

## INTERVIEW OF FELIX F. RABULIMAN

by Howard P. Willens

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- Willens: Felix Rabauliman is a former member of the Marianas Political Status Commission and has been for many years a wise leader in the Carolinian community. He was elected to the Saipan municipal government and to the Congress of Micronesia. He was trained as an educator and worked in adult education both for the Trust Territory and for the Marianas government. Felix is a former client and an old friend who has agreed to be interviewed as part of our legal and political history of the Commonwealth. Felix, thank you very much for being available. I would like to begin with asking you about your family and early education. Were you born on Saipan?
- Rabauliman: Yes, I was born on Saipan in 1934, somewhere in the Garapan area and I was the number four in a family of six.
- Willens: You had five brothers and sisters?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Were your parents also born on Saipan or had they come to the island from elsewhere?
- Rabauliman: They were born in Saipan. Both of them. Both of them died during the war. In fact, I learned that we were the first group hit as soon as the bombardment started. My mother and father and two sisters died right in the bombardment.
- Willens: Right in the bombardment of Garapan?
- Rabauliman: Yes, of the Garapan.
- Willens: That's where you were living at the time?
- Rabauliman: Yes. We were running over to hide in the mountains.
- Willens: I understand that many of the local people were told by the Japanese to leave Garapan and go to their farms or other areas.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Did you have that opportunity?
- Rabauliman: Yes. We all moved. In fact, the first day that the ships arrived when they start bombarding, all of the people were moving to the mountains.
- Willens: Did you have any advance notice that there was going to be combat?
- Rabauliman: Yes. The siren. They usually blow the siren when there's a plane coming. I mean a U.S. plane. When they left there is another siren that it is all clear. But on the first day that the ship moved here there was a siren that never had stopped. They never called that everything is clear because the plane was gone and the ships were out there in the ocean. Well, the people were confused. They didn't know what's going on so everybody was just moving back. The soldiers were trying to scare the people not to move around while there's a plane or there's a ship near the island.
- Willens: Did your family have a specific place that you were trying to go to?
- Rabauliman: No. I think we were trying to move to the back of the island.

- Willens: But you did not have a farm or other property outside of Garapan that you could go to?
- Rabauliman: No. We just don't have. We were trying to find any caves in some area that we all could hide.
- Willens: What happened?
- Rabauliman: There was a direct hit from a bomb from the ships.
- Willens: You were very young then? You were about ten years old?
- Rabauliman: Yes, that's right. I was about nine or ten years old. We just stayed under the breadfruit tree. We saw everybody lying around—my mother and my father. They were scattered around, the bodies. I couldn't find my younger sister. Nobody could find where she was. When everything calmed down we found out later about four or five in the evening, that she was holding on to a big tree. Probably it flew up also in the bombing, and then came down, and that is where we found her.
- Willens: Who raised you and your brothers and sisters from that point on?
- Rabauliman: My auntie. She was hit also in the bombing, on her side in her ribs. She lived until recently. Around 1970, she died.
- Willens: But she raised you and your brothers and sisters after your mother and father died?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Where did she live?
- Rabauliman: We all lived in Chalan Kanoa. Then we moved back to Garapan. We didn't call it Garapan. It was south of Garapan. We had a farm there. We all lived there.
- Willens: That wasn't Tanapag?
- Rabauliman: No, no. It was South Garapan. The Seventh Day Adventists are now located in that area.
- Willens: I see. As you were growing up, you were with your family but part of the Carolinian community on the island. Isn't that correct?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: What kind of education did you have under the Japanese Administration?
- Rabauliman: I attended the first grade. Just the first grade, that's when the war started.
- Willens: As I understand it, the Japanese allowed the local children to go for five years or six years of education.
- Rabauliman: Yes. I think that is the only schooling that they allowed. They allowed local people six years. Only an exceptional group like maybe. The half-caste group, who have a mother or a father who is Japanese, they would allow them to go to a Japanese school. All the rest only go to a local school where they have mostly local people.
- Willens: Did the Japanese draw any distinctions between the local people who were Chamorros and the local people who were Carolinians?
- Rabauliman: No. There's no distinction of the Carolinians and the Chamorros. They were all combined. But the people do sort of divide themselves, the Carolinian and the Chamorro.
- Willens: Where did your ancestors then come from?
- Rabauliman: From Satawal, the outer islands of Yap.
- Willens: When did they first come to Saipan?

- Rabauliman: Around the 1800's.
- Willens: So your ancestors have been on the island since sometime in the 1800's?
- Rabauliman: Yes. That's right.
- Willens: After the war were you and your brothers and sisters interned at Camp Susupe?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: And ultimately you were released on July 4th?
- Rabauliman: Yes. We went back to Chalan Kanoa. There was an American school, they had elementary school there.
- Willens: So you went to elementary school under the Navy Administration?
- Rabauliman: Yes, under the Navy. Then fortunately after the completion of elementary school, I attended the Dependent Schools somewhere here in the Hyatt [Hotel] area. The Navy Dependent Schools.
- Willens: How did it happen that you could attend the Dependent School?
- Rabauliman: I completed elementary school and then they asked us, "Who would like to work in the hospital as a corpsman?" I volunteered. Of course, they paid us very little. I don't know how much. I worked in the hospital as corpsman and from there the doctors asked me if I was interested to be a doctor. I said yes, so they asked me to attend the school.
- Willens: How old were you at the time? Was this about 1950 or thereabouts?
- Rabauliman: 1948 or 1949 I attended that school.
- Willens: How long did you attend it?
- Rabauliman: Two years.
- Willens: And was that the equivalent of finishing elementary school?
- Rabauliman: High school.
- Willens: That was equivalent to finishing high school. As I understand it from some of our mutual friends, there was no high school on the island at the time. And if you wanted to go to high school you had to go to Guam or some place else.
- Rabauliman: Yes, to that Dependent School. The Dependent School was just for the Navy dependents. The high school had about 12 or 13 students.
- Willens: That was all of the students in your class?
- Rabauliman: Yes, for the high school grades. But there are about 100 or some Dependent School children. They allowed a few local people to attend that school.
- Willens: Do you remember the names of any of the other local people who went to school with you?
- Rabauliman: Sister Antoinetta is one.
- Willens: What is her last name?
- Rabauliman: Antoinetta Ada.
- Willens: Is she related to Frank Ada?
- Rabauliman: Yes.

- Willens: All the Ada's are related.
- Rabauliman: And then former Joe Cruz was there.
- Willens: He attended the Dependent School with you?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I don't know if you are familiar with Dave Sablan.
- Willens: David M. Sablan?
- Rabauliman: Yes, David M. Sablan. He was also a student there.
- Willens: After you completed the Dependent School, did you continue your education?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I was not fortunate enough to go to Guam to attend the Medical School. They asked me to attend in Truk, the Pacific Island Teacher Training School for only local people. So we got together and we went to Truk.
- Willens: Yes. Several people that I interviewed went to that school, and they remember it favorably. Did you enjoy your years there?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I had two years there.
- Willens: Did you meet people from the other districts?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I met several of them.
- Willens: Who were some of your classmates at the school in Truk?
- Rabauliman: From the other districts like Palau, you have Thomas Remengesau who was the former District Administrator. John Mangefel from Yap. And, I think he passed away, Dr. Bernard You, who was sent from Yap to attend the Fiji [medical] school from our school on Truk.
- Willens: Did Ben Santos attend that school? Was he there at the same time you were there?
- Rabauliman: Yes. But he is one year ahead of me. He was a senior and I was a junior.
- Willens: Did you get married after you graduated from school?
- Rabauliman: Yes. After I graduated I came back as a teacher, and they sent me to the Northern Islands for two years.
- Willens: Where did you teach in the Northern Islands?
- Rabauliman: On Agrihan, which was mostly Carolinian.
- Willens: How many students did you have?
- Rabauliman: About 13 from first grade to sixth grade.
- Willens: That sounds like a lonely existence.
- Rabauliman: Very much, especially when we have only the ships to go up there to visit and check the people, with some doctors from Saipan.
- Willens: How often would the ships come?
- Rabauliman: I think every six months.
- Willens: Every six months. So was that your only communication with Saipan?
- Rabauliman: Yes, the only communication from Saipan was the Navy ship.
- Willens: Did you have radio communication?
- Rabauliman: No, at that time we didn't have any radio. It was about 1952, '53 and '54.

- Willens: And your wife was with you at the time?
- Rabauliman: No, we were not married until I finished the two years at Agrihan and then came back here to teach school here.
- Willens: But you went to the Northern Islands after you went to Truk.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: So that was your first assignment, in the Northern Islands? And then you were assigned back here on Saipan?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: What did you teach?
- Rabauliman: Oh, a lot of subjects, reading, math, arithmetic and science. All out of the Navy textbooks.
- Willens: Was it all at the elementary school level?
- Rabauliman: Yes, at the elementary school level.
- Willens: Was there a Hopwood High School at the time or did that come later?
- Rabauliman: That comes later. I don't quite remember the chronological order. But I taught in the elementary schools here—Tanapag, San Vicente, Oleai, Chalan Kanoa. After Oleai School, they transferred me to Hopwood as a Vice Principal. That was a junior high.
- Willens: When was that approximately?
- Rabauliman: I think around 1967, 1968. I taught there around two years and was a Vice Principal. Then they asked me if I would be interested in radio broadcast, working at the first radio station as a Station Manager. They asked me that maybe because I could speak two languages, Chamorro and Carolinian.
- Willens: Three languages. English as well. That was fairly unusual at the time though wasn't it? That local people could speak all three languages?
- Rabauliman: I think mostly only the Carolinians could do that.
- Willens: Because the Carolinians had to learn Chamorro in order to really deal with other people in the community.
- Rabauliman: That's correct.
- Willens: Was the radio station run by the TTPI?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: So up to that point you had been a full-time educator?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Did you agree to help with the radio station?
- Rabauliman: Oh, yes. Because I was sort of changing of jobs, so I took the radio station job. If I remember correctly, I think it was two or four years there as station manager.
- Willens: So you spent four years from about 1967 to 1971?
- Rabauliman: Yes. The same time I think because of the radio station I became a little popular there. I got elected to the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: When did you run for the Congress of Micronesia?

- Rabauliman: I think 1969 or 1970.
- Willens: The Congress of Micronesia was formed in 1965 and I guess the elections were every two years. Your recollection is that you ran in about 1969. What political party did you run as representative of?
- Rabauliman: Republican.
- Willens: Then the Territorial?
- Rabauliman: Yes. Then it was the Territorial Party.
- Willens: When did you first become involve in politics? Was that the first occasion?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Had you been active in politics while you were a teacher?
- Rabauliman: Yes. But not into politics, I was involved in civic activities. They drafted me as a District Commissioner for four years in the Oleai area because we lived there after we got married.
- Willens: That was in the early 1960's?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: What was the responsibility of a District Commissioner?
- Rabauliman: Well, you sort of register which people are coming in and going out of the villages. I was also responsible for this church over here, to build it up. I organized the people to feed the carpenters and the volunteers who worked on the church.
- Willens: That was a private church, though?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: It was not a government function?
- Rabauliman: No, no.
- Willens: But that was regarded as part of a district commissioner's responsibilities.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Did you have any financial responsibilities to administer tax laws?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't have that. We just sort of reporting the activities in the villages to the Mayor.
- Willens: You would report to the Mayor.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: And the Mayor would report to what was then the Saipan Legislature?
- Rabauliman: Yes, and the other way around. Like the Mayor will have something to announce to the people on the PA system, they call the Commissioners, they report it to us.
- Willens: Your way of communication was basically to go visit individual family houses or to have meetings in the community.
- Rabauliman: That's correct.
- Willens: Was there only one District Commissioner for each village?
- Rabauliman: No, at that time there were ten of us. Four in Chalan Kanoa, 1, 2, 3, 4, (that District 4

- was mostly Carolinian too) 5 is Susupe, and 6 is San Antonio, 7 is Oleai, 8 is Tanapag, 9 is San Roque, and 10 is San Vicente.
- Willens: That is a total of ten on the island.
- Rabauliman: Eleven with Garapan.
- Willens: I see. And would the Mayor sometime get all of you District Commissioners together?
- Rabauliman: Yes. We would have a meeting.
- Willens: Who was the Mayor?
- Rabauliman: At that time, Mayor Vicente Sablan.
- Willens: Did you become a member of the Territorial Party before you ran for Congress of Micronesia in 1969?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Have you been active as a member of the Party?
- Rabauliman: Yes. We were active. We wanted not to join Guam. That was mostly a Carolinian position. We don't want reunification with Guam. We want to stay in the TT, or perhaps to join in the FSM.
- Willens: As I understand it, the principal difference between the Popular Party and the Territorial Party at the time was that the Popular Party wanted to reintegrate with Guam and the Territorial Party wanted to have some direct relationship with the United States. Is that essentially correct?
- Rabauliman: That is correct.
- Willens: What I don't understand so well is that the Carolinian and other members of the Territorial Party also seemed to want to stay with the rest of the TTPI rather than have separate status for the Northern Marianas.
- Rabauliman: The way I see it, when the Popular Party wanted to join with Guam, the Territorial Party wants to go as you say, direct. But I think everybody believed that it would never come. That it would never be reality, never be true. So they said, Hawaii. Then they say, "Well, Hawaii is a little closer; it would still be the Pacific." The Popular Party said, "No. They [the Territorial Party] really want to stay with the Marshalls, Palau, the other TT people."
- Willens: Who wanted to stay with the TTPI, the Territorial Party not the Popular Party?
- Rabauliman: No, the Popular Party was claiming that's what the Territorial Party wants.
- Willens: I see. But you don't think it was true?
- Rabauliman: No, it is not true. We know that we cannot join with Hawaii. If we cannot go direct, the only remaining option would be with the other TT [districts] which is better than Guam.
- Willens: Why was it back in the 1960's that the Carolinian community felt more of an allegiance to the Territorial Party as contrasted with the Popular Party? I realize you can't speak for every member of the Carolinian community, but I've read and been told for the most part the Carolinian leadership tended to support the Territorial Party. Is that correct?
- Rabauliman: That's correct. We believe we could be joined with the other districts then go directly with the U.S. We know it would never be a reality or become reality that we will go direct with

the U.S.; until the campaign when everybody told us that it would become a reality that we would join with the U.S. We intended to join the U.S. but not with Guam.

Willens: Did the Carolinian community have very adverse feeling, that is they were strongly opposed to reintegrating with Guam?

Rabauliman: Yes.

Willens: And was that because if the Chamorros were together in one community the Carolinians would become an even smaller minority.

Rabauliman: That's right. When we join with the other districts, like Truk, we know that we would be the same or nearly the same in the population. Then, with other Carolinians, it could be a little easier.

Willens: Well, as I understand it the people in the Carolinian Islands, Truk, speak a different language then what you and the Carolinians in Saipan speak. Is that correct?

Rabauliman: That's correct.

Willens: Are there some similarities that you can learn?

Rabauliman: We can easily pick it up. In fact, if you learned Saipan Carolinian it is easier for you to pick up the other languages in other districts except Chamorro. Because the Carolinian language in Saipan now is a combination of Chamorro, Japanese and so even though we speak Carolinian other people in the Carolines would not understand. But the Carolinians here could easily pick up the languages in the other districts.

Willens: The Territorial Party also seemed to have been the party that the business community was most involved in. Specifically Joeten was regarded as one of the founders of the Territorial Party. Why was it that the business community and the Carolinian community found themselves together in the same political organization?

Rabauliman: I don't know. It was very difficult for the Carolinians to establish themselves, to build up their own business, because the business and the family don't go together. In other words, if you want a business then you have to separate yourself from the family because you cannot come and take also what you need from the business. The family and the business are totally different. You will ruin the family if you have your own business.

Willens: So, there were some cultural patterns within the Carolinian community that made it difficult for Carolinians to establish a commercial enterprise.

Rabauliman: That's correct.

Willens: What were the first Carolinian-sponsored businesses on the island?

Rabauliman: An early business was the fishing industry. The Carolinian fishermen were trained in the Japanese time. When they (the Japanese) came here, they operated two or three Japanese fishing boats. Everybody became a fisherman. They had a store. It was run and sponsored by the Navy and an old fisherman, an old Carolinian. How to sell it? I think there was no market at that time. They had to take a truck and go around the villages to sell their catch.

Willens: Would the Navy Administration buy all the fish that was caught?

Rabauliman: No. The Carolinians would divide the catch among themselves or sell it to Chamorros or Navy people.

Willens: Did the Carolinian community also include many farmers, or were they principally fishermen rather than farmers?



