

Interview
JOHN WHITEHEAD
December 18, 2005
Tape 2

(shot 1)

00:52 QUESTION: John, these kids came from a lot of different directions; Hawaiian families and Japanese families, Chinese families and so forth, and they met in the territorial public schools. Would you say the Americanization of islanders in the territory [UNINTELLIGIBLE] contribute to the feeling for statehood?

01:14 WHITEHEAD: Well, from—what I've found particularly from interviewing Senator Matsunaga, that the—the public high schools of Hawaii in the 1930s were—were going—laboratories of civics, particularly in which Asian Americans were told ... that they could aspire uh, to everything that any—anyone else could. And oddly enough, many of the teachers in the public schools of Hawaii—and this is because the—the—the school of education had not gotten to the point that it was turning out uh, high school teachers—many of those teachers were recruited from the American South, uh, and they came and taught in the schools of Hawaii. Of course, there was—uh, McKinley High in Honolulu um, had many of these people. But um, Spark Mat—Matsunaga—I said to Sparky, When did you think that you could become a Senator from the—of the United States? And he said, It was in my high school civics class at Kauai High School in 1935 when my teacher, Mr. Robert Clockten [PHONETIC] of Alabama told me that I could aspire to become a Senator of the United States. And not only could I, I should. And he said, Then after the war, when I came back, I decided to run for office; and do you know who was my first campaign manager and made the first speech at the first campaign I ever ran for the Legislature? He said, Robert Clockten, my high school civics teacher at Kauai High School. Um, and—and I think you hear these stories over and over, that it was a teacher in the schools who told these kids that they were just as good as anybody else, despite the rampant mainland prejudice against Asian Americans. And of course, their parents could not become citizens ... at that time. Sparky's father could not be a citizen of the United States, and so that was a certain kind of stigma. But those teachers in the schools said, No, but you can be a Senator.

(shot 2)

03:25 QUESTION: In 1945, of course, the war is over and the young men are coming home from the war.

03:31 WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

03:34 QUESTION: And how did the face of the statehood issue increase, or did it, in the years immediately following World War II with the Congressional hearings and so on?

03:45 WHITEHEAD: Um ... I would say in the immediate years after—after the war, '45, '46, there was an enormous amount of goodwill for Hawaii, and to a lesser extent Alaska. Uh, that this was the place where the war had taken place. The service of Hawaii was exemplary, and that Hawaii should become a state. Because after all, the—the plebiscite had been held in 1940, uh, and then the first Congressional hearings were held here in Honolulu, January of 1946, the Larcade Committee Hearings chaired by Henry Larcade of Louisiana. Uh, those uh, hearings were enormously favorable to statehood. Uh, Congressmen went back with a much favorable sense of Hawaii uh, than they had um, in—in 1935, in 1937. So uh, President Truman was enormously supportive of statehood uh, for Hawaii. Uh, and then the first Hawaii Statehood Bill passes the Congress uh, in June of 1947. So that initial momentum was very strong right after the war.

04:59 QUESTION: And those bills are going to pass in 1947, they're going to pass in 19 ...

05:08 WHITEHEAD: 50.

05:09 QUESTION: 1950—

05:10 WHITEHEAD: And fifty—

05:12 QUESTION: In 1951, a joint Alaska-Hawaii bill—

05:14 WHITEHEAD: '53.

05:17 QUESTION: Okay; '51—oh, wait a minute.

05:21 WHITEHEAD: There's nothing in—um, uh, uh—

05:22 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

05:24 WHITEHEAD: Okay; in '53.

05:26 QUESTION: Right.

05:27 WHITEHEAD: In '53, the third Hawaii Statehood Bill passes the House. It then goes to the Senate, where it should have been confirmed as a Hawaii Statehood Bill, but in the Senate it was paired with Alaska. And so the Senate passed in '54 a joint Alaska-Hawaii Statehood Bill, which is then sent back to the House, where it either has to be—it either has to go to a joint conference committee. Because it's not the bill the House sent to the Senate.

