

INTERVIEW OF EDWARD DLG. PANGELINAN

by Howard P. Willens

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- Willens: I have the distinct honor and pleasure of interviewing an old colleague and friend, Edward DLG. Pangelinan, who was Chairman of the Marianas Political Status Commission. Ed, I have explained the nature of this project and appreciate your willingness to be interviewed. I would like to begin by asking you to provide some basic biographical information about where you were born and where you were educated.
- Pangelinan: First of all, I would like to say that I am delighted that we had this opportunity some 21 years ago. If you recall, I was introduced to you indirectly through the Micronesian status negotiations. We were in Washington one time and Paul Warnke catered a party for the Micronesian group. Somebody mentioned to me that you were a good friend of Warnke and it was an indirect way of meeting you. I was totally impressed with your interest in the status negotiations and, of course, your legal background. I came back to Saipan and I told my group. We were in the process of developing a political status commission to enable the Northern Marianas to pursue its desire to accomplish a political status in union with the United States. When I got back to Saipan, I knew that if I had the opportunity to be involved in the political status negotiations for the Northern Marianas, I had a lawyer in mind that I certainly would like to help us in our negotiation. Look at us 21 years later. We're back meeting each other and I'm glad that we are here in Saipan. I think you and I can look back and say, well perhaps we didn't make a mistake of pursuing this political status. I think the Northern Marianas has been blessed with negotiating for its political relationship at a time when it was timely. We were able to develop a legal document that has survived for close to 19 years now. You asked me about my background. I was born here on Saipan. I went to Guam to pursue my education because we were totally limited in terms of education opportunities on this island.
- Willens: When were you born?
- Pangelinan: In 1941, a few months before Pearl Harbor.
- Willens: What opportunities were there for you to go to elementary school after the war ended on Saipan?
- Pangelinan: There was a very limited level of education available. At that particular time, it was up to the fifth grade.
- Willens: That was under the Japanese system?
- Pangelinan: My recollection is that there were very limited opportunities. I think the education opportunity was limited to the fifth grade. Basically, the Japanese believed that the natives here were entitled to be educated in order to understand the rudimentary Japanese language and to remain under their control. The Japanese recognized the power and force of education and certainly they were not about to give that to the local inhabitants of the islands.
- Willens: Were your mother and father also born in the Marianas?

- Pangelinan: Both my parents were born here. It's interesting that you ask that because I have been able to trace my family history. It went back to the Spanish era in Guam.
- Willens: Which side of the family have you been able to trace back that far?
- Pangelinan: I was able to trace both sides of the family going back three or four generations to the period around 1865. From my father's side I was able to identify the family tree.
- Willens: What nationalities had found their way into the family tree?
- Pangelinan: It's funny because there is always a claim here in the Northern Marianas and Guam that we are of Spanish origin. Maybe there is some truth to that, but my grandfather and I one time tried to really find out whether that was true at all. My grandfather was bold enough to say, well, I think it's good for you to understand where your roots are. Definitely we were under the Spanish era, but if you look at our cultural and ancestral makeup we are really of Mexican origin.
- Willens: Mexican?
- Pangelinan: Mexican origin. As a matter of fact, the food, the costume, and tradition here were of Mexican origin rather than Spanish.
- Willens: I've seen some reference in the literature to a mix of Mexican, Spanish and Philippine blood in Guam as a result of the Spanish colonization effort.
- Pangelinan: That's true, but the makeup of the mixture of the races is basically more of the Mexican. On my grandfather's side, we found out that my paternal great-great-grandfather took an excursion from Acapulco to the Philippines. He jumped ship at Guam and decided that he was not about to continue on the Spanish galleon to the Philippines. He settled in Guam, where the Pangelinan family tree originated. There was immigration back in the early 1900s when my grandfather and his brother, two of the Pangelinan members of the family of eight children and two brothers, decided to migrate to Saipan and establish our family here on the island.
- Willens: Why did they decide to come to Saipan?
- Pangelinan: There was a period of time when the natives of the islands north of Guam, such as Rota and Saipan, were taken to Guam for various reasons. I think the Spanish rulers had decided that it was easier to control the natives in that manner. There were some scimmages, a local insurrection, taking place for a period of time and it was a matter of their need to control the inhabitants of the northern islands. Just before the war, the first World War, the northern islands were open for migration.
- Willens: Was there land then available on a homestead basis?
- Pangelinan: No. The islands were just available. These northern islands were available for anybody who wanted to settle there. My family decided that it's maybe a good opportunity to check the northern islands. My grandfather and his brother decided that it was a good move. So they moved over to Saipan.
- Willens: The Pangelinans have multiplied ever since?
- Pangelinan: Yes, surprisingly I think we Pangelinans number now close to six or seven hundred individuals.
- Willens: Is the Pangelinan family one of the largest families on the island?
- Pangelinan: No. We consider ourselves in the middle group. There were other names—Cabrera and others—who have more family members than the Pangelinans.

- Willens: Did those family units go back to an earlier age or did more of them come and settle here?
- Pangelinan: Surprisingly, from our family tree there were inter-marriages with other Chamorros here on the island and we just grew by numbers through marriage.
- Willens: What was your findings as to your maternal side of the family?
- Pangelinan: That is interesting that you ask. I take it about three generations back. My great-great-grandfather from my mother's side was a man of the cloth. He was raised here on Saipan and was sent to the Philippines. He wanted to join the seminary.
- Willens: Seminary?
- Pangelinan: Yes. But I guess he made a mistake of meeting a lovely Filipino lady and that was the end of his religious training. He got married and came back to Saipan. That's the Guerrero family. I was only able to trace my grandmother, my mother's side, to three generations back.
- Willens: Do women in the Chamorro tradition have a leadership role in the family?
- Pangelinan: Actually, the women have always been. This is a matrimonial community. Women have always been a very forceful part of the community because they control the household.
- Willens: Do they control the pocketbook?
- Pangelinan: Actually, you can't say that there was such a thing as a pocketbook then. The style, the lifestyles then reflected pretty much a subsistence economy. Anyone who controlled the rice pot basically wielded enormous power and influence. The women had considerable say in the running of the family. Chamorro women have always been very, very strong and forceful and there is a lot of respect for their leadership.
- Willens: I appreciate your sharing that information. So many of the people with whom I have talked haven't conducted the kind of inquiry you have with respect to their family and family lines. There is still this debate in the history books as to exactly who the Chamorros are today and you have supplied some useful insights on that.
- Pangelinan: I may be in the minority, Howard, because there are still a lot of people that say that we are Spanish. I think it is a question of pride here. Some people take pride that they are of Spanish origin rather than Mexican ancestry, but I have nothing to hide. I recognize where I came from, I think it is only fair that I'm not at all shy to say that this is where my roots came from.
- Willens: You mentioned that you went off-island to high school.
- Pangelinan: I went to Guam to high school. We didn't have high school then on Saipan. The level of education was limited to the ninth grade in Saipan.
- Willens: Which high school did you go to?
- Pangelinan: I went to George Washington High School and later on I moved to John F. Kennedy in Tumon.
- Willens: Do you remember any of your contemporaries here at Saipan who were at the schools at the same time that you were?
- Pangelinan: It's interesting. Yes, as a matter of fact. Pete A. Tenorio and I were classmates all the way from elementary to high school and Pete and I had to go to Guam to continue on with our higher education.

- Willens: Did you pursue higher education after high school?
- Pangelinan: I went for two years to the University of Guam. That was pretty much a stepping stone to work or moving elsewhere. Earlier I mentioned to you that back in 1962, the Trust Territory government was in the process of relocating its headquarters. It was an interesting period. At that time, Saipan was under the Naval Administration and, along with the relocation of headquarters to Saipan, there was a change of status of the government. I discovered that I was qualified to apply for a scholarship for post-secondary education.
- Willens: Who had the scholarship?
- Pangelinan: The Territory government. It had a very strong scholarship program to enable deserving Micronesian students to pursue their higher education. So I did apply.
- Willens: In what year did you apply?
- Pangelinan: In my second year in college I applied for a pre-law scholarship.
- Willens: In what year would that have been?
- Pangelinan: That was back in 1962.
- Willens: So you were in Guam attending two years at the now University of Guam and at that time you learned of the change in status with respect to Saipan and your eligibility for a scholarship program?
- Pangelinan: So I did apply and I was accepted. I was actually awarded the scholarship. The only problem was that I was required to find a school elsewhere where I could apply in order to take advantage of the scholarship. I got a scholarship before I was able to go to any college.
- Willens: You mean the scholarship was contingent on your being accepted at some college or university?
- Pangelinan: That's right.
- Willens: Where did you ultimately enroll?
- Pangelinan: I went to the University of Hawaii for one summer just to see whether I could handle the academics, but I did apply to George Washington University in Washington, D.C. I had learned about the Nation's Capital and I always wanted to visit it. I thought that perhaps through the educational process I may be able to find a school in the city. George Washington University was listed in one of the catalogues and I just got the necessary application forms and applied. I think I met the minimal requirement to go to school there; and they found out that I had a scholarship, so they accepted me.
- Willens: When did you go to George Washington?
- Pangelinan: That was back in 1963.
- Willens: How many years did you go there?
- Pangelinan: I went there to finish my last two years as an undergraduate.
- Willens: So you graduated from George Washington about 1965?
- Pangelinan: 1965, right.
- Willens: Did you find that the education you had received had adequately prepared you to compete at George Washington?

- Pangelinan: It was adequate to compete but not sufficient enough to excel. There were limitations, the language. I still have this accent right now. There were many language problems.
- Willens: Were there any special programs available for you?
- Pangelinan: There was a remedial program that one had to take in order to qualify for the more advanced program. I went to the remedial program just to be able to handle the load. It was a good program.
- Willens: Did you have in mind at that time that you would be applying the law school?
- Pangelinan: As a matter of fact, I had already decided that I wanted to pursue a legal education. I knew there was an opportunity to, first of all because there was money available and also there were a number of programs that one can apply to that were limited basically to the fields of law, medicine and some of the sciences that would be useful once a Micronesian returns to the islands.
- Willens: Let's pause for a minute then in the year 1965 or was it 1963 when you went to George Washington?
- Pangelinan: Right.
- Willens: 1963. Before you left Saipan to go to George Washington, can I have the benefit of your recollection as to what you remember regarding the state of political development here in the Northern Marianas.
- Pangelinan: I have to give credit to the educational system here in Saipan. There was always that emphasis that we are in a political status under the auspices of the United Nations and that the people of Micronesia are entitled to a political status of their own choosing. That was the kind of instruction that we were given to appreciate what was the political status of the people here. So, from the very beginning, I understood that Micronesia in general, including Saipan, would have to come to grips with deciding its political identity in the future. Unfortunately, none of us were in a position to make any decision because of the limited understanding of our status. It was through the educational process that one is able to learn exactly what are our rights and responsibilities and how we can pursue a political status of our own. I decided that, well, law is the way to go to accomplishing that.
- Willens: Do you remember in the early 1960s any discussions with your contemporaries or political leaders about efforts within the United States to change their policy regarding the Trust Territory?
- Pangelinan: At that particular time, Howard, I think this was all determined by the size of the budget. Micronesia was a forgotten area. There were policies that restricted migration of people within the community. Micronesia in general was isolated from the rest of the world. It was through the open window of Guam that we would begin to realize that there was something that the people of this area were entitled to.
- Willens: Let me ask a more specific question. In May of 1963, President Kennedy appointed a special committee chaired by Mr. Solomon to investigate the situation here in the Trust Territory and make recommendations. He and the members of his committee came here, conducted certain meetings and subsequently filed a report that became controversial in future years. Do you remember hearing anything about the Solomon Commission at the time?
- Pangelinan: From the Micronesian position, nobody really gave a hoot as to what all this activity was about. I think the Solomon study was basically an effort to give Congress and the United

Nations some evidence that there were some activities going on to address the future of these islands. Micronesians, in general, were totally unaware of what's really being done.

Willens: In 1961, 1964 and subsequently every three years, the United Nations Trusteeship Council would send a visiting mission to conduct inquiries in Micronesia and submit a report to the Trusteeship Council. Did the people of Micronesia have any general sense of awareness of these visits by the United Nations visiting missions?

Pangelinan: We were aware of the visits and it was an event, involving the community, because we were expecting visitors from outside the area. The United Nations had always been a body that we were led to believe was actually responsible for our general welfare. Whenever there was a visiting mission from the United Nations it's an event of great celebration, but what that visiting mission is supposed to do here other than look us up and see how progress had been made by the United States was not known by us.

Willens: There was an effort by the Kennedy Administration in the early 1960's to increase the funding for the Trust Territory. Do you have any recollection as to your judgment at the time about the way in which the Trust Territory had performed its responsibilities under the Trusteeship Agreement.

Pangelinan: The situation was somewhat unique during this period. We were under the Naval Administration for a long while, so our exposure to what's happening in the rest of Micronesia was somewhat restricted. There was an increase of anxiety, as a matter of fact, when we learned that the Navy was moving away from Saipan and in its place was a new entity by the name of Trust Territory responsible to Interior. Our people were just apprehensive about it.

Willens: Did the Northern Marianas people feel they had benefited disproportionately compared with their other Micronesian districts because they had the Naval Administration.

Pangelinan: The Naval Administration had done a remarkable job. They were the source of employment, socialized medicine, free education in one nut. There was nothing else to compare it with, so there was a sense of security that the Navy provided at that particular time. There was some real anxiety when another entity planned to move to the Northern Marianas. Fortunately, because the capital was moving here, there was some concerted effort to assure the people that jobs will be taken over by the new government and Saipan in particular being the capital was going to have real opportunities for more employment. Overall, I think there were both anxieties as well as optimism. First of all, we didn't have any choice in the matter, so you live by what's available. Yes, the Trust Territory government did offer an important impression that there was more money available now. Also there was a kind of unusual twist here. The first High Commissioner that came to Saipan was a guy by the name of Will Goding. He had a deputy who looked like a Micronesian by the name of Joe Benitez. Benitez had a great affection for the people around here.

Willens: He was from Puerto Rico, was he not?

Pangelinan: From Puerto Rico and he could relate to us. Joe did some crazy things. First of all, he was running around like a real colonial administrator.

Willens: Mr. Benitez was?

Pangelinan: Yes, Mr. Benitez.

Willens: I heard he was very outgoing.

Pangelinan: Yes, a very colorful personality.

- Willens: Why was that good for the Micronesians here?
- Pangelinan: During the war, Saipan was a restricted area in terms of just where you could travel on the island. Half of the island was off limit to people because of the NTTU. That technical training unit controlled the island, so half of the island was off limit. Some of the prime property, like Micro Beach, was restricted to the local people.
- Willens: Denied to the local people?
- Pangelinan: A restricted area, you can't go in there because it's a military facility. It was not like a military facility, it was more like a military reservation.
- Willens: That was one of the better beaches on the island?
- Pangelinan: Yes, that was the best beach on the island. The military would tell you that you don't socialize with the locals. So there was some sense of discrimination felt by the local population. Joe Benitez personally sent a bulldozer. There was a big sign that said off limits to Micro Beach. His first act was to send a bulldozer to tear the sign down. So they opened up the island to the local population. People kind of rallied around him.
- Willens: Was there any increase in economic development as a result of the removal of the security restrictions?
- Pangelinan: No, but the Trust Territory government then was recruiting very aggressively to hire the local population to work for the Trust Territory government. As a matter of fact, while I was still in college in Guam, I was offered a job here to work for Capitol Hill. So there was an assurance on the part of the government that they would hire many Saipanese to work for the Trust Territory.
- Willens: In 1963 the Marianas District Legislature did pass a resolution requesting the administering authority to conduct a plebiscite regarding the political future of the Marianas. This apparently reflected a desire to join with Guam. Do you have a recollection of where that sentiment came from?
- Pangelinan: There was a lot of dialogue over the years going back to right after the war for unification of the islands. Yes, I remember in 1963 an episode because I was still here.
- Willens: Were you politically active at the time?
- Pangelinan: No. I was just kind of following the activities. I was impressed with the leaders at that time going over to Guam to make a case why Guam should support the effort.
- Willens: Who were the leaders you are recalling?
- Pangelinan: The leaders, as a matter of fact, included Senator Borja, Oly Borja. I think at that time Ben Santos was also involved. There were others, the former mayor, Benavente, Antonio Palacios. These old timers included some members of my family.
- Willens: Were these principally members of the Popular Party?
- Pangelinan: No. This was kind of a united group. At that time they were members of the Municipal Council, which took the leadership to promote the dialogue with Guam.
- Willens: The first District Legislature in the Mariana Islands was elected in January of 1963. Did you give any consideration to running for that office?
- Pangelinan: No. I was too busy to begin my political future.
- Willens: Did you have any views at that time whether reunification with Guam was in the interest of you and your family?

- Pangelinan: There was a consensus among the people that there would be an improved economic and political development of the island by our union with Guam. Anyone could travel to Guam at that time and see the difference in lifestyles.
- Willens: What were the key differences?
- Pangelinan: I think the economic development. People have better homes, for one thing. The infrastructure. Better everything.
- Willens: Better everything. The Territorial Party had a view at the time that the Northern Marianas would be better served by negotiating directly with the United States. Do you have any recollection as to the reasons for its position?
- Pangelinan: I think there was strong opposition to associating with another community. The interest had always been to become U.S. citizens. I think some of the Territorial Party leaders felt that we wanted to become part of the United States, not Guam. So there was strong sentiment to talk directly with the federal government rather than just go to Guam.
- Willens: After you graduated in 1965, did you then go immediately to law school?
- Pangelinan: I went to law school in 1966, right.
- Willens: When did you graduate from law school?
- Pangelinan: In 1969.
- Willens: Did you take a year off then between college and law school?
- Pangelinan: No. I graduated in 1966 and went right into law school.
- Willens: And graduated in 1969.
- Pangelinan: 1969.
- Willens: Graduated from Howard University Law School.
- Pangelinan: Yes, I went to Howard.
- Willens: Did you consider any other law schools in the Washington area.
- Pangelinan: Yes. I considered George Washington University because I was a graduate there, but then something happened during that time. I was in Washington during the civil rights march and I watched the black efforts of trying to improve their civil rights. I kind of reflected a bit about this movement. These folks are doing it; there is something for us in Micronesia to learn more about how to pursue that kind of interest. So, in the process of applying to law school, Howard was the first one to accept me. I had an interview. At that time they had an interview process where they really want to find out what you can accomplish. I think my background, somebody coming in from Micronesia, stimulated an interest in the University to say, well maybe there is something that I can learn in law school and apply after graduation. They were the first ones to give me an acceptance.
- Willens: During the years that you were in Washington, did you have any occasion to play a political role back here in the Northern Marianas.
- Pangelinan: No, Howard. The feeling was one of immense isolation. I was totally devoted to pursuing my education and lastly I just didn't have the money to make a living and take a trip to come here. I worked as a summer intern at the Department of the Interior.
- Willens: What year was that?
- Pangelinan: Almost every summer.

- Willens: You worked there for several years, then?
- Pangelinan: Yes. Especially during my law school period. I was indirectly following the activities of what was happening here. At that particular time, the legislature in the Northern Marianas was becoming very active. There was a pilgrimage every year to the United Nations and part of that process was that they would stop in Washington before going up to New York. Whenever a visiting mission from the Northern Marianas came to Washington I was given the privilege to meet the leaders. I always had some discussion about what's happening back on the island.
- Willens: Did you form any views at that time as to what role you wanted to assume when you returned to the Northern Marianas?
- Pangelinan: Not really. At that particular time, the only interest I had was going back home and see what kind of opportunities there were to get involved.
- Willens: Were you the first person from the Northern Marianas to become a lawyer?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I was the first one.
- Willens: You subsequently were admitted to the bar in Washington, D.C.?
- Pangelinan: No. That's a kind of strange situation. I passed the bar in Washington but there was a restriction that you have to be a U.S. citizen to be admitted to the bar, which was very strange.
- Willens: Are you presently a member of any bar?
- Pangelinan: The District of Columbia Bar, yes.
- Willens: But you could not be at the time because you were not a U.S. citizen.
- Pangelinan: No, I could not be because I wasn't a U.S. citizen. But it was important for me to be able to pass the bar, because during the Trust Territory time the easiest way to be admitted to the Trust Territory bar was to pass a bar someplace else. So when I got back, about a month after I got back, I notified the court that I passed the bar.
- Willens: You were then admitted to the TTPI bar.
- Pangelinan: TTPI bar and I also was working as an assistant attorney general for the Trust Territory then.
- Willens: That was your first job?
- Pangelinan: My first job, right. But then close to the end of my first year, the political issue began to percolate.
- Willens: Are you talking about the political status issue?
- Pangelinan: The political status issue back in 1969, 1970. The Congress of Micronesia had established a commission on future status.
- Willens: That is correct.
- Pangelinan: Then we had some members of the Congress, the senators from the Northern Marianas, with different aspirations. So back in the early part of 1970, the situation became pretty strong and I was introduced into the political parties of the Northern Marianas. At that time, my family had strong roots in the Popular Party, so I was pretty much recruited into that Party. In an indirect way, I was not interested in politics at all.

- Willens: Were you aware of the presentation in 1970 by the United States of a so-called Commonwealth Proposal?
- Pangelinan: As a matter of fact, during my internship at the Department of Interior I was exposed to the documents that described the so-called Commonwealth Proposal.
- Willens: You may be able to answer a question that I have been pursuing. That is, whether the Commonwealth Proposal was essentially the same as the organic act or political status act that had been developed within Interior in late 1969 and early 1970.
- Pangelinan: That was the only model available. They just put the word “commonwealth” there to kind of give it a little bit more prestige.
- Willens: The documents seem to suggest that the title was the only change of substance.
- Pangelinan: That’s right. As a matter of fact, the Micronesians found out very quickly that really they just changed the name. It’s basically the organic act.
- Willens: Did you feel free when you were an intern at the Interior Department to express your views on subjects like that, or was it more discreet to remain quiet?
- Pangelinan: I discussed it with a number of officials at the Department of Interior.
- Willens: Did they believe that the act, whether called the commonwealth proposal or an organic act, was an appropriate and satisfactory response to the Micronesian desire for self-government?
- Pangelinan: I kind of presented my position that the Micronesians are not going to be fooled by such a document and it could backfire in the United States because the Micronesians are going to reject it.
- Willens: What did they say to that?
- Pangelinan: They had to offer it first, recognizing that it’s a document that could be improved. I think that’s the assurance—this is just a talking paper.
- Willens: One of the issues that’s worth exploring in the 1960s is the difference between the agencies in Washington as to their understanding of whether the people in Micronesia were ready for self-government. Some agencies took the view that the Micronesians were simply not ready to exercise the authority of self-government. Other agencies asserted that they were. Other agencies said that it didn’t make any difference, we should offer them self-government because that is our obligation under the Trusteeship Agreement. It’s not clear at all that any of these different views were based on facts. Did you personally have a judgment at the time as to whether the Micronesians, particularly in the Northern Marianas, were ready to exercise the responsibilities of self-government?
- Pangelinan: I think one of the biggest mistakes that the federal government has committed is to put the administration of the Trust Territory in the Department of the Interior. No other agency has handled territorial relationships. Being associated with the administration of the Indian community, the officials in the Department of the Interior felt that Micronesia would never be ready. It’s in their self-interest to keep the Micronesians in their status as they were at that particular time.
- Willens: Were there people who were candid to admit that that was their sentiment?
- Pangelinan: This is perhaps almost like a racist attitude. This is going back to the military experience, when most of the people in the military who were sent to the Northern Marianas or this area had this colonial attitude: “We know better than the local people.” There were a lot

of southern people who were sent over here and kind of looked at us in the same frame of mind as, you know, the blacks in the South. I think they are very sure that these islands will never be ready for self-government or anything else.

Willens: Did you understand that the State Department was taking a very different view?

Pangelinan: I was aware that the State Department was getting restless that perhaps we have held on to this island too long and it's time to let go. At least I was aware that there was a different view from the position of Interior.

Willens: You indicated that you were back in Saipan at the time that the Commonwealth Proposal was presented.

Pangelinan: I was in Washington when they were proposing.

Willens: You were in Washington when they were proposing it, but you were then back in Saipan in 1970?

Pangelinan: Right.

Willens: When its rejection was the subject of discussion in the Congress of Micronesia?

Pangelinan: That is correct. I even tried to convince some of my colleagues in the Congress of Micronesia that the proposal may be defective, but it was just a talking paper. I noticed from the very beginning that we could discuss the working document and would have the opportunity to improve it. I think the Micronesians took a very strong position that the proposal was really an insult.

Willens: Are you now recalling discussions at a time when you were in the Congress of Micronesia?

Pangelinan: Yes.

Willens: How did it come to be that you ran for the Congress for Micronesia in 1970?

Pangelinan: I worked for the first year at the Attorney General's office. Then a legal counsel with the Congress of Micronesia offered me a job with the Congress to work as an assistant to the legal counsel. So I was privy to the discussion as staff of the Congress of Micronesia on the proposal itself. At that particular time the interests of the Northern Marianas were becoming very different and so I was approached by the leadership in the Popular Party and encouraged to start giving some serious consideration to running on the Popular Party ticket.

Willens: Who did you run against?

Pangelinan: I ran against Dr. Palacios, who was then a senator for the Northern Marianas. Oly Borja was the senior senator, whose term had not expired yet. But Dr. Palacios was up for reelection.

Willens: When did you decide to run?

Pangelinan: The latter part of 1970, as a matter of fact.

Willens: What were the principal issues in that campaign?

Pangelinan: Largely the status issue. Palacios was very committed to support Micronesian unity, but recognized that the Northern Marianas legislature had expressed a different interest. There was also some other developments. A referendum took place earlier, at which the Northern Marianas voted in support of unification with Guam, but Guam rejected it.

Willens: Did that change the position of the Popular Party with respect to unification with Guam?

Pangelinan: It did. It did change dramatically. As a matter of fact, it was a blessing in disguise in the sense for people like myself who had not been previously involved in politics. I think I was somewhat in a position to advance a different approach. I was not politically identified with any of the parties. I was in the process of joining the Popular Party then. The Popular Party had a leadership problem, saving face for one thing. They were the majority party in the legislature, and had just lost their only hope to become part of the United States through Guam.

Willens: Because of the vote of the Guamanians.

Pangelinan: The Guamanians rejected it, so I and a few others sat down and we said, well, our interest to become part of the United States has not changed. If you want U.S. citizenship, maybe the approach should be different. I understand that.

Willens: If that particular element of reunification with Guam has been removed, what then were the differences between the two parties at the time you ran in 1970 with respect to political status? You said that Dr. Palacios wanted the Marianas to remain with the rest of Micronesia. Was that generally the position of the Territorial Party?

Pangelinan: No. The Territorial Party had not endorsed that position either. The Territorial Party had always felt that it would be much easier to just open a discussion with the federal government. A direct approach. That is the difference between the position of Dr. Palacios and the Territorial Party. Dr. Palacios entertained the position to continue on with the unity of Micronesia and try to develop a status that would accommodate the six districts of Micronesia.

Willens: Did you and the other Popular Party candidates take the position that the Marianas constituents deserved a separate status. That is to say, separate from the rest of Micronesia irrespective of what that status might be?

Pangelinan: No. In respect of what the Micronesian status would be?

Willens: Suppose, for example, the other five districts all said, yes, we want to be a commonwealth and part of the United States, just like you do in the Marianas. Would you and the other Popular Party candidates have said, fine, let's all negotiate a commonwealth status for the entire Micronesia?

Pangelinan: The position of the Northern Marianas has always been very straightforward. The rejection by the Micronesians of the Commonwealth Proposal was indicative that they were not interested in a relationship with the United States. That's very clear.

Willens: Not interested in a relationship of the kind that the Northern Marianas wanted?

Pangelinan: Right. The interest of the Northern Marianas basically stood on the citizenship provision. The people of the Northern Marianas wanted to become U.S. citizens in order to have the privileges associated with being part of the United States. The Micronesians had indicated that any relationship with the U.S., irrespective of what you call it, is not to incorporate a citizenship provision for the people of Micronesia. So, the Northern Marianas position has always been very clear. Citizenship is the key goal and the Micronesians did not want that.

Willens: Had you contemplated running for public office before?

Pangelinan: No, not really. I wanted to establish a practice, basically.

- Willens: Do you consider yourself a political campaigner?
- Pangelinan: No.
- Willens: Did you enjoy it?
- Pangelinan: I got to like it after a while because of the issues involved. I knew nothing else to make the issue become a reality and it was through the political process, and through participation in the Congress of Micronesia or some of the forums, that I saw the opportunity for achieving that goal.
- Willens: After you were elected to the Congress of Micronesia, there were some events in early 1971 that
- Pangelinan: There were some tragic events.
- Willens: By that time, I think the Congress of Micronesia had, I'm not sure about this, created the Joint Committee.
- Pangelinan: Yes. They had created the Joint Committee.
- Willens: While you were in the Congress?
- Pangelinan: Yes.
- Willens: In 1971.
- Pangelinan: Right. They created the Joint Committee and I was selected one of the two members from the Northern Marianas. Myself and Herman Q. Guerrero.
- Willens: Actually I have the Congress of Micronesia itself creating the Joint Committee in August 25, 1970. That would have been before you were elected.
- Pangelinan: Yes, before me, right.
- Willens: You were a member after you were elected?
- Pangelinan: That's correct. The Future Status Commission was created in 1968.
- Willens: The future status?
- Pangelinan: Yes. The Future Political Status Commission.
- Willens: They submitted a report and then there was something called the Micronesian Delegation that conducted the first two rounds of negotiations. In early 1971, the Congress of Micronesia facilities on Saipan were burned. What is your recollection of that event and the reasons for it?
- Pangelinan: It was a sad commentary on the part of the people of the Northern Marianas. I was at home getting ready to go to the Congress of Micronesia and I received a call from no other than Lazarus Salii to find out whether I was coming to the session. I wasn't aware that the building was burned down and I indicated to him that I will be going in about a half an hour. He said Eddie, just for your information, our building has been burned down. It was very shocking news for me. I went up to the Congress of Micronesia and it was a real disaster.
- Willens: It's been suggested that it largely reflected the strong feelings of the Popular Party on the status issue.
- Pangelinan: That's an unfortunate commentary, Howard. It took the leaders of the Northern Marianas by a great surprise. Some people capitalized on that, saying that it was an indication of the disinterest of the Northern Marianas to continue on with the rest of Micronesia and

the taking of violent action to further that kind of interest. We learned later on that the building was burned by one of our own people.

Willens: The official story is that no one ever learned who was responsible for this act of arson and that no prosecutions were ever initiated.

Pangelinan: Yes, that's true. But then after a while we identified the person that did it. It was still several years later. But for historical purposes, I would feel remiss if I do not clarify the point that yes, there was strong emotion and hidden sentiments that were generated at that particular time because of the political status issue.

Willens: Were there other issues that were developing between the Marianas and the other districts that contributed to this separatist movement? For example, in an opening statement to the Marianas Legislature on February 24, 1971, President Santos decried the financial impact of legislative enactments by the Congress of Micronesia. I think this referred to the taxation that was under consideration by the Congress. Do you recall dispute on that subject?

Pangelinan: I do. As a matter of fact, it was an embarrassing part. The Northern Marianas opposed the implementation of the new tax system for the rest of Micronesia because the bulk of the revenue would be generated from this area. At one time, myself, Oly Borja and others went up to the High Commissioner to oppose it very strongly. We actually asked the High Commissioner to veto the proposed tax legislation.

Willens: Did he?

Pangelinan: We went up there with all the leaders and to my great shock and embarrassment, the High Commissioner was ready to meet with us. They pulled out the record of the Congress of Micronesia which had the vote of all the people who voted for the implementation of the new tax system, and it happened that my colleague, Senator Borja, voted with the rest of Micronesia to have the tax system.

Willens: Had that been voted on at a time when you were in the Congress of Micronesia.

Pangelinan: No. It was before.

Willens: That sort of undercut the force of your presentation.

Pangelinan: Yes. Totally, just threw it out.

Willens: The High Commissioner went ahead to approve the legislation?

Pangelinan: Went ahead and approved the legislation, yes.

Willens: The taxation legislation was in place when President Santos gave his speech and when the burning took place?

Pangelinan: That is correct.

Willens: Were there any other substantive issues that were coming to the forefront and revealing the differences between the Marianas and the other districts?

Pangelinan: Well, you know, we were looking for a smart argument in support of our position. There were not too many issues then. I think we had to use the cultural difference of the people of the Northern Marianas, who have always been different from the rest of Micronesia. That is a very poor argument, with almost a condescending, racial overtone involved there. You don't have too many arguments to advance, so we were looking around for as many issues as possible to support the sentiment of the people that our political status aspirations differ from the rest of Micronesia.

- Willens: After the fire, there were a series of Department of Defense intelligence reports suggesting that the Marianas District had access to a number of grenades, small arms and ammunition allegedly lost by the Naval Technical Training Unit in the 1950s. Do you have any recollection of any effort by the Marianas to accumulate arms?
- Pangelinan: Actually, there were a lot of small firearms that were left behind. This was long before, right after the war. Almost every family has a carbon or two M1. I used to have one or two at home. As far as having firearms, that's not a problem. The problem is that we don't have ammunition. This is probably unfair, but again it will add some color to the history here. Much of that reporting was from a guy by the name of John Dorrance, who was then the liaison officer here in Saipan. John was the kind of guy who got excited very easily.
- Willens: Can you recall any specific examples?
- Pangelinan: Oh, yes. John used to smoke a long cigarette. He was a good friend and I could always tease him. I would go in front of him and say, testing, testing, we've got a few firearms down in the legislature. It was sort of like I had a microphone and John used to really get irritated. There were times when I told him, John, there's a boat coming in with a shipment of arms to help the Northern Marianas insurrection. John would run down to the harbor, to the dock, to see whether the ship had arrived. It was a trick that we had pulled on John so many times. And it was so totally unfair.
- Willens: He did write very long and detailed reports over a long period of time. Back to Washington, he reported on conversations with you and others. Many of those reports are the only contemporaneous record of what people were saying and doing out here. My question to you is, did you regard him as a trustworthy and objective reporter?
- Pangelinan: Well, Howard, we pretty much generated the gossip, like I said, that is unfair, because we were creating it for the benefit of John Dorrance more than anything else. Then the *Marianas Variety* used to pick up all these little tidbits and Younis used to run the paper here. So we were having fun here with two expatriates who really were the only sources of newsworthy information. Like I said, sometimes we generated this gossip to just get people excited. There were really never any firearms or any act of violence, except for the burning of the Congress of Micronesia buildings, but that was an isolated act of one individual.
- Willens: Putting the rumors aside, and the games played with Mr. Dorrance, he did seem to have the interests of the people here in mind. Did you have a personal relationship with him that would enable you to judge where his sympathies were on the status issue?
- Pangelinan: I think John had always indicated that it would be to our best interests to be part of the United States. It's always been very clear that he was reserved in articulating that. Officially, because of his position, he was here to be an impartial observer. Considering there have been allegations that the United States was behind the separatist movement, he was always very cautious.
- Willens: He then did have some sympathy with the separatist movement here, although he obviously was restrained in his ability to express it?
- Pangelinan: Informally, yes. I guess it's also true too of a lot of expatriates, except those working for the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: You were quoted after the burning incident to the effect that the Marianas are going to file legal procedures and that the next step would be a meeting with the United States to discuss how to go about terminating our status legally. Did the burning incident cause you to think of new methods for raising the status issue with the United States?

Pangelinan: It was an opportunity to get attention, more than anything else. Like I said, we are always good at capitalizing on a problem; and the fire was I think the most strong and somewhat unfortunate way because of the violence involved there to get attention. I think that at least the officials here representing the United States were convinced that the Northern Marianas were taking more dramatic steps to achieve its goals.

Willens: There was some reference in the materials to the fact that there were members of Congress who visited here in March of 1971. The delegation included the Ambassador at Large, David Kennedy, and there is some evidence that there was a meeting in which you participated with these visiting members of Congress and the status issue was presented. Do you have any recollection of that particular visit?

Pangelinan: Yes. Again, we took advantage of any opportunity that is available to us.

Willens: Who came, do you remember?

Pangelinan: All I know is that we requested for a meeting with the Ambassador and it was an open forum. My group had to prepare a statement to present to him for his own consumption.

Willens: You prepared that for delivery at the meeting or in advance of the meeting?

Pangelinan: At the meeting.

Willens: When you say our group, who do you mean?

Pangelinan: Again, I was in the leadership of the Northern Marianas then.

Willens: Were you speaking on the part of the congressional delegation or representing the Northern Marianas?

Pangelinan: It's a mixed bag because I was considered the senior leader in the delegation. There were four of us in the Congress of Micronesia, actually there were five of us all together, four from the Popular Party. So I was elected by the group to be the spokesman for the delegation. Our position was identical with the Legislature's.

Willens: The Marianas District Legislature?

Pangelinan: The Marianas Legislature, right.

Willens: Were you maintaining during those months a close relationship with President Santos and other leaders in the Legislature?

Pangelinan: Yes. We were all dedicated to the effort; it was a very close working relationship.

Willens: There was some indication that when Senator Borja saw the election results in 1970, he began to doubt whether he should remain a member of the Territorial Party. Was he now more or less on board with you and your Popular Party colleagues with respect to the status issue?

Pangelinan: I think Senator Borja is probably one of the very few political geniuses in the Northern Marianas. He was a real survivor and at that time he really didn't have any choice. He saw the composition of the delegation and Oly was not about to be left behind. Fortunately, Oly has always been a spokesman for the Commonwealth. His interests personally were identical to our interests, except that he didn't have the leadership position of representing the delegation. But Oly from the very beginning was a commonwealth man. That was interesting.

Willens: Just to follow up on that meeting with Ambassador Kennedy and the others, do you recall getting any reaction one way or the other to your presentation?

- Pangelinan: The only reaction we had was that he committed himself to articulate our interests when he got back to Washington.
- Willens: Up to that point, had you had any prior experience in dealing with members of Congress or senior U.S. political leaders on the Marianas status question?
- Pangelinan: No, not really. There was a guy by the name of Neiman Craley here. He was a former member of Congress so we looked at him as a window of opportunity for at least keeping informed of what was going on. For whatever reason, we felt that we had to tap every individual who could express the interest of the Northern Marianas. That was pretty much a strength on the part of our leadership.
- Willens: Did Mr. Craley have any position that he shared with you with respect to the separate negotiations?
- Pangelinan: Mr. Craley was sympathetic to our position, although he was an official of the Trust Territory Administration.
- Willens: On the whole, am I correct in assuming that the Trust Territory Administration was not supportive of the separatist movement in the Marianas? Or did they remain neutral?
- Pangelinan: They tried to remain neutral. I think the High Commissioner tried to remain neutral because of his position, but you cannot separate him from his personal interests. That's how Micronesians approach an elected official. Yes, he may be wearing a hat as an official of the government, but we always look at him and say well, he has a personal interest involved here.
- Willens: Explain that for me.
- Pangelinan: We know that the High Commissioner would never officially endorse the interest of the Northern Marianas to separate itself from the rest of Micronesia. We recognized that.
- Willens: To become a part of the United States?
- Pangelinan: Right. At least from our perspective, we thought it would almost be an act of treason for a federal official, although he is in a position where he has to remain neutral, to not be sympathetic to our cause. We know for a fact that in aspects of his personal life, meeting with other people, he would somewhere or another be advancing, or at least articulating, what the Northern Marianas wanted. We recognized that as a very significant way of communicating the status interests of the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: Do you think he had personal interests that were more or less aligned against separate status for the Marianas?
- Pangelinan: We recognized that he would not do anything to stop us. I think that was, in our opinion, a plus for our position.
- Willens: What was your sense of the attitude of District Administrator Ada?
- Pangelinan: Well, we were not at all concerned about it.
- Willens: I've heard conflicting views. In the materials on this subject, some have suggested he was absolutely neutral and others suggest that he, like other district administrators, had a vested interest in the status quo and so any change that would threaten his stature was something that he would not favor. Do you have a reaction to those alternative views?
- Pangelinan: Again Howard, there was a point in time in our leadership that we recognized that some people would be effective, others would not. The district administrator was recognized as part of the Trust Territory government and it would be foolish for us to try to influence

him. It would be a waste of time for us even to try to convince him where we stand. He knows what's happening. In all the time that I was involved, I kept my distance from him.

Willens: Did you reach a conclusion that from his position as District Administrator responsible to the High Commissioner, he could not, in effect, interfere with your status aspiration?

Pangelinan: Yes. I drew that position and just let it go.

Willens: Was that assumption on your part proven to be accurate over time?

Pangelinan: Again, I was more concerned about whatever action is taken.

Willens: Did you and your Popular Party colleagues view him as more politically aligned with the Territorial Party at the time?

Pangelinan: He was, as a matter of fact, with the Territorial Party. His friends were basically those who were the Territorial Party. I thought that it would be of no value for me in my position to be consulting with Frank Ada.

Willens: You talk as though you and your colleagues were looking around with some care to see what the sources were for support and possible opposition to your position, and that makes eminently good sense. Did you find any basis for support of your position in the business community?

Pangelinan: Yes, as a matter of fact, I'm trying to name at least one or two of the Chamber of Commerce members who were.

Willens: Who were the businessmen? Let me list some of the names that I have heard. I mean Oly Borja was, of course, regarded as a business person. So was Mr. Villagomez and David Sablan. And a few others who were members of the Chamber of Commerce. Was the Chamber of Commerce regarded by you as a viable participant in the community?

Pangelinan: No. Because we recognized that they were not contributing to our efforts.

Willens: Which efforts, your political status efforts?

Pangelinan: Political efforts plus the funding of the campaign. We took a very simplistic approach to this thing. The only thing that matters was the Legislature because of the available funding and its status as the official body articulating the interests of the Northern Marianas. We recognized that in the final analysis we would have to go back to every sector of the community, including the business community, to get their support. The early part of our efforts to generate interest on the political status issue was limited to basically the Legislature and the Popular Party.

Willens: One of the reasons advanced over a long period of time in statements in favor of a separate status was that the political stability that would result was a necessary basis for economic development. The argument seems to have been developed that the business interests from the outside and here would prosper under a close permanent relationship with the United States. Was that an argument that did have some support in the local business community?

Pangelinan: Well you know, at that particular time the economy was not that substantial.

Willens: Let's talk about 1971. What was there on the island, for example, as a hotel other than the Royal Taga?

Pangelinan: The Royal Taga, a mickey mouse operation and other than that, that's basically

Willens: A small Hafa Adai motel.

- Pangelinan: Yes, the Hamilton up on the hill.
- Willens: There was a Hamilton restaurant up on the hill, but not much beyond that. Isley Field hadn't been developed?
- Pangelinan: No, Continental was fighting with Herman Guerrero to get the property where the Hyatt is now.
- Willens: But you're saying that the economic development here was very limited. I guess the question is whether the local people were prepared to keep it on that level or did they think that opening the community up and becoming a commonwealth would be beneficial to them?
- Pangelinan: Well, we used again the model of Guam. Whenever you have the federal government, there are activities that come along with it that would generate a considerable amount of economic activities on the island. There was very limited development going on when we were discussing political status in the early years. But we tried to give a persuasive argument that yes, political stability is a necessary element for economic prosperity. We looked at Guam and said, look at what's happening in Guam. We can emulate whatever is happening in Guam here because of the change in status.
- Willens: There was an official resolution of the District Legislature threatening to secede from the United States at about the same time as the burning of the Congressional facilities. How did you feel at the time about this kind of resolution? Did you think they were effective means of communicating your sentiment?
- Pangelinan: It's again going back to the sense of frustration. We have just been kicked by Guam. The strategy and the approach became a little bit more stronger, and so words like rebellion were added to our vocabulary. It got some attention.
- Willens: It certainly did get some attention. I have some information that Congresswoman Mink requested the American Law Division of the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress to examine whether such a secession effort for the Marianas would be lawful. Notwithstanding these various resolutions and actions, the United States government continued to adhere to its long-standing position that there should be a common status for the entire Trust Territory. When do you remember having your first conversation with any representative of the United States negotiating team on the subject of the possibility of separate status negotiations?
- Pangelinan: It was a somewhat of an inadvertence. The first official meeting of the Joint Committee on Future Status was held in Hana, Maui.
- Willens: This was the first
- Pangelinan: This was the first meeting in which I was a member of the delegation.
- Willens: That's correct.
- Pangelinan: I went to Hana, Maui, which at that particular time was not the best place to hold a political status negotiation of any nature because of the beauty of the area and its isolation. So one day, I had nothing else to do because I was not involved in a leadership position, and I was going around and there was this little church.
- Willens: A what?
- Pangelinan: A little church in the community there. I was admiring the flowers and the plants there and I saw a mango tree in the back of the church, actually it was in the cemetery. I went there and to my surprise there was Ambassador Hummel. So we got to, you know, extend

greetings in a very informal way and we just kind of looked at each other. We didn't have much to say, so I said well, Mr. Ambassador, I know that we are here to negotiate the future status of Micronesia but since we are here in the vicinity of the church, on a very informal basis, I just want you to know that the Northern Marianas is going to articulate a different position during these negotiations. So I guess that would be probably the first informal indication that we were going to present a position paper articulating our desire for a different status. We did present such a position to the Joint Committee.

Willens: Do you recall a visit by Ambassador Williams to the Northern Marianas in or about July 1971, a few months after he was appointed, during which he had various meetings on the island?

Pangelinan: Yes, I think so. I am trying to recall what our group had done on that occasion.

Willens: Let me refresh your recollection, if I may. There is some evidence in the documents, particularly a memorandum by Dorrance that reports in some detail about a meeting by Ambassador Williams with the Territorial Party representatives in the Marianas. They presented a position paper to him that strongly favored a unified Micronesia, but in close and irrevocable association with the United States. They expressed opposition to the alternative of independence and to the Four Principles. The people there included the president of the party, Jesus Mafnas; Joeten and Joe Screen were there among others. One of the points they made was that placing more Micronesians in the Trust Territory government had actually resulted in disunification within the Trust Territory. They also maintained that the U.S. Commonwealth Proposal was overly generous. Apparently the Popular Party maintained that Williams' visit was essentially unnecessary; there is a speech by Santos saying the visit was helpful but not necessary because the majority of the people here favored a permanent association with the United States. In any event, the United States anticipated a request for separate negotiations. It may come as a surprise to you to know that during the fall of 1971 they prepared a whole series of position papers and talking points to use with you during a meeting that they expected to have with you in Hawaii. Ambassador Hummel wrote a memo indicating that he met with you and Representative Guerrero pursuant to a plan and that you participated "sitting on tombstones behind the congressional church at Hana Maui." Does that suggest to you that, in fact, it had been informally arranged that you would try to find some remote place where you could talk briefly on the subject without being seen or overheard?

Pangelinan: Well, I don't recall that, Howard, because I had nothing to hide really. My position was always very clear even to my colleagues in the Congress of Micronesia. One of the things that I would have to emphasize is the fact that clandestine activity is not one of my strong points. Like I said, this visit to the church was basically out of boredom. I went over there and I was actually looking for mangoes and there was Ambassador Hummel. I don't know whether Herman Guerrero had arranged that or what. But I was always very careful because the Micronesians always suspected me as too friendly to the U.S. delegation.

Willens: It's your best recollection today that you personally had not arranged the meeting in the graveyard with Ambassador Hummel?

Pangelinan: No. I had no recollection of arranging for it. No, I stand very clear that I was not at all involved in any kind of prearranged meeting.

Willens: In trying to retrace the events that led to that meeting in Hawaii, you don't have any recollection of meeting Ambassador Williams during his first trip to Saipan earlier that summer, is that correct?

- Pangelinan: That's correct. As a matter of fact, I was trying to jog my memory whether our political party or the Legislature made any reference to that particular visit. I could have been out of town.
- Willens: As I've shown you, President Santos did make a speech before the August 1971 session of the Marianas District Legislature where he made reference to you and the other Marianas representatives on the Joint Committee and the likelihood that the Marianas would be seeking a separate status. Do you remember any other official means either by you or Congressman Guerrero or President Santos, means of communication to the United States that would have alerted them to the likelihood that there would be an informal overture by you and Congressman Guerrero during the Hawaii session?
- Pangelinan: Well, I think we have exhausted all our lines of communication to convey the interests of the Northern Marianas. The overture that we made subsequently was pretty much articulated in advance. When I met with Ambassador Hummel in Honolulu, I did mention that the chairman was going to make reference to the Marianas separate status preference, so that in itself was an official position of the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: That was very important. Do you remember how that came about? That is, how the chairman was persuaded to make at least a brief statement acknowledging the Marianas desires?
- Pangelinan: We make it very clear, at least Herman Guerrero and I made it very clear, to the chairman that the position of the Northern Marianas was very clear. As a matter of fact, we had a mandate from the Legislature that we were going to articulate our position and, although it may not be possible to present a talking paper, we wanted to place on the record that the sentiment of the Northern Marianas was somewhat different from the rest of the Joint Committee. It was not a difficult task at all. I think that at that particular point the members of the Joint Commission recognized that yes, Eddie Pangelinan was now sitting in the Joint Committee rather than the earlier delegate from the Northern Marianas. So, as I say, we did not want to jeopardize the status negotiations of Micronesia but, on the other hand, I would be in real trouble if I did not articulate the position of the Northern Marianas. Some sort of a record had to be made on our position. Lazarus was generous enough to include that in his opening remarks. We pretty much left it at that.
- Willens: As you recall the conversation with Ambassador Hummel, did you believe that it was necessary for you and the Marianas leadership to take the next step with respect to seeking separate negotiations?
- Pangelinan: Like I said earlier, we always capitalized on any opportunities available to us to advance our position as much as possible. I used the Ambassador as a sounding board. I said here, this is what we want to do, and perhaps we got carried away in telling him exactly our next steps to further this approach.
- Willens: Which Ambassador are you referring to know?
- Pangelinan: Hummel. He was the deputy to Ambassador Williams.
- Willens: As a Joint Committee member, what was your reaction to the Micronesian negotiations that took place in Hawaii and the apparent change in the U.S. position?
- Pangelinan: At that point in time, I think Herman and I took a kind of back-seat approach. We were sympathetic to the Micronesia position. On the other hand, we were not there to disrupt the ongoing discussions. So we took a very low-key attitude, as a matter of fact, almost a total disinterest.

Willens: Did you have any initial reaction to Ambassador Williams when you first saw him as head of the U.S. delegation?

Pangelinan: No. I thought that it was perhaps the best thing that could have happened to have him as the President's Representative. The only thing I knew about the Ambassador was that he was part of the Asian Foundation, which at that particular point in time I didn't really fully understand. But I was pleased to find that now we have a personality who represented the President outside of the Department of the Interior. Perhaps he is the one who could pursue the status issue with the hope that some decision would be reached as to what kind of status can be accommodated not only for Micronesia, but more importantly for us in the Northern Marianas. Now we could identify a person to whom we can communicate directly our interests.

Willens: After the negotiating session, in early 1972 you and Congressman Guerrero prepared a statement for submission to Chairman Saliu setting forth your dissenting views and reasserting your desire for separate status. The statement was dated February 11, 1972. What precipitated the need to put your views in writing?

Pangelinan: Again the need to make a case on the record. It was an effort on our part that we were serious about, what we are pursuing and that it's timely, even though it's a dissenting view. It's a position that had to go on the record.

Willens: Were you asking the Chairman to take some particular action in response to your statement?

Pangelinan: It was a hope that it would be recognized. We were in a very diplomatic way soliciting some comments from the Chairman that recognized the Northern Marianas position and put it on the agenda of the negotiations.

Willens: When the Congress of Micronesia met in January and February of 1972, do you recall any issues that were debated by the Congress that related to the Marianas situation? Let me just refresh your recollection in one regard. The Congress of Micronesia did approve the Joint Committee report. It generally authorized the Joint Committee to continue negotiating along the lines that they had in the last session. It authorized them to interpret the Four Principles as appropriate to further the negotiation. One issue that did come up, of course, reflected the opposition of the so-called Independence Coalition to the work of the Joint Committee. What was your assessment as a member of the Congress of the strength of the independence movement within the Congress of Micronesia in early 1972?

Pangelinan: Actually it helped our case in that the interest of the Northern Marianas to achieve the goal of U.S. citizenship was getting much more difficult because of the separate independence attitude of certain members of the Congress of Micronesia. It almost supported our position that whatever action the Congress of Micronesia was going to take would be much farther away from our aspiration. So we thought that it provided significant support for our position.

Willens: Was it your sense that the Independence Coalition was an articulate minority within the Congress, or did you think they had more strength than that suggests?

Pangelinan: It's leverage that they tried to convey to the U.S. side—that the other option of independence was available to the people of Micronesia.

Willens: Did you think that it was primarily being used as a bargaining lever as contrasted with it being used as truly the preferred political objective of some of its adherents?

- Pangelinan: I think that's there some truth to that. The Micronesians in general were very proud people and they feel that they were entitled to independence, although the economic reality makes it difficult to pursue that kind of status. There was a genuine interest among some members of the Congress of Micronesia that independence is the only way.
- Willens: Who do you regard as having been the most effective advocates of the independence movement?
- Pangelinan: I think the Truk delegation in particular, Tosiwo Nakayama and Andon Amaraich. Yes, those were the two members of the Joint Committee.
- Willens: So the two members of the Joint Committee from Truk in your opinion really had independence as their preferred objective?
- Pangelinan: That is correct.
- Willens: What was your sense in early 1972 of the ability of the other five districts to stay together in the event that the Marianas went its separate way?
- Pangelinan: We thought that there was more affinity among the Micronesians because of their cultural similarities than with the people of the Northern Marianas. We felt that there was also a strong sentiment for some kind of a united Micronesian entity, so we were convinced at the very beginning that the Micronesians are going to have a united governmental body.
- Willens: You frequently were challenged by critics of the separate negotiations as contributing to the fragmentation of Micronesia.
- Pangelinan: Oh yes, I was accused with stronger words than what you're telling me.
- Willens: What is your view today of the fact that the other five districts were not able to remain together? Was it due in part to the Marianas precedent or was it due to factors that were wholly independent of the Marianas, if you can analyze it in that way?
- Pangelinan: I think that from the very beginning, Howard, there was some informal discussion among leaders in the Congress of Micronesia. In particular, I look back on Amata Kabua for example. As well as some leaders in Palau, including Roman Tmetuchl. Roman was articulate in stating that the interest of Palau was different from the rest of Micronesia. Look at the reality of the final political status of this area. The Northern Marianas was not wrong in its decision to pursue a separate status. As a matter of fact, we are in the majority now, because the three distinct political entities that came out as a result of our own efforts. The Republic of the Marshalls is not really part of FSM and the Republic of Palau is just about ready to achieve its separate political identity. Those were the informal sentiments that I and my colleagues realized way back then.
- Willens: There were several comments about that session of the Congress of Micronesia that emphasized the growing decisiveness within the Congress. One issue that was cited as causing this was the allocation of tax revenues. It involves a revenue allocation formula which apparently was rejected to some extent. Do you recall what the nature of that dispute was and what position the Marianas took?
- Pangelinan: We believed that the largest revenue generating entity was the Northern Marianas, because the headquarters were here as well as more opportunities for economic growth here. The Congress of Micronesia had the responsibility to appropriate funds for all of Micronesia and, of course, the Northern Marianas wasn't getting its fair share. We used that again as an excuse to advance our position. We recognized too that there were opportunities here that the rest of Micronesia was not getting because the headquarters was here. Employment opportunities were benefiting our people. But when you don't have too many issues to use

to promote your goal, you couldn't help but look for issues like this, the disproportionate distribution of funds.