- Rabauliman: Yes, mostly fishermen.
- Willens: I have been told that the Carolinian community perhaps because of its interest in fishing had some of the choicest land next to the water. I guess in Tanapag and other portions of the island?
- Rabauliman: All of the Carolinians had their land close to the water from Tanapag all the way down.
- Willens: All the way to Chalan Kanoa?
- Rabauliman: All the way to Chalan Kanoa and south.
- Willens: Was that just a matter of history that the Carolinians when they came to the island settled on the land next to the water and all the previous administrations, the Spanish, the German, and the Japanese all let them do that?
- Rabauliman: That's true. We do have a history that the first Carolinian family, like the chief Aghurubw landed somewhere near Micro Beach. We don't call it Micro Beach. I don't know who named it but we call it Prpialough where you see the sand way out in the ocean.
- Willens: I see. And then that has special significance to the Carolinian community?
- Rabauliman: Yes, in that area, because that is where the first Carolinians settled and then they started to move down along the beach area. I think during the American administration they started making these exchanges of land where they moved Carolinians from the beach area into the mountain area. Older Carolinians will say, Elias Sablan, who was the Land Commissioner or Land Chief, he is the one who did all these exchanges.
- Willens: He was also a leader in the Carolinian community?
- Rabauliman: No, we didn't consider him a leader. He was I think, the leader from the U.S. or Japanese time because he could speak Japanese, he could speak Carolinian, and he could speak English.
- Willens: I am speaking about the right person, Elias Sablan, who was the first mayor.
- Rabauliman: He was the second mayor.
- Willens: The second mayor after the war.
- Rabauliman: The first mayor was Kalili, the father of the one I mentioned before.
- Willens: I see. Could you explain the clan system within the Carolinian community?
- Rabauliman: Yes. Now on the island, they start trying to find out or revive the clan. But these clans go all the way back to the other districts like Chuuk, and Yap. You can find the clan there and see where the clan is here. Except that the names have changed. But on Saipan during the Japanese time there's a meeting hall—we call it an Utt—from Chalan Kanoa all the way to Tanapag. There are about four or five Carolinian clans. My clan here is Mongofasch. I think that is the predominate clan, Mongofasch, on the island.
- Willens: Were there four or five clans?
- Rabauliman: There are four or five. My wife's clan is called Umma. When we traced that Umma, it is from Truk.
- Willens: And would each clan have a single Utt or would they have more than one meeting place?
- Rabauliman: One chief has his clan's meeting area. Let's say, my Utt, or my meeting place is in Central Garapan. Dr. Palacios, he is a chief of the Carolinians too but his is the southern Utt. I forgot the name of his clan.

- Willens: Did each clan then have only a single chief?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: And was there some hierarchy among the four or five chiefs so that you could say there was single person who spoke for all of the Carolinians on the island?
- Rabauliman: I think the setup on the island here is a mix of Carolinian clans. The chief is the one who builds the Utt to have a place to call the people in and explain.
- Willens: At some point a Carolinian Association was formed, do you remember when that was?
- Rabauliman: I don't know. I don't quite remember the date, the year.
- Willens: What prompted it?
- Rabauliman: We, myself and Abel Olopai and other Carolinians who held some kind of office or teaching position or managerial position, we got together and we named ourselves different names just to get the Carolinians together and try to give them news or anything that is going on in the government. Some could not read or could not understand Chamorro so we tried to help through forming what we called the CIA. We called it the "Carolinian Improvement Association." Then we changed it and we called it the "United Carolinian Association," UCA. That is the one we start from there, all the way until now. But now the two leaders are out of it. I mean they are not active.
- Willens: The two leaders now are not active?
- Rabauliman: Yes. That is myself and Dr. Kaipat.
- Willens: Is Dr. Kaipat is now alive?
- Rabauliman: No, he died.
- Willens: He is deceased.
- Rabauliman: But we were sort of the group that kept together.
- Willens: And did that include representatives from all of the clans?
- Rabauliman: No. It included everybody. That's where we sort get the history of the UCA. The Chamorro people living in Saipan recognized we are getting together. The Carolinians are getting together. Then they say they are a political group. We say, "No, we are not a political group; we are just people getting together and try to help the Carolinian." Some lawyers asked us if we were chartered because that is recognized in the law, but we don't want to be chartered. We are the Carolinians, and if you were born Carolinian you are in the UCA, the United Carolinian Association. We don't want to be chartered because that is just a form of government process or government system. We just want to recognize that everybody is a member who is Carolinian.
- Willens: There is some difference in the records as to whether Dr. Palacios was in fact a Carolinian or a partial Carolinian and recognized as a leader in the Carolinian Community. Could you speak to that?
- Rabauliman: Yes. Dr. Palacios had a brother who is alive today.
- Willens: Who was the brother?
- Rabauliman: Nick Palacios. The mother is half Carolinian and Japanese. The father is also Carolinian and Chamorro. So I don't know what Palacios is. They know, most of the Carolinian know, Alangtau that is his clan. He was the chief of the Southern most meeting hall.

- Willens: Of that clan?
- Rabauliman: Of that clan, yes.
- Willens: So he wasn't the chief of the entire clan.
- Rabauliman: No, no. He was the chief of that meeting hall and the clan that go and attend that meeting hall, close to that area. That is how we divide the clan.
- Willens: I understand that at one point he was a member of the Popular Party and then he became a member of the Territorial Party. Was he regarded within the Territorial Party as someone who could represent the Carolinian community?
- Rabauliman: We don't call him, Dr. Palacios, as a leader. We call him a ping pong because he was like a ping pong.
- Willens: So he went back and forth between the parties.
- Rabauliman: Yes. Most of the Carolinians could not put the clan and the party together. They know that you can be a party member and you can get out without no problem or they will not put you into jail or what. The clan, you are born with it, and they know that's your clan. But Palacios because he do that, they don't consider him a leader. He couldn't speak Carolinian. He didn't know the family trees or the clan trees. Just for courtesy purposes, we invite him to sit. His brother is the one, they always referred to him. His brother, Nick Palacios.
- Willens: Where is Nick Palacios located now?
- Rabauliman: He is on the island.
- Willens: He is undoubtedly retired. Does he have a business?
- Rabauliman: He is retired. We went to Truk together as teachers. He became a principal and he also ran for the Congress of Micronesia. We were together in the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: In 1963, the Marianas District Legislature was created. This was a year after the Naval Administration ended on Saipan and Tinian and the Interior Department took over. Did you have any general impressions of the Naval Administration when it was here and what changes came with the Interior Department? Did you regard that as a favorable development to have the Naval Administration end and the Interior Department take over in Saipan?
- Rabauliman: Let me get this straight, Howard. The Navy was on the island, they moved out in . . .
- Willens: The Navy Administration ran Saipan and Tinian in the 1950's, up until 1962. Then President Kennedy came into office and it was decided for various reasons that Saipan and Tinian should be made part of the Trust Territory run by the Interior Department through the High Commissioner. So there were changes that came about in 1962 including opening up of Capitol Hill, and you no longer needed a security clearance to enter. I am trying to refresh your recollection to see if you have any impression then as to how you felt about that change.
- Rabauliman: Well, to be honest we were not very happy about it. We thought we'd rather go with the Navy.
- Willens: Why was that?
- Rabauliman: I think there was a lot of free hand outs. Good things were going on, roads, they give people many things to do. They were the ones who were doing it.

- Willens: When the Navy was there to do whatever would make the people here more comfortable?
- Rabauliman: That's how I could put it.
- Willens: Were you aware of what was going on in the Trust Territory Administration?
- Rabauliman: Yes. In fact, I participated in the Advisory Group. They had a meeting in Guam with the leaders from Chuuk, The Marshalls and other islands. Saipan is just to be an observer.
- Willens: Was that so-called Council of Micronesia?
- Rabauliman: Yes. To the High Commissioner or something.
- Willens: So you were designated at one point as a representative from Saipan to that Council?
- Rabauliman: I don't think they called us representatives, they called Saipan people observers.
- Willens: Was Ben Santos involved in that at one point or another?
- Rabauliman: I don't remember. Mariano Sablan, and I don't know who comes after me. But I think they go every year.
- Willens: Did you think the Council served any useful purpose?
- Rabauliman: Yes. They had the Saipan people there maybe just because of Micronesia. They had the Navy sitting there with its delegate to show what to present at that meeting.
- Willens: So there would be someone from the Navy that would be sitting next to the observer from Saipan so as to make sure you knew what was going on.
- Rabauliman: He knew what I had to say to that meeting. I became interested in that meeting because they talked about their own lands and their own government.
- Willens: Who did?
- Rabauliman: The Marshallese, like Amata Kabua and Petrus[Mailo], the old chief in the Truk district.
- Willens: They all had by that time District Legislatures in their own districts.
- Rabauliman: Yes. I think they had already formed the district governments.
- Willens: Did you remember any discussion within that group of a future political status that might embrace all of Micronesia?
- Rabauliman: No. I remember something about the coconut and how they sell it to Japan. If they change, what will be the export item. They were talking about the trochus [shells]. So they have to plan or to spread out all of the trochus.
- Willens: What is that?
- Rabauliman: A kind of a shell, the shell for making buttons.
- Willens: Trochus, right. Was that particularly from the Marshalls?
- Rabauliman: No, that was spread around all the islands and Truk. Also Saipan. They were talking about that would be the next export item to other areas if copra sales were very low.
- Willens: So, what you are recalling is that the Council discussed economic issues like potential export products, but you don't have any present recollection of discussions of political status in that setting?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't recall discussions on political status.
- Willens: At one point in the early 1960's there became talk of having a Congress of Micronesia and

ultimately there was a draft Executive Order and an Order was issued in 1964. Do you recall any discussions in which you participated about a future Congress of Micronesia?

Rabauliman: I don't recall that they discussed any of those things in that body.

Willens: Now after the Naval Administration ended in 1962 and the Interior Department took over, it was recognized that the Marianas should have their own District Legislature like the other districts did that were under the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The District Legislature was created in 1963. Did you consider running for the District Legislature in 1963 or thereafter?

Rabauliman: No, I didn't run for this Legislature.

Willens: Did you run for the Municipal Legislature?

Rabauliman: Yes.

Willens: And were elected to that?

Rabauliman: I was elected for two years.

Willens: So you served on the Municipal Legislature for two years.

Rabauliman: Yes.

Willens: What kind of responsibilities do you remember having a member of the Municipal Legislature?

Rabauliman: I think we were talking about the drinking age, school age, the elementary school requirement.

Willens: You had certain taxing authority as I recall involving taxes on alcoholic beverages, is that correct?

Rabauliman: Yes.

Willens: Were those funds used to pay the salaries of the teachers?

Rabauliman: Yes, that's correct. The teachers and the maybe legislators.

Willens: That was not a full-time position, though was it?

Rabauliman: No, it wasn't. But they were paying at the meeting times.

Willens: But you were still a full-time teacher at the time in the early and middle 1960's?

Rabauliman: Yes, that's right.

Willens: Did you run for re-election after one term or did you decide not to run anymore?

Rabauliman: Not to run anymore. The party was so stiff. We were considering at least one or two Carolinians would get seats in the Legislature. But when the party gets so strong, they don't consider that you could run and win the seats of the Legislature.

Willens: Was that because the Popular Party had become so strong or what?

Rabauliman: The Popular Party was so strong and many Carolinians still did not trust the Territorial Party because the strongest members of the Territorial Party are the Chamorros.

Willens: The businessmen.

Rabauliman: Yes, the businessmen.

Willens: I see.

- Rabauliman: They are not too so excited or too strong in the party except just to participate.
- Willens: The Carolinians were not too strong within the party.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: So to some extent, the Carolinians who were interested in political positions have found that sometimes that the leaders of the party who were Chamorro businessmen did not make room for the Carolinians to run on the slate.
- Rabauliman: That's right.
- Willens: Why was it that the Popular Party seemed to dominate the politics on Saipan during the 1960's and really into the early 1970's?
- Rabauliman: To me it is because the issue of reintegration is very popular to everybody including some of the Carolinians, too. Maybe that would be the fastest way to survive and get rich.
- Willens: But of course in 1969, the Guamanians went to a referendum and voted against reintegration with Saipan. Did not that throw cold water on the whole idea?
- Rabauliman: In fact, the Marianas got to the referendum and elected to join Guam. Then Guam come back later and rejected it.
- Willens: I never fully understood exactly what differences there were between the parties after that point. It seemed clear that after 1969 that reintegration was not likely to develop because there was opposition on Guam. Is it your recollection today that the Popular Party leadership here on Saipan still hoped to accomplish reintegration with Guam even though the Guamanians in 1969 expressed opposition?
- Rabauliman: I think so. The leaders are hoping that someday it will become reality that they will join with Guam.
- Willens: So they thought that they could change the minds of the Guamanians.
- Rabauliman: Yes, they go back to the same issue again. When the Congress of Micronesia started and we separated from the Congress of Micronesia, we remember the leaders who were saying even though we are separated now, later on in the future we will come back and be together again—the Marianas and all the other [island] people maybe including Guam. That's what some of the old, old Carolinians were saying.
- Willens: Did you ever believe it, you personally?
- Rabauliman: I believe that someday this will come back into the FSM under the U.S. Everybody will go back to the U.S. or everybody will to Japan. But they will be together, I believe that.
- Willens: Do you believe that today? That still is a possibility.
- Rabauliman: It is a possibility that they go back.
- Willens: Do you remember exactly when you ran for the Municipal Legislature? Was that in the early 1960's?
- Rabauliman: 1960 or 1958, around 1960.
- Willens: Around 1960. You stayed for one year and then the next the political office you ran for was the Congress of Micronesia?
- Rabauliman: Not following that. But the next one was the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: And that was in 1969 or thereabouts?

- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Do you remember who ran against?
- Rabauliman: I ran against Herman Q. Guerrero.
- Willens: In 1969 or 1970. I think the elections were in even years, but I am not sure. So were you successful or unsuccessful?
- Rabauliman: Unsuccessful.
- Willens: I see, so you ran and you lost.
- Rabauliman: Shall we say he ran against me because I was in the Congress of Micronesia, and he was successful.
- Willens: I see, so you had run in 1968. You had been there for a term already in the lower house.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: And you served for two years in the Congress of Micronesia. Dr. Palacios as I recall was a Senator in the Congress of Micronesia at the time.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: And I think Ben Manglona was in the Congress at the time. Do you remember who else served from Saipan in the Congress at the time you were there?
- Rabauliman: Nick Palacios, Dr. Palacios's brother.
- Willens: Was also in the Congress of Micronesia at the same time?
- Rabauliman: Yes. And O.T. Borja on the Senate. Three in the House of Representatives and two in the Senate. And the two in the Senate were O.T. Borja and Dr. Palacios, and the three in the House were myself, Nick Palacios and Benjamin Manglona.
- Willens: How did you enjoy that experience in the Congress of Micronesia? Did you like serving in the Congress?
- Rabauliman: Interesting, it was interesting. A lot of things were happening. The parties were just getting started. For myself, I was just beginning to learn about political parties. Here, they were trying to separate the Marianas out of all the other districts. We were establishing to boycott the meeting of the Congress of Micronesia, and we just skipped it and just went to the meeting. Yes, I enjoyed the experience.
- Willens: During the 1960's, in part what the United States did was increase funding in a very significant way. Do you remember the increase in funding and the additional expenditures for schools and so forth on Saipan during the 1960's? Do you have any recollection of that?
- Rabauliman: No. I don't. The only thing that seems significant was the teachers crash program, where they bring in a lot of teachers.
- Willens: That is exactly what I am asking you about. What is your recollection of that crash program to build a lot of schools and bring in a lot of new teachers?
- Rabauliman: They built a lot of homes for the teachers, yes.
- Willens: Did you think that was a favorable development?
- Rabauliman: Yes.

- Willens: Did you feel threatened by that since you were a local teacher? Did you want to have a whole lot of new teachers coming in from the States?
- Rabauliman: No. I liked it. I wanted to see it go through. In fact, we were together with several of these teachers. One of the teachers, I think, is from Pennsylvania as a linguist. And they put Oleai, where my school is, as an experiment where they send in these teachers and try to teach us how to teach.
- Willens: How to teach English in particular?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Was that useful?
- Rabauliman: Very useful to me as a teacher and also to my students, especially the first grade. The first, second and third grade, the first primary grades.
- Willens: Was it difficult to teach English in school when the children were speaking Carolinian or Chamorro at home?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I'd say it was very difficult. Especially for the Carolinians where the language at home is Carolinian and when they come to school, the school is in Chamorro and then English.
- Willens: It is your recollection today that the teachers who came in as part of this crash program did contribute meaningfully to the educational process.
- Rabauliman: Yes, in English.
- Willens: In English in particular.
- Rabauliman: Yes, in English in particular.
- Willens: One of the comments that I have heard and seen in the written material about the time was that the crash program to build classrooms went so rapidly that in some instances schools were built without proper toilet facilities. Do you have any recollection of anything like that developing?
- Rabauliman: Not here. I am sure maybe somewhere in the outer islands, on Truk or Yap. I am sure they had some houses they built and then sometimes there are no teachers. For one year teachers come, and then no one.
- Willens: Generally, looking at the 1960's as a decade, did you have any recollection about the quality of life here improving under administration by the Interior Department?
- Rabauliman: I will say yes. From a very, very small amount to what we consider now. It was very slow but yes, there was improvement.
- Willens: What was your impression of the TTPI Administration? Did you think the High Commissioner and the staff on Capitol Hill were effective in improving the life of the people on Saipan?
- Rabauliman: No. If I compared Saipan now to Saipan in the TTPI I would say it was very slow.
- Willens: What were the principal problems that you saw with the TTPI Administration?
- Rabauliman: I am involved in the Department of Education mostly. It was very difficult to grasp actually what is the government or the setup of the TTPI because it changes a lot. The one thing I remember is pay scale for the Trust Territory and for the third country national and for the local people.