(shot 3)

06:03 QUESTION: Okay; that's—I want to go—

WHITEHEAD: Okay.

06:06 QUESTION: Let's go back—

06:07 WHITEHEAD: Do you want to go back to '47?

06:08 QUESTION: Yeah; '47, you said the bill was passed. But those hearing in '46 [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: Okay; let's talk about [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: Oh, yeah.

QUESTION: --again in 1946. Could you tell us first off, a little bit about who she is and what she was about. I think—

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: --you have some stories about her during the war—

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: --also. And then the position she took in that hearing in 1946.

06:33 WHITEHEAD: Okay. Kamokila, uh, one of the most amazing characters to appear in any historic scenario in the United States. Uh, Kamokila is the richest woman in Hawaii. She is the daughter of James

Campbell, uh, one of the leading sugar planters in Hawaii and uh, a Scottish immigrant to the islands, who married a Hawaiian noblewoman. Uh, Kamokila was born in the days of the Monarchy, uh, was a friend of Liliuokalani, uh, played in the—uh, uh, played in Iolani Palace. Uh, an—and so Kamokila grew up in a—uh, uh, a world of both extraordinary wealth, sugar wealth, and Hawaiian royalty. (07:20) Uh, and she saw herself as a part of both worlds. Uh, Kamokila then gr—grows up as a young woman, uh, marries a number of times, uh, spends a good portion of her uh, life in San Francisco. Uh, comes back to Hawaii in 1939 or 1940, uh, where she is now one of the recipients, one of the beneficiaries of the famous Campbell Estate, uh, still one of the great landed estates in Hawaii uh, at this moment. Uh, and so uh, Hawaii—um, Kamokila gets an enormous allowance from the Campbell Estate, um, and decides—uh, votes for statehood in 1940. Uh, but then uh, in 1942—now, this is gonna be strange—she gets elected a Senator to the Territorial Legislature from Maui, based on the votes of Japanese American workers on Baldwin plantations. Now, the Baldwins were one of the Big Five, whereas the Campbells were sugar but not one of the Big Five, which seemingly, if you're in those upper stretches of Hawaii society, made a difference. Uh, but she gets elected by being smuggled in, as she claims, to Baldwin plantations. And so she was elected a Senator in the Territorial Legislature with Japanese American votes. So she's serving as a Territorial Senator in 1946 when the Larcade Committee comes to Honolulu. And so uh, Kamokila wants to testify. Now, Kamokila had been the lone vote in the Territorial Legislature in 1945 when a resolution endorsing statehood had been passed. (09:12) She was the one person who voted against statehood in the Territorial Legislature. So the Larcade Committee cani—hearings came; Kamokila was ... sh—she was dramatic. She was beautiful. Uh, as the papers said, she was well turned out. Always appeared the height of fashion. She wanted to be as any true superstar would want to be, the only person testifying at the hearings on the day she testified. And she chose a Saturday, because fewer people would be at work on a Saturday and could attend the hearing. So on a Saturday uh, in January in 1946, she was the last person to testify. Uh, there she was, the lone speaker in Iolani Palace. There was an audience of six hundred ... mainly Japanese Americans uh, wa—uh, from her constituency. And so Kamokila gave this very interesting talk in which she opposed statehood. (10:18) Uh, she said she spoke as an American, uh, but neither missionary nor Big Five. But that she spoke from the heart and soul of all Hawaii, which ... many of us interpret as identifying with Hawaiians. Uh, and so Kamokila uh, said she was opposed to statehood because as a result of the war, the power of both the Big Five and the Japanese community had grown, and she was worried about their power in a new state. Even though

