

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Masaru "Pundy" Yokouchi

Masaru "Pundy" Yokouchi was born in 1925 in Wailuku, Maui. After graduating from Baldwin High School, Yokouchi attended business school for one year before being inducted into the army. He later worked in the family bakery and eventually started his own business, Valley Isle Realty.

Yokouchi's involvement in Democratic politics began in 1954. When John Burns was elected governor in 1962, Yokouchi became his unofficial representative on Maui. Burns later named Yokouchi chairman of the newly created State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) in 1966, a position he held until 1978. In 1984, he was reappointed by Governor George Ariyoshi.

Yokouchi continues to run his realty business and serve on the SFCA board. In addition, he is the driving force behind the development of the Maui Community Arts and Cultural Center.

Tape Nos. 17-31-1-89 and 17-32-1-89

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Masaru "Pundy" Yokouchi (MY)

November 9, 1989

Wailuku, Maui

BY: Larry Meacham (LM) and Warren Nishimoto (WN)

Joy Chong: The following is an interview with "Pundy" Yokouchi. First name is really Masaru. Masaru. Nickname is "Pundy" Yokouchi. The interview took place on November 9, 1989, on Maui at Mr. Yokouchi's Valley Isle Realty office. And the interviewers were Warren Nishimoto and Larry Meacham. This is videotape number one.

LM: This is tape number one. Mr. Yokouchi, how did you get the nickname "Pundy"?

MY: Well, I was born and raised in a bakery, a small bakery [Yokouchi Bakery], and alongside our bakery was another bakery. We used to just sell (our products) over the counter, and they used to take their products out to the stores. My neighbors were Portuguese, (the father's name was Manuel Mendes. And he had a son named Ernest. Manuel used to call me "*Pao duce*," which is Portuguese for sweet bread. And my brother, the oldest brother, used to call Ernest "*Pao duce*," so they used to call both of us "*Pao duce*." But as they say in Hawai'i, *Poragees* got strong mouth, eh, so I ended up "*Pao duce*" and the guy's still Ernest.

(Laughter)

WN: Did you like *pao duce*?

MY: Yeah, well, you grow up in a bakery, you eat your own product, you know. So, we used to do a pretty good *pao duce*, because my mother learned that from Mrs. Rego, who's the mother [of Leonard Rego] of Leonard's Bakery in Honolulu. He came to our bakery once and asked my brothers who (were of) the same age. And he asked them, "How come you Japanese can make sweet bread like that?" (We had) a hell of a time.

So my brothers all laugh(ed) and they say, "Don't you know where we got the recipe from?"

He said, "No."

"From your mother. My mother got it from your mother."

The guy was shocked. And then we showed him how we did it. And that was a real old-style way of doing sweet bread. (We did it) like the sponge system where you have the old dough and you break it up, to help the fermentation. That's why the bread, beyond the usual

ingredients, had (that) little extra flavor, because of the old dough.

LM: So that's pretty hard work in a bakery, huh?

MY: Yeah. It's a sweatshop. So, whenever I eat pastries, even now, I really appreciate it, what these people have to go through.

LM: Just briefly, what's the routine like in a bakery?

MY: Well, you get up—family bakeries are a little different. You get up about 4:00 and we started about 4:30, 5:00 depending on the schedule. And then, you start off mixing whatever you need to do. Everything is measured by hand, and you put it in a mixer. And all the dough is taken out by hand, by taking pieces and cutting it, put it in a trough. And that was the toughest work because you mix the dough, then you cut the dough, take the dough out—we're talking several hundred pounds of dough—put it in the trough, let it ferment for a while. (When) it comes up you (then) punch it down. And then put (it) on a bench, then you cut off 1-1/4 pound. After baking, it comes down to one pound. And you mold that by hand, all round balls. Then, later on, you put it in (a) molder, a machine, you put (in) one by one. It comes out long. Then on the other end, you catch it, put it in a pan. Then you ferment it again, let it rise, then you put it in the oven. And after it comes out, you have to unload every loaf, which comes in a pan of four. You unload all of that by hand on the rack and let it cool. After it cools, you put it in the slicer one by one. Take one bread at a time, put it through the slicer, then pick it up, then you put it in the wrapper, that's semiautomatic. You have to push (a) certain lever and all that. You wrap it, (then) put it in a box. Next day, my other brother goes out and delivers that bread. And I think we made all of one penny to a loaf.

LM: Wow. A lot of work.

MY: Yeah. (Chuckles)

WN: Where was the bread delivered?

MY: Ah, stores, different stores. We used to have a lot of people come, over the counter (also). But most of that bread-making part was for the stores.

LM: So it was a pretty successful bakery?

MY: Yeah, I would say so. You know, unlike today, you know, eating habits of people have changed. Today, we're more oriented towards bread and wheat products. Whereas in the past, you have sections of different nationalities and we were mostly in a predominantly Japanese neighborhood. So, your volume of sales weren't that great, you know. But we made a living.

LM: And could you tell us when you were born and your parents' names?

MY: My dad's name was Shokichi Yokouchi. My mother's name was Miki. And I was born in 1925. I'm the last of six children. So I was born upstairs of the bakery. Those days they had this, what do you call those nurses. . . .

LM: Midwives?

MY: Yeah, midwives, you know. My dad and my mother came from Kagawa-ken. That's (in) Shikoku. They came just after the turn of the century in 1903 or [190]4.

LM: Did they work on the plantations before the bakery?

MY: Yes.

LM: Do you know about how long?

MY: I think he probably worked there for about little less than twenty years. Maybe about eighteen years or so. And . . .

LM: Before the bakery?

MY: Before the bakery.

LM: Oh. And was he a field worker or did he have other jobs too?

MY: He started in the field like everybody else and he worked in the mill. And the reason why he bought the bakery, is that they had what they call *tanomoshi*, which is a way the old people used to save money. And they used to bid for those monies when they borrow. A group of his friends said that they wanted to go into this pineapple business. So they planted pineapple. And my dad, was, I guess, one of the better wage earners. So he had to co-sign for a lot of these people. (Then,) this severe storm (came), and [it] wiped out their crop. This was before I was born. His total obligation at that time amounted to \$7,000. It was like \$7 million today, I guess, if you're looking from the eyes of a plantation worker. Because one person died, the other one, I think, went into an asylum. He had to pick up their obligation.

LM: What did a plantation worker make in one month then, roughly?

MY: Oh, I would guess, all of \$30 or whatever.

LM: Okay.

MY: Anyway, with that, he went back to the *tanomoshi*, told them that there's no way he could pay them back \$7,000. So they loaned him an additional \$2,000, (so) he bought (this) bakery in Wailuku. That's the reason why he went into the bakery business. He didn't know anything about (baking) you know, being Japanese. But he ran a pretty successful (operation), there was a store, also, with the bakery. They were fairly successful because they paid back every penny that they owed.

LM: Was your father active in community affairs, associations, and stuff like that?

MY: No, he was basically just a storekeeper. Just running the store. Basically, my parents were really homebodies. They very rarely got out to the community (and its affairs).

LM: So where'd you go to school?

MY: To Baldwin High School in Wailuku.

LM: And you knew Najo [Nadao Yoshinaga] and them when you were in school, huh?

MY: Yeah, but Najo was above me. He's about five years older than I am. He went to Maui High School. In fact, he happened to be a classmate of my sister; she went to Maui High School (also). When (I was ready for high school), Baldwin High School was built. So we were the first entering freshman class (then).

LM: So what were you guys like when you were kids?

MY: *Pilau*.

(Laughter)

LM: For instance?

MY: Well, we grew up in a neighborhood that, you know, that (was) still the old Hawai'i. I guess we lived (the) life of Huckleberry Finn, Tom Sawyer (and others). We had great, great advantages. We used to hike up this valley ('Īao) during the summer. Eat rose apple, or guavas, or whatever, along the way. Swim in the rivers. Those days the rivers were flowing. They didn't capture the water as they do today. And hike up this mountain and what they (called the) table lands. We used to do things like that. And we used to do other things. Rascal things that other kids used to do. So, we grew up in an area that was pretty exciting for us, because it's almost in the middle of Maui. We could hike up to the mountains and hike down to the beach. And spend our summers that way.

LM: So were you guys kind of rascals around the neighborhood?

MY: Oh, yeah. I remember once Najo's brother, [Toshio] "Bull" Yoshinaga, who's the same age with me, were playing basketball that afternoon. We were young kids, probably at that time about eleven or twelve years old. And coming home from the gym, was this nice lychee tree. We used to call it "lychee," but it's actually *longan* [dragon's eye]. And [it] was [on] this Chinese family's property. So, I think about eight of us climbed the tree and were helping ourselves. The owner called the cops. We used to have this guy named Joe [Joseph] Kahooanohano, we used to call him "Joe Kohono," and that guy was one of those policemen that didn't smile. Parents used to call him in case they [were] getting a hard time with their son(s). And just he sitting in front of you, you know, scared the hell out of you. So, what he did was haul us all down, march us, and said, "One, two, three, four," we had to walk in cadence. And he dropped [us] off one by one as we go(t) home. (Laughs) So we used to get our share of fun.

LM: Okay. All right, so, after you graduated high school, what'd you do then?

MY: I went into the army. I went to business school for a while, but we were called, drafted, and went into the army.

LM: When World War II started, were there repercussions here on Maui with your family at all?

MY: Yeah, well, being a second-generation Japanese, (and also,) this island was very unusual because I think we had a population of about 50,000 at that time, (but) all the youth from nineteen [years old] on, were drafted. I wouldn't say all, but a great, great portion of them. So, you didn't find the so-called prime youths on Maui. They were all away. On the other hand, the prime youths from the Mainland came here, in the way of the [U.S. Marine Corps] 5th [4th] Marine Division. They had about 50,000 people located here. Then we had the navy, the naval air station. (Also) we had the army, the Mohawks Division. So, (at) any given time, I think Maui had about 100,000 servicemen. And we were the few kids around.

These young kids in the marines used to come to Wailuku town to take in the (movie) matinees. We used to see them get off all these trucks and (crowd the town). (But the) next thing you know, they disappeared; they (didn't) come to Wailuku. Then we would pick up the paper a few days later, (and discovered) they invaded Tarawa or Iwo Jima, (et cetera). They were the [U.S. Marine Corps 4th and] 5th Marine Divisions that were the first wave in all the Pacific battles with the Japanese. So these same kids, nineteen-, twenty-year-olds (came) back home (to Maui). (And) the next time they go to the theater, they see these guys sitting around the streets, look(ing) like the guy (they) just did battle in Iwo Jima, you know. So they point at you, (and say,) "You damn Jap." So, being teenagers, you know what happened after that. We won't back off. So, we used to do our battle in that way, too. We had our (share of) prejudice that, you know, was (prevalent during) those days.

LM: Did the bakery do better from military business or anything?

MY: No. During the war they had a ration system.

LM: Oh.

MY: Flour and everything else, you know, was just given out to the bakeries on a limited basis. And my brothers decided at that time—everybody was very, very patriotic in those days, and they felt that pastry wasn't really needed, but people needed bread because the Honolulu bakeries like Love's and (others) stopped sending their bread over to Maui, because of the war. So, bakeries like my brothers' produced only bread. They had a ceiling on all prices, you know. (There was) an Office of Price [Administration]. I think they were selling bread for ten cents a loaf, so there was no profit in it. So, my brothers' business was one of the few that really didn't prosper from the war.