Willens: Did you remember that the Marshall Islands also objected strongly to action by the Congress with respect to revenue allocation?

Pangelinan: Oh yes.

Willens: Did they have a similar economic interest to the Marianas?

Pangelinan: Well, you look at it from a very selfish point of view and, in retrospect, it's almost unfair on our part to take advantage of that. I remember very vividly we had another fire back in 1972, I believe. The power plant up on the hill burned down. We had a session in Ponape and the Congress of Micronesia gave all its money to the Northern Marianas in order to purchase a power plant. Nobody made a big issue out of that.

Willens: There was also at about this time a question of making funds available to match funds with respect to the Isley Field development, isn't that correct?

Pangelinan: That is correct. The Northern Marianas stood in a very preferred status than the rest of Micronesia. But I suppose when you had to represent your own district, you became a little bit more aggressive and little bit greedy. I think I can say it now.

Willens: But you wouldn't have said it then.

Pangelinan: No. No. I was crying with hat in hand begging for money.

Willens: There is some evidence that the kinds of issues that we've just been discussing did cause the Marshall Islands and to a lesser extent Palau to seriously consider separate status negotiations—perhaps for tactical reasons. But nonetheless, also because of some of these differences that had developed in the Congress.

Pangelinan: That's true. But, on the other hand, you have to recognize that you are dealing with some very forceful personalities. Even getting to the point of nationalistic individuals. There is no way in the world that Amata Kabua was going to allow himself to be run by the rest of Micronesia. I think it is evident that now he has reached that position where he is in control. Same thing with Palau. Palau was always, from a historical as well as a cultural position, very proud of the fact that they were a more progressive community than the rest of Micronesia. This is a little thing that you don't want to articulate to the rest of the world, but there is some prejudice within ourselves that is self-serving and causes you to want to maintain that kind of identity and control.

Willens: You would be interested in one participant's assessment of that session of the Congress of Micronesia. It was that the Congress began the session "with high expectations for unity among the six delegations but ended just short of further fragmentation, a position where the Congress was almost seven years ago when it was first convened." What is your reaction to that?

Pangelinan: That is a very true statement. It is unfortunate, Howard, that the unity in Micronesia was basically a result of the fact that we have a common enemy. I hate to use that word, but basically the force that kept us together was the United States. There was a strong uncertainty in our mind about what would happen if the scapegoat is set loose. Who is going to keep us together?

Willens: One thing that should be discussed as a result of this session, and perhaps other similar experiences, was that if Micronesia was ever going to be kept together, the central government would be very weak and most important responsibilities would be assigned

to the individual districts. The question is whether you think the Marianas could have survived under that kind of confederation form of government. Survived is one thing, prospered is maybe more the issue.

Pangelinan: The Northern Marianas people are a very practical and realistic group of people. Economic survival has always been a strong point on our part. Even if the capital of Micronesia remains in the Northern Marianas, perhaps looking further down the road there is a strong fear that once you have a Micronesian unity, the capital of Micronesia is not going to be here in Saipan. It doesn't make any sense to have it here in Saipan. So we looked at it from an economic standpoint as to where we were going to sit in a united Micronesian entity.

Willens: One thing I forgot to mention was that, a year earlier than the period we're now talking about, in 1971, the Congress of Micronesia decided to hold a session outside of Saipan because of the burning of the facilities and the fear expressed by members of the Congress. They had the session in Truk and there was a brief Marianas walk-out involving all the members of the Congress of Micronesia delegation from the Marianas including you. But one Congressman, Felipe Atalig, apparently went to the session and to some extent undercut the walk-out. Was there a common plan to defer your appearance at that session of the Congress?

Pangelinan: Yes. We used that ploy. Yes, we did.

Willens: But why?

Pangelinan: It was a decision motivated by emotional interest more than anything else. Again another threat.

Willens: What was it a threat directed against? Members of your delegation?

Pangelinan: No. I use the word threat, but I think it's an expression of strong sentiment that the Northern Marianas was going to take a different route. In retrospect, it really was a bad mistake.

Willens: Did the walk-out have any beneficial effects whatsoever?

Pangelinan: Well, we finally attended the session in Truk. So looking back, I think that was a loss on our part. A loss of face that we had to accept. Felipe Atalig benefited more than anybody else because he got good publicity. I think we were entitled to some setbacks. I look back and say, gee, you know that's a totally poor judgment on our part to take that position.

Willens: You were quoted as describing Congressman Atalig's action in attending the session as that of a "turncoat" and maintained that he did not represent anyone. Does that sound like something you might have said at the time?

Pangelinan: Well no, like I said now, I am saying it's a bad mistake and I kind of regret we did that.

Willens: Let's then turn to the April 1972 Micronesian negotiations in Palau. It was on this occasion, April 11, 1972, that you and Representative Guerrero presented a formal letter to Ambassador Williams requesting separate Marianas negotiations. Who wrote the letter?

Pangelinan: We did.

Willens: We being you and Herman?

Pangelinan: Herman.

Willens: Did the two of you do most of your own writing?

- Pangelinan: No. We had some help.
- Willens: Was Bill Nabors someone that you looked to for help?
- Pangelinan: No.
- Willens: Were there some private citizens who may have helped in this regard?
- Pangelinan: We had staff.
- Willens: You had some staff in your capacity as a member of Congress?
- Pangelinan: As a member of Congress, right.
- Willens: You had access to lawyers and others as a member of the Congress of Micronesia.
- Pangelinan: Yes. The Congress of Micronesia was very generous in making staff available to help us.
- Willens: There was staff there that you were confident you could rely upon to assist you with respect to your separate negotiations objectives?
- Pangelinan: We wanted to articulate our position and we just needed some technical help to put it in writing so that we could present it. At that particular point, we were not really concerned about confidentiality on where we stand, we just wanted to get it out.
- Willens: Had you alerted the U.S. delegation to the fact that there would be a formal request submitted?
- Pangelinan: I think indirectly we did make that abundantly clear to the U.S. delegation that yes, something is forthcoming. Although we had not made any informal draft available for their review.
- Willens: Did you have assurances before you submitted the letter that the United States would respond affirmatively?
- Pangelinan: No, I didn't. I don't know whether anyone has make any reference to that, but we were determined at that particular time that we were going to make our position clear.
- Willens: Let's begin this way. You knew because of your prior conversation with Ambassador Hummel and your general sense that the United States expected the initiative to come from the Marianas, is that correct?
- Pangelinan: We knew that the initiative had to come from us, nobody is going to help us.
- Willens: The letter was a way to seize the initiative and present your request?
- Pangelinan: That's right.
- Willens: There apparently was a trip by Ambassador Hummel to Saipan in December of 1971 in connection with which the U.S. representatives were considering again how to respond to an anticipated request from the Marianas. The United States was of the view that they might be able to respond affirmatively if the Congress of Micronesia endorsed or at least acknowledged the desire of the Marianas for separate discussions with the United States. At the time you presented your April 11, 1972 letter, had you received any expression of consent from the Congress of Micronesia to such separate negotiations?
- Pangelinan: It's interesting, because we did force the issue with Senator Salii.
- Willens: At the earlier session of the Micronesian status negotiation?
- Pangelinan: Not only that. When we got to Palau we kind of asked Lazarus that we would like to make

- a formal presentation to the American delegation outside of the Micronesian forum. For some reason, he said yes.
- Willens: He said go ahead.
- Pangelinan: Yes, he said go ahead.
- Willens: Did you try during the Congress of Micronesia session to present a joint resolution that would have authorized the conduct of separate negotiations with the United States?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I think we were introducing a resolution and proposed legislation. I had no expectation that it would be accepted.
- Willens: The record suggests that you ultimately withdrew the resolution on advice of some who said it would basically be defeated.
- Pangelinan: We knew that. Except for the Marianas delegation, we had no hope of advancing any resolution. But I remember between Oly Borja and myself we were very productive in generating all kind of resolutions and proposed legislation.
- Willens: You also apparently decided, and tell me if this is correct or not, not to submit formally the minority status report that you filed with Chairman Salii expressing the Marianas sentiments. We made earlier reference to a February statement to Salii and you and Congressman Guerrero apparently considered at one point making that an official part of the Joint Committee's report. There is some indication in a Dorrance telegram based on conversations with unidentified individuals, but probably you and Congressman Guerrero, to the effect that you had decided not to submit that minority report, but that you had been told that the Joint Committee would raise the separate status issue at the next round of Micronesian talks. Do you have any recollection of the Joint Committee agreeing during the Congress of Micronesia session that they would raise this issue of separate status on your behalf in the next meeting with the U.S. delegation?
- Pangelinan: No. I think they got to the point where we became a nuisance. Again I give credit to Lazarus, because Lazarus was very patient and very understanding and also a very forceful individual. He would say: "You know, Eddie, if you want to advance your position, I don't give a damn about it. I'm not going to stop you from doing it." I think that's the kind of message that we got from him.
- Willens: He did offer to advance it on your behalf though?
- Pangelinan: No. He did not say that. If we wanted to advance it, he said he wouldn't stop us. Perhaps that was a mistake on his part.
- Willens: You felt that at the very least you had support from him to at least present it on your own behalf.
- Pangelinan: We recognized that he's not going to stop us. We thought that it was an informal go-ahead to make the presentation.
- Willens: You did have some concern, it appears, as to what the U.S. was going to do and Dorrance reported that to Ambassador Williams. Williams then advised Dorrance to communicate some reassurances to you along the lines that the United States would take into account the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned. The most important assurance was that the U.S. would feel obliged to respond affirmatively to a request for separate talks that had the clear support of the Marianas people and could therefore be defended in the United Nations. Do you recall receiving informally through Dorrance any assurances along that line before April 1972?

- Pangelinan: Howard, I made it very clear in the earlier discussion that Dorrance was a kind of personality that sometimes we kid around. No. If there were any assurance it was not from John Dorrance. No, I don't.
- Willens: I don't think there is any impropriety or irrationality to that course of action. As I understand it, Dorrance is simply reporting or confirming what you intend to do and you are trying to learn as much as you can about what the U.S. is likely to say in response. Certainly, as a political leader you don't want to run a substantial risk of being turned down cold. Correct?
- Pangelinan: No. Because there was a point where we were getting desperate already and out of desperation we had nothing to lose. We knew that we could have been stopped along the way, but one of our strong points was the consistency of advancing our position irrespective of any negative reaction. My recollection is that this is another effort on our part to move forward. There may be some discussion that I don't recall. At this particular point in time, Howard, my focus was basically on the Ambassador.
- Willens: Ambassador Williams?
- Pangelinan: Ambassador Williams, right. It's him from whom I need to get some kind of a reaction.
- Willens: Right.
- Pangelinan: So, the reason for the letter in April of 1972 was basically to get a response officially from Ambassador Williams. This is almost like a formal request now.
- Willens: Was Ambassador Williams advised in advance that you were going to submit this letter on April 11?
- Pangelinan: I may have put out some feelers. Palau is such a small community. I remember that I used to jog with two or three of Ambassador Williams' military advisors. I never hesitated one minute to articulate our position. Perhaps the Ambassador was fully aware of our position on what we are trying to do.
- Willens: He responded promptly the next day as I understand it.
- Pangelinan: No question about it. That's right. As a matter of fact, he responded when we told him that we were going to make a presentation. It was very encouraging. He gave us the assurance that yes, they were going to respond very quickly.
- Willens: When he responded in an affirmative way, can you recapture any emotion or intellectual reaction that you had to that final conclusion on these many years of effort?
- Pangelinan: I thought that it was a very moving experience—at least for me. I thought that it was a formal response from the U.S. government. Yes, we want to talk to you. I look at Herman in retrospect, I used to say you know, we got it, we made it. Now we can move forward.
- Willens: How would you describe Congressman Herman Q. Guerrero during those years as a colleague of yours and a political leader?
- Pangelinan: Herman was not only a colleague, he was a confidant. A very strong supporter. I think Herman was the rock behind. He was a very determined individual, very articulate and dedicated. I would always consult with him. I had the privilege of being the spokesman, but I would not do anything without getting Herman to agree. Herman was a leader.
- Willens: Was there something special about his background or training that had persuaded him of the wisdom of this particular objective? What brought him to this position.

- Pangelinan: Yes, Herman had always been the leader of the Democratic Party or the Popular Party then. He took it upon himself to advance the interests of the Northern Marianas all those years. I think he had some shortcomings. Basically, he didn't have the educational background that I was privileged to pursue. He didn't have the popular support to become a senator, which is different from a representative because of the limited geographic area. So Herman recognized his position, but on the other hand he was always very persistent. There were times when I would say, Herman, we got a problem. For example, when the United States made it very clear that they didn't want to entertain separate discussions. Where do we go from here? He would always say: "Well, we have no other way to go. Let's keep plugging on." He was always very supportive. We were united in our effort but Herman was the strength behind our team.
- Willens: Ed, at the same session where you presented the request for separate negotiations and Ambassador Williams responded affirmatively, the Joint Committee counsel submitted a position paper stating that such separate negotiations were not lawful. Do you have any knowledge as to how that statement came to be prepared?
- Pangelinan: We knew the position of the Congress of Micronesia that there was a limit to what individual members of the Congress could do acting outside of the Congress. We recognized that. It really didn't matter to us. We achieved the goal of getting a response from the U.S. delegation and that's the only thing that matters to us.
- Willens: Did there come a time when you were made aware that there was certainly a legal answer to most of the contentions advanced by the Joint Committee's counsel?
- Pangelinan: No. I was more concerned as to what sanction they could impose on us and there was none.
- Willens: So you found it an interesting piece of legal work but not of particular significance?
- Pangelinan: No. They cannot make it stick.
- Willens: Following that agreement by Ambassador Williams to engage in separate negotiations, what steps were taken by you and your colleagues to get those negotiations moving?
- Pangelinan: First, I believe the acceptance of Ambassador Williams to agree to a separate status negotiation for the Northern Marianas was welcome news that got everybody excited. So the first step was to go to the Legislature and get some kind of authority to create a commission. At that time there was a real concern for setting up a commission that would be acceptable to the political leaders of the Northern Marianas, in particular those that are not in full support of separate status negotiations. There was some sentiment expressed particularly by the people of Rota about how exactly they were going to fit into the future status. At that particular time Rota had one of those unique relationships. Rota was under the Trust Territory all the time that the Northern Marianas was under the Naval Administration. There was real concern on the part of the leadership of Rota that Rota would be shortchanged in the event that the Northern Marianas pursued a separate status negotiation.
- Willens: During the years that you and Herman Q. Guerrero were actively advancing the idea of separate negotiations, had you undertaken any discussions with leaders from Rota to keep them apprised as to what you were doing and how you were seeking to achieve that objective?
- Pangelinan: Fortunately for us, we had a delegate in the Congress of Micronesia from Rota—that was Felipe Atalig. So we kept the Rota leaders informed as to their full participation in the commission that we were going to establish. As a result of that, we pretty much come up

with an idea of not only expanding participation for the people of Rota but others that we were concerned might be potential opponents to the status negotiations.

Willens: Who were some of those other potential opponents?

Pangelinan: We looked at the business community for one thing. We looked at the Carolinian group. Those were two elements that we felt important to be considered for participation.

Willens: What were the indications that you had received that the business community might be less than enthusiastic about separate negotiations?

Pangelinan: There were some uncertainties as to the economic aspect of our separate status. There were a lot of territory-wide business relationships then. TAG, the airline at that time, represented not only Saipan but the rest of Micronesia. They played an important element in the economic prosperity of the island at that particular time. In a number of meetings of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, there were vocal interests that gave us the impression that any status negotiations short of unity for Micronesia might be subject to some criticism or some concern. I and those that were leading the development of the status committee had to be cognizant of the fact that we had to set up a body that would encompass every conceivable group that might eventually give us some setback in the future.

Willens: Staying with the business community for a moment, I don't understand why business leaders would think that their economic fortunes would be better protected within a unified Micronesia rather than in some separate status for the Northern Marianas.

Pangelinan: I think the uncertainties were probably what that gave them some concern. It's kind of hard to determine exactly where their main interests lay at that particular time, but I was looking at it from the concern that I just cannot afford any kind of serious opposition coming out from the Congress of Micronesia. In expressing my own opposition to the unity of Micronesia, I was always compelled to insure that any voice that may jeopardize this new entity that we are establishing has to be taken into serious consideration.

Willens: One of the aspects of this that I think is difficult to recapture after 20 years was the sense of uncertainty with respect to change that existed at the time. I think that people find it difficult to understand that the Trust Territory provided a very secure environment in which business could operate and that any change carried with it uncertainties that people found troubling. Is that a sentiment that you think was at work?

Pangelinan: Definitely. That is not only a sentiment but a very vocal one. Many of the business leaders at that particular time and I don't want to mention any names, Howard, had expressed to us that any disruption on their investment in the island because of political status was going to impact overall investment here. We had to take that into consideration.

Willens: Originally, it had been planned that a proposal would be put before the District Legislature at its next regular session in August of 1972. A decision appears to have been made, however, to have a special session convened in May of 1972 in order to create a status committee of some kind. Do you remember any discussions as to when the Legislature might meet to consider this issue?

Pangelinan: We had the advantage of a close working relationship with the leadership of the Legislature. At that time I was blessed with the fact that I can go to the Legislature, meet with the leaders there, and pretty much suggest to them how fast they can move. So there was a lot of preparatory work as soon as Herman and I got back from Palau; there were informal meetings with the president of the Legislature then, Ben Santos. We had a close working relationship and, of course, Ben was kept pretty much informed of what was happening.

- The first thing we did was address the need to establish a body. Ben Santos asked me and Herman to suggest draft legislation that would create the commission. Our legal counsel and I drafted a proposal for the creation of the Marianas Political Status Commission. It's pretty much a simplified approach reflecting our intent of giving the Commission a fairly wide, broad responsibility to undertake status discussions with the appropriate federal officials.
- Willens: After the Palau session, it's my understanding that Ambassador Williams came to Saipan and met with some of the political leaders. Do you remember what the purpose of those discussions was?
- Pangelinan: The purpose there was to alert the leaders of the Northern Marianas that the United States had agreed to future separate status discussions with the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: Did Ambassador Williams or any other U.S. representative make any suggestion to you as to how the Marianas should organize itself to deal with the negotiations?
- Pangelinan: The Ambassador did not. He was very cautious as to even suggesting an approach and pretty much left it to us. He basically was saying that this is now your responsibility; you have to find a vehicle to conduct the status negotiations. I think we had pretty much agreed that this was our responsibility. We knew how to go about doing it. We were also very cautious to avoid any outside criticism regarding federal or U.S. interference in how we run our own affairs. I think the Ambassador's visit was basically to just to informally touch base with the leaders here.
- Willens: Did he manage to establish a good rapport with the political leaders here in the Marianas that he had not previously met?
- Pangelinan: I think the biggest rapport was that the Northern Marianas had been asking for something like this and it happened. We took it as a real affirmative action on the part of the U.S. government to accommodate us. So it was taken with real joy.
- Willens: To some extent, you understandably believed that the Ambassador was instrumental in bringing about that change in U.S. policy?
- Pangelinan: No question about it, yes. We were very grateful that it happened during his leadership.
- Willens: The legislation that was proposed and ultimately adopted explicitly tried to include representatives from diverse segments of the community. In particular, one of the fifteen slots was allocated to the Carolinian community. Was there any debate within the Legislature or in the community generally as to the desirability of including a Carolinian on the Marianas Political Status Commission:
- Pangelinan: We had two, and looking back I was somewhat pleased with the way we approached this. At that time, we were very concerned about giving an appropriate impression in a formal setting like in the Legislature. We recognized that eventually this would be debated in the Legislature. We took one step to help us. We felt that we had to discuss the composition of the Commission in a private informal setting, instead of drafting the proposed legislation and giving it to the Legislature to introduce it. We felt that what we needed was to have a talking document—a legislative proposal resulting from the leaders meeting in an informal setting, almost like behind closed doors. Regarding the details of its composition, I had raised the question that it is important to have a united body and to ensure that any potential opposition to the Commission be represented. We started out with the legal representation of the community, the municipalities of the various islands—Rota, Tinian, Saipan—and so we handled that very nicely. We felt that the Congress of Micronesia, in which I was a member, had to be represented because that is a legal body. We started out

with the Congress of Micronesia, the Legislature, and the municipalities. Then we felt that the private sector had to be represented. We had one slot for the business community. Then we decided that, although there were few residents in the Northern Islands, they wanted representation. Then the question of representation from different cultural groups arose and at that time the Carolinian community was a very important group in the Northern Marianas. We felt that they had to be represented. Fortunately, there was not much opposition.

Willens: Were there any Carolinian representatives in the District Legislature at the time that these discussions were being carried out?

Pangelinan: No. I believe there were none. The Legislature was composed on an island-wide basis and there were times when the Carolinian community was not represented. You cannot overlook the fact that there is another group of people that are part of the community. There was a sentiment among those of us in the leadership that these people have to be represented one way or the other.

Willens: After the legislative proposal was formally introduced, there were public hearings at which several dozen witnesses appeared. Several witnesses wanted the number of Commission members to be increased and others expressed doubt about the limited amount of money, \$25,000, that had been allocated to cover the Commission's cost. Do you remember any of these issues being raised?

Pangelinan: Yes. The composition of the Commission was one of the problems, but the bigger problem was the fact that the Marianas Legislature then was broke. It was difficult for us to establish a Commission without any money; \$25,000 at that particular time was an enormous amount of money. That was almost like fifty percent of the total appropriation of the Legislature. That was an issue that we just kind of left behind to say, well listen, this money, whatever you have, give it to us. My interest at that time was to establish a Commission so that there was some official body that was going to be responsible for any kind of discussions in the future. There was a lot of discussion of just how large this Commission was going to be. From my own experience in the Micronesian status negotiations, I felt that it had to be a manageable group.

Willens: How big was the Joint Committee?

Pangelinan: The Joint Committee had two from each district, so they had twelve.

Willens: Do you believe that a group of fifteen was manageable?

Pangelinan: I thought that it was a sizable group but it would be manageable.

Willens: Were there efforts made to enlarge the Commission to represent different kinds of interests?

Pangelinan: There is always some enterprising individual on the island. There were efforts to include the religious groups on the island. There were others who felt that perhaps other bodies should be given more representation.

Willens: Do you have any other recollection of the public hearings or the process by which ultimately the Legislature approved the proposal?

Pangelinan: This is in retrospect perhaps, but we felt that this was so important and wanted to ensure that the passage of this particular legislation went smoothly. So we really mobilized the political parties. I was a member of the Popular Party and, of course, we had a large following. So when proposed legislation like this went before the Legislature, we had

numbers of people going to the public hearing, pretty much on our side. We understood the political process then and we felt this was the way to go.

Willens: As the legislation was enacted by the District Legislature, it provided a ninety-day period within which the fifteen members of the Commission would be appointed. As it turned out, the full ninety-day period appears to have been utilized to appoint the members. Do you have any recollection why it was that the members weren't appointed more expeditiously so that the Commission could begin functioning sooner than it did?

Pangelinan: My recollection is that most of the members had already been pretty much identified. Then again, since the municipalities were represented, we felt that the municipal councils of Tinian, Rota and Saipan had to decide on their own. So there was a timing problem as to when the councils were going to meet. We pretty much had to give them some time to come up with a recommendation and we were not going to press them. We needed their support to begin with. It's the members appointed by the political municipalities that pretty much held us back, but the others were in place the day after the Commission was established.

Willens: At about this time a decision was made to send a delegation to the United Nations Trusteeship Council to explain the Marianas position. Four individuals went: yourself, Representative Guerrero, President Santos, and Senator Borja. There is some suggestion in the documents that you and Representative Guerrero suggested that Senator Borja be added to the delegation in order to show a bipartisan face to the Marianas position. Do you have any recollection of the decision to go to the United Nations and to include Senator Borja as part of the team?

Pangelinan: That was part of the plan. As a matter of fact, Senator Borja then represented the so-called Territorial Party but had always been very supportive of a close relationship with the United States. We felt that since he was the senior Senator to the Congress of Micronesia that an appearance of unity was necessary. So it was not even a decision. We just felt that it was needed and the Senator was accommodating to our efforts to go to the United Nations.

Willens: Do you remember any discussions with United States representatives as to the nature of the presentation that the Marianas representatives might make?

Pangelinan: I think we had discussion in terms of just what are the points that we needed to raise to inform officially the Trusteeship Council that separate status negotiations were going to take place. I'm not too sure right now on exactly the detail, but we had touched base with the U.S. delegation, the Ambassador's office, as to what are the critical points that needed to be raised at the United Nations. It was an informative way to tell them that this is what we have established and this is what we need to advise the United Nations regarding our plan to proceed forward.

Willens: Had you personally ever appeared before the Trusteeship Council before?

Pangelinan: No. I don't recall.

Willens: Do you know whether any of the other three, Santos, Guerrero or Borja, had appeared before the United Nations?

Pangelinan: They did. As a matter of fact, I know that at least Santos and Senator Borja had been to the United Nations earlier, because I met them in Washington when I was going to law school then.

- Willens: Did you anticipate that the Trusteeship Council was not going to be receptive to the Marianas position?
- Pangelinan: Definitely. We were totally aware that the Council was not going to be receptive at all.
- Willens: Why?
- Pangelinan: Because of the policy then of addressing the political status of Micronesia as a whole. We were aware that our concerns at that particular time were to inform the United Nations of the interest of the Northern Marianas; and we were taking a very strong stand now that we are going to move forward irrespective of what the United Nations felt.
- Willens: How did you feel as a lawyer representing your people before such a prestigious organ of the international community, which was not favorably disposed to the cause of your client?
- Pangelinan: We looked at the Trusteeship Agreement and the Charter of the United Nations, which gave us some comfort that the voice of the people of the respective area had to be respected. We felt that it's something that we can argue legally and also recognize the experience of the United Nations in allowing the rest of the trusteeship territories to move forward. We felt that we were standing on firm ground.
- Willens: Did you have any assistance from the Congress of Micronesia staff or the District Legislature in preparing the statements?
- Pangelinan: No. The sentiment was pretty much our own. I think the Legislature gave us financial support to go to the United Nations. We pretty much had our own resources. The preparation was done basically as a joint effort from that time with me as a representative and the District Legislature.
- Willens: There were four separate statements, each presented by one of you. Together I might say they are a very eloquent and documented defense of the Marianas position. They present, in my biased view, impressive statements and they came apparently at a time when Micronesian representatives had criticized the separate negotiations before the Trusteeship Council. So when you appeared to present your statements, you were indeed facing a hostile council. Do you have any recollection of questions that were asked and how you responded to them?
- Pangelinan: Well, I guess, when you are desperate and you have a case to present, you are kind of immune to what the opposition is going to be. But we realized that we didn't get the blessing of the Congress of Micronesia to appear before the United Nations; and we recognized too that the United Nations Trusteeship Council had a firm policy then as to how they perceived this area was going to be developed politically. We had no doubt whatsoever that it's going to be a tough forum to appear before and we anticipated some serious questions that were going to be raised against us. We were prepared to respond to those questions. And there were four of us and we felt that, if anything else, we could join our hands.
- Willens: Sing a song?
- Pangelinan: Sing a song. Sing "God bless America."
- Willens: You were cross-examined in particular about your efforts to obtain approval from either the Joint Committee or the Congress of Micronesia before undertaking to seek separate negotiations with the United States. You, in particular, had to explain your efforts to pursue this matter with the Congress and with the Joint Committee. Do you recall that issue being raised?

- Pangelinan: Yes. As a matter of fact, it was an embarrassing situation because I was still a member of the Congress of Micronesia and it was not a Micronesian way to say well, I disagree with my colleagues. It was kind of a painful experience, but on the other hand I had to show that there was a record established of how we had been trying to get the support of the Congress pertaining to our cause and to realize that we have a different aspiration. I was presenting a record in defense of why we were now appearing before the United Nations Trusteeship Council. I thought I fairly presented that record before the Council.
- Willens: The Soviet Union representative asked whether you and your colleagues from the Marianas fully accepted the 1970 Commonwealth Proposal that the U.S. delegation had presented to the Micronesians. What was your position at the time about the acceptability of the 1970 proposal?
- Pangelinan: I think I said that in principle there were features of the proposal that are attractive to the people of the Northern Marianas. But we made it very clear that the proposal needed to be improved. We were hoping to open a dialogue on status which would eventually fine tune and refine the ultimate status for the Northern Marianas. I think we also made it clear that there were features in the proposal that met our interest.
- Willens: The French representative on the Trusteeship Council asked whether the Marianas representatives had given consideration to the economic effect of withdrawing from the Trust Territory. It was unclear exactly what he had in mind. Do you recall any questioning with respect to the economic implications of the course you were pursuing?
- Pangelinan: I think the French delegate realized that the Northern Marianas was the economic center of the Trust Territory and, if the Northern Marianas is separated from that, there would be enormous economic impact not only to the people of the whole area but also to the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: How would it impact the people of the Northern Marianas, favorably or unfavorably?
- Pangelinan: That was really another question that was raised. He was kind of looking for us to elaborate on that. He made a mistake, because we thought that one of the reasons for us to seek separate status negotiations was basically an economic interest. We felt that the current state of affairs in the Trust Territory was so undesirable that we were looking for an improvement. From our experience in looking down to Guam, the economic prosperity of that island was even better than the Trust Territory, so we felt that the Northern Marianas would have a better chance economically by itself rather than to continue on in the Trust Territory. We were also very cautious in responding in a way that would show our own economic interest in seeking separate negotiations. That was a strategy on our part to downplay what economic benefits we would get, because we did not want them to believe that all this political interest hinged upon economic concerns.
- Willens: That's an interesting point. Many of the statements that you and others made at the time did emphasize the fact that economic development depended on political stability, which was one of the objectives of the proposed relationship with the United States. Economic objectives did get mentioned in an important way. Are you suggesting that what you were really concerned about was downplaying economics, so it didn't look as though your future status was going to hurt the other five districts of Micronesia?
- Pangelinan: Again, Howard, like I said, it was a tough decision, and especially addressing it before the United Nations where there was serious opposition. We were trying to come out from the discussion at United Nations leaving them with some sense of well, they do have a goal that is not predicated on basically economic interests. On the other hand, they

are pursuing their political aspirations. So that was a real difficult performance there to balance these concerns.

Willens: Were you at the Council session when the United States defended its decision to engage in separate negotiations with the Marianas?

Pangelinan: Yes, we were there.

Willens: Was it your impression that the United States successfully explained and defended its position?

Pangelinan: I think so. I think that we were very heartened by the fact that the United States finally came before the United Nations. We thought that was very critical. Because we felt that without that expression we didn't have a leg to stand on.

Willens: You didn't have a leg to stand on without the U.S. defending its position?

Pangelinan: Exactly.

Willens: The United States position at that time and for several subsequent years was that, even though it was going to conduct separate status negotiations, it would proceed to terminate the trusteeship for all six districts at the same time.

Pangelinan: That's true.

Willens: Do you recall that position being frequently made by the United States?

Pangelinan: We supported that position.

Willens: Why did you support the position?

Pangelinan: First of all, it's bad enough trying to get a commitment from the United States to conduct separate status negotiations. We were not interested in what's going to happen down the road. We were kind of close-minded to say, let's do things one at a time. Let's accomplish what is ready to be accomplished and then we can make a case later on other changes of policy. So we were focused on having separate status negotiations. What's going to happen in the future, that's several years down the road. We're not going to prejudice our position now with some statement to the effect that we are also seeking separate termination. We felt that was some years down the road and we can handle that one once we accomplish the other more important goal.

Willens: Did you have any rough idea at the time as to how long it would take the Northern Marianas to reach some negotiated status agreement with the United States?

Pangelinan: We were determined to finish this up in no time at all.

Willens: Did you think it might be accomplished within twelve or eighteen months?

Pangelinan: I guess I think from my own experience in the Congress of Micronesia that one of the problems then was this state of mind that we have the opportunity to negotiate, but then we have a calendar so let's meet several months down the road. I thought that's not the way to conduct things and I was anxious to move along very quickly. Our biggest problem from our side was that we were totally unprepared for status negotiations, because we didn't have the people that could help us to find the agreement that we're looking for. We're all by ourselves. We have limited understanding of the legal parameters of what the Constitution of the United States provides within the framework of joining the American political family. We understood our limitations.

Willens: The reason I ask about timing is that your sense of dealing with one issue at a time was eminently sensible as events demonstrated. I am wondering whether you thought at the

time that, if your team took a year or two to negotiate with the United States, it was possible that the Joint Committee might reach an agreement for the other five districts on about the same timeframe, so that ultimately the trusteeship could be terminated for all six districts without raising any particular problem for the Northern Marianas?

Pangelinan: We recognized that significant time period. We wanted to beat the Micronesian negotiations.

Willens: Why was that important?

Pangelinan: It was important because we wanted to reach our status before they decided on their status. We knew exactly what we wanted to accomplish. It's just that the details of it had to be determined. One thing that we know, and this is maybe a time to identify it, was that the Northern Marianas people wanted U.S. citizenship. Two, we wanted a relationship that is somewhat different from the traditional territorial status. Three, we wanted economic accommodation. Those are the concerns that we had as well as how best to maximize a new relationship with the benefits that we are looking for. I think the most critical part was the fact that we were going to be joining the American political family through status negotiations, rather than conquest. We felt that there were some elements of a new status that we were not fully apprised of legally. We wanted to accomplish this within a fairly short timeframe. I think I had one advantage. I would say that, just from the way the Micronesians had been conducting themselves, it was their intent to drag their negotiations slowly. I could say well, for the Northern Marianas we need to accomplish our goal quicker.

Willens: Why did the Joint Committee think that its negotiating objectives would be advanced by slowing the negotiations down the way it in fact unfolded?

Pangelinan: I think it's part of the leadership approach. I had the impression that Micronesia needed to reach an accommodation, then go to the United Nations, and kind of sound out the United Nations whether this was really an obtainable position for them. I was not privy to the leadership decisions, but that's the impression that I got along the way that there were a number of bodies, in particular the United Nations, who had to be well-informed of the Micronesia status negotiations and that some sentiment of approval was pretty much required.

Willens: Did you think that United Nations approval was also going to be required with respect to the new status for the Northern Marianas?

Pangelinan: No. That's the way we approached it. This is strictly for the interest of the Northern Marianas and the United States and we are just going to accomplish it. Why go to the United Nations when we know already that it is not sympathetic? Why worry about it.

Willens: For this range of reasons, you were definitely of the view that your style of negotiating was going to be different than that followed by the Joint Committee, but you were quite determined to proceed on a more expedited basis than the Joint Committee had?

Pangelinan: That was the strategy that we had agreed upon.

Willens: Was there some element of competition here that you wanted to demonstrate that the Northern Marianas could identify an objective and achieve it, whereas the other five districts were unable to do either?

Pangelinan: Actually, there was some inducement. We just went through a very painful experience with going to Guam. We felt that we are totally capable of handling our affairs and we

wanted to demonstrate it not only to Micronesia but also to our neighbors to the south that we know exactly what we want to do.

Willens: You would be interested in knowing that some of the documents that were being generated by the United States agencies at the time were very ambitious about a timetable for these negotiations, among other reasons because they thought that if there was a favorable relationship entered into with the Northern Marianas it might have a beneficial effect on the United States negotiations with the other five districts. They thought that, for example, that if a commonwealth relationship of some kind was developed with the Northern Marianas that seemed attractive, it might cause some of the Joint Committee members to think twice about the objective they were pursuing? Do you remember any conversations with U.S. representatives along that line?

Pangelinan: No. I was totally unaware of that. I am surprised though because the United States misread their intention. It was very clear from the very beginning that the Micronesians were not interested in a commonwealth relationship, so why pursue the issue. I am surprised that the United States had that impression. The Micronesian position from the very beginning was very clear. There was going to be no U.S. citizenship. I think that was a key. You cannot accomplish a commonwealth relationship without the key element of citizenship. That was missing in the Micronesian strategy.

Willens: Your focus on that is very useful. Some of the United States-generated documents after the Future Status Commission issued its report in 1969 expressed uncertainty as to what the Micronesians wanted. That report, as you may remember, spelled out a preference for free association and, as a fallback position, independence.

Pangelinan: That's right.

Willens: Nonetheless the U.S. agencies said, we don't know what the Micronesians want. Is it your recollection here today that what the Micronesians wanted was very clearly stated as far back as 1969?

Pangelinan: The Micronesians never really changed. I was focused on what the Micronesians wanted. The Micronesians didn't want U.S. citizenship and that in itself can tell you that there is no way you can reach a political relationship with the Micronesians involving U.S. citizenship. It has to be independence or something else. Free association was talked about before, but you don't give U.S. citizenship to an area that would have the flavor of free association or something else. I think my reading of the Micronesian position was clear from the very beginning. They didn't want U.S. citizenship, so I didn't know what political status we could develop with the U.S. I am disappointed that the U.S. agencies had some little hope that a closer relationship was in order, but that's not true.

Willens: Just to complete the story with respect to the Trusteeship Council session in 1972, do you recall any support whatsoever for the Marianas position from members of the Trusteeship Council?

Pangelinan: Except for the U.S., which was sort of self-serving, no. I think the Council was firm in not supporting the interests of the Northern Marianas.

Willens: During the summer of 1972 and the early fall, the United States engaged in two additional rounds of negotiations with the Joint Committee. These were the fifth round of negotiations as I recall in Washington, D.C. in July of 1972, and there was a sixth round that took place in Hawaii in late September and October of 1972. As I recall from our earlier discussions, your general view was that you remained a member of the

- Joint Committee and attended sessions, but you were of the view that you ought to take essentially a side-lines position and not participate actively in those rounds.
- Pangelinan: That's correct, Howard. We made it very clear that it would be unfair to take advantage of our position and be actively involved in the Joint Committee activities. I attended their meetings in Washington as well as in Hawaii, but we were not active. We decided that it was only proper that we do not become actively involved.
- Willens: During the fifth round of negotiations in Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1972 there was some continued drafting of the compact. Do you recall any impression as to the way in which those drafting negotiations proceeded? In other words, did you learn anything from those negotiations and the drafting of a document that influenced your subsequent leadership as Chairman of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: Yes. That was pretty much a turning ground for us as to how to conduct not only our discussions, but more importantly in terms of setting up our consultants and preparing our own review of the kind of status that we wanted to pursue. I was kind of looking at it from that perspective. We recognized that the exchange of papers between the parties was not a very healthy process. We felt that there must be some other arrangement where a dialogue can be developed. The Micronesian negotiations were very formal, with a strict protocol for the exchange of position papers.
- Willens: Let me see if I understand. The Micronesian negotiations were characterized by an exchange of formal position papers followed by a recess during which each party would consider the paper and then develop a responsive paper.
- Pangelinan: Right. That's the established way of conducting business.
- Willens: What did you think were the disadvantages of that approach?
- Pangelinan: One disadvantage was that you didn't have any informal dialogue, which might clarify some of the elements of a potential issue. We didn't know what the other side was trying to offer.
- Willens: Informal discussion requires two parties willing to speak extemporaneously on a subject which by definition is complex and important. With respect to the Joint Committee members, did they feel fluent enough in English, and self-confident in their ability to understand the issues, so that they would have been willing to participate in such informal discussion?
- Pangelinan: I think so. I respected my colleagues then. They were well-educated. They knew what they wanted. But more importantly, they needed to find out what the United States position was. That to me was very critical, because we felt that in formal discussions you cannot second-guess some of the more complex issues. I thought that ingredient was missing in any discussion.
- Willens: Did you think that the U.S. delegation, and specifically Ambassador Williams and his principal deputy, would have been willing to participate in informal discussions in the Micronesian negotiations?
- Pangelinan: I think the invitation was made, an overture was made. I am sure that he would have welcomed it because he was working from a very rigid position. He was getting advice from various corners and he himself didn't really fully understand the Micronesian mentality.
- Willens: What do you think he did not understand about the Micronesian mentality?

- Pangelinan: He didn't have the exposure of working with the Micronesians individually. Micronesian mentalities are very complex. You and I could be talking together and shaking our heads, but a decision is far from being agreed upon. Actually the Ambassador was disadvantaged in that respect. He always had advisers telling him what the Micronesian reactions were, even though those advisers themselves were not really knowledgeable about Micronesians. On these issues Micronesians were kind of hard to understand and the Ambassador was getting different advice from all these other people.
- Willens: The other people being people from the federal agencies?
- Pangelinan: Federal agencies, right.
- Willens: You are suggesting that not many of them had any background in dealing with the Micronesians?
- Pangelinan: Not at all.
- Willens: Ambassador Williams did establish in the context of the Joint Committee negotiations a practice of meeting regularly with the Chairman and Co-chairman of the Joint Committee, Chairman Salii and Representative Silk.
- Pangelinan: Yes.
- Willens: Do you think that those private meetings provided a means for more informal and productive exchange of views than what either party thought they could accomplish in the more formal setting of the negotiation?
- Pangelinan: No. The Ambassador, I think, was hoping for some informal reading from the Micronesians. But the Micronesians were working from a very strict protocol. The Chairman, as I understood him, had a very strong commitment that he was not going to deviate from the Committee's position in any meeting with Ambassador Williams. So the discussions were cordial and very informal, but not intended to touch upon some of the status issues. Just friendly chat.
- Willens: You believe that Chairman Salii felt that he was on a very strict set of instructions from his Committee members from which he could not depart?
- Pangelinan: I believe so. And the Chairman was very cautious to not give an impression that he's talking about issues which he doesn't have the authority to discuss.
- Willens: How would you compare that style of Chairman Salii with your own subsequently developed style as Chairman of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: My informal discussions with the Ambassador were a learning process for me. It was a time to get a better understanding, get a better grip of the parameters of his authority. I think that we were both competing in the same ground, but I was dealing with one person, so I didn't have to worry about the Ambassador's advisors. Whereas I had the advantage over the Ambassador in that I had to go back and try to get some reading from different members of the Commission. I think the advantage was that I could get some impression from the Ambassador without having to worry about my giving him the impression that I had committed myself to anything. I always used the excuse with him that I had my fourteen members to worry about.
- Willens: Did you feel somewhat more confident that you had the full support of your Commission than perhaps Chairman Salii felt with respect to his Joint Committee?
- Pangelinan: I believe, so because I'm working with one group of people and that's my people. Whereas Salii had to work with five other jurisdictions where he is not totally convinced of

- persuading one or the other. Salii was elected as Chairman of the Joint Commission by five other districts. He was working under a serious disadvantage whereas I knew exactly what the majority of my people wanted. I'm representing one group of people. So that's the advantage that I had over Chairman Salii.
- Willens: Without necessarily delving into personalities, what did you observe and learn with respect to the most effective use of consultants?
- Pangelinan: Several aspects. One is the quality of people that you need to bring in. The issues that were involved in status negotiations are so complex and varied that you've got to have people that are knowledgeable in presenting some of the technical legal issues. First, what are all of the various ramifications on certain issues. Secondly, what are the potential options that may be available to us. Third, how you can use the negotiating posture to advance your position. That's when I look at a consultant and say well, these are the people that can really help us.
- Willens: The Joint Committee did get quality legal assistance from Mr. Warnke and his group of lawyers. Was the Joint Committee able to take advantage of his expertise and follow his advice?
- Pangelinan: I believe Mr. Warnke represented the Joint Committee well. I think the Micronesians got themselves in a straight jacket and they didn't want to hear options that might affect their determination. They were somewhat close-minded about pursuing a course of action that didn't give them the flexibility to change a position after discussing it with the U.S. delegation, to fine tune it.
- Willens: Did the Joint Committee utilize any economic consultants in developing support for its financial position?
- Pangelinan: That was missing. I wasn't aware of a strong economic group advising. It was pretty much on the legal issues that we had Mr. Warnke and a few others from the South Pacific, who were limited to the legal aspect of the discussions.
- Willens: Do you recall the extent to which the Joint Committee adopted and stuck with the position that it wanted \$100 million up front as financial support from the United States government?
- Pangelinan: I was aware of the dollar figures, but I had some difficulty appreciating why they reached that amount. There were other resources that could be tapped in order to kind of balance this request. You know, in any negotiation you come up with an up-front amount and you move up and down.
- Willens: Was the Joint Committee in your opinion prepared to negotiate the amount of financial support.
- Pangelinan: No. I think that where Micronesia got itself in a corner was that \$100 million was a figure that we wanted to discuss, but they were not prepared to justify it one way or the other. Secondly, they themselves didn't fully understand what that \$100 million was going to bring to the Micronesian people.
- Willens: Did you make any preliminary judgment based on that experience that you wanted to retain an economic consultant to assist the Marianas Political Status Commission?
- Pangelinan: Howard, from the very beginning I told you that there is money involved here and the economic aspect was so critical to us. I think we kind of understood that it's nice to have a political relationship, but having gone through an experience of living under the Trust Territory Administration here, and the Naval Administration, we felt that this is a two-

legged animal we are dealing with here. One is political; the other one is economic. The economic aspect was so important to our position. We wanted to ensure that not only do we find the kind of consulting support that will give us a better understanding of what we are trying to do here economically, but also to give us some other avenues of information that we can use to improve our negotiating position.

Willens: You might be interested in knowing that just before the Washington, D.C. negotiations in the summer of 1972, Ambassador Williams sought a change in his negotiating instructions so as to authorize him to offer a level of U.S. financial support in response to the demand for \$100 million and he received authority ultimately to offer a proposed level of support that would fall somewhere between \$25 and \$50 million annually. In one of the papers prepared during this process, the Ambassador stated "that any offer under \$25 million would so shock Micronesian expectations that it would be counterproductive." Do you agree with his assessment of what the Joint Committee's reaction would have been to such a low offer?

Pangelinan: This is almost a second round of proposals where the United States made a tactical error. One was the proposal of commonwealth. The Micronesians had already pretty much determined on a level of financial support and \$25 million would have been really a low blow.

Willens: The United States did not present any figure as I recall for the next couple of rounds, and ultimately made an offer in the range of slightly over \$40 million for five districts, which was found unacceptable by the Micronesians and resulted in yet another impasse. There was an effort to develop some figures on the U.S. side. What was the next step taken by the Marianas to get organized? I have here a document signed by President Santos dated August 16, 1972 that identifies the fifteen members of the Commission. As you stated earlier, it took longer to designate some of these members than others. One other action took place by the Congress of Micronesia that I just want to spend a few minutes with. At the August 1972 session the Congress of Micronesia adopted a resolution directing the Joint Committee to negotiate for independence as well as free association. Do you recall participating in that session of the Congress?

Pangelinan: I believe I was present, although again I don't recall making any statement one way or the other on that issue. I may have voted on the resolution. I don't recall actively participating in that discussion.

Willens: There were apparently during that Congressional session hearings on the Joint Committee's work to date, specifically the provisions of the draft compact that had been prepared during the negotiations. These hearings produced a good deal of controversy with respect to where the Joint Committee was going. Do you recall whether this particular session revealed any further divisiveness among the districts or do you not have any recollection of those discussions?

Pangelinan: I was aware that the sentiment for independence was a very serious one. But that was not an obtainable position among the Micronesians because of their differences and the composition of the various districts. Among ourselves we realized that we cannot really survive economically under independence. I was aware of the differences. I think the Congress of Micronesia wanted to impress upon the U.S. delegation that this is an option that the Micronesians can rightfully pursue.

Willens: As a result of that action by the Congress of Micronesia the next round of negotiations with the United States in October of 1972 resulted in an impasse. Ambassador Williams concluded that the United States was not prepared at that time to consider independence

as an option and he needed to seek further guidance from the government. Did you personally have any conversations with Ambassador Williams during that session of negotiations about his reactions to the Congressional action and the impasse that resulted?

Pangelinan: I think this is a time when it was at Barber's Point in Hawaii.

Willens: That's correct.

Pangelinan: That was a very strange meeting.

Willens: What do you remember about it?

Pangelinan: It was the shortest one that we ever had. I spent most of my time commuting down to Wakiki where Barber's Point is up above Pearl Harbor, and it was a really strange meeting. We went there to meet to pretty much tell each other that we don't have anything to discuss.

Willens: There was an exchange of opening statements and then there was essentially an exchange of closing statements.

Pangelinan: That's right.

Willens: In between there were private meetings that Chairman Salii had with Ambassador Williams. Do you remember getting any input from either side as to what was discussed in those private meetings?

Pangelinan: Again Howard, Herman Guerrero and I decided that we shouldn't be privy to what they're discussing. I took a very low key approach and we just decided that we were not going to involve ourselves in any of the Micronesian discussions. No I wasn't aware of what was discussed.

Willens: Do you remember or have any judgment as to whether the impasse in the Micronesian negotiations influenced Ambassador Williams with respect to the timetable for the Marianas negotiations?

Pangelinan: I recall meeting with some of the Ambassador's staff. I may have given them the impression that the Northern Marianas was going to move forward rapidly. That could be. I don't recall having a personal meeting with the Ambassador himself.

Willens: After the Marianas Political Status Commission was appointed there was a series of organizational meetings. At one of the first meetings you were elected Chairman and Mr. Santos was elected Vice-chairman. Subsequently committees were established and then you were directed to identify and retain consultants.

Pangelinan: Yes.

Willens: Was there any political debate within the commission with respect to electing its leadership or had this pretty much been arranged in advance?

Pangelinan: We pretty much had arranged that in advance. First of all, we had enormous work to accomplish and found ourselves looking at each other and said we got a Commission. We are totally broke. One of the Commission members said: "Well, it's all your fault. You wanted to pursue this.

Willens: You were appointed Chairman as punishment?

Pangelinan: That's right. One thing about our group is that we had a sense of humor. I think it was Joe Cruz who said we're all in deep shit now. There was no way that we can accomplish our work with \$25,000, but anyway let's move forward.

- Willens: Without belaboring the situation, I know that you did ultimately hire Mr. Leonard and his firm on the economic side. Were there other candidates for that position or were you more or less persuaded that he was the leading candidate because of his prior work in Micronesia?
- Pangelinan: I left myself with some flexibility to go around and see what is available, basically because I didn't want to go back to the Commission and say he is the only candidate. I did contact several other firms in Washington.
- Willens: Economic consulting firms. What did you say that you could offer them by way of compensation?
- Pangelinan: I didn't want to discuss that. I made a mistake when I first went to Washington. As a matter of fact I was looking for legal counsel and I will never forget this. I went to Covington and Burling and met with an associate partner of the firm.
- Willens: What was he, a partner in the firm?
- Pangelinan: An associate rather than a partner. I don't even recall his name. We discussed about their hourly fees and I knew that I made a mistake of going to the firm. He told me the number of associates and partners in the firm, and I thought gee, I just can't afford your price. I didn't say that. Finally, he asked what's the amount, what's the financial support for the Commission. I said \$25,000. He said well, \$25,000, the meeting is over. Then I started looking. Of course, I had you in mind because of our previous informal meeting at Mr. Warnke's residence.
- Willens: Did Mr. Warnke give you a short list of firms?
- Pangelinan: No. I didn't want to even talk about it because I thought there was some conflict of interest there.
- Willens: But you did interview four or five firms as I recall?
- Pangelinan: I went around for the heck of it. But finally when I met with you, I don't recall even discussing the money amount. I said well, here is a guy who committed to help out, but he is going to be in trouble once they find out that this is all we have. I don't know whether I mentioned to you that we were kind of short-changed and there might be some more money coming from the legislature.
- Willens: I don't recall the discussion of money particularly. I do recall early on deciding that we would charge the Commission \$3,000 a month and we proceeded on that basis for several months into 1973 and then increased it to \$5,000 a month. At that time the firm was willing to undertake the assignment because of its unusual dimensions and challenges. My recollection is that we personally hit it off well, but as you may recall there was a timetable problem. You interviewed me and others and then returned to the Northern Marianas to report to your colleagues. It was unclear to me for many weeks whether in fact we had been hired or not. Do you recall what happened after the interviews and your return to Saipan.
- Pangelinan: I went back to the Commission and reported to them. I pretty much told them: we have two firms, one economic and one legal. Looking at our financial support from the Legislature, we didn't even want to discuss the others. This is it. The problem then was looking at the figures, how we can afford these groups and how much work we want them to do for us. We were talking about \$25,000, that's less than one week's review of this kind of work. So that was basically why we were slow in getting back to you; we were discussing among ourselves whether we really can support legal as well as economic consulting. Then

a decision was made. The Legislature through Ben Santos assured me that they were going to pretty much support the Commission. They were going to leave everything else behind and ensure that other financial support would be forthcoming. That was the commitment that I needed before I got back to you. Yes, we can continue on with some assurance that additional financial support would be forthcoming.

Willens: As you suggested earlier, the Commission and its members really had no preparation underway with respect to the first round of negotiations scheduled for December of 1972. On the other hand, the United States agencies had been thinking about negotiating with the Northern Marianas for more than a year and had been developing a whole series of position papers for these negotiations. What were your thoughts as to what could be accomplished at the first round of negotiations, given the Commission's lack of background and preparation for the discussions with Ambassador Williams?

Pangelinan: It was critical. One was to go on record that we have had a formal discussion. That was very critical to us here. We needed to get together with the Ambassador so we officially have formal negotiations. That was the only interest that we had to go on the record as starting negotiations.

Willens: As far as you were concerned, if the two delegations had gotten together, exchanged the ceremonial statements, and recessed, that would have been a successful first round?

Pangelinan: Somebody alluded to the fact that we've got them by the balls. That was the only purpose then. Again Howard, I want to go back. We recognized our limitations, but on the other hand we wanted to take this a step at a time. We had to accomplish one step at a time and move forward. The only critical part was this formal opening, hey, we are formally talking to the United States.

Willens: Did the Commission and, in particular, the members on the Commission other than you and Herman Guerrero have any sense of what the United States was going to seek from the Marianas in terms of land on Tinian?

Pangelinan: No. We had no idea as to what was their interest, although we know that the defense issue was so critical. You've got to understand that during the Naval Administration half of the island of Saipan was under military retention, so we were not worrying about the magnitude of their interests.

Willens: Did you know, in fact, what their real interest was with respect to Tinian?

Pangelinan: There was some informal information that came to us that, because of the Vietnam crisis and the way Guam was built up, that the military requirement for the Northern Marianas was going to be very substantial. Tinian has always been of interest to the military. Exactly how much of Tinian was unclear; but there was some discussion that it might be the whole island of Tinian and involve total relocation of the people of Tinian.