she was—had been elected with Japanese American votes. There was an undercurrent of anti-Japanese sentiment to Kamokila's testimony uh, based on the growing power of Japanese and Japanese Americans. She had elaborate charts showing the value of the savings deposits of the hundred and fifty thousand Japanese Americans in Hawaii, which she claimed showed an economic threat. (11:26) It was then pointed out by the papers that the value of the Campbell Estate was equal to half of all of the savings accounts of a hundred and fifty thousand Japanese Americans, and that uh, uh, Kamokila has almost as much money as ... uh, a—a—as the Japanese Americans in—in Hawaii. Um, she was not specific about what she wanted. Um ... she was clearly speaking with the sense of wanting to preserve a Hawaiian culture within the islands from threats that she saw coming both within and without Hawaii. Uh, she made uh, an intriguing statement to the committee and said, I would like you to go back to Washington and tell the Congress that Hawaii and Kamokila want to be left alone. (12:22) That was what—this was a media event, as they called it. Uh, there were more pictures taken, uh, the—the next day the Advertiser run the—ran the um, banner of um, Kamokila Pulls No Punches. Uh, she ran up to—to Joe Farrington, who had his hands in his—his face in his hands and said, Now, Joe, I hope I haven't upset you; our families have been friends for years. Landed a big kiss on Joe Farrington, which it was of course, front page copy uh, the next day in all the pa—uh, uh, Lorrin Thurston, the publisher of the Advertiser tri—tried to refute everything Kamokila said, but then wrote at the bottom of the article, Clearly this was the most exciting event that any group of visiting Congressmen uh, had ever encountered; it was the highlight of their trip and one they will not soon forget. Uh, and so that was—that was Kamokila, the lone member of the Legislature ...

13:26 QUESTION: Now—

13:27 WHITEHEAD: --to speak against statehood, and I think the only person to testify against statehood in those 1946 hearings.

(shot 4)

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] anybody else in your mind, or was this totally idiosyncratic?

13:45 WHITEHEAD: I—I think Kamokila believed in her heart that she represented the soul of the Hawaiian people. Uh, that she was trying to keep Hawaii the Hawaii that she had known. Uh, but we can't ... certainly her

constituency didn't support her. It was noted that there was uh, a sort of apoplexy on the faces of the uh, hundreds of young Japanese Americans in the audience who had voted for her. Um, so it clearly was not her Maui constituency that she was representing. Um, she—she didn't cl—um, she didn't claim to be a member of an organization that shared her views. So uh, she spoke on her own. Uh, she was not reelected in the elections of '46. Uh, so I mean, Kamokila can be in some ways dismissed as being a celebrity, idiosyncratic. But I—I—I think that what she expressed went beyond just Kamokila.

(shot 5)

14:52 QUESTION: You've interviewed, for example, Bill Richardson.

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: And [UNINTELLIGIBLE] in regard to her—

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: --her [UNINTELLIGIBLE]. Could you [UNINTELLIGIBLE] any conclusions or thoughts you've got about [UNINTELLIGIBLE] by the end of the war that Kamokila may have [UNINTELLIGIBLE] what she said about [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

15:22 WHITEHEAD: Well—well, for example, uh, Bill Richardson, uh, who later became Lieutenant Governor and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, was for statehood. He had gone through this military experience of the second world war. But Bill told me uh, that his father was not at all sure about statehood or for it. Uh, his father remembered the Monarchy. Uh, but he told me that ... the view of his father was that he would be for what his children were for. And if Bill was for statehood, his father was for statehood. Uh, not because he was for it, but because he wanted to support the next generation. Uh, and I—and—and I think there was that kind of ambivalence uh, in some parts of the Hawaiian community uh, and particularly among older Hawaiians. Uh, that the world they had known and loved was drifting away. Uh, what should take it's place, uh what should take its place was what

their children wanted. Uh, and so there was that kind of ambivalence, which is not being for, but not opposing.

(shot 6)

16:39 QUESTION: Tell me if you would; you mentioned Kamokila smooching with Joe Farrington.

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

16:46 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] Tell us about Joe Farrington. You see him as one of the heroes.

