

October 11, 1995

Herbert Del Rosario
Commonwealth Archivist
Northern Marianas College
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Herbert:

Enclosed is the transcript of the interview with Juan DLG Demapan, one of the delegates to the First Constitutional Convention, describing his background and experiences during the Convention.

This interview was conducted as a part of the project sponsored by the Council for the Humanities. The funding provided by the Council was used, in part, to pay for the transcription of the interviews and the related costs. The original tape of the interview is also enclosed for the Archives' records.

We have completed 72 interviews, and the transcripts and tapes for these interviews will be transmitted to the Archives intermittently as they are completed.

These interviews are also being used for the book that we are writing about the Covenant and the First Constitutional Convention.

Sincerely,



Deanne C. Siemer

cc: Ron Barrineau, Council for the Humanities

INTERVIEW OF JUAN DLG DEMAPAN
by Deanne Siemer
November __, 1993

Siemer: We are at the residence of Juan DLG Demapan in San Vicente in Saipan. Mr. Demapan, for the tape would you tell us your full name?

Demapan: My name is Juan DeLeon Guerrero Demapan.

Siemer: Mr. Demapan, how long has your family lived on Saipan?

Demapan: A little over 47 years.

Siemer: Where did your father's family come from?

Demapan: My mother came from Rota. They moved from Guam to Rota, but they were born in Rota.

Siemer: And how about your father?

Demapan: Same, from Rota.

Siemer: So your family was here in Saipan before the war?

Demapan: Up to the war they decided to come to Saipan.

Siemer: Where did you go to school?

Demapan: I went to Mt. Carmel to school.

Siemer: Up to what grade?

Demapan: High school.

Siemer: What did you do after high school?

Demapan: I remember I worked for the government.

Siemer: What position did you have?

Demapan: I was a payroll supervisor, then I keep on continuing to pursue a harder challenging position. After I took my last test and I passed it, I worked for the records management office.

Siemer: What year was that?

Demapan: I don't remember what year. But I do remember I replaced a GS-13.

Siemer: So that was a fairly high ranked position?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: Did you run for office before you ran for the first constitutional convention?

Demapan: Yes. I ran for the Municipal Council.

Siemer: And you won that election?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: What year was that?

Demapan: This was in 1974-75.

Siemer: Were you serving on the council at the time that you were in the constitutional convention?

Demapan: No, the council was not a full time; it was part time.

Siemer: Why did you decide to run for the constitutional convention?

Demapan: Because I feel I want to give some good ideas.

Siemer: What party did you run with?

Demapan: It was non-partisan.

Siemer: What party had you run for the municipal council with?

Demapan: At that time it was the Popular Party; now they call it Democrat.

Siemer: Before the convention, did the Popular Party delegates get together to decide what they were going to try to do at the convention?

Demapan: No, no.

Siemer: Who was the Popular Party leader during the convention?

Demapan: At that time, I think there were mostly our old people, were old people.

Siemer: Can you tell me about the campaigning that went on before the election?

Demapan: Well if I recall correctly, the campaigning was non-partisan. We just work on our own.

Siemer: Were you living in San Vicente at the time?

Demapan: Susupe.

Siemer: In Susupe at that time.

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: And did you campaign primarily there, or all around the island?

Demapan: If I am not mistaken, I campaigned by visiting people, house-to-house.

Siemer: How long did you campaign, do you remember?

Demapan: I campaigned about 2 months.

Siemer: Was it expensive?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: When you were elected, there were three committees that were formed for the constitutional convention. Did you pick which committee you wanted to be on? There was the Government Institutions Committee that Jose Mafnas was the chairman of, and then there was Personal Rights and Natural Resources Committee that Felipe Atalig was the chairman of, and then there was

Finance and Local Government Committees that Ben Fitial was chairman of. Do you remember being on one of those committees?

Demapan: I think I was in the Finance Committee.

Siemer: With Ben?

Demapan: I think so if I am not mistaken. It was quite long time ago.

Siemer: It is a long time. Let me just look and make sure that that is right. I think you are right, I have a list, let's let me just double check. Yes, you are absolutely correct. Did you pick that committee or did someone choose you?

Demapan: No, somebody chose me.

Siemer: That committee dealt with local government where your experience on the Saipan municipal council would be important. Do you remember the debate about the local government provision in the constitution?

Demapan: Debate?

Siemer: Remember there were some delegates who thought there should be no local government at all? Remember John Tenorio and David Maratita?