Willens: In terms of preparing for the first round, would it be fair to say that the Commission knew that there was a substantial U.S. interest in Tinian but they did not know the extent of that interest and what its implications were?

Pangelinan: No, but we had one common understanding, and that is we know that the only thing that the United States is interested in is military defense. We came to the conclusion that discussion on defense possibly is going to be deferred. That it would be the last item we had to discuss. We made it easier for the Commission to focus on the status issue. We knew at that time that the United States was going to revisit its commonwealth proposal. We knew that it's going to be a territorial relationship with some name perhaps like commonwealth or whatever. That was the bottom line. So regardless of anything else, the

United States was going to propose a status relationship. There was some fear that maybe they were going to press Guam for reintegration. But we had already made up our mind that, no, Guam is not going to be part of this discussion.

Willens: Did you have some private meetings among the members of the Commission before the first round of the negotiations and before the consultants arrived?

Pangelinan: Yes. We had informal discussions among ourselves. Living together here on the island, it was very easy to discuss all these things.

Willens: Among the various things you decided preliminarily was that the U.S. military requirement should be as far down the agenda as possible and you also wanted to have political status high on the agenda, but you anticipated some U.S. approach that might involve Guam and be unacceptable to you.

Pangelinan: We had discussed that informally among ourselves.

Willens: Was it your sense that the Commission should assume the initiative in developing its own views as to what kind of political status it wanted?

Pangelinan: First of all, we wanted to get your briefing as to what were the possible political status alternatives that the Northern Marianas could consider. I think I had the advantage of telling the Commission that our legal counsel is looking at the legal aspect of this thing and they will brief us on the various options available. Then we can make up our mind at that particular time. But we already knew what we don't want and that was an outright proposal from the federal government without any flexibility to fine tune it. Secondly, Guam was not going to be part of the discussion.

Willens: Was it your sense also that the issue of economics ought to come on the agenda from the Commission's standpoint just after political status?

Pangelinan: Pretty much your work and Jim Leonard's work were going simultaneously. It was our intent to have these two issues pretty much put on the table before the Commission, so that we can balance any kind of status proposal with the attached economic benefits.

Willens: Let me just run down the list of Commission members and ask you in a couple of sentences just to give your recollection of these individuals at the time and how you assessed them. President Santos of the District Legislature, how would you have characterized him as a leader at the time and as a participant in the Commission?

Pangelinan: Actually I was surprised that Ben was very accommodating about not becoming the chairman, because Ben was actually the most powerful political leader in the Northern Marianas. He was the president of the Legislature, which had all of the authority and the power to make or break the Commission.

Willens: What were his strengths as a leader?

Pangelinan: His strength was that he was very dedicated, very committed to a new relationship. Ben was really the man behind pushing for reintegration with Guam. Ben, as I look back, was the man that made it possible to get the Commission organized through his influence in the Legislature and to commit the financial support needed to back up the Commission. Then the Commission had the political leadership in terms of unifying at least one political party here—that's the Popular Party—behind the concept of the status negotiations. Lastly, he had the personality to unite the various different members within the Legislature to support our efforts. Ben was a very critical individual here; he had the personality to make this Commission go.

- Willens: How would you describe his personality?
- Pangelinan: He was very, very powerful in a sense. He was very outspoken for one thing and he had a good rapport with all the members. More importantly, he was also a very determined individual. He would say: “We’ve got to move forward.”
- Willens: Did you and he ever have any significant difference of view with respect to the work of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: No. We share the duties. I think that is the beauty of when I was selected to be Chairman and he was the Vice-chairman. We worked together as a team. There was never a moment when I didn’t consult with him. Or we would look at an issue and I would say well, what do you think, Ben? We discussed almost everything with each other. I recognized that although I was the Chairman of the Commission, I didn’t have the power to support the Commission without Ben. Ben was the power behind the leadership. He was the Speaker of the Legislature and he had the political muscle to make it go.
- Willens: Do you believe that he comprehended the legal and economic issues that came before the Commission?
- Pangelinan: I think he had a very strong feeling as to what we wanted to accomplish. None of us really understood, Howard, all of the political, legal, and economic ramifications involved there. You are dealing with a group of people that didn’t have the sophistication and understanding of all the legal parameters and implications. What was the beauty of it was that we knew what we wanted to do. We understood our limitations. More importantly, we felt that we needed people to advise us. I thought that was critical, knowing you are limited in understanding just where you are moving, and to be willing to get the best people to help you was a real factor here.
- Willens: How about Felipe Salas?
- Pangelinan: Felipe was the kind of man who provided the grassroots kind of leadership. Felipe was very strong in the local community and I believe at that time he was a Vice-Speaker. I looked at him as supplementing Ben Santos’ leadership.
- Willens: Did the District Legislature essentially nominate its two principal leaders to serve on the Commission?
- Pangelinan: That’s correct.
- Willens: How about Mr. Salas’s personality and his participation in the work of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: He was also very determined. Very outspoken and very committed. I felt very strongly that I have almost like the majority support of the Legislature then to make this go.
- Willens: From Rota Benjamin T. Manglona was appointed on August 16, 1972. What in retrospect was your assessment of Mr. Manglona at the time—his strengths and any weaknesses?
- Pangelinan: The strength was that Ben spoke for the people of Rota. He was the power behind the Rota political muscle. I have tremendous respect that I am going to be dealing with a person that can deliver Rota. There were some unfortunate problems that the Legislature faced with Rota. Rota was always complaining of being shortchanged for appropriations to help the development of Rota. There were some bitter feelings as a matter of fact that Rota had not been given the full advantages of financial support and accommodation. Rota was a minority in the Legislature, and so there were some real critical or bitter feelings towards any kind of arrangement. Ben was also a man who can articulate that sentiment very well, so I thought that I had a man who was very candid and very powerful—an individual who

can deliver or make it possible for the Commission to work in terms of representation for Rota.

Willens: Were you concerned that representatives from Rota and Tinian might place the interest of those constituents ahead of the common objective of all of the people of the Northern Marianas?

Pangelinan: I think it was always in the back of our mind that that was the only purpose of their participation in the Commission.

Willens: Their purpose being to represent their constituents?

Pangelinan: Right.

Willens: Was it your hope at the time that there would be enough common interest as to persuade them ultimately to join with Saipan and Tinian?

Pangelinan: Yes. In my mind I recognized that it's important to bring these people around, but on the other hand I have to be cognizant of the fact that they do have their own selfish interests to protect here. In the final analysis, accommodation has to be made one way or the other.

Willens: How about his colleague Mr. Taimanao?

Pangelinan: Joannes was a very reserved individual.

Willens: I don't recall him speaking very much.

Pangelinan: No. I don't want to second guess what he wanted to do, but Joannes was not very vocal in the Commission itself. But I had the pleasure of talking to him on an informal basis. I always made it a point to meet with the various representatives and shoot the breeze in a sense to get some direction as to how he is going to be actively involved with the Commission. He was a very personable individual for one thing.

Willens: Was he not particularly comfortable in the use of English?

Pangelinan: No. He was very competent. He was a well-educated individual. I think he had this disadvantage of having to report back to his constituency. Understanding the role of politics there, I respected his position that he didn't have to be fully active in the Commission's discussions.

Willens: Did he have different constituencies back in Rota than Mr. Manglona did?

Pangelinan: No. They did represent the same constituency because the power structure that recommended them was the Municipal Council of Rota.

Willens: Was that under the domination of the other political party?

Pangelinan: Yes. That was under the domination of the Territorial Party. More importantly, Rota had always been almost like a separate entity with different aspirations and different goals. I kind of respected that position from this Rota delegation.

Willens: Would his reserved participation have been partially explained by his deference to Mr. Manglona?

Pangelinan: There was some allegation that he was not going to oppose Benjamin Manglona in any way. Benjamin was the spokesman for the group. In deference to Joannes I recognized him as a member of the Commission but, on the other hand, the man who was going to be articulating the position of the Rota delegation was Benjamin Manglona.

Willens: With respect to the Tinian representatives, one was Herman M. Manglona, now a

candidate for mayor. What is your recollection of Herman M. Manglona as he was twenty years ago?

Pangelinan: Herman then was very vocal, very active. Fortunately, Herman also shared this interest of a close relationship with the United States. So at least from that perspective, I had somebody that would be in support of the overall desire for a close relationship with the United States. Herman also represented Tinian. We discussed earlier about what's going to happen to Tinian and there was a real concern that the military interests would be very focused on Tinian. So from that perspective, I felt that Herman's going to be a very important part of the negotiations because of the Tinian interests at stake there.

Willens: Did you know him before he was appointed?

Pangelinan: Yes. He was a member of the Municipal Council. I had dealings with him on a personal basis. I thought he was a very reasonable individual, one who speaks his mind without any reservation. I knew that I would be dealing with a person who didn't have anything to hide and was very up-front.

Willens: The second Tinian representative was Francisco A. Hocog.

Pangelinan: Hocog, right. Frank was almost as reserved as Joannes was. My recollection of Frank was that he was also going to be kind of quiet in any open discussion, but he was always ready and willing to share informally with me some of the concerns of Tinian. I was dealing with two personalities who were going to represent Tinian interests very well. On the other hand, these were reasonable individuals who understand what we are trying to accomplish for the general good of the community.

Willens: From the Saipan Municipal Council there was two nominees. Vicente or Ben T. Camacho. What is your recollection of Ben Camacho?

Pangelinan: Ben is pretty much the same. The Saipan delegation, except for the business community and the Carolinian community representative, were always in the same frame of mind as Ben Santos and myself. These are the leaders that had pursued the political status issue for quite some time.

Willens: Had Ben Camacho been part of this inner group within the Popular Party for several years?

Pangelinan: I think you hit the real key there. Within this inner circle of the political party, the leadership of the party. Ben basically was elected because of his position.

Willens: How would you describe his personality?

Pangelinan: Ben was a very lively personality. He was very outgoing, very articulate. He had some limitation of the English language but as a local politician, he was very powerful.

Willens: Did he have a lot of grassroots support?

Pangelinan: Oh yes. All the members of the Commission, looking back now, were selected because of their position in the community and the expectation that they can deliver. Ben was one of them.

Willens: The other representative from Saipan Council was Daniel T. Muna, a colorful character as I recall.

Pangelinan: Dan was the kind of the activist behind the scene. If you look back in the history of resolutions that came from the Marianas District Legislature, Danny was always adding a little excitement. He called for armed insurrection at one time. I would characterize him

as almost like a militant individual, but also very strong at the grassroots level. He was the muscle behind Ben Santos.

Willens: It's an interesting issue you raised as to the grassroots support that each of these members for the most part was able to bring to bear. You and your group were thinking in terms of ultimately winning support for whatever emerged from these negotiations and it sounds as though members were selected in part because of their ability to deliver ultimately the votes of the people.

Pangelinan: That is correct. I also realize that the power of this group comes from the power of the political parties there. There is only one majority party and that was the Popular Party then. I had no choice but to work with this group. Fortunately, it was my group that was pretty much in place.

Willens: Just by way of contrast, four years later in selecting the members of the Constitutional Convention, the voters elected delegates to the Convention who in many instances had no political background whatsoever, but were selected because they had gone to college. In other words, many young but educated people were selected to be delegates. In your case, there was no effort necessarily to find the most educated people to be on the Marianas Political Status Commission. The emphasis was more on political success and deliverability of votes. Is the contrast an interesting one for you?

Pangelinan: It's actually an issue of evolution more than anything else. When we were setting up the Commission there were really not that many college graduates. More importantly, it's the political power that makes all the difference in the world. You have to understand that you need to have this kind of people to make it go. I was delighted when this Commission was formed. There were at least some individuals who had come back from school and were willing to get involved. The people that were involved in the status negotiations were basically the political individuals.

Willens: One of those political individuals was Senator Olympia T. Borja. He was appointed, I guess, nominally to represent the Northern Islands. You have discussed him before, but how would you describe him in terms of personality and his contribution to the Commission?

Pangelinan: First of all, I look at him as the senior spokesman for the Northern Marianas in spite of his political affiliation. Oly was the man who had really an early grasp of a relationship with the United States. He was the power spokesman up in the Congress of Micronesia individually and he was totally engaged in articulating the interests of the Northern Marianas. Oly was a very strong and powerful political figure in the community.

Willens: I recall him as being very outgoing and gregarious.

Pangelinan: Oly was a real joy. We had a very close personal relationship. We had family ties as a matter of fact. It was a lot of fun with Oly but, more importantly because of his stature as the senior political man on the island, it was critical that we provided him an opportunity to participate in the Commission. We were limited in terms of how we could get Oly on the Commission from the very beginning.

Willens: Limited in how you could get him onto the Commission?

Pangelinan: Right, because of the structure of the body. Actually, when we set up this Northern Islands representation, it was in the back of our mind that here is a place for Senator Borja.

Willens: In fact, the number of people on the northern-most islands was less than a hundred.

Pangelinan: No, less than fifty.

- Willens: I was trying to be generous.
- Pangelinan: Going back to Job in the Bible, Abraham was asking for less then. I say well, I think there are fifty individuals residing in the islands. The important thing here was a way to bring the Senator into the group.
- Willens: He was still a Senator at the time.
- Pangelinan: He was a senator at the time. We thought it was not only proper but important to have Senator Borja come into the Commission, because we knew that he was one of the more astute individuals who could help the Commission in its deliberations.
- Willens: With all due respect to Senator Borja, who I liked personally, two comments have been made from time to time. One, that he was the preeminent survivor, that he did from time to time change party affiliation, and he had a great sense of survivability in the political arena. The second and related point is that sometimes he had difficulty making up his mind on issues. Do you have reactions to these comments?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I think my reaction is, first of all, Oly had strong followers on the island. He was an established individual in the community. He was a respected leader. Because of his own force of personality, Oly was able to have strong grassroot supporters who always voted for him. More importantly, Oly was a respected individual. When I look back, I say that Oly was an important and very critical participant who enabled us to survive the status negotiations and create the Commonwealth.
- Willens: Do you recall any specific anecdotes involving him in the discussions of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: One thing that was very visible then: when you give a forum to Oly, he is going to take advantage of it and he has maybe a few more words to say than are needed. But he was very colorful. Yes, I have a lot of anecdotes. Maybe later on we can add to this.
- Willens: The next name is Joaquin or Mitch Pangelinan who was designated to represent the Popular Party. He was relatively young at the time, although perhaps not as young as I thought at the time. What is your recollection of Mitch as a personality at the time and as a participant in the Commission?
- Pangelinan: Mitch was not only a cousin of mine (we have the same last name) but Mitch was also my political leader. Mitch was very active in the Popular Party. He was the Popular Party persona.
- Willens: He told me he had been active in the Popular Party for almost ten years by that time.
- Pangelinan: He was active since he was born. That's the political muscle that was needed, because Mitch was very articulate, very influential in the Party. Fortunately he was also a member of the Municipal Council. It was a good way of representing the Council. The Council at that particular time was 100 percent Popular Party.
- Willens: How did it come to be that someone as relatively young as Mitch had come to be a leader in the Popular Party?
- Pangelinan: There was no political requirement other than he be over 21 years of age and actively involved in the party. That was it.
- Willens: He obviously was competent.
- Pangelinan: Very competent.
- Willens: Aggressive?

- Pangelinan: Very aggressive, he was a real outspoken individual and he was very competent. There is no question about that.
- Willens: Do you recall him being an outspoken participant in the deliberations of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: He was very active in the deliberations and there were times when he was raising issues that even I was totally unaware of.
- Willens: The next name is Dr. Francisco T. Palacios, who was one of the other senior leaders in the community. What is your recollection of Dr. Palacios?
- Pangelinan: Dr. Palacios was also a senior statesman but, more importantly, he was almost like a Ben Franklin personality. He was always a very knowledgeable individual. Very well-educated, but he also had a very powerful, very forceful personality. He represented at that time the Territorial Party. He is the kind of guy who, when things get tough, would say well, let's just kind of sit back, and he would tell jokes. He was a very comforting person to have in the Commission, because he balanced the more activist group like Mitch Pangelinan and Danny Muna. Then you have the other extreme, Oly Borja. The Commission had a balance not only in terms of political maturity but also cultural maturity. We had youngsters in the Commission. I consider myself middle of the road and you have the other side, the senior group, Oly Borja and Dr. Palacios, who kind of created a little break when things were getting tough. Dr. Palacios was always very lively and directing us to focus on why we are there in the first place. I was delighted that he was part of the team. Not surprisingly, I also had a selfish interest. I thought well, Dr. Palacios can deliver the Territorial Party. At least he had good relations with the Territorial Party group.
- Willens: Was it your sense at the time that he basically agreed with the mission of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: No. I was very suspect in the very beginning that he had different aspirations. I had one disadvantage in that I had defeated him in the recent election. So I felt that maybe he would be bitter. But one thing that I wanted the Commission to have was a spokesman against what we were trying to accomplish. In our community, Howard, we need a dissenting voice in the Commission. It is always good, I don't believe in consensus. I always want to know what the other side is thinking about. It adds a little, not only color, to the discussion, but also a cautionary reminder of what could go wrong in the event that something does not come about. Dr. Palacios was the voice for that kind of wisdom, that kind of dissenting opinion.
- Willens: Did you and he ever discuss on a personal level your campaign against each other and did he ever make it clear to you that he didn't hold that against you?
- Pangelinan: No, he never said that. But we understood each other. There were times when informally he would look at me and say, you don't trust me. I would just say it is really irrelevant whether I trust you or not. The fact of the matter is that you are here. I just want one commitment from you that you speak your mind and don't hold it back because I can use it against you. We understood each other from the very beginning. He took that task very seriously. He said: "Well, I'm going to give you trouble in this Commission." I said "Fine, I want that." He was very candid, very outspoken, and made it very clear that, if anything else, he was going to contribute positively or negatively, but he was going to be an active participant in the Commission. He was going to speak his mind. I said: "Well, we have one advantage here, and that is that Senator Borja is going to be sitting with you

- in the Commission, so that you can bore each other to death on some of the discussions if you want to.”
- Willens: From the Carolinian community, Felix Rabauliman had been designated. Did you know Mr. Rabauliman previously?
- Pangelinan: Yes. Felix and I went back a long way and we had real respect for each other. Also Felix was, at that particular time, the ranking Carolinian leader in the community.
- Willens: I understood that Dr. Palacios also had a leadership position in the Carolinian community. Is that your understanding?
- Pangelinan: No. Dr. Palacios can trace his lineage to the Carolinian community but he has one disadvantage. He is not a full-fledged Carolinian, but he presents himself as the spokesman of the Carolinians from time to time. He is very proud of that.
- Willens: But Mr. Rabauliman was the officially designated representative?
- Pangelinan: That’s right. Mr. Rabauliman was the official representative.
- Willens: How would you describe his personality and contribution to the Commission?
- Pangelinan: Felix, I think he remained silent most of the time. From time to time he just wanted to articulate where the Carolinian community stood at that particular point in our history. From the very beginning he had some reservation, although he didn’t really say that he was going to oppose the Commission. I think he recognized his position that he is a minority of one.
- Willens: He is a minority of one in the sense that he represented the Carolinian community, but there really were no issues that came before the Commission that raised the question of differences between the Chamorros and the Carolinians.
- Pangelinan: We never gave him that opportunity to articulate that, because we were not looking at it from a racial standpoint. If you look back, our discussion had always been focused on the legal and economic issues. Cultural concerns were not part of the issues that we were discussing at all.
- Willens: Did you know that he consulted regularly with his organization with respect to the work of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: Yes, I was aware that he was a spokesman, but how he goes about consulting with his people was his prerogative. I always made it very clear that he can do whatever he wants to with our discussions in the Commission.
- Willens: Did you ever have any personal conversations with him in an effort to encourage him to support the work of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: No. Not the other members either. I tried to be very fair in not second-guessing their responsibilities. I always made the point that everyone is a member of the Commission and is entitled to represent whatever they want to do. I felt it would be improper for me to convince them. Because of my position as Chairman, I had to be impartial and try to get everybody working together.
- Willens: The last of the fifteen members was Jose C. Tenorio from the business community. Better known as Joeten. Did his appointment come as a surprise to you?
- Pangelinan: No, not at all. As a matter of fact, I was very pleased when Joeten was included in the Commission. There was a lot of prejudice against Joeten because of his business achievements.

- Willens: What was the basis for the prejudice or criticism?
- Pangelinan: I think largely jealousy.
- Willens: Why would the Marianas community be jealous of a local boy who proved to be the community's most successful businessman?
- Pangelinan: Joeten monopolized all the businesses and was in the wrong camp. He was in the Territorial Party. So there were allegations that Joeten represented not a party, but himself. He was a businessman for himself. There were a lot of sentiments along these lines. Really Joeten was more interested in protecting his own business and his own interests rather than anybody else.
- Willens: How would you describe him on a personal level?
- Pangelinan: Joeten was very friendly. He is the kind of man who had the interests of the Northern Marianas at heart. He was a Chamorro who always looked at what we needed to protect our own people. He had the disadvantage that his business success characterized him as an individual, but Joeten was a person who was very concerned of what there was for the people of the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: I have actually heard him described as a romantic in the sense that he really cared about the Micronesians and to some extent had hoped that there would be a way to keep the Marianas together with the rest of Micronesia. Did you have any sense that that was his view?
- Pangelinan: Yes. Joeten had always been entertaining the view that unity of Micronesia was best for Micronesia. I think Joeten might have been ahead of his time. He was not limiting himself to regional interests. He thought that we had an opportunity to bring a new identity to the Pacific and that's the Micronesian identity. I could see that that's almost a romantic aspiration.
- Willens: I also have heard him described as extremely generous, and there were instances of his forgiving debt and helping people out which are quite inconsistent with the view of a hard-headed business figure.
- Pangelinan: Joeten was a self-made individual. I think he understood and recognized his own experience and part of the Chamorro mentality was this sharing of his own personal wealth. Yes, Joeten was very generous, even up until now he has always been very generous. Unfortunately, he was identified as one who was promoting his own business interests and people just used that as an excuse to be jealous of his accomplishments. I had a lot of respect for Joeten. I welcomed the fact that he wanted to participate in the Commission. We thought that with Joeten it would be critical to get at least good strong support. And if he opposed what we were doing, we've got the man right there to know why we are not going to get his support.
- Willens: Was it in part because of his relationship to Joeten that you invited Mr. Screen to serve as a consultant?
- Pangelinan: No. There were very few individuals that had developed his understanding of economics. I looked at Joe Screen as a man who was exposed to a lot of the economic issues. There were not too many Americans here on the islands that were willing to help out. Screen stood out all by himself. It was not because of his relationship with Joeten, but mostly because of his affiliation with the Trust Territory government at one time and his own understanding of the business and economic issues.

- Willens: Do you think he shared your and the Commission's objective of a separate status for the Northern Marianas.
- Pangelinan: No. I wasn't even concerned about that. I just wanted him to participate and to have the benefit of his own knowledge of whether or not a certain position had to be taken. I wanted again this dissent, so that we would have the full benefit of a complete assessment of the various issues.
- Willens: You were looking for expertise because of his background in the Trust Territory. Were you anticipating that he would be a potential dissenter and therefore you wanted him as part of the inner circle?
- Pangelinan: No. Joe Screen was very articulate, very outspoken; maybe that was the cause of his eventual, not dismissal, but request to resign from the Commission.
- Willens: Let's turn to the first round of negotiations which began on December 13 and lasted for two days in Saipan. Do you have any recollection of the Commission's preparation for that session and, in particular, the introduction of the consultants to the Commission, the preparation of the opening statements, and the plotting of strategy. What is your recollection of those fast-moving two days?
- Pangelinan: That was probably the best meeting that we really ever had. It was a starting point in our efforts toward negotiation. I think you took us by surprise, Howard. You came prepared for briefing of the Commission.
- Willens: I don't remember that. We didn't really have much to brief about. We knew we had to give an opening statement. We had certain issues to put on the table and that's what your statement essentially accomplished. What do you recall?
- Pangelinan: We looked at it from this standpoint—that here is our counsel from Washington and the Commission had a lot of expectation of you. You were the man to tell us about the possible options, our rights, and how we can achieve a political relationship with the United States within the framework of the Constitution of the United States. You were going to be our legal counsel on how to accomplish all of this, the political relationship. So from that standpoint, the Commission felt that we had an expert to help us. We started with nothing and then we have you and your Washington experience. I think I briefed the Commission that you had worked for the Justice Department at one time. You were one of the partners of a very significant law firm in the area. You came prepared with some briefing papers, as I recall, which was a very substantial experience for us. It took the Commission by surprise when you gave us a briefing on some of the legal work that you had done. It was very encouraging to know that now we have good legal counsel to support the Commission.
- Willens: It's always a difficult task, as you know, when you meet a new client. It's particularly difficult when you are meeting a client that is composed of fifteen different individuals. It's also important that a counsel or consultant remain in that capacity, and not be appearing to dictate to the client but rather laying out the alternatives. My own recollection is that it took time at the first session and perhaps the second round of negotiations to begin to work up a personal relationship with the members of the Commission that gave them confidence that I and my colleagues had their interest at heart. Do you remember any discussion on that?
- Pangelinan: We did and, as a matter of fact, I never shared this with you. The fact that you came from Washington, and your experience with the federal government, gave us a little security. It was kind of telling the U.S. delegation that you're not going to just ramrod any kind of

status on us. It was an important and very significant part of our status and our stature that we are ready to negotiate but we do have our expert to guide us. It's an appearance on our part more than anything else that made it important for the Commission.

Willens: But there was some skepticism expressed, perhaps jokingly, by Dr. Palacios and others that the Commission might have been better advised to have counsel from another country to represent the Commission, because someone from the United States, in particular a Washington lawyer, might be predisposed to favor the position of the U.S. delegation. Do you remember any serious discussion on that issue?

Pangelinan: One of the advantages of Dr. Palacios was that he was always advising us on different approaches. But the Commission generally agreed that if you want somebody to help us in developing a status within the parameters of the U.S. Constitution, you can't go wrong by having somebody who understands the Constitution. We were not going to find somebody from Australia or New Zealand to represent us. It was very comforting for the Commission to know that we have a counsel with your stature.

Willens: You were also aware that I could do nothing alone. I could do some things alone but I had the support of a major law firm.

Pangelinan: That's true. This is precisely why we felt very comfortable and very confident that the U.S. delegation is not going to take us very lightly.

Willens: What I think you know is the fact that the partners of Wilmer, Cutler & Pickering without reservation supported anything that I thought was professionally necessary in terms of supporting the MPSC. They were incredibly generous in all respects for several years.

Pangelinan: No question about it. Perhaps I never mentioned this to you, but the U.S. delegation was running scared. They were taken by surprise that we had the maturity to seek legal counsel with your firm. There were some words to the effect that why do you want to spend your money on a law firm in Washington. This is the kind of thing that came to me personally.

Willens: Wasn't there some expression by the U.S. delegation that it was not necessary for the Commission to have any consultants whatsoever?

Pangelinan: There was an informal impression from the staff of the Ambassador that this is going to be a real friendly discussion between us and we already prepared a draft document. Now what you need to do is sign your name and this will be over by tomorrow.

Willens: How did you respond to that?

Pangelinan: I said well no, we agreed to an open dialogue. There are issues that are far beyond our comprehension. We would like to discuss this. We need to give the impression to the world and the United Nations that this is not going to be a one-sided affair. We are going to approach it from an equal basis in negotiating a new status. I think that didn't go very well. The Ambassador never formally expressed that, but I think that behind closed doors he was not too happy.

Willens: It certainly did complicate his life. It had always been my hope that after two or three years he would come to realize that it was to the U.S. advantage to have had the Commission well represented. But that may be a personal self-serving view that he never came to share. I recall arriving on short notice and having a few days to work with you and the members of the Commission with respect to getting to know each other and preparing for the opening session. We had an immediate task of trying to develop an opening statement

that would lay out, in very general terms, some of the aspirations of the Commission. In terms of the background of the negotiations, that was easy to do. But what was more difficult was trying to set out the overall perspective within which the Commission would be seeking a new status. Do you recall what kinds of concerns you and the Commission had with respect to this opening statement?

Pangelinan: Yes. There was a lot of informal discussion, Howard. We found ourselves in a posture where now we had to take our responsibilities so seriously. It was an overwhelming undertaking. We found ourselves somewhat limited in terms of how to develop an agenda, which would set the tone for not only a fruitful negotiation but one also that would give the United States some idea as to how we are going to work together in achieving a political status of mutual benefit to both sides. It was overwhelming. We always believed that the first meeting was the most critical part and to set the tone, to set the agenda, and to ensure some confidence on our part, at least from the Marianas side, that we are determined to reach a goal. Setting this tone in the first meeting was an overwhelming responsibility. It was through your guidance that made it possible for us to develop a talking paper and an impression of how we are going to proceed.

Willens: One of the concerns that I recall was laying out the general position of the Commission, but not taking any fixed position prematurely. The consultants had done only limited work at the time. Everyone recognized that there were very difficult legal and economic issues to be explored. To some extent the objective was to set the tone, identify principal concerns and objectives, but then reserve the flexibility so that the Commission could develop specific positions later on. Is that your recollection?

Pangelinan: Yes. As a matter of fact, the nature of the dialogue is a negotiation. It was believed that any final product is going to be not only negotiated, but it's also going to be fine tuned along the way. I think the task that we accomplished was basically putting forth how we perceive the discussions are going to take place. I think we accomplished our goal by formally presenting our views that this is going to be a dialogue between the two entities and that we are going to refine a relationship through our negotiation. It's going to be a partnership.

Willens: To that extent, your view was that the opening session had to set forth the objectives and establish a tone, but also to the extent possible give the Commission a sense that it was going to be able to negotiate on an even basis with the U.S. delegation.

Pangelinan: We have always made that point very, very clearly. This is going to be a partnership; it's not going to be one-sided. I think that perhaps the U.S. delegation was somewhat taken aback and saying hey, these guys are serious.

Willens: It was always my sense that after two years of working with the Commission, it had been turned into a finely tuned negotiating machine and that, if we had been able to turn it loose on international problems, we could have solved the problems of peace and war. But there was a lot of growing that went on. There was one statement in your opening speech in the afternoon plenary session that caught the headlines the following day. You indicated in your statement that the Commission would be looking at all kinds of different forms of political relationships that might be established between the United States and the Marianas. You wanted to look at Guam and the other insular areas to see "if the political and economic development in those areas suggest any problems or difficulties which the Marianas should avoid." Then you went on to say that based upon an examination of these alternatives the Marianas Commission might conclude "that it may well be necessary to develop a totally new political status for the Marianas." That hit the headlines the next

day and caused the United States delegation some internal concern as to exactly what the Commission had in mind. Do you recall having anything in particular in mind or was this simply a way of demonstrating to the U.S. delegation that it was a whole new ballgame now that we were engaged in negotiations?

Pangelinan: I think it came to me inadvertently that the Ambassador had a pretty much developed draft proposal and he had it in his left pocket. The purpose of that statement was to tell him to get rid of that. It was intended to assure our people that, at least for local consumption here, we are going to be approaching a novel political status that would accommodate our interests. More importantly, giving a signal to the people of Guam that any kind of territorial relationship, especially integration, is not going to be a part of the discussion here. Looking straight into the eyes of the Ambassador, I said listen, get rid of your preconceived notion that you are going to have a draft proposal that we are going to sign after this discussion. I think it was beautifully intended to give the right message to the world. I also think we were concerned about the United Nations reaction and wanted to emphasize that we are going to reach a political status that the people of the Northern Marianas believe is the one that they want.

Willens: You mentioned Guam. Governor Camacho of Guam did attend the opening session in what was called a strictly ceremonial role. The opening of these negotiations began a flood of publicity in the *Pacific Daily News*, in particular, that lasted for several years comparing the negotiations in the Northern Marianas with the status that Guam had and the growing sense of frustration in Guam. Do you recall any contacts by Guamanian leaders asking to participate officially in the Marianas negotiations as observers?

Pangelinan: I'm not aware of any formal overture, but I wanted to ensure that this was strictly a Northern Marianas undertaking. When we first met, I don't know whether you recollect, Howard, but the spiritual leader of the Northern Marianas is no other than the Bishop of Guam and he was the one who presided over the opening ceremony. Probably you realized that. It was very difficult for me as Chairman of the Commission to exclude the people of Guam, because we always valued our cultural identity and, as a symbolic gesture, we felt it was very important for the Bishop to bless the opening talks. The rhetoric that went into the formal presentation was a clear signal that we are not looking at a relationship with another political subdivision of the federal government, but rather for a close and enduring relationship with the United States. That was the bottom line.

Willens: Did you have any thought that down the line you wanted to make certain that the Guamanian political leaders supported whatever you and the Commission achieved by way of the negotiations?

Pangelinan: We never really considered that at all. We pretty much burnt our bridges behind us so we were not going to discuss reintegration with the federal government. What relationship would develop as a result of discussion, I thought eventually there might be some possible dialogue with Guam, but it was far from our mind at that point as to how Guam was going to fit in this overall relationship.

Willens: Did you make any effort throughout the negotiations to brief Guamanian political leaders as to what the Commission was doing?

Pangelinan: No. We felt that the *Pacific Daily News* was the only paper here and they were certainly going to read that on their coffee break in Guam. No. The Commission had no responsibility to involve anybody from Guam.

- Willens: One incident that I just became familiar with involved a meeting that four members of the Commission had with the Guamanian officials even before the first round of negotiations. On November 30 of 1972, Commission members Muna, Rabauliman, Hocog and Salas and Jim White as Executive Director met for several hours with Guamanian officials to discuss concerns and strategies with respect to anticipated U.S. military requirements. Do you have any recollection of the background of that meeting?
- Pangelinan: We always wanted to explore our options. Getting information was one of the strong points of the Commission, because we recognized the military experience of the people of Guam. I did informally authorize a discussion on military issues. I think the leadership in Guam was very accommodating.
- Willens: They were very accommodating, both with respect to high-level participation in the meeting and considerable candor in disclosing the kinds of problems. All of which was recorded ultimately in a report prepared by Executive Director White for the Commission, which was considered in advance of the second round of negotiations. It was the first instance that I've seen where the Commission sought advice from Guam and benefited substantially from it.
- Pangelinan: Like I said, we had an open dialogue on an informal basis with the leaders of Guam, but not on the political issue. I think it was the decision of the Commission that, since the people of Guam had decided not to support reintegration, we thought that was a dead issue. But there were a lot of economic, military, and social problems that Guam had gone through, with some painful experiences, and we wanted to learn more on how this impacted on their lives. We had open dialogue and, to our surprise, the leaders of Guam were more than accommodating. As a matter of fact, they were overly generous in telling us what the problems are that they were faced with and how we can correct those problems. We were indebted to them for their contribution.
- Willens: What is your recollection today of the pomp and circumstances that accompanied the opening round, both the public session at the Mount Carmel auditorium and the plenary sessions open to the public at the Royal Taga. Do you have any mental pictures of the setting and any recollections of how you felt?
- Pangelinan: Yes. There was an intended purpose to these events. We always believed in a formal setting and this celebration was part of that. It was an event to place in history the seriousness of our efforts. It was also a public relation effort on our part. It was intended to have a meaningful impact on not only the local community but one that eventually reached the federal government and the United Nations.
- Willens: Was the setting of the stage more or less the responsibility of the Commission since you were the host party?
- Pangelinan: We were but, on the other hand, I think the Ambassador had similar interests here. Later on I learned that he is a man who believes in this kind of setting. So we kind of worked with the oldest pomp and circumstances of really putting on a show. I think we did it so that the press and the local people can see first hand that it was a historical event.
- Willens: You thought that opening at least a portion of the discussions to the public served one of the important purposes of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: We learned from the Micronesian negotiations that they had isolated the general public from their own deliberations. I should know; we always had that discussion here in Saipan. More than anything else, we wanted to show the general community that this is an indirect way of participating in our deliberations and it is going to be open except for

formal discussion on some issues. So the intended purpose was to show the general public that we have a policy of open deliberations here.

Willens: Do you remember the Ambassador generally being pleased with the way in which the first round was organized and conducted?

Pangelinan: I think so. I think he had some heartburn when I started reading the fine lines of our presentation. It makes life a little bit more exciting. Perhaps he didn't have the authority to entertain what we were trying to tell him.

Willens: He did have detailed instructions, but he had to return from time to time to seek further instructions as the negotiations proceeded. His statement on political status, finances, and public land covered more or less familiar ground. Do you remember any statement that the U.S. made in the opening session that came as a surprise to you?

Pangelinan: I don't recall in detail exactly. First of all, I was not going to be further surprised. I was surprised that we had the negotiations formally started. That was the biggest surprise. Beyond that, I think we pretty much set the tone, to the effect that you can tell us anything you want to, but we are going to discuss it in great detail and it's going to be negotiated rather than just something that we are going to acquiesce in the following day.

Willens: To some extent the opening statements of policy from each side were sort of exactly that, an opening statement identifying agenda items with each side alluding to its position without providing any specifics. Each party was sending the other the message that these are complicated topics to be the subject of detailed negotiations in the future.

Pangelinan: That's right. I think that we articulated the issues and sent signals to the Ambassador that we take our position very seriously and that this is going to be a joint effort to arrive at the future relationship.

Willens: On the second day of the negotiations, there were so-called working sessions and frankly I had not remembered some of the issues that came up until I reviewed the documents. Ambassador Williams was particularly concerned with raising some procedural questions such as the formation of subcommittees and how to proceed. But there was one important procedural question that he raised and that was what the authority of the Marianas Political Status Commission was. He made reference to his experience with the Joint Committee and he asked you and the other Commission members exactly what your authority was and whether you would support any agreement that was reached during the negotiations. His deputy, Mr. Wilson, stated that the U.S. delegation was going to support any agreement that emerged and they wanted the same statement from you. In response, you asked for a recess and there was some discussion of this following which you came back with a written statement. Do you recall how this issue came up and how it was resolved?

Pangelinan: Yes. Also Howard, all this request for recess was a ploy.

Willens: A ploy by whom?

Pangelinan: By the Commission. It was the sense of the Commission that we are going to allow ourselves time to get the other side worried and we had one advantage—we could always pretend to be totally uninformed. We are the underdogs and we don't have the sophistication of the Ambassador's delegation. It was a basic ploy on our part to use our Micronesian personality that we need time to think things over. My recollection is that it served two very useful purposes, Howard. One was that the Ambassador was anxious to work with us, but with the idea that in an informal discussion we would be kind of acquiescing to their position. We had discussed this earlier among the Commission

members in terms of strategy. The request on my part to recess basically was designed to accomplish two things. One is that I wanted the Commission members to know that the negotiations involved participation by every member. And that I as Chairman would not address a particular issue without consulting with them. It was important for me to get them involved. That's one thing. Secondly, to get the Ambassador thinking that we are serious about what we are doing. We felt it was necessary for him to have a little heartburn from time to time just to get him worried. It was almost like a Marianas interest here. To get the other side on the defensive. We took that advantage. Although he was asking a procedural question, it was a very substantial question for the Commission. In retrospect I thought that he opened the door for the Commission to request a break on any issue that was significant for us.

Willens: My recollection is that we did discuss strategy of that kind before the meeting. Generally you and I certainly would have been agreed that the Commission should not let itself be forced into taking positions that it didn't feel comfortable about. So you have a similar recollection that this was an important precedent to satisfy the members of the Commission that they were to be consulted and to communicate to the U.S. delegation that the Marianas Commission felt free, when it wanted to, to request a recess so that it could deliberate among itself.

Pangelinan: That's right. Also I had almost like a personal interest involved here, because there were times when the Ambassador would invite me for an informal discussion. I always looked at informal discussions as basically a prelude to what is anticipated in a formal discussion. So I wanted to put him on notice that, unlike his position, I have fourteen other members to worry about and that any informal discussion on my part is not going to be taken for granted.

Willens: As a result of the deliberations over the recess the Commission did ultimately provide a statement that "when the final product of this Commission is approved by the Commission those so approving shall support the entire product through the District Legislature and to the people at a later date." This statement was welcomed by Ambassador Williams as a favorable response to his inquiry. What was your sense of the importance of this, if any?

Pangelinan: If you look at it very closely, there is almost like a reservation there that some of the members of the Commission are probably not going to endorse whatever. So again, that was an important recognition on the part of the Commission that its members want to be respected and that we are not going to force everyone to support something that they have some reservation about. As a whole, the Commission stands ready to support the final product that will be reached at a later time. It was important enough to assure the Ambassador that yes, we are going to have a meaningful dialogue.

Willens: Do you remember any discussion and a tentative agreement as to whether the transcript of the working sessions could be published by either side?

Pangelinan: I think we stood firm that this was all going to be on the public record. There were some reservations about the more sensitive talking papers being restricted, but overall we felt that we were established by authority of the Legislature and we were not going to maintain confidentiality on a position that has been reached.

Willens: The only other issue that came up during the opening session of possible significance is an issue with respect to the wording of the Joint Communiqué. There is some indication in the materials that Dr. Palacios objected in a meeting of the Commission to the reference in a draft Joint Communiqué to the use of the word "permanent" in defining the future relationship between the Northern Marianas and the United States. Based on

his objection you requested that the word be changed to “lasting.” According to a State Department account of this, the United States delegation considered this a very important and fundamental issue and the first test of the role and authority of the Commission. So they took a strong position and asked you and the members of the Commission to reconsider your position here. Do you have any recollection of that dispute?

Pangelinan: My more vivid recollection is the internal discussion with Dr. Palacios and the Commission.

Willens: The eternal or internal?

Pangelinan: Internal, the internal discussion with Dr. Palacios. There was some reservation on his part, as well I think as Mr. Rabauliman’s part, that “permanent” was a word that’s too strong and you’ve got to be cautious for public consumption. We were trying to develop a relationship with some assurance that you are not going to kind of bind yourself and say, this is the sort of framework that is going to be permanent. I think there were some concerns among the members of the Commission as to what were the more appropriate words to use. We know exactly that once you get into the political family then you are stuck with it and there isn’t any way out. I think there was discussion that even the U.S. went through a very painful experience with respect to the Civil War. I think when we discussed some said in Chamorro that it’s permanent in the sense of being able to get out, but the Marines are going to come and get you back in. Something to this effect. For public consumption we’re striving for a word that is less confusing. This is a good relationship. There were some words that were strikingly sensitive to us and Dr. Palacios; “permanent” is almost like a word he took straight in the face. So he said well, there is some word and I think you can say that “lasting” is almost as permanent as “permanent.”

Willens: It’s a little unclear as to what the nature of the accommodation was. I have no personal recollection, but the word “permanent” does appear in the final communique. It looks to me as though it was put within quotation marks and that those quotation marks may have been the accommodation in Dr. Palacios’s direction. The Joint Communiqué describes the Marianas as seeking a “close and permanent affiliation with the United States” as a way of describing what the Marianas had sought over the years. To some extent, if that was the accommodation, it was certainly a shrewd one. It was an accurate statement of the past statement of aspirations and yet it didn’t assign to the Commission (including Dr. Palacios) adherence to the word “permanent” as of that day. It may have been that was the accommodation and I don’t know where it came from, but it was viewed by the U.S. delegation as “defeating a potentially serious split and the first session was cordially closed.” Is that your recollection?

Pangelinan: That’s my recollection. I was terrified with the idea that the first session was going to be subject to criticism and some concerns within the Commission itself that it is going to fall apart before we start. I was comforted by the fact that we were able to make some serious accommodation here.

Willens: I don’t know whether that was your judgment, but some of the issues that came up during the negotiations seem in retrospect to be surprisingly insignificant, but they assumed at the time a significance to the U.S. delegation or to the Commission beyond what seemed to be justified. That may always be the case.

Pangelinan: Rightly so.

Willens: Some things are just particularly sensitive. After the negotiations were completed, it was quite clear to at least the Commission’s legal consultant that there was a great deal of work

to do for the next session. There were a whole series of developments back here in the Northern Marianas that occupied you and the other members of the Commission a good deal. There was a considerable increase in the amount of publicity received with respect to the Northern Marianas negotiations and in particular the military interest in developing Tinian. There were a series of meetings on Tinian with respect to this matter. The *Pacific Daily News* had a series of articles about Tinian analyzing its archaeology, its diet, and other matters. Do you recall after the first round of negotiations what you and the other members of the Commission were focusing on?

Pangelinan: The Tinian military requirement has always been in the forefront on our agenda because that is the only thing that the United States really is interested in; and we pretty much felt that it will be the overwhelming consideration for any kind of economic benefits. Tinian has always been referred to as of military interest to the U.S. delegation. Also we are at the point where Vietnam was a real issue and we were looking at what the United States was doing there. This was a time of political uncertainty too in Washington. We were concerned as to how this can play into our negotiating posture. There was some unrest on the part of the people of Tinian. There was a lot of speculation and allegations about what exactly was going to happen there.

Willens: There was a good deal of speculation that I'll come to. There also was growing economic interest in Tinian. There were some proposals in early 1973 for two large hotels, a coconut oil processing plant, and a petroleum refinery on Tinian. Those projects would be in addition to the Jones lease for the ranch. Did you have any view at the time as to whether economic development on Tinian should be permitted to go forward during the pendency of the negotiations?

Pangelinan: No, Howard, I was aware of those because of my role up in the Trust Territory government. This coconut industry was proposed by a guy from Guam who had no money whatsoever.

Willens: From Guam?

Pangelinan: From Guam, right. He came up and submitted a corporate document for establishment of an oil refinery, well actually a coconut oil refinery. I knew that's not going to go forward.

Willens: As I understand you, you did not regard it as a bonafide economic proposal?

Pangelinan: No. But when you are negotiating you want to capitalize on what the prospects are. I was aware of the proposals submitted for hotel development, so we kind of capitalized on that as a bargaining position. There were other expressed interests in Tinian development. Although they were not really viable, they were enough to get the United States thinking that Tinian was going to be a very valuable piece of property. In the final analysis, the fact that such economic development would be prejudiced because of the negotiations had to be taken into consideration.

Willens: As you may remember, there were allegations of speculation with respect to Tinian land by members of the Commission. There were some documents put in the public domain involving Herman M. Manglona and Senator Borja. Do you recall having any discussions on a personal level with members of the Commission with respect to their so-called speculative activity?

Pangelinan: These were not speculative at all, Howard. They were real.

Willens: What do you mean they were real? Do you know for a fact that money changed hands with respect to these transactions?

- Pangelinan: Herman Manglona in particular was a real estate broker on the island of Tinian and he had some clients that were interested in selling their property. That was a time when there was really a lot of hardship for some of the land owners in Tinian. Some of them had moved to Guam and they wanted to sell their property at that particular time.
- Willens: Was there any particular cause of this economic downturn?
- Pangelinan: Tinian was always sort of a depressed area and some of the families that had moved to Guam wanted to support their families on Guam. There were a number of transactions that were being made. If you look at the composition of the Commission, some of the people with money, you've got to understand that they were landowners before we took this up in the Covenant. The only people that can buy land were people from the area. Senator Borja was one of those with resources that he can use to purchase property. There was a lot of speculation.
- Willens: Did you feel that this was something that you, as Chairman, had a responsibility to deal with or did you feel that as Chairman you should stay apart from that kind of activity?
- Pangelinan: No. That was totally beyond the purview of the Commission and I didn't want to get involved in that.
- Willens: There was considerable support on Tinian for a substantial military presence there because of the economic benefits that they believed would result. Did you have any sense for measuring Tinian sentiment during the early months of 1973?
- Pangelinan: Yes. We pretty much controlled the politics on Tinian and the people in our party were very vocal. They were sympathetic to a military presence in Tinian. There was a lot of support. They looked at Guam, whose experience suggested that military presence provides very sizable opportunities. The majority of the people of Tinian welcomed that kind of presence.
- Willens: The United States representatives back in Washington were receiving information about the Northern Marianas from a variety of sources including the press. One source of information was Mr. Dorrance's successor, Mary Vance Trent. She visited Tinian in late March 1973 and met with various officials and residents and subsequently wrote reports back to Washington with respect to the sentiment on the island. What was your assessment of her reliability and accuracy as a reporter?
- Pangelinan: I have an enormous respect for Mary.
- Willens: You have what?
- Pangelinan: I had enormous respect for Mary. Mary was a very resourceful representative from the State Department. She's also very active. She goes to the public meetings and develops a good working relationship with the people. She has first-hand knowledge of what's happening, although she was not privy to some of the local concerns. I think at that particular time she had a good grasp of what's going on in Tinian.
- Willens: Did she have a better grasp of local affairs than Mr. Dorrance did?
- Pangelinan: John was a very excitable individual and with good intention or bad, we had played some nasty things with him.
- Willens: You mentioned that before.
- Pangelinan: It was unfortunate. We have a sense of humor here, but sometimes it's not very humorous.

- Willens: With respect to Ms. Trent, did her status as a woman operate as a disadvantage?
- Pangelinan: It was a disadvantage. We just didn't have the heart to pull the tricks that we did on John.
- Willens: That was an advantage for her.
- Pangelinan: That was an advantage for her and we pretty much kept her all by herself. John was a different personality altogether. John would just enjoy fellowship with the boys. Mary was somewhat different. Whenever we have a female representative, there is some detachment on the part of the politicians here with respect to that position. John was different. John used to socialize with us but, on the other hand, we would recognize that John was a source of information to Washington. So we gave him a lot of bad signals, sometimes intentionally, to get him to report back to Washington in perhaps a prejudiced way. But we just enjoyed John, even if John was gullible.
- Willens: In the early months of 1973, the Commission did not officially yet know the scope of the U.S. desires for all of Tinian.
- Pangelinan: No.
- Willens: That was to be revealed during the next round of negotiations. Ms. Trent was reporting back to Washington, that although the people in the Marianas and on Tinian were receptive to a military presence, they were expecting "a shared use of the island." She alerted people back in Washington that the Tinian and Northern Marianas representatives might well be shocked once they learned that the U.S. wanted all of Tinian. Do you think that was a fair assessment of the Tinian sentiment at the time?
- Pangelinan: It was. I think for all of the time that Mary was here we were kind of alerting her that the military experience on Guam was not the most desirable. There were a lot of military problems on the island of Guam and we felt that there had to be a better way of handling military presence in any community, especially in a community like the Northern Marianas. We were going to be part of the United States. There was really no need to fence up the whole island.
- Willens: What were the two or three principal problems that you saw on Guam that you wanted to avoid here?
- Pangelinan: The most basic one is the isolation of the military community. The military has a tendency to fence itself in and isolate themselves from the civilians. So there was a lot of friction between the civilian community and the military community.
- Willens: Why would there be friction if the military locked itself in? Why wouldn't that help things?
- Pangelinan: The history of the military presence in Guam has always been one of arrogance, one of looking down on the civilian community. There was also the fear that the civilian community was going to intrude into their bases and create problems. We thought that there had to be a better relationship. We are going to be together in the islands so there has to be a better working relationship with the military.
- Willens: Were these the kind of concerns that you remember expressing to Ms. Trent?
- Pangelinan: Remember the early discussions with the people of Guam? Our little group was very candid and honest with Mary—that we don't want to have a working relationship that will taint the community as it has in Guam. I think she was reporting back that this sentiment was very real. I think the United States made a very serious tactical mistake of wanting the

whole island, because that in itself is a slap in the face of the people of Tinian. Not only do we want to create a military reservation but hey, we don't want anybody around from the local community. That was one of the most dramatic and really bad positions taken by the U.S.

Willens: It was the subject of considerable debate back within the federal government with the Department of State and other agencies taking issue with Defense about its preferred objective of seeking all of Tinian. But the ultimate instructions directed Ambassador Williams to try to achieve that objective. We'll come to that. Another thing that was happening during the early months of 1973 that was of interest was further action within the Congress of Micronesia to oppose the separate status negotiations. Chairman Saliu introduced a joint resolution that was ultimately Senate Joint Resolution Number 38 to the effect that the Joint Committee had the sole authority to represent all the districts with respect to their future political status. This was extensively debated in the Congress of Micronesia and on one occasion it was debated when the U.N. visiting mission was present in the chamber. Do you remember how this resolution came about and the debate on that subject?

Pangelinan: My recollection is that it was intended to show the United Nations that the Congress of Micronesia is in control. Basically that was the purpose of that resolution.

Willens: Did you think that the sponsors like Chairman Saliu thought that it would have any legal effect?

Pangelinan: Perhaps. He was given advice that the Congress of Micronesia was established for all the districts including the Northern Marianas. We thought that it was within his prerogative to do that. At that particular point in time, Howard, we could care less what the Congress of Micronesia was doing.

Willens: It may interest you to know that I found in the documents a record indicating that I spoke with Paul Warnke shortly after this was introduced. He told me that he had not been informed that his client was intending to introduce the resolution. You gave a speech on the subject in which you stated that you were "disturbed" at the timing of the resolution coming as it did when members of the visiting mission were in the gallery. You went on to explain and defend the separate negotiations and stated that you and the Commission were not going to be dissuaded from your course if they enacted the resolution. Do you remember speaking out vigorously on the subject?

Pangelinan: I think we wanted to put something on the record as to where the Northern Marianas stands in the Congress of Micronesia. That's basically my intent. I knew that my views were going to be defeated, but some reference to them in the Congressional record was pretty much in order. I didn't know that I was that articulate.

Willens: Well you were, Ed. You will be interested in this quote. You expressed your "hope that Micronesia will become one but the realities of life in our territory points out that there are various facets in life that somehow this unity is not possible if we continue our present negotiating approach."

Pangelinan: I didn't know that I was capable of that prose.

Willens: To some extent it represents your trying to be accommodating to the idea of Micronesian unity, but expressing regret that under the present negotiating posture of the Joint Committee unity was simply not going to be attainable.

Pangelinan: I think I was very consistent.

- Willens: Shortly after the enactment of that resolution by the Congress of Micronesia, the United Nations visiting mission did pay a courtesy visit on you and several members of the Commission. It was a four-person visiting mission including for the first time a representative from the Soviet Union. Do you recall a discussion with the visiting mission members on or about March 1, 1973?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I do very vividly. As a matter of fact, we invited them to the Legislature for that matter and it was more than just a discussion; it was an open forum in a sense. It was our intention to brief the visiting mission on where we are and to have an open dialogue. I think we made a presentation of our official position. We were able to meet with the Soviet representative at that particular time. That was the first time that a Soviet representative was in the area.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of his participation?
- Pangelinan: He was very articulate as a matter of fact. We told him that we weren't a bunch of mavericks running around loose trying to destroy Micronesian unity, but were a civilized bunch of people that aspired to accomplish a relationship with the United States. I think we make that very clear to the gentleman.
- Willens: Do you think that he had come to the Northern Marianas with some preconceptions as to who you were and your lack of competence?
- Pangelinan: I think he was surprised to see that we were very articulate. It was friendly. He couldn't understand why we wanted to align ourselves with the capitalist country of the world.
- Willens: He didn't offer any relationship with the Soviet Union I gather?
- Pangelinan: No. He did mention some opportunity for our students to visit the Soviet Union. As a result of that, one of our more enterprising local boys was finally granted some kind of a scholarship to go to the university in Moscow.
- Willens: That was Oscar Rasa's brother?
- Pangelinan: That's right. At least we accomplished that.
- Willens: In advance of the meeting between the Commission and the U.N. visiting mission, the U.S. delegation and the State Department were apprehensive about the meeting and wanted to reassure you of U.S. support for the Commission. Do you remember Ms. Trent or others trying to bolster your efforts here and assure you that the United States stood behind the Commission?
- Pangelinan: I think Mary tried her best. I remember she was very apprehensive. As a matter of fact, she didn't know how to handle us. Mary took her role here very seriously.
- Willens: Well, how could anyone handle a fifteen-person Commission?
- Pangelinan: Well, it was enough for me to send Danny Muna to her. Danny was (what you call) the activist here on the islands so perhaps that was very unfair on my part, but I wanted to kind of scare Mary. We were capable of handling ourselves.
- Willens: There was one substantive issue that came up at this time and in the future that was of concern to you and was not resolved, I believe, to your satisfaction. The issue was whether the United States would separate out the Northern Marianas from the remainder of the Trust Territory so that actions by the Congress of Micronesia would not apply to the Northern Marianas. This was particularly prompted by consideration of a constitutional convention bill in the Congress of Micronesia, but there were other measures under

consideration as well. Do you recall whether this was an issue of some importance to you at the time?

