the best judgment with that offer. Yes, to us we always come up with a very basic understanding that maybe that is not enough, maybe we need more money. And that is true. Only one thing came up very strongly as I recall, having come in from Rota, I vividly recall a time when I asked the Ambassador, "Mr. Ambassador, you know this \$3 million is really insufficient for the infrastructure needs of our government. I am sure that all this \$3 million even Saipan alone would not be enough and I know they would not give money to Rota and Tinian and you know how much the central government neglected us." And so after a very serious discussion on that, I remember Ambassador Williams called for a short recess during which we disbursed ourselves and then when we came in, the Ambassador said, "I have a proposition for you. The United States is willing to raise up the \$3 million to \$4 million under one condition—half a million of which will go to Rota and Tinian." So it put our delegation on the spot and we just also have to recess ourselves in order to caucus, so I keep begging, me and Joe Cruz keep begging our delegation to please be sympathetic, be considerate, because if you people don't agree in having Rota and Tinian

getting this guaranteed earmarking, then there is no assurance that the Ambassador will give us the \$1 million anyway. So you must agree so finally they agreed to that. We went in and there we said we accepted the \$1 million. It was put in an additional \$1 million and is sympathy, I think, from the Ambassador that he agreed that Rota is less developed and Tinian is less developed and maybe that \$1 million will help them catch up a little bit in terms of the infrastructure improvement, which over the years proved to be true.

Willens: Do you remember dissent within the Commission about accepting the additional \$1 million under those conditions?

Manglona: Well, there was some concern. I know the Senator O. T. Borja from Saipan, having represented the islands up north, he said, well, maybe we should guarantee also the Northern Islands. But after talking with him and the other members, finally we decided it should be split equally between the two islands.

Willens: The increase in capital investment funds did occur at the fourth round of negotiations in the spring of 1974. Do you remember whether it was at that round at which the Commission decided to have each member of the Commission speak briefly about the needs of his island or the particular needs for capital investment?

Manglona: I think there was an opportunity given to each of our island delegations to more or less express themselves on the needs of their respective islands.

Willens: My recollection is that this was one of the first times we used the strategy of asking individual members of the Commission to speak briefly about something they felt deeply about, whether it was the need for better health care, education for their children or the need for roads on Rota, and so forth. Do you have any recollection of individual members of the Commission speaking about this?

Manglona: Yes, I know Senator Cruz, for example, and myself spoke eloquently about the need for infrastructure funds for Rota and Tinian, and I think this is a subject which in the heart is so deep and that really touched the hearts of the Ambassador and his delegation.

Willens: On the political status side of the negotiations, one of the ongoing issues was the extent to which the future Commonwealth would have a guaranteed right of local self-government, and at the second round way back in May of 1973, the Joint Communique provided that Marianas Political Status Commission wanted to evaluate and study further how to achieve maximum self-government over local matters at the same time that the United States Government wanted to have plenary legislative authority in the Commonwealth under Article IV(3)(2) of the U.S. Constitution. And my law firm did an analysis of this issue and reported to the Commission before the third round of negotiations. And it was at that point that the Commission advanced the proposal that Article IV(3)(2) should be limited in order to make certain that the local government here would have maximum authority over local matters. Do you recall any of our internal discussions on that subject?

Manglona: Yes, I think that is an issue that we have spent a lot of time discussing. You know one of our references is the Trusteeship Agreement in terms of our people deciding their political future to either become self-government or independent. I think we really zero in to those two areas—self-government and independence. There was a lot of discussion on the issues. Also that at the time we were discussing self-government I think we were discussing whether or not we should have all of the Constitution of the United States apply here or shall we limit that power. We also discussed the need to establish our own constitution. And I believe we also discussed the applicability of the U.S. laws. There

was a lot of discussion about that. My recollection is that, as I said, inasmuch as we want to tackle that issue, we have to rely on our consultants for many of these specific and detailed evaluations of other insular areas so that we make sure that whatever we adopted, it protects us, it gives us the kind of self-government that we want.

Willens: At the third round of negotiations when this issue came up, the United States delegation agreed that the mutual consent provision that had been already agreed to, was in fact a limitation on U.S. plenary authority. They asked the Commission to identify which provisions of the status agreement would be protected under the mutual consent provision. One of the main points made by the U.S. delegation, however, during this round and in later discussions was that the Marianas Political Status Commission should not insist on a status that was much different from Guam. They made the point on many occasions that if the relationship was very different from Guam or the Virgin Islands, it would be difficult to get approval from the members of the United States Congress. Do you recall having any discussions with Ambassador Williams or other members of the U.S. delegation on that subject?

Manglona: Yes, I think what you said is correct. Oftentimes the Ambassador reminded us that whatever provisions were agreed with us, that they would have to sell it to members of Congress. And he is telling us that at least we have to be reasonable in trying to get a compromise on something that could be accepted by Congress. I remember at the time when we were discussing the mutual consent that there is a lot of concern about that. At one point, I believe there was a discussion about how long will this relationship be. You know it is going to be permanent relationship or it will be ten, 15, 20 years relationship. And there are members in our group that are thinking about the future—that, who knows maybe we should be a Commonwealth today, and sometime in the future it's up to our future leaders to decide whether we should change our political status to a free association or even independent, although all if not most of us agree that we would never be an independent. So there is a lot of discussion on that. I believe there is also some worry that if we have this relationship—like in the case of Guam where they are treated under the Organic Act—through enactment of legislation that, who knows, Congress might at any time decide that, okay we don't want to give you that status anymore, and that leave would leave us with uncertainty in the future. So I think it is because of that you lead us to the discussion of mutual consent which you help us find a way how would we protect ourselves once we agree to something. That's where we come up with these words "mutual consent," is that we all have to agree on a relationship that can only be dissolved by mutual consent, so that no one party can terminate this relationship without the other party agreeing to terminate it. That is one area, on the mutual consent. The other area which I think I played a major role with Joe Cruz is on the bicameral legislature. We were extremely worried that although the United States reluctantly said that maybe we would give you the bicameral legislature, I am afraid that Congress or even our own Congress would some day just for some reason take that away. So that's why Joe Cruz and I worked very hard to convince the U.S. side and our delegation that the bicameral legislature is our protection for the minority. And we insisted that a mutual consent also be applied there.

Willens: And that requirement of a bicameral legislature came up in the very last stages of the negotiations, as you will remember between the December 1974 meeting and the reconvening of the negotiations in February of 1975 shortly before the Covenant was signed. Did you and Joe Cruz decide not to raise the subject earlier of a bicameral legislature, or they did it come to you as a final thought?

- Manglona: No, it's not came as a final thought, it's been asked throughout the negotiations, especially at the time when were discussing about the Constitution, about the self-government, but there is a reluctance even among ourselves to give us that power, because they know that is a very strong power. But we always make it known to our own membership and to the United States that if there is no bicameral, there is no Commonwealth, and I think that has been our bargaining chip with Joe Cruz that Rota and Tinian would not approve the Covenant if there is no bicameral legislature.
- Willens: So is it your recollection then that you and Joe Cruz raised this at earlier stages but that the Commission had never yet adopted it as a formal position to present the United States?
- Manglona: Yes. As remember it, this is the last provision that we have approved. I remember being locked in the old Joeten Hotel over at the Hafa Adai side, the temporary hotel there. We were locked in.
- Willens: Locked in?
- Manglona: Yes, we were locked in the room with the U.S. delegation. I don't know whether our U.S. counterpart consultants were with us but we were locked in, trying to convince us, maybe there is a way where we could sign the Covenant without the bicameral legislature. And I think we probably may have locked in almost one-two hours in that room and all we have been saying is that no way.
- Willens: Do you recall efforts made by the U.S. delegation to try to talk you out of it?
- Manglona: Yes, that's why we were locked in, because they are worried. And that's the last one, that is what holding up from wrapping up the whole work of the Commission because of the bicameral section.
- Willens: Was it a meeting with the U.S. delegation that only you and Joe Cruz participated in?
- Manglona: Yes, yes.
- Willens: So Ed Pangelinan and Ben Santos were not there.
- Manglona: Those people already kind of reluctantly agreed, but it's the United States find it difficult to sell that idea in the U.S. Not after maybe last minute consultation back to their principal that there is no way we are going to have it [the Covenant] unless we are going to have it.
- Willens: I remember that Ambassador Williams and the U.S. delegation got impatient with the fact that the Commission was meeting for several days, whereas the Ambassador had thought that the Commission was all ready to approve the agreement and schedule a signing ceremony. But it took the Commission days, as I remember, to discuss this within the Commission and finally to agree on it.
- Manglona: The other one has to do with the mutual consent as I remember—the Commission made an effort to apply mutual consent to the multi-year funding. We feel that that is a very important provision of the Covenant, the multi-year funding. And we are afraid that the United States can just drop us anytime, without that provision. So finally the United States' explanation convinced us reluctantly with reservation, that it's better not to put the mutual consent there because how do we change that in the future should you need more money. So if we put the mutual consent section there, it would be very difficult to change, because we have to go back to the people and to the United States Congress. And we thought that's a very convincing proposition that maybe they are serious, so as you can see, that on Section 702 we try to word it as such that it give us the protection there. You know there are several references there. One reference is that 702 funding—it's the local

people that should decide on which projects to be funded. I regret that the United States violates that over the years by insisting on conditions and insisting on projects when it's a violation of the Covenant. That's a violation of the Covenant I am sorry to say that, because it's very clear either in the Covenant or the analysis of the Covenant that it's the Northern Marianas people or leaders that should determine which projects they want to be funded out of their own money. Yet as you see the history today, Congress will try to impose that, let us know what is the project and give us a project listing. So, I think to me that is a violation of the spirit of the Covenant. Another thing also that I notice in the Covenant is there is a provision that in the event the United States does not give us the multi-year funding that we can use Section 903 of the Covenant for recourse and that's the court. That we can go to court, tell the court that the United States fails to make its commitment on giving us money, and I think that is put there purposely because of that concern on mutual consent. Another provision there that we compromise a little bit so that it makes stronger in lieu of the mutual consent is that the 702 shall continue until such time as the standard of living of people [in the Marianas] is comparable to that of the U.S. communities. So that is a concern, that in order to give up the mutual consent, we put in certain things that it will give us encouragement that we have a recourse, if United States fails us.