- Willens: What was your feeling at the time about this dual pay scale that compensated Micronesians at a much lower level than compensation of expatriates?
- Rabauliman: For me I will say, because I don't understand or I don't know that this is something different. I thought this must be something planned or the plan. Because they own it, they have it, it belonged to them that is why they can do it. Two kind of payments or dual compensation or three times; it is their money.
- Willens: Did you think it was fair?
- Rabauliman: No. It is not fair, but it is their money.
- Willens: It is the money of the United States.
- Rabauliman: Yes, it was the United States. And the United States is the one who is running it. Because we do have some experience with the Japanese where they dictate what you are going to do and have. Maybe that is how I gather that the TT do this, well it belongs to them, that is why they have dual compensation. They all live in Capitol Hill. They don't mingle with the people. That is my feeling I get that the crash program is sort of effective because people live together with the people. I mean local people and the Americans. Like the TT, those are the experiences why I just couldn't understand why they separated themselves with their dual compensation, and mostly they dictate.
- Willens: That is interesting because to some extent what I hear you saying is that you basically expected the Americans to behave in this way because that's the way the Japanese did and you basically regarded them as just another sort of conquering power sort of speak?
- Rabauliman: Yes. The power of the administration.
- Willens: What did you perceive to the role of the District Administrator here in Saipan at the time? Was the District Administrator the spokesman of the High Commissioner in your view or was he to be representative of the local people?
- Rabauliman: I would say just the same as when I was a District Commissioner. I presented the problem or get the problem. I would get the things from the Mayor. The District Administrator did likewise. They get the people information from the High Commissioner or get the things from the people and give it the High Commissioner. The High Commissioner would decide yes or no, and then tell the District Commissioner this—you do it or you don't do it.
- Willens: What was your assessment at the time of the District Administrator Ada?
- Rabauliman: Of what.
- Willens: How did you think he performed his responsibilities?
- Rabauliman: If I compare to the District Administrator now that . . . .
- Willens: Just thinking back to around the late '60's and the early '70's. Did you think he was an effective administrator?
- Rabauliman: No. I don't think he was effective administrator to the people. He was maybe effective to the Americans. You know we have a saying, "If you do things with Americans and go with Americans and do everything like Americans then you are effective with them but not with the local people." No, I don't consider he was effective with the local people.
- Willens: In the Congress of Micronesia, while you were there, the Congress heard the first report and then the second report of the future Political Status Commission. Dr. Palacios was a member of that Commission. It was created in 1967. It issued an interim report in 1968

and then issued its final report in 1969. Did you have any involvement with the work of that Political Status Commission?

Rabauliman: No. As a member of Congress of Micronesia or as leadership at the local level, no, I didn't.

Willens: The report of the Political Status Commission in 1969 recommended a political status called, "free association" and the backup position expressed by the Commission was to endorse independence for Micronesia. Do you recall having any reaction to the recommendation of the Commission that the Micronesians seek a future political status called "free association?"

Rabauliman: I recall in the Congress of Micronesia that they were seeking for independence.

Willens: That is your recollection? That there was a strong move for independence?

Rabauliman: Yes.

Willens: Where did the leadership for that movement come from as you recall?

Rabauliman: I think it was from Truk leadership and the Marshalls.

Willens: Do you believe that the leaders who sponsored independence truly thought that Micronesia together could be a economical, viable and secure independent country?

Rabauliman: No, I don't think they did. Some of this leadership especially on Truk still believed that they could get the independence, but not in a way that would raise the living standard. I just don't understand why they were after the independence.

Willens: What did you think of independence as an alternative?

Rabauliman: For the Marianas?

Willens: For the entire Micronesia.

Rabauliman: I don't think the independence would be the next move or the move other than what they have now. I mean the Marianas.

Willens: But if you going back to the late 1960's and the early 1970's, did you think then that Micronesia might be able to stay together and be an independent country?

Rabauliman: Together to be independent? Yes, we might stay together. But to be independent, I don't know. I know that you might get together, but associated with the other state or the nation.

Willens: Had you ever heard of this concept of free association before?

Rabauliman: No.

Willens: Did you have any sense of what it meant at the time?

Rabauliman: No, I don't.

Willens: Did you think the people in the late 1960's and the early 1970's who were active in the Congress of Micronesia had some clear concept of what free association would involve?

Rabauliman: I don't know. But I think some of the leadership or just one or two people bring that up. After the millionaire from Texas who comes in as another negotiator for free association, I think that is how that thing started.

Willens: You are thinking about somebody from Texas. You are not thinking about Assistant Secretary Loesch?

- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: He came in for the Department of Interior to represent the United States in some negotiations.
- Rabauliman: He came from the Department of Interior?
- Willens: He was from the Department of Interior. I have actually interviewed him. Well, let me try to help reconstruct this to some extent. After the Future Status Commission issued its report in 1969 actually there were negotiations back in Washington in the fall of 1969. But before that, Secretary Hickel, who is now the Governor of Alaska, visited Micronesia in May of 1969 and he made a general announcement that the United States was interested in exploring a relationship with the Micronesians. And he invited the Micronesians to send a delegation to come to Washington to discuss it. He also announced an action program that included such things as more Micronesians in the Trust Territory government, pay equalization, land surveys and registrations, more economic development and so forth and so on. Do you have a recollection of Secretary Hickel's visit to Micronesia in 1969?
- Rabauliman: Yes. That is only at the airport.
- Willens: It could had been, I am not sure of that. Were you there?
- Rabauliman: Yes, I was at the airport.
- Willens: Because I guess you were a member of the Congress of Micronesia at the time. What is your recollection of this event?
- Rabauliman: Because an announcement came out, all the leadership were at the airport lining up to shake hands. We remember he came down and he answered. I mean he talked about equal pay, equal work with an equal pay, and more people in the offices, Micronesian people, to work in the government. At that time it is not only the Marianas, but also [people] from the other districts that came to the airport.
- Willens: Did you have any recollection that he announced for the first time that the United States was interested in an exploring a future political status that would bring all of Micronesia into a relationship with the United States?
- Rabauliman: Maybe after he left, that is where the dialogue start coming up. We should have a committee or commission established and sent to U.S. for negotiation on status.
- Willens: Were you impressed by Secretary Hickel's announcement and promises with respect to the policy?
- Rabauliman: At that time, yes. Everything is exciting, and we're looking forward to it and that's the end as I remember and I think further [things] will come.
- Willens: The Future Status Commission issued its report in June or July 1969 and the report commented on the fact that the Marianas had a long history of wanting to reintegrate with Guam and go its independent way. And the Future Status Commission expressed the hope that the Marianas would stay with the rest of the Trust Territory. Was that your hope at the time, that despite the differences between the Marianas and the other districts that the Marianas would find a way to stay together with the rest of the Trust Territory?
- Rabauliman: Yes. My position at that time was that we stay together with the Micronesians. The Marianas will join the Micronesians. That the negotiation would be stronger and have some teeth in it if we all stick together. The members of the political party, they say that thing will never materialize because the other districts are way behind the Marianas. We will go forward and negotiate for a separate status.

- Willens: What you just stated was the position of the Popular Party?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: But it was not the position of the Territorial Party, though, was it?
- Rabauliman: No. That was where we start getting together and saying listen, the Commission was strongly united with the other districts and they also wanted to be joined with the U.S. That is the Territorial Party sort of a platform we were distributing.
- Willens: The United States officials did meet with a Micronesian group in the fall of 1969. It was in October and Mr. Harrison Loesch was the U.S. official who was more or less in charge of the negotiations. My records indicate that Ben Manglona and Dr. Palacios attended on behalf of the Marianas and then of course there were representatives from the other districts there as well. Then there was a second round of negotiations in May 1970 but meanwhile between the first and the second round the United States came out with something that they called, "a commonwealth proposal" and they distributed that to Micronesian representatives in early 1970. Do you recall seeing a commonwealth proposal at the time or hearing about from your colleagues?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I remember that they start talking about the Commonwealth and the thing that stands out is to be like the Puerto Rico commonwealth. It was also circulated among the Legislature. Not through the political parties, but mostly the leadership or the Commission that had already been established.
- Willens: What was your reaction to the concept of a commonwealth proposal?
- Rabauliman: At that time, I had no reaction about it. I think because there were a lot of things happening like Hickel, the reintegration with Guam. A lot of things came in and nothing happens. That is just another part of the activity—that they will distribute or talk about it but it will never become reality or something stronger will happen.
- Willens: What you remember about this period of time is that lots of individual things were happening with respect to political status but you didn't have any sense at the time that it was all going to lead anywhere.
- Rabauliman: Yes. Or that it will materialize or anything will happen. Because everything had been talked about it or disseminated to the people that nothing comes up.
- Willens: One of the significant developments with respect to the Marianas took place in about 1970 after this so-called commonwealth proposal was presented by the United States. The Congress of Micronesia met and rejected the commonwealth proposal. First the leadership of Micronesia rejected it and then subsequently the Congress approved that rejection. But leaders from the Marianas including Senator Borja and Congressman Manglona spoke on the floor of the Congress of Micronesia to effect that their constituents back here in the Northern Marianas saw some merit in the commonwealth proposal and so Senator Borja said that although the commonwealth proposal is not perfect, it provides a good basis from which to negotiate as a good beginning. Do you have any recollection of the debate within the Congress of Micronesia about the commonwealth proposal and whether that might be suitable even if the other districts in Micronesia rejected it?
- Rabauliman: Yes. If I recall correctly, Howard, it was a heated discussion. A lot of people were outside too. In fact, it was the interesting result of the burning down of the houses of the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: That came a year later in 1971. But these things are not unrelated. You are absolutely right. But you do have some recollection of heated discussion on status issues?

- Rabauliman: Yes. But I think I will say everything has been fixed or understood among the group in a caucus outside of the Congress because when they joined together on the floor everything has already been established, sort of pre-fixed, except two of the Marianas group who are still against it. Those from Yap and other districts decided that they should fight against the commonwealth status that had been presented to them.
- Willens: It was about this time that the Micronesian leadership adopted what they called the four principles and these four principles, involved sovereignty in the Micronesians, it involved the right to have their constitutional convention, it involved the right of unilateral termination to be able to terminate a relationship whenever it was established with the United States or any other major power. Do you have any recollection today of where these four principles came from?
- Rabauliman: No. I don't know. I know there was a lot of it in the House, on the floor, and in groups.
- Willens: You remember a lot of discussion about the four principles?
- Rabauliman: Yes, but I don't remember who brought it in. I think to me it was maybe the group who went to the States, the Political Status Commission. Maybe those are the ones who decided or maybe the consultants.
- Willens: Do you remember any consultants that worked for the Congress of Micronesia during the time you were in the Congress who were a particular influence?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't remember them.
- Willens: I think Carl Heine served later on as staff to the so-called Joint Committee on Future Status which was established, I think, in 1970 or 1971. Then there was Kaleb Udui who was the counsel. Was he a significant factor in the work of the Congress?
- Rabauliman: Not in the Political Status Commission. He is just counsel, like an aide or staff.
- Willens: There was a Professor Davidson and a Professor Freeman. Do those names mean anything to you?
- Rabauliman: Yes. Those are the consultants. They go and they come back.
- Willens: As consultants.
- Rabauliman: Yes, as consultants. I think Freeman was a professor at some university.
- Willens: In 1970, it is true that every member of the Territorial Party in the Marianas who ran for office got defeated. I guess you ran for reelection and you were defeated by Herman Q. Guerrero. Because in that election Herman Q. Guerrero was elected, Ed Pangelinan was elected as Senator, Felipe Atalig was elected, and Carlos Shoda was elected. He was then a member of the Popular Party at the time?
- Rabauliman: All of them were.
- Willens: And Senator Borja did not run for election so he remained in office but he recognized that political sentiment was changing and he switched parties sometime later on.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Was the Commonwealth proposal and its rejection by the Congress of Micronesia one of the important factors that led to your defeat in 1970?
- Rabauliman: I think so. At that time, they were sort of grouping together that they would try to push the status issue. But if they put in any Republican member, they will defeat it again. So I think that was the main thing, that they wanted to put out all Republican or Territorial

candidates. The Democrat or Popular Party together, they put them in the House or the Senate.

Willens: It seems as though the voters in the Northern Marianas did support all these Popular Party candidates at the time. So there must have been a lot of campaigning about future political status and so-called commonwealth proposal. Do you remember hearing about that in the town meeting?

Rabauliman: Yes. Those are the big issues that they were sort of comparing to the Republican platform where they say they still want to go with the U.S. and go with Hawaii. But nothing happened and here is an offer from the U.S. so what are we waiting for? Put aside the reintegration and take the commonwealth, like Puerto Rico.

Willens: As you remember it, the Popular Party now saw that there had been a direct offer from the United States and so they no longer had to pursue the reintegration alternative. And they were telling the people, here is our chance to take an offer, let's sit down and consider negotiating about it.

Rabauliman: That's right.

Willens: But on the other hand, the Territorial Party was still taking the position that there was something to work out with all the rest of Micronesia, either free association or something else.

Rabauliman: Yes, but with the Micronesians and go pursue other than reintegration. I think that is the main thing that [caused] O.T. [Borja] to switch parties. He is pleased with that offer of commonwealth and that is why he said he switched parties from the Territorial to the Democrat.

Willens: In 1970, there was also a U.N. visiting mission that came to visit in 1970. The United Nations would send a visiting mission out to the Trust Territory once every three years. There was a visiting mission in 1961, 1964, 1967, 1970 and 1973. Did you ever have the occasion in your various capacities to meet with the members of the U.N. visiting mission?

Rabauliman: Yes, I remember they were supposed to have meetings of the leadership, local leadership, and one or two of the members of the U.N. visiting mission. Of course they sort of coach the leadership what to show to the people.

Willens: Who did the coaching?

Rabauliman: The Mayor and the Navy. Bridwell is what they called one of the District Administrators of the Commander.

Willens: That was during the Navy days?

Rabauliman: Yes.

Willens: In 1960 or 1961. How about later on under the Trust Territory Administration? Would the High Commissioner or the District Administrator try to influence you as to what you wanted to say to members of the U.N. visiting mission?

Rabauliman: No. That time, if I remember correctly, the whole group would get together with those who will be sort of accompanying members of the United Nations visiting mission. I remember the representative from India, Rasgostra.

Willens: From where?

Rabauliman: From India, Rasgostra is his name.

- Willens: Of the person from India? You remember that after all these years? That's wonderful.
- Rabauliman: The reason why, Howard, is because you have the same hair, white hair here and here and the same build. He listened from 9 o'clock in the meeting all the way up to 3 or 4 o'clock. He was very quiet. Then, of course, he listened to the people. Because there were a lot of people in the chamber at the Municipal Council. The Chairman is Carlos Salamanca. He is from Bolivia.
- Willens: I wonder what year this was? I can trace this down from my records.
- Rabauliman: I think earlier because we were in the Municipal Council.
- Willens: So you think it was during the Navy Administration days?
- Rabauliman: No. I would say the TT. Even though the Interior Department here, there is a Navy here. Our understanding, we learned that the Navy was here just to protect the TT from the United Nations. The reason why these things I remember because we all come up and start shouting I don't know. We talk about the salary, we talk about the roads, and we talk about telling the United Nation visiting mission. And they were just listening and there were no comments until we were finished. Then they each one talked about one hour or two hours. Especially that representative from India.
- Willens: You said that each one of the members from the visiting mission then would speak to the public about what they had heard.
- Rabauliman: Yes, sort of a response to a question or their comments. Then these people would talk, especially this guy from India. He spoke very long. And if I could remember they briefed us, I don't remember who, but among us the leadership who will accompany this visiting mission asked us what we want to say. Like let's not mention anything North of Saipan because those are off limits, belong to the Navy. But these people are ready to move the Navy out. That's their main mission here, they will sweep out all the Navy because other nations will come in. I mean those are the talks we heard about visiting mission.
- Willens: Did you believe that the periodic visits by the United Nations Trusteeship Council were useful in terms of advancing the rights and the opportunities of the people here?
- Rabauliman: No. No, because after so many meetings of these United Nations visiting missions, still nothing happened. At that time, we didn't know much of the relation of the U.N. visiting mission and the other U.S. officials, Hickel or Ambassador Loesch. They are to us all important people. Everything was promised, or they would tell the people. But, nothing is happening much. That's why we said, even the United Nations which everybody talked about, those are the high or the important people. Higher than the U.S. even, they could listen and tell us what we really want. They're here in Saipan to listen to what you people want and then until we learn, or I learned maybe later on that they would just get what we tell them and listen and go back and ask the U.S. And that's how they asked the U.S. if they could do it, but not demand U.S. to go ahead and build that road.
- Willens: Your recollection then is that some Northern Marianas residents thought that the United Nations had the authority to tell the United States what steps to take in order to respond to the criticisms and complaints of the people here?
- Rabauliman: Yes. Yes.
- Willens: But you came to learn that that is not the case?
- Rabauliman: Not the case, yes. They go back, and maybe in New York, they request the U.S. if they could do this or do that or improve this and improve that and not demand that.