Demapan: Yes, yes.

Siemer: They wanted to have no local government at all. Other delegates want to have full local government: the mayor, the council, the whole thing? Do you remember what your position was on that?

Demapan: If I am not mistaken, my position was I do not want local government.

Siemer: Because of the expense?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: What do you recall about the debates with respect to local government?

Demapan: This is why I don't want local government, because we were abolishing the district commissioner as well as the council. It is useless to have a local government if we have commonwealth government.

Siemer: Was it your view that the commonwealth legislature could do what was needed?

Demapan: It was with the hope that the commonwealth legislature would do the best to save money.

Siemer: What do you recall about the position that the delegates from Rota and Tinian took on that issue?

Demapan: I think they prefer to have a local government.

Siemer: When the local government issue was presented on the floor of the convention, did you speak in favor of it?

Demapan: I didn't speak much at that time for a political issue. I did not speak as I recall.

Siemer: Were there meetings of the delegates on this local government issue outside of the convention. Did any of the delegates get together to talk about this?

Demapan: I do not know if, after the convention session, the other party are conducting a meeting or not. I do not know. I cannot speak on that.

Siemer: Do you remember any debate about whether Popular Party people should have chairmanships or vice chairmanships of the committees?

Demapan: No.

Siemer: There was some complaint by Dr. Camacho at one time that none of the Popular Party people had been appointed to any offices or any chairmanships, and there were some in the Territorial Party who said ...

Demapan: At that time, you know, although the convention was non-partisan, the President of the convention based his choice on the naming of the person who win the election. You can identify the ConCon delegate from what party they believe. So I remember that President Guerrero at that time, he can identify who his people are, who of his people to join him.

Siemer: Did the Saipan Municipal Council, when you were on it, do anything with respect to the constitutional convention at all; were there any resolutions or things that came before you?

Demapan: No because it was abolished already. By mandate of the constitution, the Municipal Council was abolished. So at that time when it was abolished there was no council anymore so I never joined, never go back to session.

Siemer: Did you hold offices after the constitutional convention? Did you run for office after that?

Demapan: After the constitution? Yes.

Siemer: When did you run again?

Demapan: I was a member of the Fourth Marianas Legislature.

Siemer: That was 1982?

Demapan: 1984.

Siemer: And how long did you serve?

Demapan: 2 years; and I had a stroke in 1984 too.

Siemer: So then you retired after that?

Demapan: No. Whenever they had a session, they just called me up. But I was not active as much; not very active.

Siemer: Were you working for the Trust Territory government at the time?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: And what job did you have then?

Demapan: I was a Contract Supervisor.

Siemer: After the Trust was terminated, did you switch over and work for the CNMI government?

Demapan: Yes. I was an administrative officer, for the Labor Department.

Siemer: When was that? When did you start working there?

Demapan: I started working after former Governor Camacho won the election.

Siemer: So in the first administration?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: How long did you stay in the Labor Department?

Demapan: Not very long, maybe only 3 months. At that time, the lieutenant governor praised me for organization. At that time, the governor also liked his nephew to become the chief of labor. I was also interested in that position. So I never had that position whatsoever. And I was the campaign manager for the

former Governor Camacho. So I expect, you know, like political appeal from him but I never got it.

Siemer: Did not get it?

Demapan: Did not get it. So both of us at that time, Joe Camacho, the nephew of the Governor, was interested in chief of labor. But since the Lieutenant Governor Ada praised me for the work done and for the decisions I make in the labor office. He really pressed me hard. But outside of that, I was expecting the former governor to appoint me or to choose me as chief of labor.

Siemer: Camacho was only in one term, right?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: So what job did you have after that?

Demapan: After that? Oh, I was working for the legislature for Oscar Rasa; where I'm translator from English to vernacular. I worked for the public information office.

Siemer: I remember Oscar Rasa from the constitutional convention. He is a very talented person. How long did you work for Oscar?

Demapan: I only worked about less than a year.

Siemer: And then what did you do after that?

Demapan: What did I do after that? I didn't work for the government after that.

Siemer: After you finished working for the legislature then you didn't work for the government any more?

Demapan: No.

Siemer: Do you work now?

Demapan: No.

Siemer: Are you retired?

Demapan: No, not retired but I'm disabled.

Siemer: Did you run again for the legislature after 1984?

Demapan: I ran in the last election. I lost.

Siemer: This election, just now [in 1993]?