- Willens: After the third round, Congressman Burton and Congressman Foley came out to the Northern Marianas in January 1974. They met with people in Guam and with the TTPI Administration. They also had a very long meeting with members of the Marianas Political Status Commission. Do you recall attending a meeting with Congressman Burton and Congressman Foley in January 1974 at which time the preliminary agreements that had been reached to date that were discussed with those members of Congress?
- Manglona: Well, I remember them coming. I don't quite remember whether we have met personally, but if we do we probably had a briefing on the status of our negotiations at the time.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of Congressman Burton or any other member of Congress telling you personally that the Covenant had too many unique provisions in it and might not be approved?
- Manglona: Well, I know Ambassador Williams at times mentioned that to us that he is afraid that if we were going to continue to put in unique provisions that we may have a problem selling that in Congress, but we pledged to them (the Ambassador) that once we approved the Covenant it is not only his job but is the job of the entire Commission to go along with him and lobby hard with Congress.
- Willens: During the third round negotiations, the United States delivered for the first time to you and the other members of the Commission a draft of the document called the Covenant. It had been prepared by lawyers from the various federal agencies. The chairman of the Commission told the Ambassador that the Commission would study this and respond in due course. Do you remember having any reaction to the delivery to you of a draft status agreement by the United States?
- Manglona: Yes, I remember that. We were very happy despite that we haven't thoroughly gone through those provisions. At least it made us happy that we have the preliminary draft of the so-called Covenant. There was some discussion about what we are going to call it. Some call it the Covenant, some propose maybe Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, like Puerto Rico, and some other.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of the delivery of these documents to the U.S. delegation and what his reactions were to that strategy?

Manglona: Yes. We asked you if you can take back the proposal by the U.S. and see if you can help us digest, evaluate and assess and give us back your recommendation. And then as I recall you came out with our proposal on the way we want this document structured. And we deliberated among ourselves, and then I think we adopted the package that is presented to the U.S. side which in a way to me kind of surprised the U.S. side. They always thought we going to use their draft as a basis of refinement by just going section by section and say that maybe why we don't insert these words here and there. They were surprised because here we submitted to them almost an entirely different version. So I think personally they are kind of surprised. I am sure the Ambassador was very disappointed that we have our own version of the proposed Commonwealth rather than using the U.S. version to refine it.

Willens: Did the Ambassador or any other member of the U.S. delegation ever tell you that the Commission was getting poor legal advice?

Manglona: Well, there are times when they tell us that some of this perhaps can be just decided by ourselves. We don't want to bother with your legal consultant and maybe you people are getting bad influence. So I know that at times they really get disappointed because they always say that it's you that really giving those decisions. We came along and countered that, that all of what we have decided it's a decision made by us, but then of course we are discussing it with our legal consultant and you are asking questions on why we have this and this and this and that, and in the end we come up with unanimous decision for those sections.

Willens: Is that how you responded to the criticisms?

Manglona: Yes, because they labeled us as we just accepting a carbon copy of what was recommended to us, but that is not true. I think we discussed that among ourselves with you, and you explain it to us, we make a decision, we tell you this is what we want. And then you put it into [a final form] what we think is good for us.

Willens: After the third and fourth round, the United States gradually modified its request for land on Tinian. It withdrew from its request for the entire island, and it agreed that one-third of the island would be under civilian control. At the fourth rounds of negotiations, it announced for the time that it had revised its plans and there would be need for relocation of San Jose village. This came as quite a surprise to everyone and was viewed by some on Tinian as eliminating some of the advantages of the proposed leasing of the land. What is your recollection of those various changes?

Manglona: I know when the United States presented us with their military land need in Tinian, the Ambassador said can we keep that confidential a little bit and not to expose it to the press. But then for some reason it was exposed, and he came in and kind of threatened, you better watch your people, we know who among you.

Willens: You remember that?

Manglona: Yes, who among you exposed that.

Willens: So he thought someone on the Commission had leaked the proposal?

Manglona: Yes, so he kind of looked us in the eye, everybody was little scared, because he kind of threatening us that we know who among you has been leaking this out. And it was all over the newspaper, the local newspaper and Guam. So I remember that. Plus to me personally and to Joe Cruz, who is representing Tinian, I think this proposal of relocating the land owners we agree with that, and I think it is something that is not well-explained to the people of Tinian. If it is well-explained, I am sure that is more advantageous for the people

of Tinian. The original plan as I recall is that they would relocate those residences nearby the Tinian harbor and they would build these people compatible home or even better homes someplace else with a well-established community with parking lots, roads and all those things, running water, electricity, and it could have been better take advantage of that. But for some reason, the Mayor at that time was very critical of the military and due to his influence some people just all of a sudden raise opposition to that plan, and I am sure the U.S. capitalized on those and at a later time came up with a revised plan.

- Willens: There was substantial opposition on Tinian to relocation of the village. There was a proposal in early 1974 to actually have referendum on the island of Tinian as to how much land the people of Tinian would be willing to lease to the United States for military purposes. The proposal for a referendum came from the Tinian Municipal Council and was approved by the Mayor, but then it was vetoed by District Administrator Ada. Do you recall any debate about such a referendum?
- Manglona: I recall there was considerable public hearing also held in Tinian at which time the member of the Commission were there. We have to help Jose Cruz who is the advocator of some of these benefits for the people. It was a very emotional public hearing as I recall. There are pro and cons on the issue, but since Senator Cruz was also one time a mayor, he has some political influence. He also had his group countering the Mayor's opposition. And I remember him vividly telling the people that what's the use of having this abandoned airfield, and its wasteland. All we have to do is taking your jeep there or car and driving around it with nothing there. It will be better if we give it to the military and have economic benefits from the presence of the military in employment, indirect benefits by having the military personnel stay at hotels in Tinian or maybe buy foods and others, and he tried to explain it from the economic side. So personally I think his argument was very persuasive, more than the Mayor at that time. The prevailing side is to the Commission side—to our side. And Joe has to be credited (and his delegation) for that.
- Willens: He often said publicly that he would have to follow the wishes of his constituents and if they voted to make only one-third of the island available, he would be obligated to follow that. At the same time I think he was working behind the scenes with the Commission and with the U.S. delegation to try to reach agreement on making two-thirds of the island available. Was that your sense?
- Manglona: Yes, I remember Joe Cruz being a very clever and a prominent politician on the island. He even managed to garner the support of the school children there. Every time we go to Tinian, I see a sign there like "We want America" or something like that, "We want to become part of the United States."
- Willens: When the Ambassador went over there, he often was greeted by signs of the opponents.
- Manglona: Well, of course there were opponents, yes. But Joe Cruz was very effective on countering the opposition.
- Willens: The Ambassador went there on at least two occasions to speak to the public on Tinian about the military plans and sometimes he had the Colonel provide slide presentations. Do you think the U.S. delegation was effective in setting forth their plans for use of the islands?
- Manglona: Yes, I think in a way they are effective, and what's make it more sellable is with the Commission members all falling in support of the plan.
- Willens: You think the people on Tinian had confidence that the Marianas Political Status Commission would adequately represent their interest?

- Manglona: Well, at least Joe Cruz was very influential, and some of the Commission members are very influential at the time. That at least the majority of the people supported us; otherwise it could have been different if we had more influential leaders on the other side.
- Willens: At the fifth round in December of 1974, the United States made a further announcement about its plans for Tinian and told the Commission that there were no immediate plans to build a base on Tinian. What was your reaction at the time?
- Manglona: Well, there was a committee that was formed to deal with the military land lease issue, and I believe Pete A. was the chairman. I also served as a member of that committee with some others. And our task is to really review that proposal and to come up with recommendations as to the land values, as to what joint benefits can we receive from that, make sure that we protect the local interests. And I remember we deliberated.
- Willens: Yes, the committee was formed at the fourth round of negotiations and worked in the summer and fall of 1974. Do you remember coming to Washington?
- Manglona: Yes, we came to Washington. We secured a consultant there to help us with the land evaluation. I remember American company.
- Willens: Metrics or something like that.
- Manglona: Yes, something like that. And it's not an easy thing. We keep educating them on the price of land, what's going on, and future development. Finally when this group presented to us their findings, I think we are convinced and use this as a basis of negotiating with the U.S. on the price for the land lease for military use.
- Willens: As of the fourth round of negotiations, before that Committee was established, the United States delegation was still insisting on purchasing the land rather than leasing it. Most of the members of the Committee believed that ultimately, I think, the U.S. delegation would agree to lease the land. Did your committee have any discussions with the U.S. counterparts during the recess on the purchase vs. lease issue?
- Manglona: Yes, and I think we come out very strongly in proposing we prefer to have it leased on a long term lease with option for renewal, and I think we made that very clear.
- Willens: On the subject of a price, the United States delegation always took the view that there was no need to use professional appraisers, that the land situation in the Northern Marianas was very difficult to evaluate, because there were no transactions.
- Manglona: No transactions, no infrastructure.
- Willens: Did you discuss in your committee the desirability of having some professional assistance?
- Manglona: Yes, and that's why we hired this consultant to help us evaluate. I think our strongest argument there is the symbolic of this land. It's not so much the infrastructure, or the lack of land transactions. It is just that land is so scarce. We are islanders, and land is so precious and symbolic to the local people. We tell the United States it's not much as if you are going to have it appraised in the United States where you take into consideration transaction, locality, if there is a power or water, sewer or good roads. Our price for our land is so deep in our heart, and this is symbolic, we have a symbolic value and we focus on that extremely. Plus the prospect of development in the future, knowing that we have rich Asian countries around us.
- Willens: One of the other issues that was important to the United States delegation was that it had use rights to what we call military retention lands. And one of the issues that came up