WHITEHEAD: Oh, yes.

QUESTION: Describe Joe Farrington to us when he comes into office [UNINTELLIGIBLE] what did for statehood.

16:59 WHITEHEAD: Uh, Farrington is uh, a very intriguing character. You know, he—he was not one of the old missionary families. Uh, his family came out uh, right before or after the annexation uh, to work for the newspaper. Uh, Farrington then, as a young man, went to the University of—of—of Wisconsin, where he roomed with uh, a member of famous La Follette family of Wisconsin; uh, famous Fighting Bob La Follette was the father of his roommate. And so while there, he was ... he—he came to believe in what we called American Progressivism or—or democracy. Uh, and he decided at the University of Wisconsin that he was gonna dedicate his life to bringing full political equality or statehood to Hawaii. In fact, he told his—he proposed to his wife Betty uh, on the campus of the University of Wisconsin and said, This will be our life, (17:58) uh, statehood. Uh, so he came back um, to Hawaii, uh, worked for the newspaper, of which his father was the publisher. Uh, and then his father, Wallace Farrington, became Territorial Governor. Uh, and so that was uh, Farrington's background. Farrington really started to ... get involved with statehood as a result of the Massey case. That was when um, he particularly became uh, concerned that statehood was needed now. He had always been for statehood, but uh, what were the conditions that could push for statehood now. And he was, I th—I think I mentioned earlier, uh, the chairman of one of those first commissions uh, to respond to the Richardson, uh, Richardson Report uh, and the Rankin Bill, which was gonna put uh, uh, at least take away the resi—the local residency requirement of the Territorial Governor. (18:57) Uh, so he got

involved—and that was when he got involved. Uh, then after the um, Jones Constigan Act uh, was when he decided to run for the Legislature uh, and got elected to the Territorial Senate and helped propose something called the Hawaii Equal Rights Commission, which was interestingly enough, equal rights for sugar, not people. Um, so the Hawaii Equal Rights Commission was the first organization that started pushing for statehood. Farrington was then in the Territorial Legislature uh, after 19 uh, 35, and his father died about this time. And so uh, Joe Farrington became publisher uh, of the Star Bulletin. And then put—firmly put the Star Bulletin behind statehood. (19:45) Um, and he supported uh, Sam King, who was the Territorial Delegate. Then what propelled Farrington into further prominence—and this becomes for myself one of the ... the human interest, almost emotional stories of the Farrington um, uh, career. Uh, Joe had a weak heart. That was why he was not drafted in World War I. It was why he wasn't drafted in World War II. He had a uh, he was uh, 4F. Um, and so in 1942, the um, Delegate to Congress, Sam King, who had been a World War I Navy veteran, wanted to reenlist in the Navy. And so he came to Joe and asked him, Would you run for the Delegate position? Uh, and Farrington said—had to think about it. Uh, he had a real worry as to whether he was physically strong enough to conduct a campaign. Uh, but Joe said, No, I have to—I have to do this. By this time, he had taken a position against martial law. Uh, and so in '42 he ran for the delegateship, moved to Congress, uh, opposed martial law uh, in the Congress, uh, and then started—you know, he—he—he was instrumental in supporting the creation of the 442nd uh, and supporting Hawaii during the war. Uh, I think Joe Farrington even went to Italy uh, to see the boys, um, as—as he called them in—uh, during the war. So uh, that was how Farrington got his start. Uh, so when the war was over, Farrington was the Delegate to Congress. Uh, he was a friend of Truman. Uh, his wife Betty says that uh, the—the—the Farringtons were str—I guess we would say strange today. I call it the uh, the—he was the last days of patrician rule. Uh, Farrington never accepted any campaign contributions. Uh, he supported it, you know, uh, with money from the Star Bulletin, as if the Star Bulletin had an unlimited income. Um, so he never had to accept campaign contributions. He was a friend of the ILWU. Uh, the ILWU liked him. Se—and there was a typesetters union uh, at the Star Bulletin. (22:26) So the ILWU supported Farrington. Um, and so Farrington is the Delegate, he's—he's a friend of Harry Truman. Uh, they had an elegant par—they had an elegant house in Washington where they were always throwing parties to which Truman was a frequent guest. So—so Farrington was a good friend of Harry Truman, who believed in the same kind of everyone is entitled to equality, uh, that—that Farrington did. And so uh, that's why Farrington uh, wa—was a great