LM: Did a lot of [your] brothers end up in the service, or some of them, or . . .

MY: No.

LM: No.

MY: The bakery was considered vital, . . .

LM: Oh.

MY: . . . work, so, they were all exempted.

LM: Okay, so when you were drafted, where did you go, where were you stationed and so on?

MY: We were in Schofield [Barracks] right through.

LM: Oh.

MY: It was (nearly) the end of the war. So [when] we got inducted, the European war just got through, and then right after that the Japanese war. So, we were just stationed in Schofield.

LM: Okay. So after the war was over, what did you do?

MY: When I came back, I was a very poor student, school didn't interest me, so my brothers talked me into working in the bakery. So I said, "Yeah, I think that's easier for me." I went through all this regimentation in the army that I hated. And, you know, few of us were offered to go overseas and get commission(ed), field commission, and (other benefits). (But) I said no, I just hate(d) this regimentation—getting up at a certain time, reporting, and all this discipline. I preferred civilian life. So, I went back to the family, worked in the bakery, got up at four o'clock in the morning, found a tougher regimentation in the bakery than the army. And regretted that ever since.

(Laughter)

WN: Did the family business, was it frequented by soldiers during the war? Did it increase in that respect?

MY: No. Our business, very, very seldom, some of the soldiers used to find their way to the bakery. (We) used to make a limited amount of pastries. Very, very limited. But, once in a while, maybe they're hungry for civilian bread, or whatever—the army always had their bread—they used to come and buy some bread. But mostly [it] was the civilians that were our customers. Those days, it wasn't unusual to have bread lines, wrapped right around the block. You know, just waiting for our bread to come out, because bread was pretty scarce. So, every day you had to wait in line.

LM: So your brothers' feelings were pretty clear. During the war they were totally pro-American. How about your folks?

MY: Yeah, my dad, right after the outbreak of the war, suffered a stroke.

LM: Oh.

MY: He was basically retired. He was in bed (at) home most of the time, and he could hardly communicate. Whereas, Mother was still healthy. One night I asked her (about) her feelings about her country and my country. My dad was a fierce (Japan) patriot. When he first arrived in Hawai'i, they had the Russo-Japanese War couple years later. He went back and volunteered for the war. But at that time, they told him the war was just about over, so, he came back. Whereas my mother told me that, "My son's country is my country."

WN: Why don't we stop right here.

LM: Okay, why don't we switch tape.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

JC: The following is a continuation of the “Pundy” Yokouchi interview. This is videotape number two.

LM: Yeah.

MY: When Kīhei was starting to develop—interest actually, not real(ly) development yet. This (was) about 1957 or [195]8. We saw this property, twenty-five acres, owned by a fellow by the name of Jack Abreu. When I approached him, whether he was interested in selling the property, he told me, “Well, how much will you offer?” And he knew me because he knew my dad.

So I said, “For [\$]2,500 an acre.”

He laughed. He said, “You know, this is really something.” He said, “You know, your dad and I (were) good friends.” He used to peddle groceries, and used to (sell) bread for my dad. And he told my father way back, “Yokouchi, let’s go down Kīhei and buy these homestead lots. They’re cutting it at twenty-five acres.”

So my old man told him, and these are his [Abreu’s] words, he said, “Your old man called me *bakatare*. He said, ‘Why should I buy *kiawe* when I can have it delivered on my doorstep.’” And those days, we used to use a lot of *kiawe* wood. So (my dad) didn’t buy. Jack Abreu bought, and he paid all of seven dollars an acre. It was \$175 for twenty-five acres. My old man refused (to buy). (Because) my father always had the idea he’s going back to Japan, so they didn’t buy land. So, Jack had a lot of kick out of that. So he said, “Well, I’ll let you know. If one of these days I sell, I’ll sell to you.” And one year later he called me.

And I told him, “Oh, Jack, we’ve got to adjust the price,” because (it’s) one year later, (so) “I think the price must have gone up a little bit.”

He said, “Nah, nah, nah, what you told me before is good enough.” So he sold the property to us.

LM: Let me ask you. A lot of the books talk about how in school and stuff, kids learned a lot about democracy and stuff like that. Did you get that feeling when you were in school? That you came out as sort of super Americans determined to be democratic and all that stuff?

MY: Not really. My interest was always sports. I used to just concentrate on sports and not on my studies. So, I haven’t really—I never did put my mind to questions like that. We, naturally, [were] educated on (the) American system. But then, we lived in a plantation system. There’s some conflict there, you know. Our world was a little confined. Few of us, boys that really applied themselves, may have had that kind of thoughts that you just mentioned. They felt that they can go out into the world and really do something. But myself, I basically grew up in a limited kind of a way. The way we lived in Wailuku, the surrounding plantation way of life, and then the little we learned from school. And I’m saying very little, because I was a poor student, as I mentioned earlier. So, I had no aspirations as such. My idea of a good life was playing baseball or football, and later on coaching. And then, helping the family bakery kind

of thing, you know. . . .

LM: So you were working at the bakery. What else were you doing, this is after the army, working at the bakery, and what else were you doing?

MY: I was involved in sports a lot and I used to coach, help coach, the high school football team. And then I started coaching some of the younger kids in the Pony League. And basketball, I used to coach what they called the senior league, the older players, and then baseball. So I used to do a lot of coaching. And, you know, we used to have a pretty good league. On Maui, baseball was—they played a good brand of baseball. It was during the war, in fact, (we) had a lot of major leaguers, and semipro, and minor leaguers here. The Mohawks Division, army, navy, fielded some great teams. And then some of our senior league teams used to play with them. They used to play a good brand of baseball; so, Maui always had a strong baseball league. So, we were quite involved with that.

LM: So you knew a lot of people and a lot of people knew you from that, huh?

MY: I guess, yeah. I guess, we had some success, you know. And, in fact, I think that's one of the reasons why my good friend, Nadao Yoshinaga, when he came back from law school and started his [law] practice on Maui, asked some of us to get involved in politics, which was very, very strange to us, you know. Our world was sports. And he told me that he needed to have people around who can talk to their friends on this great, great (effort) that they're developing in 1954. This was 1953 when he organized us. And he tried to explain some of the basics to us.

Like, I still remember what he told me about the Christmas Seals. That used to be funds for tuberculosis, those days. And he said, you do a lot of things in a charitable way. Like in sports, you try to do your share of what you feel is at least some giving back to the community. And then you have groups like the Salvation Army, they're doing their part. But he said, "There are many inequities involved that could change overnight the idea of (equity)." That's the reason why he wanted to get into politics. And he needed our help, people that he knew, plus people that he felt had some contact with the community. That's how we got involved in politics.

LM: Did he get specific about what sort of things he wanted to change? How did you feel about those?

MY: Yeah, [it] was really strange to me. I come from a businessman's background. A small, tiny bakery, but nevertheless, we consider ourselves business[men]. And Nadao, naturally, was a Democrat. And he embraced the ILWU [International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union] as "Jack" [John] Burns did. And one of the inequities that he really felt strongly about was our labor laws. They were pretty anti-labor those days. And so, I still remember his telling me, one factor [of his going into politics], he said, that he wants to change some of these laws. And he's embracing the ILWU, whom the general public perceive(d) as being pink, red [communist], or whatever. They had a bad reputation in the general community. When he explained to me why the ILWU was crucified, it was for business purposes. But he said that he needs that vehicle, like the Democratic party needed a vehicle, the ILWU, because they're organized, they have a large number of people in their organization. Together, they can change and benefit the people. But the day may come when they will be

self-serving and only serve the ILWU for their own political purposes just to stay in politics or get reelected. So Najo told me, "When that day comes, Pundy, when I put the ILWU and the welfare of Yoshinaga before the welfare of the people, then that's the day you call me on it. You know, you drop off from my campaign. I'll understand."

LM: All right, but labor laws was something that Najo was interested in. I mean, if you're a small business[person], why do you care about the labor laws? What things attracted you in Najo's and the Democrats' program?

MY: The fairness, basically. And as I told you earlier, my mind really wasn't into governmental affairs or world affairs. But just that argument. . . . And Najo is a fantastic arguer. He's a persistent guy, you know. He put in a very clear way with me that some of the labor laws were—and he explained it to me, (so) I could understand the unfairness of it.

One of the really fundamental things was minimum wage. I think that those days it was something like [fifty-five] cents an hour or something like that. And then when the Democrats took over [the legislature] they raised it to [sixty-five] cents. And all the small business people were screaming. And I remember (in) Wailuku, we had an association, business association, and some of the people pointed their fingers at me. They said, "How can you, Pundy, as a businessman, support a person like Yoshinaga, and they raise the minimum wage on us?"

I said, "I guess we have to go on a basis of what it takes, number one, to live. Number two, that this money being paid, on a minimum wage level, comes back to the small businessmen. Even though you paid them, it comes back to you, because we're talking about the basic people." And I know I was criticized at that time, being a small businessman supporting this kind of Democratic movement, you know. But, again, I guess I was brought up in the sports world, where sportsmanship, fairness, and rules are very important. So, even though I didn't fully understand some of the impact, with a guy like Najo explaining the parts to me, I couldn't help but agree.

LM: Besides minimum wage, labor laws, were there other things that Najo was pushing for that you felt were important?

MY: Yeah, well, unemployment compensation for agricultural workers, for instance, was a big thing with him. He fought about five years for that, and he finally got that thing through in 1959. That date is very important to me because the day he passed that bill, my son was born, you know. And Najo got up on the floor of the senate and said that a son was born. So Heb [D. Hebden] Porteus, who was the Republican minority leader, got up and congratulated Yoshinaga. But, that was meant (as) a double (entendre), you know, that his pal had a son and his unemployment compensation law was passed that day.

WN: You said that you received some criticism from the small business community. In what form was it? By whom? Anybody specific? Or what kind of feedback did you get?

MY: Well, basically from that minimum-wage thing. That really, really hurt the small business people, you know. They were fighting that. And the other one was the sales tax. Those days we used to call it. . . . We didn't call it a sales tax. We called it excise tax. And the union [ILWU] and the Democrats wanted that tax to be hidden. So, in other words, if you buy a dollar product, you know, you pay a dollar, but four cents is paid by the store to the

government. So the net amount is ninety-six cents. Whereas, the sales tax, you charge a dollar, plus four cents, you know. So it comes to dollar four cents [\$1.04]. So (there) was a big battle on that. And finally the merchants took it upon themselves to show that tax. So today, it's known, basically, as a sales tax. So it's not dollar, it's dollar four cents [\$1.04] today, you know, which is a pretty big thing to the small merchants, eh.

LM: Where would [you] hear about this? At say, community meetings or business meetings, or Rotary, . . .

MY: Yeah.

LM: . . . something like that?