- from time to time was whether their rights on these military retention lands would survive into the future Commonwealth and they ought to be given some credit for the value of the money they paid many, many years earlier. Do you remember having any discussions about the military retention land?
- Manglona: Yes, we do. People have been real critical about the military retention land, the red line.
- Willens: Why critical?
- Manglona: Critical because we feel that those lands are supposed to be owned by our people and the military just come around and just say that they are going to own those lands for military use. And we have been very critical. In fact, some of this land encroaches into private properties, and that makes it even more critical to the local people. And we cannot even come in because there was restriction. We cannot homestead the area because there is restriction.
- Willens: Was there a distinction between the military retention lands one the one hand and public lands on the other?
- Manglona: Yes, so that's why people are critical, they cannot go in and homestead that area. Although it's a public land, but it's within the military retention area.
- Willens: Was it being used for military purposes?
- Manglona: No. It's just been reserved.
- Willens: You must have heard over the past 15 or 20 years some criticism of the amount of money that the Commonwealth received under the Covenant for leasing the land on Tinian and on Saipan plus the island in the Northern Islands. Do you feel today that the approximately \$20 million was a fair sum by way of rental payment?
- Manglona: Well, having a success in the last five years over land transactions here, I think yes we regret our action. Because we can make billions of dollar if we ever consummate a deal with a developer to develop that into a resort hotel, golf course. We probably may have generated many million dollars more than the \$19 million. And I think this is the problem. Despite our reluctance to give away land because land is scarce here, we are willing to do that in the interest our national defense. And if you look at the agreement under the technical agreement attached to the Covenant, everything is alluded to the base development. That once the base is developed we are going to have certain benefits. Our people will benefit during the construction phase, because there is going to be a lot of workers and this and that. So after many years, this has not materialized.
- Willens: Do you have any optimism about the ultimate return of a significant portion of that land by way of lease-back from the United State so that it would be made available for private commercial development?
- Manglona: That's what we have been working on now especially with our administration. We are negotiating for a possible lease-back. Still the United States is very insistent that a lease-back must compatible to military use. It will be renewed on an annual basis, and no developer would ever like to spend thousands if not millions of dollars under that arrangement of an annual renewal.
- Willens: Is that still the U.S. position?
- Manglona: Yes, plus most recently, the United States took the position that they can permit a golf course or a hotel, but they can vacate the place and clear the place within 30 days notice. Which is very unreasonable—maybe six months is okay.

- Willens: With that kind of a limitation, I think it would be very difficult to persuade a developer to come in.
- Manglona: Because if it's six months plus, they are going to get compensated. And they are trying to work it out so that it would be compensated, with no time frame to lock it in. It could be 20 years, it could be 50 years, so that is even more difficult for a developer.
- Willens: In November of 1974, just before the fifth round of negotiations, there was an election at which time the Territorial Party won important seats in the Congress of Micronesia. In particular, both Ed Pangelinan and Herman Q. Guerrero got defeated. So they lost their seats on the Marianas Political Status Commission when they were defeated for re-election. Oscar Rasa and Pete A. Tenorio were elected to fill those seats, and there were some changes made in the Commission as a result. Do you recall whether political status was an issue in that campaign? It has been suggested to me, for example, that the Territorial Party may have won because of the concern in the community that the status negotiations were proceeding too rapidly. Other people say that political status wasn't an important issue at all, that it was a matter of personality and internal political competition.
- Manglona: Yes, the reason why we Republicans lost in that election, the political status issue is one of the factors. I remember the Popular Party took a strong stand in the negotiations, hoping for commonwealth, and that may have been a factor. Is that the time when Dr. Palacios was defeated? No.
- Willens: No. This is in 1974, this is later. He no longer was in the Congress of Micronesia. This was when Ed Pangelinan and Herman Q. Guerrero, both Popular Party members, were defeated and Pedro A. Tenorio got elected. He had run has an independent two years earlier. And Oscar Rasa got elected on the Territorial Party ticket. He had run before and I think just narrowly lost. Do you have any recollection of Oscar Rasa as a political leader?
- Manglona: Well, Oscar is a manipulator of politics, and being an educator he's got a lot of influence in the young people, so I suppose maybe that's what carry him into that election.
- Willens: You don't have any specific recollection that political status was a major issue, so the Republicans was not saying vote for us if you oppose the negotiations or anything of that sort?
- Manglona: Well, I heard allegations leveled against Pete A., that Pete A. if he get elected he will slow down the negotiations, because according to the allegation he is not in favor of consummating a deal now but rather would like to wait maybe for a few more years down the line. So I heard that allegation.
- Willens: After the bicameral legislature issue was resolved in February of 1970, a signing ceremony was scheduled for February 15. As you may remember, a lawsuit was instituted the day before to prevent the signing ceremony from going forward. The lawyer was Mike White, and the plaintiff was Mr. Mafnas, who may have been in the Congress of Micronesia at the time, I forget, I think he was. Did you have any recollection of that effort by the Congress of Micronesia to stop the signing ceremony?
- Manglona: Well, they may not do it in the open, but I am sure they are doing it in the closed door. I am sure they are trying their very best to stop it. And I know this that they are doing it. They are trying to even to manipulate among some of our people that they know that they are not in support of the Covenant to more or less go against it. So I have the feeling that there is some manipulation maybe not openly but behind the scene.
- Willens: Did you have any specific recollection in mind as to efforts made by the Congress of Micronesia to stop the separate Marianas negotiation?

- Manglona: Well, for sure Oscar Rasa. He associated himself with our Micronesian leaders. Oscar is of Ponapean origin, and he had friendships with the Micronesian leaders, so I have the feeling that he may go against the signing of the Covenant.
- Willens: Do you recall the final meetings of the Marianas Political Status Commission when for several days the members spoke about the Covenant, asked questions, and then ultimately there was a vote? Do you have any recollection of those meetings? And in particular there was a meeting at which time in the evening we were in the Municipal Council Building and some people became visible through the windows on the balcony surrounding the meeting room, and there were members of the Commission who felt somewhat intimidated by the fact that the discussions within the room were being overheard by outsiders. Do you have any recollection of those meetings?
- Manglona: No, not really. I recall that when everything is put in place, agreed upon, they were sounding that at least a great majority of our Commission members are in favor if not unanimously in favor. We keep hearing rumors about some concern or reservation by Oscar Rasa, Dr. Palacios, and Felix Rabauliman, but based on my recollection, I never see them strongly coming out and say they are in opposition to the Covenant. I think the only surprise we get is when they come and like Oscar Rasa I believe takes us to court, right?
- Willens: He may have supported that effort. The named plaintiff was Mafnas. But Rasa became a great opponent of the Covenant after it was signed and before the plebiscite.
- Manglona: So see maybe they failed to sign, but as I said, they never come openly going against it.
- Willens: Were you surprised that Felix Rabauliman did not support the Covenant?
- Manglona: Yes, I was surprised with Felix, because I always sit next to Felix, and all along I thought he is supportive. He is involved in voting on the provisions of the Covenant and I am surprised that he ended up refusing to sign.
- Willens: The Carolinian Association apparently by majority vote concluded that they did not want to support the Covenant.
- Manglona: That's what influenced him.
- Willens: Do you recall having personal conversations with him about whether the Covenant was in the interest of the Carolinian community?
- Manglona: During the negotiations, I think we share many things, even that discussion about who would become citizens. The reason why we compromised the citizenship provision was over concern about Carolinians. And I think the argument was why should we force people to become U.S. citizens when deep in their hearts they want to be like they are—Micronesian, Carolinian. So I think as a compromise we have a provision there that at the termination of the Trusteeship, those people born here will become automatically U.S. citizens. Those people that will not exercise this will come about six months—there is a period of time they will come up and apply for U.S. national [status]. But eventually what happened, no one take that opportunity within that given time frame. But we did provide that because of that concern and I think it was Felix Rabauliman and Dr. Palacios who are member of our Commission that really feel strongly about that.
- Willens: Do you think that Dr. Palacios' views about a close relationship with the United States changed during the 2-1/2 years that the Commission was in operation?
- Manglona: Well, I am sure he's been very supportive and he sees our prosperity over the years before he died. I am sure he may be having a second thought that after all it would not be like

that. But after [some time], he sees a lot of things change and we are benefiting from our prosperity because of our relation with United States.

Willens: Although he was regarded as senior member of the Carolinian community, he supported the Covenant at the end, where as Felix Rabauliman as an official representative elected to not support it.

Manglona: Yes, I think you are right. Felix really tied himself to this United Carolinian Association and he cannot help but to abide by their decision of not to sign and support it.

Willens: After the Covenant was signed, did you play an active role in the political education campaign?

Manglona: Oh very much so, especially on the islands of Rota and Tinian.

Willens: What did you do?

Manglona: Well there is some opposition as you may know and I went out openly, vocally, providing public education on the Covenant as written and approved. I tell the people that if we become part of the American political family there will be lot of benefits that we will receive from the federal government. Our relationship will be better than Guam's, because we used Guam as a reference. We have a better relationship with the United States. We are better than Guam, because we are going to have our own constitution. Guam cannot. We are going to have a bicameral legislature which Rota really loved to see and to know that we the unfortunate of the past will not be repeated. The financial assistance there, the land alienation, so those are very good subjects. But some people objected, to be honest with you, even my mother. Trying to explain this to my mother, and my mother tends to tell me, although she voted because she followed me, but she was kind of worried that even the tablespoon will be taxed.