advocate for statehood when this Larcade Committee hearings came, and then he gets the first statehood bill passed through the Congress uh, in 1947, clearly with the support of Truman. That Truman would sign it once it got to his desk. So we want to—

23:16 QUESTION: Well—

13:17 WHITEHEAD: --now move to what? [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

23:21 QUESTION: No, I was wondering if we could head to the McCarren ...

23:30 WHITEHEAD: Oh, uh, one of the—okay.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] Let's go to Stainback now.

WHITEHEAD: Okay.

[INDISTINCT CONVERSATION]

(shot 7)

23:48 QUESTION: You said in 1946 and 1947, things looked good. I mean—

WHITEHEAD: Oh, yeah.

23:54 QUESTION: --aside from Kamokila's testimony before the Larcade Committee. But then suddenly the ... the statehood issue movement got slow.

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

24:06 QUESTION: Significantly slow. Who were the major players [UNINTELLIGIBLE] what was the major movement, and what was the [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

24:13 WHITEHEAD: Well, the uh, the major move came uh, in 1947 when Territorial Governor Ingram Stainback in November of '47 announces that there's a serious Communist problem in Hawaii. Um ... and uh, he sends—he communicates with the Congress that there's a serious Communist

problem in Hawaii. Uh, Stainback had opposed martial law, he had spoken in favor of um, statehood at those 1946 hearings. Uh, but in 1947, he says there's a major Communist issue mainly involved with the ILWU, uh, which was of course, the rising labor union uh, in Hawaii which uh, had taken—taken wings uh, in 1946. (25:07) Oddly enough, in '46, Stainback told the Larcade Committee that the growth of unionism in Hawaii was a progressive feature that showed that Hawaii was ... uh, a modern state. Uh, we don't know if Stainback really became concerned about Communism in uh, the union, or whether the fact was that in the elections of 1946 the ILWU supported the Republican Joseph Farrington over Stainback's pick, a Democrat named William Borthwick. Uh, so many think that—that Stainback just stabbed the islands in the back for party reasons. Um, but the Red scare was building force in the Congress of the United States, uh, Stainback communicates this to uh, a Senator Hugh Butler, who was the chairman of the uh, Interior and Insular Affairs Committee in Washington, and a rising anti-Communist. So the statehood bill goes to ... the Senate, where Butler says, uh, Ooh, we have to check out this Communism in the islands. Sends a member of his committee, Guy Cordon of Oregon to the islands. Cordon goes back and reports there's no Communist problem in Hawaii, uh, and suggests that the Hawaii statehood bill go to the Senate for a vote. (26:43) Butler says, Nothing doing. Says, I'm gonna have to go to Hawaii and investigate. And so what Butler basically does is run out the clock, just like any protagonist on a football team would do; uh, run out the clock. Uh, and then that—uh, once—once the forty-eighth session of Congress expired, that was the end of the Hawaii statehood bill. They would have to start all over again. Uh, and it really seems that that bill would have passed, had not Stainback come out and made this Red scare report, and uh, and written Washington. He and uh, a former Territorial Supreme Court Justice, James L. Coke uh, wrote Washington. Uh, I've always been the—of the opinion that the Hawaii statehood bill would have passed, had it come to a vote in the Senate in 1948. And one thing I learned in studying statehood; I think the votes for statehood were always there. The opposition to statehood by the re—was the Red scare people or Southern racists. Uh, their tactic was to keep the vote from coming to the floor. When um ... when Butler was trying to stall the vote, Senator Nolan of California uh, made a proposal on the floor of the Congress uh, to bring the bill directly to the floor of the Senate and bypass the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. The reason that vote didn't pass was simply because that would have been such an extraordinary motion. It would have had to have been an issue of momentous national importance for the Senators to vote against one of their own committees. Um, so I think—I think if the bill had come to the floor of the Senate, it would have passed.