Pangelinan: Well, we felt very strongly that, since we were pursuing a different status now, our role in the Congress of Micronesia should be restricted. Perhaps we had no business participating now in those activities. Although we recognize the reality there that it was going to be an impossible task for the United States to do that. It would just jeopardize our future relationship because of this real serious problem.

Willens: You did recognize that any such action by the United States would be viewed by the Congress of Micronesia and others as provocative. On the one hand, you wanted separate treatment; on the other hand, you recognized that politically it was premature to achieve it.

Pangelinan: Not only premature, but also it would jeopardize our ongoing relationship. We were sure that the United States was really behind the separate negotiations.

Willens: That was a matter of public record.

Pangelinan: That's true, but we just didn't want to add this aggravation, which would give the Congress of Micronesia a basis for more criticism.

Willens: Another aspect to this that began to assume some importance was how the United States would be able to honor and implement any status agreement that was arrived at with the Commission consistent with its overall position that it would not terminate the trusteeship until a status relationship for all of the districts had been negotiated. Do you remember when it was that this issue began to be ventilated?

Pangelinan: We discussed that informally on a number of occasions. But that didn't bother us at all because we thought that could be accommodated. I keep using this word "accommodation." But I always believed that once we achieved a status for the Northern Marianas, it's really irrelevant when the trusteeship was terminated. We didn't want to put the United States in a position where they have to contradict their policy regarding termination. We recognized that it was important for us to proceed in a manner that would not put the United States in an embarrassing position. It's bad enough, while they are negotiating with us, to ask for another concession regarding termination. It would be just impossible to achieve.

Willens: Did you believe that during the sessions with the visiting mission members that you and your colleagues made any headway whatsoever in persuading them that the separate negotiations were reasonable?

Pangelinan: No. We were very pragmatic about it, Howard. By the next visiting mission all this will be gone. Nobody is going to read the transcript of this visiting mission, so let's not worry about it too much.

Willens: Did you anticipate that they would ultimately produce a report that was critical of the separate negotiation?

Pangelinan: Yes, we recognized that.

Willens: So long as the United States wasn't troubled by that, you were not going to be troubled by it?

Pangelinan: No. Again we were continually going to the United Nations to make our views known at the Trusteeship Council.

Willens: Do you remember the steps taken to prepare for the next round of negotiations?

- Pangelinan: Yes. I think we gave you a pretty tall order as to what we wanted to work on in preparation for the next discussion. I think Jim Leonard was also put to work very seriously on a number of other issues.
- Willens: It's an interesting contrast to look at the record. The United States delegation had a well-established procedure for developing positions. They had been working on these negotiations in part for several years. We came at it, as did Jim Leonard, with more or less of a blank slate. We were left to figure out how best to be of service to the Commission. One thing that happened following the first round of negotiations was that some disagreement within the Commission did become public. There was an interview given by Dr. Palacios in February 1973 that was published in the *Marianas Variety*. He expressed concern with the effort to achieve a permanent association with the United States and about the impact of these negotiations on the remainder of Micronesia. Did a publication of those views give rise to any concern by you or other members of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: Well, it did. But on the other hand, the Commission didn't restrict anyone from openly discussing his own sentiment. As Chairman, I was so preoccupied with just getting prepared for the negotiations, I didn't have the time to even entertain what Dr. Palacios wanted to say. I couldn't stop him if he wanted to do that. We are focused on what the Commission has to do and all this media information was not a real concern for the Commission.
- Willens: During the months preceding the second round of negotiations, there were numerous efforts made by Commission members and consultants to obtain more information from the United States as to the nature of its military land requirements on Tinian. These efforts were unsuccessful. It's understandable once one reviews the historical record. Do you have any recollection of efforts made to try to obtain more information as to what the U.S. military requirements were in advance of the negotiation?
- Pangelinan: There were no formal requests. But we were hoping to get some informal input, just to give us some idea as to how we can address this issue in preparation for the next round of negotiations. We were not very successful, as I understand it.
- Willens: One of the issues that came up later in the year in a particularly confrontational setting pertains to homestead applications that had not been processed by the Trust Territory government. You wrote a letter in early April 1973 to Ambassador Williams on the subject of the homesteading program. The homesteading program was one of many land-related problems that was evaluated in a report prepared by Executive Director White. In your letter you said that there were more than 200 homestead applications in the district and that permits had been given but not implemented. Do you recall why it was that you decided to raise the homestead issue with Ambassador Williams?
- Pangelinan: Yes. Largely because those homesteaders had met all of the requirements for the issuance of their deeds and there was just total reluctance on the part of the Trust Territory government to issue them. It was important for the Commission to ensure that we took care of the people who had land requirements before we started discussion on what we are willing to do to accommodate the military requirements.
- Willens: Was that a political problem that you had?
- Pangelinan: Well, more than a political problem, it was a real problem because these people cannot do anything with their homesteads unless they get their deeds from the government, and the government was very slow in issuing those deeds. So we wanted to put a little pressure on the Trust Territory government to accommodate those homesteaders. Also from a political

standpoint, it was important for us to take care of the people first before discussing the military requirement.

Willens: What was the relationship between the homestead program in your mind and accommodation of any U.S. military requirement?

Pangelinan: How can you justify to the local people who put you into office that you are willing to give the United States government land for military use when a homesteader position is not a perfected one. In the islands they can lose a property tomorrow if the Trust Territory so decides. I have my own experience with my own family here. They were qualified to receive grant deeds from the Trust Territory Government, but nobody wanted to do that. So it was an opportunity for us to expedite the issuance of grant deeds to all the people there.

Willens: At the time that you and other Commission members were doing your job, there was a wide range of problems that needed to be addressed in the Northern Marianas. One of the decisions you had to make as Chairman for the Commission was to what extent to involve the Commission in these separate problems, which had maybe only a tangential relationship to political status. As a political leader, you and others wanted to be sensitive to the needs of the constituents. At the same time you recognized that you had to focus on political status negotiations with the United States. Did you think about what issues were of sufficient importance to use the Commission's authority in trying to deal with it?

Pangelinan: We used the Commission in an indirect way. We used our influence with the Ambassador to urge him to influence the Trust Territory government. We thought that we had a very prominent position to use the Commission as a vehicle to resolve some of the local issues that directly or indirectly would have an impact on the status negotiations. I think we used it very effectively.

Willens: Do you recall pressure being applied on the Commission to interfere in other matters?

Pangelinan: The Tinian delegation, in particular, had vocally expressed to the members of the Commission, we have a lot of homesteaders, we are not going to discuss any military requirements unless we resolve this other issue. They were getting a lot of pressure from their own constituents. I found it necessary to work on their behalf because we knew that if we started talking about military requirements without solving the local homestead problems we were going to be in deep shit.

Willens: In advance of the next round of negotiations, you received one substantial report from my law firm with respect to political status alternatives and certain legal issues with a set of recommendations for the Commission's consideration. You received two reports from Jim Leonard on varied economic issues and you received a report from Jim White that addressed certain land issues. The Commission held informal sessions before meeting with the United States in order to review these reports and develop position papers. What was your sense of the Commission's priorities in preparation for the second round of negotiations.

Pangelinan: I think we pretty much concluded that, in order to proceed with some expediency in the discussions, certain issues were more sensitive than others. We felt that the best way was to use those priorities to shape an agenda for the discussion. I think we handled it pretty well. We were concerned with the political relationship first, to be followed by the economic interests, and lastly the military requirements.

Willens: The discussions within the Commission began, as I recall, with a discussion of the law firm's report on political status alternatives. The report was more than 100 pages in length;

it addressed issues of sovereignty, applicability of the U.S. Constitution, applicability of federal laws, and analyzed alternative options for the Commission to consider. It produced a set of very demanding meetings with the Commission and its consultants. What is your recollection of the process by which the Commission reviewed those issues and ultimately decided on a position paper that advanced a commonwealth proposal?

Pangelinan: I think, Howard, that you surprised the Commission with an overwhelming product. I think the Commission for the first time found that there were so many issues involved. Even on the question of political relationship. Your firm, in particular, did an outstanding job in doing the necessary research so that you can enlighten the Commission members. I think that we were overwhelmed by the product itself and the implications of all this. You've got to understand that you are dealing with fifteen different personalities here that do not really have a complete understanding of what's involved in a relationship.

Willens: I forget whether you and I discussed how to proceed, but my recollection is that you chaired all of the meetings and that you encouraged me to summarize the sections of the report orally in order to provide an opportunity for the Commission to ask questions. And that we tried to defer taking positions until everyone felt comfortable with their understanding of the issues. What is your recollection of how you developed a style of proceeding here that you felt worked as the Chairman of this group?

Pangelinan: When you came in with those bound volumes, and we passed that around to the members of the Commission, it was, like I said, an overwhelming product. So it was important for us to make this available to them, but then somebody has to take the initiative to summarize the product. It was then I think we decided that it was important for you to guide the Commission. To work with the Commission on the issues that you have presented in those volumes. I think that was an appropriate approach. On the other hand, it gave the members the opportunity to fall-back on the more detailed analysis. It was important for you to ensure that we take each step in a very serious and comprehensive manner—by enlightening each individual member of what's involved here in terms of the legal relationship. I think you did an outstanding job in working with the Commission members. I remember we had long sessions on just the review process.

Willens: Do you remember discussions of such issues as sovereignty?

Pangelinan: Yes. I think the members of the Commission had some understanding of what is really involved in sovereignty. I think it helped the Commission members to understand that, although we had so-called sovereignty as a people, once we entered into a close relationship with the United States we gave up that kind of understanding. I know that we devoted a considerable amount of discussion to that particular issue.

Willens: Do you have recollection of any particular exchanges among members of the Commission or between consultants and members of the Commission on that or any other subject?

Pangelinan: I think so. We had some very lively discussions especially with Dr. Palacios. You cannot have your cake and eat it too at the same time. It helped to allay the fears that, although the federal government had the final sovereignty in the American political family, there are aspects of self-government that the people retained. I think we spent considerable time on just that part of the review process. There were certain members of the Commission who felt that we cannot give up sovereignty altogether, but I think you did such a remarkable job in enlightening those members, in particular, that this is an aspect that needs to be fully understood.

- Willens: It was important from my standpoint to help educate the members of the Commission and at the same time be careful not to intrude on the decision-making process. You were always very careful to make certain when it was that you wanted some kind of a decision from the Commission and I think your style was to wait until you felt the Commission was ready to make decisions. My recollection is that it was the job of the consultant, whomever the consultant was, to develop a draft position paper and bring it back to the Commission for review. Was that a process that you remember discussing?
- Pangelinan: That is correct. I will take it one step further, Howard, and that's the Commission wanted to have full confidence and trust in the people that were helping us. I think our discussion made it very clear to the Commission members that our consultants are there to help us, that your review and preparation of the legal issues were ones that we can stand on, and it was important for the members of the Commission to have that confidence and trust in you in particular. Once we reached that point, you made our work a little easier so that we could progress to the other issues on the agenda.
- Willens: These are incredibly difficult issues and there was really very little precedent on which anyone could rely. So to some extent the Commission and its consultants were creating a whole new approach.
- Pangelinan: I think that was the beauty of the process. That we are developing a unique relationship.
- Willens: Do you recall any discussions with Ambassador Williams in advance of the second round that led to this concept that there would be some informal working sessions between the two delegations before there was a formal opening to the negotiations?
- Pangelinan: Going back again to my experience with the Congress of Micronesia, we wanted to avoid a deadlock by passing formal papers that may not be understood by both sides. So it was important for us to have an open dialogue. Although I still considered that a formal session, where we present our case to one another and see how the other reacts, is a very healthy way to discuss issues, without getting bogged down in any sensitive areas that would deadlock the Commission. I think we found that kind of open forum to be a very important and significant approach that led to the success of the working of the two delegations.
- Willens: There was a meeting of the U.S. delegation headed by Mr. Wilson and the Commission on May 10, 1973. At that time the Marianas Political Status Commission delivered a position paper on political status and the United States delivered a position paper on political status and other issues. The Commission's position status paper, which resulted from a week or ten days of discussion, was a basic 13-page paper setting forth a recommendation for a commonwealth relationship. The paper recommended that there be a requirement of mutual consent for any amendment or termination of the relationship. What importance do you recall attaching to the concept of mutual consent?
- Pangelinan: I think it was very strikingly important. We had a real concern in our Party regarding the primary power of Congress to change the relationship at some point in time.
- Willens: Was it particularly a concern about being forcibly reintegrated with Guam?
- Pangelinan: No. Not much of that. We knew for a fact that Guam did not want us in, so we can raise holy hell at any forum that this is not an attainable situation. But there was a real concern on a few members, on my part in particular, that a mutual consent provision is one that would protect us from the outright plenary power of Congress to change the status to whatever is convenient for it. At that time there was some concern on our part about how to accomplish this. Mutual consent is very unique, a very novel idea, and it was unclear

whether it's attainable. I think you promoted the idea that this should be explored. After all, we were looking for a novel relationship, and there was not much we can use for precedent as to how you can improve a relationship outside of the scope of the traditional approach.

Willens: There was also a recommendation in the Commission's initial position paper that whatever status was agreed to should be periodically reviewed at five year intervals. Do you recall where that review concept came from and what importance, if any, it had in the Commission's mind?

Pangelinan: I think again, Howard, it's a novel proposal that you and the legal counsel had suggested—that a review process is important in any kind of relationship. We knew that we cannot identify and address all of the issues of a political relationship, so this was a vehicle to open the door for a future discussion on some of the problems that may be created.

Willens: You raise an interesting point there. One of the differences between the two negotiating parties is that the United States delegation, for the most part, wanted to keep the status agreement as general as possible and defer for the future any specific problems that might come up with respect to applicability of federal laws, for example. The Marianas Political Status Commission on the other hand believed that it should, on advice of counsel, try to identify all of the important issues that it could, and try to deal with them in the course of negotiations, on the general assumption that it might not have the opportunity again in the future. Do you recall any thinking along these lines and perhaps any discussion with the Ambassador about these different approaches?

Pangelinan: No. We did address this in a very substantive manner—that this is our opportunity to resolve as many issues now as possible during the status negotiations, because that's the only way you can establish the framework. I was very concerned, and I think the individual members of the Commission were concerned, that we should do as much as we can in our own way to try to address the more important issues now, rather than wait for the future to unfold.

Willens: Weren't you, on occasion, asked by the Ambassador why it was that you and the Commission members were interested in so much detail and why weren't you satisfied with a more generalized statement of the relationship?

Pangelinan: I think the Ambassador wanted to wrap this up as generally as possible. I think we took our responsibility a little bit further than the Ambassador. Because we were going to be the recipient of this relationship, we wanted as much as we could to develop the framework in more detailed ways to address the concerns as we had been mandated to do. I think it was a mixed bag—that we were going to work on a product that at least would identify some of the concerns of the Commission.

Willens: It may come as a surprise to you to be told that the internal U.S. documents suggested a timetable that might permit a formal status agreement to be signed by the end of 1973 and to be implemented shortly thereafter with a constitutional convention in 1974. Did you have any sense that the United States was proceeding in the hope that such a timetable could be accomplished.

Pangelinan: I think I mentioned earlier that the Ambassador had a proposal ready to be signed. I think it was we who wanted to take a slower approach, because the issues you presented to us were so overwhelming, and there was a need to understand in order to develop a working relationship that would protect the interests of the Northern Marianas. I thought that 1973 was a little bit too ambitious, especially when they were just discussing the political

issue and we haven't even touched on the economic aspects. I think also I indicated earlier that we were approaching it from three different goals: political status, economic, and then the U.S. military interest. It was impossible for us to reach an agreement in 1973. That timetable was too ambitious for us. I also had the problem of having to defend the product that eventually was reached by these two sides.

Willens: It took essentially two full years of negotiations. Ultimately some of the critics of the Covenant maintained that the Commission had proceeded too expeditiously and it should have taken more time. On the one hand, you had criticism that the Commission proceeded too rapidly, and on the other hand you had criticism that the Commission was proceeding too slowly. What conclusion did you reach from that?

Pangelinan: I think that the process that we had undertaken was the right one. I was not concerned about slowing down. I was afraid that if we take our time, we may lose the opportunity just like the Micronesian negotiators did. There were world issues that got me very worried.

Willens: There were what kind of issues?

Pangelinan: Developments internationally, showing that if you really procrastinate on this status negotiation you may just totally lose the opportunity to get on the train and find yourself holding your bags in the train station.

Willens: One of the issues that came up in the internal discussions of the Commission that came as somewhat of a surprise to the consultants was the extended debate about U.S. citizenship and the desirability of offering the alternative of U.S. national status to people in the Northern Marianas. Where did this problem come from?

Pangelinan: I think that I had the advantage of my legal background in understanding that U.S. citizenship and nationality really doesn't make any difference at all. It was a cosmetic thing to handle some of the potential problems here in the Northern Marianas. For those individuals who may find it not totally in sync to obtain U.S. citizenship, some accommodation can be made. As you pointed out in your own review, the Americans are more experienced. There is some flexibility within the American political family that you don't have to be a U.S. citizen to have the full benefits and advantages. We are not concerned about voting for the President because the reality is that's an unobtainable situation. But the benefits of a U.S. citizen can be attained with nationality, and it was an accommodation to those individuals. I'm not pointing fingers to any racial group, but there was some concern from members who said, I don't want to be a U.S. citizen so why do you want to put me in this relationship. So we could say, well then fine, you don't want to be a U.S. citizen and here is another identity that you can hold onto.

Willens: What was hard for me to understand was why people thought that the status of U.S. national was significantly different from the status of U.S. citizen so as to satisfy some of their personal or political concerns.

Pangelinan: Howard, in retrospect now when I look back, I don't see anyone who has come forward and said they want to be a U.S. national. Again it's a way to pacify certain individuals who may have some reservations. It was an opportunity for us to say there is some flexibility in this relationship.

Willens: Providing this option from the Commission's standpoint was a response to concern in the community and, if it was important to that element of the community, the Commission would try to find a way to accommodate it.

- Pangelinan: That's right. It was important for me as a Commission member later on to say, listen, you don't have to be a U.S. citizen and that was important.
- Willens: The U.S. presentation on May 10 was one of the first declarations to the Commission of the full range of desires by the United States for land on Tinian. Mr. Wilson did speak about political status and other matters. Do you remember a portion of his presentation that pertained to Tinian and when it was that you first learned that the United States wanted the entire island?
- Pangelinan: That was a time when I thought I was going to have a heart attack, Howard. This was pretty much kept confidential and it took the Commission by surprise. As a matter of fact, like I said, I almost had a heart attack because I thought that was stupid—a bad, a very bad mistake on the part of the United States to make that kind of proposal.
- Willens: Do you remember whether the United States on the occasion of that informal session on May 10 made available to you and the members of the Commission any memorandum or description of the Tinian requirements that might subsequently have been leaked? Something was leaked because there was a *Pacific Daily News* article that I will refer to shortly, but I don't recall any memorandum from the U.S. that described the Tinian proposal being delivered at that point, do you?
- Pangelinan: No. I kept myself very much away from any proposal, because I don't want to be accused later on that. I knew what's happening. I was anticipating the worst scenario. Not the complete requirement for the whole island of Tinian, but more substantive military development, not only in Tinian but perhaps in Saipan. I was cautious in not even opening myself up to any possible allegation that I was aware of what was happening. I didn't share that informal information.
- Willens: Mr. Wilson went on to elaborate about the wide range of compensatory benefits that would result to the people of Tinian if these U.S. military land requirements were met. I'm sure you remember some of them in terms of jobs and increased revenues and so forth. What was your initial reaction to the U.S. effort to try to persuade the Commission that the compensating economic benefits justify making the entire island available?
- Pangelinan: I think the Commission took it very hard, because of our understanding of the Ebeye-Kwajalein scenario.
- Willens: Could you explain that a bit?
- Pangelinan: Here you have the U.S. military requirement on the island of Ebeye, the capital of Kwajalein. Complete control. Then you have the people, the civilian population working in Kwajalein who have to return home to live on this tiny little island. It's more of an assault on our intelligence and our respect for individual, or you could call it civil, liberties which shows total disregard for the importance of the local people. Again I mention the bad experience of the people of Guam over the years. If you look at military history in Guam it's always relates to jealous, arrogant and overbearing attitudes by the military looking down on the civilian community.
- Willens: The disclosure came from Mr. Wilson during this informal working session on May 10. The formal negotiations did not open until May 15. There is some indication that after Wilson presented his presentation that, on May 10, 11 or 12, there may have been some informal discussions at which members of the Commission asked questions of Mr. Wilson or others about his presentation. I don't have any recollection of that. Do you have any recollection of pursuing these issues informally before the negotiations formally opened on May 15.

- Pangelinan: Howard, no. In retrospect, I think I was basically shocked at the presentation at that particular time; I was worried that this would just destroy the working of the Commission.
- Willens: Do you remember any internal meetings of the Commission where you shared that point of view with members of the Commission and heard their views?
- Pangelinan: I think we had a meeting at some point. The Commission decided to wait for the formal presentation and then address it at that time.
- Willens: We had limited resources and we had prepared a paper on political status dated May 10. The Commission then turned then to economic status and had a position paper of May 14. The Commission's official view on military land requirements did wait, as you say, for the Ambassador's formal presentation. Was it your sense that the other members of the Commission shared your strong reaction to Mr. Wilson's definition of U.S. military requirements?
- Pangelinan: Yes. Definitely there was almost a walk-out by some members of the Commission because this is just an outrageous demand. That reaction was circulating within the Commission. I had a difficult time just keeping everybody on track. I think by that time we had Joe Cruz on board or close to.
- Willens: Not quite. He came on board over the summer. But he was still a very active spokesman.
- Pangelinan: I had a real challenge just keeping the Commission together.
- Willens: In fact there was, as I said, a *Pacific Daily News* headline and I think it was on May 16. The day after the formal ceremonies opening up the second round, the *Pacific Daily News* had a headline that filled one-half of its first page saying "Say Navy seeks all of Tinian" and it reported obtaining an inch-thick document that set forth the plans of the U.S. military. This generated enormous furor on Tinian that we will come to. It's your recollection now that you and the other members of the Commission were so shocked by the dimensions of the U.S. request that you personally thought there was a risk of the negotiations recessing, if not falling apart, because of that development?
- Pangelinan: I couldn't even generate any other discussion after that. It was so important. I thought that was the end of the Commission, to be honest with you. I thought I would not be able to keep the members together.
- Willens: Did you ever express that sentiment to Ambassador Williams, and in particular, either before the second round began formally or shortly after the beginning? Did you ever seek the opportunity to tell him on a personal level that the scope of the U.S. requirements was a real threat to the negotiations?
- Pangelinan: No. I didn't want to show our weakness at that particular time. Secondly, I thought that now that we knew their proposal, we wanted to put it on the record so that we can really respond to it. From the Commission's standpoint, it was necessary for me not to give any impression that would show the disarray or the weakness of the Commission. But more importantly, I thought that now at least we know what's involved here and it was important for the U.S. delegation not to know where we are coming from.
- Willens: That's correct. In any negotiations, there are going to be surprises and the Commission had to hold itself together and then put together a reasoned response to the U.S. request, which would really defend the Commission's objectives and make it clear to the people that all of Tinian was not going to be granted away. That was ultimately done and we'll come to that. After the Commission made its statement on political status, Mr. Wilson

delivered an overview of the U.S. position, including U.S. land requirements on Tinian. He made a few comments with respect to political relationship that identified some points that the United States continued to make on this subject. I want to ask your understanding and reaction to them. Mr. Wilson and the Ambassador always argued for a simple and straight-forward relationship of a kind that would avoid complications in Congress. Do you remember that being a principal position?

Pangelinan: I think that I do. Largely because we got the impression that the U.S. delegation was not ready to circumvent the political authority of Congress, its plenary power, and they believed that the only authority that the Congress can use here is the so-called Territorial Clause, I think Article IV, section 3, clause (2), and so they had a real serious problem as to what kind of a political status can be established within this framework.

Willens: They also evidenced concern about any use of Puerto Rico as a precedent because of the uncertainty and ambiguity that some members of Congress saw in that relationship. Do you remember having any discussions with the Ambassador or others as to Puerto Rico as a precedent for the MPSC to follow?

Pangelinan: Well, the Puerto Rican example model was not the ideal kind of status that the Ambassador was willing to propose to the Northern Marianas. I think he saw some real problems with that model. First, I think he was under constraints that the size of the area and its small population cannot justify any other status short of a territorial framework.

Willens: He did in fact have instructions that required him to negotiate what was called a "territorial relationship." As the negotiations developed there came to be some exchange of views as to what that meant. Did you ever get from the Ambassador some more elaborate statement as to what exactly he had in mind and what his limitations were?

Pangelinan: I think it was very clear from the beginning that his limitations were, one, authority to tie down the power of the U.S. Congress. I believe he was just not prepared to go beyond what the traditional status for territories was at that particular time. I think too he probably had not touched base with the Congressional leaders as to what Congress was willing to extend to the Northern Marianas. Yes, we did have informal discussions as to what was the ideal relationship that the Northern Marianas could achieve within this negotiation. But I always had the impression that the Ambassador was not too sure of his own flexibility to go beyond the territorial status.

Willens: Do you think that he was also under some direction not to agree to a status for the Northern Marianas that was significantly different from that of Guam.

Pangelinan: I think so. I think Guam played an important factor here. As you probably know, by that time Guam had a congressional delegate and that was in the person of Tony Won Pat. Tony was a very close colleague of Congressman Phil Burton. I believe there were discussions, as I understood it later, that Tony had always expressed some concern that the Northern Marianas for all intents and purposes really were a part of the geographical chain of the Marianas. To extend a relationship more favorable to the people of the Northern Marianas than Guam had been viewed, I wouldn't call it an insult, as a serious denial to what Guam can accomplish.

Willens: When do you recall being made first aware of the Guamanian concern being expressed along those lines to Congressman Burton?

Pangelinan: I guess there were a number of communications along these lines. I think in an informal setting with some political leaders in Guam.

- Willens: Let me interrupt. There was in fact a meeting with the Guamanian political commission after this round of negotiations. Would that have been a setting in which this kind of concern might have come up?
- Pangelinan: No. I took a number of trips to Guam. We had a political status conference at one point at the University of Guam. I had a chance to talk to some political leaders then. The University of Guam at that particular time was discussing Guam's political status. They were aware that we were in the process of negotiating and some of the academic folks had written papers that allude to the fact that any status that the Northern Marianas got should take into consideration the fact that Guam had not achieved its desired political status.
- Willens: After the negotiations began, there was this headline in the *Pacific Daily News* with respect to the U.S. requirements for Tinian. After that news article came out, neither delegation, according to the press, was willing to respond to the press inquiries for a day or two. Under some pressure there finally was a joint press release issued on May 17, 1973. The joint release stated "that at no time however, has the U.S. stated a requirement for exclusive use of all of Tinian. Ambassador Williams wishes to state that the U.S. Government has no plans whatever to make the U.S. military responsible for the civilian administration of Tinian as alleged in recent news reports." Do you remember any discussions with the Ambassador as to (1) the need to respond to the press developments, and (2) what to say about Tinian?
- Pangelinan: I think we did discuss that, because a bombshell was thrown at us and there were a lot of mumblings among our citizens. I think there was a lot of disappointment as well as real concern as to the impact of the U.S. proposal for the complete requirement of Tinian. At that time it was necessary that before we proceed toward the formal negotiation we needed to allay the fears of the people and to demonstrate that this is a matter that will be negotiated to the satisfaction of both parties.
- Willens: The statement did make the point that the Marianas Political Status Commission had the responsibility and was going to fully protect the interests of the citizens of Tinian. Some of the Tinian leaders who became very vocal were Felipe Atalig, Tinian Mayor Antonio Borja and Council Member Leonardo F. Diaz. Do you remember those individuals on this subject?
- Pangelinan: Very much so. They had embarked on a plan to travel to the Philippines to inspect Clark Air Force Base in Subik.
- Willens: Did you know of their plans before they in fact went?
- Pangelinan: Well, they told me that they do have the plan. There is nothing I can do to stop them. I would discourage them. I was put in a position where it was in the best interest of the Northern Marianas, especially the people of Tinian, to not be hindered in whatever oversight investigation that they want to conduct. As a matter of fact, we went to the extent of helping them arrange for tourist visas to go to Clark Air Force Base and inspect the area. So, we did in an indirect way contact I believe some folks from Guam, the Naval personnel in particular, to give these folks some opportunity to see for themselves.
- Willens: Subsequently, when Ambassador Williams did lay out in public the full plans for Tinian, the *Pacific Daily News* thought that his first statement was not entirely accurate. In a self-serving way the newspaper thought they had broken the story and that, in fact, the U.S. did want exclusive use to all of the island of Tinian. Did you have any concern at the time about the accuracy of what the Ambassador wanted to say about U.S. plans?

- Pangelinan: I think there were serious inconsistencies to begin with. First of all, when you want the whole island, that really implies full control. This goes back to the historic way of the military's handling of jurisdiction, its mentality, especially going back to Guam, of fencing out the military bases. Let's say that you want the whole island; that means that they do really require a complete military reservation. The implication was very clear that the Ambassador wants full control of the island. When the U.S. said it's not seeking total exclusive control, the papers did not buy that.
- Willens: As a result of the public clamor, as I will term it, you and the Commission members decided to hold a meeting on Friday night over in Tinian on May 18, 1973. Do you recall making a decision that it would be necessary for the Commission to deal directly with the people on this issue?
- Pangelinan: I think earlier we did allude to the fact that there may be a need to go to the other municipalities to conduct a public hearing. I know we were prepared from the very beginning, at least within the Commission, that when it comes to the Tinian requirements, it's only fair that we bring the discussion to Tinian so the people can hear for themselves.
- Willens: Do you remember whether everyone went, the whole Commission and the consultants? I have a recollection of some evening meetings over there and I am just unclear as to which ones I am remembering.
- Pangelinan: Yes, I think we did. We had a full complement of the Commission. Subsequently before the final trip was taken there were a lot of rumors that some folks are probably going to do some violence there.
- Willens: During your visit to the island?
- Pangelinan: Yes, during our visit. As a matter of fact, there were some personal threats. Not directly to us, but words were circulating that some folks are very unhappy with the situation and perhaps some members of the Commission, in particular myself as Chairman, are going to find it uncomfortable and perhaps some lives may be in jeopardy here. We are used to that kind of rumors.
- Willens: What is your recollection of that meeting and what was accomplished?
- Pangelinan: The meeting was intended to involve not only the leaders of Tinian but also to have an open forum where a candid discussion can take place. It was intended to show to the people of Tinian in good faith that the Commission was making good on its promise to discuss on Tinian the federal land requirement and the preparation for negotiations. We wanted to have people ask questions which the Commission could use in the status negotiations to raise with the Ambassador and the U.S. delegation.
- Willens: The reports of the meeting suggested that there were at least two principal lines of criticism. One, the people seemed not to want to have to relocate the village under any circumstances whatsoever. Too, they objected to the military taking the entire island and planning to leaseback a third to the civilian community. Addressing the first of those concerns, some skeptics have suggested that Tinian residents really didn't have any emotional attachment to their land in the village and this contention about relocating was not a sincere one. What is your judgment?
- Pangelinan: That's the impression from people on perhaps the outside. The people from the Northern Marianas understand very clearly that the people of Tinian had been purposely dislocated. They came from Yap and Tinian became their home. I'm very familiar with this because my own family was part of that group. As a matter of fact, my grandfather came in from Yap.

- Willens: From Yap?
- Pangelinan: Yes.
- Willens: To Tinian or to Saipan?
- Pangelinan: My grandfather came to Saipan but my father's family, uncles, cousins, a whole large number [went to Tinian]. They all originally came from Yap.
- Willens: So you understood where these people came from and how they felt about their lives?
- Pangelinan: No question about it. You've got to understand too that the relocation of the people of Yap took place in late 1949. I was there when we met the boat from Yap.
- Willens: On Tinian?
- Pangelinan: On Tinian. I have a strong recollection, which caused me to be sympathetic to these people. So I could relate to the interests of the people of Tinian?
- Willens: Did you ever make that point in a public meeting? Explain that you had some familiarity with Tinian's history and that you shared it to some extent?
- Pangelinan: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, when I look at the people that were there, these were basically my families. Friends.
- Willens: You think that the concern about relocation was a deeply felt one?
- Pangelinan: Definitely. This was almost like a point that you just do not negotiate.
- Willens: Do you remember that there were all kinds of formal presentations about fancy concrete houses that would be constructed and relocation benefits? Did that package of benefits that the United States presented have any countervailing appeal to the people of Tinian?
- Pangelinan: Of course, it's a very attractive package. But you've got to understand too that the people of Tinian were going through a period of time without the benefit of luxury homes and all the modern advantages. The words came to us very clearly, who cares?
- Willens: I don't understand.
- Pangelinan: Who cares? The package is nice but this is our home. They have lived here most of their adult life; people were born in Tinian and its their land.
- Willens: How about the second of the main points that the United States was simply asking too much. Was that a widely shared view on Tinian?
- Pangelinan: Definitely. The consensus of the people is that yes, the United States was asking for a little beyond what we can deliver.
- Willens: There were several speakers that evening, including Speaker Mendiola, who had previously gone on record as being receptive to the military. But that evening and in response to the U.S. request, he and others said that, although they were still pro-military, it was time to tell the United States that they were asking too much. Is that the way you understand the bulk of the discussion?
- Pangelinan: Again going back to the historical record. There was a lot of expression welcoming the military. The people of Tinian were receptive to a military establishment on Tinian. There is no question about it. Probably nobody opposed that need to welcome the military back. The impression that they got from the proposal was an overwhelming one. Well, here we want to welcome the military to the island but that requires our dislocation. So the interest overnight became a real concern.

- Willens: Based on that meeting and internal discussions within the Commission, was the Commission putting itself in a posture to develop a position paper that would, when the time came, reject important elements of the U.S. proposal?
- Pangelinan: I think it just helped us to refocus our attention. Now we knew that we don't have the support to accommodate the exclusive requirements of the United States. Actually, it encouraged us to come up with an option to present to the United States government.
- Willens: You indicated earlier that the Commission wanted to develop its position in due course, but that there were other items that were on the agenda of the negotiation. Specifically, political status and economic assistance. As I understand it, the Ambassador had made it clear that the parties had to concentrate on political status and reach some preliminary agreement before the United States would be willing to discuss other subjects. Do you remember his taking that kind of a position with respect to the agenda?
- Pangelinan: I believe so, because both sides were using some leverage to take advantage. In particular, we were interested in economics. The U.S. delegation was focused on the land requirement. So there were times really when it became it very difficult to decide which ones to consider. I think we stayed pretty much on track.
- Willens: It's interesting that you and the Commission on the one hand, and the U.S. delegation on the other, did stay on track even though the Tinian issue had become a highly controversial one several days before it had been scheduled to be discussed between the parties. So far as the Commission was concerned though, there was really no interest in dealing with Tinian on a higher priority basis. It was a very delicate and controversial matter. Isn't that correct?
- Pangelinan: That's correct. But on the other hand, now that we knew the proposal, it gave us the opportunity to use this as a way of expediting the other issues that we wanted to address. At the same time, I believe we saw some of our limitations, in that our bargaining position may be weakened in some areas because we knew what the United States now really wanted. It was a difficult position for the Commission to know what exactly we can get out of this discussion. Knowing about the requirements was enormous.
- Willens: Did anyone on the Commission seriously think that it was possible or desirable to reach agreement on U.S. military land requirements at that session of negotiations, in May and June of 1973, or did you believe that this was going to be a subject that required additional discussion and negotiation over the next year?
- Pangelinan: As you probably recall, Howard, really we were not prepared to discuss land issues. We had not had the opportunity to have any research on what is really involved here. I think that was subsequent to this discussion. We formed a subcommittee to beef up our research on land requirements.
- Willens: That's a good point. Whether planned or not, the Commission really did have limited resources. So the Commission had to assign some priorities as to what it was prepared to negotiate about—what it needed and wanted to defer for future sessions.
- Pangelinan: That's right. I think the U.S. delegation understood that we were really totally unprepared to discuss the land issue at that particular time.
- Willens: After you went to Tinian on that Friday night with members of the Commission, would that have been the kind of a session with the citizens that you would have had a private conversation with the Ambassador about or was that something that you elected to pretty much keep in confidence? It was reported in a newspaper that you had met with him and

I should think that the Ambassador or members of his staff would have some interest in your reactions to the meeting.

Pangelinan: I think the Ambassador was helpful in not using it as a way to find out what the reaction of the people was. I think too that the Ambassador knew me well enough that I was not about to reveal any internal working relationship with the constituents. Surprisingly, he never raised that issue to my recollection, to me personally. Had he raised it, I would only just have told him that it was not for discussion purposes.

Willens: Turning to political status then in the formal negotiations, when Ambassador Williams followed up on Mr. Wilson's statement, he objected to certain elements of the Commission's proposal. First, he didn't see any need for the requirement of mutual consent and he didn't see any requirement that there be a periodic review of the relationship. Those were two issues on which the Commission continued to attach a high priority. Do you remember the nature of the discussion with respect to the element of mutual consent, for example?

Pangelinan: I think the element of mutual consent was a very novel idea here. I got the impression that the U.S. government was unprepared to address this. I think they had never seen this in any other arrangement. I think it took them by surprise that it was somewhat unique. I think they were not prepared to see whether they had the authority to agree to such an arrangement.

Willens: The other principal point that the Ambassador made was that the United States had to have unlimited legislative authority under Article IV(3)(2) [of the Constitution] and this was another issue that was of some concern to the Commission. Do you remember any internal discussions of the Commission with counsel as to these issues and how best to pursue the Commission's strategy here?

Pangelinan: I think it was your suggestion to us that this is a binding arrangement. The major concern was a provision that there is no legal or constitutional constraint that you were aware of and so, therefore, we can support and defend our position. I think also there was some discussion that Congress within its authority can limit its power and it's really Congress that has that prerogative. We got the impression that the U.S. delegation perhaps had not touched base with the Congressional leaders, so they were constrained in their own effort to propose something when they don't have the authority. I think your legal research indicated very clearly that this approach certainly was viable.

Willens: There were during this session a series of meetings among the lawyers from both parties. I have now obtained memoranda that the United States lawyers prepared summarizing those meetings. There was a meeting on May 19, 1973, in which I participated with four lawyers. I assume that your counsel had general authority from you as Chairman of the Commission to talk to the other side and report to you and the members of the Commission as to what the problems were and what the potential was for reaching agreement on some of these controversial subjects.

Pangelinan: Yes, indeed. As a matter of fact, counsel was given full authority to discuss legal issues and to report back to the Commission. I think that's one of the beauty of this negotiation; we found a vehicle in which open discussion among the counsel on both sides can work and try to resolve issues that the principals can later on be in a better position to negotiate. I think that was one of the attractive features of our negotiation; we had this flexibility and certainly counsel, you and your associates, helped the Commission to make its deliberations more expeditiously, to understand some of the problems of the U.S. delegation, and to get the best advice from you in particular.

- Willens: After one of the meetings of counsel where the subject of mutual consent was pressed very hard on behalf of the Commission, the U.S. delegation through Ambassador Williams came back to the formal negotiating table and tried to summarize the agreements that had been reached with respect to political status. Interestingly, on that day, Ambassador Williams stated his understanding that the U.S. Congress would have authority under Article IV(3)(2) to legislate for the Northern Marianas subject to any future agreement with respect to mutual consent. For the first time, he offered tentative agreement to a mutual consent provision so long as the parties agree on everything else and subject to limiting its application. But that was a major concession. Do you remember being surprised when you heard that across the table?
- Pangelinan: No, because I think you had earlier advised us about this agreement with counsel that it's a viable point that can be supported. I think you had presented a very persuasive argument to the other side. I think you alerted us that if we continued to pursue this that the U.S. would be willing to make a concession here.
- Willens: One never knew, of course, in dealing with lawyers from the other side as to what recommendation they would ultimately make to their principal and whether he would accept that recommendation. In this case, there was a breakthrough which then led to a second controversy over Article 4(3)(2). The Commission members and counsel still continued to express their concern that the future commonwealth would have difficulty exercising the maximum self-government which everyone had agreed it should have, if Congress was free at that same time to legislate without restriction on local matters in the Commonwealth. That led to a meeting between counsel on May 21, 1973, and then a meeting in which you participated on May 22. Because of the importance of the discussions that took place, I would like you to take a look at least one of the memoranda. Ed, I have shown you some of the memoranda reflecting meetings of counsel on May 21, 1973 and then on May 22 in which you participated with the Ambassador and counsel. The general issue was whether the Commission was ready to agree at that time to the unlimited application of Article IV(3)(2) even with a mutual consent provision or whether it wanted some more express limitation on congressional power. What is your recollection of these discussions and the importance of this issue to the Commission?
- Pangelinan: I think this is probably the most important issue in the political status discussions. It affects the authority of the Northern Marianas to have complete self-government in light of the position of the U.S. delegation regarding the applicability of Article IV(3)(2).
- Willens: We basically had not done sufficient homework in advance on this issue so as to be able to recommend a position for the Commission to take. Our recommendation to the Commission was that it try to persuade the United States to defer further consideration of this issue, so that the Commission would undertake the necessary study and analysis and try to deal with it at future sessions. Do you remember what response the Ambassador made to that?
- Pangelinan: When I met with the Ambassador he was prepared to reach an agreement on this issue. But I think he was unprepared that we were going to request a deferment largely because he felt that this was a matter that had to be put to bed. I recall after an informal discussion with him that he said that you are asking for the impossible. There was really no way that I can accommodate that. For some reason, he said that he felt that he was trying to accommodate us. I think that he made a mistake with saying, well yes, let's do the necessary research and revisit this at a later time. At that point, I had the opportunity of meeting him in the afternoon and he was just totally upset.

- Willens: Was that before or after the meeting in which you both participated?
- Pangelinan: After the meeting.
- Willens: The meeting ended with the U.S. delegation saying that they would consider our request for deferral of this issue and they would be back to the Commission on the subject, which typically meant that the Ambassador would contact you at some point and let you know what his decision was. Did he contact you?
- Pangelinan: Well he did and we had a tea break, as we sometimes call it, an informal chat where he wanted to pretty much speak his mind. As always, I said well, you know, my Commission stands firm in that we have decided to defer this issue. He was making it very clear to me that our position was untenable.
- Willens: My recollection is that this may well have been the first of several occasions where he felt that the Commission's lawyers were perhaps pressing too far and that the Commission should not rely on that kind of advice.
- Pangelinan: No. I make it very clear with the Ambassador that our counsel is our counsel and he has his own counsel to rely upon. We have the full confidence and trust in our own people and we think the recommendation from our counsel is the one that the Commission is going to rely upon. I think also we kind of made a point to him which is sometimes difficult to say, because it's a little embarrassing. You know his own people may not have done the full research and that he is entitled to a complete briefing. He didn't quite appreciate that. Saying that your people are not giving you the benefit of complete research is just short of telling you that our people are better than yours.
- Willens: I recall it as being a very delicate point in the negotiations. We knew that unless he would agree to deferring this issue, we could not put the question of political status behind us for the time being and move on to the other important issues that remained to be negotiated. In fact, he wanted ultimately to reach the question of U.S. military land requirements, so he had some incentive to reach tentative agreement that this could be deferred because he had an interest in going forward. Isn't that correct?
- Pangelinan: No question about it. He felt that he had been waiting patiently to come to the most significant part of his assignment and that is the land issue. Whereas we are taking our good time and this is another ploy on our part to defer and delay. I think the Ambassador was under real pressure that we reach certain points so that we can move forward.
- Willens: Did he ever suggest to you that the Commission was proceeding too slowly and trying to avoid issues that he wanted to address?
- Pangelinan: Well, he alluded on a number of occasions that we were making the negotiations very complex and difficult and we were getting into areas that perhaps we shouldn't be involved in. His understanding was that he was there to accommodate the interests of the Northern Marianas, but now it appears that we were intentionally delaying reaching agreements on significant points. He kept alluding to the fact that he was ready to give us the full benefits of a status arrangement and here again we are looking for an excuse to delay the negotiation.
- Willens: It must have been a very delicate issue for you to discuss personally with him because you had been so instrumental in securing U.S. agreement to these negotiations and the Ambassador would frequently make reference to the fact that he was there at the invitation of the Marianas people. At the same time, as Chairman of the Commission you had the duty to get the best possible arrangement for your constituents. So there was this tension

that you must have experienced in dealing with him that from time to time must have caused you some problems.

Pangelinan: No, it did not really. The Ambassador was kind of an overwhelming personality and sometimes he felt that this is a kind of father-son relationship here and I should listen to the good wisdom that is emanating from him. There were times when people said that he was somewhat patronizing me and I say well, no, because I have one advantage. I've got fourteen other members to consult with. So I took it in good humor. I think it was important for me to hear him out because I didn't have to listen to the other political advisors of the Ambassador and it was an opportunity for me to see just how far we could go. I think a lot of times he spoke his mind, so I could read him and then report back to the Commission what transpired.

Willens: I think that's right. I think a very important function of the Chairman of the Commission was to serve that liaison function. It was undoubtedly difficult at times but enormously important I think to the work of the Commission. I think the Ambassador, although he had his own strategy and tactics, did on the whole value that line of communication and used it effectively.

Pangelinan: I think also, Howard, that we did make life difficult for the Ambassador; we contributed to that because of the significance and the importance of the issue. I think to a large degree maybe we were a little unfair to the Ambassador because the demands that we have made were sensitive and difficult and it took us a little bit more time to come to grips with them. The Ambassador perhaps, not understanding our intention, had difficulty accepting the fact that the Commission felt it was necessary to resolve various complicated matters before we can reach an agreement on some political status.

Willens: This goes back to something we've discussed already. That's the basic different strategies of the two parties to the negotiations. The next subject that was addressed in the negotiations related to the economic and financial aspects of the relationship. Jim Leonard's firm had supplied two working papers for the Commission and based on those the Commission developed a position paper that essentially tracked Mr. Leonard's recommendations on a three-phase approach. Looking back to the beginning of the negotiation on the subject of financial support, what did you really think was attainable here or, put another way, what did you think the Commission ought to try to achieve in the area of financial support?

Pangelinan: There were a number of serious considerations here. One was the level of financial support to develop the kind of infrastructure that was so badly missing in the Northern Marianas. Two, the financial support that would help run the government—operational costs. Three, opportunities that would give the Northern Marianas some level of standard of living that was lacking in the area. Fourth, opportunity for the private sector to develop. I guess we also learned that there were other programs that citizens of the United States were entitled to and we felt very strongly that those programs should also be given to the people of the Northern Marianas. To name a few, housing programs, welfare assistance to the elderly, senior citizens and the disabled, and school programs. A whole range of federal domestic assistance opportunities that we were not qualified to receive under the Trust Territory. These were basically the factors that we were interested in getting more information about so that we could judge how this new arrangement would help the Northern Marianas develop.

Willens: On the subject of capital improvement requirements and the infrastructure deficiencies, Jim Leonard's paper and the Commission's proposal projected that approximately \$48 million would be needed to meet the Marianas needs for public facilities over (I think)

a five-year period of time. The figure had been developed by examination of previously developed plans in the Marianas, either by outside consultants or by the TTPI. This amount of money, as I recall, was far larger than the United States had begun to think of. Was it a realistic figure in your judgment in view of the deficiencies in the infrastructure that existed at the time?

Pangelinan: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, I was aware of the studies up on the Capitol Hill. The studies were done with great care and they were sitting up on the shelf in the Trust Territory government largely because there were no funds to support them. These were very conservative figures at that particular time. Figures that were reached as to the reasonable amount needed to improve the infrastructure in the islands. We are talking about water, power, we hadn't even considered sewage at that time. But road development, harbor improvement, the airport, basic infrastructures that a community needs in order to progress and develop its economic strength. Our feelings, as a matter of fact, were very conservative. But it was a staggering amount because the United States had never accepted the idea of giving this level of support. We were talking about an amount that the whole Trust Territory was not even privileged to be afforded. But it was a very defensible posture.

Willens: With respect to support for government operations, was it your view that the future government would require a level of funding that would be greater than what had been spent under the Trust Territory Administration?

Pangelinan: We anticipated the displacement of our people who at that time were working at the Trust Territory government and their moving into the Northern Marianas government. We were about the same level with some opportunities for growth. We also realized that because we were moving into an American affiliation the wage scale would be somewhat different from the current one. We factored that into the cost of the new government.

Willens: One of the subjects discussed in Leonard's report was the difference between the Guamanian wage scale, for example, and the one that existed then in the Marianas; and he projected that over time the Marianas would want to increase the general level of compensation up to the Guamanian level. Was that something that you felt was part of the overall objective of improving the standard of living?

Pangelinan: We felt that that was the minimum that we should aspire to. We recognized that you cannot overnight change the operations of the government to the extent that it would jeopardize the private sector. I think it was a very comprehensive plan and the gradual development of the new government into an acceptable level that would make it completely functional.

Willens: One of the proposals in the Commission's initial position paper on economics was for a multi-year program that would permit the Marianas to proceed on the assumption that it knew exactly how much money was going to be available and that it would not have to go to Congress on an annual basis through the normal budgetary process. Was this an important objective to the Commission?

Pangelinan: It's very important because of our own experience with the Trust Territory government and the continued dependency on an annual review. It's a very insecure position. Also we felt that in order to develop the infrastructure there has to be an acceptable period of time to develop this. I think we compromised from a long term to a five-year term which is one that can be defended. One that covers a period of time that we felt was necessary to develop the infrastructure.

- Willens: So the Commission stuck to that principle and it ultimately found its way into the Covenant.
- Pangelinan: Right.
- Willens: One aspect of Leonard's suggestion, which was adopted by the Commission, was to engage in what was called a Phase One planning effort. He basically laid it out in three phases. Phase One being a twelve or eighteen month planning period during which the transition to the new government would be organized, funded, and studied; and the second would be a five or seven-year program of major support. And then Phase Three was off in the future looking toward the point at which, I assume, economic self-sufficiency would be attained. There was a good deal of discussion at this session of negotiations and at the next two rounds about transitional planning. What was your initial thinking about the need for transitional planning and the kind of work that ought to be done?
- Pangelinan: I think Jim pretty much pointed out not only the need but also the urgency for the phasing of the transition. We recognized that the transitional planning would cover not only the complete change over from Trust Territory to the Northern Marianas government, but also other very significant issues that needed to be considered. I think later on we decided that we just didn't have the money for this particular phase and we needed to get some financial help from the federal government. But it was a very significant point that we wanted to ensure that the new government had the guidelines that it would use into its development.
- Willens: Do you recall any important differences within the Commission as it reviewed Leonard's papers and developed the first Commission position paper on the subject?
- Pangelinan: I think the key recommendation was accepted by the Commission members pretty much in whole. There were minor discussions in the interim of just how much we need to have and how long it would last. But overall, the recommendation was one that the Commission accepted.
- Willens: Do you feel that the Commission understood some of these economic analyses and recommendations more readily than they did some of the legal issues?
- Pangelinan: Yes. The economic issue was more or less something that we could relate to. It's a more exciting subject because it affects everyone on a very personal basis. I think too that the Commission members felt more closely related to the economic part of the negotiations. I think this was one of the strong incentives for these discussions and I believe that the Commission members were more excited in discussing this issue.
- Willens: After having received the Commission's position paper, the United States responded. But it did so without really dealing with the specific data, analyses, or recommendations of the Commission. Do you remember having any reaction to the U.S. delegation's first response to the Commission's views on this subject?
- Pangelinan: I don't recall any serious objection informally or in the formal discussion. We are dealing here with a small amount of money when you look at it. I think the U.S. delegation had some reservation about the impact this was going to have on the other negotiations. But, on the other hand, they felt that this is something that can be accommodated. In comparison with the legal issues, this is much easier to handle.
- Willens: One of the points they made, and continued to make for some time, was that the Commission's economic analysis had not taken into account the economic benefits of the anticipated military construction and operation on Tinian. They urged strongly that the

economic benefits flowing from that were substantial and needed to be included. Do you remember that issue?

Pangelinan: I remember that very issue and I think the Commission took a very strong position that the administrative proposal is something we cannot rely upon. It's something way off in the future and, if that happens, well it's fine. But in the event it doesn't happen, then we cannot put our hope on the economic aspects of the matter, realizing that defense facilities have to be funded and time has to be taken into consideration before they become a reality.

Willens: Is your reaction that the Commission took that position and stuck with it throughout the negotiations?

Pangelinan: That's right. I think now, in retrospect, that was a very wise decision.

Willens: There are those who think one of the shortcomings of the Commission's work was on the financial side and that it should have tried to get more financial support from the United States, especially after the U.S. decided that it was not going to embark on construction of a Tinian facility in the near future. Do you have any reaction one way or another to that line of criticism?

Pangelinan: No. We didn't even pay attention to that. The Commission felt that let's be pragmatic, let's be realistic, let's get what we need to develop ourselves. We chatted among ourselves that the military aspect is the additional benefit that may come to bear but, surprisingly, there were some members who were not totally optimistic that the military plans really were going to become a reality.

Willens: Do you remember any particular members who were more skeptical than others?

Pangelinan: I don't want to point out any particular individual, but there was some sentiment that we perhaps were too far away. Guam had sufficient military facilities there and the Northern Marianas was probably only for contingency purposes. Look at that particular time, the Vietnam crisis was just about coming to an end and, looking at our military operations around the world, we felt that we have Clark and Subic in the Philippines. The reality of Tinian becoming a full-fledged military installation seemed really remote and unreal.

Willens: Do you ever remember expressing those uncertainties to either the Ambassador or any other member of the U.S. delegation?