Willens: She was afraid of . . .

Manglona: Everything is going to be taxed. My mother use to tell me that even the spoon, I think they are going to tax the spoon. I said no, no they wouldn't tax that. But they are curious. Because of ignorance sometimes they start questioning. But my job is to explain it to them.

Willens: You think that your mother's view was sort of representative of the older group, because at some point I have heard that the older residents were among those who had wanted to be U.S. citizens for many, many years and felt that finally they had an opportunity to achieve citizenship.

Manglona: Well, it's not a strong opposition, but it's a concern as I raise it up. I think they are not ready for that chance.

Willens: What do you think were the most important lines of opposition to the Covenant? I have heard, for example, that some people said that they supported Commonwealth, but this particular draft agreement wasn't good enough and that it should be renegotiated. Others were opposed to any status different from the rest of Micronesia. What is your recollection as to the most important lines of the opposition?

Manglona: I think the most important opposition there is that the people are worried. One is the applicability of the U.S. law. You know a lot of people say that there are a lot of laws that who knows maybe not good for us. We are not ready. And then if we become part of the United States, they will have that implemented and it will affect a lot of people, that's one concern. On the land, they heard about this condemnation process, some are worried that maybe their lands can be taken by the federal government or the local government

maybe for public use. And these people are not used to that process, in those days. They are worried about heavy taxation. During the TT time, [there was] very little taxation. In fact, practically no tax for individual citizens—only businesses, and they worry that there maybe tax under the new system. So I believe those are the worries they have.

Willens: Do you think that enough time . . .

Manglona: I terms of Tinian [a big concern] is the land taking of the thirds of Tinian. That's the major issue in Tinian.

Willens: How about on Saipan?

Manglona: Saipan is practically same with Rota other than the bicameral concern on Rota and Tinian.

Willens: And you think there was still an important minority in the Northern Marianas that regretted developing a separate status that was independent of the rest of the Micronesian islands?

Manglona: No. I always said this and I have been making lot of public statements that if our people are to vote today, whether to continue this relationship, I am sure a great majority of our people will reaffirm that this is the best relationship to have.

Willens: Some of our mutual friends think that it would have been better for all of Micronesia if it could have stayed together and developed some kind of a common relationship with the United States, perhaps free association.

Manglona: Well, at least knowing my people here, I think they cherish this relationship. In fact some of the people that at the time maybe they still have reservation, I am sure they are turning around now and tend to agree perhaps that after all this is not bad. Let's take for example, I think some time I hear Jess Villagomez commenting about in the past during the TT time that the Governor was appointed, now we elect our own governor. So although he may have differences in certain areas, at least overall, I think he's more in favor of this relationship.

Willens: After the Covenant was approved by the people here, there was a period of nearly a year during which it was considered by the United States Congress. Did you go to the United States Congress as part of the delegation to argue in favor of the Covenant?

Manglona: Well, I am always a supporter of the Covenant, but at the same time also, I am a critic of some of the violations that I feel the United States did not live up to the Covenant.

Willens: You are referring now to recent years since 1978?

Manglona: No, even from the past up to recent. Let's say in the past we have a problem where this drawdown of money, in other words, the money can be drawn down to us once our fiscal year budget is approved. And during the early days we communicated with our founding father [Congressman] Burton, our champion, and he wrote a letter to OTIA and Interior telling them that the Northern Marianas has a unique relationship. They don't even have to come to Congress and testify for their budget. They are doing that because they want to demonstrate to Congress that they are using the federal money wisely. And we appreciate them coming and telling us that. But as far as we are concerned, the deal is that it would come out on an annual basis and therefore they can drawdown this money with no restriction. But yet, Interior and the OTIA are kind of imposing certain restrictions before you draw down this money. And they don't follow Burton's recommendation when he wrote that letter to them, plus there's another Congressman, Mr. Clausen, they jointly signed this letter.

- Willens: Did you go to the Congress in 1975 and 1976 when the Covenant was being considered by Congress for approval?
- Manglona: We went there lobbying, helping the U.S. side lobbying for the Covenant. I remember attending only one Congressional hearing, but most of the time at least one or two times I was there going from one office to the other lobbying with either members or staff of Congress.
- Willens: What kind of objections did you hear, particularly from the Senate side, where as you remember the Covenant was considered not only by the Interior Committee but by the Armed Services Committee and Foreign Relations Committee?
- Manglona: Well, I think there are several concerns by some of these Senators or Congressman. One of the concerns is that there are some special provisions built into the Covenant that other insular areas do not have. And some times they raised this. But overall their prevailing reason is environment. They thought this area of Micronesia is a paradise, and they rather like to keep it the way it is than being part of the American political family where [it can be] subjected to development that may end up not protecting the environment. At the time when we were lobbying, once we came into one office and go to the other, another group of U.S. environmentalists were lobbying, approaching them saying, “No don’t give it to them. They are going to screw up with environment.” You know that really piss us off. We say this, “Don’t use us a zoo. You want us to remain what we are so that you can look at us as being a zoo, just to watch us.”
- Willens: You thought some people were trying to maintain Micronesia as a zoo?
- Manglona: Right.
- Willens: Were some of the Senators that you met also opposed to giving the military any authority to construct the base here? There seem to be some people in Congress who opposed to the military use of Tinian.
- Manglona: I don’t think I hear that, no, much of that opposition, no. Some complained that the 702 commitment is too much. Some of them feel that way.
- Willens: Did you feel that the lobbying effort that was conducted by the Marianas representatives was well done?
- Manglona: Well, I think we supplemented the U.S. efforts, but I commended Ambassador Williams for the aggressiveness of his staff by spending a lot of time up here lobbying. They even have a listing of all the members of Congress—whom have they spoken to, what is their feeling, whether they are for or against—and they have a listing of those that have still have reservation, so that we know where to concentrate. So I think that effort really helped us, by knowing who is for us and who is not supporting us, and who is undecided, and we can go to those people that opposing us and undecided voters.
- Willens: When you were part of the lobbying effort, did the Marianas people stay separate from the U.S. delegation representatives?
- Manglona: I think we more or less complement each other. While we don’t go together, we complement each other’s efforts. We went in and just said the same thing, the reason why we supported the Covenant because this is our agreement.
- Willens: What do you think ultimately carried the day in favor of the Covenant?
- Manglona: Well, we had serious opposition as you may know. I think it’s Senator Pell and Senator Hart, we cannot undermine those people. They are really influential members of Congress.

But even as aggressive as they are, we never shy away but continue to come to them even if they have to tell us no.

Willens: Did you ever meet personally with either Senator Pell or Senator Hart?

Manglona: No, not me personally, but Eddie and some of the other members—Senator Cruz, Olympio Borja. We even had to do a lot of pressure. Like one example I can give you is Senator Kennedy. You know Senator Kennedy's campaign manager is Senator Hart, and it's very hard for him to go against him. So what happened, we took a picture of his brother's statue, the bust that was built in front of our Cathedral Church, to demonstrate how much we love President Kennedy. And we took a lot of pictures of that and our delegation went to his—where's his vacation place?

Willens: Up in Massachusetts.

Manglona: Yes, Massachusetts. And our delegation even presented that personally saying that how much we love President Kennedy. It touches the hearts of our people, here is a picture Kennedy bust, a monument that was built in front of our Cathedral. You know he appreciated that gesture, but I think he kind of blunt in telling us, "I am opposing the Covenant."

Willens: You think primarily because of his loyalty to Senator Hart?

Manglona: Yes, but it's good to continue approach him so that he would just say he opposed it but not going to the others to lobby for more opposition.

Willens: That's certainly true. Why don't we take a break and let you get back to other work.

Manglona: Okay.

Siemer: At the outset of the consideration of the Constitutional Convention, there were several efforts in the Legislature to pass a Constitutional Convention bill. You were in the Legislature then, were you not, back in 1975 and 1976?

Manglona: You're talking about a time, yes, I was in the Legislature.

Siemer: Do you remember the Constitutional Convention bills that came up back then?

Manglona: I vividly remember that.

Siemer: The first Constitutional Convention bill that came up was in 1975 before the Senate of the United States had approved the Covenant. And the Legislature passed a Constitutional Convention bill, and Frank Ada vetoed it, saying that he thought it was not appropriate to write a Constitutional Convention bill before the Covenant was even approved. At that point, there was a citizens group that petitioned Frank to veto that. Do you remember that? There was a citizens group that opposed that bill, and I've never been able to find out why or who they were?

Manglona: Well, I'm not too aware about that one.

Siemer: Okay.

Manglona: Perhaps I was not yet in the Legislature at that time. Because what happened, there was a brief period that I resigned from the Congress of Micronesia. And then I think I resigned in 1970 to become Director of Public Works. And then about the summer of 1975, I believe, I was appointed by the Mayor of Rota back to the Legislature.

Siemer: You were in the Constitutional Convention of Micronesia in 1975, were you not?

Manglona: Yes. I was a member of the Micronesian Constitutional Convention.

Siemer: And the Saipan delegates decided to attend that Convention, even though the Covenant might be approved in the meantime.

Manglona: Yes. We do attend that.

Siemer: Why did you decide to attend?

Manglona: Well, at the time we are under the transitional period, and we thought that since we don't have a commonwealth status yet, and since the Micronesians insisted that we sit down, even knowing that we are going to be having our own commonwealth, they insisted that it will be not bad, you people can come in and sit down and participate. So actually it was the blessing given by the Congress of Micronesia hoping perhaps that there will be a turnaround. And they feel that despite our decision that we are on the road for commonwealth and we already achieve our negotiation then. They just permit us to go ahead and sit in and be part of that.

Siemer: Who was with you in that?