(shot 8)

28:52 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] In '47, that's a Republican Congress, isn't it?

WHITEHEAD: Yes, it was.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

28:57 WHITEHEAD: For the Republican.

QUESTION: And the Republican; and then after '48, it's gonna be a Democrat—

WHITEHEAD: Yeah.

QUESTION: --Congress, and then it's gonna be the Southern [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: M-hm; m-hm.

QUESTION: Even though [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

29:11 WHITEHEAD: Well, in um [CLEARS THROAT], in the next Congress, um, Butler of course stalls so late that he doesn't make his report until 1949, and that's when he makes this famous report that uh, Moscow has selected Hawaii as the beachhead for Communism in the United States. Uh, you know, it—it's sort of like when a—when a judge says to a jury uh, Strike what you've just heard. But every smart lawyer knows that's the stunts you take, because no one can strike what they've just heard uh, from their minds. So um, he poisons the new Democratic Congress, except ... that Farrington is able to get a Hawaii statehood bill passed through that Congress in 1950 in the House of Representatives. Which is then gonna go to the Senate again.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

WHITEHEAD: Well, uh, an—and then at one of the great attempts to try to get the bill through the Congress and end the Red scare tactics, that's when Hawaii holds its Constitutional Convention in 1950, at the same time that the House Unamerican Activities Committee is gonna hold hearings in Honolulu. Uh, the Constitutional Convention and HUAC uh, were meeting across the

street from each other, one in Iolani Palace, the other one in the Honolulu Armory. Uh, uh, some members of the Constitutional Convention were then subpoenaed to testify before the House Unamerican Activities Committee, but the upshot of this was actually uh, favorable. The chairman of the House Unamerican Activities Committee, Senate—uh, Congressman Walter of Pennsylvania, goes back to Washington and says, There is no Communist menace ... in Hawaii. Uh, but by this time, it's now late in 1950, the Korean War has just broken out. And what always happens with legislation in Congress is, if a more important event breaks out, then the less important event is just allowed to slide. Uh, many people in Hawaii, and—and I would agree, uh, thought that the vote would be positive in '50. So uh, it was a great disappointment to many people in Hawaii. Uh, we've had two bills pass the House, we've [UNINTELLIGIBLE] the votes in the Senate, and it's been stalled, one by an obnoxious Senator, and in this case by a turn of national events.

(shot 9)

31:51 QUESTION: And then in 1950—tell us a little bit more about that Constitutional Convention. That was elected by the [UNINTELLIGIBLE] a constitution—

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: --for the state.

32:00 WHITEHEAD: Yes. Uh, um, uh ... what a lot of uh, people had discovered—uh, there was a group in um, in Hawaii called the Legislative Reference Bureau; it was a division of the University of Hawaii, which researched uh, bills. Uh, and one of the things they found was that a number of states had be—had gotten favorable legislation by holding a co—uh, a constitutional convention as a territory, as a demonstration to the Congress that they can write a constitution. Um, and of course Hawaii now, wanted to show that it would be a constitution that had no Communist ... tinges to it. Um, so the um, the—the convention was elected by the uh, elected by the people. Um ... uh, they met and wrote the constitution that then later became the constitution for the first State of Hawaii. It was a great—it was a great uh, uh, even in statesmanship in writing the constitution, which was then ratified by the people of the State with a three to one uh, majority, which was even more than the two to one plebiscite uh, in 1940. So uh, it—it was a great event. Uh, Sam King uh, the old Territorial Delegate, was the president of the

convention. Um, Hiram Fong was the vice president ... um, of the Constitutional Convention. It was—it was quite representative uh, of the people uh, of Hawaii. And particularly those who—both of those who were politically prominent uh, and those who were um, just wanted to take a hand in this civic-minded event.