Pangelinan: I think we make it clear to the Ambassador at some point that if Tinian is going to develop as a military installation, that's fine and dandy. But we're not going to wait until then to pursue our economic development.

Willens: You are correct in recalling that the U.S. delegation generally agreed with the principles that were set forth in the Commission's position paper on economics and finance; and they generally concurred with the three-phase approach, although indicating that there might be differences on some details and timing issues. They did ask a whole series of questions though about the Commission's proposal and they never really seemed to want to negotiate the substance of these issues at this round of negotiations. The Commission became somewhat dissatisfied with this and there was an exchange of position papers in which the Commission emphasized that it wanted to obtain specific commitments from the United States regarding the financial needs of the Marianas in the future. Do you remember the Commission's desire for specificity and the U.S. delegation's reluctance to provide it?

- Pangelinan: Yes, because we were ready to propose dollar figures. To us that was a most significant part of the discussion.
- Willens: Do you think the United States did not want to respond because they were not ready to respond or because they wanted to wait to see what happened on military land requirements before they would discuss the level of U.S. financial support?
- Pangelinan: I think it's a mixed bag. Earlier we alluded to the fact that their economic plan was to incorporate this military development on Tinian and therefore that could shift one way or the other depending how much land it can obtain. On the other hand, the Commission was anxious to make progress on this issue. For two purposes, one is that we want to show the general public that yes, there are some very significant benefits and economic opportunities here under this new arrangement we are trying to achieve. From that standpoint we were ready with our proposal and some real dollar amounts that we wanted to present to the U.S. delegation.
- Willens: After an exchange of papers and discussion of financial support you and Ambassador Williams issued a press release on this subject. It was very general in its terms and you on behalf of the Commission issued a one paragraph statement, the critical sentence of which advised Ambassador Williams "that the Commission is of the unanimous view that the commitments made by the United States in the area of economic and financial support in this release are not as specific, definite or generous as the Commission believes appropriate." That sounds like fighting words.
- Pangelinan: It was intended to be, because there were people that said, "Well now that you begin to discuss economics, what is there for us. What level of funding are we talking about?" There were some concern that the Ambassador was going to run us over and it's going to be another mini-Trust Territory arrangement here. That release was very self-serving on our part.
- Willens: It did require the United States to look at the issues with more attention during the recess. The last item discussed during this round of negotiations was the subject of land and in particular the military requirements on Tinian. Ambassador Williams did review the entire proposal again and on June 1, 1973, the Commission produced its initial response. These were some of the issues that were raised. First was the form of acquisition. The Commission took the position it would not agree to sale; it would insist on a lease. How important was this?
- Pangelinan: Real important. Largely because of the experience in all the jurisdictions. I think also because we were negotiating as a sovereign people. We felt that land has always been a dear thing to the people of the Northern Marianas. We just don't want to lose it. I think from that posture we felt that sale was not acceptable at all.
- Willens: Why do you think the U.S. delegation continued to insist on purchasing the land, rather than leasing it, for at least another two rounds of negotiations?
- Pangelinan: I think from their own experience in Guam, in particular, that land issues have always been very complex, very difficult and very expensive.
- Willens: So they basically wanted to have it.
- Pangelinan: Of course. I think the military experience had always been one of purchase and eminent domain proceedings. Leasing is not acceptable. Perhaps I am wrong, but it's not the normal process for the federal government to acquire land.

- Willens: A second issue addressed by the Commission was the United States desire for 320 acres adjacent to Tanapag harbor [on Saipan]. What was your sense of the importance of this to the Commission as part of the negotiating strategy?
- Pangelinan: Very important, because we understood precisely how economic developments were going to progress and here the United States government wanted to control the gateway, the harbor in particular and our docking facilities. So that in a sense was going to preclude us from any kind of access to the island. It was a very substantial point here that we were not persuaded that we can give this away.
- Willens: You ultimately concluded that some compromise was available here in recognition of the possible contingency use of the area by the United States?
- Pangelinan: Right. Again I keep using Guam as an excuse, because it is the same modus operandi that the federal government had been using in Guam where they controlled the harbor. The civilian commercial activities are limited to a very isolated part of the harbor.
- Willens: Did you know that to be a source of controversy in Guam?
- Pangelinan: Not only a source of controversy, it was a long-standing contention and one that had worked to the detriment of the people of Guam. We saw right off the bat the same scenario that they wanted to pull on us here.
- Willens: The third issue related to the 500 acres that they wanted to have access to on a contingency basis next to Isley Field. What was your reaction to that proposal and the Commission's response?
- Pangelinan: Again we looked at it as the same kind of proposal that they have made in Guam. The airport also is our gateway and they want to control it. We just found that unacceptable.
- Willens: I forget Isley Field had not yet been renovated and enlarged. I think it was right in the process of being funded.
- Pangelinan: We had already identified Isley. Isley had been constructed at that particular time. It was set aside. During my time at the Congress of Micronesia I introduced legislation that would create the establishment of the terminal facilities through a lease arrangement with Duty Free Shoppers here. I knew exactly what's involved here.
- Willens: With respect to Tinian, the amount of land of course was one of the most important issues. Did you believe that the Commission really had any basis for judging whether the United States was requesting more land than they needed?
- Pangelinan: It's not the size that distressed the Commission members, it's the unreasonableness of total disregard for the people that are living there. The insensitivity on the part of the U.S. delegation to propose this concept of a total military reservation. It was almost like an insult to us. We felt that the requirement may be substantial. We know for a fact that Tinian has a very limited land area and from their own experience in the Second World War that Tinian basically for all intents and purposes served as a very important airport facility. We recognized that. There was no doubt in any mind of the Commission members that for military purposes Tinian is the ideal island. Again we had reservations with regard to this concept of exclusive control of the island. Disregard for the people there.
- Willens: With the advantage of hindsight, do you think that assuming the Ambassador had the negotiating discretion that he would have been better advised on behalf of the United States to make a more modest proposal with respect to Tinian at the outset of the negotiations? Specifically, to request only the two-thirds that, in fact, they wanted to

develop a base on. Would that have had a different kind of impact on the negotiations in your judgment?

Pangelinan: I think it would. On the other hand, I think the Ambassador knew that he wanted as much of the island as possible. So he advanced this outrageous proposal let's get the whole island and perhaps negotiate part of it back. I personally feel that was a tactical mistake on their part because it raised unnecessary concerns among the people. It made our work much more difficult for the Commission to defend. Lastly, I think that we believed that since we were going to become part of the American political family we should be very reasonable in our accommodating U.S. requirements. I think the Ambassador was looking at us as adversaries and tried to get the best deal for the United States. It's a perfect position for them to be in, but they exercised bad judgment in proposing something that we cannot deliver.

Willens: The question of price was presented in the Commission's position paper only to the extent that there had to be some mechanism for developing an appropriate price for a lease and that it had to take into account comparable transactions on Guam and the real value of the land. Do you recall any early discussions with the U.S. delegation about how the price of the land to be made available would be determined?

Pangelinan: I think we had informally mentioned price as a way of reaching agreement on the Tinian requirement. I think the Commission was not in complete agreement as to the prevailing price because here in the area, including Guam for that matter, we are talking about requirements for the future and there are really no acceptable transactions that are comparable. Both Guam and the Northern Marianas were just in the very, very beginning of development and the prices in the past for land had always been almost insignificant. So we felt that the Commission needed to review other areas that were more relevant in terms of military requirements.

Willens: Do you recall any discussion about the military retention lands and whether the future Commonwealth government would be obligated to honor the use agreements that had been entered into with respect to those military retention lands?

Pangelinan: We felt that all those military retention lands would revert to the Northern Marianas and their use be renegotiated. We had a long history of controversy on those military retention lands and we were very forceful in our position that there would be no military retention land at all. What we are going to accommodate for a military requirement would involve a new deal altogether.

Willens: It became an issue at the next round of negotiations. There were people in the Defense Department who maintained that those leases were lawful in every respect and would have to be honored and it was an issue on which the Commission and counsel took strong objection, and we ultimately prevailed. The last issue with respect to Tinian is in the overall subject area of relations between the civilian and the military communities. Our Executive Director, Jim White, and others on the Commission were particularly concerned about the whole range of joint use of utilities, of harbor, of education facilities, of housing. How important to the Commission was the effort to think through some of these anticipated problem areas, and try to solve them or provide a mechanism for solving them?

Pangelinan: We knew the problem because, again going to the experience of Guam, we had a long understanding of the civilian-military relationship. It was a bad one. Going all the way from the governor to the local community and it's an experience that we don't to repeat in the Northern Marianas. We understood the problem. What are the potential problems?

What we wanted to find out is how we can inter-relate the civilian community with the military community and avoid friction between the two. We recognized our sensitivity in the military operation but, on the other hand, we were going to be living on the same island. A very small community. Some novel ideas and arrangements would have to be undertaken here so that you have a community that can work in harmony.

Willens: On the very same day the Commission presented its views on land issues to the United States, June 1, 1973, Ambassador Williams went over to Tinian to participate in a public hearing on the evening of that day. There is some suggestion in the materials that you were not enthusiastic about his going over there for that purpose. Do you have any recollection of what your position was on that subject?

Pangelinan: Yes, I think there was some suggestion that we were not giving the people of Tinian the full benefits involved in this proposal. The Ambassador kind of alluded to the fact and it got to me that perhaps I am somewhat prejudiced, I'm not giving the people of Tinian the complete picture of the U.S. proposal and therefore the Ambassador himself had to go there and present the complete and true proposal.

Willens: As it unfolded, do you think it was a worthwhile effort by the Ambassador?

Pangelinan: No. It didn't make any difference.

Willens: Tell me what your recollection is of that seven-hour meeting. We have some news coverage of the meeting and a report by Mary Trent that's of some interest. As I understand, you served as the, or one of the, principal interpreters. Is that correct?

Pangelinan: No. I fortunately had the benefit of Senator Borja and Senator Borja took upon himself to be the main interpreter. First of all, he was the senior member there and secondly, he was very fluent in the language. I also recognized his weakness that when you give him a sentence Senator Borja will take an hour to explain it. It was a ploy on our part to make life a little bit more difficult for the Ambassador and to see how well he put up with us.

Willens: Well, in fact, he was greeted by Representative Atalig, who had returned from the trip abroad and stated that the residents were going to strongly oppose the U.S. plan to acquire all of Tinian and described the U.S. proposal as "some kind of fancy dream by the military." Ambassador Williams was also greeted by two competing delegations with signs when he arrived. Do you have any personal recollection of that?

Pangelinan: A very vivid recollection. As a matter of fact, there was some feeling on my part that some violence was going to erupt there. There were some boys that had just returned from the military and I know they have been practicing their rifle skill. I had some real fears as to just how far this would go. There were some personal threats, as a matter of fact against members of the Commission, myself in particular, that I am going to be in real trouble. Although I didn't take it seriously then, I was more concerned as to what's going to happen to some members of the U.S. delegation.

Willens: Did the Commission play any role in setting up this meeting or in organizing the demonstration one way or the other?

Pangelinan: We didn't do it directly, but our community never missed an opportunity for fanfare.

Willens: Who never misses it?

Pangelinan: The community, the Northern Marianas, the political parties and others. I think indirectly we put out the word to show a demonstration of opposition to the U.S. requirement. As Commission members we didn't want to participate. I think that there were some informal discussion that went down to the leadership of Tinian.

- Willens: On the whole from the Commission's standpoint, the more opposition that was expressed to the U.S. proposal, it would help the Commission in its negotiating?
- Pangelinan: Right. I was always very careful that we don't generate this kind of demonstration. But we have a way of getting our views known. The fact that the Commission had expressed very strong opposition to the U.S. requirement got down to the leadership of Tinian as well as others that the U.S. proposal was just not going to be acceptable to the people.
- Willens: Do you recall that the Ambassador was supported by the Defense Department colonels and they presented color slides and made the whole presentation?
- Pangelinan: That's a nice dog and pony show, but it really incited the people more against the proposal because they could really see on the chart how this would affect them. As you probably recall, a lot of the residents of Tinian had property within the proposed military land and farm land in particular. They were very distressed about the whole thing.
- Willens: One of the stories in the *Pacific Daily News* emphasizes the concern by the people that the land that would be left to the civilian community was limited and that future generations might not have land. One young family man reportedly amidst his tears asked whether land would be available for his children in twenty years. Do you remember any emotional content of that kind at the meeting?
- Pangelinan: There was a lot of emotion expressed by individuals.
- Willens: Was it real?
- Pangelinan: There was real concern, there is no question about it. Very real concern. I remember a lady with ten kids who came to the meeting and said well, where are these kids going to have their home? Concerns like that. Again based on my own personal experience with the families on Tinian, I felt very sympathetic to their concern.
- Willens: One of the reports (and this is the one by Ms. Trent) suggested that there was a bit of a generational conflict. That some of the younger, more educated participants were strongly opposed to the plan, whereas some of the older, poorer residents seemed to welcome the plan because of the prospect for new homes and jobs. Do you have any recollection of a generational dispute of that kind?
- Pangelinan: I didn't consider that generational difference. I think that there were some people who found the proposal attractive in the sense that there were proposals for an area in Tinian to be set aside for the development of like a Capitol Hill facility for homes, concrete homes with furnishings, a very attractive presentation of the kind of benefits that the people would be given. Some people felt that if you have been living in a shack for all your life and recognize that the opportunity to improve your standard of living may not be possible at all in your lifetime, the proposal had some attractive features. I didn't consider it a matter of generational gap, but there were families that looked after their own welfare and said, well, this is something that looks very attractive.
- Willens: When it all was done, at the end of seven hours, what was your reaction of the Ambassador's state of mind?
- Pangelinan: I think the Ambassador was exhausted and felt that his position was not going to prevail. I think he got that reading, at least that's my impression.
- Willens: Did you have any private conversation with him, if not that night the next day or two, before the negotiations concluded?

- Pangelinan: My recollection is that we didn't discuss that. We thought that we were ready to move on the formal presentation now.
- Willens: From the standpoint of the negotiating timetable, it was probably a valuable thing for both parties to have done.
- Pangelinan: No question about it.
- Willens: From the U.S. side they had a chance to present their case directly to the people and hear their reactions and, from the Commission's standpoint, the kind of opposition that was expressed confirmed the Commission's concern.
- Pangelinan: That's right. I think too the Ambassador probably woke up to the fact that now he has to deal with the Commission and that his own efforts to get the support of the people of Tinian were totally lacking in effect.
- Willens: This was one of the few occasions, was it not, where he really tried to go directly to the people. That's my recollection. Do you have any?
- Pangelinan: My recollection is that he was under the impression that nobody can represent the position of the United States better than himself. We wanted to accommodate him.
- Willens: He essentially did respond on the very last day of the negotiations. He responded to the Commission's position paper, raised some questions, recognized concerns, but made no changes in the U.S. position. It seemed clear that this was going to be an issue that was going to have to be studied further during the recess and brought back to the negotiating table at the next round of negotiations. Is that your recollection?
- Pangelinan: I have two recollections. One is that I think that now the Ambassador felt that if he made the proposal then we were going to just ignore it. So he felt very strongly that timing is now important on his part to defer this issue.
- Willens: I don't understand that. Do you think that he thought the Commission was going to ignore it?
- Pangelinan: No. I think that if he insisted on a decision now on his proposal the Commission was going to reject it. So he didn't want to be defeated right there and then.
- Willens: I see. He didn't want to bring it to a final decision.
- Pangelinan: He knew that it's really not going to prevail.
- Willens: Okay, that was one reaction you had.
- Pangelinan: I think that from a strategy point of view he didn't want to come out a loser here. That's very important. Secondly, he thinks that yes, we need time to cool off and perhaps give us the opportunity to review this so that next time around we can make progress. At least now he knew that his proposal needed to be modified and changed.
- Willens: Did he ever give you any indication in private that he was going to try to get his negotiating instructions modified so that he could be more flexible with respect to U.S. military land requirements?
- Pangelinan: No. I never pressed him on that. I always felt that he had the authority to change the proposal. I felt very strongly that he had the leverage and the authority, as a matter of fact, to cut back on the requirement.
- Willens: You were right. Ed, following the conclusion of the second round of negotiations, do you recall having any general assessment as Chairman as to how they had progressed?

- Pangelinan: Yes, I did. I think we discussed with the Commission that we made progress. I think we accomplished a significant concession in the area of mutual concern. We felt that there was some additional reasons to fine-tune the question of Article IV(3)(2). The U.S. delegation had made their military requirements known. We had discussed the economic package. I think overall it was a very productive and substantial meeting with the U.S. delegation.
- Willens: What was your thinking at the time about the need to engage in political education of the constituents as to what had been done and what remained to be done?
- Pangelinan: We had given some thought to the need to inform our people on the current affairs of the negotiations. We recognized then and there that there were sensitive areas that we needed to be more prepared to brief the constituency. The Tinian experience was a very enlightening one and the Commission had a real responsibility to go to their respective parts of the community to open discussion on areas that affect that particular community. I think we kind of changed our approach from just a press release style to a more open dialogue with some of the leaders of the community.
- Willens: One of the issues that came up in that connection was whether the Commission was going to publish the position papers that had been exchanged during the meeting. You had a Commission meeting in June or July and the Commission decided to submit those papers as part of its report to the District Legislature. There was some indication that the United States delegation was opposed to that. Do you have any recollection of discussions on that subject?
- Pangelinan: Yes. That was I think part of the need to enlighten our constituency. And we still had the requirement of reporting back to the Legislature. This negotiation was the most critical one because everything had been put on the table as to what's involved here. There was a lot of pressure on our Commission because we were funded by the Legislature and it wanted some real first-hand clarification as to exactly what's involved here.
- Willens: Was there any dissent within the Commission to giving the Legislature a detailed report?
- Pangelinan: No. There was no dissent at all. I think that everyone agreed that we had that authority, responsibility to do it.
- Willens: I got a call from Mr. Wilson reporting that he heard from Ms. Trent that the Commission was going to publish the papers and he expressed great concern. By the time I wrote you on this subject, it had already been done. Do you recall being approached by the Ambassador or any other U.S. representative on this subject?
- Pangelinan: I don't recall now whether Mr. Wilson was the one who came to me and say you know, that's totally unfair. If you do this, you might as well give it to the *Pacific Daily News* too because the information is going to leak out.
- Willens: The *Pacific Daily News* did get the information within about three weeks and they published a series of articles. Do you have any recollection as to how you felt about seeing the issues ventilated in the *Pacific Daily News*?
- Pangelinan: I knew that we had no control on the matter. But on the other hand, if it's going to be leaked out and the *Pacific Daily News* is going to have a series of articles, it's for the best. We took a very simplistic approach. We've nothing to hide. The more the people learn about the proposals, they will be better informed. On the other hand, the U.S. delegation felt that it's a breach of confidentiality. They expressed some real reservation that every document going to the Commission for discussion and negotiation would be subject to review by the press. The press had not been too friendly, especially when it came to their

land requirements. Again, we had no choice here. These papers were public records in a sense and our responsibility was to make this information available to the Legislature.

Willens: It produced a very favorable series of articles and did I think achieve certain public education purposes. I do not recall it being doing with respect to subsequent rounds of negotiations, do you?

Pangelinan: No, because there was no urgency then.

Willens: Do you think there were some special needs with respect to this second round, which was really the first substantive discussion, that were different from what happened later?

Pangelinan: That's correct. This is one that exposed the different issues of importance to the people and they certainly were entitled to know what's involved here.

Willens: During the formal negotiations, the United States heard, and you may have heard, that the visiting mission of the United Nations had completed its report and it was, in fact, critical of the separate negotiations. It asked that the United States stop the separate negotiations with the Northern Marianas. When do you remember hearing that for the first time?

Pangelinan: It came from various sources. One, my recollection is that you advised us, I believe you advised us very quickly. Two, we learned from the Trust Territory government that the Congress of Micronesia had objected. I think the best source was the one from your office. That was the one that the Commission received first.

Willens: The documents demonstrate that the United States, of course, took strong objection to that and undertook a variety of (what I'll call) lobbying efforts to try to soften the report when it was considered by the Trusteeship Council. Two members of the Commission went to testify before the Trusteeship Council in 1973, Mitch Pangelinan and Ben Manglona. I went with them. They collaborated on statements that you subsequently saw. They had I think a very successful appearance before the Council. Did you think that was a useful step for the Commission to take?

Pangelinan: The Commission had always believed that we have to make a case, at least for the record, before the Trusteeship Council. This was another opportunity to not only to make our case, but also to brief the Council on where we are in the status negotiations. So there is no misunderstanding as to what we are doing and what we hope to accomplish. We know the position of the Council is not going to be favorable, but it was incumbent upon the Commission to make its presentation and at least develop a record.

Willens: One of the interesting aspects of the Trusteeship Council's deliberations was that the report by the Commission members and by the U.S. representatives regarding the results of the most recent negotiations persuaded at least the United Kingdom member of the visiting mission that the recommendation to stop the negotiations, which he had shared, had been overtaken by events. And he more or less suggested that he wouldn't have made that recommendation if he had know the extent to which the negotiations had progressed as far as the Joint Communique reflected. I have no idea whether that was due to lobbying by the United States or the persuasive contributions of our colleagues. Did you hear any report back from either the U.S. side or from your colleagues as to these discussions?

Pangelinan: We did receive some favorable notice that at least one member of the Trusteeship Council was now joining the position of the United States. But overall, we felt that as long as we have the Soviet Union there, we are not going to make that much progress. It was welcome news. I think informally within the Commission Ben Manglona and Mitch Pangelinan were taking credit and said they should continue to go to the United Nations and make a presentation there.

- Willens: An annual trip to New York. There was a meeting between the Marianas Political Status Commission and the Guam Political Status Commission on July 5, 1973. It seems to have been initiated by the Guamanian Commission and you made it clear that there would be no discussion of reintegration during such a meeting. Do you have any recollection of the purpose of that meeting and the substance of the discussion?
- Pangelinan: My biggest problem here is trying to recollect exactly who I met with. I took a number of trips to Guam to informally. Actually, I appeared before a number of forums.
- Willens: Did you have any dealings with Mr. Murphy, who was the leading editorial writer?
- Pangelinan: Joe was an old friend and I also used him as a conduit for advertisements on behalf of the Commission members. Murphy and I were very close, so I never missed an opportunity to go to Murphy. Cheap publicity in a sense.
- Willens: It was about this time actually that Congressman Won Pat, who you referred to earlier, did initiate certain actions in the United States Congress in an effort to get Guam's status reevaluated. He asked for the formation of a special commission. He conducted a limited poll of his constituents and he obviously was increasingly concerned with the comparison between Guam's status and what was being negotiated with the Northern Marianas. Did you feel that the people in Guam understood what the objectives of your Commission were?
- Pangelinan: I think it's more or less what the leaders of Guam perceived as the objectives. There is a real distinct situation here. One is that in general the people of Guam have never really been given the opportunity to discuss the full ramifications of their status. The turnout in the previous referendum was very low so it was indicative that the people of Guam were really not fully informed.
- Willens: Someone told me that the reason the turnout had been so low in 1969 was that the legislature, which was ostensibly supporting that resolution, never went to the backside of the island to actually visit the villages involved.
- Pangelinan: That's right. There was no discussion, no political education, nothing. The leaders themselves were misled that they can get the support of the people and we woke up to the fact that, no, you can't sell a political status to your people, because you never can underestimate your constituency and the leadership never made the effort to enlighten them. Going back to the issue here is that yes, the leaders of Guam were concerned that the Northern Marianas were reaching a political status that was not only favorable to them, but one that the people of Guam were going to find themselves left behind. There was a lot of pressure put on Won Pat as to what he can generate in Washington to see that some improvement of the Guam situation is going to take place while at the same time negotiations are taking place in the Northern Marianas. I think the timing was right. It's just that I don't know exactly where Won Pat failed to get support from people like Phil Burton and others.
- Willens: How would you describe your willingness to sit down with the Guamanian Political Status Commission—as an act of courtesy and friendship or did you feel there was some risk involved if you did not make yourself available for that purpose?
- Pangelinan: We always looked at Guam as a very critical player here. One that can make our negotiation very difficult. They could stop the negotiation if they cared to, because they can put on so much pressure in Congress to make life difficult for other members to appreciate what we are accomplishing here. Two, we want to show in good faith that what we would get here for the Northern Marianas is not going to unduly prejudice their life and status. Three,

we didn't have a good working relationship with the leaders of Guam and much of my going to Guam was not, I would say, sanctioned by the Commission but was an act of good will and friendship to brief them. There were times when I went to Guam to brief the constituents from the Northern Marianas residing in Guam. But I used it as a vehicle to have an open forum to kind of keep our friends in Guam informed of the progress of the negotiation.

Willens: Some of the enthusiasm in the Marianas for the negotiations that had just concluded was put into question in the middle of June, June 15, 1973, when the *Pacific Daily News* published an interview with three members of the Commission: Dr. Palacios, Joeten, and Felix Rabauliman. They were responding to a set of questions that had apparently been presented to them a few weeks earlier and they all expressed very substantial concerns about the work of the Commission to date. They expressed concern about sovereignty; they said that the United States delegation was fully prepared but that the Commission was unprepared for the most part; and that there was too much of a rush to get on with agreements. Did this publicity come as a surprise to you?

Pangelinan: No.

Willens: What is your recollection of how this dissenting position came to see the light of day?

Pangelinan: Well, during the course of the negotiation a few members of the Commission were outspoken on certain issues. They had expressed to me and to the Commission that they were not totally in agreement with the position reached. I think what we have done in the Commission is that every issue of significance has to be voted on. I don't know whether you are familiar with that but we had a set of rules within the Commission as to how to reach consensus. There would always be a vote on an issue so that you know the Commission is ready to defend its position. But I recognized some dissenting voices from certain members of the Commission. I think you mentioned the names of two prominent members of the Commission there. I had never attempted to stop a member of the Commission from expressing his opinion outside the forum of the Commission.

Willens: Did you take issue with this release in any public statement that you made to that effect?

Pangelinan: I don't recall rebutting those statements.

Willens: There was a letter written by an unnamed staff assistant to you, I think it was a Mr. Rosario, which was extremely critical of the three Commission members for not bringing their grievances to the attention of the Commission during the negotiations. It was a very ad hominum response suggesting that Mr. Tenorio and Mr. Rabauliman was typically very quiet. Do you remember any kind of response of that kind?

Pangelinan: Again, I think the staff probably was a little bit out of line in criticizing members of the Commission, but I thought that you know he had the privilege to express his own observation.

Willens: To ask a more fundamental question, did the fact that these three went public cause you to be concerned about your ability to keep the members of the Commission together for the next round of negotiations?

Pangelinan: It didn't really distress me at all because from the very beginning I knew that we were not going to have 100 percent consensus. It makes my life more challenging later on, because now we have a vocal minority within the Commission, but we were very practical with the whole approach—that these members had their own prerogative to articulate their interests outside the Commission. I was disappointed (as Mr. Rosario had pointed out) that had they been more vocal in their participation, perhaps we would be able to help

them understand some of the more complex issues. I don't want to point fingers at Mr. Rabauliman, but Mr. Rabauliman from the very beginning was talking about himself being very reserved in his participation. So a lot of time I didn't fully understand what his objections were.

Willens: One of the developments over the summer of 1973 was that the Joint Committee, of which you were still a member, divided itself up into two groups and conducted hearings in each of the six districts of the Trust Territory. They came to the Marianas in July with a hearing on July 17, they met on Tinian on July 20, and they had various meetings on July 23 in Saipan. You were present at most of these meetings, as I recall, and we happen to have a transcript of these discussions which makes most interesting reading. What did you understand to be the purpose of these public hearings that the Joint Committee was conducting?

Pangelinan: Well, the Joint Committee also had expressed interest to visit the various constituencies, and they asked to visit Tinian and Rota in particular. As a member of the Joint Committee, I helped arrange those meetings. Again, it's an educational process more than anything else to just be with the Committee. I remember very vividly because I was down in Tinian with them and Rota.

Willens: Did you view it in any respect as a threat to the work of the Marianas Political Status Commission?

Pangelinan: No. Again, we take it very simply that we cannot stop them from going.

Willens: In almost every meeting they heard very strong support for the work of your Commission and their desire for separate status negotiations, with a few exceptions that I'll come to. But Chairman Salii and other members of the Joint Committee from time to time would try to advertise the advantages of the free association status that they were pursuing.

Pangelinan: True.

Willens: What sense did you get from the meetings that you can recall as to how this was received by the Marianas attendees?

Pangelinan: We already pretty much knew the sentiment of the people in Northern Marianas, you know, and had no doubt that things were going to change. On the other hand, I felt also that Mr. Salii had the responsibility to make his case before the people of the Northern Marianas, and it would not be in our best interest to stop that, because we would be criticized and accused that we're trying to preempt the Joint Committee from making its presentation to the people of our community. I knew where we stand. I was very confident that the people of the Northern Marianas were going to more or less reiterate their support for the Commission's work.

Willens: Many of the participants in the meetings made a very strong appeal to the Joint Committee to stop opposing the Northern Marianas and to give its blessing to the work of the Marianas Political Status Commission to pursue separate status. At one meeting Dr. Palacios strongly urged that the Joint Committee give its blessing to the Northern Marianas, saying that it's a fact of life that Micronesia cannot really stay united. That seems to reflect a somewhat different view than Dr. Palacios had stated publicly just a month or so before. Do you recall whether his views on this subject were undergoing some change?

Pangelinan: Well, I think the more we got involved in the status negotiation for the Northern Marianas, Dr. Palacios began to see the real advantages and the real benefits that the people of the Northern Marianas are going to gain. I think too it was a real blessing for us because he

was one of the few outspoken proponents for free association and, at that point in time, coming around to even address the Joint Committee to stop its efforts to stop us from our negotiation and to give a blessing was a most welcome change in strategy by certain members of the Marianas community who were against the status negotiation.

Willens: When the Joint Committee came to Saipan, they met with the Commission, the District Legislature, the Municipal Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the Carolinian Association, and the public at large. In most of those meetings, they heard more or less what they had heard on Tinian and Rota, namely, virtually unanimous support for the work of the Marianas Political Status Commission. At the Chamber of Commerce meeting, Joe Screen was present and he questioned the legitimacy of the so-called desire of the people of the Northern Marianas for a closer political relationship. He seemed to be suggesting that the extent of this desire had never been accurately measured and ascertained. Were you present at the Chamber of Commerce meeting, if you recall?

Pangelinan: I don't recall, but I was fully aware of Mr. Screen's position on the status issue in general as well as his own personal reservation about the status negotiations for the Northern Marianas. I think we aggravated that situation by having him work for the Commission on a short term and then also requested him to stop helping us. I think he had his personal feelings, I won't call it animosity, but he was not very happy, and Joe was one of the more articulate, more vocal individuals in the island who could get carried away in his own criticism of the Commission.

Willens: Chairman Salii conducted these meetings as it appears from the transcripts in a very objective and thoughtful way. At one point, he tried to elicit from the audience whether the differences between the Northern Marianas and the other five districts were so significant that, even if the other five districts agreed to commonwealth, the Marianas would still want to go its independent way. And for the most part, the people who responded to that question stated that the Northern Marianas would want to go its own separate way even if there were not the status differences between the Marianas on the one hand and the other five districts. Do you recall discussion on that along that line, and did you have a view at the time?

Pangelinan: We were prepared; we knew that Lazarus was going to pull a trick like this. But you know the Northern Marianas were not going to be convinced one way or the other that unity was going to be a reality.

Willens: Do you think it was more or less a debating technique?

Pangelinan: Yes, it was cosmetic rhetoric that he used to see whether we were confused to begin with, more than anything else. We were prepared to respond to that. We thought that the easiest approach was to say well, even if we are going to join in a commonwealth effort, you're not going to change us one way or the other, so let's let it ride. Also, I think there was a lot of respect for Lazarus and we did not want to embarrass the Joint Committee. So the meetings were very friendly and I think there was a strong sentiment in the community at large that we're going to be as civilized as we can during this presentation.

Willens: He had at some of these meetings an exchange with you and others from which he concluded that the Marianas had agreed that the people of the Northern Marianas, when they ultimately had a plebiscite, would have before them for decision not only the status that had been negotiated by the Marianas Political Status Commission but also whatever political status had been negotiated by the Joint Committee with the United States. Do you remember agreeing, preliminarily, to the idea that the Marianas people would ultimately have at least those two choices before them?

- Pangelinan: Yes. I think we conceded to the idea that political choices had to be made. Lazarus somewhat misread us—that there's only one political status that we're going to actively support in any political education forum. But as far as putting on the ballot what alternatives are available, you know, we had no problem with that.
- Willens: In part, it was largely a hypothetical question because you probably had some doubts yourself as to whether the Joint Committee was ever going to arrive at a status alternative or at least arrive at one at the same time or before the Commission arrived at its.
- Pangelinan: We had to kind of look at our own progress. I think we were so focused on reaching our own status agreement that we did not worry about what the Micronesians were going to accomplish. And I think too we had the foresight to believe that they were going to try to procrastinate and delay their own negotiations so that by the time we have a referendum we will have a Northern Marianas political status pretty much in place.
- Willens: At the meeting of the general public, there only were about 18 people present, including some young people who are now distinguished members of the legal and political leadership in the Northern Marianas. Several of the people at the public meeting were opposed to the work of the Commission and the loss of unity. Chairman Salii took comfort from that on the grounds that it meant there was really a meaningful difference of view within the Northern Marianas on the subject of status. Did you ever hear anything about that discussion?
- Pangelinan: No, I don't know whether I attended that meeting at all. Probably I did. But I think we made it clear to Lazarus that yes, we know the separate negotiations do not have 100 percent support from the people of the Northern Marianas. We never deceived ourselves that everyone was in agreement. We recognize there's a strong element that has some real reservation. But I knew that more than the great majority of the people of the Northern Marianas wanted a different status.
- Willens: The biggest issue over the summer of 1973 was the alleged moratorium on Tinian homesteads and economic development. Do you recall when you first became aware that the TTPI on instructions from Interior had decided not to process any more homestead applications?
- Pangelinan: This is really another surprise that came around.
- Willens: How did it first come to your attention?
- Pangelinan: There were a number of Tinian homesteaders who were about ready to be given deeds to their homestead, and they couldn't get them. So that's the first indication that something was wrong. Secondly, there were people who were submitting applications for homestead, and they were told that there's no homestead land anymore available. When you look around and see that there is more land available there, we had to go to the Trust Territory government and learned that yes, there's a moratorium in place. And it made life very, very difficult then, because people were criticizing the Commission as being in one way or another responsible and that we were conspiring to change the situation in Tinian.
- Willens: There was some allegation that the Commission had been advised in advance and had agreed tentatively to this moratorium. You were quoted in the paper though as calling a unilateral moratorium "a dirty trick" and you maintained that denying growth and development during the negotiations would place a serious handicap on Tinian. So you took a strong public position when this came to your attention in late July. Is it your recollection now that you had not been consulted?

- Pangelinan: No, I was not consulted at all. The Commission was never aware. That's why I say this is another surprise that caught us unprepared.
- Willens: The result was a series of petitions, draft resolutions, complaints to the Trusteeship Council, and so forth and so on. Deputy Representative Wilson came out and made a statement to the Marianas District Legislature on August 8, 1973. Do you recall taking any action on behalf of the Commission to find out what the facts were and to try to urge the United States to change its position?
- Pangelinan: I believe we did very strongly, because our own complaint to the United Nations was kind of generated through the Legislature.
- Willens: But did you agree with the basic idea of the United States as expressed by the U.S. delegation and Interior that there should be no development, no new applications after May 8, 1973, which is the date they identify as when the Marianas Political Status Commission heard for the first time about the full dimensions of the U.S. military requirements?
- Pangelinan: No, I don't recall agreeing even to that kind of overture. Not at all. No, it would be remiss on my part to even participate in that kind of discussion. No, none.
- Willens: The United States tried to explain it. Deputy Representative Wilson explained it and you had a meeting with Ambassador Williams in late August at which this was one of many issues discussed. Notwithstanding all the controversy, the moratorium seems essentially to have stayed in place for a considerable period of time. Isn't that correct?
- Pangelinan: That's correct. It was almost an impossible task to change the position of the Trust Territory government then.
- Willens: They said they were just taking orders from Interior.
- Pangelinan: Well, that's right. Precisely.
- Willens: So was this a political problem for you that you really couldn't see any timely solution for?
- Pangelinan: Well, actually it was not as real or sensitive a problem as the earlier land requirements, but it was an irritant that made it difficult for us to discuss issues with the people of Tinian. The Municipal Council of Tinian was very vocal in expressing its outrage.
- Willens: Well, MPSC member Herman M. Manglona was so offended that he suggested he might change his position with respect to support for commonwealth. Other strong statements were made by Tinian leaders. Did you think this was something that was serious or was it a good deal of political posturing?
- Pangelinan: Political posturing basically. But, on the other hand, Herman was selected by the people of Tinian to the Commission, so he had a real interest involved here. If you look at the transcript of the negotiations, this is one area where Herman was very active and very vocal. And it gave him an opportunity in a forum to articulate his concerns on behalf of his constituency.
- Willens: Ambassador Williams did change his schedule in late August in order to come over and talk about some of these items. He came over to Saipan to meet with the District Legislature ...
- Pangelinan: Municipal Council.
- Willens: ...and the Council, and he had met with you on various procedural matters a few days earlier. He tried to clear the air by acknowledging that there had been inadequate

- consultation in advance. Do you think his taking that position helped lessen some of the tension on the issue?
- Pangelinan: I think his commitment to ensure that the policy was going to be changed was a welcome one. I think finally we found that he can reverse Trust Territory policy. So he was helpful in that regard. Also he defused the allegation that the U.S. delegation was putting pressure on the Trust Territory government to put a moratorium on the Tinian land so that any future negotiation would be protected.
- Willens: When did the moratorium in fact get terminated?
- Pangelinan: I don't recall the exact date.
- Willens: I'm not sure either. I wondered whether the moratorium may well have stayed in place until ultimately the Marianas Political Status Commission and the U.S. delegation agreed as to what the arrangements were with respect to Tinian.
- Pangelinan: No, I think that moratorium was lifted before we reached discussion there because it was, just like I said, an irritant. My recollection is that it was lifted before the land issues were finally reached.
- Willens: Okay, I'll check into that further. We mentioned Herman M. Manglona, and it was during the summer of 1973 when he resigned from the Marianas Political Status Commission. He was replaced by Joe Cruz. What do you know about the circumstances under which that step was taken?
- Pangelinan: My recollection is that I think there was a change in the leadership in the Council and Herman was in the process of going to school. I'm not fully aware of the details of this change.
- Willens: What was your reaction to the addition to the Commission of Mr. Cruz?
- Pangelinan: Was Mr. Cruz at that point in time was the Mayor of Tinian?
- Willens: He had been a former mayor of Tinian. I'm not sure whether he held office at that time. I don't think so.
- Pangelinan: There were so many changes in the local government then.
- Willens: Did you know him?
- Pangelinan: I knew him personally. As a matter of fact, Joe is a transplanted carpetbagger from Saipan.
- Willens: On Tinian?
- Pangelinan: On Tinian, right.
- Willens: He used to live on Saipan?
- Pangelinan: He used to live in Saipan. We're very close, a relative of mine. One of the more colorful political leaders.
- Willens: Everyone uses the adjective "colorful" to describe Mr. Cruz. Could you elaborate on what your sense was of him as a political leader and personality?
- Pangelinan: Well, Joe had a good sense of humor. A very articulate guy, very bright, a kind of man that can be very controversial at times. He enjoyed the limelight of the political arena, and Joe never missed an opportunity to promote his own agenda. And so now he found himself in the workings of the Commission and they say well, he was determined to single-handedly make his mark on the Commission.

- Willens: What do you remember his contribution being within the Commission?
- Pangelinan: I think his contributions were manifold. One is that he knew the issues involved, in particular the land issue, the Tinian economic proposals, and Joe was a person who looked at those things with a real interest. Joe is also an individual who believed that we're going to be shortchanged in every step of the way here because we were dealing with a large country and we were just a bunch of kids playing with status that we are really not totally prepared for. He took that kind of very extreme positions. But more importantly, Joe believed strongly in the protection of the people. And he put himself in a position where his demands were almost unattainable. Joe was a very flamboyant personality also, and he enjoys creating and raising controversy. I think those were the strong points that Joe contributed to the Commission, which became more active with him around. For the first time, we have somebody from Tinian who was very vocal, and Joe never miss an opportunity to speak out.
- Willens: He had a habit of breaking into choruses of "God Bless America" at the most unexpected occasions, and my recollection is that it always threw the U.S. delegation somewhat off guard.
- Pangelinan: True. And I never mentioned this to anyone, but also Joe and I developed a close affinity as to when we can make the Commission stop, so that we put a little pressure on the Ambassador. I think I mentioned this earlier, we never shared it with the other members of the Commission. Joe and I would look at each other, and he would pretty get my signal that it's time to break, to stop the proceedings of the Commission, and in front of the Ambassador he would speak in Chamorro and change his personality, so that he got the Ambassador to be thinking and actually in a sense kind of irritating the Ambassador for our own interest. Joe was very articulate, and he had good command of the English language, but he wanted to speak always in Chamorro, in the vernacular, because he felt that the best way to irritate the opposition was to show this disrespect by conversing in another language. And Joe was very effective in doing that.
- Willens: Just a few weeks after Mr. Manglona resigned, Mr. Tenorio, Joeten, also submitted a resignation letter to the District Administrator. He identified business reasons or commitments as one reason, but he also expressed concern that, although he had tried to be genuine and impartial, several members of the Commission felt that he was there representing his personal economic interests. He thought that he should therefore be replaced by someone without this kind of a handicap. What was your reaction upon seeing the resignation letter?
- Pangelinan: I thought it was a mistake on the part of Mr. Tenorio to do that, because he had contributed immensely to the discussion, especially the economic part. But Mr. Tenorio was a man of conscience. And he felt that there was some real valid criticism against him.
- Willens: Well, do you remember people within the Commission expressly suggesting that he had personal economic interests that he was promoting?
- Pangelinan: No, I never recall any Commission members speaking out against another member of the Commission. I think we looked at each other with a serious responsibility on our part. No, there was never any word expressed to Mr. Tenorio in the Commission that he's representing himself. Each one of us respected our position there. But there was vocal sentiment expressed from the general community, especially from the political parties.
- Willens: The Popular Party in particular?
- Pangelinan: The Popular Party in particular. There was never a time when Mr. Tenorio was comfortable

- because of this allegation. He found himself in a position where if he speaks out, he felt that he would be suspect in the Commission.
- Willens: Do you think his resignation had anything to do with the fact that he, along with two others, had publicly expressed disagreement with the progress of the negotiations to date?
- Pangelinan: I don't really think that was a contributing factor. I always made it a point for the Commission that if they have any dissenting opinion they certainly can articulate that. But on the other hand, I think he was getting, I don't know. At one time I was convinced that, perhaps in order for him to be more effective in articulating his own dissent, it would be better to do it outside of the Commission. You mentioned that Mr. Screen had spoken very eloquently about the need for unity in Micronesia and a lot of time you couldn't separate Mr. Screen from Mr. Tenorio because one is working for the other. I got the impression that perhaps he felt that to isolate himself from the Commission would give him a better opportunity, a better forum, to articulate his own concern.
- Willens: The Chamber of Commerce did nominate Pedro A. Tenorio to replace him and that was confirmed by the District Administrator in late October 1973. Pete Tenorio had publicly expressed views about the negotiations and military development somewhat at odds with the Commission's objectives before he became a member. What was your reaction to his joining the Commission?
- Pangelinan: I thought that Pete was a fine addition to the Commission. Pete was very articulate, very knowledgeable, and he was one of the few members that would be a real advantage and benefit to the Commission. I welcomed that addition.
- Willens: You had gone to school together?
- Pangelinan: Went to school together, yes. Went to high school together.
- Willens: And you had not run against each other? He had run as an independent?
- Pangelinan: Right, right and lost against Borja?
- Willens: That's because there was some question about what party was going to support him and Senator Borja switched from the Territorial Party to the Popular Party.
- Pangelinan: Yes. That was a time when Pete, I think, was preparing himself for another try.
- Willens: Did you anticipate that he would end up being a political rival of yours?
- Pangelinan: Not really. I was so engrossed in the Commission work that I think I took my position very clearly that whoever wants to run, you can't stop a person from running. We had work to accomplish before us and that was my main focus.
- Willens: How much time did you personally spend on Commission business? Or put another way, did you have time to do anything else in terms of your membership in the Congress or your personal life during these years?
- Pangelinan: Well, you know this happened at a time when I was still in my early 30s. I had a lot of energy then. But surprisingly, yes, there were some personal sacrifices I had to put up. My wife used to complain that between the Congress of Micronesia, the Commission work, and also I was involved in private practice, there was never time for me to be with the family. And I don't know how I managed to juggle all these different responsibilities and still manage to make things work for the Commission. I think I felt that the Commission work was the overriding obligation altogether.

- Willens: Ed, going back to the moratorium and the homestead situation in the summer of 1973. At that time, there seemed to be some litigation with respect to the Trust Territory's refusal to issue certain deeds to homesteaders who had otherwise qualified for that right. The Micronesia Legal Services Corporation represented the homesteaders and seemed to have prevailed. Is it your recollection that the TTPI Administration was not sympathetic to the homestead program?
- Pangelinan: Well, it's not a question of sympathy because the program was initiated or established by the Trust Territory government through the then Marianas District part of the Trust Territory. So the program was ongoing. The problem was the issuance of the deeds for the homesteaders. There was a moratorium placed on that so those homesteaders who were qualified had not received their deeds, which was the final certificate of ownership. The Micronesia Legal Services came into the picture then because of the pressure from the community to force the Trust Territory government to begin issuing the deeds.
- Willens: Do you remember Ambassador Williams coming out to Guam to meet with you at the end of August of 1973 and then coming over for a meeting in Saipan with the political leaders? He came over to Saipan in part to deal with the homestead issue, and he made a very graceful public statement where he apologized for the lack of communication and consultation with your Commission in advance. Do you remember any personal discussions with the Ambassador on that subject?
- Pangelinan: I think my recollection is that there was a significant criticism of not only the Trust Territory government, but also there's some allegation that perhaps the U.S. delegation was putting pressure on the Trust Territory government to initiate the moratorium. So my purpose of meeting with Ambassador was to ask him to ensure that not only was the moratorium lifted but also to pretty much inform the general public that his delegation was not involved in any way in creating the problem of the moratorium. I think the Ambassador was very sensitive to any criticism that might be alleged against his delegation.
- Willens: But it was true, was it not, that the U.S. delegation and the Office of Micronesia Status Negotiations did play a key role in recommending that there be a moratorium?
- Pangelinan: That's right, that's right. And it is for that reason that I said, you know, it's going to jeopardize our ongoing discussion. Since he had that authority to direct the Trust Territory government, this must be done as quickly as possible. In the meantime, the ongoing litigation from the Micronesia Legal Services was not helping the situation. So something had to be done very quickly in order to ensure that the next round of negotiations will go smoothly.
- Willens: Before the Ambassador met with you or Chairman Salii, typically his staff would prepare briefing papers or talking points that would identify some of the issues that they thought should be raised with you or Chairman Salii. Before he met with you on August 29, 1973, Ambassador Williams was told that one of the subjects to discuss with you was to arrange for the scheduling of the third round of negotiations sometime in the fall. He was also told in a briefing paper that he should advise you "that the most important lesson learned from the second round was for negotiators not to get locked into a fixed position prior to commencing talks." I know you never probably have heard of that before, but was there anything the Ambassador said to you in those personal meetings between the second and the third rounds where he tried to suggest to you that the Marianas Political Status Commission had taken fixed positions on issues in a way that was inappropriate?

- Pangelinan: There were times when Ambassador, on an informal basis, would say that. As I probably noted earlier, the Ambassador always tried to give us a sense of direction, almost like a fatherly figure to guide us, and he used that word sometimes to guide us in ensuring that the issues in the next round of negotiations are not going to be bogged down because of firm positions taken by both sides. Our meeting at this particular time was no different from the previous one. But yes, he was very concerned that our positions were very strong in the second round of negotiations and he was suggesting that perhaps we should be more flexible and not be put in a position where we cannot change our position on some issues.
- Willens: How did you respond to that kind of guidance?
- Pangelinan: I think I had the advantage of telling him that this is something I would take under consultation and that I'm going back to the Commission to get the Commission's decision on this. I also defended our positions as not really inflexible at all. I said our positions could be defended and that it was the Ambassador's side that was sometimes inflexible in seeking accommodation. So I think we pretty much convinced him that the Commission stood firm in defense of its positions.
- Willens: During the summer and fall of 1973, there were two working groups in process. One dealt with economics and finance, in which Jim Leonard served as co-chairman, and the other was a working group of lawyers where I served as co-chairman. I remember sending you a variety of reports about those committee meetings. Did you personally have any involvement in the work of either of those committees?
- Pangelinan: I think as Chairman of Commission I was kept informed on a regular basis. I think I attended some of the meetings of both subcommittees, and yes, I was pretty much kept informed on all their activities.
- Willens: There was an issue about scheduling that seemed important at the time, although it doesn't seem very important in retrospect. The Commission was receiving advice from me that we needed time to complete the work of the working committees, to prepare the reports, to consult with the Commission before formal negotiations began. The United States at one point suggested that the negotiations begin as early as November 5, 1973, and they apparently suggested that because they were trying to arrange meetings at the same time with the Joint Committee. So the records indicate that both you and I advised the U.S. delegation that such an early date did not provide sufficient time for preparation. This prompted a very substantial reaction from Mr. Wilson, who called me and said that the Commission's position that we may have to defer the next round until March of 1974 in his words "raises the most serious questions about the desire of the Marianas people to be part of the United States." And I tried to explain to him that it was a scheduling matter, and he indicated the Ambassador was trying to meet with you. You did eventually meet with the Ambassador in San Francisco in late October 1973, and as a result there seemed to have been an agreement reached as to when the next round would be held. Do you remember any discussions with the Ambassador about the scheduling issue?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I think one of the problems that the U.S. delegation faced at that particular time was funding for travel and getting the right people on time. And it was the hope of the Ambassador since we were already beginning our negotiations that, whenever there was a schedule for the Micronesian negotiations, either before or after a short period of time the Marianas negotiations should take place. He was trying to impress upon me that he had that kind of scheduling problem himself. He had to put together a team to conduct negotiations with Micronesians and the Northern Marianas, and he didn't have the kind

of financial support to carry on discussions with extended periods between the two. So he was hoping that he could carry on the negotiations with Micronesia and subsequently meet with the Northern Marianas at the same time. I tried to convince him that that may be well and dandy, but the Commission had undertaken some real strong efforts to conduct studies for the working committees, and we needed time to prepare those studies and we couldn't meet the kind of scheduling that he himself was suggesting to us. I think he was sympathetic in a sense. Finally we just told him if we held a session within the time frame he was suggesting, we would not be able to conduct any negotiation because we were just totally unprepared to do that.

Willens: What started out as a controversy seems to have been resolved very amicably, among other reasons because the Joint Committee negotiations with the United States were ultimately held in Washington because many of the Joint Committee leaders were there for the CAB hearing on the Japan-Saipan dispute.

Pangelinan: That's right. That was somewhat fortunate for us, because the Micronesians put the pressure on the Ambassador to have the negotiations outside of Micronesia. So finally I think he found he could accommodate us without any problem.

Willens: Did the Ambassador understand that the Commission's request for funds to the Legislature had not provided travel funds that would permit the Commission to meet outside of Saipan?

Pangelinan: That also came about at that particular time. The Commission was undergoing its own financial discussion before the legislature. But I think we always made it a policy to hold the Commission meetings here in Saipan, because of the need for the people to participate in the ongoing negotiations. You're correct, Howard, the Legislature had very limited funds and it was doing everything that could be done to ensure that money was available for the Commission.

Willens: Given the limited amount of funds available to the Legislature as I recall, the Legislature approved a very substantial amount for the Commission in either August or September of that year. Is that your recollection?

Pangelinan: It is my recollection. As a matter of fact, I had to appear before the Legislature formally and informally to encourage them to provide the money for the Commission. We had public meetings with all the local leaders to hold any kind of local appropriation so that the Commission could be funded. At that particular time the Legislature was involved in making social and general welfare appropriations for the communities. After our meetings there, I think we convinced them that sacrifices had to be made regarding these efforts because the Commission's activities were in the overriding interest of everyone.

Willens: By the time the District Legislature made its decision about funding, the *Pacific Daily News* had already published in some detail summaries of the position papers that had been submitted by the Commission to the Legislature. Did you encounter any opposition within the District Legislature or in the leadership in the Northern Marianas about the direction in which the Commission was proceeding?

Pangelinan: No. It appears that that's one advantage that I had: almost all of the leaders of the Legislature were supportive of our efforts. I had to present the working papers of the Commission to the Legislature to support any request for funding because they required that. But as far as any criticism on the way the Commission was moving, perhaps there were some individuals that expressed some criticism, but overall I think the great majority felt that we were doing the right thing and we were moving at the right pace.

- Willens: During your informal discussions with Ambassador Williams before the third round began, did he ever indicate to you that the U.S. delegation was in the process of preparing a draft status agreement that they would present to the MPSC at the next round?
- Pangelinan: I'm trying to recall now exactly the detail of their proposal. Yes, he did indicate that they're ready to make a presentation. I tried not to get any details about what's involved here, because I didn't want to go to the Commission and start briefing them.
- Willens: Start what?
- Pangelinan: Briefing—I made it very clear that whenever there is a proposal from the U.S. side it will be done on a formal basis, rather than through an informal discussion with me. I think the Ambassador was aware of our position, but from time to time he liked to encourage me that something definite is going to be presented.
- Willens: During those months that Jim Leonard was working, there was someone named Sol Silver who was designated by the United States as the principal representative of the United States on the joint working group dealing with economic and finance. When do you recall first meeting Mr. Silver?
- Pangelinan: I think I bumped into Mr. Silver when he was a consultant (I believe) to the Department of the Interior at one time.
- Willens: He had worked for AID and then retired. He was selected by Ambassador Williams to bring expertise to the U.S. delegation to deal with Mr. Leonard and the analyses that Leonard's firm had developed. Silver came out here in September of 1973 to meet with TTPI and district officials and to develop some positions as to transitional planning and ultimately the level of support that the United States would offer the Marianas. Do you recall meeting him when he was out here for the first time?
- Pangelinan: I believe I did, because I'm trying to recollect my thoughts. I think my first meeting was in Washington in connection with my own responsibilities at the Congress of Micronesia. I attended a number of budget hearings in Washington, and I think that was my first meeting with him. Subsequently when he came to Saipan, of course, he was around and probably paid me a courtesy call on an informal basis. I think he was just trying to get to know me, because he was advised by the U.S. delegation that I was involved in the leadership of the Commission.
- Willens: Did you attend the Joint Committee negotiations with the United States in Washington in November of 1973?
- Pangelinan: I believe I did, Howard.
- Willens: Those were the negotiations that were terminated after about a week because of an impasse on the financial issue. The Micronesians generally were sticking to the proposition of \$100 million for all six districts, although they evidenced some willingness to reduce it to \$80 million. The United States delegation came in with an offer in the range of \$40 or \$42 million for five districts excluding the Marianas.
- Pangelinan: That's correct.
- Willens: One of the issues that came up repeatedly was whether the Joint Committee and the United States ought to be negotiating for all six districts rather than just five. Do you remember that discussion, and what position did you take?
- Pangelinan: Well, again we didn't make a formal presentation on that to express a Northern Marianas position. I think the Joint Committee had already taken the position it's going to negotiate

for the whole of Micronesia. Again, our participation in that meeting in Washington was very limited. We took the position that whatever the Micronesians are going to advance, we're not going to entertain any dissenting position. So I think when the Joint Committee made a formal presentation of representing the six districts, I don't recall we entertained any opposition to that.