Demapan: Yes. Not enough votes I got to win.

Siemer: What did you run for?

Demapan: For the House of Representatives.

Siemer: From this district here in San Vicente?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: How many votes did you get?

Demapan: I got about 500 or so.

Siemer: I did not see your name on the list.

Demapan: Juan DLG? But you know the problem here, I was so disappointed. My cousin also ran and it so happened that maybe this is confusing for the old people, for the old voters. He is Demapan, initial J.; I am also Demapan, initial J.

Siemer: So there were 2.

Demapan: So there were 2 of us running with the same family name. I truly suspected that the old people have some confusion.

Siemer: And they only put the first initial, they don't put your other initials on? They don't put DLG?

Demapan: No. They put Juan DLG. But what I mean to say is that during the count of the ballot, I overheard from somebody that they were ready to fall asleep so they only said Demapan J they never said Juan or Jose. They should have identified me as a last name, first name, and middle name.

Siemer: Your cousin is Jose?

Demapan: Jose. During the counting they always said Demapan J, Demapan J, Demapan J; they never said Juan. So that is what transpired. But I do not complain.

Siemer: How many Demapan families are there on Saipan?

Demapan: Not many.

Siemer: About how many?

Demapan: Maybe about less than 20, or about 20.

Siemer: Back in those days of the first constitutional convention, were there other delegates in the convention who were your particular friends, people that you had worked with a lot?

Demapan: As I said to you even I myself could identify with that particular delegate as a Popular Party or not. Saipan is small, you know. People are closely related to each other. Politics are strong.

Siemer: Very strong.

Demapan: Very strong and people are closely related to each other, north to south, east to west.

Siemer: At that time, the Popular Party did not have too many delegates in the first constitutional convention?

Demapan: Yes, at that time, I think they considered the Republican Party were a majority. They won the ConCon. And then from that standpoint, I noticed that the President Guerrero always appointed Republican Party [members to positions]. So like a good example, the legislative composition.

Siemer: Yes. Do you remember that?

Demapan: Yes, because Rota wants another seat and the committee decided not, they decided to give Rota only one. But Rota wants two because they prefer to accommodate one more person; that is their thinking.

Siemer: Explain how that worked. As I understand it, the proposal was, the first proposal was 16-2-1, 2 for Rota. And then the proposal was 12-1-1.

Demapan: Yes, at the end it was 12-1-1.

Siemer: Now what difference did it make to Rota whether they had 1 or 2 if Saipan had so many? Why were they so exercised about that?

Demapan: They just want to accommodate one person there. They figured easy to win the election whereby he was a Republican member.

Siemer: Really?

Demapan: That was their thinking.

Siemer: I never understood why those people walked out over that issue?

Demapan: That is the only purpose.

Siemer: Because they already had equal representation in the Senate and they already had the resident commissioners from each department on the island. They already had all of that. Were there efforts made to get those people who walked out to come back and sign the constitution?

Demapan: I think after a half an hour we expected they didn't come back no more.

Siemer: You decided not to sign the constitution. Why did you do that?

Demapan: I did sign.

Siemer: Did you sign?

Demapan: Yes. because the Secretary [of the Convention] came up to my office at headquarters.

Siemer: Oh, so you did sign?

Demapan: I did, but not in the ceremony. I was absent in the ceremony. I caught a very serious flu; I had a fever.

Siemer: So you did sign?

Demapan: I did.

Siemer: One of the issues that you talked a lot about, at the time of the convention, was the Executive Assistant for Carolinian Affairs. Do you remember that?

Demapan: I delivered a statement, a very strong statement.

Siemer: You were very strongly against it.

Demapan: Yes, I was against it. Beside that, I was against the land alienation.

Siemer: Focus on the Executive Assistant for Carolinian Affairs. Why were you opposed to that?

Demapan: Because I want the delegates to understand that we want to be a united force, not to divide. This is a constitution we are now trying to draft. Please understand that we are not trying to divide ourselves among us; let's be a united force. Citizens of the Northern Marianas, that's the point

Siemer: You almost won that debate; that was very close.

Demapan: Yes. I stood up, I remember, and I said let's not divide ourselves. Let's place ourselves as one citizen; this is our constitution.

Siemer: And then Ben Fitial stood up and said I just want this one thing. Remember, he said we have given all these things to Rota and Tinian.

Demapan: You have a copy of that remarks I deliver, or not?

Siemer: Yes. I do.