- Willens: Did you think that was useful for the political leaders on Saipan to express their grievances to the United Nations?
- Rabauliman: Now, I don't think it was useful. As you say, they do have the Legislature to have a resolution and everything formulated to present up to the United Nations to give pressure to the U.S.; but, unfortunately, we thought the U.N. would tell the U.S. what to do, but I learned later that, no, the U.N. would just request the U.S. if they can do it.
- Willens: One of the questions that came up regularly before the U.N. visiting missions and in Washington among the various agencies of the federal government was whether the people out here in the Northern Marianas were ready for self-government during the 1960's. And my question to you is, whether you think, from your perspective as an educator at the time, and being active in the Carolinian community, whether you believed in the 1960's that the people here were ready to assume the responsibilities of electing their own officials and running their own affairs?
- Rabauliman: I am talking about the Carolinian side, Howard, at that time we're not ready. Or even to the time when we present the present status, that we're not ready. The Carolinians have a sort of a tendency of listening and taking the things that you tell them to do. Not getting the idea or arguing the idea that you presented to them. That's why my position in the that last Political Status Commission is that we're not ready, it's too fast. I don't know how long we negotiated the status. Even myself I do not really understand the status that this time we will be like this. If I learn during the negotiations that it will be like this, the result will be like this, but I don't know what will be the status. That's why my position at that time is I do not believe that we're ready.
- Willens: So, you saw a difference between the Carolinian community and the Chamorro community in terms of their readiness or would you make the same point that you just made about the Chamorros on the island as well?
- Rabauliman: I will say only the side of the Carolinian, not the Chamorro. The Chamorros, I will say, they might be ready because they do have a close contact with Guam and they go back and forth. But my position and so as the Carolinians that we are not ready. We do not know what we will be involved in. We do not know when we take the status because a lot of people, especially the Chamorros, they say that if we take the status we will be U.S. citizens and free, not free, but you have an access to the PX and commissary, you know, the Navy or you go down to Guam, those goodies that they basically were mentioning.
- Willens: You make a point that I hadn't focused on before and that is that the Chamorros on the island do have relatives in Guam and visited back and forth a good deal. And many of the leaders on Saipan who were Chamorros went to high school in Guam. As you were growing up with your brothers and sisters and relatives, did you go back and forth to Guam from time-to-time and did you have any sense what life on Guam was like?
- Rabauliman: No. In fact, when I become a teacher I think only two, three times that I went Guam.
- Willens: Before you became a teacher?
- Rabauliman: No, as a teacher.
- Willens: Had you ever been to Guam before you were a teacher?
- Rabauliman: No, I had never been to Guam. None of my sisters, none of them went to Guam. My brother went there just to work as a carpenter and then all the way to Kwajalein, my eldest brother. I could count how many Carolinians went to Guam to continue their education. I think there were about three or four. But their stay on Guam—there's no



- relative, but maybe their friend—it was a hardship for them to go and work as a maid or in construction and go to school at the same time.
- Willens: After you were defeated for the Congress of Micronesia in 1970, were you still employed by the TTPI as a manager of the radio station?
- Rabauliman: No. I was a teacher. I was the Adult Education Coordinator for the whole TT.
- Willens: You were an Adult Education Coordinator for all the Trust Territory?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: When did you assume those responsibilities? Was it after 1970?
- Rabauliman: Yes, after I got defeated in the Congress.
- Willens: Was the Congress of Micronesia a full-time job?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Then you were compensated for being a member of Congress?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: So, you did not continue with the radio station while you were a member of the Congress of Micronesia?
- Rabauliman: No.
- Willens: So, did you enjoy the work as a Coordinator of Adult Education?
- Rabauliman: Yes, very much.
- Willens: What exactly did that entail?
- Rabauliman: You work out of the headquarters here [in Saipan]. The money is from a federal program and you divide it among all the districts. Those who will pursue the teaching of English and math.
- Willens: But it was definitely for adults and not for children?
- Rabauliman: Yes, definitely for adults.
- Willens: Did you find interest in Adult Education throughout the various districts?
- Rabauliman: Yes, they are very interested. Especially they talk about the politics.
- Willens: Especially what?
- Rabauliman: Politics. They talk about the government. They have less understanding on how the government runs, because for them the chief tells them what to do and they would tell what the chief want or what they will do the next day in their farming or their fishing. But nothing like debating among themselves who is the judiciary and all these branches of the government.
- Willens: Did you find that there was an interest out in the other districts, in the Marshalls, Palau, and Yap, Truk, Ponape, that there was interest in political issues that were related in some part to this whole debate about political status?
- Rabauliman: Yes. There is some interest except that some of them just this will be the line where they will learn about the political status. They don't hear much about free association. The only things they heard is what the leaders tell them to hear; but they don't discuss about it except during these classes or when I come down and we talk about political status, what happening in the Congress. I will tell all these coordinators of the Adult Education in their

districts when we had our meeting and that's where they would be doing their lesson plan on it.

Willens: At one point the Trust Territory developed a program called, "Education for Self-Government" with the initials ESG. I think it was a little bit later than 1970; but, as I understand it, a political education program was something different from what you were doing. Your task was Adult Education generally, is that correct?

Rabauliman: Yes, that is correct. I was a participant or member of this ESG Task Force where we developed this political education.

Willens: Did that develop early on in 1970, 1971?

Rabauliman: That is after the Political Status Commission. We developed some sort of a lesson, filmstrips, pamphlets and we distributed [these materials]. We go around the district, this Task Force, this group. My job is other than we teach English, health and math.

Willens: Did the leadership in the other districts, especially in those communities where the chiefs have a lot of influence, were they receptive to Adult Education of the kind that you were sponsoring from the Trust Territory government?

Rabauliman: Yes. That's because the ESG Task Force is very limited. I think it was only five or six of us and Sam McPhetres. We traveled around the districts. This is the program that we have where we sort of give out the money to the districts. The district will register the people who will come and attend English class, Health class, Math class and sometimes all of these when they build political education in it. Like the government, how does the government operate?

Willens: But you generally found support for the Adult Education program throughout all the districts of Micronesia?

Rabauliman: Yes, all of the districts.

Willens: Do you remember today any differences among the districts with respect to Adult Education and did they all respond in the same way or were some more enthusiastic about it than others?

Rabauliman: I don't know how the program started. Because the funding is just from the U.S. funding. Some districts do give out some money but there it is to be used only on the handicrafts and navigation course and small engine mechanic. That's where the District Legislature provided the money for. But I don't know what happened now to the other one that the U.S. funded program.

Willens: In April 1972, Ed Pangelinan and Herman Q. Guerrero, as members of the Joint Committee on Future Status, asked Ambassador Williams if the United States would agree to separate negotiations. Ambassador Williams responded in the affirmative and agreed to separate negotiations and he subsequently visited the Marianas in April of 1972. Do you recall meeting Ambassador Williams at any point before you actually became a member of the Marianas Political Status Commission?

Rabauliman: I don't know what year, but first time I met the Ambassador is at the Susupe District Administrator Office at the Civic Center.

Willens: Do you remember what the purpose was of your meeting him?

Rabauliman: I think what Eddie announced is that he's bringing in the package of commonwealth status and the U.S. is ready to negotiate separately.

- Willens: Well, it could be that you're referring to the visit that he made in about April of 1972 because he came here to satisfy himself that the people here were truly in support of the separate negotiations and then he asked that the Marianas District Legislature take the steps necessary to create some kind of a negotiating commission. What was your first impression of Ambassador Williams?
- Rabauliman: Well, I thought another of those important people will be sitting and telling people what the U.S. and the U.N. will do, you know, all these things. I didn't think it would really become reality, that separate negotiation will be possible.
- Willens: The District Legislature did draft the legislation to create the Marianas Political Status Commission and they had public hearings with respect to that proposed legislation. Do you remember whether you or any representative of the Carolinian community spoke about that proposed legislation?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't think there were any Carolinian representatives there at the meeting.
- Willens: Did you recall whether you favored the legislation or opposed it?
- Rabauliman: At that time, I don't favor it nor did I oppose it. To my understanding at that time, the proposed bill was just railroaded through. I don't remember there's public hearing or a big issue. The big issue that I consider a political issue is the integration things where meeting in the villages, continuous meeting at night and in small groups. But this bill on the Political Status Commission, I don't think there is a big meeting. I think they railroaded it through and we have a bill.
- Willens: The legislation as enacted provided for 15 members of the Commission and set forth segments of the community from which they should be drawn. What is your recollection about how it came to be that you were selected to represent the Carolinian community on the Commission?
- Rabauliman: Yes, we received a letter. I was the, sort of the Chairman of this United Carolinian Association, UCA. We received a letter that the 15-member Commission will be established and they named the groups: Republican, Democrat, UCA (United Carolinian Association), and I think business, Rota, Tinian representatives were named. They would like to get the list of the people who the Carolinian community will send. I don't recall whether it was all Carolinian or just the leadership because leadership that got together and submitted my name as chairman of the UCA.
- Willens: And you recall that at that time you were the chairperson of that organization so you were the logical one to be put forward as a member of the Commission.
- Rabauliman: I don't put in my name. The whole group get together, I don't remember if the whole Carolinian community or just the leadership of the Carolinian Association.
- Willens: Did you have any view at the time as to whether you wanted to be a member of the Commission or whether you did not want to be a member of the Commission?
- Rabauliman: At that time, I was not excited because I knew this will be another political struggle on the whole island. They have named Chamorros, I mean, business, you know, in this organization and we know that I will be the minority, the smallest minority in the group. And we have experience also in the Congress of Micronesia during the campaign that we lost the vote because they grouped together.
- Willens: You made reference earlier to the burning of the Congress of Micronesia buildings which took place in February of 1971. What is your recollection today as to what prompted that?

- Rabauliman: I think that thing was prompted by the Commonwealth political status that they issued and everybody turned down except the Marianas. Because those things followed, if I recall correctly, after the burning down of the house, the burning down of the flag, the TT flag.
- Willens: And also the TTPI Code.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Did you have some understanding at the time as to why they were doing this?
- Rabauliman: No. I don't know about that.
- Willens: It seems in retrospect to have been very dramatic and, of course, some of this was illegal. I mean, arson is illegal. There is some sentiment that I gathered that people really had a strong dislike for High Commissioner Johnson at the time. What is your recollection of his service as High Commissioner?
- Rabauliman: I don't know. I just don't have anything against or for the High Commissioner.
- Willens: You worked for him indirectly after 1970, correct?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: And then there also is some evidence in the records that the Congress of Micronesia was becoming increasingly divided about subjects like revenue sharing, taxation and so forth. And the districts that generated the most revenue like the Marshalls Islands and the Marianas felt that they weren't receiving a fair share of that money back for their constituents. So, some people believed those issues were demonstrating the difficulty of trying to keep the various districts together. Did you have any recollection at the time of the importance of those issues?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't have anything. Those are the talk in the Congress and the people, their differences. Beside the language and the culture and the custom, those are the things like Marianas have a lot of taxes, and they get less from the revenues. In fact, we used to have this head tax which none of the people like to have a head tax. But they do it.
- Willens: What was a head tax? What kind of a tax is that?
- Rabauliman: When you are a family and you have a baby—I don't know a baby boy or baby girl—you pay a tax. You pay the amount, maybe \$5.00 or \$7.00. But that was in the municipal level. But a lot of people talk about it, that they would try to implement it in the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: I see. But it was your thought at the time, as I understand you, that although there were these differences among the districts you thought that there was a way to work out a compromise of these issues so as to keep all the districts together.
- Rabauliman: Yes. That's my understanding that they could easily work out a way that they will be satisfied by all the districts. Of course, not satisfied on the amount but that they do have some share equal, almost equal to the taxes.
- Willens: Some of the people that I have talked to say that the Chamorro leadership in the Northern Marianas did not really want to work out any accommodations with the other districts because the Chamorros basically thought they were superior to the people in the other districts. What is your reaction to that generalization?
- Rabauliman: Yes, that's true, Howard. But they don't talk about it in the higher level group or in the leadership, but we know the sort of the mood and the movement or the action of the

- people. That's how they think about it. Although when they established the Congress of Micronesia here, the Chamorros feel that they [the other Micronesians] are almost equal to them.
- Willens: Almost equal to whom?
- Rabauliman: Equal to the Chamorros, the other districts. But before the Congress (when they didn't have the Congress of Micronesia here), that's the feeling of the people.
- Willens: But you think that once there became a Congress of Micronesia and the Marianas Chamorro leadership met the leaders from the other districts that their feelings of superiority diminished?
- Rabauliman: Is diminishing. Yes.
- Willens: Felix, before I begin with the negotiations, could you tell me which of the leaders of the Carolinian community who were active in the 1960's and the 1970's are still available today for interview?
- Rabauliman: There is Joe Taitano, who is a member of the United Carolinian Association, also the leadership. He is still here. He was the Assistant Administrator of Larry Guerrero's Administration.
- Willens: Joe Taitano. Where can he be presently located?
- Rabauliman: I think he's still at home in the As Lito area.
- Willens: In the As Lito area?
- Rabauliman: Yes. That's close to the airport
- Willens: So, if we have trouble getting him, you might be able to help us?
- Rabauliman: Sure, sure. I will give him a call.
- Willens: Okay, who else? Joe Lifoifoi?
- Rabauliman: Joe Lifoifoi, yes.
- Willens: Who's presently active in the Convention. Dr. Kaipat is deceased?
- Mendiola: Deceased.
- Willens: And Mr. Olopai.
- Rabauliman: Abel Olopai is deceased. And there is Billy Rokucho. He's a Trukese, and he was the last Carolinian Affairs Executive Assistant before Abel Olopai.
- Willens: He was the Assistant for Carolinian affairs in the Guerrero Administration?
- Rabauliman: Guerrero Administration, yes.
- Willens: And he is still on Saipan?
- Rabauliman: He is still on Saipan. In fact, I understand he is also a chief in our part of the Truk lagoon. We learned that he was the chief there.
- Willens: Does he spend time in Truk?
- Rabauliman: No, mostly here.
- Willens: I see. But both of those individuals would have a good background with respect to the Carolinian community?

- Rabauliman: Yes, both of them. In fact, they are also active members of the other group which is just formally established when the Carolinians sort of split out with the United Carolinian Association and what they called Aghrub Society. That's with Dr. Kaipat.
- Willens: What prompted a split in the community?
- Rabauliman: I think it's a misunderstanding among the members, among the leadership especially.
- Willens: When did it happen?
- Rabauliman: Just during these negotiations. Yes, after the negotiations with the U.S.
- Willens: After the negotiations that led to the Covenant?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Did the split have any relationship with the Covenant?
- Rabauliman: No, only with the political parties on the island.
- Willens: So, did the Carolinian Community then split into one group that wanted to support the Republican Party and one group that wanted to support the Democratic Party?
- Rabauliman: No, no. One group just remains so-called "Aghrub Society." Aghrub was named after the chief buried on Managaha. And they are followers of Dr. Kaipat and they are the ones who like to sort of stay back and mostly support the Democrat political parties.
- Willens: How do you spell the chief's name?
- Rabauliman: Aghrub is (spells it out) A-G-H-R-U-B.
- Willens: And what did the other group?
- Rabauliman: The United Carolinians stayed the same under our leadership with the Republican Party.
- Willens: And you remained with the Carolinian Association?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Going back to the beginning of the Marianas negotiations, Felix, the negotiations began with a formal ceremonial session in December of 1972. You may recall an opening ceremony at Mount Carmel Auditorium and speeches given by Ambassador Williams and Ed Pangelinan at the Royal Taga. What is your recollection of the first round of negotiations?
- Rabauliman: What do you mean, Howard?
- Willens: Do you have any picture in your mind of what went on?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I remember the ceremony at the Mount Carmel Auditorium and then the formal activities at the Royal Taga.
- Willens: Before the negotiations began, the Commission met for the first time as a group with its consultants including me, Jim Leonard, and Jim White, as Executive Director. A position paper was prepared setting forth the overall goals of the Commission in these negotiations. Do you have any recollection of what the objectives were of the Commission? Or put it another way what were you personally interested in achieving in these negotiations?
- Rabauliman: What I recall, Howard, is that I am still very, very cold in the group, beside the political parties. I was the only the Carolinian in the group and I know that we are not excited about this because we still thought that this would eventually go as reintegration issues again. Then, the Carolinians were not too eager or excited about this negotiation because

- that's what they believe in. And then we have very limited knowledge of what's going to happen. We thought that I would be there just to sort of listen or an observer then relay the message to the people, the Carolinians especially.
- Willens: So you felt like you were more of an observer rather than a participant?
- Rabauliman: Yes. Yes.
- Willens: Who were the members of the Commission that you felt the closest to, both politically and personally?
- Rabauliman: Mr. Felipe Salas. He is the member of the Political Status Commission. And Eddie. Eddie, we eventually started getting together since he was in the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: Both Ed Pangelinan and Felipe Salas were active leaders in the Popular Party, were they not?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: But you still felt close to them?
- Rabauliman: But I still feel that is how I will get closer into the group. This is besides Dr. Palacios who's sort of acting as the leadership of the Carolinians, I think, as a traditional chief of the Carolinian community.
- Willens: As a matter of party affiliation, both Dr. Palacios and Joeten were more or less part of the Republican Party or Territorial Party at the time and you were also.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Did you share any common political objective with Dr. Palacios and Joeten?
- Rabauliman: I think only Joeten. Dr. Palacios, we also have a little doubt on him because he used to be the Popular Party and now he's moved to the Republican Party or Territorial Party. Joeten is sort of the original founder and closer to the people. But I have very limited association with Joeten. I think I met him only once or twice in the negotiations.
- Willens: Did the Carolinian community generally have respect for Joeten?
- Rabauliman: Yes. This is the case way back since Japanese times. Joeten and the family built their house among the Carolinians.
- Willens: Joeten's family built its house within the Carolinian community?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I think they have a lot close to the Carolinians. They were neighbors with the Carolinians and they all knew each other since Japanese time and carried on to American time. In the store where he allowed most of the Carolinians also to sort of have on a credit basis at that time.
- Willens: Well, that's an interesting point because I have recently heard an allegation that Joeten took advantage of the Carolinian community and that maintaining open accounts at the store was one way that he managed to take most of their salary from their shipping jobs or fisherman jobs. He was at some point accused of taking advantage of the Carolinians. And that's the first time that I ever heard that report and I wonder whether you have any reaction?
- Rabauliman: No. In fact, Joeten and my wife's family are very close. They were neighbors. In fact all of the Carolinians, on my family side, my wife's side [knew him]. But I never heard that he took advantage of the Carolinians. In fact, that's the only thing I remember is that he open

an account in his store. Some of Joeten's family also were very close to the Carolinians. I don't remember that sort of allegation.