Manglona: Well, I think I remember Palacios was one member. And Olympio Borja I believe.

Siemer: How did they run it? Did they organize in committees like you did when you did the Marianas Constitutional Convention?

Manglona: Yes. We formed into various committees. And we were able to get a legal counsel to work for us on various issues. And that's how we operated.

Siemer: In the Micronesian Constitutional Convention, did they adopt things in principle first without the super majority and then adopt them again with a 3/4 vote or a 2/3 vote the way you did in the Marianas Constitutional Convention?

Manglona: Well, I remember I think delegate proposals were introduced and then referred to the appropriate convention standing committee. And I think the committee members deliberated and voted by majority and then after we brought it out we reported out to the full membership for adoption.

Siemer: How big was that Convention? How many delegates?

Manglona: I don't know the number, but there's a lot of people there. Could have been 30 or 40 or ...

Siemer: Who was the president?

Manglona: Gee, I don't recall the president, surprisingly. Who was the president? It's from Ponape or ...

Siemer: It was not covered very much in the *Marianas Variety*.

Manglona: Yes. Because we don't take a great interest in the Micronesian Constitutional Convention. In fact, many of our delegates from the Northern Marianas can just come in and out of the Convention. So there's not much interest.

Siemer: Were there practices that you saw there in the Micronesian Constitutional Convention that you thought would be useful for the Marianas Constitutional Convention?

Manglona: Well, one thing I really observed there is different from our own is the preservation of custom, tradition, language. They're very concerned about that because of the various customs in Micronesia, like the chief, so I know they are really concerned about that—land, customs, so that is something which is not too similar to our situation. The other thing was a substantial discussion on the formation of the government—how they elect the president, whether they should have a council of ministers.

- Siemer: Those questions were not going to come up here. You were already going to have a republican form of government.
- Manglona: Yes. So those are the unique things during those days. There seems to be some concern as how they are going to elect the president, whether it can be directly from the Districts, or there is a panel or council that will elect the president, and there's a lot of discussion on that.
- Siemer: Then in 1976 when the Marianas District Legislature considered a Constitutional Convention bill again, the Legislature passed the bill, and by this time Canham was here as Resident Commissioner, and he vetoed it. Do you remember that?
- Manglona: Yes, I think I remember that. Let me see if I can recall the incident there. I think I was responsible for putting a very unique provision there in the Constitutional Convention bill enabling legislation, trying to protect the interests of Rota and Tinian. I put a provision there, there is something like if one delegation would not be present, there will be no decision in the Convention. And I believe that provision is in there, and I think that is the reason perhaps that he vetoed it.
- Siemer: I was going to ask you about that and the number of delegates that you got for Rota. You did extraordinarily well. You had eight seats for Rota. And throughout all the debate, you were able to maintain that number of seats for Rota.
- Manglona: Yes, you're right. I managed to get the concurrence of the majority members of the Legislature to get eight for Rota. And I think that maybe the major reason if not the only reason that it was vetoed.
- Siemer: Then it was vetoed, and the Legislature took it back. Canham came and made a big speech about how important it was to pass it in an acceptable form. And your Legislature passed exactly the same bill again.
- Manglona: There was a serious debate over the issues. And I can vividly remember what I said—that in order to make a workable Constitution, there ought to be a compromise, a bargaining power which will make sure that the interests of everyone are represented, must be protected.
- Siemer: In the Convention.
- Manglona: No. That's in the Legislature when we passed the same one back again.
- Siemer: But what you were looking for was bargaining power in the Convention?
- Manglona: Yes. And I vividly remember giving them an example, and I take this example and tell them, let's take the United States with other nations, France, the Soviet Union, would not dare permit the United States to have atomic bomb. They have to have atomic bomb. And when they have the atomic bomb, there will be no war. There will be peace, because everybody is powerful. I am using that as an example, that if all the major super powers have atomic bomb, that will lead them to peace. So same thing could be used in the case of the Northern Marianas, that if we have the two, to make sure that we will let them decide on major constitutional issues that will lead and unite the people together, maybe that what will it take to do that. And finally with that explanation, I was able again to convince my fellow colleagues, to pass that back.
- Siemer: Did you discuss the veto with Canham after he issued his message back and said that the legislation wasn't acceptable?

Manglona: Well, no, personally not. But we have a lot of discussion among ourselves. We caucus, discuss it, we debate it seriously. But then Joe Cruz, and myself try very hard to convince our colleagues to pass it.

Siemer: And they passed it again.

Manglona: Yes. Right.

Siemer: And Canham vetoed it, again. And then, after Canham vetoed it for the second time, you and some others seemed to put together a compromise because the third time there was a long list of sponsors on the bill, maybe 12 or 13, and the Legislature wasn't that big. And this time, the bill allowed Canham to appoint two delegates in case he thought that the election did not fairly represent all of the interests in the Northern Marianas. And finally you passed that one, and that one he did not veto.

Manglona: Yes.

Siemer: And now it's the end of August, and you've got a very short time before the election. How were the candidates who were going to run for delegate from Rota selected?

Manglona: Well, we go to the popular vote election. We selected the group among ourselves.

Siemer: Among the party?

Manglona: Yes. And although they said it's non-political, but then we manage to just within our own party select people that were around, and we campaigned, and we won.

Siemer: You had a Territorial Party selection?

Manglona: Yes. We unanimously got elected.

Siemer: After your delegates were elected, then there were some meetings to organize the Convention. And I wondered what you recall about how the committee chairmen were selected and how delegates were assigned to the various Constitutional Convention committees?

Manglona: Well, during those days, we are not out for a grab as far as the presidency or any position in the Constitutional Convention other than getting ourselves prepared for the issues that we would like to present. I remember we just give Saipan the opportunity, whoever among them, delegates from Saipan who want to become president, we will support that. So I think there was a decision that Larry Guerrero I think was elected to be the president, and I think there were two or three first vice-presidents or something like that.

Siemer: Three of them, that's correct.

Manglona: And I was one, and one from Tinian, I think Ben Manglona from Tinian, and I think there's another one.

Siemer: Correct. And Dr. Palacios.

Manglona: Dr. Palacios. Yes.

Siemer: Then there were three committees. There was Government Institutions, and Finance, which had Ben Fitial as the Chairman, and Personal Rights, which had Felipe Atalig as the Chairman. And you had eight delegates from Rota. How did you decide which of your delegates to put on which committee?

Manglona: Well, since I am very vocal in government organization because I have been in government and in the Legislature, I was a member I think in the Government Institutions Committee. Prudencio, my brother, I believe also since he's the

administration rep at the time, he went to Local Government. We have people who have experience in other areas that we put them also as a member of the other area. What was the other committee?

Siemer: One was Finance, one was Personal Rights . . .

Manglona: Yes. I think we put Pete Dela Cruz, who has been, more or less have more experience in finance, with the other committee. And I think Greg Calvo also from Rota, and the other guy was Leon Taisican, I think we put him with this chairman Atalig committee. So we kind of spread ourselves, and we just talk it among ourselves, that maybe you can best fit into that, and we just have a consensus.

Siemer: Some people told me that Felipe Atalig, who was the Chairman of the Personal Rights Committee, was viewed as being a Rota person.

Manglona: Well, yes, because he's originally from Rota, and he stayed here [in Saipan], so, you're right, some people are kind of suspicious about that.

Siemer: When you got your delegation together before the Convention, did you try to work out what the Rota and Tinian position would be with respect to, for example, the executive branch or the legislative branch, before the Convention ever started?

Manglona: Yes. As I said, we have caucused among ourselves. We more or less know what position to take on various issues, and the thing that we talked seriously is how best can we make sure that we make Rota has the maximum local autonomy that we want there. And that is our primary concern because of the treatment that we all felt at the time was not fair and equal. And that is our major concern, that whatever decision, we have to make sure that we have at least minimum local autonomy, local autonomy on the island.

Siemer: Very early in the convention, about the fifth day, I think, your delegation handed out a sheet that stated the Rota and Tinian position on the legislature and executive branch. It was very carefully worked out. And you then got up and gave quite a fiery speech on the Convention floor. All the delegates had your position paper, and you got up, and it was one of the first major speeches, actually, and it provoked quite a lot of comment. Do you recall that?

Manglona: Yes. I recall that. I think it provoked a lot of concern. Some people, especially now Associate Justice Villagomez, I remember he fired back an attack on me. I was saying at the time that if you people don't treat us fairly, this and that, we not going to participate, and we boycott or this and that. And as I said, we already made up our minds. There's a lot of mistreatment during the early days. Maybe it was not done intentionally, but maybe it was done because of the very little money we have, that there's no choice. But to also limit the amount of money given to us, so maybe that's the real thing there, but to us, we feel we are mistreated.

Siemer: Why did you decide to take that on very early in the Convention? The Government Institutions Committee hadn't gotten to the issue yet, the Finance Committee had not gotten to the local government issue yet. But you went out very early in the Convention with a very tough position.

Manglona: Well, we thought that it will be better to let them know of our feeling far in advance, before we begin to formulate and start approving constitutional provisions. So at least it's just like raising a red flag, that let's work together. Let's make this Constitution workable. Anything we approve should be good for all of the islands. Provide fairness. And I think that is the kind of message, but in a very strong way, that I put it out.