Demapan: Let me have one please. I really want a copy of them. You know there was a typhoon and my copy was wet; even my constitution copy I lost, in the typhoon.

Siemer: Really, all of it?

Demapan: Yes. It was wet.

Siemer: Let's see if I can find it.

Demapan: Thank you. That is why whenever the committee decides to approve one thing, it was even though you went ahead because they are Republican.

Siemer: The debate about the Executive Assistant for Carolinian Affairs came up sort of late in the proceedings; I think it was just before the public hearings.

Demapan: It was right before the public hearings. See what is happening now? Even Carolinians are now questioning that office.

Siemer: I was going to ask you about that.

Demapan: It was in a cable forum during the last election

Siemer: Is that right?

Demapan: A real Carolinian person questioning.

Siemer: Whether it works?

Demapan: No. They say why is not Carolinian descent to have that position. Why Trukese?

Siemer: Is that who has it now?

Demapan: Yes. So that makes me to feel happy. I was not wrong.

Siemer: No, you definitely were not.

Demapan: But my point there was straightforward. I do not want to divide us between the Carolinians and Chamorro.

Siemer: There was some suggestion that by having an Executive Assistant for Carolinian Affairs somebody would be there to make sure that nothing adverse happened to the Carolinians.

Demapan: We said that. In addition to that, my point of view is that if we have that office in there, that official will still be run by politics, political office; only

a Republican can go in there. A Democrat individual will never go there, believe me.

Siemer: Is that because the United Carolinian Association was

. . .

Demapan: No. It is because politics is so strong on the island. People here are closely related to one another.

Siemer: Were the Carolinians primarily Territorial Party members at that time?

Demapan: Yes. So for example you are Carolinian, you are a Republican; and I am a Carolinian and, I am a Democrat. I would never go to you and ask you for help. You are not going to help me because you know that I am a Democrat and I know I am a Democrat too. See? It is common sense sometimes.

Siemer: Yes. That is true and the islands are so small.

Demapan: And politics are so strong, very strong.

Siemer: And everyone knows everyone else. Did you think that the Carolinians would have any trouble getting elected if they ran for office island-wide?

Demapan: If a Carolinian ran, I don't know. If they come to a Chamorro community or village so they say, very seldom can they win. Same as Chamorro. If a Chamorro goes to Garapan or San Jose, they will never win; cannot win. Very seldom do they win.

Siemer: Did the Carolinians, back at the time in 1976, have enough votes to elect somebody island-wide?

Demapan: Very seldom a Carolinian individual could win the election once the ballots go to a Chamorro community; same as Chamorro, once it goes to a Carolinian community, very hard to win against Carolinians. Chamorro against Carolinian in a Carolinian society cannot; Carolinian against Chamorro in a Chamorro community cannot; same.

Siemer: Were the Carolinians represented by the United Carolinian Association back then?

Demapan: At that time, yes. They involved themselves.

Siemer: What happened to the United Carolinian Association after that? Did they divide up? Are they still in existence?

Demapan: I think not in existence, no, not as active as before.

Siemer: Didn't some of the Carolinians move over to the Democratic party?

Demapan: In the recent election, yes.

Siemer: And so now some of them are Republicans, some are Democrats?

Demapan: Based on the recent election result.

Siemer: But back in 1976, that was not the case; they were primarily voting Territorial? Do you recall whether any Carolinians at all ran who were Popular Party members back then?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: Who was that?

Demapan: Abel Olopai.

Siemer: Mr. Olopai was a Popular Party member? Mr. Rabauliman was in the Territorial Party?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: Any other Democrat or Popular Party people back then who were Carolinians?

Demapan: I remember a Carolinian guy . . . was Juan Teregeso, he lost.

Siemer: Teregeso?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: Anybody else you remember?

Demapan: I think only these two guys.

Siemer: Now the Territorials elected several Carolinians, Mr. Limes and Mr. Igitol and Mr. Fitial. Were they able to succeed because they were on the Territorial ticket?

Demapan: Yes, because every time that, you know, their area is San Jose and Garapan -- that is the most populated by Carolinians. Every time there is an election ballot there, the Carolinians always got a big vote; but whenever they come to a Chamorro village, they get a small vote. I don't know why. But there are some Chamorro that have the sentiment, if you are a Carolinian, I don't like you. I don't know. That could be possible.

Siemer: How about the Popular Party on Rota? Why did the Popular Party not do well on Rota?