(shot 10)

QUESTION: And then in 1951, another bill passes Congress. Another statehood bill passes the House, right?

33:44 WHITEHEAD: In 1953.

QUESTION: Oh, I'm sorry.

WHITEHEAD: Okay.

QUESTION: The next one to pass the House is 1953.

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: And nothing had passed the Senate.

WHITEHEAD: No; no.

QUESTION: Okay.

33:56 WHITEHEAD: Uh, but let me say uh—

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

WHITEHEAD: This—uh, we should go to the McCarren Walter Act.

QUESTION: Okay; but let's—talking about the McCarren Walter, Joe Farrington's contribution [UNINTELLIGIBLE] the statehood movement.

34:09 WHITEHEAD: Um ... one of the reasons that I became so interested in Joe Farrington uh, was much of the Hawaii statehood movement was tied to the civil rights movement of the post-World War II era. In fact, when Harry Truman came out with a fam—his famous civil rights platform in 1948, uh, he listed among the things that the nation wanted to do uh, eliminate

the pole tax, uh, eliminate racial segregation in the South, and make Alaska and Hawaii states. Um, and of course, one of the things which was really a civil rights issue after the war was the fact that Japanese immigrants could not become citizens of the United States; they could not be naturalized. And this dated back to the very early days of the Republic; uh, of the American Republic, the 1790s. That Asian immigrants were not eligible for citizenship. Um, Chinese immigrants were given the right to be naturalized in 1943 because the US and China were allies during the war. (35:29) So it was sort of a diplomatic foreign policy move. Uh, but after the war, Japanese and Korean immigrants could not become citizens. And so one of the first things that the Territorial Legislature did after the war was to pass a resolution that would allow the parents of members of—of Japanese American veterans to become citizens. And so Farrington took that memorial from the Legislature to the Congress. He then got the support of Senator—of uh, Congressman Walter, uh, of um, uh, of uh, Pennsylvania. And so they first supported uh, the so-called Water Resolution uh, in 1950. That didn't get through the Congress. But then in 1952, a new measure, the McCarren Walter Act, sponsored by uh, a great anti-Communist of the s—of the Senate, Senator McCarren uh, of Nevada, and Congressman Walter, again the chairman of the HUAC Committee. This reformed immigration law by allowing Japanese and Koreans to become citizens. (36:49) It also included a huge number of anti-Communist provisions. You know, like if you'd been a—if you'd been a member of the Communist Party in the previous five years, you could be deported. It had so many anti-Communist provisions to it that Truman, who had always supported citizenship for the Japanese, vetoed the McCarren Walter Act. And then the Congress overturned his veto. Uh, so in 1952, McCarren Walter became law, and the—the—the Ja—uh, and the—the most Japanese immigrants in the United States were in Hawaii. So it was a uh, a bill which affected uh, Hawaii even more than the mainland.

(shot 11)

37:35 QUESTION: You have a story about [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

37:38 WHITEHEAD: Yeah. Um, it's—it's difficult to figure out exactly how many um, issei uh, were naturalized. Uh, I've never seen any figures. I got a figure out of the—the paper, but it was about five thousand, which would not have been uh, anywhere near even a majority of the issei in Hawaii in 1952. Uh, the test had to be taken in English. Uh, and of course, many of the issei were quite old by 1952. But Spark Matsunaga's father took the test and became a citizen, and Matsunaga later as a con—as a member of the

Congress uh, in 1950—67 on the fifteenth anniversary of McCarren Walter said, The greatest event of my life was to see my father, a resident of the Hawaiian Islands for sixty-seven years, finally become a citizen. And uh, he said that as a uh, as a soldier in the war, he often wondered why was he fighting to go back home to a country that would not let his father become a citizen. Uh, and so he said it was the—it was the greatest day of his life.