- Siemer: Were the delegates from Saipan surprised at the position that you put out?
- Manglona: Well, I really don't know whether they are surprised, but as I said, it tended to arouse emotion on the other side.
- Siemer: It's a very strong reaction.
- Manglona: And since Tinian and Rota are experiencing the same problems, Rota and Tinian more or less share in this feeling.
- Siemer: Let me just go back to the Tinian representation. Joe Cruz had run as a Democrat. And you had, I think you had four out of the five were Republicans. Did Joe Cruz generally vote with you anyway?
- Manglona: Well, we have a long friendship with Senator Cruz. And I might say that he may be the one that more or less convinced me to get into politics, national politics, I should say. Because it was him and Senator Borja, Olympio Borja, who really pushed hard to have me get elected to the first Congress of Micronesia delegate. And through their insistence, I became a candidate, and I won that election. And my voting district was not only Rota, but it consisted of Tinian and also part of Saipan. So they were very much instrumental in getting me elected because in Saipan I was not known then. Very few people know me. But I know him since that time on, plus we have an association with the Congress of Micronesia. We were colleagues together. We are colleagues in the Legislature during the transitional period. And we are also both members of the Covenant negotiations. And he is also a member of the land acquisition negotiation team. And he is also a member of the transitional team. So we have all these associations.
- Siemer: Were there any of your delegates from Rota and Tinian who disagreed with your position about how Rota and Tinian's position ought to be protected?
- Manglona: Yes. Prior to the end, we have a divided delegation. We have those that work in the central government put their loyalty to the central government, and because of that, there was disunity toward the end of the Constitutional Convention. Because they got influenced by political influence on the island.
- Siemer: Yes, but you nominated all those people, didn't you?
- Manglona: Nominated for . . .
- Siemer: Nominated to be delegates from Rota?
- Manglona: Yes, but as I said, they like their jobs here. They all had responsible government jobs. Let's take Pete Atalig, was I believe with the Attorney General's office or Public Defender's office at the time.
- Siemer: Right. He was with the Attorney General's office.
- Manglona: Oh, he was with the Prosecutor's office.
- Siemer: Because Villagomez was with the Defender's office.
- Manglona: And Pete Dela Cruz was I believe Assistant Economic Development Officer, which is a very top position in District government.
- Siemer: David Atalig—what was he?
- Manglona: David Atalig was with Public Works, perhaps like a Deputy Director or Superintendent of Public Works. Greg Calvo also I think was working for the government as Public Health Administrator or something like that.

- Siemer: And those people were all located on Saipan at the time?
- Manglona: Yes. And they are working here in the central government. They got a lot of influence from the central government. And naturally, because of the tremendous pressure, because of their jobs and they don't want to lose their jobs, they just follow.
- Siemer: You must have taken that into consideration when you nominated them to run for delegate, didn't you?
- Manglona: Well, to be honest with you, we know that, but we cannot make that as a campaign issue, because they have family in Rota, and we need support also from their family. But there has been concern on the island that maybe we should not nominate those people. And that happened during the second Con-Con election, that we don't nominate them, because we have a fear that if we nominate them, it's going to end up the same thing.
- Siemer: Did they come to you and tell you that they wanted to run, or did you go to them and suggest that they run?
- Manglona: Well, they expressed their interest in running. Pete Atalig, for example, the Mayor of Rota is his father. He's one of the first attorneys on the island, is well-educated .
- Siemer: Is David Atalig his brother?
- Manglona: His brother. And he's very respected. His father was also once a councilman and a commissioner on the island. Same thing with Greg Calvo. We are with Julian Calvo, he was I think with our District Legislature.
- Siemer: What did Leon Taisican do at that time?
- Manglona: Leon Taisican, I believe he's with Education.
- Siemer: How about Pete Ogo?
- Manglona: With Education.
- Siemer: And your brother, Prudencio?
- Manglona: He's the District representative.
- Siemer: When you put out the Rota and Tinian position on the executive branch and the legislative branch, you didn't put out a similar position on local government. Why was that?
- Manglona: With who?
- Siemer: The Rota and Tinian delegation wrote a piece of paper and handed it out to all the delegates saying what your position was on the executive branch and the legislative branch. And what I wondered is whether that was your view of how the government was going to operate, and you didn't have a separate view on local government, the subject that was assigned to Ben Fitial's committee.
- Manglona: The local government? Yes. Perhaps that is something that I don't really focus my attention on. I was more concerned in concentrating on the central government.
- Siemer: And that was the committee that you put yourself on. You were on the Government Institutions Committee.
- Manglona: Yes. Because the provisions that come up with the mayorship position were very weak. And that's the provision that I know is going to cause a lot of trouble on Rota.
- Siemer: Well, a few days after you made your speech, David Maritita got up and made a proposal to do away with local government all together. Do you remember that? And you made

a very effective speech in response, and Leon Taisican and others in your delegation also made very impassioned speeches about why you needed to have some form of local government.

Manglona: Yes. Because we feel that our interests will not be taken care of by the central government.

Siemer: Maritita is from Rota, is he not?

Manglona: Right. He's from Rota.

Siemer: Why was he in favor of doing away with local government?

Manglona: Well, Maritita worked in Saipan. In fact, Maritita is also with the economic development office, I think he's an economic development officer. And Maritita's first cousin is Dela Cruz. And he's staying here too. So we always feel that somebody in Rota must be responsible for the delivery of public services, because we are separated by water. And I foresee during those days that we cannot run a government by getting regular direction from the central government, maybe on a day-to-day basis. There's got to be somebody on-island who will be given the authority for the administration of public services so that that particular person will ensure that he will ask the directors, the employees to make sure that they do their job right in providing the service to the people.

Siemer: Were there some Saipan delegates that you thought would vote for your position, even though they came from Saipan?

Manglona: Yes. I'm sure there are a few that share some of our feelings. But as I said, overall they are influenced by other emotional people. But there are a few of them that share our feelings.

Siemer: But basically your leverage in the Convention was the 3/4 majority and the provision that there had to be at least one member from every delegation.

Manglona: Right. And as I said, I purposely put that in the enabling legislation to protect us, and we try very hard to convince our fellow delegates to make sure that we negotiated, we compromise, and try to come up with a workable Constitution.

Siemer: The first time that each proposal came to the floor, it was voted on in principle, and just by a majority, not by the 3/4 majority. And that went on until the entire Constitution was put together, and then there were public hearings, you recall. And then you went back and voted on each provision with the 3/4 majority required. There are several points during the first half of the Convention when the delegates were voting simply by majority when you expressed a very strong concern that the 3/4 majority provision was not being used. Were you concerned that somehow the process was being pushed along in the wrong direction?

Manglona: Yes. We thought that if we used the 3/4 majority, that it can best protect the interests of the minority.

Siemer: And use that from the outset.

Manglona: Yes. From Rota and Tinian. So that's why I insisted that we should vote on the 3/4, because we have better chances of getting some of our concerns protected when voting time comes.

Siemer: You had several discussions with Oscar Rasa about that. Oscar would get things up and say, we're going to just vote on this with a simple majority. And you would say, now wait a minute.

- Manglona: Yes. Oscar, you're right, he's very pro-central government. And I was trying my very best to see if I can have him support me. In fact, I think I was sitting close to him, next to him. But for some reason, he's also a very strong advocate of a strong central government.
- Siemer: Did you think Oscar was an effective floor leader during the Convention?
- Manglona: I think so. He's very knowledgeable, educated and speaks well.
- Siemer: He seemed to have a fair amount of respect from the other delegates, despite his temper.
- Manglona: Yes. During those times, we don't have too many educated people in the Northern Marianas, and Oscar has a reputation as one of the most educated individuals at the time. And he's very talented, too. He's got a reputation as a very smart young man and he is aggressive. And some people are afraid also to antagonize him, because he's a very short-tempered person. So I think they respect him from that perspective also.
- Siemer: When the Finance Committee, chaired by Ben Fitial, began to consider local government, that committee started to really whittle away at local government. It took out the Municipal Councils. The first time around, Ben got both of your Rota delegates to agree to that in the committee.
- Manglona: Yes. I remember that. I was very pissed off with our delegates. I thought they didn't realize the kind of provision they were led to believe is going to work for Rota. I remember I had a personal encounter after the Convention session, that you people don't see there's something wrong with what you have adopted. I think it's going to create more problems than it will cure some of the problems that our people are experiencing on the island. So some of them were a little disappointed that I think I came out very strong. But then I think they realized my concern and probably see where I'm coming from, because I visualize it, that this is not workable.
- Siemer: When Ben presented that on the floor, Ben said that the Rota delegates on his committee approved it. And you stood up and said, well, Rota doesn't approve it.
- Manglona: Yes. I was so blunt, and I may have hurt my delegation who are members on the committee, but I was just being so sincere that I think that was wrong, and we will not support it. But after that discussion on, I think the other people understand. I think they come around and join me.
- Siemer: When you got to the public hearings in the middle of the Constitutional Convention, and you had a draft Constitution, only approved in principle, no 3/4 majority, you took that draft and you went back to Rota for public hearings. Was the Constitution satisfactory to you at that time?
- Manglona: Well, actually no, because the area on the local government is formulated in a way that we don't think that it will give us the kind of minimum self-government for the island. And that is our real objection there.
- Siemer: But when you came back from Rota and you made a report to the Convention, you were pretty supportive. You didn't say that it was unacceptable. You said that there had been meetings on Rota and that there was some concern, but that overall things were satisfactory.
- Manglona: Yes. I think as far as the other provisions of the Constitution, we didn't have many problems. The only real problem is the area about the delivery of public services there, the provision about the mayorship.
- Siemer: Was that the focus when you went to Rota for the public hearings?