Willens: You gave an interview a few weeks later back in Saipan before the third round began in which you left the impression that you had learned something from the Joint Committee's negotiations with the United States. You expressed some confidence that the MPSC could avoid the kind of deadlock that the Joint Committee had reached. What was your sense about the cause of that negotiating impasse in the Micronesian negotiations, and how did you think the MPSC could avoid that?

Pangelinan: Well, I think the first lesson that I learned there is that when you reach an impasse and there is no room for negotiation, then you end the discussion right there. It was significant for us that we continue the negotiations until we make progress, and I was fearful that a situation like what the Joint Committee had gone through in Washington would have been repeated here in Saipan and that would have been disastrous. Secondly, I think the biggest lesson I learned is that when you make a presentation in defense of your position, you got to have some supporting documents to support your position and proceed from a position of strength rather than just making a presentation without any support. The impasse that was reached in Washington basically arose because both sides were making presentations that had no basis or rational support. The \$100 million on the part of Micronesia was never defended other than a general expression that this is what it's going to cost the U.S. Government to have an impact in Micronesia.

Willens: I believe that Mr. Silver did play a role in explaining the U.S. position during the Micronesian negotiations. Did you think the U.S. delegation presented a reasoned explanation in defense of its financial offer to the Joint Committee?

Pangelinan: I believe that they had the information about what it cost to run the rest of Micronesia. They using statistics and data from past experience to tell the Micronesians that this is what's required for infrastructure development and to run the new government of Micronesia. On the other hand, it's a very conservative kind of financial support, but they were more prepared than the Micronesians. They came out with a generalized figure for one thing. And they had no supporting data whatsoever as to what is required for the development of infrastructure, or development of services in any of the districts in Micronesia. So that's my perception. I felt that at least once I have some justification, the others did not have any justification, and so there was some great difficulty trying to develop a balance or to negotiate on some financial requirements that can satisfy both sides.

Willens: Without having detailed justification from both sides, you're suggesting there wasn't really the raw material from which a compromise could be reached and defended?

Pangelinan: That's correct and, you know, that's I believe the critical lesson that I learned from that negotiation.

Willens: One of the points you made actually, according to the newspaper interview, was that the Marianas Political Status Commission, whenever it reached an impasse on one subject, could always take a recess and move to another subject. You and I have talked before about the Commission's use of the recess technique as a way of dealing with problems that unexpectedly arise.

- Pangelinan: I think, Howard, that's another beauty of the way we developed our negotiating style. There are issues that would be more difficult to resolve, but others that can be resolved along the way. So we were not constrained by one major issue. I think the weakness of the Micronesian negotiation was that we tried to handle one issue at a time and, when you reached an impasse, there's no other items to go to. And I think that the direction that the MPSC took was well, there was always an opportunity to re-visit those issues where we had reached some difficulty. I never called it an impasse, because we were always able to go back and eventually solve the difficulty. But we had a number of ongoing problems that we felt were necessary to address on the agenda that we were able to resolve very quickly. Another beauty is that when we make progress on some issue, it makes it easier for us to go back to the more difficult one and sometimes in good spirit and humor we were able to find an accommodation.
- Willens: In advance of the third round of negotiation which began on December 6, 1973, the Commission met for approximately ten days in advance with the consultants. You received from Leonard's firm two very substantial documents with respect to the work of the subcommittee and his plans for the transitional program and funding. You received from my law firm several hundred pages of legal memoranda dealing with a wide variety of subjects from military land issues to self-government to citizenship and so forth. One of the things that the MPSC worried about in advance of this round was exactly what its priorities were. Counsel recommended that a high priority be attached to reach an agreement on some specific issues, but recognized that you couldn't reach agreement on all the issues on the table and some ought to be deferred to working groups and so forth. Thinking generally about the military land issue, self-government, financial support, what's your recollection as to the priorities that you had as Chairman with respect to that round of negotiations?
- Pangelinan: I think again we were trying to firm up the earlier positions we had on the legal political relationship, the economic, and the land requirements. We really never deviated from that position, so our briefing and discussing at that particular time was focused more or less on trying to get the economic position that we had agreed upon. Although we realized that we were going to make some firm decision on the land issue, I think we pretty much rested on our early agenda and my recollection is that we did follow that course.
- Willens: In the political status area, the Commission developed and delivered to the United States on the opening day of negotiations five position papers. They dealt with citizenship, income tax laws, customs and excise taxes, an applicability formula for federal laws, and then a long position paper dealing with the Article IV(3)(2) problem. Some of these items, the citizenship, income taxes and customs, had all been worked on a good deal in the subcommittee and there had been working-level agreement. Do you recall any significant issue within the Commission about the proposal on citizenship and nationality? The proposal, just to refresh your recollection, basically defined groups of people with a commitment to the community who could become U.S. citizens. If they wanted not to be citizens but to be U.S. nationals, they could go to court and there were some other aspects of the proposal. What is your recollection about discussions within the Commission on that subject?
- Pangelinan: I think there were some heated discussions when it came to the question of citizenship or nationality. There were some members of the Commission who couldn't understand why some people would like to become other than U.S. citizens. But then again we recognized that there were members of the Commission who represented other minority interests, and we recognized that potential problem. The beauty that we had reached during our

discussion was the proposal that anyone who doesn't want to become a U.S. citizen can go to the court and declare one's intention of accomplishing that. And that was almost like a way out of this dilemma. I think the Commission finally decided that that would be the best solution to this dilemma.

Willens: One issue that came up during the Commission's discussions was the question of whether aliens could come to the Marianas after it was part of the United States and meet the residency requirement to become naturalized U.S. citizens by living in the Marianas for five years. As I recall, there was some concern expressed about the Marianas being used as an entry point to the United States, and ultimately there was a proposal made that only immediate relatives, or some such phrase, of people who were here could come and establish residency here in order to become naturalized citizens. What is your recollection of that?

Pangelinan: A very vivid impression, because there was a guy by the name of Dr. Palacios who really focused on this problem.

Willens: What was his position?

Pangelinan: His position was that since the U.S. immigration laws provide for a quota of people from every country to move to the United States, I believe at that particular time it was 20,000 for each country, he was very concerned that if the Northern Marianas comes within that after becoming part of the United States, well, the Northern Marianas definitely is going to be just like Guam. We had experience of Vietnam then, coming to the end of the Vietnam War, where people were leaving the country. Some folks alluded to the fact that, look at the Vietnamese going over to Guam and to the United States, and suppose they decide to establish residency here in the Northern Marianas overnight. The position of the local people would change dramatically and, because of this potential citizenship, the Northern Marianas would lose the ability to control its own destiny. So there was a very serious concern of people like Dr. Palacios that citizenship was going to raise very difficult problems for those of us who wanted to become citizens, because of the possibility of all the people moving to the Northern Marianas establishing residence and eventually qualifying under the immigration and naturalization law to become U.S. citizens here in the Northern Marianas. I think it probably was you and the legal counsel who advised us that this issue could be addressed in deciding who controlled immigration, and the two issues were pretty much tied in together.

Willens: That's true. Did Dr. Palacios himself want to become a U.S. citizen, do you believe?

Pangelinan: Well, I believe he did, but on the other hand he was concerned that the aliens that might be coming presented a very frightening situation. Yes, we want to become part of the United States, but what about these other people that would come to the islands to become U.S. citizens, and therefore in the process we going to lose control of our own area.

Willens: I assume his views on that were generally shared by the other members of the Commission?

Pangelinan: Yes, it was shared almost unanimously.

Willens: But he was an articulate spokesman of that view, is that what you're saying?

Pangelinan: He was not only an articulate guy, but he was the one who was questioning what is the advantage of becoming U.S. citizens if in the final analysis you going lose the relationship that we are going to establish here, because others will come in and then control the government because of the small number of the people here in the Northern Marianas.

One country from the Far East can easily move 20,000 people, and we had only a little over 15,000 people on the islands.

Willens: You're right about the linkage with the general problem of immigration. The law firm submitted a memo to you and the other members of Commission on the immigration laws as part of the preparation for the third round. The Commission decided, however, not to develop a specific position paper to present to the U.S. delegation on immigration at this session.

Pangelinan: Right, correct.

Willens: I frankly do not recall whether that was because the Commission was unable to formulate a position on it, or because we thought it was too politically sensitive to raise, or for some other reason. Do you have any recollection as to the strategy that prompted the Commission's decision on that subject?

Pangelinan: Well, like I said, it was a real thorny issue because of the potential implications. Everyone wanted U.S. citizenship, but then a dilemma arose on how you can get U.S. citizenship without having to worry about the potential aliens coming in. My recollection, Howard, is that although we were not prepared to make a proposal, my understanding is that we felt very strongly that the control of immigration is an issue we can address at a later time. But for the time being, we felt that we had to reach an agreement on the citizenship issue and also recommend this "close relatives" provision as a way of making a strong case later on as to why we need to have this immigration control. I think that was basically the accommodation that we reached among ourselves.

Willens: The documents suggest that both the Commission and the U.S. delegation were concerned that only two weeks had been allocated to this round of negotiations because of the Christmas holidays. The negotiations lasted from December 6 until December 19, 1973, and it was made clear from the beginning that there would be this definite conclusion on December 19 in order to permit people to travel back to the United States if they wanted to. Your counsel, my firm, recommended that we home in on very specific subjects where agreements seem to be possible. Do you recall any sense that there would have to be at least one or two more rounds of negotiations after the December 19, 1973 session?

Pangelinan: Yes, we recognized the work was far from completed. You're right, the timing was very difficult because of the holidays around the corner. And also, the Commission was getting a lot of pressure from just the local community. I'm trying to recollect some of the local issues that came about that particular time. I'm not very sure about the internal problems that the Commission had to face then.

Willens: That did come up later to some extent. Was it your impression that the community or the political leadership thought the Commission was proceeding too slowly or that it was proceeding too rapidly?

Pangelinan: We were in the process of a political election then of some sort, and there were some of the Territorial Party then were accusing the Commission of moving too fast. Yes, that was the local issue that came about.

Willens: Well, that came up in 1974 when you ran, but we're now talking about 1973. Well, you recall that the time limitations were an important concern. In his opening statement, Ambassador Williams expressed hope that having negotiated on two occasions during 1973, the U.S. delegation would return to Saipan to finish the job in 1974. Did you and

he have any private conversations as to whether the negotiations could be completed in 1974?

Pangelinan: The Ambassador at one time was trying to encourage me, you know, we're making good progress and he's taking the position that I think we should wrap it up as early as possible. He's also getting some pressure from Washington that this negotiation has dragged on longer than was anticipated. So he always wanted to make sure that I'm optimistic so that we can move forward expeditiously. He wanted to wrap this up as early as possible.

Willens: There was a preliminary agreement reached on the citizenship/nationality issue at this session. There also was a preliminary agreement reached on income tax laws, basically to the effect that the Marianas would have the authority to enact its own income tax laws and that the territorial tax law would not be a mirror image of the internal revenue code. That was ultimately changed as you remember. How important was it to the Commission members to have the authority to impose in the future the Commonwealth's own tax laws?

Pangelinan: It was very important because of our own experience with the Trust Territory government.

Willens: How so?

Pangelinan: Well, tax was always a sensitive thing here. People were not used to really paying taxes, given that the government had basically spoiled the people by providing the kind of funding needed to support the services required.

Willens: You said the Trust Territory government spoiled the people?

Pangelinan: Yes, in a sense. That was the long history of trusteeship here in the Northern Marianas, which always gave the impression that government exists to support the people without their having to contribute any tax to the operation of the government. The Northern Marianas had a long history of opposing taxation by the Trust Territory government. And so it was a not a legitimate issue. But it was a concern that people had been used to. There was some recognition that we were going to develop a new government with the authority to tax our own people. But managing that was something new. We were not really prepared politically to have taxation during the status discussions at all.

Willens: You wanted the future commonwealth to have the authority, even though you may have been somewhat apprehensive about how it might ultimately be exercised?

Pangelinan: There's no question about it. We felt that authority has to be with the local government.

Willens: But what was your reaction at the next round looking ahead when we were ultimately advised by the U.S. delegation that it had to withdraw from that preliminary agreement, because Congressman Burton did not want to have a significant difference between the tax laws applicable in Guam and those applicable in the Northern Marianas?

Pangelinan: We were getting pressure from Guam that, if the tax regime in the Northern Marianas is different from Guam, then residents from Guam would come over to the Northern Marianas to establish businesses.

Willens: That certainly was Congressman Burton's concern.

Pangelinan: We felt that that was a premature kind of decision. We couldn't understand how anyone from Guam would like to move over to the Northern Marianas to begin with. At that particular time the islands here were totally underdeveloped. The attraction here was

- minimal. It was, as a matter of fact, the people in the Northern Marianas who wanted to move to Guam.
- Willens: Okay, just to stop on that point for a minute. Can you recall what the stage of economic development was here in 1973? It was the time during which the Continental Hotel was being built with a scheduled opening as I recall in early 1974. So essentially there was only the Royal Taga Hotel and the small Hafa Adai at that point available for the public?
- Pangelinan: Right.
- Willens: There's some indication in the documents that the pace of economic development here was beginning to increase, and that the prohibition on foreign investment was being re-evaluated by the United States. Do you have any recollection of whether economic development was increasing here and, if so, to what would you attribute that development?
- Pangelinan: Well, Saipan was a seat of the government and that in itself provided the economic incentives and opportunities. We always felt that at that particular time the Saipan-Japan route was being worked very seriously. So we understood that there were a lot of activities underway that were going to encourage very significant economic development in the future.
- Willens: But there were projections saying that by 1975 or 1976 there would be 800 to 1,000 hotel rooms on Saipan, whereas at the time there were less than 100.
- Pangelinan: Those were the projections of the airlines in particular. Continental, Air Micronesia then, had made some studies of, if the route was awarded to it, the kind of tourist development of the islands that could take place.
- Willens: Did you think that was realistic?
- Pangelinan: We felt it was realistic, although because we were using the status negotiations as a way to get more money, we're trying to downplay that kind of projection. It's kind of a dilemma—recognizing that there's potential for development but on the other hand not wanting to play that up so that it will be used against your request for funds.
- Willens: Certainly the United States would frequently suggest that, with increasing economic development, the Marianas government would generate more revenue.
- Pangelinan: Precisely. That's the kind of problem we faced in making our proposal. We wanted to discourage the United States from using the potential economic development here for developing the financial basis for supporting the government.
- Willens: Did you think that economic development was in fact increasing, or put another way, was there growing foreign investment interest in the Northern Marianas because of these status negotiations? Was there any relationship?
- Pangelinan: There was a remarkable relationship. One of the strong points from almost every potential investor then was the fact that, if the Northern Marianas become part of the United States, then you have the political stability which generally supports economic stability. And so we were aware of those positions and recommendations.
- Willens: Did you think the foreign investors, either mainland U.S. or Japanese in particular, thought that the negotiations would almost certainly be successful in the sense of bringing the Northern Marianas within the American political family?

- Pangelinan: No question about it. Also there's another factor, Howard, which actually helped to constrain economic development in Micronesia, and that was the foreign investment policy here.
- Willens: Well, did that change at about this time?
- Pangelinan: It was beginning to change. Right. But more importantly, everyone felt that if the Northern Marianas controlled its own government here, then it would be much easier to handle investment because you're dealing with a group of people that want to invite foreign investors into the islands. Unlike the rest of Micronesia, where investment, especially foreign investment, is restricted and in many areas discouraged. For example, Yap didn't want any kind of tourist development there, whereas the Northern Marianas was excited to promote this kind of development.
- Willens: There is some indication that the prohibition on foreign investment in the Northern Marianas and the Trust Territory by Japanese concerns was being circumvented by the use of local corporations that would serve as frontmen, so to speak, for Japanese investment. Was that a development in the Northern Marianas that you and other leaders were sympathetic with, or did you think that was a bad development?
- Pangelinan: Well, the existing policy probably created this opportunity for investors to come in. The leaders in the Northern Marianas felt that the policy could change very easily. The Northern Marianas was always pro-economic development and the sooner we got rid of this restraint of investment in the islands would be in our best interests.
- Willens: Your basic position was that you were more favorably inclined to foreign investment than the other districts. You wanted to have a change in the policy and you wanted to have control over the policies so that the Marianas political leaders could make their own judgments.
- Pangelinan: That's right.
- Willens: One of the other preliminary agreements pertained to the customs area of the United States. It was agreed after a lot of preliminary work that the Northern Marianas would not be in the customs area of the United States and have some of the benefits that flowed therefrom. What importance, if any, did you personally attach to that aspect of the negotiations?
- Pangelinan: We are looking for the opportunity, because we are close to the Far East, to encourage some investment here to develop products for export to the United States. We felt very strongly that countries like Japan, Taiwan and others would look at the Northern Marianas as a way to develop, you know, cottage industry. This would give the opportunity to the Northern Marianas to provide exports to the United States. I think that those kind of issues were not really argued about very strongly within the Commission. But the Commission felt that you need to balance development, but you also need to provide some incentives so that if industry developed here, its products can be exported to the United States.
- Willens: Does this reflect some interest within the Commission in having an economy that was more diversified, so that it would not necessarily depend on either tourism or the military?
- Pangelinan: Those were certainly matters of interest to us. There were some expressions that military development is a very particular kind of development. So diversification of economic activity here was certainly in our best interest. But on the other hand, I am trying to recollect all of the aspects. One is the shipping, just the distance from here to the United

States, some people were concerned that you can't really develop any kind of viable industry in the islands.

Willens: Okay. Let's turn to the issue of the self-government. Counsel presented the Commission with a long memo following up on the concern that the Commission had at the last round that there might be some inconsistency between its desire to have maximum self-government on local matters and the United States delegation's insistence that the U.S. Congress has plenary authority under Article IV(3)(2). There was a recommendation made that the Commission propose that the United States be asked to recognize that Article IV(3)(2) was limited by the mutual consent provision, and a proposal was advanced that the future Commonwealth have essentially the same authority over local matters as the States, unless there was some specific problem that required that they either have more authority or less authority. Do you recall discussions within the Commission that preceded the presentation to the U.S. delegation of the proposal along that line?

Pangelinan: The discussion basically centered on how we can control local matters. One discussion that I recall very vividly was how can you convince the U.S. Congress to limit its plenary power with the mutual consent provision.

Willens: So its your recollection that there was some concern that the U.S. Congress might not be persuaded that its power should be limited by the mutual consent provision?

Pangelinan: Yes, there was some discussion within the Commission. We recognized that this is probably the most important proposal that we're going to be making on political status because of the mutual consent provision. But I was trying to say that there was some concern within the Commission whether or not we are advancing a very novel idea. This certainly had not been tested within the constitutional framework, and certain members of the Commission had expressed the concern that the U.S. Congress may not be persuaded easily to limit its authority through the mutual consent provision.

Willens: Did the Commission attach a high priority to trying to limit plenary authority of the U.S. Congress under Article IV(3)(2)?

Pangelinan: Yes, the Commission wanted to advance the position that the Congress can limit its authority. There were no reservations on this whatsoever. This was perhaps the strongest position that the Commission had made. And I think we convinced those members of the Commission that this is a matter for the Congress to do. We just have to ensure that we encourage the Congress to recognize the significance of this new status that we're trying to develop.

Willens: Did you have any recollection as to the reaction of the U.S. delegation to the proposal made by the Commission to limit U.S. authority with respect to local affairs?

Pangelinan: I think the U.S. delegation was taken by surprise, basically one day, because earlier they were not prepared at all to address this particular issue.

Willens: They were aware in advance of the negotiations that counsel was preparing a memorandum on the subject for the MPSC.

Pangelinan: Right, right.

Willens: From time to time, U.S. representatives would ask whether that was going to be given to them in advance and you and I told them that it couldn't be presented to them until it had been reviewed and discussed with the Commission. Do you recall any discussions of that kind?

- Pangelinan: From time to time, I met informally with the staff of the Ambassador. And in the course of our discussion they would allude to the fact that some important legal briefing was going to take place within the Commission. They would ask whether that can be shared with them. But I think we pretty much stuck to our guns—that this is not an issue for discussion, especially with me as Chairman of the Commission.
- Willens: The records of the negotiations show that the proposal was discussed on two or three separate occasions after the MPSC presented its position paper.
- Pangelinan: Right.
- Willens: Mr. Wilson presented the more detailed response after some introductory comments by Ambassador Williams. He agreed with the legal proposition advanced by the Commission that the mutual consent provision did operate as a limitation on plenary authority of the United States and, in fact, that agreement is reflected in the Joint Communiqué. Do you recall a discussion on that point?
- Pangelinan: Informally?
- Willens: Informally or during the working sessions? Do you remember how the Commission got a response from the U.S. and how the Commission then responded? There were occasions, for example, when the Commission asked me as counsel to make certain presentations to the U.S. delegation on this issue.
- Pangelinan: Well, because of the complexity of the problem, I think it was the Commission that authorized you as legal counsel to clarify the position of the Commission. It was your presentation to them concluding that the legal research indicated that this was something that the U.S. Congress could be persuaded to agree to.
- Willens: One of the points that both the Ambassador and Mr. Wilson made repeatedly was that the Commission's concerns about federal interference in local matters were misplaced; there was, in fact, no real threat of federal interference because of traditional Congressional forbearance, as they termed it. What was your reaction to that kind of representation?
- Pangelinan: We thought that was not the reality in this part of the world and that given the size of the Northern Marianas, the insignificance of the Northern Marianas, the Congress would not be sensitive to the area. We also felt very strongly that whenever legislation is made, it is really going to be applied to the rest of the country, whereas the Northern Marianas wanted greater protection, especially for its own internal affairs, so that Congressional interference would not prejudice that local control. I think the Commission had made a very forceful and very strong argument that, in order to ensure the complete autonomy of the area, that this provision was needed.
- Willens: One of the other points made by the U.S. delegation was that accepting the State model advanced by the Commission would give the Marianas a much preferred political status over Guam and the other territories that would be unacceptable to Congress. In other words, they didn't object to it on legal grounds, but they did object to it on political grounds. Do you recall any discussion on that point?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I think we tried to convince the U.S. delegation that, if there is no legal limitation, then the political one can be overcome. And I think we wanted to be firm in our position that the political aspect of the concern of Congress is one that we can overcome. We were more concerned with what the legal limitations were. And I think in the final discussion we kind of persuaded them that we could handle the political implications.

- Willens: The way the discussion appears to have ended at this round of negotiations on this subject was that the matter would be referred to a working group of lawyers. The U.S. delegation indicated that it was willing to meet the Commission's desires to protect self-government under the mutual consent provision. And so, the instructions were to the Commission to identify those fundamental provisions of the status agreement that the Commission wanted protected under mutual consent. Do you remember that kind of resolution to the problem?
- Pangelinan: Yes.
- Willens: Ed, you've had a chance to take a look at the Joint Communique of the third round, and I'd like to direct your attention to the transitional planning issue. That had been the subject of considerable discussion within the working group during the recess, and Jim Leonard gave a report and recommendations on that subject during the session. Do you have a recollection of any issues that were discussed between the two delegations regarding the transitional planning program?
- Pangelinan: Yes, indeed. As a matter of fact, the transitional planning was a very critical part of the negotiating efforts, largely because of the need to have a smooth transition to the new government. But, also it was important because of the work that had to be done in order to ensure that the new government would have the programs and the planning needed. We recognized the need for such a transition, but the Northern Marianas did not have the money to carry on any significant efforts during the transitional period.
- Willens: The Commission's economic consultant recommended strongly that the Commission try to get preliminary agreement on the nature of the planning program and the amount of funding at this round of negotiations. He was somewhat disappointed with the progress that had been made during the recess. The United States seemed to take the position that funding could not be sought from Congress until there actually was a basic agreement between the two parties as to a future status. So there was some difference between the parties as to the timing for seeking the funding for transitional planning. Do you remember that issue?
- Pangelinan: Yes, I remember that issue very well. The U.S. always attempted to not reach any substantive agreement on some issue unless they would obtain concessions on the more significant ones. They considered the funding as a premature request on our part. On the other hand, we felt that this is pretty much in line with what is needed to accomplish the work and also to ensure that some guarantee is made to help the Northern Marianas in a concerted effort toward a smooth transition.
- Willens: Well, looked at from the U.S. delegation's point of view, it seems reasonable for them to use the promise of transitional planning as an inducement to persuade the MPSC to make concessions on certain other issues. Is that right?
- Pangelinan: That's right. But we also felt that their position was not really acceptable to us. I think we prevailed in the final analysis on our position.
- Willens: It was referred to something called an Ad Hoc Committee. There seemed to be some direction to that committee to present a report for consideration by the principals before the next round of negotiations. Did you feel that was simply a technique for delaying any further consideration of the issue?
- Pangelinan: No, I think that it was an opportunity really for the U.S. delegation to go back and look at this important request from the Northern Marianas. I think they were not prepared to address that in specific terms, although we did do comprehensive work on it. But I

think the significance of the concessions made by the U.S. delegation was the agreement in principle that a transitional program is needed, and their agreeing to create an Ad Hoc Committee to work on the program was something that I thought that was a real substantive concession.

Willens: The United States presented a proposal at this round of negotiations for the so-called Phase Two level of economic support. They proposed a figure of \$7.5 million for government operations, \$3.0 million for capital improvements projects, and \$1 million for a developmental loan fund, for a total of \$11.5 million. They then estimated that the future Marianas government would receive \$3 million in federal programs. Was this the first time that the U.S. delegation had put before the MPSC specific figures for a multi-year program of support?

Pangelinan: I believe this is the first formal presentation of the level of funding that the U.S. was willing to accommodate the Northern Marianas. I was somewhat concerned, though, because they're using a five-year term rather than our proposal for a longer duration.

Willens: The proposal did fall significantly short of what the Commission's own analysis said was needed. Is that correct?

Pangelinan: Right. That is correct.

Willens: Was there any across-the-table discussion about these figures during the round of negotiations?

Pangelinan: I think the discussion centered around what was needed not only to support the operation of the government, but also and more importantly to develop the infrastructure requirement and to develop some inducement for local economic programs, such as a loan fund, which we felt were badly missing during the Trust Territory Administration. So, yes, there were figures that we presented to the U.S. delegation that reflected our own study of the kind of requirements and extensive programs that we needed to develop here.

Willens: Before the negotiations began, the Commission's economic consultant basically recommended that the Commission stick to its position as to the level of support needed under Phase Two as had been presented by the Commission at the preceding round of negotiations. Do you recall whether there was any need or desire to revisit the Commission's position in light of the figures and analysis that the U.S. delegation presented?

Pangelinan: It gave us the opportunity to now focus on the kind of financial support the U.S. delegation was willing, at this particular time, to provide. Now we had a definitive presentation. We felt that our own study showed the level of funding that we felt was required. It gave us some flexibility now to revisit the U.S. proposal and to see how we can accommodate it with perhaps some concession to be made to reach not only funding, but also accept the period of time for the multi-year support.

Willens: Now that the Commission had, for the first time, a U.S. proposal, it could then begin the process of negotiation with a view toward ultimately achieving some compromise that might be acceptable to both parties.

Pangelinan: That's right, and I think that, although the figures were not in total support of our requirement, it was a very positive U.S. proposal.

Willens: As I recall, the Joint Communiqué expressly indicated that the Marianas Political Status Commission did not accept these figures. That had the effect of sort of putting the U.S. proposal out into the public domain for comment from the leadership in the Marianas and

the citizens generally. Do you recall, after the negotiations at this round were completed, what kind of reaction you got from the community to this U.S. proposal?

- Pangelinan: It generated significant interest. As I mentioned earlier, the status negotiations hinged upon two requirements. One is the political relationship and, really, more significant locally is the financial support that we can derive out of this relationship. So, for the first time there were numbers put in the public domain that people can look into. Really there was criticism that perhaps the U.S. delegation always attempted to underestimate and present very conservative financial support, and that this was indicative of the lack of readiness on the part of the U.S. to really help the community. On the other hand, people now were saying that well, if you look at what the Northern Marianas is going to get, it's definitely a better deal than what we could have gotten under the continued efforts with the rest of Micronesia. And this was very significant, because now those of us that had taken the position that separate status negotiation is in the best interest of the Northern Marianas could point out that those benefits were beginning to materialize in this proposal of the federal government.
- Willens: Well, that's an interesting point. Was this figure of \$11.5 million, putting the federal programs aside for the moment, recognized by you and the community as, at the very least, better than what the Marianas was getting under the present TTPI funding level?
- Pangelinan: No question about it. It's almost three times what the current level then for the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: Really?
- Pangelinan: Oh, yes.
- Willens: On that order of magnitude?
- Pangelinan: \$14 million under the—it's more than that.
- Willens: I thought the U.S. presented figures indicating that the Marianas share of the TTPI budget was in the \$6-\$7 million range, but I could be mistaken.
- Pangelinan: Take the \$14 million in itself. It's definitely more than double, but then you have to tie in what are the other benefits that will come into play—federal programs, for example, which were very conservatively estimated at \$3 million—we realized that there's more programs involved here. And certainly, what the local economy would generate in terms of revenues under this kind of support had to take into account the multiplier effect. Yes, you have this figure here, but what that figure can generate into the economy is also a factor that you have to take into consideration. Taking into account the multiplier effect of money, the level of funding proposal here, vis a vis what we're already getting from the Trust Territory government, was unquestioningly three times better than the current level of funding that we're getting.
- Willens: You also suggested that you and others who knew what the Joint Committee was doing, or what kind of offer they were receiving from the U.S., believed that the offer that the MPSC had received, even though the Commission rejected it initially, was better than what the Northern Marianas would have gotten as its share of what the U.S. was offering the Joint Committee under a free association relationship.
- Pangelinan: Well, earlier, before this, when we had that meeting in Washington, the United States came out with \$40 million for the five districts of Micronesia. If you look at the simple arithmetic, it shows that each one of the Micronesian districts would probably get less than \$8 million. Here you have a very concrete proposal of over \$15 million, or

\$14.5 million, which is definitely better than what we would have gotten under the unity of Micronesia. So it put those of us who had kind of led the separate status negotiation in a better position now to show the community that what we're trying to accomplish is going to benefit the people. The criticisms were more from those who felt that well, this is a very conservative financial package from the U.S. Government.

Willens: Based on your own experience in the Joint Committee, did you accept it as a very conservative, what might be called a low-ball, offer by the United States that you were confident might ultimately be negotiated upwards?

Pangelinan: Well, this was raised during, I believe, some town meetings locally. I told them that the figures that you're seeing are a proposal from the U.S. government. The figures of the Commission are much higher and, therefore, at least now we have two positions that we can discuss and negotiate. So I always emphasized that this is not the final figure—that we have not agreed to this figure.

Willens: Was it your sense of the negotiating strategy of both sides that the United States delegation would probably not be ready to increase its level of financial support until the Commission had agreed on U.S. military land requirements?

Pangelinan: Well, that's the strategy I believe that we had attempted to use as a leverage. But, on the other hand, we felt that perhaps now we can agree on how to finalize the financial support. Some of the members of the Commission felt comfortable now that we can even reach an agreement on the economic side, without having to resolve the U.S. land requirements, because we kind of put that back because we had other interests.

Willens: Yes, that may be true on the part of the Commission, but from the U.S. delegation standpoint, if you had been on that side of the table, wouldn't you have wanted to defer any final agreement on the monetary side until there had been resolution of the land requirements issue?

Pangelinan: True, true. But, again, keeping faith with our own strategy here, we were sensitive to the U.S. position that now they have an attractive proposal and perhaps now let's try to start addressing the land issue.

Willens: Your hope was that the Commission might be able to press forward on the financial side and get it resolved to its satisfaction, leaving the land requirements for the last item to be resolved during the negotiations.

Pangelinan: That's the way we approached it.

Willens: That was your goal?

Pangelinan: That was our goal.

Willens: One land issue that was of paramount importance during the Micronesian negotiations was the return of public lands. As a result of the Palauan insistence that this issue be addressed before there would be resumption of negotiations, and for other reasons, the U.S. did develop and announce a policy on or about November 1, 1973, that set forth the terms under which public lands would be returned to the people of the districts. Approximately 90 percent of the land of the Northern Marianas was considered public domain, including military retention lands, although that became an issue of controversy. The Commission was given a memorandum in advance by counsel setting forth a proposal to use a public land corporation as a vehicle for receiving land. Was the issue of public lands in the Marianas one of importance to you and the other members of the Commission?

- Pangelinan: It was important in the sense that it's of symbolic importance to us.
- Willens: Was it more important to the people in Palau and the chiefs in Palau and the other Micronesians than to the Marianas? I don't quite understand why that should be.
- Pangelinan: Yes, it's more important to the others because of the way traditional land ownership is held. Here in the Northern Marianas it's individual ownership rather than collective ownership, and so therefore those of us on the Commission felt that much of the land is really owned by the government. So, therefore, as long as we identify and take care of the individual ownership, the land will be under a trust by the government. It's much easier to us to address the land issue in the future. Our concern at this particular time was that the land be returned to our so-called local Northern Marianas government rather than placed in the Trust Territory domain. So, it was not difficult for the members of the Commission to appreciate what's involved here. There were just basically two issues. One, as long as individual ownership is respected and identified, fine. The rest of the public domain stays with the government of the Northern Marianas. It was symbolic for us to ensure that this land be returned to the local government, so that we have the appearance that we control this land rather than the Trust Territory government, which is holding it in trust for us.
- Willens: Were you generally satisfied with the U.S. policy on public lands that was announced?
- Pangelinan: Yes, because it is an expression for the first time that the control of the public land is going to be given to the Northern Marianas government.
- Willens: The general thrust of the U.S. proposal was to place the matter, to some extent, in the hands of the Congress of Micronesia initially, and the districts. Did you think that the Congress of Micronesia was going to present any kind of a barrier to letting the individual districts ultimately decide how to accept the return of public lands?
- Pangelinan: We felt that the Congress of Micronesia had no business here in the first place. Secondly, it would be an insult to us. So it was significant in the sense that land has to be returned to the rightful owners, and that is the people of the Northern Marianas, and that's the position we took.
- Willens: Did you recall any discussion within the Marianas Political Status Commission as to whether a public corporation was the best way to handle this problem or whether it should be administered by the government or by the Legislature? Do you have any recollection of this issue being discussed?
- Pangelinan: We did discuss it. The appropriate vehicle to hold the land was one of concern to us because of the potential political implication.
- Willens: What kind of political implication?
- Pangelinan: Well, if you give it to the Legislature, then you're dealing with members that have political interests. We felt very strongly that some form of an entity that would not be subject to any political influence would be the perfect vehicle. Secondly, there was a real urgency to ensure that the Trust Territory return this land as expeditiously as possible. So, from those two points we concluded that a body of some sort was the most appropriate vehicle to handle it.
- Willens: The military land requirements of the United States were discussed again during this round of negotiations. There had been various efforts that you and others made during the recess to try to find out from the United States whether it was re-evaluating its plans in any respect and changing its proposal. We in Washington at the time were unsuccessful

in getting any information from the United States. Do you recall any discussions with Ambassador Williams during the recess as to the military land requirements issue?

Pangelinan: We had some informal discussion. It was my obligation as chairman of the Commission to put on record with the Ambassador that the original request for land requirements was totally unreasonable and that some change had to be made in order to ensure that our discussion of the land requirement would move forward. I think the Ambassador was well-informed then of our position and he took that under advisement.

Willens: Do you recall any changes in the U.S. position on military land requirements that were set forth during this round of negotiations? Just to help in that regard, the United States apparently continued to prefer purchase rather than a lease. Is that your recollection?

Pangelinan: Yes. My recollection is that this was one of the two issues involved here. One is the ownership and then the size of the requirement.

Willens: But the Joint Communiqué indicated that they still wanted approximately two-thirds of the land area, but suggested that one-third would remain under civilian control. Did that reflect a change in their position in terms of withdrawing from the original request for the entire island?

Pangelinan: Definitely. That was a very positive change in the proposal.

Willens: That's what you recall as being the most important change with respect to Tinian?

Pangelinan: That's right. That's not only a significant change, but one that makes it possible for us to continue discussion on the land issue.

Willens: Did that come at the end of the negotiations in December 1973, after the Commission had expressed its views on this subject? Do you have any recollection as to what discussion there was about Tinian that ultimately produced a slightly changed position on the part of the United States?

Pangelinan: Some of the discussion that went on earlier was about the need to change the position from the exclusive use of the entire island to a more favorable proposal. Secondly, the recognition that part of this island would come under the control of the civilian community. It's a very remarkable concession on the part of the U.S. in its recognition that the local population in Tinian would not be affected. And that to us was an important change from the earlier requirement.

Willens: Did that change lead you to believe that the negotiations were ultimately going to be successful?

Pangelinan: Well, not only that. We felt now that we can push for other concessions within the land requirement.

Willens: You mean on issues like lease rather than purchase? And price? Or what?

Pangelinan: Well, actually, three. We now were convinced that we will prevail on the lease. That's one. Two, that other concessions can be made. For example, they were pushing for almost exclusive control of Saipan Harbor and even the airport facility. When we looked at the map we saw that they wanted almost all the surrounding area of Isley Field, a new airport. And third, we felt that there might be some other accommodation; we could push for the lease-back of some of this land that would not be developed initially. So, and then finally, of course, the price. We felt that there was a good opportunity now to push for a higher price. So, actually, the concession made by the U.S. delegation to cut back on the land requirement opened a new ball game altogether and new opportunities for us to press.

- Willens: The matter of the military land requirements was referred to another working committee—it's unclear to me exactly what the working committee was expected to do.
- Pangelinan: We call it the Land Committee, right.
- Willens: The official Land Committee was created at that point.
- Pangelinan: Right.
- Willens: I guess Pete Tenorio was on that. What was the mission of the committee? To address the kinds of issues that you've just identified?
- Pangelinan: Right. Plus, to get a better reading on the kind of price range that we can negotiate and basically to use references, not only here in the Northern Marianas, for price negotiation, but to undertake studies elsewhere where military reservations are in place, in the United States and Guam in particular. And there were even some suggestions that perhaps we should look at foreign countries where U.S. military bases were established to see what kind of price negotiation we can undertake.
- Willens: Ed, you mentioned the U.S. land requirements on Saipan. The Commission had taken a strong view early on with respect to the U.S. request for land around the harbor. Ultimately, that was resolved to the Commission's satisfaction, was it not?
- Pangelinan: That is correct.
- Willens: The Commission also continued to take, at this round and subsequently, a strong position with respect to the land around Isley Field and ultimately the U.S. withdrew its request for land around Isley Field. Do you recall how that outcome was reached?
- Pangelinan: Yes. Again, looking back on Guam's experience with Guam in particular, we look at Isley Field as perhaps the center for future economic development on the island. We felt that Isley Field should not be subject to any kind of military retention. There was really no need to have this, if the United States was going to develop Tinian altogether. We felt that there's no rationale to have any kind of requirement in Isley Field. Also we took the position that if there's a national emergency or national need, certainly the people of the Northern Marianas will make Isley Field available. But to have it under military control is something that we just were not ready to concede.
- Willens: Do you remember any discussion with respect to the extent to which the Northern Marianas government in the future would have to honor the use agreements that governed so-called military retention lands?
- Pangelinan: I think that we had agreed that we, not only the government but the people, were committed to honor the terms of any lease agreement. There was never any reservation on any part of the Commission member.
- Willens: With respect to the people that you dealt with on the U.S. side, did you form some impression, for example, of Deputy Representative Wilson as a contributor and a personality? What was your impression of him?
- Pangelinan: I thought at times Mr. Wilson was overbearing. He acted very strongly in presenting the position of the U.S. delegation. I thought that he was a reasonable person, too, that he was willing to discuss our position and he was accommodating in clarifying the U.S. position. We thought that he was a person that we could discuss our proposal with intelligence and one who had the ear of the Ambassador. We felt that we could work with him.

- Willens: Actually, at the end of this round of negotiations, he and Felipe Atalig got into a verbal tangle at a reception, and there was an exchange of letters in which Atalig accused Mr. Wilson of being overbearing and insulting. Do you remember any of this?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I was aware of the exchange of correspondence between the two—more from Felipe than Mr. Wilson. But I was not surprised at all. Felipe was another colorful character who at that time had some real serious interest in what's happening in Tinian. He was my colleague in the Congress of Micronesia representing Tinian and the southern part of Saipan. So he had, of course, an important concern about what's happening.
- Willens: Did you have an opportunity to form any impression of Dick Scott, who worked for the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations?
- Pangelinan: Yes, Dick was a very friendly kind of person. I thought he was a balancing personality with Mr. Wilson. Mr. Wilson was very professional, kind of the ultimate bureaucrat, if you look at it. Whereas Dick was always very friendly, was always giving us the impression that he was very encouraged about what's happening. I didn't really spend that much—trying to analyze who are the key players there.
- Willens: Were there any other members of the delegation that you got to know, in particular Jim Berg, Adrian de Graffenried, Col. Kenty or so forth?
- Pangelinan: Yes. Jim Berg was almost like a colleague because he worked for the Department of the Interior at that time, and I had a closer working relationship with him. Adrian de Graffenried was Adrian at work with the Congress of Micronesia at one time?
- Willens: He was a Peace Corps volunteer out here. I don't know what his assignment was at the time.
- Pangelinan: Yes, volunteer. He was a legal counsel at the Congress of Micronesia, so I had some experience with him. I found him to be a very easy-going person. He had a good understanding of the Micronesian or the Northern Marianas interests involved here. Bill Kenty was a very colorful individual.
- Willens: How so?
- Pangelinan: Well, on a social level, I think among the members of the U.S. delegation I spent more time with him than anybody else. Just his out-going way, I thought he was underutilized in the delegation, because most of the time I found him hanging around the swimming pool. So we had social drinks with Bill.
- Willens: Did you think the practice of having receptions and hosting various social events contributed to the tone and progress of the negotiations?
- Pangelinan: Oh, undoubtedly. That was an opportunity for us to just socialize and forget about status negotiations and to be ourselves. Yes, that helped a lot and I hope that it contributed also to the well-being of the U.S. delegation. It was an opportunity for us to get to know each other and also, since we're all going eventually to be part of the American political family, it was a very important aspect of our negotiations.
- Willens: Did you feel that the U.S. delegation was trying to use these receptions as a means for communicating any messages to you or individual members of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: I think that was probably understood. As I alluded earlier, this was also an opportunity for us to get to know each other. There were a lot of informal exchanges on activities on the island, politics, and future aspirations. I also felt those occasions provided a time to exchange some ideas, and at moments there was the interplay of sometimes

- heated discussion. I thought that in general it was an outstanding opportunity for social interaction.
- Willens: The U.S. delegation near the end of this round of negotiations did discuss the subject of transition again. Putting aside the question of transitional planning and funding which you've already commented on, there were issues of a separate administration, a transition to commonwealth status, and separation from the Congress of Micronesia. Do you recall transitional issues of that kind being of importance to you and the members of the Commission at the time?
- Pangelinan: That was perhaps the most important phase of accomplishing the moving into a completely new authority for the Northern Marianas. It was significant for us because we had gone through this negotiation; and now how do you put in place the new identity for the islands. We recognized a lot of very technical aspects involved here. One was the change of administration from the Trust Territory to the Northern Marianas. Two, our separation from the Congress of Micronesia. At that particular time, several of my colleagues in the Commission were still members of the Congress of Micronesia. And three, how is the new Northern Marianas legislature going to play a very critical role in the transition. It's going to have the responsibility for doing that.
- Willens: Did you think there was any possibility of obtaining an amendment of the secretarial order so that the Marianas District would be administered separately and not subject to the jurisdiction of the Congress of Micronesia before a status agreement was finally reached?
- Pangelinan: Yes, we had no problem with that.
- Willens: You wanted it, didn't you?
- Pangelinan: We wanted it. We knew that it could be accomplished because it was done in the past.
- Willens: Yes, but the United States ultimately resisted that approach and concluded that they needed to wait for Congressional approval of the Covenant. Isn't that correct?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I think the United States was very cautious so that it would not be accused of separating the Northern Marianas without any legal basis to do it.
- Willens: So separate administration wasn't really achieved until 1976?
- Pangelinan: That is correct.
- Willens: Did the fact that there was a delay in separate administration cause you, the Commission, or the Marianas Legislature any particular problems during 1974 and 1975?
- Pangelinan: We discussed the potential problems. But we were pragmatic about the fact that unless you have a new status relationship, we're not going to on firm ground as to getting the United States to permit separate administration. I think we recognized that the most important goal was to achieve the status relationship.
- Willens: There also was talk of the eventual move of the capital of the TTPI from Saipan to some other location and what the financial implications of that would be within the Northern Marianas. Did you believe that this was an issue of some importance during those years?
- Pangelinan: It was important in the sense that we didn't want to displace any government employees. The government of the Trust Territory here was the main source of employment for our people and we wanted to ensure that these people do not have an adverse reaction when it comes to voting for the ultimate status. So we recognized that this is an important local issue that could jeopardize the status negotiations. On the other hand, we also understood

that there's no other place that you can put the Trust Territory government just because of the reality of the situation here. There's no other facility where you can put the Trust Territory government. But we didn't want to give the impression too that we were forcing the relocation of the Trust Territory government outside of Saipan.

Willens: Okay. Let's turn to the next round of negotiations that took place in May of 1974. During the recess, there was an Ad Hoc Committee on transitional planning that engaged in certain work. Your consultants were busy doing various papers. Do you remember any particular issues developing during the recess in early 1974? Or let's put it another way—were the results of the third round generally well received in the community?

Pangelinan: I think it pretty much finalized the resolution of all these issues we have touched upon—the political relationship, economic opportunity, financial need requirements, and the lands discussion.

Willens: Yes, but the latter two issues were still basically unresolved.

Pangelinan: That's true. But on the other hand we pretty much had a firm grasp and control on how these economics are going to come about and we're confident that attractive financial support is forthcoming.

Willens: In fact, a few days before the third round opened, you had conducted a meeting over in Tinian with the citizens to keep them apprised and you indicated publicly that the Commission was committed to going out into the public and reporting on what it was doing. Following the third round, did you engage in a series of meetings, not only on Saipan but in Rota and Tinian, to discuss the matter?

Pangelinan: I think we did that and it was well received by the leaders and the people. It was almost like a vote of confidence that yes, we're making good progress. I remember the visit to Tinian was in particular not as confrontational as in the past.

Willens: Was the meeting in Tinian before the session began or after the session began?

Pangelinan: Before.

Willens: You did meet before the third round.

Pangelinan: Right, right.

Willens: Did you go to Tinian after the round?

Pangelinan: Yes, we also went to Tinian after the round.

Willens: And then you were able to say that the U.S. had reduced its requirements.

Pangelinan: Precisely.

Willens: Reduced it to two-thirds rather than the entire island.

Pangelinan: That's right.

Willens: And so that was well received.

Pangelinan: Not only well received, it was now also a time when the people of Tinian began to consider what benefits can come about. The people weren't concerned about the two-thirds, because a lot of the homesteaders had properties within that area. But on the other hand, they looked at it now from the standpoint of the benefits for the civilian population. I thought it was a very successful meeting. It was not confrontational as before; we were able to sit down with the people and open a forum for discussion. I was not put in a position where I had to defend an untenable position.

- Willens: I forgot to mention one subject that continued to be an issue. The Ambassador in his opening comments before the third round said that the U.S. delegation was going to make available a draft status agreement during the course of the negotiations. The U.S. delegation did so on December 11, 1973, when it handed over to the Commission a so-called draft Covenant, consisting of various Whereas clauses, certain general principles set forth in titles, and then a series of articles and sections covering a wide variety of subjects. Although the Ambassador had indicated that this might be forthcoming, it did come somewhat as a surprise, at least to the Commission's counsel. The Ambassador made clear that it was not supposed to turn the meeting into a drafting session, but he asked very shortly thereafter whether the Commission had any reactions and comments about the U.S. document. The notes that I have seen from the negotiations quote you in effect as saying that the Commission will submit its comments "in due course." Do you have any recollection of the receipt of a draft Covenant and how the Commission decided to deal with the matter?
- Pangelinan: I think the members of the Commission were in consensus that we were going to develop a draft agreement. We were somewhat surprised that the U.S. delegation had already started the drafting process. I think there was not much opposition to the fact that the U.S. had said that they'd draft a proposal. I was more concerned with the fact that this is supposed to be a joint effort to be developed between the two delegations and the Ambassador was pushing for the Commission to use their draft as a token paper. I think, too, it got to us that it was the Ambassador's personal touch here of calling this document a "Covenant"—attaching almost a religious implication. We thought that was an interesting effort by the Ambassador to make it more palatable to us.
- Willens: It certainly was counsel's view that the Commission didn't have either the time or the resources to analyze the U.S. version during the middle of negotiations. Your position of stating that comments would be made "in due course" was a diplomatic way of suggesting that the Commission would take its own time to look at the draft.
- Pangelinan: We couldn't find better words to tell Ambassador—well, I'm trying to be diplomatic here too—I thought that the position we took was the right one.
- Willens: As it happened, counsel did spend a good deal of time during the recess before the fourth round to develop a draft status agreement, which we called the Commonwealth Agreement, and to prepare a long explanatory memorandum that compared it with the U.S. draft Covenant. And after preliminary discussions with the Commission before the fourth round of negotiations, that draft Agreement, with appropriate changes and an explanatory memorandum, were delivered to the U.S. delegation. It is my recollection that this prompted a very strong adverse reaction from Ambassador Williams. What is your recollection?
- Pangelinan: Again, the Ambassador felt that our draft showed a significant, I won't call it a departure, difference of interpretation in our drafting the various agreements that we had reached. The Ambassador felt that a simplistic approach . . .
- Willens: What kind of approach?
- Pangelinan: A simplistic approach.
- Willens: A simplistic approach?
- Pangelinan: . . . to the Agreement would be better, more in order than our reaction to his proposal.
- Willens: He and others fairly characterized the Commission's document as legalistic.

- Pangelinan: Right.
- Willens: And overly detailed. And so it contrasted, in their view, unfavorably with their shorter, more generally stated draft agreement?
- Pangelinan: Precisely.
- Willens: There also was the suggestion that it didn't reflect the preliminary understandings that had been reached.
- Pangelinan: That's right.
- Willens: So it was not an appropriate document. And, lastly, there was the suggestion that it came as a surprise to them because they had expected us to react to their Covenant in a different way, perhaps making suggestions for revising the Covenant. Some of this may have been directed at a personal level at counsel, but I'm interested in your reactions as to what happened during the negotiations, both in the working sessions and in private discussions on this subject.
- Pangelinan: I think that the most significant one, in my recollection, is that we tried to develop a document that reflected the interests and positions of the Commission and to ensure that, although a greater detail has to be put into the language of the draft, it is one that is going to preserve the integrity of the understandings that we have reached. I believe that our position was much more defensible than the U.S. position.
- Willens: Do you think the Ambassador and his staff were ultimately persuaded that the status agreement had to be somewhat more specific and perhaps far-ranging than they had originally planned?
- Pangelinan: No question about that. I think the Ambassador finally realized that the document that we were trying to develop had to be clear enough in a lot of areas so that it would not be subject to misinterpretation in the future and that more precise language in the draft agreement was required. I think he understood that. I think our strong reaction prompted him to realize that we were not only taking our understanding seriously, but we're ready to propose the kind of language that was lacking in his earlier proposal.
- Willens: But after all the controversy, the matter was ultimately resolved in a predictable way. The matter was referred to a joint working committee.
- Pangelinan: Right.
- Willens: Its job was to take the two drafts and try to reach agreement on a common draft that could be presented to the principals at the next session. Do you recall any controversy about that approach as a way of dealing with the issue?
- Pangelinan: No. I think the Ambassador realized that, if we had not referred this to the working group, it would be subjected to scrutiny by the general public. He could see a potential problem developing of using the media as a way to point out some of the weaknesses of the U.S. proposal, which would not only jeopardize the next round of negotiations, but would subject the U.S. government to a certain degree of ridicule. I think the Ambassador felt that it was important not to have this proposal out in the open, and the referral to the working committee was a way to stop any potential critique of the document.
- Willens: Do you remember a discussion with him personally about the public aspects of this?
- Pangelinan: I make it very clear to him, saying this is almost like the land proposal that you make. You're inviting the media to really critique the proposal, and perhaps they will be presenting the negative aspects of it, and the U.S. legal position may be subject to a real

- controversy which eventually could lead your delegation to finding your position totally unacceptable.
- Willens: Do you think there ever was a time during the negotiations with the United States where the U.S. delegation was so offended by something that the MPSC did that it considered seriously recessing the negotiation?
- Pangelinan: I think overall the Ambassador was impatient at times.
- Willens: Do you think this was an issue that he considered using as the basis for a recess?
- Pangelinan: I think our own efforts in the Commission did not help him to allay his fears. I think we contributed in some degree to some aggravation on his part. There were times during the negotiations when we intentionally requested a recess among ourselves and very impolitely offended him by having the members of the Commission speak in the vernacular. But, again, this was a strategy that we had developed to protect our interests, but I felt that the Ambassador had exercised a large degree of restraint and patience on his part.
- Willens: So you think that although he may have been aggravated from time to time, there never was anything of substance and of such controversial nature that he thought the negotiations could not be productively pursued?
- Pangelinan: I believed very sincerely that we were making progress and he felt that the importance of that progress was going to ultimately make the negotiations successful and he didn't want to prejudice that.
- Willens: The report of the Ad Hoc Committee was presented and approved by the parties. It authorized a planning effort to be funded in the amount of \$1.2 million and proposed that a Joint Commission on Transition be established. Do you recall any issues surrounding the transitional planning effort that were of particular interest to the Commission during this round?
- Pangelinan: Yes. One significant aspect was who's going to control the transition program. It was the consensus of the Commission that it should be placed under the control of the Northern Marianas. We thought that the level of funding may be insufficient. That was another area of discussion which led to some heated debate. But overall we felt that this was probably the best vehicle to conduct the transitional program.
- Willens: Was the question of control in terms of who would be the director of the office something that was resolved at this session? I am looking at the report of the Ad Hoc Committee, and it did contain a recommendation that the so-called Secretariat have a director "preferably a citizen of the Marianas" and then a deputy director who was "preferably a citizen of the United States." Was that the kind of compromise that emerged and was acceptable to the principals?
- Pangelinan: Right. Right, and, like I said, the main interest was control and we agreed with the suggestion to have a Northern Marianas person running the show.
- Willens: Do you recall any disagreement between the parties as to the extent of a government organization planning effort or preparation for a constitutional convention? I see, for example, that the \$1.2 million includes \$75,000 for a constitutional convention, which I know was substantially less than the MPSC's consultants thought was appropriate.
- Pangelinan: Right.
- Willens: Was there any sense on the U.S. delegation side that the MPSC or its consultants were trying to overreach here and, to put it bluntly, feather their own nest?