MY: We used to have meetings, off and on, like. . . . At one point I was the president of this Wailuku Improvement Association. And they wanted to move our civic center down towards Kahului. A&B [Alexander and Baldwin] offered the county the property in order to move the civic center. And naturally, it was a fairly good offer, because people feel they can build new, you know. Plan it right, the land is free. But as a merchant in Wailuku, we fought that because this is our only industry in Wailuku. And Wailuku was the biggest tax base those days. And A&B had this plan for this Dream City, so they needed a civic center, all the offices that go with it, you know. We were very, very young in those days, we didn't know much about it. So, we started this improvement association, and they elected me president. And we lobbied against that. So, in some of our meetings of that improvement association, some of our gatherings, coffee hours in politics, we used to have a fairly active business group that used to meet. And they used to discuss different matters like politics, too, so, . . .

LM: Was this under the improvement association or were there other organizations you were in?

MY: No, just a little town association in those days. Wailuku Business and Professional Association, you know. Fundamentally, that.

LM: So you were involved in all these community groups, also, in addition to the sports?

MY: Yeah, well, I just started those days. After I got involved in politics, then I started getting involved in things like this. But prior to that, my world was strictly sports.

LM: Okay. So. . . .

WN: Can I ask a question?

LM: Yeah, go.

WN: How did your father and your brothers feel about you getting involved in politics, especially Democratic politics? I know your father was, especially your older brothers, I think, were active in the bakery, too. Did they give you any kind of a bad time?

MY: Well, they tolerated me, because in a bakery, you know, you cannot do things at your own time. When the bread rise(s), you got to punch it down, and you got to mold it. So, finally, my brothers gave up. They put a telephone next to the work bench, because that's how I used

to get telephone calls. So they used to tolerate that. Then I became, one year, the Democratic party patronage chairman on Maui, where we used to demand that the elected officials recognize some of the workers. Job opportunities and things like that, you know, went through the patronage committee. And then, appointments to boards and commissions, also, went through the patronage committee. Not that the committee really controlled things, but, at least we were like a group trying to have a fair(er) distribution of positions.

One of the items was civil service commission. In those days, the civil service commission and the liquor commission were the only ones paid for their attendance. And they had all of ten dollars per meeting, you know. So, a lot of people wanted to get on those commissions. And then, the slot that opened at that time [late 1950s], was a Republican position. Whereas, the board of supervisors at that time, were all Democrats, controlled by the Democratic party. So, we said, okay, let's find a friendly Republican. So, we nominated this fellow named Charlie Ota. Then the Republicans came out with Marco Meyer, who also was an alumni of St. Anthony's School. And so we denied Meyer, we recommended Ota, and Ota eventually got it.

Meanwhile, this delegation from the school came to see me and said that they want my support because Meyer is an alumni. And I told them sorry, because Meyer, his whole family is a very, very strong Republican family. And as a Democrat, I have to recommend a weaker Republican. But they said, "Yeah, but, Pundy, your bakery supplies the school (all of the) bakery products." And so he said, "You know, if it's not Meyer, you may lose your contract." And St. Anthony happened to be one of the few schools that served breakfast and lunch, so they were our best customer. And sure enough, they took their contract away.

And that's the one time one of my brothers blew, you know. He said, "You and your stupid politics. You see what it does to our bakery? No benefit. We lost our biggest contract that we had." But . . .

LM: He never got it back?

MY: No, never got it back.

LM: Okay, let's switch tapes.

WN: Interesting.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

JC: The following is a continuation of the Pundy Yokouchi interview. This is videotape number three.

LM: This is tape number three. When you started working in politics, what were you doing? When, say, '53, what sort of activities were you doing?

MY: In politics you mean? Oh, we were basically the people who walked around, house to house, you know, talking to our neighbors, talking to our friends. And Najo [Yoshinaga] was amazing, when you consider that was his first time in politics, the way he organized it. He organized it by sections. Every part of Maui was divided into sections. And then in the end, it was divided into blocks. So we had, at one point, I would guess we had about 500 active workers working on any given campaign. But Najo was a real team player, so he used to get his people to even carry other candidates' cards and things like that. So, in the end [it] was almost self-defeating, because you get a great organization, but you're passing out too many cards. And then he used to always instill that sense of responsibility in us that just Yoshinaga winning is not enough. That it has to be a team. And then, the leader of (the movement, Burns, didn't) have any particular group representing them on Maui, (so Yoshinaga insisted) that we had to at least share that responsibility in helping that person. So, that's how we got involved with Jack Burns. Jack, being a Honolulu person, didn't have any real organization on Maui. But there was a Yoshinaga organization that in the end became the Burns organization.

LM: So, say you have the Yoshinaga organization, you have the ILWU, is that all there was as far as the Democrats went?

MY: Oh no, no, no.

LM: No.

MY: Every candidate, naturally, had their following. And those days, in 1954, it wasn't organized like today. So when we organized, it was completely a surprise to lot(s) of other candidates, (since) they weren't as organized. Lot of candidates used to win strictly by their own personality, you know, and whatever popularity they have at that time.

LM: So how would they get workers to go out and do this stuff?

MY: They used to have rallies in the old days where you go from place to place. They have a night rally, the Republicans and the Democratic party. And that's where they used to make their speeches, people would come out to these rallies to listen to them. And they may have a handful of workers, you know, helping around, but no real house-to-house canvassing. Yoshinaga, I think, was the first one that did it in a, basically, a county-wide basis. I'm sure there were others who did it in piecemeal basis, place to place, but not in a county-wide basis.

LM: So where did he get all the people? Where did he get 500 people?

MY: Well, it's like a chain reaction. He called his friends, who called their friends, and their friends called their friends. And then we used to, at a certain point, integrated some of the ILWU workers. But the ILWU also had their own structure where they didn't want to be influenced by the Democratic party, either, you know. They wanted a certain independence, so that the party had to come to them, rather than they join the party. So, at times, we weren't really working together. We were working independently. The ILWU had their own slate. They used to also endorse some Republicans. So, they had their own slate. But whenever we (had) a common candidate, at certain times at least we could join forces. Our workers were few ILWU-type workers, too. But basically, it was all friends of friends kind of

thing.

LM: How would you decide who worked in each area?

MY: The ideal was that if you lived in this block, that's your block because you know your neighbors. And sometimes it doesn't—you (couldn't) find a person there. So you find somebody fairly close by. But, we were so organized where the Wailuku guy don't go to Kula and campaign, or go to Kahului. We have Kahului people campaign in Kahului. Wailuku people, Wailuku. Kula people, Kula.

LM: So Najo was the one who basically sparked all this, huh?

MY: Mm hmm.

LM: On Maui.

MY: Right.

LM: Who were the other people running? Who were the other prominent politicians then?

MY: We had Elmer Cravalho, who started the same time. In fact, Najo called us one night, told us about this young, promising guy upcountry [Kula], that he was very impressed with. And in order to give him some exposure, because he wasn't well known on Maui, he said, "Let's make him party chairman." So, in 1954, they named Elmer Cravalho, who was a real freshman in politics, as a party chairman. And ever since then, you know, Elmer led the ticket. Then we had David Trask [Jr.]. He was living on Maui those days. And we had people like [S.] George Fukuoka. Old-timers like John Duarte. On the county level, people like Eddie [Edward F.] Tam used to be the mayor [chair of board of supervisors]. The most colorful mayor in Hawai'i. (Now,) that's a real case of popularity. He didn't really have workers as such. It was strictly his personality.

LM: He was in office a long time, yeah?

MY: Yeah, yeah. He died in office [in 1966]. So . . .

LM: He was Democrat or Republican?

MY: Democrat.

LM: Democrat.

WN: Where was Eddie Tam's source of power? I mean, was he aligned at all, eventually, with the Burns group or. . . .

MY: No, Eddie Tam was Eddie Tam. He was an unusual, (a) happy person. He used to go (to) these cocktail parties, as you know, politicians are always invited. He was the only nondrinker, having the biggest ball of his life, enjoying himself. He [was] that kind of guy. He's a nondrinker, and then he's the only guy scurrying around the whole cocktail party talking to everybody. He used to just love that. That was his nature. He had an unusual

attractiveness that people really liked.

LM: And was he a good mayor, too? Did he work well as a mayor?

MY: He worked maybe half a day and made sure he didn't miss the tee-off time. But his staff, the board of supervisors used to all cover for him, because they liked the guy. So, somehow the county functioned. But the guy used to worry about these (long) caucuses, (when) I used to be in that patronage committee and we (had) some serious things to discuss. We (met) in his office with the board of supervisors. And everybody's arguing and Eddie's only looking at his watch. He doesn't want to miss the tee-off [time]. (Chuckles) So, he was a colorful guy.

LM: Did he have an organization that helped him? Or did he just do it on his own or . . .

MY: Basically his own. Naturally, like everybody else, [he] had followers. But he wasn't organized like Yoshinaga. It was really old-time politics. Personality. Well, another guy used to be the treasurer [auditor] of the county of Maui. And I forget when he retired or even lost. Probably he lost the last campaign, but he was probably nearing eighty when he lost. It was Sam Alo, [Sr.], and he used to be a nice gentleman. He used to have this—always this hat on. And he used to bow to the ladies, tip his hat, and always said, "Hello." Nobody could defeat the guy. And he didn't have any campaign force. Just him. Riding in a car, always waving at people. And that was the old-time way of politicking. [In 1954, Sam Alo, Sr., lost his bid for reelection as county auditor. He was seventy-two years old at the time.]

WN: When you people started to campaign for Burns, where did Eddie Tam fit in, in all this?

MY: We used to have rallies. So, we used to have county office seekers, the state [office candidates], and then the mayor, and then the governor. So, basically, he would be one of the principal speakers late in the night. If the governor showed up, the governor, naturally, would be the last speaker. Because we were well organized, too, that helped a person like Eddie, because the crowd (came) out because of different candidates and different friends. So, we used to have some pretty good gatherings. Over thousand people attended rallies like that. That kind of exposure alone goes a long way for a person like Eddie Tam.

LM: You're talking how many voters all together on Maui at that time?

MY: Oh, gee.

LM: Roughly.

MY: Yeah, I would say maybe about 15,000 voters, something like that.

LM: Did Najo basically recruit all these guys: George Fukuoka, Elmer Cravalho, et cetera?

MY: No, he didn't recruit them.

LM: Trask?

MY: But he encouraged them. I cannot think of anybody in that group that he, himself, you know, recruited as such. But I'm sure he played a role in encouraging them, like Elmer Cravalho,

for instance. Elmer (had) the ambition. And Elmer Cravalho, nobody recruits him. Elmer Cravalho is Elmer Cravalho. So, Najo recognized his talents right away. And that's how he asked the people to support him for party chairmanship.

LM: So Najo's support was sufficient to get him in?

MY: Oh yeah, yeah. He led the ticket, Elmer Cravalho, the first year they ran. They all ran in the house [of representatives]. Najo, David Trask, Elmer and Bob [Robert N.] Kimura. There were four [six] seats those days. And all four made it. And Elmer led the ticket.

LM: Now, is that what people refer to as the Maui landslide? Wasn't there something . . .

MY: Mmm, well, '54 was a landslide, statewide. Territory-wide at those days, eh. It was a landslide all over.

WN: What was the extent of the Republican party at the time? Who were some of the Republican figures in those early years?