Willens: In Ed Pangelinan's opening statement on the issues that were going to come before the negotiators, he made reference to the future political status and he mentioned that the Commission wanted to undertake a study of various different kinds of political relationships that might be explored with the United States. And he commented that the Marianas might want to seek a "totally new political status." That prompted some publicity in the newspapers because it was uncertain exactly what he had in mind. Did you have any feeling at the time as to whether the Commission should seek a political status different from Guam, or like Puerto Rico, or did you have any views at all on that subject?

Rabauliman: No. At the beginning I had totally no idea on the political status until such time where you started giving us those materials about the choices, what is Puerto Rico, what's Guam, incorporated territory, and all other things. That's where I started beginning to be interested in this group.

Willens: Did you find those issues interesting?

Rabauliman: Very interesting. Very interesting. These are the first times I had it explained. It is not the same as Ed, who is the Chairman, and who has been a lawyer, who spends most of his time in the U.S. The highest school I attended is the University of Guam, College of Guam at that time. But we have never come across those political status questions.

Willens: You made an interesting point a few minutes ago that you and the Carolinians thought at the very beginning of the negotiations that the Popular Party leadership might still be seeking reintegration with Guam. Was that your concern at the time?

Rabauliman: Yes. In the beginning, in fact, even though I am also a member of the Status Commission I think some of our leadership was just told to be careful and never to commit yourself because this might eventually come to reintegration. I think they do it twice. One is when they vote it down. And that was after Kaipat who sort of headed that group, the Carolinians on the reintegration issue. And he was very outspoken against it and in total Carolinians were against it. And they were following Dr. Kaipat.

Willens: One of the other issues identified at the very beginning of the negotiations was the question of restrictions on land transfers or land alienation. And the Marianas Political Status Commission identified preliminarily that it might want to explore imposing some restrictions on land alienation in order to prevent exploitation of the land by outsiders to the community. Did the Carolinian community and you, personally, have any strong views one way or the other about land alienation?

Rabauliman: That's very interesting because until now the Carolinians are confused on land alienation. Among the government, I will say the Trust Territorial or during the Navy [time], all of the land, the Carolinian lands were exchanged. They moved all the Carolinians from their original area to some other places and that is done by the leaders or the officers of the Land Commission.

Willens: Was that done on a voluntary basis with the Carolinians or was it forced on the Carolinians?

Rabauliman: I'll say they were forced on the Carolinians because at the beginning we know that we were living close to the ocean.



- Willens: Well, that's right and as we discussed before the land on the ocean was generally was viewed as the most valuable land.
- Rabauliman: Mostly the Carolinians were there [along the ocean front]. Now all of a sudden we ended up in the inland area. I think everybody was accusing Mr. Elias Sablan; the one who was the Land Commissioner. He was the one who exchanged it because they claimed U.S. or the government (and we did not know which the government, if the U.S. or United Nations or because there were a lot of other governments), and so once the beach area preserved as a beauty site, no houses will be there. In fact, we still we know there is, in the Garapan area, some of the Chamorros on the north side as you go down there is no more. These are the only Carolinian group where they have the pavilion now. But in the past all of them are the Carolinian land and they do some exchange or force them out of the area and to take that the inland area.
- Willens: When did this generally take place?
- Rabauliman: I think it was around 1958 or maybe 1950 or 1960. I'm not quite sure.
- Willens: You remember it happening after the war and up into the 1960's?
- Rabauliman: After the war, yes.
- Willens: And you identify Elias Sablan as the Land Commissioner at the time?
- Rabauliman: Yes, Elias Sablan.
- Willens: Was that the same Sablan who was the Mayor of Saipan for a time?
- Rabauliman: The second mayor, yes. And the third was Benavente.
- Willens: Did he have some Carolinian lineage?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I don't know which side, but they say he had some Carolinian blood in there because he speaks Carolinian, he was married to a Carolinian. But because he was a mayor at the beginning I think he still claimed that he can do all those things especially when he's in holding the office as the Land Commissioner.
- Willens: So, he served as Land Commissioner in the TTPI Administration?
- Rabauliman: Yes, while we had the District Administrator in the Marianas area. That was when everything started.
- Willens: So, then to go back to the question of land alienation, did the Carolinians in the 1960's and the 1970's hope to recover the land on the coast that they had been forced to move from earlier on?
- Rabauliman: Yes, they always wanted to recover because they remembered that when they moved out of those lands it happened also during the Japanese time. They moved everybody out of the Garapan area to go to the farms. But when the Americans were occupying [Saipan] and we formed the District Administration and all those things, the Carolinians thought that they would go back to their land, but instead they were arguing that this land is already sold to Japanese by your ancestors or by your grandfather. That's what the records say. Those are the common responses to the people who would like to move back to their own land.
- Willens: And so, as a general matter the Carolinian people have not been allowed to move back into their land?
- Rabauliman: Yes, in fact, until now, the land close to the beaches was not given to the people, instead they exchanged it for other land inland.

- Willens: Well, during the negotiations, did you think that imposing some restrictions on land transfer would help protect the Carolinians to at least maintain control over the land that they presently had?
- Rabauliman: No, Howard, I didn't have the idea that they would eventually hold on to their land because we thought that Elias Sablan who is holding the land title officer, is the one who is calling the shots at that time. So land alienation, I don't think we have any idea about that. You mean whether it will give it to the outsiders? We don't consider that they would do that. They will be allowed to, Carolinians, to give their lands away because they are the ones who are holding it.
- Willens: That's what I am trying to get at. The Commission ultimately reached an agreement with the United States that the Northern Marianas was required to impose restrictions on land transfers for 25 years so as to prevent the Carolinians and the Chamorros from selling their land to people who were not of Northern Marianas ancestry. And the idea was try to preserve to the local people, both Carolinian and Chamorro the ultimate financial benefits from owning the land and sharing it with their family. Did you come to the point where you thought that was a good idea or a bad idea?
- Rabauliman: I have no idea on that one, Howard. I just don't have any idea that the land will be preserved by the Political Status Commission. I thought the land is the sole responsibility of the government land title officer.
- Willens: When the Carolinians build on land, did they feel they owned the land and they want to share it with their families?
- Rabauliman: Yes. Yes.
- Willens: And the Carolinians attached a high value to land just like the Chamorros?
- Rabauliman: Yes. Yes.
- Willens: Have many Carolinians given long-term leases on their land to Japanese or other investors?
- Rabauliman: During the Japanese time, they forced them to give long-term leases. Right after the war, they went back to claim [the land] but according to their records they say they gave up the rights of the land.
- Willens: After the first round of negotiations, there was a small difference near the end about the use of the word "permanent" in the joint communiqué. Dr. Palacios did not want to use the word "permanent" as describing the future status of the Northern Marianas with the United States. He did not want describe it as being "permanent" relationship because he thought that denied the descendants the right to pick another political status. Do you have any recollection of argument within the Commission about the use of the word permanent?
- Rabauliman: Not very much. My whole concern was to get those arguments on both sides and present it to the people so that they will understand what's the word "permanent." I don't really grasp the permanent during the negotiations. I was an observer. I thought that I would just what transpired at the meeting and take it to the people.
- Willens: After the first round of negotiations, the Congress of Micronesia, of course, continued to meet at regular intervals and there was continued opposition in the Congress of Micronesia to these separate status negotiations that the Northern Marianas had embarked upon. Did you or the Carolinian leadership keep in contact with the leaders in the Congress of Micronesia with respect to the status question?

- Rabauliman: Very, very limited in meeting with the leadership of the Congress of Micronesia because I think the leadership of the Congress of Micronesia like Tos Nakayama all the others, they would hesitate on meeting with the Carolinians. Especially because they do not know where Carolinians stand. They were Democrat? Or they were Republican? I think really that I could count three or four times only that we met with the leadership of the Congress of Micronesia. But of the whole Carolinian community, I think three people came down and met with them and we talked in Trukese and Carolinian. These are the leadership from Truk.
- Willens: The leadership in Truk that served in the Congress of Micronesia from time to time expressed very strong views in favor of independence for all of Micronesia together. Did you ever have any discussion with the Trukese leaders about the practicality of aspiring toward independence?
- Rabauliman: I am pretty sure that we never discussed among the leadership from the Congress of Micronesia about independence because we know, the Carolinians know, that's their position and that eventually will be their desire. But the Carolinians do hesitate on independence especially because of the talk around the Carolinians, they say we know that since Japanese time we cannot hold onto our own money, we cannot survive with the independence.
- Willens: You recall with the general view of the Carolinian Community that they would not be able to survive economically in an independent status?
- Rabauliman: Yes, independent status, yes.
- Willens: In that respect, the views of the Carolinian community was very similar to the views of the Chamorro community, isn't that correct?
- Rabauliman: What was that again?
- Willens: Well, to some extent the Chamorro leadership also felt that the Northern Marianas could not survive economically as an independent country. So, I'm just trying to see whether the Carolinians and the Chamorros agreed basically on that point.
- Rabauliman: Yes, on independence. When we start talking about Puerto Rico and Guam, if it was about independence, we thought that the talks would be totally different. But the Chamorros also had the idea that we cannot survive with the independence status.
- Willens: You made a reference earlier to the report that my law firm provided to the Commission about various aspects of political status and that discussed legal issues like U.S. citizenship, sovereignty and some very abstract issues. Before the second round of negotiations in May of 1973 the Commission met for seven or ten days with the consultants to review the consultant reports and to develop position papers. You made reference earlier to the fact that you were interested in some of these issues. Did you find that the paperwork that the consultants presented was too lengthy or complex for you and the other members of Commission?
- Rabauliman: That's how I feel, that this was very lengthy. As we always put it, a joke with Mr. Salas, that the consultant, Howard, we saw his name with the firm on our letterhead and he is treating us like one of his firm because he give us this volume which we cannot even read overnight. And it is very interesting but we would rather hear him explain orally than give it to us to read because we are learning two things, one is the word that he uses, and actually second the idea that he is presenting. I am very interested in those things.

- Willens: As I recall, we did develop a procedure of reviewing the reports orally and responding to questions. Did that work out as a useful way to communicate on these very difficult issues?
- Rabauliman: Yes, it very useful, Howard, but, to me I say you were presenting the things like another lawyer, or a big group, while we just learning English and learning the form of the government.
- Willens: To some extent, the Northern Marianas community, both the Carolinians and the Chamorros seemed to have an oral tradition rather than a written tradition. They seemed to communicate by public meetings and personal conversation and there is not apparently a tradition of reading. Is that a fair generalization?
- Rabauliman: That's true, Howard, that is very true. In fact, my part of the duties as member of the Commission is to report to the community, the Carolinian especially. I never report it written or anything because even writing or writing system is very limited. The only thing that I presented in writing is when I think the government, the TTPI government sort of demanded some kind of a writing form or translation of the I think it was a small pamphlet where they wanted to translate about the plebiscite. And that's how I get down and write out some questions and answers in Carolinian. And then some of the leadership want me to write up the translation on the I think the technical agreement and I think the whole Covenant. Yes, I don't remember if I finished that thing but I just do it because they wanted me to. Even Carolinians, they could not read my handwriting and understand. Oh, but another one I would you like to meet is Ben Fitial who is the President and he is also a member of the Carolinian side.
- Willens: Yes, we interviewed Ben when we were here before.
- Rabauliman: It is correct if you generalize that the people do things orally rather than by reading or writing.
- Willens: One of the issues that was discussed before the second round of negotiations within the Commission was whether the Commission should take the view that each and every Marianas citizen should be entitled to U.S. citizenship or whether some should have the option for something called U.S. national. Do you have any recollection of the discussion of that issue?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: What do you recall about the pros and cons that were discussed on that issue?
- Rabauliman: My recollection is that if this is the choice or alternative, I would bring it to the people. I would sort go with the "national" alternative especially when they said the national, you can come back later and be a U.S. citizen. If you choose to be a U.S. national, later on you can come back and change. The Carolinians would hesitate on U.S. citizenship because once you become a U.S. citizen they could draft you easily, whether you like it or not, to be in the military services. But as a national, I think they should ask you if you'll be in the service or not.
- Willens: Do you remember that the prospect of being drafted was an important element of the choice for national status rather than citizenship status? Were people really concerned about being drafted?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: As I recall, there was some sentiment within the Commission that many of the older

- people in the community might not want to be U.S. citizens and might elect to be U.S. nationals. Is that correct?
- Rabauliman: That's correct, yes.
- Willens: Why did the older people feel that way?
- Rabauliman: To me I say that is because the people, just right after the war, they have experienced war and people were shot down. They just don't want to be involved in the draft or be in the Armed Services, especially their children, their sons and everybody would be drafted.
- Willens: Did you remember that from the legal standpoint at least it was pointed out that there were very limited differences between the two alternatives?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: But still you felt on behalf of the Carolinian community that preserving the option for people here was important.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: The Commission finally did put together a Commonwealth proposal that was based, to some extent, on the Puerto Rico precedent. It included the concept of mutual consent. Namely that certain provisions of the future relationship could not be changed without the consent both of the United States and of the future Northern Marianas Commonwealth. Had you ever heard of the concept mutual consent before you participated in the work of the Commission?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't recall that there is such thing. I mean in the status, I never had any idea about the mutual consent.
- Willens: Did you think it was an important aspect of the relationship?
- Rabauliman: Yes. As time goes on, I learned that it's very, very important. Once the U.S. wants to change its mind about acquiring this land or these people then things could be easily changed. Whatever the U.S. wants, he can do it if this is not a mutual consent.
- Willens: One of the issues that the lawyers spent a lot of time was the question of Article IV(3)(2) known as the Territorial Clause. That is a clause in the U.S. Constitution that gives the U.S. Congress full authority in its possessions or territories. The lawyers advised the Commission that it should seek to have some restrictions on U.S. authority here in the Northern Marianas. Do you remember any discussions within the Commission about this Territorial Clause?
- Rabauliman: I remember that was a big issue in the village meeting or the public meeting of the Commission.
- Willens: What do you remember?
- Rabauliman: That they [the U.S. negotiators] want the U.S. Congress to be the one to decide on that, not the people of the Northern Marianas. The Northern Marianas could talk and discuss but the U.S. will decide. This was not very clear [who would decide] only the U.S. Congress, or only the President. Those are some sort of comparisons that they were using, that they would not agree to.
- Willens: At various times the Commission took the position with the United States delegation that the U.S. Congress had to have limited authority here in the Northern Marianas, otherwise it would come in and regulate the schools, garbage collection and matters of local consequence. Ambassador Williams would reassure the Commission that the U.S.

Congress would not do that and would respect self-government here in the Northern Marianas. What were your feelings at the time about local self-government and the importance of that issue to the Northern Marianas?

Rabauliman: I think I had two ideas there. I would hesitate not giving the power to the U.S. To me I would say, give it to the U.S. let's have the U.S. handle everything. If you give it part, or little bit to the U.S. and a little to the Marianas government, we know where our position will be. The status of the Carolinians would be way below because we are the minority. Once you give it to U.S., they will treat everybody in the Northern Marianas as one, not Chamorro, not Carolinian. But when you give it a little bit to the U.S. and give a little to the Northern Marianas, then you know we will be playing very low on the list.

Willens: To some extent then you were concerned that giving authority of self-government to the future commonwealth might mean that the Carolinian community would be discriminated against?

Rabauliman: Yes.

Willens: Did you feel that the Carolinian community had been discriminated against during the Trust Territory days?

Rabauliman: I will say yes, Howard, at that time during the Trust Territory.

Willens: Are there any particular areas that you are thinking of?