(shot 12)

28:58 QUESTION: John, I know your book is all about this, but could you tell us briefly how did the Alaska and Hawaii statehood movement get all tied up. And the [UNINTELLIGIBLE] I think you told me yesterday that [UNINTELLIGIBLE] and what was the precedent [UNINTELLIGIBLE] about which should go first?

39:28 WHITEHEAD: Um, well, hawa—uh, Alaska lagged Hawaii. Uh, um, Alaska did not become well known until the second world war because of the Aleutian War. Uh, the Japanese bombed Dutch Harbor in Alaska in June of 1942, and then occupied two islands in the Aleutians; Kiska and Attu. Um, and that was quite a bloody battle to remove the Japanese from Attu and Kiska. So Alaska became well known after the war, but there was not even a—a plebiscite in Alaska to uh, test the waters until 1946. So the Alaska statehood movement was a little bit later in coming than the Hawaii statehood movement. But certainly by about 1948, uh, both territories were firmly pushing for statehood, uh, particularly with their elected delegates to the Congress. Um ... both had negatives and positives. Uh, it was thought that Hawaii would be Republican, and Alaska would be Democratic. Uh, the negatives to Alaska was that it didn't seem to be economically developed; there just weren't many people there, uh, and there weren't uh, many industries there. The negatives to uh, Hawaii then were the Red scare, and still this lingering mainland prejudice against Asians. Uh, and so as both bills started going through the Congress, um ... they would—one would pass, and then the other. More Hawaii statehood bills passed than Alaska statehood bills. Um [CLEARS THROAT], but oftentimes—and what happened in 1954 (41:14) ... so there were various people in Congress who might support or oppose the two different bills for different reasons. And so some folks say that what happened in '54 is that the House had passed, then this ... Hawaii statehood bill; it went to the Senate, where some Alaska supporters thought, well, Eisenhower is now President, and he is a Republican. If we just pass a Hawaii statehood bill, he will sign it into law, and then forget about Alaska. So let's combine the two bills, so that one can't come in without the other.

Uh, but some people say that the reason for combining the bills was so that when it went back to the House, opponents of both would defeat the joint. Well, now, this always begs the question of, do members of the US Congress know what they're doing? Uh, you vote for a bill which you're sure, with—with the intention of being sure it will be defeated. Now, are—are our legislators that clever? Um, no one's—no one's figured that out. So the bill goes back to the Congress, where it—uh, back to the House uh, where ~~Joe~~ ^{Joe} Farrington fights valiantly to get the House to vote on it. And that is, of course, the dramatic day when Joe Farrington, having had uh, a difficult time with the chairman of the House Rules Committee, goes back to his office and finally the heart problem that he's been fearing all of his life occurs, and he dies ... in his office, in the Capitol, July of 1954, trying to get this joint statehood bill passed. (43:13) Uh [CLEARS THROAT], that sort of takes the momentum away. Uh, Betty, his wife, replaces him. She wins two elections in '54, one—it's like the—like the recent Patsy Mink election—one to replace her husband for the two years—I mean, for the two—two months of his remaining term, and then again to succeed him for another two-year term. Uh, Betty wins that, but in—in many ways, the momentum that—that Joe had doesn't pass today. And uh, Joe was enormously respected by many members of Congress, uh, and—and that respect just did not ... uh, transfer to his wife Betty. Uh, interestingly enough, when Joe died, Philip La Follette, governor of Wisconsin and his roommate, escorts the body back to Honolulu where Joe is given a royal funeral, uh, never before given to a Haole uh, in Hawaii. So that the—the funeral of Joseph Farrington was quite an event. Uh—

QUESTION: So—

44:27 WHITEHEAD: --in 1954. But that—that was sort of the end of the Farrington dynasty in Washington.

[END]