Demapan: I don't know. Because many times it happened that whoever win the governorship, hire people, different

people, you know. So sometimes employment purpose hurt a party. They are not satisfying another group; they satisfy their own group, but not a majority. . . in employment.

Siemer: And how about Tinian, the same thing?

Demapan: Same thing. Employment is the worst to hurt a party.

Siemer: Most of the delegates to the constitutional convention from Rota and Tinian were associated with the Territorial Party. I think only Joe Cruz was associated with the Democratic party.

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: How about the Northern Islands? Do you recall any of the issues about the Northern Islands?

Demapan: The mayorship, that is the only issue. Until it comes to 1,000 population, they can't have mayors there.

Siemer: Were you opposed to having a mayor in the Northern Islands?

Demapan: I was truly opposed because they do not have the population.

Siemer: There are not any people up there now, are there?

Demapan: Yes. In Pagan. Some in Agrigan and Pagan.

Siemer: But they still have a mayor?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: Where does the mayor live?

Demapan: That is a good question, I don't know. Maybe Agrigan.

Siemer: How many people do you think are up there?

Demapan: Maybe less than a thousand now.

Siemer: Did people go back after the volcanic eruptions in the early 80's?

Demapan: Just right before the elections, several months before elections the governor come out and released that Pagan people can go back.

Siemer: Is it likely that a lot of people will live up there at any time?

Demapan: I don't know. It is up to them because some of them are already scared to go. Some of them prefer to stay here. They tried to like the life, you know.

Siemer: It must be easier.

Demapan: Easier. More complete.

Siemer: Much easier living here. How often does the boat go up there?

Demapan: I think every month.

Siemer: And here you can just drive to the grocery store whenever you want.

Demapan: That's the problem.

Siemer: During the constitutional convention you voted against the executive branch article. Do you remember why you were opposed to that?

Demapan: What article?

Siemer: The executive branch, the governor, the lieutenant governor, some of the offices in the executive branch. When they had a vote on whether to approve the executive branch article for the constitution, you voted against that. Do you remember why?

Demapan: I had a good reason. I don't remember why, but I do know I had a good reason for that.

Siemer: Did it have to do with the Carolinian Assistant? That was in the Executive Branch article.

Demapan: I don't know.

Siemer: Did it have to do with the term of office?

Demapan: I had a good reason, I remember, but I do not know now. I don't remember.

Siemer: You supported the legislative branch, the small legislative branch and that was successful. Do you recall other issues with, for example, the judiciary or the Washington representative that you were concerned about? Were you concerned that the Washington representative might wind up being of a different party than the governor?

Demapan: I think I supported to have a Washington representative. To have is not bad.

Siemer: Do you think that will be a problem now when the Washington representative is a different party than the governor?

Demapan: No. I think it is good now. It is good to have. Even same party, I don't care. As long as we have a representative back in Washington.

Siemer: How do you think that has worked out actually, the Washington Representative. Do you think that has worked out all right?

Demapan: As long as he is doing his job; try to listen to the public needs here; to the needs of the people, I don't mind.

Siemer: Do you recall the public hearings that were held during the constitutional convention -- right in the middle of the constitutional convention, the delegates adjourned for 2 days and you held hearings on all the islands? Do you remember that?

Demapan: That was quite a long time ago.

Siemer: It is a long time ago.

Demapan: Especially because I had a stroke, you know.

Siemer: After the public hearings, then the delegates started to vote on constitutional provisions with a 3/4 [vote] requirement; do you remember that, they had to have 3/4 to pass?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: Did you feel at the time that there wasn't enough time left for the constitutional convention, that you were rushed in any way?

Demapan: No, I feel that there was enough time.

Siemer: How did you feel about the briefing books that you were given? Do you remember those? The blue books?

Demapan: For me, okay. No document is perfect.

Siemer: Did you think they were too long?

Demapan: Quite long, yes.

Siemer: If you were doing that kind of thing over again, if you were doing those briefing books over again, what improvements would you make? Would you make the books shorter?

Demapan: If possible.

Siemer: Did you think they covered too much?

Demapan: If possible, it is not bad.

Siemer: How about the use of the consultants by the committees. Remember there were some consultants with your committee and with each of the other committees. Did you think that worked out all right?

Demapan: Yes. For me, yes, because each committee got the right consultant, so it was okay.

Siemer: How about the procedure for delegates to put in their own proposals? Did you think that worked out all right?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: Where delegates would come in with . . . some delegates wanted to do this and other delegates wanted to do that.