Rabauliman: I'll say one is in education. I am one of the sort of victims, maybe we call it, of the method. How they sent people to Truk, to the Pacific Island Teacher Training School. That was done by the Superintendent, by the name of Mr. Reyes. The way they worked, they go by the scholastic record of the student. The students took a test, everybody, and then he'd draw a line from where these are passing people, these are the failure people. Every time we had a Carolinian in the group who is in the passing grade he sort of shifts the names and uses a Chamorro. The reason I say I was a victim once because I was one of those passing students. He presented to the PTA that here is a student who is a good student, we know he will make a good teacher but the problem now is that he is an orphan and the government could not spend money on him because he is number twelve but actually the government could spend money only to the number eleven student. I mean, that is how he presented it.

Willens: When he presented it, you were not an orphan at the time?

Rabauliman: I was.

Willens: I thought you were raised by your aunt?

Rabauliman: Yes. But we were considered orphans because our mother and father are dead.

Willens: I see.

Rabauliman: So, the parents say they would like to put up money for my education. So, I was able to go there. But instead he switched it again. Because the parents can give all the money he took another Chamorro student to be included. And it would be paid out of the PTA. So my name was included and then he used the government funds to pay the rest and then he added another student. We call it non-scholarship and give it to PTA to pay out or give out money for him. That is one thing. Another incident is mostly all Carolinians were sent out to the outer island schools to teach. The first one is the first Carolinian. I think one, two, three, four, five and I was number five to teach right after 1952. I was sent there to teach at the Agrigan school. The other previous teachers [at the school on Agrigan]

were not trained yet at Truk Island. They were just gotten from the other services like the hospital, and, because he is a Carolinian and he can speak a little English and write a few English words, they send him out to the Agrigan school. Then in the offices, I recall that there were three or four people who worked in the office, and they are not the Carolinians even though they are here, they are capable, and they can do the job. They could not get hired if a Chamorro is the leader or the manager there.

Willens: Is it your recollection that the TTPI Administration here gave preference to the Chamorro residents on Saipan rather than the Carolinians?

Rabauliman: I wouldn't say the TTPI, Howard. I would say the District Administration on the Marianas level. TTPI is all mixed with Carolinian and other districts' people.

Willens: So, to some extent the discussions of self-government within the Marianas Political Status Commission presented a different issue for you because of your concern that if there was extensive self-government here in Northern Marianas that you and other Carolinians would be taken advantage of?

Rabauliman: Yes, that is how I feel about it at that time.

Willens: Looking backwards if we can for the moment, how do you think that the Carolinian community has survived and existed over the past 15 or 20 years. Do you think the Carolinian community has been treated fairly and given equal opportunity under the Commonwealth?

Rabauliman: This type of government?

Willens: Yes.

Rabauliman: Yes, I say, we are striving, because maybe we are minority, we are very small group. That's why I say it is very difficult. We do experience that if you are holding an office and you are a Chamorro then mostly it would be all Chamorro down the line. But one or two Carolinians hold office, because of outside friends, but not because they are picked as the best.

Willens: To some account that reflects the very strong family loyalties that seem to exist in the Northern Marianas with respect to political jobs.

Rabauliman: That's true. The family ties are very important.

Willens: But would you say that your fears during the negotiations with respect to discrimination against the Carolinians have proved not to be true?

Rabauliman: Yes, nowadays because, as you mentioned, the U.S. Congress would take part of the responsibility and then the others would be the Northern Marianas. We feel that it's better if you give it all to the U.S. and then you will call the shots on the Northern Marianas instead half the U.S., half to the government of the Northern Marianas because we know that we would be way down the line on status.

Willens: I've noticed that in recent elections the Carolinian candidates have been successful. Is that your sense that the Carolinians have gotten a fair opportunity to run for office?

Rabauliman: It is beginning to because now the people are starting, the Carolinians, the Chamorros especially during the school, this young group will mingle together, they marry and then they go to school. It is not like in the past where we all separated in the groups. Now they start mingling together.

Willens: So you see the Northern Marianas as becoming more of an integrated community.

- Rabauliman: Yes, now, it's beginning to become integrated I think because of the political status or because of education and everything that plays into it.
- Willens: What was your general sense in the way in which the Marianas Political Status Commission operated? For example, how would you describe Ed Pangelinan's functioning as Chairman?
- Rabauliman: Yes, I started mingling with Ed. He is a very good friend and as a Chairman, yes, I liked him. He didn't show any separate or distinction of Carolinian or Chamorro.
- Willens: You thought he gave everyone around the table an opportunity to speak up.
- Rabauliman: Yes. That's very true.
- Willens: Which of the members of the Commission do you remember as being the most outspoken on issues?
- Rabauliman: I will say Dr. Palacios. He speaks very abstractly. Sometimes he gives an example which we didn't understand.
- Willens: We will just stay with Dr. Palacios for the moment. How would you describe his personal objectives within the Commission or the issues that seemed to be of particular importance to him?
- Rabauliman: Sometimes I don't understand Dr. Palacios. He takes this issue and talk about it on this issue and most of the time I don't understand what his goal is. We could see from his delivery on an issue if he's for the U.S. or he's for the Chamorro [position] or he's for the Carolinian [position] but sometimes I just don't understand Dr. Palacios.
- Willens: Who else do you remember as being particularly outspoken or active within the Commission?
- Rabauliman: I will say the late Joe Cruz.
- Willens: And how would you describe his performance within the Commission?
- Rabauliman: I'd say he's very good. He speaks out. His presentation is very simple, and his examples and everything is understandable just to ordinary local people, the way he presents himself.
- Willens: Did you feel that he was talking down to you or did you feel that he was treating everyone in the Commission as a colleague?
- Rabauliman: I think he was giving everybody the same and not talking down to me or to the others. He was very good.
- Willens: Did you have a sense that the representatives from Tinian were representing aggressively their constituents back in Tinian? Especially with respect to the U.S. military requirements issue?
- Rabauliman: Yes, I think so, Howard. I never attended the public meetings. But to me, [it appeared that] they were well-represented. I think that they were better represented than myself. I am the only one in the Carolinian group that agreed with them.
- Willens: You did not go over to Tinian to attend any of the public meetings there?
- Rabauliman: I think only once when they ask all the Commission and the Ambassador to come. We took the military flight.
- Willens: There was from time to time the message communicated by Ambassador Williams on behalf of the United States that if there was no agreement about land on Tinian there would not be any commonwealth. Did you recall having the impression that unless the



- Commission agreed to the U.S. military requirements on Tinian, there would be no future political status?
- Rabauliman: That is how I recall it, but those are the talks of only the leadership. The people, the common people, they say it's not the Commission who will decide. We know that once the U.S. decides, whatever it decides on, we have no choice. Especially the older people, they say that these negotiations were just sort of a formality of the process. If the U.S. wanted to take Tinian, they will just take it.
- Willens: You are recalling that was generally the view of the older people.
- Rabauliman: The older people, yes.
- Willens: Did you share that view?
- Rabauliman: At that time. They were saying, well, the U.S. had a war with Japan. Why give up the land after so many of their soldiers died, and now they will spend their time and money to negotiate about Tinian, which is just a small pencil point on a map? Those are talks we shared with the older people.
- Willens: Well, did you personally agree with that or did you think that something could be accomplished in these negotiations?
- Rabauliman: I personally, at that time, I agreed with those views, Howard. I thought those are just the sort of things that Elias Sablan presented to the people but actually he can call it anytime he wants to take land. Negotiations were just negotiations especially when me and Mr. Salas talked right after. Every time we have a break, and after you explained all those things, we were saying that Howard and all his law firm, the U.S. give him money. They give us money then here we give Howard money to negotiate and this is just an activity the way that the U.S. wants to do it. But if they want to take the military, the military will take the Tinian and they will just do that. We thought it was just like a joke, that there was something behind it.
- Willens: Did you continue to hold that view throughout the entire negotiations?
- Rabauliman: No. I think when we started talking about military land, the U.S. started giving away some of the military land. Some people will talk about that this happened because of the negotiations. That's why the military land which we call it military retention area the U.S. started giving it away because they want to give a chance to the people.
- Willens: You mentioned Dr. Palacios and Joe Cruz. Which other members of the Commission do you recall as being particularly active?
- Rabauliman: Ben, also is very active. Benjamin Manglona from Rota.
- Willens: Had you known Mr. Manglona before you came together as members of the Commission?
- Rabauliman: We were in the Congress of Micronesia together.
- Willens: How would you describe him as a political leader and member of the Commission?
- Rabauliman: Ben, he is very straightforward during the Commission. And sometimes he is what do you call it?—hard-headed even though we know that's a black and he would just argue, no, its red. He is very hard-headed, straight, he holds on to whatever he believes in.
- Willens: Did you have the sense that he was principally concerned with the interests of Rota?

- Rabauliman: I would say maybe to Rota and the whole Marianas together. He has been with the government during the TT time when Saipan is with the Navy and they are with the Interior Department. And I'd say he's straightforward.
- Willens: Some of the documents actually reflect the fact that the people on Rota occasionally wanted to be a separate district and not be affiliated with Tinian and Saipan. Did you have any experience with this particular issue on Rota?
- Rabauliman: Yes, the time when Saipan and Tinian were under the Navy, they [Rota] were under the Interior Department.
- Willens: Right.
- Rabauliman: So, they claimed that they could separate and they could be much better off than with Saipan.
- Willens: Did you ever think there was a risk that Rota might break off from the negotiations and might want to stay within the Trust Territory?
- Rabauliman: No, no. I never thought that eventually it would be separated.
- Willens: I was asking, Felix, about your recollection of about Ben Manglona and his leadership on behalf of Rota?
- Rabauliman: Ben, when he became a member of the Congress of Micronesia, he started thinking about the Marianas as a whole. But before that, he was strong on Rota is for Rotanese only. He would work or fight for Rota separation.
- Willens: Just before the second round of negotiations began, the *Pacific Daily News* had a front page story with a large headline to the effect that the United States wanted to take the entire island of Tinian for its purposes and lease back one-third to the civilian community. That news report caused consternation and shock among the Northern Marianas citizens. Do you recall that the United States initially wanted to acquire the entire island of Tinian?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I recall that during the negotiations the U.S. wanted to take all of the island except one-third. At first, it was all of the island. To us, the Carolinians, we still said yes, it is all right. We never talked about the bombing or the nerve gas or anything. We just said yes, the U.S. or the military can have that. Because in the first place Tinian is not for the Tinianese. It isn't the present Chamorros who owned that area. The Chamorros now on Tinian are from Yap.
- Willens: Well, that's a point of some interest to me. The Tinian residents, of course, took a different view and maintained that they had the same rights in this land as the Carolinians or the Chamorros on Saipan had in the land here. Did you disagree with that at the time?
- Rabauliman: Yes, I disagreed. The history shows that actually Tinian is owned by Carolinians from Tanapag. They moved up from Satawal in Yap and this is way back in 17th or 18th century and then landed on Tinian. In fact, that is where the name Tinian is from. We don't call it Tinian, we say Chuliam. Because Japanese cannot say Chuliam, they say Tinian.
- Willens: How do you spell Chuliam?
- Rabauliman: C-H-U-L-I-A-M.
- Willens: Because the Japanese cannot pronounce it.
- Rabauliman: They cannot say Chuliam, they say Tinian.
- Willens: The Carolinians then at one point were exported from Tinian. Tinian was vacated, isn't

- that correct, under the Spanish Administration?
- Rabauliman: That is correct.
- Willens: Your point is that history demonstrates that the people who resettled it after the war were Chamorros but from Yap.
- Rabauliman: Yes. The Chamorros were located in the Susupe area. That is why they say it is the Susupe camp. They separated us from the Chamorros. The Carolinians were in Chalan Kanoa. And these are from Susupe so they moved them to Tinian because that is the leprosy colony. They moved all those who were infected with leprosy there.
- Willens: Over to Tinian?
- Rabauliman: Yes, with their family.
- Willens: Was that a U.S. military decision?
- Rabauliman: Yes, I think it was the Navy.
- Willens: So it is your understanding the Chamorros who were from Yap were segregated at Camp Susupe and then they were directed or permitted by the United States to go settle in Tinian. And many of them you think may have suffered from leprosy.
- Rabauliman: Because we do have Dr. Kaipat a Carolinian who is a doctor. He was the doctor also assigned to Tinian on a weekly basis.
- Willens: I see. Well, you also recall now that when the United States initially made its request for the entire island of Tinian your reaction and that of the Carolinian community was to agree.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: On the theory that the United States wanted it they were going to get it anyway so you my as well agree to it?
- Rabauliman: Yes. That is how I looked at it. My position is that it is one of those big nations and they had the power. The older people talk that way. This was just sort of a formality, that they would talk in negotiation. They would ask, they would request, but actually they could easily take whatever they want to.
- Willens: Ambassador Williams did during the second round of negotiations go to Tinian with his military aides and other members of the U.S. delegation. Several members of the Commission and the consultants also went over for what turned out to be a seven hour public meeting attended by many of the residents of Tinian. Did you recall being present at a meeting where Ambassador Williams made a presentation and responded to questions?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I don't know how many trips we took to Tinian but I think I remember only one that I attended.
- Willens: What was your reaction to the way in which Ambassador Williams responded to the questions?
- Rabauliman: I think one question if I recall correctly was if people were asking too much. I mean that is my only reaction—that the people of Tinian were asking too much of Ambassador Williams. He had no actually no authority to commit. For example, the housing turnkey [proposed project]—they even asked if there will be a icebox and all those things to complete the house, when they turn it over to the local residents of Tinian.

- Willens: You are recalling that the meeting did focus, to some extent, on the proposed relocation of San Jose village and the construction of new houses for the people on Tinian.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: And you are recalling questions about whether it would be turnkey operation?
- Rabauliman: Yes, a turnkey operation.
- Willens: Could you explain what you remember hearing about that?
- Rabauliman: They asked and the Ambassador said, if that's what they want on one-third of the land, that's what they will they do? They [the Tinian people at the meeting] said they would have a hospital, they want a community center, a PX if it is going to be the military, schools and housing for the local residents. That housing was not just the four corners of a house. They wanted a refrigerator and everything. They wanted it on a turnkey [basis]. You get the key and you will sleep inside [because the house is completely furnished] and, they will own the key.
- Willens: So it was your feeling at the time that the people on Tinian were seeking too much in terms of benefits?
- Rabauliman: Yes, they asked too much.
- Willens: You thought they asked too many questions.
- Rabauliman: Yes, too many questions that are not related to the Ambassador's trip. I thought the way they should ask is to go down to a group of people like in the Navy or (for construction) to the Seabees who would be working the Tinian, but not to the Ambassador or to the lawyers like you.
- Willens: Did you think the Ambassador handled those questions well?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: What was generally your impression of Ambassador Williams as the head of the U.S. delegation?
- Rabauliman: It was my first experience. I would rather see and talk to him or deal with him than the other one, the Deputy Wilson.
- Willens: Why did you feel differently about him?
- Rabauliman: I think is he is very straightforward.
- Willens: Ambassador Williams was?
- Rabauliman: No, the Wilson. The way I put it, even though it could be sort of 50/50 to share he will not give out [the 50 share during the negotiation]. Another way to put is that he had no consideration for the people. If it were \$50.00 to take Tinian then he would take the \$50.00 but not go down below \$50.00 or that sort of thing.
- Willens: Who are speaking about Wilson or Williams?
- Rabauliman: Wilson.
- Willens: You thought that Wilson was straightforward.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: But you not describing that as something you like particularly.

- Rabauliman: Right. Say for a minute, what we call it, he doesn't bend, he's straight. I say he treated the local people as his same people [as if he were in the U.S.]. We were saying maybe because you [Howard Willens] are with us [as our lawyer] that is why he talked very hard and he negotiated very hard. To us, he doesn't bend something to whatever we decide. He should give us a little because don't have anything.
- Willens: Did you think that Ambassador Williams was more flexible?
- Rabauliman: Yes, that's right. Flexible is the word I would use.
- Willens: Did you have any private conversations with Ambassador Williams during the negotiations that you can recall?
- Rabauliman: I don't think it is during the negotiations. Some I think is during the receptions. But right after the negotiation, I was talking more to Ambassador Williams. He invited me to his office in Washington, D.C. when I took the leadership tour for a whole month. He invited me to his office and then invited to me his San Francisco residence.
- Willens: Was he or members of his delegation making any efforts to learn from you exactly what the Carolinian community thought about these issues?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't recall his lawyers or all those lawyers were trying to learn anything.
- Willens: Were there any members of the U.S. delegation that you got to know on a personal basis? Any of the U.S. lawyers or the military aides, or other members of the U.S. delegation?
- Rabauliman: I think one, the lawyer who used to be in Yap. That is the only one I know and I talked to him.
- Willens: Who was that? Was that Adrian deGraffenried?
- Rabauliman: The smaller one. Yes. He was former Peace Corps on Yap.
- Willens: He was certainly former Peace Corps. I don't remember whether he was on Yap or not.
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: The Commission always told the people on Tinian that the Commission would protect the interest of the people on Tinian. Within the Commission did you feel that the Tinian representatives, who ended up being Joe Cruz and Bernard Hofschneider, was basically the ones to whom you should look for recommendations as to how to deal with the military issue?
- Rabauliman: For me or for the whole Commission?
- Willens: For you.
- Rabauliman: I don't think I would go to Bernard or Joe Cruz. I would rather go to the other leadership. I don't remember their names but the older people, they were older than Joe Cruz and Bernard.
- Willens: The older people on Tinian?
- Rabauliman: Yes, on Tinian. Joe Cruz is actually from Saipan. He just moved there [to Tinian] because of his marriage. Bernard is very young. That is why I say I would rather go to the other leadership in Tinian.
- Willens: Did you do that?
- Rabauliman: No.
- Willens: So you never did personally try to go to the older leaders on Tinian?