MY: Well, before Eddie Tam, the chairmanship of the board of supervisors, which is like the mayor today, were held all by the Republicans. And you go back to basic Hawaiian history, for fifty years the Republican party was a majority. They dominated until 1954. It was the first time the Democrats took the majority. That was universal in all the counties. So Maui was no exception. In 1954 everything changed, became Democratic.

WN: But there's some Republicans like Toshio Ansai.

MY: Toshi Ansai was a member of the board of supervisors. And he was a Republican, and if [I'm] not mistaken, Toshi ran from the early [19]30s. And I think he had a string of not being beaten for over thirty years, whatever race he ran. Senate or whatever. You have people like, the old days, like Al [Aloysius S.] Spenser. . . . Again, pre-'54 is almost like a blank to me. I really wasn't involved with politics.

LM: In '54 did the Democrats win all the board of supervisors races, too?

MY: Not all, but they took the majority.

LM: You talked about the patronage committee. Can you tell me a little bit how that worked? I mean, how would you decide who to recommend? How powerful were your recommendations, et cetera.

MY: Our recommendations weren't powerful. Because, what we were asking the politicians to do was concede their power to the party. And any politician worth his salt, you know, uses that power. So, we were in constant struggle. That thing didn't go far actually. And especially, like the case I mentioned earlier, about the civil service commission, was one of the very, very few. But when it came to jobs, actual jobs, they just called us on that. I think that in those days, again, we were in a recession. There were hardly any new jobs opening. So, the few that came about, I would guess at this point, it was lucky that they took one-fourth of our recommendations.

LM: How about later on when you were sort of Burns' man in [Maui]? Did that give you more leverage? Could you get more people placed?

MY: No. Actually, we probably could, but not as an official committee. By that time, the patronage committee was defunct already. But as a Burns' man, I probably could have placed more people if I wanted to, because of my position. But, one of the things that we refrained from was to try and get people hired, that weren't qualified. By that time, anyway, our civil service rules were pretty strict already. So, all we could do was just ask people if the people that we recommend(ed), if they (made) the top five, if they would give them some consideration.

It sounds as though I'm kind of pulling your leg, because of the perception of politics. But I'll give you one example. This fellow, his name was (Hideo) Hayashi. He used to be superintendent of highways for the state. And one night, my wife and I were at this luau [lū'au]. And after the luau, he and his wife walked over to me. And he thanked me, because he said that he just retired from the position. And the reason why he was thanking me, is because in all the years that Burns was in power, and knowing that I sort of semirepresented Burns on Maui, I never did put any pressure on him. I used to ask him about certain positions, when it's open, you know, when do they take the exam, things like that. And he said, I was one of the few politicians—and I was considered a politician—that never did put any pressure on him.

LM: So what percentage of your recommendations ended up with the jobs, would you guess? In the Burns period, let's say.

MY: Jobs are given, even in the Burns period, was not plentiful. We're talking about few positions opening up. I would say, if I put in a dozen people, I think it was about it.

LM: Okay, let's talk a little bit about Burns. He lost in '54 [in race for delegate to Congress]. Why, would you say?

MY: That's one of the examples that Yoshinaga used. He said that everybody was busy electing themselves. And the guy that put everything together for everybody was neglected. But because he had nobody in Maui, Kaua'i or Hawai'i, and just a handful in Honolulu, his campaign was neglected. And he [Yoshinaga] said that we cannot let that happen again. That's totally unfair. That next time, 1956, we got to really, really draw (our) effort(s) behind him [Burns], because without him, 1954 wouldn't have happened. So, that's when the Yoshinaga group took the responsibility to campaign for Burns.

LM: Okay, let's switch tapes because I think that'll be a long story.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

JC: The following is a continuation of the Pundy Yokouchi interview. This is videotape number four.

LM: Okay, this is tape number four. Okay, so decided that next time we have to work harder for Burns. So how did you folks go about that?

MY: Well, we made sure, besides all the cards that we have to carry, that we made Burns our focal candidate. So, everybody, whenever we (had) our gatherings, emphasized that they have to help Burns. Because, you have to understand, people who come out campaigning, basically came out for their friends. And Yoshinaga would meld them together and say, "My boys and your boys, we work together," kind of thing. They had their, naturally, their favorite candidates. So, we had to really, really instill in them the idea that they had to basically support that standard-bearer, which was Burns.

LM: Did you know Burns personally at that point, say in '56?

MY: Very slightly. I was one of the third-string boys. Others were the people that handled his . . .

LM: So, basically, you're taking on Najo's them word, yeah?

MY: Mm hmm, mm hmm.

LM: So, did Burns come over at all? How did people react to him?

MY: Oh, yeah, he came over. In fact, he used to always kick off his campaign on Maui, you know. That was traditional with him. And he used to come over quite often. So, as he started coming over, we started getting to know him better.

LM: What sort of things would he say when he was talking to you? When he was giving speeches? What would he emphasize?

MY: I still remember the---he used to always say the---I'm trying to find that word, now. It's right on the tip of my tongue. The "latent talent" of our people. And I used to look at Najo guys and say, "What he mean by latent talent?" "Latent talent," they('re) trying to explain to me. Still not out there, but it's in there, you know. "What you talking about?"

"We're talking about our people of Hawai'i."

"Oh."

"Latent talent."

Yeah, but, chee, you know, those days, only the *Haoles* get all the good position, right? You know, so they (are) the talent. But Burns used to always say about the latent talent, you know. And when we finally got statehood, he just loaded up his cabinet with all, basically, locals. (But) then the government didn't collapse, right? So that was proving his point about (our) latent talent, you know. So, I still remember that. He used to use that word.

The beginning, I'm still in the bakery, eh. "What he mean by latent talent?" They had to explain that to me, you know. And after they explained it, I still couldn't understand what he meant because, "What he talking about? We had that kind of ability? You don't feel you got that ability." Like, (the) earlier (statement of) going school, learn about democracy. You come out and feel like you can do anything. We came up in a very confined society. (It was so difficult) to believe in yourself. And this *Haole* from Honolulu, stands on a stand and

telling all of you, "You talented people." Chee, you look around and say, "Who you talking about?" you know. That's my impression, the first time with Burns.

LM: What other stuff did he talk about?

MY: Basically, of fairness. That we need to have equality. And at that time he was running for Congress, delegate to Congress, so statehood was, naturally, number one for everybody. And later on, when he ran for governor, again, the same basis that equality, you know. Nothing more, but nothing less.

WN: I'm wondering, back in '53 when you were helping, getting involved in politics, did you really know what you folks were working for? Was it very clear in your head?

MY: No. As I told you, my mind really wasn't in politics until I was introduced (into it) by Najo. And little by little, you start learning. But it wasn't that clear. The only thing I remember, though, was fairness. Equality and fairness. And you grew up in a society that basically wasn't fair. But it was the accepted way. We didn't go ranting and raving, "It's unfair." Only a few bright people in the community said those things. And especially people that were intensely involved and dedicated like Burns, to see the inequality. And like Najo.

WN: For example, like A&B [Alexander and Baldwin], which was, more or less, ran much of Maui.

MY: Mm hmm.

WN: Where did their political power lie? I mean, who were some of the people who were active in politics?

MY: They basically were the Republican party. All the [sugar] factors, the Big Five [C. Brewer & Co., Ltd., Castle & Cooke Ltd., American Factors Ltd., Alexander & Baldwin, Ltd., and Theo. H. Davies & Co., Ltd.]. A&B was a good example. So, whoever ran, basically, needed the support of these people those days. So, all the newspaper, everything, (was) controlled by them. So, again, they'll play up the Republicans and play down the Democrats. So, they controlled the politics in Hawai'i. And A&B was maybe a little different because the Baldwin families lived on Maui. And the Baldwin family were basically very, very decent people. They used to have lot(s) of sports programs on Maui under the Alexander House Settlement Association. They had this association, they had buildings, they had offices and everything, where the Boy Scouts and sports activity (came) out from those offices. They basically are missionary stock, the Baldwins, so, in spite of their power and then their riches, they were concerned about people. So, it wasn't like an unpopular benefactor that you were working for or unpopular political group. That's why the people voted Republican [for] fifty years.

I guess part of that change in thinking, was because of the war. When you get exposed to a lot of these service people, (who) used to come here and say, "How come you guys living in this kind of confined—," you know. We wondering, "What you guys talking about," you know. And then, later on, as our people from the GI Bill of Rights got their education, found a different world. So they came back with that (new knowledge). That's why everything hit in 1954.

WN: I was wondering, too, with the Baldwins, you said they were very decent people, they helped organize a lot of sports leagues in the plantations. Did any of your people organizing have to come to grips with this? Or was it difficult for anybody to have to, in essence, go against the Baldwins in supporting this new Democratic movement?

MY: Sure. When I say the Baldwins didn't just represent the Republican party, naturally, others [did too], you know. The newspaper, I still remember in 1959, when Burns ran for governor. The last day before the election, they came out [with] this front-page picture of Harry Bridges [ILWU International president], Jack Burns, yeah, I forgot who else. Well, that's how much the Republican party controlled communications. So, we had to overcome that. But again, it was basically a political revolution that, in spite of all that control, eh, the people just came up. Because their sons went to school, they came back, and told (their people) about the inequities that we really didn't feel until all that exposure.

And Burns, again, was the guy that put all of these people together, and reminded them of some of the inequalities, that we could work on. And the campaign, (as) human beings are, (will) have hate (and) lies, or whatever. But Burns worked on the positive. When he said equality, he meant equality. He didn't mean, let's go get the power now and let's go turn things against these other guys, (but) because of human nature, the people in power didn't believe that. They said, this guy's going to come in and he's going to wreck our company, wreck our lives. But, history proved the guy meant what he said. All he was looking for was equality. So . . .

LM: How did he show that when he came in? Example.

MY: Well, like there was these interlocking directorates. Like trusts in the banks and whatever. Then they used to have directors, (a person) could be sitting on ten different boards and doing business with each other. And he [Burns] had to break that up. But rather than demolishing the company, he had Bert Kobayashi, at that time, the attorney general, did it in a very, very understanding way without trying to destroy the company. But making them adhere to these antitrust laws. And they knew they were wrong, so, they cooperated. So, it was a very, very peaceful transition. I think that was one of the big illustrations of Burns' fairness.

Again, the support he gave, like A&B, I remember C. C. [Cornelius C.] Cadagan. I had the pleasure of talking to him for about an hour once. And he was telling me about how much they admired Burns. Cadagan was one of the first CEOs [chief executive officer] in Hawai'i that was non-family. He was just brought in as an independent CEO. So, he had no feelings for the past. His job was just to run the company. But when Matson [Navigation Company] was available, and there were, naturally, different suitors, Burns encouraged A&B to buy Matson out, because he felt that it was vital to Hawai'i that a locally-owned company control the shipping. So, that was one of the major moves that A&B made that was under Cadagan [in 1964]. And he was telling me why he was encouraged to do it, because of Burns' effort.

LM: What was Burns' and the Democrats' attitude toward development? How did it fit in with politics, and equality, and fairness, and all that?