Demapan: For me it is not a proper procedure but I think it is the best, not the best but it could be considered good enough.

Siemer: It worked all right during the convention.

Demapan: Yes. Good enough.

Siemer: Because your committee had a large number of those proposals to consider, one after another, and you were

very successful in convincing your colleagues that some things should be left to the legislature, that they should not be in the constitution.

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: You made several speeches about things -- keeping the constitution simple and not including things in there. And your committee disposed quite a lot of those delegate proposals. Remember there were proposals about immigration, there were proposals about all kinds of . . .

Demapan: Minimum wage.

Siemer: Yes. That is exactly right, specific things that you were successful, I think, perhaps because you had been in the municipal council, you were successful in persuading them that the legislature would actually do something about these subjects.

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: When the Rota delegates walked out, were you concerned that that would affect the constitution?

Demapan: No.

Siemer: Why not?

Demapan: Because I treated the . . . people at that time. Why should they walk out for something that is very small? They shouldn't walk out.

Siemer: And not all of them did?

Demapan: In fact, Greg Calvo came to me and asked me a favor not to retaliate, not to fight against. He whispered

to me: "Do not go against please because I want them to come back."

Siemer: And he was one of the ones who did not walk out?

Demapan: Yes, well, yes, indeed that is true.

Siemer: Do you remember talking to any of the others who did not walk out?

Demapan: Only Greg Calvo come to me and whispered don't please hurt those people that walked out because I want them to come back.

Siemer: Did Calvo think they would come back?

Demapan: Yes, he feel yes.

Siemer: Did Calvo go and try to persuade them to come back, do you think?

Demapan: I think so; but for me, I look at those people that walk out, and I don't think there was many who went out.

Siemer: You weren't worried about losing support for the constitution on Rota?

Demapan: No, that is not my point. My point is that I know that they will come back because you know we are at a point to form a constitution.

Siemer: Did you think you had public support for the constitution at the time?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: So you weren't worried that the constitution would not be ratified after you finished your work?

Demapan: I wasn't worried because everybody else knew the constitution created three branches of government.

Siemer: And you were right about that. The constitution was approved with a very large vote.

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: After the constitutional convention, did you work at all on the approval of the constitution?

Demapan: Yes. I campaigned for the approval.

Siemer: Tell me a little about the campaign. How did that get organized?

Demapan: I campaigned in Tinian, I remember. I told the people of Tinian that the U.S. Constitution has been revised 30 times. No document is perfect but, let's vote yes for it because it is done on by our own people, our own delegates. The delegates had been voted by you people so we are the people to ratify; let's have no hard feeling; let's try to support the work of the framers. Who placed the framers? You people.

Siemer: And that worked very well?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: Did you campaign here on Saipan?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: How did the campaign get organized? Who was in charge of it?

Demapan: Over the radio. Over the microphone. Like a campaign.

Siemer: Did Larry Guerrero work on that?

Demapan: I don't think so, but I don't remember. Oscar Rasa, I remember.

Siemer: Did Oscar Rasa work on it?

Demapan: With me, yes.

Siemer: Was Rasa the one who asked you to help?

Demapan: Yes, because I am a very good Chamorro speaker. Very good to speak in Chamorro. I can convince people. I can do convincing speeches. The last election I did not speak over the radio or TV due to the fact that it is very expensive: \$75 per one minute, very expensive so; very few candidates talk on the TV, nor on the radio because it is very expensive.

Siemer: Did you go around and campaign here?

Demapan: No, because I choose to run the hard way - independent candidate. Did you see my picture? Independent candidate.

Siemer: You ran as an independent?

Demapan: Yes, very hard to win.

Siemer: But 3 independents did win?

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: That is the first time, isn't it that independents have won?

Demapan: The 2nd time.

Siemer: Will you run again?

Demapan: No, unless either party urges me to run again, I accept. Because when I won, for the Legislature I run under the Democratic Party.

Siemer: So you have been in the Democratic Party all along?

Demapan: Yes, because Precinct 1 territory is considered Democratic territory, not Republican.

Siemer: That is where we are now in Precinct 1 [San Vicente].

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: You worked on the election districts in Saipan, remember that dispute at the constitutional convention about how the election districts were going to be set up? Do you remember anything about that?

Demapan: The legislative composition or what?

Siemer: Well there was an argument about how much of Saipan was going to be in District 1

Demapan: The redistricting?