- Manglona: Well, as far as the people there, they are not very sophisticated, knowledgeable in government. And not too many people were really concerned about the detail, about what would that do in the future to them. It is more or less incumbent upon their delegation that they put their trust, that their delegation must protect their interest, and since being a young leader at that time, I took that interest in making sure that that provision needed to be strengthened and at least I for one strongly feel that the proposed provision at the time I think was unworkable.
- Siemer: Then you came back from the public hearings, and the Convention now started in provision-by-provision approving by 3/4 vote. And you were a part of the leadership group that decided the order in which the Convention was going to consider those, right?
- Manglona: Yes. I and one of the vice-presidents of . . .
- Siemer: One of the very first things that came back before the Convention on the second go-around was the legislative branch. Why did the leadership want to bring that back first?
- Manglona: Well, I believe we don't have much quarrel on that, because more or less the Covenant do the job for us. It protected the interests of Rota. We have a bicameral legislature in the Covenant that says it's got to be a two-house legislature. So we don't have much quarrel over that issue. The only discussion there is that whatever combination, one-one in the Senate, two-two in the Senate, three-three in the Senate. So we decide on three-three. But I think we insisted of having more than three. I think we insisted about four or six at the time. I'm not too sure whether it's four.
- Siemer: Then you compromised?
- Manglona: Then there was a lot of discussion about this apportionment, that it's contrary to the U.S. Constitution because of the one man-one vote principles. I think even Mr. Willens have a hard time, trying his best. I even have to push him around here. Please, let's have it maybe four or five or six. Say, gee, Ben, we are on the borderline. Even three is too much. So we try our best, and I think there have been serious discussions on that, and that is also one of the major opposition of the Rota and Tinian delegation, because we want to have more.
- Siemer: In the House?
- Manglona: Yes.
- Siemer: And the proposal in the House at the time, which effected the House at the time, was 16-3-1?
- Manglona: Right. And I think we were insisting about two or three at the time, I am just a little mixed up on that. I was saying Senate, but it got to be the House, yes. Because of the one man-one vote principle.
- Siemer: Then Ray Villagomez proposed 12-1-1. And you said that was unacceptable.
- Manglona: Yes. Right.
- Siemer: And so then the Convention passed everything the legislative branch except that one provision.
- Manglona: Yes.
- Siemer: What happened after that?
- Manglona: I think what happened after that is that we were coming to the point where we were very disappointed. The Convention made a decision. They are unwilling to compromise. And

- I think at that point, the Rota delegation got together and was concerned that unless we reconsider a decision on that, we are not going to sign the Constitution.
- Siemer: Did you have everybody in the Rota delegation with you at that point?
- Manglona: Well, at least those of us who are residing and staying in Rota all the time. We are together. But as I said, those that are working on Saipan, because of this disagreement, they were taking sides with Saipan or with their appropriate committee.
- Siemer: Well, you had 16-3-1 was acceptable to you, right? If Rota had three, that was okay?
- Manglona: Yes.
- Siemer: But Ray Villagomez proposed 12-1-1, and that was not acceptable to you?
- Manglona: Yes.
- Siemer: Why was it important enough to walk out of the Convention over the issue about whether you had one representative in the House or three?
- Manglona: Well, we know very well that although we have a bicameral Legislature, it's important also for Rota or Tinian to have a greater voice in the House. At least if Rota and Tinian will have three, maybe they have six out of the 12. And in that way, we feel that our interests can best be protected.
- Siemer: But suppose you have 16-3-1, and so Rota and Tinian have four to Saipan's 16?
- Manglona: I think there was a discussion there that we don't want Rota and Tinian to kind of dominate or control the central government. There's a fear that, who knows, with Rota and Tinian getting together, that we may tend to outvote delegates from Saipan.
- Siemer: You can certainly do that in the upper House.
- Manglona: But there is some concern there, and I think I told them that I don't believe so. It all depends on the issue. Some issues may unite Rota and Tinian. Some issues may unite Saipan and Tinian. Some issues may unite Saipan and Rota. And I think my theory was correct today and they organized the Legislature. I see that to be true. And we've been experiencing over the years, there are times when Rota and Tinian are together; there are times when Saipan and Tinian are together. So I think my theory was right, that no, it's not going to happen all the time. It depends on the issue; depends on the politics at the time. So I'm glad that I found my theory to be correct.
- Siemer: Was it just that issue about the number of Rota delegates in the House that caused you to walk out, or was it a combination of things?
- Manglona: No. I think it's a combination of things. That plus the local government issue. The delivery of public services, I think is a major concern we have, plus of course that one.
- Siemer: And you thought that the provision, that compromise provision, that the committee came up with wasn't good enough?
- Manglona: Yes. Which one?
- Siemer: That was the provision that each of the departments would have a resident representative on Rota and Tinian and that those services would be provided by the resident person from each department.
- Manglona: That's my real concern. And let me just tell you this, because maybe some people will say that in the end I tempted my fellow delegation to walk out of that Convention. You know, I asked them, make up your mind, but I, for one, will not be proud to see my signature

on that Constitution. So that any future generation of Rota will ask the question, why our founding father Benjamin T. Manglona does not sign the Constitution?

Siemer: But Benjamin Manglona's always been a very good politician, a very good compromiser, you've always done extraordinarily well for Rota. This is the first time you ever walked out of anything.

Manglona: Yes, because I always feel that Rota is separated by water. I always feel that a central government cannot direct the delivery of public services from the central government on a day-to-day basis to Rota. And it's been my belief that the Mayor of Rota will be just like a Governor in the central government, to be responsible for the delivery of public services there. So whatever the central government has—budget, the Legislature decides the budget, pass the budget, how much would go for Rota, how much would go for Tinian, how much would go for Saipan. And let the Mayor implements that mandate from the central government Legislature.

Siemer: But that provision, that local government provision, had gotten a 3/4 vote by the time you walked out. That provision of local government had passed, and it had support from Tinian and support from Rota, because they couldn't have gotten the 3/4 majority otherwise. That had already passed.

Manglona: Three-fourths from the delegates?

Siemer: Yes. That had already passed by the time you walked out over the very last issue. Everything had passed except the lower House. And remember there was a special committee formed because the Government Institutions Committee could not arrive at an acceptable compromise?

Manglona: Well, as I said, in the end, I make up my mind I would not sign the Constitution because of some concern over those provisions. And when I walked out, my fellow delegation, many of them also walked out with me. I think Pete Ogo walked out with me, Leon Taisican walked out with me, Prudencio walked out with me.

Siemer: And Joe Cruz, also.

Manglona: Yes. Joe walked out. And I think Ben Manglona, too. And I think another one, King. But later on King came back and signed it, as I remember, right? And Ben also I think.

Siemer: After you walked out, did other delegates from the Saipan delegation or from the leadership come to you and try to persuade you to come back?

Manglona: Well, yes, but I said well, unless you are willing to reconsider, and they are willing, let me just tell you they are willing to reconsider. But you know who turned us down—our own delegation from Rota. Okay?

Siemer: What happened?

Manglona: I went to Rota after that, and I talked with the Mayor. The Mayor was very disappointed about his son, Pete Atalig. The Mayor sent a dispatch to Pete saying that, you listen to me as a father, I've been dealing with the Rota problem for so many years, I think I know better what our people here want, and you better go with the leader, your fellow delegates that are residing in Rota, vote with them. But Pete just refused. But I got indication from Saipan delegate that if those delegates from Rota which are residing on Saipan will follow us, they will be willing to modify it, to reconsider it.

Siemer: Then did you come back and talk to Pete Atalig and Greg Calvo?

Manglona: Well, his father tried, we tried, but they are determined.

- Siemer: What about Calvo's father? What was his position?
- Manglona: He's with us, in Rota. All of those delegates that are residing in Rota, the people supported us.
- Siemer: Was time a factor? You were fairly close to the end of the Convention; there wasn't much time left. Was that a factor in not being able to persuade the other Rota delegates to your position?
- Manglona: No, I don't actually think so. My intention here is not to pressure them not to sign. My position is that I only object maybe one, two or three provisions in the Constitution, and that does not give me the right to totally say, this is a bad Constitution. So I'm walking out by not signing it just to make history, that later those future generations ask the question, why do I not sign it. I just want to have them question it in their minds every time they look at those signatures, why, why this guy didn't sign it? But it's just that those other three groups follow me, but I don't insist that they follow me. I don't insist on it. I don't tell them, let's go and not sign it. I advise them, you people, if you want to sign it, go and sign it, because I think overall there's many good provisions in the Constitution, but my conscience dictates to me that I will not sign it, because I want future generations to know that that issue and the Mayor issue will not help Rota. The central government will dictate everything. People there, the resident directors, will not listen to the Mayor in Rota. They go and have coffee every day, eight hours a day, with no regard to the people. Because as long as they can please the central government, their directors, every time my director comes, I'll take him for a good breakfast, lunch, dinner, I give him one box of maybe cucumber, sweet potato, I'm okay. I will never get fired, even if I don't work. And I think I proved my theory to be true. When the first elected Governor came around, that is exactly what happened. Nobody is working, nobody is concerned what to do. Everybody is out drinking coffee with no regard for the Mayor. Because their loyalty is to the central government. As long as they please them, it's good.
- Siemer: Who was the Mayor after Atalig?
- Manglona: I think Prudencio became the Mayor.
- Siemer: And then he served two terms?
- Manglona: Yes. He served two terms; then there was a Constitutional provision that established the term of the Mayor, and I think he was around for two more terms.
- Siemer: So he had four altogether?
- Manglona: Yes. So he was Mayor for about eight years or 12 years.
- Siemer: After the Constitution was signed and there was an effort to do some public education about the Constitution, did you participate in that effort at all?
- Manglona: Well, I participated. I told the people what I just said, that I think there's a lot of provisions there that is good, is workable. The reason why I don't sign it, because of that particular provision.
- Siemer: Did you think people should vote against it because of that?
- Manglona: Well, because I encouraged them to vote for it.
- Siemer: To vote for it.
- Manglona: I withheld my signature because I want to let history to know that I see problem as far as the Rota delivery of public services. And I was right.