MY: Development? Well, I think Burns grew up like the rest of us in the depression. In the [19]50s (there) was severe recession. Maui, at our peak, we were about 58,000 people. By that time, about 1960 or so, we were down to 38,000 population. The out migration was just

fantastic. So, everybody wanted economic development. And there wasn't a single area that didn't want economic development. The main thing was all this job opportunities and better life kind of thing. So, he was basically pro-development. In his later years, he wasn't that actively trying to promote development. Because I had a lot of conversations with him. And certain areas in Honolulu, for instance, he wanted to just keep it the way it was. But in his early years, he felt the need for development. But . . .

LM: I'm sorry. What was his attitude towards tourism, would you say? What was the role of tourism seen in those early days?

MY: I think he believed that we didn't have much choice. That tourism was an available vehicle for us to prosper. And, in fact, we talk about 1962, twenty-five years later, we're still on the same track. We haven't really discovered any new industry for Hawai'i. People are trying. Like, I belong to the Maui economic development board, which is a nonprofit group. And we're trying to do what most of the world [is] trying to do, develop a high-tech [technology] park here, so we can get some of the kind of work that our people can really work up to. But that's going to be a tough, tough struggle. We got the land, we got the development team, already, but the impact won't be overnight.

LM: How about Burns' attitude toward the neighbor islands?

MY: Well, he believed in the neighbor islands. To him, Hawai'i was everything. And at certain points, he even wanted to decentralize some of the governmental departments, but politically it was just impossible. He talked to me about some of those things. He told me about the sleeping giant, the Big Island. But Maui had a fantastic group of legislators, like when you get a guy like [Nadao] Yoshinaga, [Elmer] Cravalho, and [Mamoru] Yamasaki later, we're talking about fantastic talents. They have their politics, they have their own agenda. And yet, when it came to a Maui thing, they always supported each other. So, Burns told me, "One of these days, the Big Island legislators going to learn from Maui. And then you're going to see things happen there."

LM: So what sort of things would they cooperate on? How would they help Maui?

MY: Oh, roads, water, you know. Some of the infrastructure things that need to be done. Not just the glamorous things. Some of the basics. So they accomplished a lot. They built a lot of reservoirs. We still need to develop far more than what we're doing today. At least for that time, when Yoshinaga and Cravalho was in office in the legislature, they met lot of those needs. And Burns used to always admire that among the Maui legislators. He used to tell me about it.

LM: Could you tell us a little bit about the 1959 race [for governor].

MY: Yeah, that was disaster.

LM: How so?

MY: Well, the man [Burns] brings statehood to us, you know, and there isn't a bigger hero than the man who delivered statehood. So, we were confident that he's going to win. And then, that night when we found out he lost, it was a real shock to us. The Honolulu people knew he

was trailing, because they used to run all sorts of polls. We didn't know that on the neighbor islands. We just (kept) plodding, thinking that we're going to win. So that came as a real shock to us. Even though they had some hint and knowledge in Honolulu, they didn't communicate that to us.

LM: Did he win on Maui?

MY: Yeah, Maui he won. But then, so, 1962, when he ran again, that's when Najo told me. I was involved in the [Daniel] Inouye campaign (in 1959), because [we] had a bitter fight (between) Inouye and Patsy Mink. And Patsy was a Maui girl, so Najo asked me to handle Inouye's campaign.

LM: What were they running for?

MY: House of Representatives, Congress, on a special election. So, he (Najo) said, "Well, Pundy", again, we'll go back to 1954. "You know, we let the Old Man down. So next time around, 1962, that's it, you know, let's concentrate on our man." So that's when I took over his [Burns'] campaign in '62. And '62, again, it was history because all the factions got together. They weren't fighting each other like in '59.

LM: How come? I mean, they never did that before or since. How come in 1962 it went together so nicely?

MY: I think, I think they learned a lesson that they weren't as powerful as they think they were. That they needed to band together.

LM: And the shock of Burns' loss?

MY: Yeah, that was the best illustration, huh?

LM: How about this business with Bob [Robert C.] Oshiro [state Democratic party chairman] supposedly putting together the chart and all that. Were people really sort of following that? Could you tell us about it a little bit?

MY: When you say "chart," what do you mean?

LM: Didn't Bob Oshiro do a study, what went wrong, and sort of put together a plan what to do next time, after 1959?

MY: Well, if he did, I'm not aware of that.

LM: Oh, okay.

MY: He's a good detail man, you know. Bob is a good detail man. And he's very, very emphatic in doing things, you know, his way. So when he runs a campaign, he controls it, which is good. You've got to have leadership.

But, as an example, in 1962, what we did on Maui, we had every candidate on our rallies speak on behalf of Burns. Whether that person [is] running for the board of supervisors, or

the senate, or the house, every person, we asked them at least say a word about Burns. Maui, we had that sense of unity that Yoshinaga developed. Even though there was factionalism, at least on the platform we were unified. So, on Maui, we had no special design. We're just trying to get out with unity. So, we always had a great, great cooperation on Maui. Plus the fact that the simple reason is that the politicians on Maui admired Burns.

LM: Okay, we better switch tapes.

END OF SIDE TWO

TAPE NO. 17-32-1-89; SIDE ONE

JC: This is a continuation of the Masaru "Pundy" Yokouchi interview. It's videotape number five.

LM: This is tape number five. Mr. [John G.] Duarte wanted to retire you said?

MY: Yeah, I think, you know, he was advised that his chances to win were going to be very, very slim. Because people like Toshi Ansai running, you know. They felt David [Trask] was stronger. And David kept saying that he want [S. George] Fukuoka as his running mate. And we were working on George, but that had nothing to do with asking Duarte to step down. He decided on his own, but we just about knew that was going to happen. David was concerned because he felt that if Duarte ran with him, it would weaken the team. Whereas, if Fukuoka ran, that was his reasoning that it would be a stronger team.

LM: Why'd it be a stronger team?

MY: Fukuoka, naturally, had a better reputation, stronger, you know. So the chances that both of them could win, was there. So, David kept promoting the idea that [it] should be Fukuoka, not Duarte. But in spite of what he said, he didn't really work at it. He just was saying this to people like myself. And we were working on the idea of getting Fukuoka to run. And when John said, no, he's not going to run, more so. The final night of registration, George Fukuoka finally decided. Because his wife was objecting, because they had small kids and all that, and she wanted him to stay home. So, finally, he got convinced that night, because Kase Higa, who used to be the county attorney, who is a very, very trusted person. Kase is a man completely without deception. So, he [Higa] was telling me this, the night before, he says, "You know, Pundy, we're going to forfeit one seat in the senate, you know, because nobody's running. And the best candidate for that is George Fukuoka."

I said, "Yeah, I agree with you."

He said, "Well, somebody got to talk to George."

I said, "Yeah, I'm talking to the guy," you know.

So he said, "Oh, you talking to the guy?"

I said, "Yeah, I'm talking to him right now," you know.

He said, "What do you mean, talking to him right now?"

"I'm talking to the guy who's going to talk to George." And the wife especially.

"You talking only to me."

I tell, "Yeah, you the guy."

(Laughter)

MY: George Fukuoka trust(ed) Kase Higa. So, he went that night. And something like the last hour, like eleven o'clock or whatever it was, they came down, they signed up, and ran.

And then, that night, I was in my friend's house up in Wailuku, then David Trask calls me. He found out I was up there. He said, "Well, you pulled a fast one on me."

I said, "What do you mean 'fast one'?"

He said, "Well, you got George to run."

I said, "Wasn't this what you wanted?"

He said, "No, you ought to know better than that."

I said, "What do you mean? I'm taking your word for it that you wanted George."

He said, "No, you know with Duarte in there and Ansai, I walk in, you know. Now I got to fight George."

I told him, "You better see me in the morning."

But I got so mad, he outmaneuvered himself, you know. He's just trying to get John out, encouraging that, using George, you know. But he really thought George wasn't going to run. And we took his word for it that George would form a strong team, you know. But, so David stayed home that year and George got elected.

(Laughter)

MY: Eh, that's the truth.

LM: Serves him right.

MY: But it wasn't a pressure directly to John to step down. It never worked that way. Ours was more to make sure that the seat was filled. And Kase Higa was so amusing because I kept repeating to him, "Yeah, I'm talking to the guy," you know. "What are you talking about?" That's funny.

WN: Was there ever or did you ever think about running?

MY: Once in a while, I guess, like everybody else, you get ideas, eh. But, I never really gave it a serious thought. I felt more comfortable just doing what I was doing, and then . . .

LM: Exactly what were you doing in the campaigns?

MY: I was like a man Friday, yeah. I used to run around from here to there kind of thing. Except, on the Burns campaign, from '62, then I really, really, just concentrated on his. And, I used to have a campaign chairman, but, basically, I was the coordinator.

LM: So you would set up the schedule for the campaign and stuff like that?

MY: Yeah, yeah. It was really intense like 1970 when he ran against Tom Gill [in the Democratic primary for governor]. The polls showed that, I think he had something like [24] percent, and Gill had like [48] percent, double that. And they thought the campaign was over. So, when we started our campaign on Maui, we got together, we said we got to do something different. We have to do something that really dispel the poll, that the people are behind this person. And the only way we can show that, we got to have a mass turnout.

So we came out with this idea about getting entertainers from Honolulu and Larry Mehau helped us on that, because he was a good friend of Don Ho. So we had people like Don Ho and several others come over. We held it at the gym. Before, if you get about a thousand people, it's a great gathering on Maui. That day, we had, oh, 4,000 people showed up. So it was really an eye-opener, and kind of dispelled the poll. In fact, Bob Oshiro was there that day. He started using that format in Honolulu, too. They started doing that at McKinley [High School] and different places. So, that was the first, real giant rally that we had.

LM: We'll go back. But that campaign, you know, the main theory is it's the film ["Catch a Wave"] that won it, you know. What's your feeling on that?

MY: Tom Coffman and I are good friends. And those days we were on opposite sides. And he met me in the basement of the senate chambers one day. He told me, "Too bad, Pundy, you guys, you know. It's only a question of when already."

I said, "Well, okay. Just mark one word I'm going to tell you, you know, besides we're going to win, yeah. One thing that you people don't understand. With all your brilliance." Tom Gill was a smart man and he surrounded himself with smart people. I said, "The one thing that you people don't really know about campaigning is, you don't know people."

He says, "Oh, what do you mean?"

I said, "Well, you got to find out for yourself. I'm saying you don't know people. And we're going to win this campaign. (I'm) not just saying because we are working on this campaign. I really mean it when I say we're going to win it. And I know it's happening."

And that was a surprise in a way, because till the end, Tom Gill was leading. And we could see, but then this is way before that. The last two weeks we could see the great change happening.

LM: How could you see it?

MY: Way out in the bushes, you know. On Maui, I remember telling my people, "We've got to win by 3,000 votes." And that was tough those days. Fifteen hundred was normal, so 3,000. Came the last day of the campaign already, I said, "We passed 3,000." It's a question of how much more. And I think, if I'm not mistaken, we ended up with 3,600 votes or something. That's how closely we could call it those days. We're talking about [a] small place. It's a guess, but we were fairly consistent. So, when you say that to a person, you're not just making things up. So anyway, so Tom [Coffman], later on when he wrote his book, was trying to interview me, and somehow we didn't connect. And I wasn't happy about being interviewed anyway. So, we never did get together. But he always remembered that, what I told him.