Siemer: Yes, exactly. Do you remember any of the debate about that? It was done right at the very end of the constitution.

Demapan: They even went to court.

Siemer: Yes.

Demapan: Okay. This is a Republican idea. Oscar Rasa and the late Senator Borja, always the Republican idea, then afterwards they regret it.

Siemer: What were they trying to do?

Demapan: You know they always like to come out with idea, and then after they discover the idea is not beneficial to their party.

Siemer: Well it didn't work because Governor Camacho was a Popular Party candidate and he was elected.

Demapan: Not only that but, after the redistricting, the Republicans discovered that there are more Democrats win [in the] legislature.

Siemer: But then they won the next election, right? Governor Camacho lost the next one.

Demapan: Yes.

Siemer: Why was the Northern Islands put in with Garapan?

Demapan: That I do not know why.

Siemer: Are there other pieces of the debate that you remember from the constitutional convention?

Demapan: The land alienation, I do remember.

Siemer: Tell me about your position on land alienation.

Demapan: My position was, when I stood up I remember I said, what would happen if a first class U.S. citizen filed a complaint to the Supreme Court stating that the particular provision of land alienation is unconstitutional; what would happen if the Supreme Court come up with the decision that it is unconstitutional? I do not know what they answered me. I forgot. Not too many had good answer. I, for one, [think] this particular section here is very unconstitutional. Why shall we deprive a first class U.S. citizen to own land here; and a Northern Marianas person can feel free to buy land on your soil.

Siemer: Were the other delegates thinking that the Japanese would come in [to the Marianas] through the United States?

Demapan: It was not concerned about foreign countries; they were only concerned about U.S. citizens; I don't know why.

Siemer: They were primarily concerned that U.S. citizens would come here and buy land.

Demapan: Yes. But it happened to be the complete opposite; there are more foreign countries buying land here.

Siemer: Many more.

Demapan: Yes. The Koreans, the Japanese, you know.

Siemer: Who were some of the other delegates who had the same position as you did on the land alienation? I know John Tenorio took the same . . .

Demapan: I think my first cousin, Juan S. Demapan, the Senate president now. And Mr. Camacho, too.

Siemer: Anyone else you can think of?

Demapan: Quite a few.

Siemer: I know when I talked to John Tenorio he said the same thing: he thought, how can we explain this in the United States if we pass this?

Demapan: How the hell can he put in, excuse my words. How can it happen that as an American citizen I can own land in any U.S. soil but a U.S. citizen cannot own down here; why? That is not fair.

Siemer: How do you think that has worked out, the land alienation provisions, since the constitutional convention? Has it caused a problem?

Demapan: I don't think so. I don't think, regarding Article 12, it is much problem because I think only Japanese are involved in that, no U.S. citizen.

Siemer: Has it worked well with respect to the Japanese?

Demapan: In their case, yes, it worked good, okay, no problem; only after [Ted] Mitchell discovered such provision. But you know this particular provision is for protection of our people here.

Siemer: When the land alienation came up, did you try to get it amended?

Demapan: No, it was never amended.

Siemer: You did make a speech about it, though.

Demapan: Yes, but not to amend. It was only trying to gather information from the legal counsel, Mr. Willens.

Siemer: It was a difficult legal question; it was not very clear.

Demapan: I know. I can say that none of the legal counsel ever said that Mr. Demapan is correct, none of them.

Siemer: But no one ever said you were not correct either. It was quite unclear.

Demapan: No, but somebody said well the President of the United States has approved the covenant and in the covenant also there is a provision of that thing; so I believe in the constitution as we are I think U.S. Congress and the President have approved it, so no problem.

Siemer: But there was a danger that you pointed out at the time that the constitution also had to be approved by

the Congress and that that might not happen, if there were these kinds of provisions.

Demapan: Yes. Somebody came up and said the covenant has been approved already by the U.S. Congress.

Siemer: That was right, the Covenant . . .

Demapan: So the U.S. Congress cannot deny to approve the constitution.

Siemer: The Covenant had been approved and the constitution was going to be approved in the Executive Branch. What else? Are there other pieces of the debate that you recall?

Demapan: That is my utmost debate that I would like to make it clear [approval of the Constitution] and the Executive Assistant for Carolinian Affairs, those are the two that I remember the most.

Siemer: All right, thank you very much.

Demapan: Now you switch off the recorder.

[END OF INTERVIEW]