- Pangelinan: I think that an informal suggestion from some third-grade staffer expressed that. I noted, too, that some of the U.S. staff were perhaps kind of jealous of how well the Commission consultants had done for the Commission. There was always this allegation that, if you're going to have substantial work on legal and economic issues, the Commission was going to retain services of outsiders. But, no, there was not a single person who said we were trying to promote our own consultants. As a matter of fact, I was making it very clear that our own consultants were really underpaid because we just didn't have the money for them. But, certainly, the transitional program was not in any way designed to bring the same consultants to work for us.
- Willens: Was there really any precedent for this kind of a transitional planning effort that you were aware of?
- Pangelinan: No. As a matter of fact, this was a very novel effort. It had never been undertaken. As a matter of fact, the United States was somewhat concerned that the funding should come from the Northern Marianas rather than the U.S. government.
- Willens: Where was the Northern Marianas going to find a million dollars for this purpose?
- Pangelinan: Precisely. And I think eventually we prevailed in our convincing them that this is something that's needed and that there's a real interest on the part of the United States to ensure that an effective transition takes place.
- Willens: I think that's right. When all the debate was over and the negotiating differences were resolved, the U.S. deserved a lot of credit for accepting the proposition that this planning effort was in everyone's . . .
- Pangelinan: Best interest. Yes.
- Willens: It also appears that at the fourth round of negotiations the United States did change its level of support with respect to the multi-year program. I see from the Joint Communiqué that the two delegations tentatively agreed on the initial seven-year program of U.S. financial assistance. Do you have any recollection as to why it became seven years rather than five years or nine years or three years?
- Pangelinan: I think that was a compromise between their five-year proposal and our longer term. And I think that seven years was an acceptable long-term period that we felt comfortable with and the United States agreed to increase its proposal by another two years.
- Willens: The United States also increased its proposed level of support from \$11.5 million per year in constant dollars to \$13.5 million. Specifically it increased the support of government operations from \$7 million to \$8 million, the development loan fund from \$1 million to \$1.5 million with some specification as to how the additional 1/2 million dollars should be used, and it increased the capital improvement funds from \$3 million to \$4 million. Do you recall the negotiating strategy that the Commission followed with respect to trying to achieve increased U.S. financial support?
- Pangelinan: I think we pushed hard for a more generous financial support at all these levels operational government, infrastructure-capital improvement projects, and the economic development loan fund—plus support for the other two municipalities. We realized that the final position reached was something that we could work on. But I think that we added something new, a new element there, and that is the constant dollar factor there.
- Willens: Was that a subject on which the U.S. delegation and the MPSC had some difficulty agreeing with?

- Pangelinan: I think initially the U.S. resisted that because they recognized that constant dollars over time would multiply this to a much larger number. But it was something that I think the Commission made very clear—if we're going to agree on the amount the additional protection of the constant dollar is something that we also have to make part of the agreement.
- Willens: I forget whether it was during this round of negotiations or the last one where, on the subject of economic support, individual members of the Commission spoke up about particular needs in the community and the need to have more money from the United States. I recall you deciding as a deliberate matter of strategy that it would be useful to have individual members speak about the need for better education or better roads or anything else. Do you remember such a session and how it came about?
- Pangelinan: Oh, yes. We always believed that a wish list was important. I remember now when we went around the room for each of the members to articulate their particular interest in addressing the economic needs of their constituency.
- Willens: Did you think the individual members would be more persuasive, taken as a whole, than having one person or you present the Commission position?
- Pangelinan: I think this was one way of having a dog and pony show before the Ambassador. We already knew what our requirements were, but we wanted to give the Ambassador this new encouragement for the level of requirements and we thought the individual presentations were in our best interest.
- Willens: Were the individual members receptive to this approach?
- Pangelinan: Well, actually, I had some difficulty earlier because each one of them wanted to present a more comprehensive listing of their own particular requirements. And I said well, let's just highlight some of them, but when you go around the room with 15 members you end up with a very large catalog of what is needed.
- Willens: So was each member given sort of a specific assignment or need to address?
- Pangelinan: What we did then, as I recall it informally, was to highlight specific needs by particular members. For example, no one from Saipan can articulate the needs for Tinian better than Joe Cruz. So we had an assignment of some of the areas of need. I also believed that at that time Manny Sablan was a member of the Commission and he wanted to support the economic development loan fund. So this would give him an opportunity to address that issue. And so we went around the room and had a good listing of needs to present before the Ambassador.
- Willens: You definitely remember Manny Sablan as being involved in this, because he came on the Commission at the fifth round in December, and this might have happened in the fifth round rather than the fourth?
- Pangelinan: Yes.
- Willens: I don't recall. You will remember that it was in the fifth round when the United States indicated that there were no immediate plans to develop the base on Tinian, and so the Commission came back and argued strongly that the level of financial support should be increased. It ultimately went from \$13.5 to \$14 million. So this advocacy that you and I are remembering might have taken place in the fifth round rather than the fourth round. Do you have any reaction on that?
- Pangelinan: Well, I'm just trying to see the historical dates here. I thought that Manny was involved here. I could be wrong.

- Willens: No, you could be right. It may mean it was at the last round in the face of the change with respect to the military timetable. The Commission did speak up about economic needs again.
- Pangelinan: Because I felt that the need for economic programs, loan grants, and economic development opportunities were so badly lacking in the Trust Territory. Therefore, these needs had to be part of this economic package.
- Willens: Before the fourth round in the spring of 1974, Mr. Hocog from Tinian had been replaced by Bernard Hofschneider.
- Pangelinan: Right.
- Willens: Do you remember any background with respect to that change in personnel?
- Pangelinan: I think the change in personnel was basically, again, because of the composition of the Tinian Municipal Council. That was the reason for Mr. Hofschneider to be appointed.
- Willens: Was the Tinian Municipal Council separately controlled by the Popular Party?
- Pangelinan: It was at that particular time. There was a change in the composition and I think Mr. Hocog was out of office then. So the new leadership decided that Mr. Hofschneider was going to be the person to be appointed.
- Willens: Do you remember, just going back to the financial level issue, the Ambassador ever expressing dissatisfaction with the Commission's approach and suggesting that he was not engaging in "Armenian rug trading"?
- Pangelinan: I don't recall. Sometimes I felt that I had to take the Ambassador's suggestions with a little grain of salt, and at this particular juncture I thought that he was over-stepping his recommendation to us.
- Willens: At one point, the question of a power barge entered the negotiations. It was a power barge that had been made available to the TTPI following some weather disaster here or some power outage.
- Pangelinan: Yes.
- Willens: Do you remember when it was that the United States agreed that the Marianas, as part of the financial assistance, would receive use of the power barge?
- Pangelinan: We were having a power problem at that particular time, and there was some interest to ensure that as we continued discussions that some of the local power problems would be alleviated. The military had a power barge on Guam or some place else that they were ready and willing to made available to the Northern Marianas. I remember that episode very vividly because the barge was moved forward and placed in Tanapag Harbor.
- Willens: Moved where?
- Pangelinan: It was from Guam and was placed right in the harbor area. There was some joking on the island that gee, the United States hasn't really gotten its land requirements and was already using the area of the harbor. But, on the other hand, the power was needed on the island and this excess barge was put here to help us.
- Willens: But it was an extra bonus for the people.
- Pangelinan: Right. It was something of an extra bonus, but then we had some discussion on who's going to pay for this darn thing. It was not the most efficient power barge available then.
- Willens: How was that resolved?

- Pangelinan: Well, the Trust Territory decided that they would take care of it.
- Willens: The subject of military land requirements was discussed again at the fourth round in 1974, and the Joint Communiqué reflects the fact that the U.S. seems to have reduced the acreage on Tinian by approximately 1,200 acres so that its needs now could be met by 17,475 acres. Do you recall what brought about that change in the U.S. position?
- Pangelinan: I'm sorry.
- Willens: The acreage. It seems to have been reduced by about 1,200 acres on Tinian, and I'm asking you whether you have any recollection of what prompted that reduction in the U.S. requirements?
- Pangelinan: Yes. As you probably recall earlier, there was a concerted effort to relocate the Tinian town to a place up on the hill.
- Willens: To relocate the village?
- Pangelinan: Right. Relocate the village up on the hill because of the potential danger of the wharf being used at certain times for storage of, or to bring in, munitions or other things. So the proposal was to move the village up on the hill where it would be safe from any potential accident, and that requirement was about 1,200 acres within the Tinian Harbor. And, of course, we did not agree to the relocation of San Jose. So as a result of that, they had to cut back on the requirement.
- Willens: Did they develop some alternative way for handling ammunition that was made known to you?
- Pangelinan: I think we were informed that another area on Tinian can be utilized for this particular purpose. As a matter of fact, there was another beach area where some kind of a docking facility could be built to handle this potential problem. But within the two-thirds requirement.
- Willens: It appears that there was still no agreement that the land would be leased rather than purchased. The Joint Communiqué indicates that a joint land committee was appointed by the two delegations to explore the means of acquisition and the terms. Did the U.S. indicate any willingness to compromise on the lease issue during this round of negotiations, as you recall?
- Pangelinan: My recollection was that the United States was looking at the potential danger of the Commission not agreeing to the sale as a means of acquisition. And I think they saw our strong position that we're not going to change our mind. So I think that now they felt that the lease was the only option available. So the working group had to be constituted in order to ensure some better understanding on how to proceed on this.
- Willens: Was the Commission generally satisfied with the way in which the negotiations were proceeding with respect to potential leasebacks on Tinian?
- Pangelinan: I think that's another issue that we had anticipated in the event of non-utilization of land leased on Tinian or Saipan. This leaseback opportunity had to be discussed and terms had to be arrangement as to how we can take advantage of the leased land. We recognized that the military requirements might be inactive for a long period and we didn't want to leave this property under-utilized.
- Willens: Was it your judgment that there was a significant possibility that the United States might never develop a facility on the land that the Commission was going to make available on Tinian?

- Pangelinan: You know, we discussed this earlier, Howard. The history of the U.S. land requirements in the Marianas, particularly Guam, had indicated to us that there may not be any urgency on the part of the United States to develop this land. From the very beginning, we learned that the purpose of the Tinian requirement was basically to meet contingency requirements. I made an informal trip, when I was in the Congress of Micronesia at one time, to Clark and Subic myself and I was flabbergasted by the size of Clark Air Force Base. I'm talking about 100,000+ acres there. I took a helicopter ride as a matter of fact over Clark and it was staggering. I couldn't believe that the United States would need to match that requirement elsewhere. And also I asked why would they have Clark and Subic and still want to develop Tinian. So there was in the back of my mind some serious reservation that Tinian was going to develop in any possible way, and I think I used that in our discussion with the group. Our fear, basically, was that it would never be developed and what would happen if it's not developed at all—what are the potential economic implications there. I think the Commission and a lot of the members felt that Tinian would never be developed.
- Willens: Ultimately, there was a requirement that they exercise the option within five years, as I recall. Do you remember ultimately, after the Covenant was approved and you became the Washington Representative, do you recall the circumstances under which the Defense Department ultimately went to Congress for the approval to exercise the option?
- Pangelinan: Yes. As a matter of fact, I was indirectly involved, because the money that was going to made available under the Covenant here had to require congressional appropriation. During the early part of the transition, I was the Washington liaison then and I had kind of pressed the Pentagon on a number of occasions to honor the commitment here, but more importantly to get Congressional approval for the funding.
- Willens: What was the reaction within the Defense Department to your exhortations?
- Pangelinan: There was a real fear that this contingency requirement was not really viable at all. There was a lot of fear that Defense had no requirement for Tinian.
- Willens: Do you remember to whom you spoke at Defense or in what offices they were located?
- Pangelinan: Phil Barringer at that time was the man handling most of the land requirements in this part of the world.
- Willens: I think he is still there.
- Pangelinan: Still there as a matter of fact. He and Herman Marcuse are the last remnants of this exercise.
- Willens: Except perhaps us. No, that's certainly right, so when would this have been in 1976 and 1977 during the transitional phase?
- Pangelinan: 1976, 1977, 1978.
- Willens: Then it went on after you were elected.
- Pangelinan: Yes, until constitutional government took over and then I kept pressing on.
- Willens: What do you think ultimately persuaded Defense to go forward and present the matter to Congress?
- Pangelinan: It was kind of a strange situation. There were national interests of some sort developing in the Pacific. I think the Philippine base negotiation was also an influence there. There were a lot of other factors that came into being. I think the Philippine base requirement was the one that got people to start thinking about Tinian. There was a lot of discussion

in the Philippines about not moving forward on the base negotiations. I think that was the major influence.

Willens: Did you participate as a representative of the Northern Marianas in any lobbying efforts on the Hill with respect to this request for funding?

Pangelinan: It was kind of strange again, Howard. The Pentagon had pretty much wanted to keep this on a low key. No, I think I had informally discussed it with the people that were involved in the Committee on Natural Resources. In particular, Phil Burton at that time was still very active and so through his office we were able to get the Appropriations Committee to start reviewing this matter when the Defense Department presentation was made to the Appropriations Committee. That's the extent of our effort; I don't call it a lobbying effort but more of a reminder to the Congress that there was this commitment to the Northern Marianas.

Willens: I remember vaguely that the issue was finally presented in the very last of the five years available to the United States. Is that your recollection?

Pangelinan: My recollection too is that the land requirement was not going to be honored and the amount of money involved was very small compared to some of the requirements for the Defense. So there was a last minute effort on the part of the Pentagon to get this into the appropriation.

Willens: There was in the Joint Communiqué of May 31, 1974 reference to plans for an American memorial park to be established and funded in the Tanapag Harbor area. What was the background of that particular proposal?

Pangelinan: The background pretty much was influenced by, first of all, a hotel development on Micro Beach, the Continental Hotel.

Willens: Which hotel?

Pangelinan: The Continental Hotel became a very controversial issue. The government was giving out prime land for economic development basically without research whether there was adequate land for any kind of park on the island. This land was becoming limited and now the U.S. requirement for Tanapag Harbor came into the picture. We had to look at it from the standpoint of exactly what kind of harbor development was going to be created here.

Willens: What kind of?

Pangelinan: Harbor development. I think at this point I should give credit to the Ambassador, who took upon himself to recognize that there was a real need to have an open space for the benefit of the people. But, on the other hand, there was also a need to honor our armed services that liberated this island. So the concept of a memorial park came into being largely due to the efforts of the Ambassador, who took it upon himself to ensure that such a development took place. So the Tanapag harbor military requirement was a way to accommodate this need and it was one that the Commission considered very significant.

Willens: It was useful from the Commission's standpoint because it guaranteed that an attractive beach was going to be retained as available for public use?

Pangelinan: More than that, it is also an area around the Tanapag harbor that would be preserved not only for the park but also for an area that the people can use. I think later on we developed a more comprehensive plan as to what could be put into the park area.

Willens: Why has there been so much controversy about the design of the park?

- Pangelinan: Well, not only a controversy, but it has become an expensive enterprise?
- Willens: Has it?
- Pangelinan: Oh yes, unfortunately. People were more gung-ho to retaining consulting services to develop a plan for the park rather than moving forward in implementing what we had. In the transition we came up with some really good recommendations as to how this park should be developed.
- Willens: Why were they not implemented?
- Pangelinan: I don't know. The change of administration influenced the direction.
- Willens: In Washington or here?
- Pangelinan: Here, locally. It's all a local matter. People over the years have come up with a different concept.
- Willens: As I understand it there has been specific direction by the United States Congress to make three million dollars available.
- Pangelinan: No. As a matter of fact, they had authorized three million dollars but there was no money available yet. It has become a low priority now in the federal budgetary scheme.
- Willens: The objective still appears to be to try to have a park that's fully completed by the 50th anniversary of the invasion.
- Pangelinan: Well, yes. Now it has become a local concern here that we are looking forward to the celebration—the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the island. Also there is a lot of criticism here that if you go around the island you see that the Japanese developed substantial support for a memorial area to honor their people that died during the war. Whereas those of us who have become U.S. citizens have really not created any meaningful memorial for our own soldiers—men and women who died here for the liberation of the island.
- Willens: The Japanese interest in the area did foster numerous trips of so-called bone collectors and ceremonial return of those relics to Japan. Was that extent of Japanese interest in the island and the nature of that interest well received by the people of the Northern Marianas?
- Pangelinan: There is always some affinity between the people here and the Japanese former colonial presence in the island. There is real sentiment and support from the local population when the Japanese requested to retrieve the bones of their people here. We felt that this had religious implications so it was supported over the years.
- Willens: Was there any opposition to the creation of the various memorials, Japanese, Okinawa, and others that now exist on the island?
- Pangelinan: Well, no. I don't think so. There was some criticism that the Japanese were overly generous in trying to promote the development of their memorials. As a matter of fact, all of that were financed by their own contribution.
- Willens: I've seen some correspondence advising the Japanese of all the various approvals that had to be obtained from the District Administrator and from the TTPI government. Do you remember any public controversy about the propriety of those memorials?
- Pangelinan: No. Again, it's not the propriety but rather how to implement the concept. All of the memorials are on public land. There is no plan whatsoever to do with, especially, the northern part of the island and how to incorporate this into the general overall plan of Saipan. But then you have all these proposals from various groups (and even individuals)

who want to do something meaningful to honor the deaths as well as to create a memorial of historic importance. I remember one Japanese man who was here during the war, came to the island and took a trip to all of the various sites. Went up to the northern part of the island, the Bonsai section and the last command post, and this was a military guy. I remember very vividly that he had an urgent need to go to the john and there was none here on the island. So, what can you do? We told him that the woods are the only place to do it. When he got back to us, he says he want to build a john. I said well, in this part of the island it would cost you a fortune to do it. Howard, so he wrote a check for \$60,000 and asked would this be sufficient to build a john?

Willens: At the last command post?

Pangelinan: At the last command post, right.

Willens: And is there one there now?

Pangelinan: There's two there now. This is the kind of generosity we saw. People were coming around saying well, we want to do something and you cannot resist that. Yes, there is a need for a john out there and this is a guy that wants to do it.

Willens: You believe that, notwithstanding all the deficiencies of the Japanese Administration and all the cost in human life that resulted from the war, there was in general terms a relationship between the Marianas and the Japanese that is not antagonistic but favorable and sympathetic?

Pangelinan: Also, you have to understand that the people of the Northern Marianas, unlike the people of Guam, were not conquered by the Japanese. They were not invaded by the Japanese. The Japanese were here. We were the innocent bystanders in an international conflict. So there were never any hard feelings between the Japanese and the local people. So, unlike Guam, there was no animosity developed over the years. When tourist development took place here, the early Japanese visitors who came to Saipan were those who had some attraction to the island, because either their parents or those people were here during the war, and they wanted to see the island. So a lot of the initial tourist development here had a historical base to begin with. Then the bone missions that came to the island also influenced a lot of the Japanese to visit Saipan, in particular. Then the charitable program to develop the memorial became a real significant part of the Japanese efforts. And I was surprised later on to learn that not only the Japanese, but also a lot of Koreans were here on the island, so there are now a Korean memorial as well as an Okinawan memorial.

Willens: Who were what?

Pangelinan: They were developed. If you go up to Bonsai cliff there is not only a Japanese memorial but also a Korean memorial, an Okinawan memorial.

Willens: And that's because those people were here in substantial numbers?

Pangelinan: Substantial numbers, right.

Willens: But all under the control of the Japanese?

Pangelinan: Yes.

Willens: You mentioned the dispute about the location of the Continental Hotel on the beach. Was the Northern Marianas problem with the location of the hotel that it shouldn't have been given a permit or was it because the TTPI government was making that decision rather than the Northern Marianas authorities?

- Pangelinan: No. I think the initial controversy right now probably has lost its meaning. Some of the initial opposition was pretty much based upon the fact that it's almost like with the homestead program. At that particular time, there was this homestead program but the Trust Territory was very slow in accommodating people that need homesteads. And then we have a hotel development group that came in and wanted to have the prime property on the island and the Trust Territory government had given it without any hesitation. They were so excited by the proposed hotel development that the proposal was accepted in a short period of time. Some of our local people objected. As a matter of fact, one member of the Commission, Herman Guerrero, was one of the activists who filed suit against the Trust Territory government. His idea was well, before we start giving up prime property here, let's take care of our homestead problem first.
- Willens: To what extent was your role as Chairman of the Commission an issue in the 1974 political election, where you were opposed for reelection to the Congress of Micronesia by Pete A. Tenorio?
- Pangelinan: Well, Pete had taken the position that we were moving too fast. It was one of those political issues that was attractive at that period of time. There was some strong sentiment that perhaps we were moving too fast.
- Willens: Was it generally perceived in November of 1974 that there was going to be a final status agreement the next time the parties got together?
- Pangelinan: There was some perception on that, right. But it became a political issue largely because of the fact that we were getting closer to reaching an agreement and Pete seized upon the argument that he wanted to delay so that we could get a better deal. You know, the usual political rhetoric that you can do better than what you have now.
- Willens: But Pete would have been a member of the Commission for more than a year by the time he ran; had he expressed any of these sentiments in the course of the Commission's deliberations?
- Pangelinan: No. In a local setting you just take advantage of what you consider negative aspects and at one time I alluded to the fact that Pete was involved in the status negotiations very actively. So that's what I was talking about.
- Willens: Some of the Popular Party leaders have suggested to me that the Popular Party didn't really attach much importance to the election in 1974, because they really had no particular interest in continued participation in the Congress of Micronesia. Does that coincide with any feelings that you had at the time?
- Pangelinan: No. I still believed that, until we have termination or separation from the rest of Micronesia, the participation of the members, Oly Borja and Pete Tenorio and a few others should be protected.
- Willens: So far as you were concerned, you wanted to be re-elected and you expected the Popular Party to support you?
- Pangelinan: The Popular Party supported me, except that the opponents got more votes in Rota and a few other places.
- Willens: The other side got more votes?
- Pangelinan: Oh, yes.
- Willens: How did you respond to the public challenge that the Commission was proceeding too rapidly toward agreement?

- Pangelinan: Again, it's difficult to deal with that argument. The reason for my defeat here was not the status negotiations, it was local issues.
- Willens: What were the local issues?
- Pangelinan: The Territorial Party very actively wanted to get back into politics. We had a split in the Legislature.
- Willens: What was that split about?
- Pangelinan: The split was between Ben Santos and Felipe Salas. Felipe Salas wanted to challenge Ben Santos for the speakership.
- Willens: So these were two senior leaders of the Popular Party who had a falling out?
- Pangelinan: Had a falling out, right. Felipe Salas was kind of ostracized by our Popular Party. They had a good strong following and I think the Territorial Party seized upon his support and urged him to come to the Territorial Party. You know, there's only so many votes in any given Party to win an election. So with that combination Pete was able to win. His success as a matter of fact was related to Salas. In Tinian, there were other people that showed up to oppose the land requirements for the military. Actually, I was put in the position where, in certain areas, the political status was a real political concern.
- Willens: You reminded me of something else I've been told, and that was that the Popular Party had been in power for a long time and there were a lot of internal rivalries that could no longer be restrained and the election revealed some of them.
- Pangelinan: No question about it.
- Willens: I forget, were all the Popular Party candidates defeated or did Herman R. Guerrero win?
- Pangelinan: Herman Q. Guerrero?
- Willens: Herman Q. Guerrero and you lost the election.
- Pangelinan: Yes.
- Willens: Did any Popular Party nominee for the Congress get elected?
- Pangelinan: No. I think we all got defeated because the other person who won the election was a guy by the name of Herman Palacios. He was running for the Felipe Atalig position. We lost because of local issues more than status.
- Willens: How did you then try to deal with the changes in the Commission that were going to result from that? You and Herman Q. lost your automatic designation as members of the Commission because you were from the Congress of Micronesia. Ultimately Olympia Borja withdrew from his seat and offered that to you. What were the political dynamics that led to that solution?
- Pangelinan: Well, fortunately the Legislature then was still very strong. It was still run by the Popular Party. There was another thing here that contributed to my defeat. My wife almost died. Lucy had a simple appendectomy that turned out to be a complex problem. While I was campaigning in Rota, about a month before the election, Lucy was in the hospital and an appendectomy generally lasts about three days. Well, it turned out that Lucy had a complication, had to go back for a second surgery, and she was in the hospital for three weeks. During this time she was really just about dying. I didn't spend too much time campaigning. It was a real nightmare then. I think she was still in the hospital when the election took place. After the election, I got defeated, I had to move Lucy to another area for medical attention. I took her to Guam and then finally I had to take her to the

Philippines for additional treatment. So I was absent here for about three weeks from Saipan, and people started, you know, after the election to say well, now we are going to have a real problem with the status negotiations. The Ambassador got very antsy.

Willens: Did he contact you?

Pangelinan: He was trying to contact me. I was totally unavailable. I talked to Ben Santos and I told him, you guys take care of the status. At this point in time, I just lost interest in everything. The Popular Party seized upon the opportunity to tell the people that now we are going back to the Congress of Micronesia because Pete Tenorio is now leader of this new political party. The Northern Marianas negotiation is going to go down the tube. There was a real fear as to what's going to happen.

Willens: The Popular Party did that as a matter of tactics?

Pangelinan: Tactics. There was real concern that Pete Tenorio was now going to be in charge of the status negotiations and he was going to take us back to the Trust Territory. I think he had a real fear that he had got himself into a real tight position. Finally after a month I came back to Saipan and to my surprise people were just lining up at my front door asking me to revive the status negotiations. I just wasn't that interested at all. Finally, I got a call from the Ambassador saying: "What the heck is going on here, I couldn't reach you any place." I said: "Mr. Ambassador, I am no longer in power. Talk to the other guys." I think he also reached Ben Santos and said you know, we're in trouble here. So finally after a while, the leadership in the Popular Party said there was a strong sentiment that I had to continue in the negotiations.

Willens: Did Oly Borja then agree to resign from his position so that you could be designated?

Pangelinan: Well, actually there were several slots in the Commission. One guy was willing to step down. I also got an offer from the Speaker of the Saipan Municipal Council, Ben Camacho. He said, listen, I'll step down.

Willens: One thing that happened was that Felipe Salas was appointed as a judge and so he withdrew from the Commission, then Borja withdrew, and Herman Q. was off. But the changes were that Oscar Rasa went on, Larry Cabrera came on as an appointee of the Legislature, and Manny Sablan came on as a designee of the Chamber of Commerce, because Pete moved from that slot to the Congress of Micronesia slot.

Pangelinan: Oly represented the Northern Islands. Remember that little deal that we discussed earlier. Oly came to me and said: "Well, the easiest way out is for me to resign from the northern islands and then your appointment can take place." I wasn't really that excited but finally, you know, I was persuaded that I must continue on.

Willens: Well you had invested so much energy and effort in this project. Did you seriously consider withdrawing from the Commission's work?

Pangelinan: Well, there were times, Howard, and I came close to realizing too that after all this investment of time and effort, I came close to losing the most important person in my life, and that was my wife. That's why I had to run away from the island just to get myself into focus here. I had four children then. I sat down and said gee, all of this is going to be such good for the islands but not for me personally. Then also I realized that well, my earlier interest was really for the Northern Marianas. I talked to Lucy and the family and agreed that I should go back into the status negotiations.

Willens: Did you ever have a discussion with Pete Tenorio before the negotiations began about his campaigning and what position he intended to take within the Commission?

- Pangelinan: I didn't even want to discuss that. I just told him, I say well, I was accepted in the Commission and I looked at the people in the Commission. Except for three maybe four people, Pete Tenorio, Oscar Rasa, Rabauliman and Manny Sablan, I had eleven members of the Commission that were really behind me.
- Willens: Did you anticipate that Manny Sablan was going to be an opponent of the draft agreement?
- Pangelinan: No. But he is from the Territorial Party.
- Willens: Did you know him well?
- Pangelinan: I knew him well. We worked in the Trust Territory government. He was a good friend. I thought I would have no problem with Manny. The problem that I had was Pete Tenorio, Rabauliman and Oscar Rasa.
- Willens: What was your view of Oscar Rasa coming on the Commission?
- Pangelinan: Oscar Rasa was not going to be supportive of the effort. He went on record very strongly as to where he stood and he was not about to change. Oscar was predictable. He was as predictable as Rabauliman. I didn't consider him a problem, I just recognized that I'm not going to get his support at all.
- Willens: You must have placed Pete Tenorio in a somewhat different category.
- Pangelinan: As a matter of fact, I put him in the position where he had to react. First of all, he is a member of the Congress of Micronesia, so that put him in a very difficult position to begin with and I was willing to use politics then.
- Willens: I don't understand that.
- Pangelinan: I told Pete that one of the reasons why you are now in the Congress of Micronesia is that you are going to jeopardize the Marianas negotiations and that your interest is basically to reunite. That in itself is almost a real threat to him.
- Willens: You mean if you were able to identify him publicly in the Marianas as someone who wanted to force the Marianas back within the Trust Territory, it would give you a lot of leverage with him?
- Pangelinan: Well not only that, I was going to blame the defeat of the status negotiations on Pete Tenorio; and I think he woke up very quickly that it's not only a real threat to his political career, but a real threat to his personal life. Because people were becoming very agitated. People like Danny Muna had expressed violence and all of the people here enjoyed talking about violence that they never really carried out. Pete realized that it was a real very serious threat to him and I felt that he was going to be very cooperative in the Commission.
- Willens: But once you went back on the Commission and you continued as Chairman, you were still optimistic that you had at least eleven of the fifteen votes to support the work that had been done in the past and what needed to be done to complete the job?
- Pangelinan: No. Actually, I looked around and thought there were only two members that would not support it. I've got Pete pretty much under advisement that he has to be productive now. I look at Manny Sablan as one who had never entertained separation from Micronesia, so I thought that he could be reached also if I was able to corner him.
- Willens: What prompted his designation by the Chamber of Commerce? Had he been an active leader in the Chamber?
- Pangelinan: That was one. Also Manny had been on the staff of the Trust Territory government.

- Willens: He was an economist at the time?
- Pangelinan: Yes, he was an economist.
- Willens: So he was regarded as someone of ability who could contribute to the work?
- Pangelinan: Manny was a very significant personality. To me it was a welcome addition to have him there.
- Willens: He was willing to participate, as I recall.
- Pangelinan: Not only willing to participate, he was very vocal, very active. Later on I had some difficulty keeping him and Joe Cruz apart.
- Willens: Ed, I've shown you a telegram report that Mary Trent sent back to Washington on December 20, 1973. After the third round of negotiations, she describes an informal meeting involving you, Mr. Santos and Joe Cruz with Ambassador Williams, either during or after the formal session, to discuss the Tinian situation. Do you have recollection of having such a meeting with the Ambassador?
- Pangelinan: Yes, indeed. As a matter of fact, I do have a good recollection about it, basically because of Joe Cruz. That was after the formal presentation of the U.S. delegation and, in particular, the Ambassador wanted just an informal chat. I think also he wanted to meet Joe Cruz informally. That's why I remember the incident. The Ambassador was concerned that perhaps since we now have a new representative from the Tinian municipality, he just wanted to get a reading from Joe Cruz as to what is the perception of the people now that the United States has backed down on their request for the whole island of Tinian to two-thirds. There was one issue that was outstanding at that particular time, the relocation of San Jose village. I think we formally advised the Ambassador that it appeared that the Commission will be in a position now to not only to meet the U.S. land requirements but basically to support the effort of going back to the people and defending the proposal.
- Willens: Did you and the others indicate some willingness to support relocation of the village now that the United States had reduced its requirements to two-thirds of the island?
- Pangelinan: I think we indicated to the Ambassador that we would support the full package, which included relocation, but I think this was a matter that we had to go back to the constituents to get their comments on whether this would be acceptable. I think we make it very clear that this is one issue where we have to go back and consult, because the Commission really didn't have that opportunity yet to discuss the issue with the local people.
- Willens: What was the Ambassador's reaction to Joe Cruz and to the meeting?
- Pangelinan: I thought that the Ambassador had kept an eye on Joe Cruz and was aware of his early participation as a public official. He was a member of the Congress of Micronesia at one time. Joe had been a major of Tinian and was very active in local politics, so I think the Ambassador had a good reading about Joe Cruz. More importantly, I think too, during the Commission discussions, Joe was very actively participating.
- Willens: We do happen to have some notes that were taken during this round of negotiations by U.S. participants and also some handwritten notes that I took. The notes indicate that Joe Cruz was very active in the informal give and take with respect to the U.S. military land requirements. Did he offend the Ambassador by his active participation?
- Pangelinan: I think the Ambassador was pleased that now we have somebody who is very vocal, who was willing to share his thoughts on the issues, and he thought that Tinian was well represented by Joe Cruz.

- Willens: Did the Ambassador give you any indication whatsoever that he did have the discretion to agree to lease the land rather than purchase it?
- Pangelinan: We didn't discuss that issue because that was a matter for consideration in the formal session.
- Willens: Did the Ambassador understand that you did need a substantial time to consult with your constituents and try to bring them about to support the package?
- Pangelinan: I think we indicated very clearly to him that we needed time. The package itself was very complex and required consultation not only with the constituents but also the Commission itself has to make a real determination as to how far we go in supporting it. I think we supported the proposal in principle; it's just that some of the detail required a little consultation, so we requested additional time to consult with the people of Tinian.
- Willens: Ms. Trent's report back to Washington also includes a paragraph or so assessing the performance of the MPSC during the recently concluded round. For the most part, her comments are quite complimentary of the work of the Commission. Do you have any reaction to her assessment of the Commission's performance and particularly how it contrasted with the earlier round in May of 1973 when the Commission members had been somewhat less ready to participate?
- Pangelinan: I think Ms. Trent's assessment here is very good evidence of the kind of work the Commission had undertaken. In particular, I was pleased to note that she is complimentary not only regarding the material that the Commission had undertaken but, more importantly, that the counsel and the advisors to the Commission were well-prepared. I think she was giving some indication that we're dealing with a Commission here that knew what it was doing. It has all the necessary research to support its activities. I think in general she was very candid in saying that the Commission is well-informed, had done its preparatory work, and that it's moving with great intensity in its effort to identify the various issues in the negotiation.
- Willens: She did draw a contrast between the two sessions. Do you agree that the Commission members approached the third round and perhaps future rounds with a greater sense of commitment to the overall objective or was it simply a matter of experience and more self-confidence?
- Pangelinan: Well, you know Ms. Trent came in I think somewhat late in the negotiation after replacing Mr. John Dorrance. I feel that perhaps she wasn't aware of the kind of work that the Commission had done earlier. I feel that perhaps it was addressing this particular period more in terms of the kind of material that the Commission was putting out. But I think overall the Commission had done exceedingly well in preparing for all of the earlier discussions. Perhaps she was giving the impression that the Commission was indeed well-prepared for the next round of negotiation.
- Willens: At the end of the year there was a story in the *Pacific Daily News* based in large part on an interview that you gave with respect to the recently-concluded negotiations. There were some comments there with respect to the memorial park proposal that had come up during the session. Did you regard that as a useful suggestion by the U.S. delegation as a way to use the land that they wanted to obtain or retain for contingency purposes?
- Pangelinan: I think the U.S. delegation was looking for a compromise position here. They had indicated their contingency requirement for Tanapag Harbor in particular, which comprises not only the harbor itself, but the area surrounding the harbor, including the current Micro Beach area. I think it was a good proposal in a sense that, although the

requirement is for contingency, there was room to make available certain land within the Tanapag Harbor area for park development. I thought this pretty much met the earlier concerns of the members of the Commission, in particular that we were too readily losing our precious resources. Setting aside some property for a future park would be in keeping with our need to preserve some area for the people of the islands.

Willens: Let's skip ahead one year to December of 1974 when the fifth round of negotiations was scheduled to be held. It was anticipated that it might actually result in a final agreement with respect to the draft Covenant. You mentioned earlier that there were some changes in the Commission that resulted from the election, and other developments such as Mr. Salas's resignation from the Commission, as a result of which Juan Cabrera was designated by the Legislature. Did he bring to the Commission any particular experience that was relevant or important to the Commission?

Pangelinan: Mr. Cabrera was the Vice-Speaker of the Marianas District Legislature then. He played a very critical role in terms of assuring the funding of the Commission and getting the support for whatever was approved by the Commission. I felt that Mr. Cabrera would be critical in getting the support of the Legislature to approve whatever final agreement is reached. He came from a very strong political background. He was involved in the local politics. In terms of his participation, he was not actively involved in the negotiation because he came in pretty late to the Commission.

Willens: It seems to me that would have been very difficult for anyone to join the Commission in December of 1974 and be confronted with a draft Covenant of some length and complexity and be able to deal with it.

Pangelinan: Not really, because every time we reached an agreement I reported to the Legislature and Mr. Cabrera was a member. He kept pretty much informed of what's happening. He took it upon himself not to be actively involved in the formal discussions. I remember during the time when we had an informal meeting among the members of the Commission, Mr. Cabrera was actively supporting the effort to move to continue making progress. I believed that his participation was critical in the sense that he was one of the at least twelve members that I can count on for passage of any important issue among the members of the Commission.

Willens: One of the other new members of the Commission was Oscar Rasa, who I believe you said you anticipated would not be agreeing to any document that the two delegations had negotiated.

Pangelinan: Mr. Rasa came in after Herman and I were defeated in the previous election. From the very beginning, Mr. Rasa was opposed to the working of the Commission. He had strong reservations and he was running a small paper then on the island. We knew his position so there was no surprise at all. He had come to the Commission because of his election, and he indicated to me that he was going to be involved in the Commission, but perhaps not actively reaching any decision on issues that were raised by the Commission.

Willens: Was it your view that he essentially disagreed with the objective of a close and permanent relationship with the United States?

Pangelinan: His opposition to the separate status negotiations is basically one reason. To join the American political family is the second. Lastly, he had a real reservation about U.S. citizenship for the Northern Marianas.

Willens: By the time that the two delegations got together in December 1974, there had been a very substantial effort among the lawyers during the recess to work out their differences

between the two competing draft status agreements. Do you have any recollection now of key issues that were presented to the delegations with respect to the Covenant at that time?

Pangelinan: I think it was more procedural about how to set about preparing a status agreement. There were discussions of the solemnity of this agreement and there was even language suggested to describe the agreement in a very simple form. I think it was the Ambassador who suggested that perhaps we should be calling the status agreement by a more simplified name. He held very strongly to the idea that we should call it a covenant.

Willens: Did you and the members of the Commission have any feelings one way or the other with respect to that suggestion?

Pangelinan: I think that the Commission felt that we can call it whatever we want to call it. We attached little significance or importance to the single name that would describe the agreement. At times among ourselves it was called a commonwealth agreement but that didn't sound so significant, so the idea of a covenant was tossed around and there was strong support for such a name.

Willens: Earlier in the year, Ambassador Williams had objected to the Commission's draft proposal because it seemed too long, too legalistic, and too specific. By the time the lawyers from both sides had worked together during the recess, do you think that his basic objection to the Commission's approach had been alleviated?

Pangelinan: Not only alleviated, I think that he agreed with us that there had to be a more greater description of the issues treated by the various sections of the proposed draft agreement. I believe he supported the recommendation of the working group and the consultants that we would have to be more specific in certain areas and more descriptive, so that future generations can be less inclined to try and interpret the meaning of the provision. I think he was persuaded in the final analysis that that was a good way to draft the final agreement.

Willens: It was during the fifth round of negotiations in December 1974 when the U.S. delegation finally agreed to lease the land that it desired rather than insist on purchase. Do you remember how that issue came up and how the compromise was ultimately reached?

Pangelinan: I think the compromise was reached largely because the Commission insisted that the land would not be made available on a fee simple basis but rather on a lease basis. This is a matter that's not open for discussion. I think we made a very clear concession on the part of the Commission that the lease would be made available for a term of fifty years with an option to renew for another fifty years. So that pretty much allayed the fears of the U.S. delegation that there would not be a long-term arrangement and they felt that was a good compromise to take. They then pretty much agreed on lease rather than purchase.

Willens: Was it your impression, and this is admittedly asking for a subjective judgment, that the Ambassador had planned ultimately to agree to a lease but wanted to reserve that concession until the very conclusion of the negotiations?

Pangelinan: I think he pretty much knew that he's not going to prevail in convincing the Commission that purchase was the right way. So he had no other option but to fall back and accept the lease.

Willens: There also was agreement reached at this session with respect to the amount of money that would be paid for not only the Tinian land, but also for the land on Saipan that the U.S. wished to have use of. Do you have any recollection of the negotiating between the two delegations that led ultimately to the figure of \$19 million plus with respect to Tinian?

To refresh your recollection, it's my recollection that at an earlier session the United States had advanced a very low figure with respect to Tinian, somewhere under \$10 million in the range of \$6 or \$7 million for Tinian. What is your recollection of what the initial offer and counter-offers were?

Pangelinan: First of all, the Commission earlier set up a working team, I think we called it the Land Committee, to get an assessment of land value not only in the Marianas area but elsewhere, and to come up with some way of determining the kind of price that the Commission would be in a position to insist on. We were aware of the current assessment of land in the Trust Territory under the Trust Territory government and we were really disappointed in the undervaluing of the property here. I think we became pretty well-informed as to the kind of price that we would be proposing to the U.S. delegation. We were also aware that the U.S. delegation had in mind a pretty minimal amount. So I think our proposal was much, much higher than the U.S. delegation's proposal. I think that we to some extent convinced the U.S. delegation that our proposal was much more defensible.

Willens: The Joint Communiqué issued at the conclusion of that round of negotiations summarizes the lease-back arrangements. Were those arrangements important to the members of the Commission in the negotiations?

Pangelinan: It was important because we knew that the requirements for Tinian and Saipan were on a contingency basis. There was really no likelihood for development or construction on all those land requirements. We looked at it two ways. One, the lack of construction would deprive of us of any economic significance for the Commonwealth. That's one. Two, in the event that those lands were not developed the people of Tinian, in particular those who had farms and other activities within the requirement, would be deprived of the use of that property. We felt that it was important for us to ensure that those lands do not remain dormant and that some activities would take place in the event that no military construction is going to occur. It was a major concession on our part to ensure that we have some opportunity to make use of the land. It would be utilized for either for the needs of the local people on Tinian or for some economic development that could be undertaken consistent with the contingency requirements of the military.

Willens: Did you believe that the U.S. delegation was responsive to those desires of the Commission or did you believe that the lease-back arrangements ultimately agreed to were not as generous as you might have desired?

Pangelinan: I think the U.S. delegation knew that they had no concrete evidence to show us that there was some future near-term development of the island. We knew for a fact that, first of all, this property would have to be addressed by the U.S. Congress in terms of authorizing funds for the construction of any military base and there was nothing in the works of that nature. I think the U.S. delegation felt that their position was insupportable that they can keep this land for an indefinite period of time even though under-developed.

Willens: The records indicate that it was at this session that the U.S. delegation informed the Commission that the Defense Department had changed its plans and there was no immediate proposal to construct a facility on Tinian. Do you recall the circumstances under which that information was provided to the Commission?

Pangelinan: I'm trying to recall. I think at this particular time the situation in Vietnam was pretty much coming to a close. There was no formal presentation to us, other than the fact that the U.S. government did not have any concrete plans to develop the Tinian land. I think there was more. It probably had to do with the political situation in the United States.

- Willens: The Joint Communique indicates that the Marianas Political Status Commission was sufficiently concerned by this new development that it engaged in more negotiations in order to increase the financial assistance that was to be provided under the status agreement. The result was the commitment by the United States to provide an additional \$500,000 per year for two specifically identified programs. Do you recall the Commission's efforts to obtain more money?
- Pangelinan: I think so. Tinian in particular was insistent that since the bulk of the land requirements involved Tinian that there be some assurance that financial support will be forthcoming to them, especially in the area of economic development. There had been very limited opportunities for the people of Tinian. So I thought that through the insistence of Joe Cruz we should revisit the economic assistance for Tinian and request additional funds. I think for some reason we threw in a half a million dollars also for Rota. I think the amount was small enough for the U.S. delegation to agree to.
- Willens: Do you remember any discussions with Ambassador Williams or other members of his staff as to the need for increased financial assistance because of the changed plans with respect to Tinian?
- Pangelinan: I think we did. I also tried to recall whether we did this on an informal basis, largely because we didn't want to embarrass the U.S. delegation that now, after negotiating for a period of time with the attempt to convince us that there is a significant need for military development, the policy has changed. We felt that perhaps this was a way to save face and that the request for this half a million dollars was a small request to honor.
- Willens: What was the reaction on Tinian when the residents learned that there was not going to be in the immediate future any significant military development on the island?
- Pangelinan: There was considerable disappointment, because for a long, long time the residents of Tinian felt that they had been really overlooked and had been deprived of any economic opportunities. They felt that the desire to join with the United States would mean that Tinian would be considered for a future military installation. And now the change of policy just kind of killed the hope of any kind of near-term construction on the island for military purposes.
- Willens: Do you recall that most of the time during this session was spent in discussing the military land requirements? Was that the most important issue on the agenda at this meeting?
- Pangelinan: That was the most critical issue because that was the issue that we had pretty much put off.
- Willens: It had not yet been resolved?
- Pangelinan: It had not been resolved. Also, I think we had placed the U.S. delegation at a serious disadvantage that we were addressing our agenda, political status and economic opportunities, more so than the land requirements. We know for a fact that one of the more urgent interests of the U.S. delegation was the military land requirements for the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: The Joint Communiqué also makes reference to the agreements reached with respect to the U.S. request for land on Saipan, in particular Tanapag Harbor and Isley Field. Did the U.S. agreement with respect to Tanapag Harbor represent a concession by them to accept less land than they had originally requested?
- Pangelinan: I think so. I think this was also more in line with the kind of development that it can use in Saipan.

- Willens: Are you making reference to the public memorial park?
- Pangelinan: I am making reference not only to the public memorial park, but earlier we had some bad experience with the military requirements on Saipan. The land requirement identified here from Micro Beach over to the harbor area was a smaller land requirement than when the Navy was here. They had occupied up to Navy hill and pretty much all the land adjacent, including the lower base area, so we felt that this land requirement was almost one-third of the total land requirement that at one time the military wanted in the area.
- Willens: There seems to be an indication here that the total area that will be leased by the United States will go to either the public memorial park or it will be leased back to the future Marianas government for harbor-related activities.
- Pangelinan: That's correct.
- Willens: Did that represent a substantial concession by the United States?
- Pangelinan: I think so at that time. Looking at the size of the memorial park, it would be almost half of the land requirement. Then the agreement to lease back part of the harbor area for commercial activities was again a real concession. Looking back now, we have put that land to real good use.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection as to why the U.S. delegation withdrew its proposal with respect to Isley Field?
- Pangelinan: I think that issue was somewhat of a surprise to us. When they first proposed the land adjacent to the new Isley airport, it was somewhat unreasonable in that the U.S. already had requested two-thirds of Tinian, where any kind of major military developments would take place. Why they wanted to have Isley Field was somewhat of a surprise to us. I think the Commission became convinced that the amount of money they were offering was very, very small. I think it was less than a half a million dollars. But more importantly, we assured the U.S. delegation that to meet any future national defense requirements, Isley Field would be available. So therefore, I think they were convinced that, because of the commitment, why spend any money for an area that probably has very little military significance.
- Willens: The Joint Communiqué issued on December 19, 1974 indicates that the fifth session was going to be recessed and would be scheduled to resume in early February of 1975, at which time it was hoped that the agreement would be put in final shape and be signed. Was it your understanding before the session in December of 1974 that there might be a final agreement and a signing of the document at that time
- Pangelinan: Yes. I believe we were in a position then to look forward and at the time schedule that we needed to develop. It was important for us that, if there was going to be a final agreement, we would do it on a more solemn occasion to celebrate the historic undertaking of our negotiation and, more importantly, for the people to see that we are doing this with great solemnity and as a way of celebrating the signing the status agreement.
- Willens: The status agreement dated December 19, 1974 has a few footnotes in it indicating that certain provisions are subject to reservation by the United States. Do you recall that one of the reasons for the recess was that the United States felt that there were certain aspects of the draft agreement that they needed to review further in Washington, including with members of Congress, before they could agree to those provisions?
- Pangelinan: I believe so. I believe that the significant position of the U.S. delegation was that this agreement had to be reviewed not by the entire U.S. Congress but at least by the ranking

committee members of certain committees of Congress. It was important to ensure that, in the event this status agreement was signed, there was support in the U.S. Congress, so that eventually when it went to the Congress for its final review there would be those key members of the Congress who would support the passage of the status agreement.

- Willens: There has been some indication or recollection from other Commission members that the delay between the December session and the next session in February of 1975 was useful because of the recent election. They saw a need to make certain that the Commission had the votes it needed, and that the people who had been recently elected such as Pete Tenorio in particular, could maintain that there was no rush to agreement, but that time was being taken to review the matter carefully. Do you have any recollection of political concerns of that kind influencing you or other members of the Commission in agreeing to a recess?
- Pangelinan: There were a lot of local activities that took place then. I was not in office at that particular time, so I had very little interest in the political situation. I was aware that, once we had a status agreement, we could sell it very easily to the people. I think the request for a recess was our need to report to the Legislature and to report to the people in general what we have agreed upon rather than going directly to signing a final agreement. I think there was a need for the U.S. delegation to go back to Washington and report to their principals. But I believed that at this particular point that the politics were already behind us and that it's time to wrap up an agreement.
- Willens: Do you remember consulting with the Legislature in between the two sessions?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I remember that very vividly, because that was also the time when the Legislature was reviewing its budget for the following year. I had to make sure that the report of the Commission move expeditiously to the Legislature for its final review.
- Willens: Do you remember whether there was any objection raised either within the District Legislature or within the community at large about the new agreements that had been just reached, specifically with respect to land on Tinian and Saipan?
- Pangelinan: No. There continued to be some expression of, not dissatisfaction, but concerns that finally we have an agreement. Some individuals from the Carolinian community were concerned that finally an agreement will be reached and therefore the hope for Micronesian unity was going to disappear very quickly. There was some sentiment about it, but overall I think the great majority of the people of the islands were hopeful that now we are getting close to realizing a relationship that had been pursued for many years. Now finally, after spending almost three years in negotiations, we were getting closer to conclusion of these significant efforts. I was encouraged and confident that we were very close to signing off a status agreement for the people of the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: As you gradually approached that moment when the agreement would become final, didn't you yourself have some sense of apprehension about the importance of the decision and hope that you were doing the right thing for your community?
- Pangelinan: Well, that always had crossed my mind. It's always very difficult to really evaluate what's the implication here. I always looked back. There was one member of my family who I always consulted, and I have never mentioned this to anyone, and that was my grandfather. Grandfather was born during the Spanish period. He saw the German administration of the island, then the Japanese and now the U.S. I went to him during the course of the status negotiation on a number of occasions, especially towards the end of the year and I told him that finally we had come close to joining the American political family and

I said to him, well what do you think? Having gone through a period of four different administrations, he looked me straight in the eyes and said: “Well, there is something about the Americans that makes me proud to see a relationship that you have been working for to be realized and that is the question of individual freedom. All this time we were under the Spanish and we never really had that freedom. We were always subject to other people, subject to the Germans, subject to the Japanese. There was no opportunity for us to stand up on our own two feet to be counted as individuals. But here now, you have that opportunity. It’s important that you make your mind clear that you stand up as an individual rather than to be subject to any other country.” But more importantly, he said: “When the Americans liberated the islands, the Japanese had more or less brainwashed the people that the Americans were going to kill us. But then I remember when we were up in the other side of the island when the Marines came up to rescue us and the most pronounced experience was that one of the ladies was ill and, instead of dragging her out from the jungles, she was carried by two soldiers for several miles to the camps. Then after we got to the camps, the Americans pretty much respected our right as individuals and the local people were set free, whereas the Japanese were incarcerated.” So he kind of looked at me and said: “This is the right decision to make.”

Willens: How old was your grandfather in the early 1970s?

Pangelinan: My grandfather was at that time about was about 87 years old.

Willens: That is most interesting.

Pangelinan: I really had no reservation whatsoever that this was the right decision.

Willens: The last session of the two delegations came in early February of 1975 and there was ultimately the signing ceremony on February 15. One of the issues that developed during the recess and preoccupied the Commission for several days, as I recall, was the demand by Rota and Tinian representatives that the Covenant be revised to provide for a bilateral legislature in which the three islands would be equally represented in one house. When did you first learn that the Rota and Tinian representatives were going to raise this new issue?

Pangelinan: It was not a new issue. It was something that we had to face eventually. It involved one of the promises I made especially to the Rota delegation, which had always been vocal about their lack of representation in the old Marianas Legislature and the disproportionate financial benefit that they had received. This was very much an issue that had been articulated very strongly over the years. The Rota delegation had made it very clear that, if there is going to be a new status relationship, this injustice had to be corrected. We knew that it was forthcoming. I knew that the only way that we can get Rota to agree to a status agreement was a commitment that in the new legislature accommodation has to be made for equal representation at least in one body of the legislature.

Willens: The draft Covenant as of December 19, 1974 did not include any commitment to a bicameral legislature, but the final version did. Why was it that the Rota and Tinian representatives on the Commission had not made this a major issue earlier in the negotiations rather than reserve it until the very last days? Was that a deliberate decision on their part?

Pangelinan: It’s not a deliberate decision. Again, we discussed this, it’s just that I have to give them credit for their shrewd and . . .

Willens: For their shrewd?