LM: So you don't think the film won the campaign. What won the campaign?

MY: Oh, that was part of it, sure. Yeah, no question about it, you know. They brought this guy Joe [Joseph] Napolitan in, and I guess Mike [Tokunaga] can fill in much better than I can because they were there. But, everybody was apologizing for the Old Man, that they used to call him the "Great Stone Face" and he's not a good political subject, you know. Doesn't smile and all that. So they were apologizing to this guy [Napolitan]. So the guy [said], "Give me one week with him. I'll tell you guys whether I can take it on or not." After three days, he called a meeting. He said, "What are you guys talking about? This guy's the perfect subject. Sure, he's not a gladhander, he doesn't smile, but he has that dignity about him, that in film would really come out." And he said, "We're not going to ask that guy to smile. We'll just shoot him the way he is." And the guy was right. That thing came out really nice. It really showed Burns.

I remember one portion of that film, it says, "Principle." He [Burns] discussed this with me couple times. When a guy vote on principle, many times, it's because he's lazy, you know. Because he doesn't want to go through this whole morass of questions and thinking. So he said, "I'm voting 'no' because of principle, yeah?" So his mind can go to rest, right? But he [Burns] said, "How often is principle involved?" [Because] many, many times thinking is involved, [but] the guy, he leans back, and he leans on the word "principle," [when it] is not a question of principle. You know what I mean?

So, and then it came out on that film. I remember talking to him [Burns] about that, and that always stuck in my mind about whenever you have to make a decision, whether it's principle or basically a problem, how are you supposed to separate the two. And that helped me a lot because then, certain times it's a question of principle. But then, because you were taught and explained about the word, it really helped me. And then the decision becomes very clear, eh, you know what I mean?

LM: Could you tell us the story about Burns and Val [Valentine U. Marciel, comptroller]?

MY: (Chuckles) As I said, I was sitting in the office one day. And here comes---before Val came in, Burns told me that, "Well, we got some problem with our friend. Some of the senators are asking for his head, because of the way he's handling a certain matter."

And when Val came in, right away Val said, "Governor, these guys don't understand. And they all mad and they just don't know what they're mad about."

So Burns turned to me, he said, "Yeah, you see our boy is dumb like a fox. But I remember, you know, how he handled another matter, similar matter, some time ago, in a different way." So he told Val, "Well, Val, you remember how you handled that? Now that was really clever." So the guy just couldn't get out of the room fast enough to implement that. But Burns made him feel that it was his idea, that [it was] his foxiness. That even though people think that he's going to do it in a different way, he actually had that in his mind. And he worked it out, and everything turned out great. But, it shows the inside of the man [Burns]. He doesn't tell the guy, "Eh, I'm the governor, I'm smarter than you, you do it my way." He made that guy really feel that he did it. And the solution, the governor wanted the solution to be resolved in that way. But he made the guy feel it was his idea (and kept his dignity).

LM: And you said the day after he was in office, he was going home. . . . Could you tell us the limousine story?

MY: Oh. Well, 1974, actually '75, when he left office. No, no, was it '74? The governor get sworn in December, eh. Yeah?

LM: Yeah.

WN: The election was in '74 and they get, yeah, they get sworn in . . .

LM: They start in '75, yeah.

MY: Well, anyway, the day after [George] Ariyoshi got sworn in as governor, Ariyoshi asked the governor [Burns] not to move out right away, because they had to do few things, and Burns had to get his Kailua home ready. So, he told him, "Don't rush. Stay there." I don't know how long he stayed. Maybe a week or two weeks more. But I was with him that morning and he called for his car. And the chauffeur brought the governor's limousine, you know. And he just sailed right into the guy, told him, "That's the governor's car. My car's a Buick." So he said, "Remember who's governor." So, you know, that's Burns.

LM: You said there was sometimes some factionalism in the Maui party. What happened in the Inouye-Mink race?

MY: Well, too bad the man passed away, but, Dan Aoki, you know, it was his job. . . . Because statehood, one of the Southern conservative states' concern was that Hawai'i's a liberal state and [it was] going to be overrun with Japanese. And you're going to have only Japanese in Congress and all that. So, Burns didn't necessarily defend that, because to him, you know, everybody's the same. But then, that was the prevailing thinking in those days.

So Dan Aoki, being the first sergeant of the group, took it upon himself to say we cannot blatantly just walk in there and prove these guys correct, you know. So Oren Long wanted to run [for U.S. Senate] just for one term, and he asked for support of everybody, just for that one term, and he's going to retire. Dan [Daniel K.] Inouye, meanwhile, announced that he's going to run for the United States Senate in that seat. So, Dan [Aoki] went to talk to Dan Inouye about it. He said, "Why don't you pull out and run in the House of Representatives. In 1962, we'll support you. But give Long the chance to crown his career." So he finally convinced Dan Inouye. But then the problem was, Patsy Mink already announced for the House. So, his question was, "How do we get Patsy out?"

So, Dan Aoki said, "Well, we'll talk to Patsy," you know. But Patsy refused to pull out.

So, you got to start on the basis that these were our two golden people, you know. Top vote-getters those days in Honolulu was Dan Inouye, and the leading woman candidate at that time was Patsy, who was in the territorial senate at that time. So they were our golden people, you know. We saw big things for them.

And Dan Aoki told Patsy that in 1962, we can all support her for the Congress, the House. But she just refused. So here's our two golden people fighting each other. This turned out to be a pretty bitter campaign.

How far will this record go? I get a funny story to tell about this incident.

LM: We can let this one wait. How's that?

MY: Yeah, okay. So anyway, it turned out to be a bitter campaign. So, Najo asked me to handle the [Inouye] campaign on Maui. See, this is Patsy's home island. But the way it turned out, Dan won convincingly. So, it wasn't as bad as we thought it would be. But the lines were drawn at that time. And Patsy, I don't think, ever achieved back the popularity she had at that time, because of that fight. It's unfortunate because I really think Patsy is a very big talent.

LM: Okay, I wanted to ask you one other thing. We have to change tapes, so we only have two minutes. I wanted to ask you about Najo's '64 campaign.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

JC: The following is a continuation of the Yokouchi interview. This is videotape number six.

LM: Okay, this is tape number six. One sort of making-waves campaign was Najo [Yoshinaga] running for the U.S. Senate against Gill in 1964. Could you just talk about that a little bit?

MY: Yeah. Najo all of a sudden said, "I'm gonna run for the United States Senate." So, you know, he's like my big brother, so, naturally he calls me and told me about his aspiration. And naturally, I had a lot of questions. Number one, we don't have that kind of statewide political force that would join him, especially at that time, the known candidate was Hiram Fong and Tom Gill.

So I said, "We cannot ask the Burns people to help us, because I'm sure they're going to hands off on this." Because in '62, we had the unity thing, you know. Tom Gill ran for the U.S. House, he got elected. And we were all unified. In fact, the Burns people were very, very mad at Najo for running. In fact, they thought that Najo was basically running just to kill Gill, you know, and not to win the election. In fact, I had a talk once with one of the Burns key people who accused Najo of that.

So, I told him, "I completely disagree." Because I was the guy, 1964 was the year I came out of the bakery. I didn't know anybody or anything about fund-raising. And I had to go around, find money for Najo Yoshinaga. And we raised five dollars, ten dollars. Twenty dollars was a big contribution. And we had to raise money for his campaign. And Najo and his wife, Mieko, spent most of their time in Honolulu. They're walking up Tantalus, St. Louis Drive,

you name 'em. And that was the only vehicle they had, their legs. No communication vehicle, because we didn't have that kind of funds. So, I was telling this Burns person, "That guy gotta be the greatest actor, who's willing to suffer physical and mental pain, just to block a person. But if you want to listen to my side."

"Yeah, okay, what's your version?"

"Very simple. The man is a brilliant politician, that never was really given his due. And like any other politician worth his salt, he has his ego." And I guess if you look around, and even his contemporaries like Dan Inouye, whoever. Tom Gill, anybody. You wonder, why are these guys there and I'm not? And I said, I think I questioned Najo himself about the electability of Najo Yoshinaga. I said, "You know, I have no question about how smart you are. But that's not going to elect you."

So he told me an interesting thing. He said, "There are issues that need to be said, that nobody is saying. They're afraid to say it. But it's the truth. And we have to say it. And even if we lose, at least the public will be that much more educated. So I think we advanced our purpose a little bit. But ultimately I want to," he said, "naturally, I want to win."

And those two issues that he brought up, were humdingers. Nineteen sixty-four he said, "Get out of Vietnam." This was before all the student uprising. In fact, I questioned a couple of my University [of Hawai'i] friends. I said, "Why are you guys, you liberals, nobody coming out for Yoshinaga on this issue?" He was just getting hammered on that. But the university people, (were) supporting Tom Gill. But Tom was smart enough not to even raise that issue, right? But Najo came out with that.

Then the other thing he said was trade with Red China [the People's Republic of China]. He said, "How can you ignore one-fourth of the world's population as we are doing?" And we say we're for peace, right? So he said, "First, the Vietnam War,"—I'm just out of the bakery now. I'm manning that headquarters. I get these academicians come in, eh, and tell me, "How dare you say get out of Vietnam. Do you know what is Vietnam?" And they go through all this, you know, theories and some of the exposures. And I cannot answer. I'm sitting there (chuckles) like a damn fool. And I'm trying to support what Najo is saying. But, he said that we're interfering with a civil war. And then, it's not Red China's fault that we're against them, or don't trade with them, because our communications, our intelligence service was wrong. (He) thought we('re) supposed to be friends today. But we're giving them to the other side, and we're ignoring them. He's right. But the campaign, holy mackerel, was disastrous, (chuckles) simply because [what] we thought wasn't the time yet.

After that, it proved him correct, right, when [Richard M.] Nixon got elected [U.S. President], he finally got out of Vietnam. And we finally started trading with Red China. We didn't ignore one-fourth of the world's population. Najo was right, '64. But those days, [it] was unpopular yet. But I still remember he telling me that the United States Chamber of Commerce president also advocate(d) trading with Red China (in) 1964. So he said, "Eh, Pundy, this is not communist thinking," you know. Told me, "Actually, chamber of commerce, business, you know, saying we got to do this. That's reality."

LM: So how did the campaign go?

MY: We lost by 20,000 [34,000] votes of—I forgot the actual count. It was something, 94[,000] against 74,000, something like that. [in 1964, Najo Yoshinaga's 34,253 votes lost to Thomas Gill's 71,298 votes, a difference of slightly over 34,000.]

WN: Who did the Burns people support in the general [election]? Fong or Gill?

MY: Oh, Gill.

LM: Did Najo's campaign hurt Gill, you felt?

MY: That's what they felt. They felt that. That's why I had that argument with one the Burns people. They really felt bad. Whereas, our basis was very, very simple. We, Maui boys, one of our leading boys aspired to the United States Senate. And we know all these other people, that nobody can say they have a finer mind than Najo. So, how do you tell no to the guy, eh.

LM: So you had very little money. How'd you organize the campaign? What'd you use?

MY: A lot of letter writing.