Rabauliman: No, I never go. To me I say I never had any need for talking to the other people on Tinian.

Willens: The first proposal of the United States did involve relocation of the village and the construction of all these new houses that you talked about earlier. Later on in the negotiations United States changed its position and said it no longer had to relocate San Jose village because it found another way of dealing with the ammunition loading problem. Do you recall having any reaction one way or the other when the United States changed its position?

Rabauliman: No, I don't recall. But to me, I would say the first location was acceptable. I think I would rather have that than the other choices they had.

Willens: So far as you recall then, it might have been better to have relocated the village with all the benefits that the people were promised?

Rabauliman: Yes.

Willens: And the other major issue with respect to military land was whether the United States should be allowed to purchase the land or whether it should be permitted to lease the land. That was a big issue that was never resolved until the very end of the negotiations. Did you have a strong feeling one way or the other that the United States should not be entitled to purchase the land?

Rabauliman: At that time Howard, I say well, the U.S. can take it or purchase or whatever. In fact, I remember during the negotiation that everybody was handing out the first checks. They say it was a Tinian check that the U.S. presented during the negotiation at Mt. Carmel and maybe the first payment or the last payment. I don't know. The payment was several thousand and was handed to us, solely to the members of the Commission. But I have no strong feeling of the U.S. to have title or not to have the title.

Willens: On the financial side of the negotiations, Jim Leonard had done an initial report and then subsequent reports trying to outline what he thought the future Commonwealth needed in terms of support for government operations, support for capital improvement projects, and funds for economic development. What is your general recollection of the reports and advice you got from the economic consultant?

Rabauliman: I remember, Jim Leonard, as a former Trust Territory consultant.

Willens: He had done a study for the Nathan Association in 1960, contract with the teachers.

Rabauliman: The other leadership of the Commission, not members of the Commission but other Chamorro leadership, they were not so excited about the Leonard presentation. Especially this Manny Sablan, he is the one who is talking around that those are not the true figures what the Marianas need. He was talking around that those are maybe the needs of the whole TT, but not for the Marianas when they are separated under the Commonwealth.

Willens: Did he think that Jim Leonard was underestimating the needs of the Marianas or overstating?

Rabauliman: He overstating because he is including the whole TT including Truk, the Marshalls and so on. Because he [Leonard] used to work with the Nathan Associates, he [Sablan] didn't think that will be acceptable to the Ambassador's group because it is too high. That is what he said.

Willens: How did you personally feel about the financial needs of the future Commonwealth? For

- example, did you feel that the future government of the Northern Marianas would need more money than it had under the TTPI?
- Rabauliman: To me it was just the same, Howard. It will be the same amount because most of what Marianas had will be also needed under the Commonwealth. To me, I thought it would be about the same.
- Willens: One of the issues that was debated a good deal within the negotiations on the financial questions related to capital improvement projects. Did you have any views at the time that the Northern Marianas needed more infrastructure that justified a higher level of CIP funds?
- Rabauliman: At that time I don't have any idea to be bigger or smaller government. I was thinking that if the Marianas or the Commonwealth separated from the other TT they [the U.S.] might give us the whole TT complex [on Capitol Hill] sort of [for the Commonwealth government offices] to be in it.
- Willens: But in terms of roads and utilities and educational facilities, did you think that the Northern Marianas needed more money to improve those aspects of life?
- Rabauliman: Yes, they will need it. But at that time I didn't have any notion that we will be needing this road over here, or that we may expand it. To me I will say it would be about the same.
- Willens: So, were you then generally satisfied with the level of expenditures that had been made for the Northern Marianas?
- Rabauliman: Yes, under the TT.
- Willens: Who on the Commission as you recall took the more active position on these economic issues. Do you remember anyone in particularly expressing strong views about CIP programs and so forth?
- Rabauliman: I think Dr. Palacios, if I recall correctly. Dr. Palacios and Ben Santos.
- Willens: There was an initially a proposal from the United States to offer \$11.5 million of support. I believe this came up at a later round of the negotiations. That was regarded as unsatisfactory by the Marianas Political Status Commission which took the position that it needed \$16 million. So the U.S. delegation said \$11.5 million which they said was about 50% more than you getting now under the TTPI and that should be enough. And the Marianas Commission, armed with Mr. Leonard's studies, to some extent took the position that it needed \$16 million and eventually that was resolved at first \$13.5 million and then \$14.5. There was a meeting at which various members of the Commission were asked to speak as to why they needed more money and some people spoke education and some people spoke about infrastructure. Do you recall any of the debate about the level of financial support?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't recall the financial aspect of the negotiations.
- Willens: I gather from what you are saying that you were generally satisfied that the level of economic support provided in the Covenant was a reasonable amount?
- Rabauliman: Yes, about that amount, the share that we get from the TT.
- Willens: Also under the Covenant, as negotiated by the Commission, United States agreed to provide \$14 million every year with protection against inflation. Do you remember having any reaction at the time as to whether that was too little, too much or just enough?

- Rabauliman: If I recall correctly about the U.S. offer, yes I will take it. However, the justification, I am not too clear on those things.
- Willens: Return of public lands by the Trust Territory government to the citizens of Micronesia was an issue that was very much in the public domain at the time. Do you remember having any opinions at the time about the importance of returning public land to the citizens?
- Rabauliman: I don't have any recollection on that.
- Willens: Did you ever go to the United Nations Trusteeship Council and appear there on behalf of the Northern Marianas?
- Rabauliman: Yes, only at the time when we were to separate from the Trust Territory.
- Willens: That was after the Covenant had been negotiated?
- Rabauliman: I don't remember if it was after or before or during the Covenant. But we were there and the president of our political party, Jesus Mafnas, appeared in order to state that some of the Chamorros and most of the Carolinians do not agree with the separation from the TT. That is our presentation.
- Willens: The Trusteeship Council members were generally in this time frame opposed to the separate negotiations that the United States had agreed to. Did you regard the U.N. Trusteeship Council as having any influence on U.S. policy?
- Rabauliman: No, I think as I mentioned earlier that we thought at the beginning that the U.N. had the sole authority over the Marianas or the TT. But we found out that every time the U.N. made a visiting mission to the TT there were a lot of resolutions and a lot bills presented to the U.N. and nothing happened because they say U.N. just goes to the U.S. to request for it.
- Willens: And do what?
- Rabauliman: To request a response on what the Marianas were asking.
- Willens: After the second round of negotiations in June of 1973, there was an interview reported in the press of you, Joeten and Dr. Palacios. The three of you answered some questions that had been put to you about the negotiations. And generally, the three of you were very critical of the negotiations to date and you said, among things, that the United States were well-prepared in the negotiations whereas the Marianas Political Status Commission was not well-prepared and could not negotiate equally with the U.S. delegation. Do you have any recollection now as to how it came about that you and Joeten and Dr. Palacios agreed to go public with a position that was generally critical of the majority of the other members of the Commission?
- Rabauliman: I don't remember this interview with the PDN.
- Willens: It is very possible that Joe Screen made had played an active role in putting this together. I am not sure of that.
- Rabauliman: That is a possibility. I think there is talk in the political groups or in the meeting of the political parties not the other parties, but the Republican or Territorial Party they were sort of teasing members of the Political Status Commission of the Marianas. What are you offering to the U.S.? How can you negotiate with the professor being just the student? Like the Ambassador is the U.S. and we are just the students. We cannot bargain on anything because we don't have anything. Everything belongs to the U.S. Those are just the talks among the leadership of one of the political parties, especially Joeten and myself. But I don't quite remember if we came out in the interview.



- Willens: Did you, Dr. Palacios, and Joeten feel that the Commission was not going to be able to negotiate effectively with the U.S. delegation?
- Rabauliman: Yes. That is how I feel at the beginning. From the beginning when they established the Political Status Commission, there's a lot of talk about how they select this group and what is their experience to negotiate with an Ambassador. And then a little later on, we had the idea to come up with, to name a lawyer, so there will be a lawyer with the Marianas Political Status Commission. We feel pretty sure that we can negotiate if we have that lawyer. The lawyer is especially selected by Eddie [Pangelinan]. But then, after that, some people were saying well he is from Washington and we think that Ambassador Williams is also located in the same state and the same area [in Washington] and we don't think it will be very effective.
- Willens: Did you change your view?
- Rabauliman: Oh, yes. But not right away. When we start going in the negotiating sessions, people were just also observing, they feel very sorry for our lawyer because he is only one [person] at the table. And the other table is Ambassador with about six or eight lawyers. They still think that we will never get across or never take what you [the lawyer] want.
- Willens: I can understand that. In fact, there was one member of the Commission who was unnamed was quoted in the *Marianas Variety* or the PDN as saying putting me [Willens] in the negotiations with the United States is like putting me in the ring against Cassius Clay. I gather that was generally your feeling at least at the beginning?
- Rabauliman: Yes. It was.
- Willens: During the summer of 1973 the Joint Committee on Future Status that the Congress of Micronesia had established headed by Lazarus Salii conducted hearings in the various districts throughout the Trust Territory. Chairman Salii and members of his Joint Committee, including Ed Pangelinan, conducted hearings on Rota, Tinia, and with various elements on the community of Saipan. They did have a meeting with the Carolinian community, and the published reports of this meeting indicate that the Carolinians were one of the few groups on Saipan who expressed reservations to Chairman Salii about the separate negotiations and repeated their views that it would had been better if all Micronesia had stayed together. Chairman Salii subsequently reported to the Congress of Micronesia what the Carolinian sentiment was and you and other leaders of the Carolinian community made various statements about it. As I recall you did publicly state that that reservation with respect to the separate negotiation did represent the views of the Carolinian community. Do you have any recollection of meetings with Chairman Salii or members of his Committee on this subject?
- Rabauliman: Yes. We met with Salii and I don't think all of the Committee but maybe few members and most of the staff in to one of our meeting halls. Dr. Kaiput and Ben Fitial were the ones answering most of the questions. The question is how far had they gone on the [Micronesian] negotiation because we heard that there would be a separate negotiation with only the Marianas but the Congress of Micronesia they negotiate for everybody, and we still haven't heard anything.
- Willens: Did you know Lazarus Salii?
- Rabauliman: No, not very close only as a member of the Congress of Micronesia. He is sort of close to us because of maybe the language and because they know that we were one of those groups in the Marianas who expressed reservations that we would still like to join with the other [districts in the] TT. O.T. [Borja] and Benjamin [Manglona], they were also expressing

strong feelings about the reintegration [with Guam]. So those were the two groups with reservations.

Willens: What did you understand was the purpose of this meeting that the Joint Committee requested to have with you and other members of the Carolinian Community?

Rabauliman: I just think they were going around expressing sort of a report on the status their work so far. Also they were requesting what is the general feeling of the people what status do the people want? There is no strong issue on what kind of status they presented to the people. We never had anything except just question and answer. Where they are now and how far have they gone in negotiation? Because they been talking in the Congress of Micronesia and nothing else, aside from the U.S. presenting to the members of the Congress or the Committee.

Willens: At about this time in 1973 there was a Foreign Service Officer stationed here named John Dorrance. Mr. Dorrance from time to time would send reports back to the U.S. government agencies interested in Micronesia. Did you have the occasion from time to time to meet with Mr. Dorrance?

Rabauliman: No, except I met him in one of these meetings. I don't really recall what it was all about. He was also reporting as a military or State Department representative?

Willens: State Department.

Rabauliman: That's all. To us, we don't consider it as big issue. He is just a liaison for the State Department.

Willens: Between the second and third rounds, Joeten resigned from the Commission and replaced by Pete A. Tenorio. What was your understanding at the time as to why Joeten withdrew from the Commission?

Rabauliman: It seemed that Joeten attended a very limited number of meetings. Only by the commission with the lawyer or during the whole negotiations. I don't recall Joeten actually sitting in the group. But that is, now I think, because of his business. I recall one time they meet and they called the leadership to try to find out who will be the Executive Director of the Commission. . So they interviewed several people (some lawyers were) to be the Executive Director of the Political Status Commission. So Joeten recommended Joe Screen. So he appeared in the chamber and he started expressing his views and ideas about the status what the Marianas will be. And then after the meeting they asked if there were any comments from the members. Joe Screen and Joeten left. Then Dr. Palacios said: "So I don't know about the rest of you, but I don't know about Joe Screen. Just by his voice, I am already afraid." He has a big voice. That's what I recall.

Willens: Joe Screen did end up as a consultant to the Commission but he never performed in that capacity and I have heard from others that his retention was not approved by the Legislature. Do you recall what general views that Joe Screen expressed about status?

Rabauliman: No, I don't recall much about that. Just once Joe called the group and said to us that we will be together with the other TT.

Willens: You do recall that he took that position?

Rabauliman: I think that is right, but I am not sure.

Willens: Did you know Pete A. Tenorio before he came on the Commission?

Rabauliman: Yes. I think he was some kind of Executive Director before he came on the Status Commission.

- Willens: I think he worked for the TTPI, didn't he?
- Rabauliman: I don't remember him working the TTPI, but he was some sort of an Executive Director with an Economic Group or something like that.
- Willens: At the time of his resignation, Joeten also said he was resigning because some of the members of the Commission thought that his views on status were influenced by his business interests and he thought he should be replaced by someone who would not be attacked on those grounds. Do you have any recollection about Joeten's business affiliations being an issue within the Commission?
- Rabauliman: No. I don't have anything.
- Willens: The third round of the negotiations was in December of 1973 and much of the discussion at that time related to the financial issues which we have covered to some extent and also to various legal issues. Some of the issues that were discussed related to the applicability of the income tax laws, custom laws, applicability of U.S. laws generally. Do you have recollection of what your views were on those various legal issues?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't have anything on those issues.
- Willens: Did you care one way or the other how those issues were resolved?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't.
- Willens: The United States also delivered a draft Status Agreement to the Marianas Political Status Commission. And the Commission decided not to respond to it until a later session. At the very next session in the spring of 1974 the Commission was given by its counsel in advance of the negotiations an alternative version of a status agreement, a long explanatory memo, and several legal memos. These were reviewed by the Commission in some detail and, after revision, these papers were presented to the Ambassador at the beginning of the fourth round of negotiations. He was very upset with the fact that the Commission presented its own status agreement in draft form rather than respond to the U.S. prepared draft and that engendered some discussion off the record and behind the scenes. Do you have a recollection of a conflict once the Commission presented its own draft status agreement?
- Rabauliman: Not very clear. The only time that I recall he was very unhappy was about some kind of an issue or some kind of a paper for the next session. I don't really exactly what it was about, but I remember that in the afternoon or the following morning he didn't show up. Then Wilson was the one who conducted the negotiation.
- Willens: It was your reaction at the time that his failure to appear showed his unhappiness?
- Rabauliman: Yes, on some issue that you presented.
- Willens: Was it an issue that I personally presented?
- Rabauliman: That you presented on behalf of the Commission.
- Willens: Did you have any problem with the fact that on some of these legal issues (when the Chairman requested) that I would do the speaking for the Commission? Did you think that was a good practice or a poor practice?
- Rabauliman: I would say it was good, Howard. It's understood by the other groups the people across the table including the Ambassador when you presented instead the whole group of Marianas delegates. But the way we do it, you explain to the Commission members, we expressed what we feel about it, and then you present it to the Ambassador.