- Siemer: But you didn't try to persuade people not to vote for it.
- Manglona: No. I encouraged them to vote for the Constitution.
- Siemer: And the people in Rota did, in fact, vote in favor.
- Manglona: Oh, we vote, yes. Because, as I said, I encouraged them to vote. But I just explained why I don't sign it, because I see a problem there, but the problem I see will not be a prevailing problem for me to tell them not to vote for the Constitution. I just want to prove my theory, what I see to be true in the future, which I did.
- Siemer: What has actually happened with the delivery of public services on Rota?
- Manglona: It has been a crisis. We had four years of crisis—economic crisis, political crisis. We spent the four years of Camacho's administration, nothing but going to court, disagreement, turmoil. Our people suffered. They don't get their CIP funding. There was a veto. The Mayor's office didn't have money; it was vetoed. Our people suffered. But people are determined because of their leadership.
- Siemer: Prudencio was the Mayor during the Camacho Administration?
- Manglona: Yes. We asked our people, be courageous. I think we should prevail in the long run.
- Siemer: And you were in the Legislature at the time?
- Manglona: Yes.
- Siemer: In the Senate or in the House?
- Manglona: In the Senate. So after that, there comes the second Constitutional Convention.
- Siemer: Were you a delegate?
- Manglona: No, I'm not a delegate. But I was responsible for correcting that section on the local government. I was personally responsible. I was then a vice-president of the Senate. And I took personal interest to go out there and lobby hard on that provision. I even drafted myself the language.
- Siemer: A Municipal Council provision?
- Manglona: No, the local government and the Mayor. I went up there one time to the second Constitutional Convention. I was talking with the lawyers there, the Attorney General and some other people that are helping the delegates. I was suggesting language; they were saying, no, no, no, you cannot do that. You cannot do that. Then I went back to my office and did a draft of my own. And the present provision of the second Constitutional Convention is my draft, with very minor changes.
- Siemer: How did that work?
- Manglona: Well, good after that. Because the Mayor of Rota shall be responsible for delivery of public service. And the Governor shall delegate to the Mayor. So I drafted that and they said, oh, maybe something like this will work. So the only thing we rejected there is that they're worried that the Mayor may be making decisions in terms of administration of aviation, shipping, insurance, which is a very complicated area of law. So we refine that area a little bit so that we know as deemed appropriate I think they put those words "as deemed appropriate." Other services as deemed appropriate. So I drafted that. Ever since, from that time on, I think the people are happy. The money is appropriated by the Legislature. They may spend it according to instruction by the Legislature. The Mayor appoints the resident directors, confirmed by the Council. So now the central government director's only accountable for whatever assistance that we may need, technical, professional. So it

- works. But even with that, there is still some problem in these departments about trying to go there and interfere, but I was lucky to be the Lt. Governor in this commonwealth. And I was kind of eyeing them, every now and then saying, well, you cannot do that.
- Siemer: Do you think people on Rota feel less that they've been discriminated against and have less public services? Do you think they feel less of that now?
- Manglona: That feeling is practically erased. Every meeting, they come up here [to Saipan] and attend meetings. And I think that feeling of the past is almost gone. I hope it will not come around. And it all depends on the policy of the Governor. Because sometimes they can really create problems that may end up, we are going to court, like even during our administration, there's one or two cases that we also went to court, but minor ones.
- Siemer: Do you think that because the people on Rota and Tinian now feel more comfortable with the delivery of public services, that a third Constitutional Convention will have an easier time with these issues?
- Manglona: The one major issue that I see is going to surface, and it's going to be a major discussion, is the passage of the annual budget, continuing authority. I think there is a tremendous concern about that issue.
- Siemer: Eliminating the possibility of a continuing resolution?
- Manglona: Yes. Some people feel that it's really unfair to curtail government services over legislative inaction on the annual budget. So therefore I am sure they will try to do away with the continuing authority under the Constitution so that the Legislature will be compelled to pass the budget. And I am sure they will try to find a language that will make that more effective. I think that will be one of the major issues.
- Siemer: But the structure by which local government deals with services on each island, you think that will not be an issue?
- Manglona: Well, our only hope that they will not tend to pass the bicameral provision, because there is also some feeling that sometime Rota and Tinian are together on certain issues, budget, for that matter, and maybe some other issues, and at times there were informal discussions of concern in the central government that maybe we should have a unicameral legislature, this and that. But I'm not too worried about that, because it's in the Covenant. I think I was so smart to insist on that provision, put it in the Covenant, so that it would be difficult to change now. So I just master planned that also a long time ago.
- Siemer: Thinking back to the first Constitutional Convention, were there things about the committee structure, leaving aside the specific issues like local government, that you thought were unfair to Rota or Tinian?
- Manglona: No, not really. Because, let's take for example, department directors. Naturally, whoever the Governor, I'm sure he will come around and appoint his directors. We have no problem with that. Let the political mechanism handle that. Sometimes they need votes in Rota, we have to press arms, this and that. The only concern I have now is disposition of public land. Because I think it's really unfair for the central government to really have full control in an island where they really want to have a better land policy. Like, for example, let's take the Sabana area in Rota. It's a very unique, traditional farmland for our people. And we want to preserve that. Everybody that can farm up there, they can come up there and farm.
- Siemer: Is that the area in the north end of the island?

- Manglona: That's up in the plateau. And we don't want the Public Lands Department to come around, and just because a developer or wants to use it, that they can just say, go ahead and you can go ahead and you can use that land. So I think we should have more local say-so in something like that. So I think that's an area that we hope could be strengthened.
- Siemer: How about thinking about to the first Constitutional Convention, the way that the staff worked with the delegates? Is there anything about that that you were dissatisfied with?
- Manglona: First? Yes, I was very suspicious. I knew very well that Frank Ada, who was the administrator, had a lot of influence in the Convention, how it should be formulated. Because he was the District rep. Even Canham.
- Siemer: Frank Ada didn't run for the Convention.
- Manglona: What?
- Siemer: He didn't run as a delegate?
- Manglona: Oh, but he's very influential. He influenced a lot of people. His government got credit this way, so forget about Rota, forget about Tinian
- Siemer: How about Canham? Did you think he had any influence at the Convention?
- Manglona: Well, I don't think he tried. And I don't think he would to do that. But I'm sure he had influence in a way of other people coming to him and saying, what do you think about this and that, and he may offer an opinion.
- Siemer: He seemed to try to take a very neutral stance.
- Manglona: Well, I think because he was the election commissioner, I think he was named, for the passage of the Covenant, and I think he has to be very neutral.
- Siemer: Did you think that there was anyone else from the United States side, this sort of official United States side, that was trying to influence the first Constitutional Convention?
- Manglona: Well, it could be the High Commissioner. Some of the middle staff there like Screen, for example, is very influential during those days. And is very associated with Joeten because he was just working with Joeten, could very well have some input.
- Siemer: How about the business community? Were there particular delegates from the Saipan delegation who were very tilted toward the business community?
- Manglona: With all due respect, I don't want to say that Mr. Tenorio was dishonest, but I'm sure if there's one, it might be him.
- Willens: Mr. Tenorio?
- Manglona: Joeten. As I say, with all due respect, I respect him, but if there will be influence, I think he may be the one that could make that influence.
- Siemer: How about the Villagomez family?
- Manglona: Well, I know that Villagomez is a very business-minded person. He likes to golf all the time, and he doesn't have much association with politicians.
- Siemer: What was your position with respect to the Carolinian rights issues when those came up in the Convention?
- Manglona: Personally, I don't like that.
- Siemer: Why is that?

- Manglona: Well, the indigenous affairs position, because I feel that it's going to create more problems in the future than not. Some people will say, what about Filipino affairs, Korean affairs, Chinese affairs, plus, I always feel, and this is I think if you dig into the Convention journal, I'm sure you're going to find what I said.
- Siemer: ou made a speech?
- Manglona: Yes, I said, you who were born here in Saipan, no matter whether you're Carolinian or Chamorro or American, if you were born here, you will have good schools here, you are going to be benefited by having good schools. So why should you have distinction whether you're Carolinian or Chamorro? I think we're equally concerned, we're going to provide you the service, good hospital, good school, good infrastructure. It would be different if our friends come in from Micronesia, so I think that was the argument I made.
- Siemer: But you finally voted for it.
- Manglona: Well, as I said, it's not a big thing so I'll compromise, but I think it's wrong. It's not right.
- Siemer: There were some Saipan delegates, however, who felt very strongly that there should not be a special Carolinian representative.
- Manglona: Yes. Another thing also, my concern, and I think I already said is, I always believed that we don't need to amend the central government. And I think I made that. Because this is the central government. I think I rather like in favor of having a commissioner in some of the villages.
- Siemer: Do you think that would work?
- Manglona: It works after the first Constitutional Convention. But I think the real argument is that we don't need it, to be honest with you. Or if we need it, maybe we just have to restructure some of our government departments. And maybe those functions handled by public works, give it to the Mayor. CCA, maybe, Cultural Affairs, give it to the Mayor. So at least we minimize government by reducing that in favor of the Mayor here.
- Siemer: Were some of the delegates at the first Constitutional Convention who did not know Howard from the Covenant days concerned that a mainland lawyer was there working on the Convention?
- Manglona: There may be, and if there is, maybe it's just a handful of delegates, but for us, because we have association with Mr. Willens, those of us that worked with him under the Covenant negotiations, we have every confidence that the advice he is giving us is something that is good for our people. Especially after the successful conclusion of our Covenant negotiations, we trusted him even more. In fact, I think we were responsible in recommending him also to help us with the first Constitution. I think it is to our suggestion to Larry and others there that I think enabled us to ask if he can work for us, right? But if there is, maybe a few handful are over-suspicious maybe that maybe he is really trying to impose something. I never ran into any person telling me that, but if there is, maybe they are over-suspicious about trying to put too much of the federal system into our Constitution.
- Willens: Well, this concludes our questions, and I want to thank you Lieutenant Governor for being so generous with your time and for all your help with our oral history project.
- Manglona: Well, I am glad to be a part of it.