LM: Oh.

MY: We sent, oh, in excess of—direct letters to friends—over 50,000 letters from Maui throughout the state. Mostly in Honolulu. And lot of the people who sent letters put their own stamp, you know. And that's how we were able to do that. Only the stamp alone was, you know, we're talking big money. So, that was really, really (a) blood-and-guts kind of thing.

LM: Let me ask you how you got [out] of the bakery and into real estate. That's a big jump. How'd you decide to do that?

MY: Najo, again—(chuckles) this all goes back to Najo. When we got involved in politics, he got to know Hung Wo Ching. And then, evidently, he was impressed with what Hung Wo represented. He was one of the few guys with a MBA [Master's of Business Administration] from Harvard, those days. And he [Yoshinaga] gathered his friends, (and) said, "You guys, all young, married. You got to listen to this guy." So Hung Wo gave us a talk and, I would say to the man, we were all wage earners. He said that, "You guys are young, but you need the protection today for your family. So, buy term insurance, which is the cheapest." But then, term insurance, later on, start rising in cost on you, (so) that's when you convert it to ordinary life or whatever. Meanwhile, you're supposed to have some money saved. So, rather than just put everything in a expensive insurance, you buy the cheapest insurance possible. But you invest that money, rather than just keep it in the bank. One of the best vehicles for investment is real estate. So he said real estate won't happen overnight. You know, you can buy today, and then it'll just follow inflation. As the years go by, your worth will be much more. Meanwhile, your insurance need(s) won't be as great, because your investment is starting to work for you. So, the whole gist of it was, buy this cheaper insurance so you get immediate coverage for your family. But in the long term, invest in something like real estate. Gives you a long term, real value. So, that's how we started a *hui*. We said, okay, let's go invest. So, okay, who's going to head this *hui*? Who knows about land? Everybody look around the table, I don't know how they look at me in the end. So I said, "Okay." And, you know, I'm working in a bakery now, yeah. And here, I became one real estate entrepreneur

overnight, you know. And I get all these guys giving me their money, tell, okay, let's invest. Okay. (Chuckles) So, I go looking around (for) property. We didn't know what we were looking at, you know.

And, I'll give you an example, like I told Cooper, George Cooper, who wrote that book [*Land and Power in Hawai'i*], "Eh, you guys, always trying to attach politics with whatever success we had in land." You know, which is, really, you can paint it that way, but I explained to him and privately, I know he believe(d) me, but he couldn't print that in his book, because it won't sell, right? Which are some examples I gave him. I don't know if you're familiar with this Mā'alaea Bay, Kīhei, just the entry of Kīhei. (There) is Polly's Restaurant, there's a two-story building there, you know. At that time, about 1957 or [195]8, those properties were being sold. And we were looking around so, I told 'em, "Eh, chee, over here is pretty cheap, you know. Let's go buy that."

"Eh, what you talking about, Pundy? Too windy, that place. Junk," you know. Local knowledge, you know what I mean? So, we would buy different things. Those properties were going for \$4,000 an acre on the beach, those days, which is less than ten cents a square foot. And we didn't buy it. If we bought, let's say, ten acres, \$40,000, than we'd have—our *huis* were big because by the time we got going, we had as many as over hundred people asking to invest with us. All small money. So we used to divide things in 100 shares, one percent each. And some people buy five shares, some two, some they split one. I know four sisters had one fourth of one percent. So, we bought a lot of properties, but if we bought just like that one property, cost us \$40,000. Today, conservatively, I would say it's worth. . . . Conservatively, it would be worth about (\$10) million, you know. One million an acre. That's conservative, you know. There are parts of Maui already (sold) for \$5 million an acre. (Values have dropped further, from the time I talked to George Cooper.)

Nukoli'i, my famous Nukoli'i, right. They wouldn't believe me that we sold it so fast, we made good money, and there wasn't a compact where we would deliver zoning to them later, even though zoning wasn't in place. I said---Jim (Dooley) was the first guy, then George Cooper. [I] said, "Use your common sense. Would we sell it knowing we're going to have zoning that's going to increase the value of that property, yeah, more. And we just sell it, even though the profit was great, sell it now?"

He [Cooper] said, "Well, I think that's part of the compact."

They (writers) didn't want to reason the thing out. We sold it for two dollars a square foot. We paid fifty cents a square foot. Maui property was already going for over two dollars a square foot. So when Amfac said they would sell it based on the appraisal of fifty cents, I said we'd buy it. It just happened by coincidence, somebody walk right in, said they're looking at this property. So they referred these people to us. So, that's why we sold it so fast at two dollars. My guess today, that property, if we still had it—which we should have, like most of the investments we made—again, we're talking about 2 [million], 3 million [dollars] an acre, you know. And that was sixty acres. The Japanese would come in and buy it for \$180 [million], \$200 million today, you know, fee simple, right. (Back in 1990.)

LM: So you were just wheeling and dealing as much as you could.

MY: Yeah, because we were just going day to day, because (we were) all wage earners, you know.

Like a person, let's say, we buy a property that's \$100,000. And we have to put [up] \$25,000. So the [\$]25,000 represents 100 shares, so each guy puts up \$250.

We had one deal down in Kīhei. My friends were my immediate neighbors. The wife was a secretary, the husband used to work in the garage, pumping gas. And just before that, we turned over one small deal. So they said, "Oh, Pundy, we want to buy two shares." So they put down—each share was \$700. That's the down payment of twenty-five percent of the deal. So they bought two shares, they put \$1,400 down. And just about a year later, we sold the property. And since we made only one payment of \$1,400, \$1,400 to them that is, the two shares. They (earned) principal and interest, close to \$60,000. That's how real estate goes. And that's why they said, "Eh, that's my son's education." He was attending Purdue that time. And \$60,000 those days, you can still do it, right. (Chuckles) So he said, "Eh, Pundy."

So we always thinking in terms of we got to sell our property because people can use the money kind [of thing]. We didn't have that kind of withholding power, to hang on to the property. If we had, none of us would be working today. Because some of the prices, I gave you the examples, eh.

So, I keep telling these guys it's not politics. It's just a question of . . . [I] know a lot of people not even in the book [*Land and Power in Hawai'i*] that personally made much, much more money than I ever did. Because, they just go their merry way. They buy, they hang on, and later on they sell. They have no involvement in politics, but no question about it, personally, they made out much better than I ever did. But it's just real estate. And in fact, I always advise this to my people whenever they ask me about what they should buy, whether they could afford it. I said, that's the key. If you're buying for investment, it's the power to hold that property so you're not at the mercy of the market. Real estate, sooner or later, the price will be there. It's a question of whether you can wait until then. So, imagine like three years ago if you sold a property against selling it today. You know, we're talking about triple the prices. Ocean property, three years ago, was going for about a million [dollars] an acre. Kapalua, it's (2) million [dollars] an acre today (1990).

LM: Okay, at what point did you make the transition from the bakery to full-time real estate? And were you doing this on the side at first and then . . .

MY: Yeah.

LM: . . . where it just sort of took over too much time?

MY: Just doing the *hui* thing, that's all I was doing. But that was an education. As the years went by, and I wanted to get out [into] real estate but being a family bakery I couldn't leave. So finally in 1964, my brother said, "Eh, you better get out of here. You got too much obligations." So in '64 I went into full-time real estate.

LM: So you'd already built up the real estate business on the side already, eh?

MY: No, no, just the *huis*, which . . .

LM: How many *huis* were you running, would you say?

MY: Ho, boy, about over twenty.

LM: Ooh.

MY: Different combinations. The same people belong to all; some people, you know, belong to only a few.

LM: Okay. Let's change tapes.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

JC: This is the conclusion of the Pundy Yokouchi interview. This is videotape number seven.

LM: Okay. I want to ask you a couple, just a few things we left out, yeah? Let me ask you a general thing. When you look back, you know, what do you think of this? I mean, there you were, say, 1952 to now. When you look back, you know, what thoughts do [you] have about this amazing process, political, economic, et cetera, that went on? It's been an education for you, too. I mean, you stopped after high school, but, you know, you obviously learned a lot and so forth.

MY: It was a real education for me. Personally, it has been very, very, exciting and good to me. I met people like Najo, besides just being friends, I got involved in his political quests, eh. And Burns, you know, Burns is, to me, the greatest teacher of all. And you see immediately the change that happened after '54, that we went right up into, smack into what America really stands for. And after that, has been like any state that you try to find your way. But the immediate transition into a real state happened in the [19]50s, especially after statehood. Especially when Burns became governor [in 1962], then he could really, really install the kind of people that he claimed had that latent talent kind of thing. And proved, that all these are not just dreams, but it's really actual and practical.

And Burns told me one thing that I think I'd like to share with you people. It was that day after [George] Ariyoshi got elected, Burns just came out of the hospital. That's when he had his cancer, eh. So, Tom [Thomas S.] Yagi and I went to see him. And he was just leaving the hospital. So he says, "Hey, let's go to my house." So we went with him to Kailua. And I don't know where Tom was, but just Burns and I were sitting on the porch. And then it was just the day after the election, or was it couple days? Anyway, you know, very close by. And then he had tears in his eyes. He told me that, "Well, Pundy, I guess, the people of Hawai'i did it." So I'm, you know, just waiting for what he's trying to say. He said, "Ariyoshi won."

I said, "Yeah."

He said, "Well, you know, people call me the Jap lover. That I'm always surrounded by the Japanese."

He said, "That's true. And you and I know about the vehicles that we needed. We needed the

ILWU, was unpopular, but they were organized. We needed the Japanese, because they were one of the largest racial groups that was basically disenfranchised." So we used the Japanese. But he said, "The real dream was that to have a non-*Haole* elected," you know. So that next time, it could be a Filipino, it could be a Chinese, it could be anybody. But the point is . . . it could be a *Haole*. But the point is, it's not a question of race, you know, but a question of ability. So he said, "Hopefully, the people (are) going (to) understand that, what Ariyoshi represents. He doesn't represent Japanese. He represents non-White Caucasian, you know." So, that really, you know, reminded me about the talk we had way back. He said, "Yeah, I know, everybody calling me a Jap lover. Well, I love Japs," he said. "But," he said, "that's not the point." And, so that day, already, he knew he was dying, you know. So, when he said that, it was really meaningful to me.

LM: When you said in your Burns tapes, you said that you used to talk a lot with Burns after '62. What sort of things did you talk about? Say, how would you, what would you talk about—let's talk about business first. What sort of business would you take care of?

MY: Well, there're a lot of things happening politically. For instance, you know, the council, or the mayor, maybe apart with the state. And many times they used to complain to me about what the governor is doing, for instance. Or vice versa. You know, I'll go back and forth, and try to see that these people can work it out. And, invariably, these people all respected the governor. That's why invariably it worked out.