- Willens: From time to time the members of the U.S. delegation told members of the Commission that they thought that the Commission should not depend too heavily on its consultants. Do you ever remember any conversation with members of the U.S. delegation along those lines?
- Rabauliman: No. At the beginning we all sort of questioned our consultant. And as the negotiations went on, we all felt strongly about consultant who was our Cassius Clay. No. I personally did not hear anything from the U.S. along those lines.
- Willens: One of the other financial issues discussed during the negotiations related to transitional planning and funding. This involved an effort to obtain U.S. commitment to funds in excess of \$1 million in order to conduct various studies in terms of preparing the Commonwealth government. Do you have any recollection today of the debate about transitional planning and studies?
- Rabauliman: To me I say the only thing I recall there is when we have I think Pete A. Tenorio heads that transitional planning. I don't know if that is correct.
- Willens: The United States was not originally was not prepared to accommodate the Commission with the full amount of money requested and there was a debate about what kind of planning was required and so forth and so on. Did you personally feel that some transitional planning would be useful?
- Rabauliman: I don't have any idea on that one, on the transitional work. I just didn't know what would happen if Commonwealth status took place or when they will implement it. I didn't know about the transition. That was way beyond my understanding.
- Willens: Well, as the negotiations came to a conclusion there was at least one point in early 1974 when several Congressmen, including Congressman Burton, visited Saipan and met with members of the Commission. Do you have any recollection of meeting with Congressman Burton?
- Rabauliman: Yes, only one time. I think that was the first and the last time I ever met with him.
- Willens: What do you recall about the meeting?
- Rabauliman: There's no specific issue discussed there because he was standing at the podium and we don't consider that a meeting, just sort of a get-together. That is my recollection. I recall something he mentioned that what he said is good for the people. I don't know if it is U.S. citizen or something about the money, but he mentioned that we should not be worried because that will go through. I don't know what it is, though.
- Willens: He did indicate that the financial terms would probably not raise too much difficulty in Congress, but he did express some views that the U.S. tax laws should apply here in the Northern Marianas just as they apply in Guam. Do you have any recollection of him making that point?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't know. But I know we talked about tax law during the negotiation and when all of these people were visiting.
- Willens: Did you generally have the impression that Congressman Burton was inclined to support the Commission in the negotiations?
- Rabauliman: I don't know about supporting the negotiations, but it is the talk of the leadership that Burton is a good friend and a good helper to the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: During the recess between the third and fourth rounds, Chairman Pangelinan and Vice Chairman Santos had several meetings with Ambassador Williams. One took place in

- Honolulu in March of 1974. Did Ed Pangelinan and Ben Santos report back to the Commission generally after they had met with the Ambassador?
- Rabauliman: He might, but I don't recall what is the topic or what is the issue that they report on. What I recall only is that there is a separate meeting with the Ambassador and the chairman and the vice chairman.
- Willens: The last session of the negotiations was broken up into two parts in November and December of 1974 and in February of 1975. There was an election in November 1974 when Ed Pangelinan and Herman Guerrero were defeated in their efforts to run for re-election to the Congress of Micronesia. They were defeated by members of the Territorial Party specifically Oscar Rasa and Pete A. Tenorio. To your recollection was political status an issue in that election that contributed to the defeat of Pangelinan and Guerrero?
- Rabauliman: To me, I don't consider that is the issue [that caused] the defeat of Eddie and Herman Q. Guerrero. I think it was more the way they presented the campaign. We played a big role in that campaign on the Covenant, to approve or disapprove by the people.
- Willens: When you speak of you, you are speaking of the Territorial Party?
- Rabauliman: Of the Carolinian?
- Willens: You portrayed the election as a vote on the Covenant in draft form?
- Rabauliman: Yes, because another visiting mission, I don't know which group ( I don't remember the U.S. or the U.N.), would visit the Marianas and we were the first group that will go up to the airport and campaign 'No Covenant.' No Covenant to the whole area especially of those World War II remnants, the tank and the road. And they were surprised Herman Guerrero and other leaders of the Democratic Party.
- Willens: Do you recall this happening the campaign for the 1974 election?
- Rabauliman: I think before that campaign. The campaigning is for the Covenant.
- Willens: You speaking about the plebiscite now in 1975?
- Rabauliman: Oh, yes I am talking about the plebiscite.
- Willens: Let's go back to the election where Ed Pangelinan and Herman Q. Guerrero were defeated. Somebody told me that the turnout was low and that the people in Northern Marianas didn't really care about who went to the Congress of Micronesia. Other people said that status wasn't involved. But the newspaper coverage at the time reported that status was a major issue and that the people were sending a message to the Popular Party that they should go more slowly with respect to the negotiations. Can you help me understand what really was going on?
- Rabauliman: To my recollection, Howard, I think the issue at that time is the negotiation with the U.S. It was going very fast and we still haven't heard what became of these negotiations.
- Willens: Which negotiations, the Micronesian negotiations?
- Rabauliman: The U.S. and the Northern Marianas. The Micronesians were going out to inform people. Saliu and his group were going to the people and that was the one going fast. I don't recall if it's burning down the flag or the arson by Herman that is why they lost the election.
- Willens: Did you personally expect that the negotiations would come to a halt once that Oscar Rasa and Pete A. Tenorio and other new members went on the Commission? Did you anticipate that there would be a fundamental change in direction?

- Rabauliman: The Political Status Commission in the Congress of Micronesia, it is my thought that it will continue involving the Northern Marianas. Some people say forget the Congress of Micronesia. Let's not participate anymore because there is a Political Status Commission going on for the Northern Marianas. But my position there is let the Congress of Micronesia continue involving the Northern Marianas. Then we can decide which one we will take. We will have a lot of choice.
- Willens: I gather that based on what you are saying and your political affiliation you were pleased with the outcome of the election and that the Territorial Party prevailed?
- Rabauliman: Yes.
- Willens: Certain changes took place in the Commission as a result, Oscar Rasa came on the Commission. Juan Cabrera came in. Manny A. Sablan came in. Judge Salas left. Oly Borja withdrew in order to give his seat to Ed Pangelinan, so that Pangelinan could remain as Chairman. And so the Commission was reconstituted with some new faces, and what I am wondering about is whether you thought, given your general view about the negotiations, that now you had enough votes to slow things down?
- Rabauliman: No. I might have, Howard, but I think even though we have these new faces here I think people have already got the idea that separate negotiations have started so they should continue. I don't recall any people who spoke against it. I think it was Rasa, but he doesn't speak on behalf of the people (just himself) that everything should go slow.
- Willens: As you do recall, things were very far along in December of 1974. There had been a lot of work in drafting the legal document known as the Covenant and there were many issues to be resolved. And after the December 1975 meeting, a recess was taken with the view toward finalizing the drafting and then coming back for a signing ceremony in February of 1975. When the Commission reconvened in February 1975, the delegates from Tinian and Rota presented their request that the Covenant contain a requirement for a bicameral legislature in which the upper house would have equal representation for Tinian, Rota, and Saipan. They said, in effect, that this was an indispensable critical element in the Covenant. What was your reaction when the Tinian and Rota people insisted for the first time on this idea of a bicameral legislature?
- Rabauliman: At that time there is a push by the Carolinian Community that if that thing goes through and the U.S. consider the bicameral legislature proposal, I should push for at least one or two seats for the Carolinians, not to be elected but Carolinians would select and put one Carolinian in the Senate.
- Willens: Did you ever make that proposal to the Commission?
- Rabauliman: No.
- Willens: You decided not to do that?
- Rabauliman: Yes, not to do that.
- Willens: Were you basically though as a resident of Saipan opposed to giving Tinian and Rota the measure of political power that they would have in an upper house in which they were equally represented with Saipan?
- Rabauliman: Yes, generally I opposed the idea. I would rather have what we had then [a unicameral legislature]. But if that thing [a bicameral legislature] became a reality, that there will be separate seats just for Tinian, we should push, the Carolinians should push for at least two seats from the Carolinian community. Because everybody is Chamorro, and we [Carolinians] are likely playing the minority group.

- Willens: Did you think that the Tinian and Rota representatives on the Commission would refuse to sign the Covenant if they had not been given the bicameral legislature that they wanted?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't think so. I don't recall that they ever talked about refusing to sign the Covenant. I think when it started coming near to the date of the signing, they were just talking about what would be for Tinian and what would be for Rota. Would it be bigger or smaller or is it a fair enough distribution on money or whatever.
- Willens: Well, they did end up getting the guarantee of an upper house with equal representation. Based on the last 15 years or so in the Northern Marianas, how do you think that the upper house has worked out? Do you think that Tinian and Rota have taken advantage of their political power in that house?
- Rabauliman: I know that to some people they have already abused the power. They get together and go against the Marianas.
- Willens: Against Saipan.
- Rabauliman: Yes, against Saipan.
- Willens: You have heard that.
- Rabauliman: In fact, they are doing it now. When it comes to funding or any voting on big issues, Tinian and Rota will get together.
- Willens: After the Commission generally agreed to accept this amendment to the Covenant, for about three or four days the Commission ended up internal discussions about whether to approve the Covenant. Chairman Pangelinan was very insisted on having everyone explain his views about the Covenant before taking a vote. Do you have any recollection of those discussions that preceded the taking of a vote on the Covenant?
- Rabauliman: No, I don't. I think my participation was very limited at that time. When we know that everything had already been put in a package, we thought it would be approved.
- Willens: Was it your view, as the time for decision approached, that you were not going to sign the Covenant because of the wishes of the Carolinian community?
- Rabauliman: That's right. The position I took is based on the leadership of the Carolinians and the Carolinian community. Now they will be signing the Covenant but the members of the leadership, actually no one knows of the contents and what we are after because the document was so big and we haven't translated it yet. And we haven't explained to the people what is involved. Willens: Was there a particular meeting with the Carolinian leadership in January or February of 1975 at which the final decision was made that you should not sign? Or had it always been the case from the beginning that you probably not agree?
- Rabauliman: I don't remember what meeting is this but we do invite the Ambassador and some of his staff to the Utt [meeting place]. I don't recall the actual date and what year. We do express our reservation that the negotiation is very fast. We just don't understand up to that time what we're involved in. After that, the leaders were confused and they sort of don't want to commit themselves because they already learned a lot from other parties and other leaders. And they do some of the reading. So they asked me to go ahead and decide on my own if I will sign or not.
- Willens: You were free to decide however you wanted to go?

- Rabauliman: Yes. But it was very difficult to represent everybody because some of them already understood some of the content of the Covenant, but some of the Carolinians thoroughly do not understand and were asking to slow down or give us time.
- Willens: Did you feel that your decision not to sign represented the majority view within the Carolinian leadership?
- Rabauliman: Yes, within the Carolinian leadership, Carolinian community.
- Willens: Was there anything that the Commission could have done to have brought the Carolinian community along to a better extent? Should there have been translations along the way?
- Rabauliman: Yes, translations, village meetings, and some sort of newspaper. And the Commission should play in between the two political parties. The Carolinians, we can identify who is a Republican or Democrat [on the Commission]. They just couldn't understand or maybe do not want to understand because the majority [on the Commission] are Democratic.
- Willens: Well, after the Commission would have its formal sessions with the United States, did you have a practice of going back and reporting to the Carolinian leadership as to what the Joint Communiqué meant and what the important issues were?
- Rabauliman: Yes, I do print out the Joint Communiqué and make duplicate copies to those leadership who read, like Dr. Kaipat and others who have no access for getting a copy.
- Willens: Would you translate it into Carolinian?
- Rabauliman: No, I hesitate to translate it. There are a lot of technical words that we don't use [in Carolinian]. As you say, the meetings for the people are what we have been doing.
- Willens: But, as you tell me here today, it sounds as though distributing the Joint Communiqué to the leadership and having meetings with the community did not prove to be sufficient in terms of informing them adequately about the Covenant so that they could make the decision either to vote for or against it?
- Rabauliman: That is correct, yes.
- Willens: So you think the Commission might have played a more active role in dealing directly with the members of the Carolinian Community?
- Rabauliman: Yes. I think they should be involved getting the information out. But to me I say even the Commission would hesitate because of the political affiliation.
- Willens: That's right and certainly the leadership of the Commission would not have felt comfortable in going to the Carolinian community without you and Dr. Kaipat and other leaders inviting them to do that. Do you remember extending any invitations to Ed Pangelinan and others to come and meet with the Carolinian community?
- Rabauliman: No, we never invited them. People were still down on Ed because he was outspoken in the Democratic Party. That is how the Carolinians decide whether we can trust him or not to trust him. He is really telling us the truth or not?
- Willens: Did you participate in the political education program beyond the translation work that you told me about earlier? In preparation for the plebiscite, what did you do besides help with some translations?
- Rabauliman: I think only in conducting the meetings, meetings separately with the leadership so they could take part also in disseminating the same information. I just recall now that I had some leadership in from the Marianas Political Status Commission who joined us in the meeting with the people. I am sure that is not only thing.



- Willens: The education program went forward between February of 1975 and June 1975 when the plebiscite was held. Did you believe that the Carolinian community was becoming more informed about the Covenant and what it meant?
- Rabauliman: I will say 50/50, Howard. Some people already learned from Chamorro [language materials] that they are against Covenant and some Carolinians also learned from the leadership.
- Willens: By the time the plebiscite occurred in June of 1975, did you believe at the time that the Carolinian leadership was more or less evenly divided between supporting the Covenant or opposing it?
- Rabauliman: They all not divided before the Covenant, the Carolinian leadership started dividing after the Covenant.
- Willens: You think that the leadership basically opposed the Covenant at the time of the plebiscite?
- Rabauliman: I will say they were not involved. I will say they don't care if it is approved or not approved. As a nation, the Marianas will go ahead and will decide on approving the Covenant or not. But we know that whatever course it takes, it will go through, because we are still a minority.
- Willens: After the Covenant was approved, there began to be plans for a Constitutional Convention in 1976. Did you run for the Constitutional Convention in 1976?
- Rabauliman: No, I didn't.
- Willens: Ben Fitial and others ran from the Territorial Party which won the majority of the positions in the First Constitutional Convention. Did you have any interest one way or the other in the work of that First Constitutional Convention?
- Rabauliman: Yes, there was some concern that if they have these elections for the Legislature, we know that we will never take any seats [because we are a minority]. So we asked for at least two seats for the Legislature to be from the members of the Carolinian community who would sit in the Legislature or be a member of the Legislature. Not a write-in but selected among the Carolinians and then be a member.
- Willens: Do you remember meeting with Resident Commissioner Canham to request to that there be some specific provision for Carolinian delegates to the Constitutional Convention?
- Rabauliman: Yes, I remember that we appealed to the Resident Commissioner that we would like to have a legislature seat for the Carolinians or a Carolinian representative. He wasn't giving us a yes or no, but I think he mentioned something about the Constitutional Convention, that this [legislature seats] was to be decided on. We had a committee and the Carolinian leadership appealed to the President [of the Constitution Convention], at that time it was Larry Guerrero. All the leadership appealed that we would like to have included in the Constitution seats [in the Legislature] for the Carolinians because we know we will never be elected to the Senate or to the House. I think they assured us that they would try to work it out. I don't remember if you were the one who said we will have one [Carolinian] who will be acting the Governor's Assistant if possible. We will have one Carolinian in the Cabinet, the Governor's Cabinet.
- Willens: How do you feel that the Special Assistant for Carolinian Affairs has worked out?
- Rabauliman: I will say it has worked out excellently. But at this time, the way I feel, it's not sort of working the way we would like it to work. Because of the politics involved, after we have

this office established, the Carolinian leadership split and some took the others to the other [Democratic] party.

Willens: As I have heard it said, and this may not be accurate, the position of Executive Assistant for Carolinian Affairs has sometimes been filled by a Carolinian who was not among the Carolinian leadership. Is that correct?

Rabauliman: That is correct. In fact, just the last election, there was the appointment of a Trukese, Billy Rokucho, where the Carolinians got together and elected him. It was by some kind of a maneuver or strategy that they put him in.

Willens: Who? Governor Tenorio?

Rabauliman: No, it was Governor Guerrero. Actually it was done by some few leadership. At this time I was in the States, and some few leadership, Abel Olopai and Dr. Kaipat, they got together and decided that they will have Billy Rokucho run and then they all tell all the Carolinians. Now the same group, Abel Olopai asked a few Carolinians to submit their name as a candidate for Special Assistant to Carolinian Affairs. And then they asked the Governor, and the Governor say, "The Carolinians should decide on that and I will appoint once you give the name of the person who is elected." So by the doing of Abel Olopai, they elected Billy Rokucho.

Willens: Well, in that example then, as I understand it, the Carolinian leadership did end up picking the person who was selected by the Governor to fill that position?

Rabauliman: He was selected by Carolinians and accepted by the Governor.

Willens: Is it your view that's a good way to proceed?

Rabauliman: That's what they have been doing, yes.

Willens: Are you generally satisfied then that the position of Executive Assistant has been filled by people who were selected by the Carolinian leadership?

Rabauliman: Yes, except that provisions that said "accepted by." I don't know which comes first. It is recommended by the Governor and accepted by the Carolinian community or is it selected by the Carolinian community and accepted by the Governor? That is the confusing issue. For example, Governor Pete P. Tenorio selected me and that was accepted by the Carolinian community because they get together and voted. The First Governor, Carlos Camacho, selected Pete Rogolifoi Guerrero. He and Herman R. Guerrero are brothers. And the Carolinian community did not have any meeting except a few papers were circulated as a petition. Because he [Pete R. Guerrero] is Popular Party member, Carlos Camacho supported him. Then the third one, is the Rokucho appointment. Governor Guerrero is the Republican and so Rokucho, who used to be a Democrat, moved to be a Republican. They do then the maneuvering of selecting him and they put him under Guerrero who went ahead and appointed him.

Willens: Have Carolinians been elected to the House of Representatives and the Senate under the Commonwealth?

Rabauliman: No.

Willens: There has never been a Carolinian representative or senator?

Rabauliman: No, there never been a Carolinian, except Ben Fitial.

Willens: Herman R. Guerrero is not regarded as a Carolinian?

Rabauliman: Yes, Carolinians regarded him as a Carolinian. But we sometimes regarded him as a Chamorro who depend on the [Chamorro] votes.

Willens: All right we have come to the conclusion of our questions for this interview, Felix, and you certainly have been very, very patient and accommodating and I appreciate that. Is there anything else that you would like to say with respect to the negotiations or the Commonwealth or for purposes of our historical effort here?

Rabauliman: No, Howard, I sure appreciated being with you. And it was very interesting. I hope this is the time we will start negotiating. I think I learned more here than during the negotiation where I was hesitating on being a minority and being different from the others. I was so retiring or being way back in the corner of the room. I really appreciate you, and I am glad to have been helpful to your project.

Willens: All right. Thank you sir.

Rabauliman: Thank you very much.