- Pangelinan: For their shrewd conduct, their interest in protecting their own people and their patience in not raising this issue earlier to show that there was a problem within the Commission. I thought that was very generous of them to work with the Commission and then raise the issue in this way. I think also they recognized that this was an issue of local concern and it's not something that we should advance to the other side. It was not a matter for the U.S. delegation to agree to. It was more or less within the Commission to support.
- Willens: Do you remember when you or the Commission as a whole first advised Ambassador Williams that this question had arisen within the Commission and that there now was a proposal from the Commission to ensure that there would be a bicameral legislature?
- Pangelinan: I think that when we had the first draft and there was no mention of the bicameral legislature the Rota delegation as well as the Tinian delegation said that now we should make this a formal issue to be addressed. They said that the Tinian and Rota delegations have supported the negotiations all along. It's now timely to bring it to the table.
- Willens: Do you recall whether there was any strong opposition within the Commission to this proposal?
- Pangelinan: Not that I know of. There were certain members of the Commission who felt that there was nothing wrong with the bicameral legislature. We looked down on Guam where they had a unicameral legislature. But there was a much stronger concern. I think Joe Cruz mentioned it and said: "Well, we're reaching almost the same situation where the founding fathers of the U.S. Constitution realized that the smaller states have to be accommodated." So they keep reminding us of our American history, telling us that this is the way that it went and now we are faced with a similar situation. You've got to be concerned about us and, if this status agreement is going to be agreed upon, you need our support and we ain't going to give it to you unless you agree to a bicameral legislature.
- Willens: Is it your recollection that the Rota and Tinian representatives on the MPSC would not have agreed to the Covenant if the Commission had not supported their request for a bicameral legislature?
- Pangelinan: I think that they probably would support the Covenant but, on the other hand, they are putting their arguments strongly; and I think they were genuine and sincere in saying that you need our support, you better give it to us. The Commission looked at each other and said: "They're right."
- Willens: The newspaper reports in early February of 1975 indicate, and this is consistent with my recollection, that the Commission met for several days to review the Covenant in detail. To discuss with the consultants changes that had been made during the recess and to deliberate over this bicameral legislature request. At the same time, the U.S. delegation was sitting there waiting for a joint session and the Ambassador reportedly was getting somewhat concerned about the delay in the first meeting of the two delegations. Do you recall keeping in touch with the Ambassador and advising him what was going on?
- Pangelinan: I think I kept the Ambassador informed of some internal local issues that the Commission had to address and resolve. It had nothing to do with the issues that we had negotiated. On the other hand, I was very careful not to reveal to him exactly. I think at one point I mentioned the composition of a new legislature for the new government. I think I alluded to him that there was a question of whether a unicameral versus a bicameral legislature was in order.
- Willens: Did he or any other member of the U.S. delegation take a firm position against a bicameral legislature?

- Pangelinan: No. We pretty much told him that this is a local issue that we had to address.
- Willens: Did they indicate that they would basically agree to whatever provision the Commission wanted in the Covenant on this subject?
- Pangelinan: I think the Ambassador indicated that perhaps those details should be in the constitution of the Northern Marianas rather than in the status agreement. I mentioned to him that it was important to ensure that some direction be given to the new constitution. The people of Rota would be assured of a bicameral legislature, rather than waiting for the constitutional convention to do this because they might be shortchanged by that time.
- Willens: Was it your political assessment at the time that the Rota and Tinian representatives felt they had more bargaining power in the final days of negotiating the Covenant than they might have in the future when a constitutional convention was convened and asked to consider this issue?
- Pangelinan: The Tinian and Rota delegation felt that they would not wait for the convention. They had no assurance that the new constitution would provide such a provision. They were very insistent that this was the time to do it.
- Willens: There came a time after this particular issue was resolved when you as Chairman began to try to bring the members of the Commission together in a sense that it was now time to vote on the proposed status agreement. As I recall, there had been very few votes, if any, during the preceding two years. But you believed, correctly, that there had to be some expression of support from individual members of the Covenant and you obviously wanted to know whether they were going to approve it and be ready to sign it. What was your general strategy in conducting the meetings that led ultimately to the vote by the Commission?
- Pangelinan: I did something that I as Chairman could do pretty much on my own. I visited each member of the Commission before the discussion for a vote to take place. I sat down with almost every member and said: "Well, here is the package. Do you have any reservations on any of the issues and if you do, what are they? Enlighten me so that when we go back to a formal meeting I am aware of any reservations." It was also an attempt to get a reading from each member as to how they perceived the status negotiations. More importantly, I felt that it was important for me as a Marianas resident to go to each one of them as a colleague. I think I wanted to make them understand that this was not only an historical event but, more importantly, it's what he thinks we are trying to accomplish here for the future generations. It was an attempt on my part to spend some time with each member to just get their sentiment, hear their voice, and their views whether this is really the right thing to do. I went through the fourteen members. I came up with the impression that we were ready to vote. The meeting in the Commission was pro forma rather than a decision making one.
- Willens: Did you believe that the individual members were more candid in speaking to you in a personal informal setting than they were in the more formal sessions of the Commission?
- Pangelinan: As a matter of fact, I was pleasantly surprised, because even those that later on proposed some revision said they were going to sign; they gave me the impression that they supported almost every issue there. I spoke even to Rabauliman.
- Willens: Was it your impression that Mr. Rabauliman was going to support the Covenant when it came to a vote?
- Pangelinan: I was convinced that he was going to support the agreement.

- Willens: You indicated that it was very difficult to read Mr. Rasa with respect to his intentions. Did you have any hope based on your meeting with him that he might ultimately agree to sign the Covenant?
- Pangelinan: Well I went to him with good will to discuss the agreement in general and to convince him that what we are doing is for the benefit of all of our people, and he as an elected leader should be conscious of his responsibility. If he had any personal issue with the status agreement, I asked him to put it aside and to vote on his best conscience as to what he felt was in the best interest of all of the people.
- Willens: What was his reaction?
- Pangelinan: He was very friendly, he was in good humor. He had to express candidly his own reservations about the disunity of Micronesia. One thing that surprised me the most was the fact that he keep alluding to the fact that he was still a member of the Congress of Micronesia and therefore he was responsible to that office rather than to the Northern Marianas. I thought that I kind of read him clearly and that he was alluding that he would probably not support the Covenant.
- Willens: Was there any other member of the Commission that you thought might possibly refuse to support the Covenant as it then had been negotiated?
- Pangelinan: No. As I said, I even visited with Felix and he gave me all the indication that he was ready to sign.
- Willens: My recollection is that there were at least two or three days where you chaired meetings and opened the floor to discussion on any subject whatsoever with respect to the Covenant. I recall your asking individual members of the Commission to express their views and that you were going out of your way to make certain that everyone felt that they had a chance to express their views and to hear other people's views. There may well have been some consultants who said it was time for a vote, and you kept telling the consultants more or less to restrain themselves and that you would decide when it was appropriate to have a vote or not. Do you recall coming to the point at one evening meeting when in fact a vote was taken?
- Pangelinan: Yes, indeed.
- Willens: Do you remember the setting in the municipal building with the balcony and the fact that certain people appeared on the balcony?
- Pangelinan: There was a lot of, not apprehension, but just a feeling of great emotion taking place at this particular time. Not only did I try to conduct the Commission, but also I was meeting with a lot of the grassroots, meeting with the general public, and had visited with almost every group on the island that was established.
- Willens: Did they know that the Commission had not yet voted?
- Pangelinan: Yes. We told the general public basically that we are going to be voting on all these issues at a certain time, a certain place and date. There was a lot of interest generated and there were times when people even said that, if this is going to be a public meeting in a sense, they would appear. They would come around just to witness the historic event of the members of the Commission voting. Unfortunately, we were conducting the meeting in the Saipan Council chamber, a small place and there were a lot of people who wanted to witness the event. That particular day when we had the Commission together we wanted significant time to just go around the table and have everyone speak their mind, express themselves so that we could take a vote on the agreement.

- Willens: Did the Popular Party leadership encourage some of the women in the community to witness this event from the balcony?
- Pangelinan: Well, not only the Popular Party, but everyone was invited to come to witness the event.
- Willens: Do you recall that some Commission members expressed concern that they were being observed and felt somewhat intimidated under these circumstances?
- Pangelinan: It's hard not to recognize that there were people looking over our shoulders. There were a lot of strong feelings expressed then. People were very vocal.
- Willens: Within the Commission room or outside?
- Pangelinan: From the outside, and I think that it served as somewhat intimidating to anyone, and not only those who have some reservation. Just to see the people around there was enough to make one anxious and apprehensive.
- Willens: You felt as chairman that it was a useful reminder to the members of the Commission that the public was very concerned with what they were doing and was watching them?
- Pangelinan: Also, I think it was a reminder to tell them that what we are doing here is not for ourselves but for the people outside then. I think we had some kids and old people walking around the outside. It was a symbolic gesture to let them know that what we are trying to accomplish here is not for ourselves but for the future of the Commonwealth.
- Willens: When the vote was actually taken, do you recall whether Felix Rabauliman and Oscar Rasa voted against it or did they abstain?
- Pangelinan: I think that at the first round there was some abstention, as I recall. I don't know whether I did it by alphabetical order, I don't recall how we did this. I think we just went around the table. I'm trying to recall how the event took place. We asked each one to express themselves. I think I was the last one to vote on the matter.
- Willens: Do you recall that there were at least 13 affirmative votes?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I think that on the first round there were 13 affirmative votes with two absentees.
- Willens: Were two abstentions?
- Pangelinan: Yes, there were two abstentions in the first round. Then I came back again to revisit those members that abstained and finally we had 13, including myself.
- Willens: In favor of?
- Pangelinan: In favor of.
- Willens: And ultimately two that were negative.
- Pangelinan: Two that were negative. I think we opened the opportunity for them to reconsider their position later on.
- Willens: Do you remember how you or the Commission advised Ambassador Williams that the vote had been taken and the result was to support the Covenant?
- Pangelinan: I'm trying to recall whether we did put this in writing. Advising the Ambassador that a vote had been taken by the Commission members and 13 supported it.
- Willens: At that point, did you develop the plans for the signing ceremony?
- Pangelinan: Yes. Then we agreed that the signing ceremony would take place.

- Willens: Even after the vote was taken, I have heard from some members of the Commission that the Ambassador remained uncertain about whether the Commission really had agreed to support this and he had some private meetings with other members of the Commission. Do you recall why he would have any reservation about the Commission being in a position to sign the agreement? Was he perhaps looking to obtaining the full 15 members of the Commission rather than just 13? Do you have any recollection of discussions with him on that subject?
- Pangelinan: Well, not really. I met with him after advising him. I had the impression that he was somewhat disappointed that not all members supported the agreement, but I had to remind him that this was the democratic process and there were two members that expressed their reservations. The important thing was that the Commission had expressed overwhelming support for the status agreement.
- Willens: Do you remember that a lawsuit was filed the day before the signing ceremony to enjoin the signing?
- Pangelinan: Yes, I remember the day before that an injunction was filed with the Trial Court of the Trust Territory to enjoin the signing of the agreement.
- Willens: Do you remember the Friday evening before the signing ceremony in your law offices where efforts to put together a responsive paper were under way?
- Pangelinan: I will never forget that, because we were not only short-handed then but there was a real novel attack. It took us by surprise that somebody would do it.
- Willens: Were you aware at the time that it was Oscar Rasa who had stimulated the lawsuit?
- Pangelinan: Well, I was led to believe that he was behind it, but I was surprised at the person who did it.
- Willens: That was Mr. Mafnas?
- Pangelinan: Joe Mafnas. Joe Mafnas had never expressed any reservation one way or the other. I thought that it was not in keeping with Rasa's integrity that, if he had reservations, he wouldn't be the person to do it. Instead he had Joe Mafnas do it for him. I don't even know whether the information I got was accurate. Rasa was behind it, but why Joe Mafnas was doing it was a total surprise.
- Willens: Was he in the Congress of Micronesia?
- Pangelinan: He was in the Congress of Micronesia then, right. The more surprising thing of all was the fact that the counsel representing Mafnas was Mike White. You know, I thought that it was a bad move on his part because he was also counsel for the Joint Committee.
- Willens: Do you have any recollection of the following morning when the case was argued?
- Pangelinan: I have a recollection of the overnight work that you and the other counsel had to prepare the argument for the following day hearing. Yes, I remember vividly, because we were all dressed up for the final signing but we had to appeal through the Trial Court before the ceremony.
- Willens: My recollection is that, either by the newspapers or through other means, people on the island learned of this lawsuit. I recall many people coming to the courthouse and inside the court room was filled. Do you remember that people seemed to emerge from the community and direct their attention toward the courthouse?

- Pangelinan: No. The night before we just put out the word and went around telling everyone. I think that was one of the few moments that I got real angry. So, I went to the people and said well, we are not going to have any signing ceremony because we have been sued, and this was the time to incite a little emotion.
- Willens: How did they do that?
- Pangelinan: They just say they are going to appear before the court en masse. There were a lot of bad feelings. People were really very, very excited and disappointed in a sense. Here at the eleventh hour, somebody was still attempting to sabotage the status negotiations.
- Willens: Do you recall that the lawyers from the U.S. delegation were not involved in this because the United States had not been sued?
- Pangelinan: As a matter of fact, we told the U.S. delegation that the best you can do is to keep your distance. We don't have any time for you to be involved here. Just keep your distance and we'll take care of it.
- Willens: What is your recollection of the argument and the event?
- Pangelinan: It was interesting because the opening of the trial was an exciting one.
- Willens: The what?
- Pangelinan: The presentation of the argument. I remember in the course of the hearing, the plaintiff actually stood up and pretty much fired his counsel right then and there.
- Willens: Do you know why?
- Pangelinan: He addressed the court and said he was doing it because he thought it was important to raise this issue before the people voted for it. He said that he had no personal interest to stop the signing, and he was convinced that after hearing your argument that he wanted to stop it right then and there. So his counsel objected to his appearing and he told the counsel: "You are fired. I'm addressing the court right now." That was an exciting moment. Kind of unique in the judicial proceedings of the Northern Marianas. I think after that we just went straight to the ceremony at the Mount Carmel church auditorium and I think it was a very solemn event.
- Willens: Was that the ceremony which David Sablan was the master of ceremonies?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I believe that was.
- Willens: How did that come about, do you know?
- Pangelinan: Well, we had a number of volunteers who wanted to help out in the ceremony. David had always been a good friend and I think he asked to be considered to be one of the masters of ceremony.
- Willens: What was your feeling at the time, in the signing ceremony when you and the other members of the Commission, as I recall, were asked individually to sign the document, isn't that correct?
- Pangelinan: That's correct.
- Willens: Since you had invested so many years of your life to this endeavor, was that a particularly memorable moment for you?
- Pangelinan: That was more than a memorable moment. It was an exciting moment, it was a moment of real accomplishment. I looked down at the others and I see all mix of people, ages. In particular, I looked at the children. At that time I had four kids and I think they all came

to the signing ceremony. I looked at them and I thought, you know, I'm doing this for you guys. This was a moment of real accomplishment for the people of the Northern Marianas and a rare moment in history that a group of people is given the opportunity to negotiate their future status and they were not going to miss that opportunity. I think I was the first one to sign the document and I told those guys, I said, listen I don't want any hesitation, sign it and let the Ambassador sign it, and let's celebrate.

Willens: Was there a celebration afterwards?

Pangelinan: Yes, we had a good celebration. As a matter of fact, it was done in good taste. We had the Navy band, we had a lot of singing, but it was a real moment of great historical importance to us.

Willens: Were you surprised that Mr. Rabauliman and Mr. Rasa did not show up?

Pangelinan: I was not surprised at all. I thought that it was in keeping with our tradition that if you oppose something you don't insult the occasion by your appearance. I just felt sorry, especially for Mr. Rabauliman, who had spent all of his time in the negotiations and did not see the fruits of his work.

Willens: The Ambassador in his statement listed the important steps that had to be taken before there would actually be a constitutional government in the Northern Marianas. The first of those steps, as I recall, was obtaining approval of the Covenant by the District Legislature. My recollection is that we turned to that almost immediately after the signing ceremony and spent two or three days, as I recall, with the District Legislature. Do you recall that process?

Pangelinan: Not only do I recall it, but I thought that process was pretty much pro forma. We had been working very closely with the Legislature. The Legislature was 100 percent support behind it. I thought the Ambassador probably rightfully wanted to ensure that all these steps had taken place, but we also knew that we had to follow certain procedures. What we would have to do to accomplish that pretty quickly.

Willens: Do you recall any opposition being expressed within the Legislature?

Pangelinan: No, I don't recall. As a matter of fact, the Legislature was more anxious than we were to get moving quickly. Just a question of getting themselves together, organized. Also they wanted to give us a few days after the celebration to, you know, just enjoy a few days of our achievement. We were ready. Ben Santos after all was the Speaker and also the Vice-chairman of the Commission and then they have John Cabrera, who was the Vice-Speaker of the Legislature. We had Danny Muna and others, so I had no problem.

Willens: The current governor recalls asking some pointed questions in his capacity as a member of the Legislature. Do you have any recollection of that?

Pangelinan: I think yes, I am accustomed to having him start his political agenda at that time. As a matter of fact, I think he was using the opportunity to raise the significance of the status agreement. But, more importantly, I think he had a political agenda to promote.

Willens: Directing your attention now to the plebiscite and the political education that preceded it, do you recall when it was decided that the plebiscite would be in June? Was that a decision in which you participated—to set the date for the plebiscite?

Pangelinan: Yes. I was involved in the schedule of events that had to take place. We felt that after approval by the Legislature, the plebiscite was the most critical decision of the people.

Willens: Do you think that sufficient time was provided for the political education?

- Pangelinan: Well, we thought that the political education had extended over the past years so, in terms of what's happening, the people knew exactly what they wanted. They were informed, but we wanted to ensure, for the purposes of the United Nations, that a more concerted effort, a more precise kind of political education was undertaken to ensure that there is no allegation at the United Nations that the people were never given the opportunity. I was aware of the importance of having serious political education conducted through other villages.
- Willens: Who were the political leaders, in addition to those on the Commission, who were active in supporting the Covenant during the campaign?
- Pangelinan: Well, most of the members of the Commission, members of the Legislature, members of the Municipal Council, for that matter. All of the elected leaders were pretty much involved. Then we had other groups. We had women organizations, we had interest groups that were selected to represent particular needs.
- Willens: Was there any opposition from the business community?
- Pangelinan: Not a vocal opposition at all. I don't recall any serious opposition. There was some concern about investment and exactly the kind of foreign investment that would take place here in the island.
- Willens: Who do you recall being the most articulate and effective opponents of the Covenant?
- Pangelinan: Well, it turned out to be the political leaders.
- Willens: Of the Territorial Party?
- Pangelinan: Some of the Territorial Party people, but mainly individual members like Oscar Rasa who took upon himself to be the vocal political opponent of the Covenant.
- Willens: How about the Carolinian community?
- Pangelinan: There were certain members of the Carolinian community who joined forces with Rasa.
- Willens: Were there some leaders of the Carolinian community that supported the Covenant?
- Pangelinan: Well, actually there were some Carolinian leaders. At that time the Carolinian group was more or less identified with the Territorial Party. So, we were not looking at them as a very strong vocal group. We knew that the problem was for the plebiscite. The Carolinians had always been very quiet when it comes to articulating their opposition, but I was more concerned with what would happen when we go to the polls. That was a dilemma that I had to face, because once a person starts making any vocal comments, locally here, then you pretty much can address that issue, but the concern that I had was what the general Carolinian community required. It raised a real problem as to exactly how strong the group is, and what kind of opposition they are going to take in order to vote against the Covenant. That was a dilemma that I couldn't address well.
- Willens: Did there come a time when the Carolinian leaders became more vocal about their views, or did they remain relatively quiet on the subject until the vote?
- Pangelinan: At least from my impression, they were pretty quiet, although some of Rasa's statements in the paper and in his own paper—he had a flyer then that he put out from time to time—reflected some elements of Carolinian opposition. I was kind of reading that and wondering what the general Carolinian community would do.
- Willens: There were some opponents of the Covenant who maintained that they were supportive of a commonwealth relationship with the United States but they felt that the negotiated

- arrangement could be improved. Do you remember that being an important line of opposition?
- Pangelinan: No, because we told them that had they expressed their concerns during the status negotiations, they would have been accommodated. So, it was too late to start. They didn't even speak out when we gave them the opportunity to do it; now they are raising all these issues.
- Willens: What do you think were the most effective lines of opposition to the Covenant? Was it with respect to Tinian and the amount of money, the location of sovereignty in the United States, or financial support? Which were the issues that you think were most effectively pressed by the opponents?
- Pangelinan: Actually, none. The opponents had made a tactical error. We finally found out that Rasa was receiving some money from the Congress of Micronesia to support his efforts in opposing the Covenant. And then we just turned around and used the Congress of Micronesia as an argument. It was a sad way to do it, but Rasa was speaking for Micronesia.
- Willens: Do you have evidence that in fact the Congress had provided money to Rasa?
- Pangelinan: I had some evidence that yes, otherwise it would have been libelous to do that.
- Willens: So they became an important political issue?
- Pangelinan: That was the only political issue. Rasa received \$10,000 to undertake his political campaign and we used it against him. The moment we identified him with the Congress of Micronesia, that was the end of his campaign. So he became very ineffective in raising the Tinian requirements and all of this. The perception of the people was that really he was the spokesman for the Congress of Micronesia.
- Willens: How effective was Mr. Canham in performing his responsibilities?
- Pangelinan: I think Mr. Canham was very effective in that he ensured that the political education was conducted in a very comprehensive, a very effective way. He was very fair to ensure that every sector of the community was given the opportunity to address their issues at the local level. More than anything else, his personality, and having somebody as an outside observer conducting the political education, was a real plus.
- Willens: Was he someone who communicated effectively with Chamorros and the Carolinians in the community?
- Pangelinan: The way we looked at him was that his presence was important to allay any fears from the outside. In particular, we are looking at how the outside would look at this whole effort, and especially the United Nations. Here we have a third party who is conducting an impartial political education to ensure that all of the facets of a political education program are conducted in a very fair, objective manner.
- Willens: Did the U.S. delegation or the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations play any role that you can recall in the political education campaign?
- Pangelinan: No. After the signing of the agreement, we just pretty much told the Ambassador that political education is our problem and he should not be identified with us at all. So we kept them pretty much away from any political education.
- Willens: As I recall, and I'm not sure of this, there were some legislative hearings that took place in the U.S. Congress even before the plebiscite. But after the Covenant was approved in the plebiscite, it was considered first by the House Interior Committee where Congressman Burton was a supporter. Do you recall any efforts by you or other members

of the Commission to inform Congressman Burton or other supporters in the House of Representatives or Senate as to what you were doing with respect to political education?

Pangelinan: Yes. We had communicated with Congressman Burton, in particular with his staff, as to the level of political education program that we were conducting here. And that was just to inform him from our side that the Congress can be assured of a fair and impartial political education program.

Willens: Did he make any suggestions one way or the other about a political education program?

Pangelinan: No.

Willens: Had he been briefed by you or your representatives as to the Covenant as it had finally been negotiated and signed?

Pangelinan: No. We pretty much left that to the Ambassador too. That was his prerogative to inform the U.S. side. It is my recollection that we sent a telex to Congressman Burton that the Covenant was successfully approved by the people of the Northern Marianas by a majority of 78 percent.

Willens: Were you surprised at the percentage?

Pangelinan: No. I wasn't surprised. I was surprised at the low percentage.

Willens: You had hoped for even a higher one?

Pangelinan: I was shooting for 80 percent. I was surprised that the opposition was stronger than I anticipated.

Willens: A politician is never satisfied.

Pangelinan: On the other hand, 78 was more than 75.

Willens: It was a very impressive accomplishment, I think. What is your recollection about consideration of the Covenant by the House of Representatives? As I recall, it went through the House of Representatives on a rather expeditious timetable. Do you recall testifying before the House on the subject?

Pangelinan: Not only did I testify before the House, but also I had my share of walking around the halls of Congress visiting a number of key members of the Committee at that time the Committee of Interior and Insular Affairs.

Willens: Who were the key Marianas representatives that participated in the lobbying effort?

Pangelinan: We decided that we were going to limit it to a handful of us. I for one. There were times when we had Pete Tenorio and then Manny Sablan, Mitch Pangelinan, and Ben Santos. Usually there were not more than five of us. First of all, we thought that it would be improper to bring a whole battery of Northern Marianas politicians there just to show a number. Also, I had early experience that when you meet with members of Congress, the less people that are there, the better for any kind of serious discussion.

Willens: To what extent was this whole effort coordinated with the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations?

Pangelinan: At that time it had become evident that we needed help. Help in arranging for the meetings. For one thing, appointments with certain members. So we used the Office of the Micronesia Status Negotiation to help us in arranging for meetings with members of Congress.

Willens: Was there a sharing of strategy as to how to deal with individual members of Congress?

- Pangelinan: There were times when they knew some of the concerns of certain members and they shared that with us. But more importantly, we felt that they had been doing their own briefing, and now it's time for us to make the presentation ourselves. We made it very clear that when we go there, it's going to be us, the Northern Marianas, and no one is going to interfere. There were times when staff of the Office of Micronesian Status Negotiations would join us on the Hill, but whenever we had a meeting, they stayed out in the hall.
- Willens: Why did you think that was important?
- Pangelinan: It was important because I personally thought that if I cannot convince a member of Congress as to the significance of this, as a representation of the Northern Marianas, then no one can make a case for us.
- Willens: Were you apprehensive that if someone from the U.S. agencies was there, you might be viewed as simply being a puppet or spokesperson for the United States?
- Pangelinan: No. I made it very clear that I had gone through the negotiations, I understood the issues and I can address them better than anybody else. So that was the simplistic approach that we took.
- Willens: Who were the key U.S. staff people that were involved in the lobbying efforts?
- Pangelinan: I wouldn't call them lobbying efforts. Many of them took us up to the Hill because they make the necessary appointment.
- Willens: I misspoke. I mean the United States delegation was making its own visits and conferring, isn't that correct?
- Pangelinan: That is correct.
- Willens: Were there people like Jim Berg involved in that?
- Pangelinan: Perhaps, I don't know. There were times when Jim would bring me up to the Hill. But again there was a guy by the name of Captain Dick Wyttenbach, or at that time Commander Dick Wyttenbach, who would accompany us to the Hill.
- Willens: But in terms of who from the U.S. delegation actually met with members of Congress themselves to advise them about the matter? Are you really in a position to know that?
- Pangelinan: No. I told the Ambassador that our presence in Washington to go around and meet members of Congress was at our initiative.
- Willens: I know that it's difficult to separate out efforts in the House of Representatives from the Senate side. Just focusing on the House of Representatives for the moment, do you remember whether there were any issues of substance that were of concern to members of the Interior Committee with respect to the Covenant?
- Pangelinan: Yes. First of all, the most critical substantive issue was the vehicle to use in passage of the Covenant. There was discussion as to whether it was going to be in a bill or in a joint resolution.
- Willens: Did you have a position on that?
- Pangelinan: I did have some reservation as to which is in the eye of the Congress more important a bill or a joint resolution. There was a question about the provision in the Covenant limiting the plenary power of Congress, whether a bill can accomplish that kind of restriction. I remember when I met with Congressman Phil Burton and I said: "You know, you understand the Congressional process more than we do, but I want to ensure

that whatever vehicle you use is going to ensure that the protection of the mutual consent provision is not affected at all.” He said: “Well, let me worry about the vehicle.”

Willens: Did he then ultimately recommend the use of a joint resolution?

Pangelinan: Yes. He said this is not only the best vehicle, but also the one that he can get through Congress more readily.

Willens: Did he explain why?

Pangelinan: No. He said: “Let me handle the Congressional [side]; you are already making a presentation as to the importance of the provision and I’ll take it from there.”

Willens: Do you remember whether Ambassador Williams or any U.S. representatives took a contrary view?

Pangelinan: I am not aware of it. Because again you know, once I met with the Congressman, he knew what he was doing and, first of all, you don’t ask too many questions of Phil Burton and you don’t second-guess what he is going to do. Pretty much you say well, whatever you think is the best we will rely on your decision.

Willens: One of his staff people had told colleagues from my law firm a year earlier that Congressman Burton would essentially support whatever the Marianas people agreed to in the status agreement. Do you think that was his position at the time that the Covenant was presented to him for approval?

Pangelinan: No. I think the Congressman was very generous in saying that we support the people of the Northern Marianas, but he had been reviewing this very, very carefully.

Willens: Did he understand that the mutual consent provision operated to limit the plenary power of Congress?

Pangelinan: I’m sure he did. But more importantly I think, he looked at the economic package because there was a commitment there from the Congress. That long-term support of financial assistance would be forthcoming, so he was looking at it from all the various issues.

Willens: Did he ever indicate to you that the financial package was too generous or not generous enough?

Pangelinan: At one time he looked at me and said: “What are you going to do with all this money that is going to your people?” I said “Phil, a liberal member like yourself shouldn’t worry about those kind of things.”

Willens: He thought you had been reasonably successful in negotiating a fair financial settlement?

Pangelinan: I think in jest he said that he thought we are running away with the store.

Willens: How about on the Republican side and Congressman Clausen in particular? Was there any different view about the Covenant that came from the Republican members of Congress?

Pangelinan: No. One thing about Congressman Burton is that, whenever we had a time to meet with him, he always had Congressman Clausen and a few others from the other side of the aisle with him. And there was a young fellow by the name of George Miller who was always hanging in the background.

Willens: Was he a member of Congress at the time?

Pangelinan: A member of the Congress then, right. And a guy by the name of Tony Won Pat. He took it upon himself to hold a mini-public hearing in the confinement of his office. When he

addressed the issue, of course, you don't say much when Phil Burton is talking, because nobody but nobody speaks but Phil. They just go around the table and assure us that his colleagues agree with him, and fortunately all of his colleagues then were from California. One happened to be the minority leader of the House Committee.

Willens: What was Congressman Won Pat's view with respect to the Covenant and, more generally, what was the Guamanian reaction to the document once it ultimately was signed and approved by the people?

Pangelinan: Tony Won Pat was very generous. I guess he looked at the Covenant; and I can feel his disappointment that a group of people are getting a status that perhaps Guam will never accomplish during his lifetime. I get the sentiment that he supported our effort but, on the other hand, he had a lot of concern that we have really reached an agreement, whereas the people of Guam would never be given the opportunity to improve their political status.

Willens: Do you think that he or any other political leader from Guam tried to seek some commitment from Congressman Burton or the Executive Branch that Guam would get the same kind of status as was set forth in the Covenant in the near future?

Pangelinan: I think so, because they said that at a time the Covenant was being approved. Then subsequently Tony was able to introduce a bill that provided that, in the event the Northern Marianas and Guam agree on a political status in the future, there is this opportunity to have a united commonwealth for the whole area.

Willens: Did that bill go through?

Pangelinan: Yes, I just can't recall the name of the bill now, but it went through. But nobody pays attention to that now. But if Guam wants a political status like commonwealth, then they can negotiate with us and we can accomplish a commonwealth for Guam and the Northern Marianas in no time at all. Did you know that?

Willens: No, I don't think I ever did know that.

Pangelinan: Oh, yes. Do we have a Title 48 here?

Willens: Ed, after the Covenant was approved by the House of Representatives, there were hearings before several committees of the U.S. Senate. I have directed your attention to the hearings before the Senate Committee on the Interior, where a question was put to Ambassador Williams by Senator Johnston with respect to the impact of federal legislation on the Northern Marianas. Have you had a chance to read Ambassador Williams's statement?

Pangelinan: Yes, indeed. I've read Ambassador Williams' statement and it was in response to a direct question by Senator Johnston.

Willens: What is your reaction to that testimony?

Pangelinan: I think this is one of the most critical statements presented to Congress. When we appeared before the Senate Committee, Senator Johnston was asking for clarification of the significance of the mutual consent provision of the Covenant. In particular, he addressed the issue of federal legislation impinging on local self-government or affecting the internal affairs of the Northern Marianas. He was asking whether Congress under mutual consent would be able to legislate on the internal affairs of the Northern Marianas. The Ambassador, as I look at the testimony, did state that most acts of Congress affect the internal affairs or the right of self-government of the States to a greater or lesser extent. Subsequently, I was asked whether I agree to this statement. I had only a very limited opportunity, but in my presentation I went on the record: "Yes, the delegation agreed to

that.” But it was my understanding, and is still now my position, that the agreement there was to the effect that the Northern Marianas in terms of local self-government was to be treated as though it was a State.

Willens: There is a reference near the end of the Ambassador’s statement to the effect that section 103 of the Covenant is basically an institutional guarantee. That sentence has been used in litigation by the U.S. Government to maintain that the Northern Marianas has the right only to create the institutions of self-government through its own constitution, but that the United States Congress remains free to legislate on any and all matters with respect to the internal affairs of the Northern Marianas. Did you understand that the Covenant provided more opportunity for local self-government than just creating the institutions of self-government?

Pangelinan: Definitely. The Covenant provides for greater opportunity. The mutual consent provision is a very unique aspect of the Covenant and basically that was for the protection of the Commonwealth’s right of internal self-government. The institutional aspect addresses itself to the constitutional process, but the protection is broader because of section 103 of the Covenant. It was always our intention that any internal Congressional infringement upon the local matters of the Commonwealth would be treated as though it was the same as a State. But it was not a blanket authority to limit self-government by action of the Congress in legislating to affect local issues.

Willens: Was the issue of local self-government and the extent to which the U.S. Congress would have limited authority in the Marianas an issue that was discussed in the political education campaign before the plebiscite was conducted?

Pangelinan: Of course. The mutual consent provision had always been a strong provision and one that the people were led to believe that provided protection, unlike any other territory where Congressional authority is unlimited. Congress in fact, in agreeing to section 103, agreed to a restriction on their plenary power to affect the internal self-government of the Commonwealth. It was our position then and still our position now that Congressional power is restrictive in a sense that it would not be able to legislate in the internal affairs of the Northern Marianas unless it can do so with respect to a State.

Willens: In late 1975 the decision was made that the Covenant would be considered in the Senate by the Foreign Relations Committee and the Armed Services Committee, as well as the Interior Committee. Do you remember how that came about?

Pangelinan: It came about largely because the Foreign Affairs Committee made a trip to the Far East and make a short stop on Saipan on the way back to the States. I remember the group of about four members visited the island. Senator Baker was the chairman of that particular committee and was accompanied by Senator Culver and two others.

Willens: They had a mission elsewhere in the Far East, but they stopped over in the Marianas?

Pangelinan: That is correct.

Willens: What was the impact of that visit, if any?

Pangelinan: The impact was for them to see the islands first-hand and visit with the local leaders. We had a meeting, as a matter of fact at the Continental Hotel then, and it was at that time we had an informal discussion on some of the issues in the Covenant. So we took it upon ourselves to express our full support of the Covenant. But in an informal meeting during dinner, Senator Culver in particular raised some real concern as to certain provisions of the Covenant. He alluded to the fact that it may be well for the Foreign Affairs Committee to have a formal hearing upon his return to Washington. Subsequently, I was

- given notice that the Foreign Affairs Committee wanted to have a meeting with at least the key members of the Commission. I took a trip to Washington with at least three other members of the Commission and met with the Committee. It was very interesting.
- Willens: What were the principal objections in the Foreign Relations Committee to the Covenant?
- Pangelinan: I think one of the concerns was the mutual consent provision, exactly how it would affect the relationship. They were concerned that perhaps Congress had overstepped its authority to agree to limit its plenary power. Those issues were foremost in the mind of Senator Baker and especially Senator Culver.
- Willens: Senator Culver, yes. In the Foreign Relations Committee as I recall, there also were questions raised about the separate negotiations and the alleged fragmentation of the Trust Territory. The suggestion was being advanced that the Covenant should not be approved until a status had been negotiated with the remaining five districts of Micronesia. Do you remember concern being expressed along that line?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I think one of the concerns raised was the policy of the U.S. government taken earlier with regards to termination for all of the Trust Territory. The question was raised to me whether I had any problem with that position of the federal government. I said no. I don't really have a problem. Our concern here is that we have reached an agreement, we have reached a status, and termination is something that can take place in the near future or in the long term. I didn't think it would affect the implementation of the relationship between the Northern Marianas and the United States to have a single termination for all the rest of Micronesia. I make it very clear that various aspects of the Covenant can be put in place without having to worry about termination. But I did allude to the fact that the citizenship provision would be suspended until after termination.
- Willens: There were indications in the documents that the United States represented to Congress and also to the Marianas Political Status Commission that termination of the trusteeship might come as early as 1980 or 1981. Do you recall any indications from the United States to that effect?
- Pangelinan: There were several impressions that the United States was anxious to get termination because of the pressure from the United Nations. The Trust Territory [TTPI] was the only remaining [U.N. trusteeship] and the pressure had been to put it to bed. A termination should take place as early as possible.
- Willens: Do you remember any question being raised in the Armed Services Committee as to whether the Covenant served the national security interest of the United States? Specifically, whether the Tinian facility or land was valuable to the United States?
- Pangelinan: That issue was raised in terms of the contingency need for national defense. I think I alluded in the hearing to the fact that we're not limiting ourselves for purposes of national defense only to Tinian or a certain part of Saipan. I said the whole Marianas archipelago will become part of the United States and whatever resources the islands can offer for national defense we will make available. Not only the land requirement, but the people there would be available to serve the national interest.
- Willens: Do you remember along with other members of the Marianas Political Status Commission visiting with some members of the Armed Services Committee or Foreign Relations Committee?
- Pangelinan: Yes. The Foreign Relations Committee was a very significant meeting. We had an informal meeting as a matter of fact.

- Willens: Senator Percy was active I think. Senator Pell was active.
- Pangelinan: Senator Percy was more active than anybody, because he sent his staff to Saipan earlier to get a better understanding of the relationship.
- Willens: Did he change his mind?
- Pangelinan: Yes, he did. As a matter of fact, he was very supportive during the meeting. Baker was there. Senator Culver was there and he didn't entertain that much opposition.
- Willens: What arguments were you using most to persuade them to support the Covenant?
- Pangelinan: I think we had limited time, so the argument that we used basically was that the people of the Northern Marianas wanted to become part of the United States because of its aspirations to achieve this republican form of government, the democratic process, and the long-term interest to become U.S. citizens. That was sufficient to get the Committee to support the Covenant as a matter of fact.
- Willens: Your recollection of the vote in the Senate, were you there in the Senate balcony?
- Pangelinan: I was there in the Senate. Actually before that, when we knew that the Senate was going to act at a certain time, I visited most of the members of the Committee and we learned that at least three members of the Senate were strong opponents of the Covenant. In particular, the Senator from Colorado.
- Willens: Senator Hart.
- Pangelinan: Senator Hart, yes. And then Senator Pell from Rhode Island and surprisingly word came to us that Senator Kennedy was close to Hart and therefore he could be persuaded. So, in my own efforts of trying to reach as many members as possible, I took a trip to Hyannis Port, going after the Senator.
- Willens: Did you meet the Senator?
- Pangelinan: Well, fortunately we had a contact. There was a visiting medical team from the United States in Micronesia and one of its members was a physician from Hyannis Port. We learned that he was also the physician of the Kennedy family. So we contacted him, I forgot his name right now, and I asked him whether he could arrange for a meeting with Senator Kennedy and he did. He tried to get the Senator to at least give us an audience for a few minutes. But in the process of getting up to Boston and then catching a flight to Hyannis Port, our trip was delayed for I think an hour or so. By the time we got to Hyannis Port the Senator had left. As a matter of fact, I missed him by about five minutes. He was going sailing and we saw his yacht leaving the pier maybe about two minutes when we got there. But then a cousin of the Kennedy family was with us and he say well, as a way to show you that it is not a hopeless visit, he took us and showed us the compound of the family, the Joseph Kennedy compound in Hyannis Port. Then he wanted to show us that, when Kennedy returned from his trip, he will personally see the Senator to tell him that representatives of the Northern Marianas were there to ask him for his support of the Covenant. So we went back to Washington and a day or two later the vote in the Senate took place and we got word, that if there was a danger of the Covenant not getting the majority from the members on the floor, Senator Kennedy was going to vote in our behalf.
- Willens: Do you recall any discussion within the Marianas contingent or with the U.S. delegation about the need to have a two-thirds vote of the Senate?

- Pangelinan: No. I think that we were only informed of the fact that, if a majority of the Senate approved, that was all it required.
- Willens: What is your recollection of the signing ceremony on March 24, 1976, when a group of us and several members of Congress were present at the time that President Ford signed the Joint Resolution?
- Pangelinan: That was a memorable time. I never thought that the significance of an agreement like this would mean that the President would have time to celebrate.
- Willens: Did that come as a surprise to you?
- Pangelinan: It was a real surprise. I thought it was going to be a silent, quiet signing.
- Willens: Do you know how it came about?
- Pangelinan: Not really. People tried to take credit that the President was available. Oh no, wait a minute now, I visited the President on one occasion.
- Willens: You visited President Ford?
- Pangelinan: Yes, President Ford before the signing, as a matter of fact. I was in Washington with Pete Tenorio and all of a sudden we got a call. We were getting ready to leave in the afternoon and we got a call in the morning that the President wants to see us. So I had trouble trying to find the right suit to dress up for the occasion. Pete and I rushed over to the White House after lunch and the President was there and the National Security Advisor, Admiral Scowcroft, to meet us.
- Willens: Was this after the Senate had approved the bill?
- Pangelinan: Yes. I believe just right after the Senate approved the bill.
- Willens: But before the signing ceremony?
- Pangelinan: Long before the signing, right. I went to the White House. We were told that the President had only five minutes to spend with us. So we went there and it turned out that the President had reviewed his World War Two experience and he was in Yap, so at least he was in the vicinity during the Second World War. So there was a globe in the oval office and he asked us to sit down. He looked at us and he said: "You know, you guys are very young to be dealing with political status." It was in great humor. He said: "By the way, I just want you to know that I have been to your area, but not quite Saipan." The meeting turned out to be 45 minutes with the President.
- Willens: Just a social occasion.
- Pangelinan: Really very social and, like I said, it was a real surprise.
- Willens: Did Ambassador Williams know about that?
- Pangelinan: The Ambassador was the one who alerted us that the President wanted to meet with us.
- Willens: That's terrific.
- Pangelinan: I think Jim Wilson accompanied us to the meeting. I think we probably had done no more than make our case on why we wanted to become part of the United States, and the next thing I knew the President wanted to have a real signing ceremony at the White House.
- Willens: Do you recall the agile efforts of the Marianas participants to get to the center of the picture?

- Pangelinan: Well there were a lot of politicians trying to get close to the President in the photo session. I remember, in particular, especially in the Congressional delegation, that there was a large contingency from the House. I remember on one occasion when I was trying to get behind Phil Burton and said Phil, and he looked at me in the back and said: "If you stand behind me, you're not going to be in this picture." Phil was an important man. I think he put some of the Northern Marianas people in front. It was quite an occasion.
- Willens: After the Covenant was approved, there was the beginning of a transitional effort that had been negotiated at great length during the sessions. What role did you have in the transitional program?
- Pangelinan: I think the first step was to determine who was going to be in the transitional operation.
- Willens: There was a Joint Commission and then a Secretariat. Were you on the Commission?
- Pangelinan: I was on the Commission because of my chairmanship of the MPSC. We selected the membership there and then tried to recruit the people that would be working for the Commission.
- Willens: What do you recall being the important issues during that period?
- Pangelinan: Well, one important issue was that we wanted to have more voice in the transition and one of the key positions there was the directorship.
- Willens: Who were the leading candidates for the Secretariat?
- Pangelinan: The leading candidates from the Marianas side for the directorship were a number of local people. Pete Tenorio was one of them, Mitch Pangelinan, and I think Ben Santos. My name was also mentioned at one time.
- Willens: Who did you support?
- Pangelinan: I finally ended up with Pete Tenorio.
- Willens: What is your overall assessment of the transitional effort? Particularly, with respect to the economic, social and other plans that were developed over a period of a year and a half?
- Pangelinan: We did some outstanding work really and wrote very comprehensive recommendations for a new government to undertake. I thought they were very appropriate guidelines and recommendations which, had the new government adopted, would have made a very smooth transition to the Commonwealth.
- Willens: You are speaking of studies that were on the legal and government reorganization side?
- Pangelinan: No, not only government organization, the constitutional convention, and the establishment of a working government. You also had comprehensive recommendations on the economic side, including steps to be taken to improve the services that are required.
- Willens: Were you in Saipan when the Constitutional Convention was in session or were you at that time assigned in Washington?
- Pangelinan: No. I was selected to be the liaison officer in Washington.
- Willens: When were you selected to do that? Sometime in 1976?
- Pangelinan: Early 1976. As a matter of fact I went to Washington in the summer of 1976. So that kind of foreclosed my participation in the Constitutional Convention.
- Willens: At that time you were still a member of the Popular Party?

- Pangelinan: I was still a member of the Popular Party.
- Willens: The Popular Party had been very successful in local elections for several years but, when the delegates were chosen for the Constitutional Convention, the Territorial Party obtained a significant majority of the delegates. Why was it that the Territorial Party seemed to be more successful than the Popular Party in electing delegates to the convention?
- Pangelinan: My own perception was that we were so actively involved in the negotiations that there was just apathy on the part of the Popular Party. I think we were just exhausted.
- Willens: Was it your view that the Constitutional Convention really had a very limited sphere within which to operate because the Covenant had more or less set down the overall guidelines?
- Pangelinan: No. I thought the Convention was very critical. I think that perhaps one of the problems was that I wasn't back here to get people moving. My participation was totally limited. Also the other leaders that were here were more interested in running for the Marianas Legislature.
- Willens: Apparently they had to make a choice between running for the Constitutional Convention or running for the Marianas Legislature.
- Pangelinan: That's the other significant factor there. The Marianas Legislature then had the power and authority to do things. Whereas the Constitutional Convention was limited in terms of its responsibility. It's a choice between where is the power and where is the attraction.
- Willens: When did your service end as the Washington representative in the transitional effort? Was that some time in 1977?
- Pangelinan: No. It happened in 1978 when we had the constitutional government.
- Willens: You decided to run for the office of Washington Representative in the fall of 1977, is that correct?
- Pangelinan: Right, right.
- Willens: What prompted you to run for that position rather than to run for Governor or Lieutenant Governor?
- Pangelinan: I had also been asked to consider the governorship. I guess the problem was that I already had my family back in Washington, so it was kind of difficult for me to relocate myself. I thought that it would be important for me, because of my experience in Washington, to continue in the representation before the federal government.
- Willens: How did it come to be that Dr. Camacho was nominated to run for governor?
- Pangelinan: Dr. Camacho happened to be the chairman of the Popular Party at that particular time. When I took myself out of the race, there were other people that were interested: Senator Borja and David Sablan. Both David and Senator Borja were not really strong supporters of the Popular Party. I think Camacho finally decided that there was an opportunity here.
- Willens: There came a time when Senator Borja, having failed to get the nomination of the Popular Party, made himself available to the Territorial Party to run for lieutenant governor with Joeten. What is your recollection of the events that led to that decision?
- Pangelinan: When Camacho was selected by the party to be the nominee for governor, Senator Borja and Governor Camacho had a family problem. They are kind of in-laws; the older brother of Senator Borja was married to the sister of Camacho. Who is the father of the candidate

now, or the Lieutenant Governor, Jesse Borja, and there was a family split then. So there were a lot of bad feelings between the Borja family and the Camacho family. Camacho felt that he was not going to have a Borja on his ticket. Oly was kind of left behind and his supporters were very strong. He decided well, there was an overture made by Joeten to get as many people to his side, and of course the Senator was available.

Willens: How did it happen that former District Administrator Frank Ada got selected to be the candidate for lieutenant governor?

Pangelinan: That was interesting because we were looking around for Lieutenant Governor. As matter of fact, the first choice was Pete A. Tenorio. And Pete A. Tenorio agreed to run with Camacho.

Willens: What happened?

Pangelinan: Pressure from the Tenorio family, Joeten and company put the pressure on him that he was running against his own family. So Pete had to back down. Therefore, the slot was open again for consideration. Finally, the Popular Party decided that well, there is Frank Ada.

Willens: The Republican Party?

Pangelinan: The Popular Party.

Willens: Popular Party.

Pangelinan: They looked at who was available and saw Frank Ada. He was kind of leaning toward the Territorial Party, but because of his experience in the Trust Territory Administration he could attract voters from the Territorial Party. He was slated for lieutenant governor.

Willens: Was it generally the perception in the community that the ticket of Joeten and Senator Borja was a very powerful ticket and was likely to win?

Pangelinan: Well, I think the general perception was that there would have been strong Territorial Party unity.

Willens: Who did you run against?

Pangelinan: It was a guy by the name of John Lizama. John just got here from law school. There was nobody that wanted to challenge me from the Territorial Party, but then John decided why not.

Willens: How many years did you serve?

Pangelinan: I served until 1983.

Willens: It was a two year term at the time? You served for three terms.

Pangelinan: Three terms, yes.

Willens: Why do you think the Popular Party won the election in 1977?

Pangelinan: We still had the strong experience from the political status negotiations. The Popular Party controlled the Legislature. So, politically we were very, very active in the community.

Willens: I have heard that the fact that both of the candidates on the Territorial Party were businessmen was used effectively in the community to support the proposition that the Popular Party cared more about the lower income and middle income parts of the community.

Pangelinan: That's one of the issues that helped the Popular Party get into office.

- Willens: When Dr. Camacho took office as the first Governor, what did he do with the various plans that had been developed in the transitional effort?
- Pangelinan: Well, unfortunately he just disregarded those. Camacho had (I think) got into the glory and the power and all the attributes of the responsibility of this just got over his head.
- Willens: Did you make any effort to persuade him that he should pay more attention to the work that had been done?
- Pangelinan: We tried. We tried a number of ways but he was tone-deaf to any recommendation. Like I said, it was kind of a very, very weird situation because he had become a very reserved person.
- Willens: He became a reserved person?
- Pangelinan: Yes, all of a sudden he just became paranoid. At times he had security people running him. It was an unfortunate incident in the history of the Northern Marianas.
- Willens: Did the Lieutenant Governor have any active role to play?
- Pangelinan: No. The Lieutenant Governor was totally ignored. So it was one member trying to run the show from the confines of his office. He surrounded himself with security people, and he pretty much ignored any recommendations or studies that we had done to help him develop an agenda. And then to aggravate the situation, the Legislature surprisingly was run by the Territorial Party.
- Willens: Both houses?
- Pangelinan: Both houses. So Camacho had a difficult time getting any kind of program through the Legislature. As a matter of fact, all of his nominees for various positions, including the judiciary, were shot down by the Legislature just to spite him.
- Willens: What were the costs to the Commonwealth of that first term. Were there consequences that you think were far-reaching?
- Pangelinan: Far-reaching consequences.
- Willens: What were they?
- Pangelinan: First of all, Camacho never really tried to work with the Legislature. He used his political power to fight with them. It was a power struggle more than anything else. In the process all of the programs that were required to be put in place were totally ignored. Camacho was unable to get any action from the Legislature on legislation that would help the new government implement programs that were necessary to be put in place.
- Willens: In the years since that first administration, there have been many other times when the Executive Branch and the Legislature have not been able to get along. There are those who suggest that's one of the major problems the Commonwealth has the inability to get the political leaders in both branches to work together for some common objective. What's your assessment of the political situation here with respect to the executive and the legislative branches?
- Pangelinan: I think the consequence is that both of them started to have their own agendas, different perceptions of how to run the government.
- Willens: You think that began in the very first Administration?
- Pangelinan: The first Administration.
- Willens: And you think it still exists to some extent today?

- Pangelinan: It looks like it is moving in that direction.
- Willens: Well, some people say it's the bicameral legislature and the authority given to Rota and Tinian that led to this kind of impasse and everyone associated with the Covenant should have anticipated that. What do you think?
- Pangelinan: No. I think later on it's after the big money started rolling into the Commonwealth.
- Willens: Economic development?
- Pangelinan: Economic development opportunities, the level of funding. You've got to understand that when we started out, we were talking about very minimal operations for the government. Then all of a sudden you have a Covenant level of funding and that was a new element altogether for the members of the Legislature, who had been used to penny-ante. Now they are dealing with millions and millions of dollars. The power struggle for the control of the municipalities came about recently, I think it started in 1985. For a long while, Rota and Tinian were working together with Saipan for their common good.
- Willens: Your judgment is that for the first seven years or so of the Commonwealth, the bicameral structure of the legislature did not prove to be an obstacle?
- Pangelinan: No. Not at all. Finally when the power struggle started to develop, this happened during I guess 1985. The Senate tried to develop among themselves a way of sharing power. At one time, Saipan had a first and second president, and then for a third president an offer was made to Benjamin Manglona. Benjamin Manglona was in the Senate then. When they went to the Senate to vote, Senator Borja was selected as the president. I think the Rota delegation started to think about themselves. That was the time when they started to work with the Tinian delegation and it became a power struggle to control the Senate.
- Willens: Directing your attention to your own responsibilities in Washington, were you able to work with Governor Camacho in representing the Commonwealth in Washington effectively?
- Pangelinan: Well, I had no problem then. It was a new responsibility for me. As you probably noted, one of the financial benefits that we have in the Covenant was in the area of federal programs. We had a very minimal and very conservative estimate as to the first year of benefits of \$3 million.
- Willens: What did you spend your time doing in Washington in your years of service there?
- Pangelinan: I spent a lot of time with the Congress, especially the committees in both the House and the Senate. Keeping good working relationships.
- Willens: Did you think that people in the Executive Branch and in Congress understood that the Covenant was a unique document, which defined the Commonwealth's political status in a way that differentiated it from Guam and the Virgin Islands?
- Pangelinan: I think that was one of the challenges that I had, especially when we were selecting federal programs that we wanted to take advantage of. We were qualified for all of them. I remember one federal program, the food stamp program, where we tried to carve a different program for the Northern Marianas. Instead of direct participation in the program, we set aside about 25 percent of that for fishing and farming opportunity. The Social Security Administration and the Department of Agriculture had trouble with trying to understand why we wanted to be different from the program's operation in the rest of the United States. I think I convinced them that the Northern Marianas is unique in a sense that a more relevant program should be implemented here in the Northern Marianas, and they agreed to that.

- Willens: In concluding the interview, I would appreciate your stepping back from these many years and giving me your assessment of what have been the principal accomplishments of the Commonwealth and what are the principal problems that it needs now to cope with?
- Pangelinan: I think the success, if I look at it, is that we have a living document, the Covenant, which provides for an enormous opportunity and responsibility for the Northern Marianas and that in itself is a real achievement. The Commonwealth is a working experience here as a new political entity. I have no doubt that it will continue to do so. My disappointment in looking at what's happening in the island is the enormous and somewhat unpredictable development that has taken place.
- Willens: Economic development?
- Pangelinan: Economic development where I think the Northern Marianas is giving all the opportunities to outside interests. If you look around, there are very few business enterprises that are owned locally. I think opening the flood gate on immigration here has created an enormous problem both socially and economically for the future, especially for the local indigenous population to have any meaningful participation in the business community. I think that we just pretty much have given up the store to the outsiders. I think my biggest disappointment is that in our interest to develop economically we had not planned to protect the local people from outside interference and the taking-over by outsiders. If you look around, we talk about economic opportunity, but economic opportunity for whom? I think that is probably a terrible indictment of the failure of the Commonwealth in protecting its own people.
- Willens: How about the current actions by the U.S. Congress to require the Marianas to address some problems? How do you feel about that?
- Pangelinan: That's a very serious one in terms of the limitation on the future funding for this area. I think Congress is beginning to see the enormous impact on labor. Immigration on the island has caused some grief in the relationship and that has to be worked out very sensitively and very carefully.
- Willens: With that comment, I think we will end the interview. Ed, thank you very much for your support and I may be back to you again.
- Pangelinan: Howard, I welcome this opportunity any time.