Like, I'll give you one example of business. Amfac used to be crucified out in west Maui on Kā'anapali, because the union was fighting them, because they [Amfac] were very, very ancient and, you know, very, very rigid in their way, the way they treated employees. For instance, Pioneer Mill was the only plantation on Maui that didn't provide houses for their employees. So, Hal [Harold C.] Eichelberger [Amfac Properties] and Henry Walker [Jr.] [president of Amfac] came to see me one day. I had this tiny office, only Norma [MY's secretary] and I. And in fact, I had to excuse Norma from the room, because we had only one room. So they asked me to help them in implementing their plans into the [county] general plan. So I said, "Okay, fine. Let me think about it." Later on I found out, the reason why they came was Najo recommended me. But then I said that unofficially I represent the governor, so I went to see the governor. I told him that these guys asked me, and they are being crucified. All the politicians, all the business people, all the union guys, everybody, the whole community fighting them. So I said, "What do you think?"

He said, "Well, I think you should try, because without economic development out there, Maui is going to just be killed." And we're talking about real difficult times, so I said okay.

So, we went out there, and I started talking directly to the union people. I still remember the first committee meeting. They had ten people. They practically almost threw me out of the room. They said, "You're a traitor." I talked to my business people, and same thing. They said, "Why are you supporting these guys?" Politicians, naturally, mouthed everything what the community was saying.

And then, one day—I don't know if you ever heard of this guy named Allan Temko. He used to be architectural critic for the *San Francisco [Chronicle]* and used to teach at Berkeley. Real, you know, liberal activist. The union hired him to advise them how to fight Amfac. So he came down, he marked up all the Amfac map, paint them all green. Park here, park there,

you know. And then we said, holy mackerel. So we had to overcome all of that.

Then, one meeting, the planning commission was having a meeting to go over the plan again. And [Mamoru] Yamasaki called me. He said, "Eh, Pundy, this guy Alan Temko wants to see you."

I said, "Yeah, okay." So, he came down. So we got together. And he had this brown paper bag torn off with my name on it.

So he said, "You Pundy, eh?"

I said, "Yeah."

He said, "I understand you have this work at west Maui and you're on the Amfac side, whereas I'm on the union side."

I said, "Yeah."

And so, okay. "What's your plan?"

I said, "The Bartholomew plan [(for the zoning of West Maui and land use) conceived by Harlan Bartholomew and Associates], because I think that's the only hope we got for west Maui. A planned development in Kā'anapali. Otherwise, with all this opposition from the union and the business people, Amfac will never make it."

So, the next day, they had a meeting. And all the plans that Temko recolored they brought 'em all out again. So Temko said, "No, no. This is not the plan."

"What plan? I just saw one the last time you marked it up."

He said, "No, no, bring the other plan." (Chuckles) So he brought this Bartholomew plan out. And Temko said, "Now that's a good plan." (Laughs) He turned the whole thing around.

LM: So how did you change his mind?

MY: No. So later on, I ask Yama [Yamasaki], "Whose handwriting is that?" you know.

He said, "Don't you know? Jack Hall [regional director of ILWU]."

"Why would Jack Hall send the guy to me?"

Then Tom Yagi told me, "You dumb bugger," he said. "Jack and who the other Jack going influence Jack Hall?"

I tell, "Yeah."

So Jack Burns evidently told Jack Hall, "Eh, your boys giving my boy a hard time out there. They're not listening." And then during all the course of that, they instituted employee

housing. All the kind of stuff that a union were fighting [for]. And in fact, the final public hearing, the Bartholemew plan, the one that they fought, the union came out endorsing that.

The unit itself came out supporting it. So, but that's where like Burns, just one word from the guy like that goes a long way. But he knew that I wasn't sidestepping anybody. I went straight on to the union guys, said, "What's your concern?" You know, I went to the business people, "What's your concern?" And we tried to accommodate all of that. And it came out. But, without Burns' help, these guys were going wild. Because I called my friends at Pioneer, Apaches, these guys, these union guys. Even Tom Yagi, the division director, couldn't talk to them. Really independent guys. So, but, a guy like Burns, one word from him, he's heard. So, at least you get a fair chance to explain your side.

LM: How about---did Burns ever talk, besides that, you talked about the one case, when he already had cancer. Did he ever talk philosophically about what he was trying to do or how things should go in government, stuff like that?

MY: The part I told you about, you know, Ariyoshi, what he represents, yeah. Not Japanese, but everybody. He said that part. The rest, he would not say, "I think we should do things like this from now on." Or, "The next governor should do that." The guy would never say somebody else should do this. Never. You know, he would always give them due respect. And then confidence, like when he talked about latent talent, eh. Always like that, consistent.

LM: Like, how about the Kenny [Kenneth F.] Brown and Tap [Taylor A.] Pryor things? What was he trying to do there?

MY: I think he was trying to introduce more of the elitist people, what we considered elite people into the Democratic party. Try to make it whole. That the Democratic party represented the Japanese, the ILWU, you know. I think he was trying to introduce the so-called, more the elite group, to be part of the Democratic party. So that's why, I think he tried to help Tap Pryor and Kenny Brown.

LM: I see you have great art all over your office. How'd that happen?

MY: Well, Tadashi Sato painted this, but I bumped into him when he just came back from New York. And that's in 1961. And I had a thousand dollar check from one of my *huis*, you know, my investment. And those days, I used to probably earn about [\$]350 a month from the bakery. And I heard about Tadashi, so I went out to see him. And I bought one gouache, one oil painting, and one watercolor from him. I spent the whole thousand dollars. And when I came home with the paintings, instead of the check, my wife cried.

(Laughter)

MY: That's big money for a baker, you know. Then, one night, Burns was at my home. This is in 1965 or [196]6. And he saw these Tadashi Sato painting staring at him. So he asked me, "Eh, what's that?"

"Oh, that's a painting by Tadashi Sato, you know."

"Yeah, but tell me what is it?"

I said, "I don't know. Seaweed or whatever. It's his own interpretation or whatever."

So he goes, "Hmm," you know.

I said, "Eh, wait a while. You better not say 'hmm' because you, the education governor." Because Burns, when he first got in, education was his fundamental priority, eh. So I said, "Art, to me, belongs with the rest of education. That's considered elitist thing, you know, [but it] belongs to everybody." So, and I didn't know [what] I was talking about, you know.

About a year later [in 1965], they passed this act creating the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. So one day I walked in his [Burns'] office for something else, and Mary Isa [Burns' secretary] yells out, "Here comes your chairman."

So I walk in, "What's this all about?"

He said, "Oh, congratulations, Mr. Chairman, you're going to Chicago next week, representing the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts as its chairman."

"Okay."

It's the first national conference for the arts, you know, after the creation of the, what do you call. . . .

LM: National endowment.

MY: The National Endowment for the Arts and the Humanities. So, I'm listening to all this. I said, "What's the joke?"

"It's no joke. You're going."

I said, "No. You can't mean what you say. What are you talking about?"

He said, "I'm telling you, you make the arrangements with Mary, you going into Chicago representing Hawai'i."

Then I realized this guy was serious. I said, "You're out of your cotton picking mind." I said, "You know, I don't know (anything) about the arts. I don't belong to any organization. All I have is a painting by Tadashi Sato hanging on my wall. That's all."

(Laughter)

MY: So he said, "I thought you told me that art belongs to everybody. Especially the common man should get more involved."

I said, "Yeah."

"What better way can a common man identify with the arts, than its chairman being cut from the same cloth?"

(Laughter)

MY: I ended up in Chicago in the middle of winter, snowing, you know, representing Hawai'i. That was the most frightening time of my life. Till today, I didn't go through anything more frightening than that.

I played football, as I said, right, when I was a young kid. My first game, I still remember, I was a sophomore. Lahainaluna [School] had all kind of standards. They didn't observe the age limitation. So, my pal, later on, this guy didn't play his senior year and was hauling pineapple during the summer with this (guy) Shibuya from Lahainaluna. Basically, they working together. So Shibuya told him, "Eh, Lincoln, how come you didn't play football?"

"I was over-age."

"Over-age? What do you mean over-age?"

"Yeah, I was six weeks over-age. Couldn't play football."

The guy was on the truck, loading the pine. He laughed so hard, he fell off the truck. He told Lincoln, "How old do you think I am?" In those days, it was nineteen, eh. "I'm twenty-three." And he was playing football, you know.

So we had our first game, I came in as a substitute. And I'm playing end. In those days, single wing, you block the tackle, the biggest guy on the team. I come out of the huddle. These guys squatting down. He didn't even get up. He look at me, in his best French, he didn't say just something, he said, you know, with the word F, eh. "What the frickin' hell you think you doing here, kid?" you know. And I look at this guy in front of me, high school football, now, he get beard, you know, he get beard. And this guy is tough. I was frightened then. But that was nothing compared with Chicago.

(Laughter)

MY: Chicago was frightening, I tell you.

WN: Frightening because you felt intimidated by the arts people?

MY: Yeah, I didn't know anything about the arts. They ask me, "Oh, Pundy, you're from Hawai'i. You know So-and-so?"

"No."

"You know anybody from the Academy of Arts?"

"No." What the hell kind of chairman is this?

LM: So you sort of learned as you went?

MY: Yeah, yeah. I had to learn, right. So . . .

LM: What sort of guidelines, you know, what sort of directions did you want the foundation to go? What did you finally decide?

MY: Well, basically, we spent a lot of time with the schools. I believe, fundamentally, that it should be part of the curriculum. We never really made any headway. In fact, that item just came back the other day, again. I belong to the American Council for the Arts, which is a civilian counterpart of the national endowment. They're making the number one priority, art in education. So, that's really what we wanted to do at [the] state foundation.

Then we instituted programs in all of the Model City areas, like Kalihi-Pālama, Wai'anae, Nānākuli, they have their own council today. It's been in existence for years. So, that basic theory, as I mentioned to the governor, that art should be universal. And Tom Coffman, when I first met him, he was with Walter Heen. And when Walter introduced me as the chairman of the arts, the guy said, "Eh, what are you guys doing in Kalihi-Pālama? You guys trying to really, really take advantage of these poor people for political reasons?"

I said, "What are you talking about?"

He said, "You guys don't mean it, trying to get an arts program in Wai'anae, Nānākuli and Kalihi-Pālama. You guys trying to prostitute these people."

I said, "What do you mean?"

So, "Well, I come from the Peace Corps. I know what is suffering, I know what is work."

I said, "Okay, good for you."

"And when you see the Burns people, when they go into the poor people area like you do, they have political reasons, right?"

"Yeah." I tell, "Yeah." So I said, "I have only one fundamental reason to argue." I said, "If the arts cannot work in Wai'anae, Nānākuli, or Kalihi-Pālama, the arts don't belong anywhere." As simple as that, right? That means you don't teach school, either, in Wai'anae, Nānākuli? Because seventy-five years ago, you tell a kid you got to go to school in Wai'anae, Nānākuli, the old man going tell you something, "Nuts, you go to work. You twelve years old, you can handle a hoe already," right? Today it's universal. And I really believe the arts should be like that because it opens up different dimensions for you, right. And that's what education is all about.

LM: I'm curious. Why'd you buy the Tadashi Sato paintings in the first place?

MY: Well, you know, like any kid I used to dab in oil myself.

LM: Oh, you did do a little bit yourself when you were young, eh?

MY: Yeah. I used to love art, but, never did, you know, study it, or follow it. But when Burns appointed me, boy, I got shoved into the pool right away.

(Laughter)

LM: Okay, thanks. I guess that's about it.

WN: Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW

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