MK: Due to technical problems during our last session, we’re going to have a repeat of a few questions and answers.

RK: Sure.

MK: During the last session you were talking about the McKinley High School student government and the students’ efforts to participate in the war effort, especially in terms of selling war bonds. And if you can repeat that story for us?

RK: Yeah. The war started December 7, 1941. Then, that was our senior year at McKinley. And, of course, for the rest of December and all of January, schools were closed, but we went back to school in February. When we went back, we planned several activities to help in the war effort. One of them, for example, was selling war bonds in school. The McKinley High School student government treasurer handled the sales. I think we were quite successful because I think they gave us credit for buying enough bonds to buy a bomber or something.

WN: Did you go back to school on the same grounds? Were there temporary quarters at all?

RK: What happened was, some of the schools were taken over by the military for different purposes and Saint Louis High School was taken over. Therefore, we were told that we had to share our facilities with Saint Louis. They also wanted to cut down on transportation, and McKinley covered a large geographical area, most of Downtown all the way out to Hanauma Bay, practically all of Kaimuki.

What we did was, we had, as I recall, use of the buildings in the morning, and Saint Louis used the buildings in the afternoon. We split our student body, not exactly in half, I think, but a sizeable proportion who lived in the Kaimuki area went to school at what is now, I think, Kaimuki Intermediate. Also, I think classes convened some time in February, but our class, in which we had almost about a thousand, maybe 900 members, the numbers were cut down because a lot of people who could work at Pearl Harbor were asked to do so. So our class size was down to maybe around 650.

MK: Were there some of your friends in that group of students who chose to work?
RK: Oh yes. As I recall, those of Japanese descent couldn’t work at Pearl Harbor or other sensitive areas, so it’s mainly the non-Japanese. The Chinese, Hawaiians, Portuguese were able to gain employment.

MK: And how did you feel about that, where the Japanese were not allowed but the other ethnic groups were allowed to do that?

RK: At that time, since the war was against Japan and there were other measures that restricted the movement of Japanese, some of the Japanese were being interned. It fitted that pattern so we thought it was part of what we had to go through because the war was against Japan. Some discrimination was, I guess, expected.

MK: And then, also during the last session, we’re talking about McKinley’s version of socialized medicine. If you can tell us about the health fund and who was involved in it and what it did for the students?

RK: As I recall, I don’t know if (they) still have it now, but we had what we called—I don’t know what we called it, mutual aid society—but when I look back in a way it was socialized medicine. I think each student contributed I don’t know what it was—ten cents a year or whatever—but it could be sizeable. With a student body of about almost four thousand, it could be sizeable. And what this fund was used for was to help students and their families to meet medical emergencies.

As a junior I sat on the council or the board that helped to dispense payments. As I recall, the people that applied saying, “My mother had to undergo an emergency appendectomy and it cost sixty dollars. We can only pay half of it. Can we get money from you for the rest of it?” And, in most cases I think we would give them the sum to help out.

And, as I recall, that council or board consisted of students, faculty and doctors—medical doctors who were part of the program—and some of them were very generous. Like I remember Dr. [F.J.] Pinkerton who sat on the board and kept on seeing me blinking. I told him I didn’t sleep well the night before and had very little sleep. He wanted to check my eyes, so he gave me an appointment and he never charged me for it. So I suspect that there were other doctors who tried to help out.

MK: Did that board already exist by the time you came to McKinley?

RK: Yeah. I don’t know when it was started, but, I think, was another program that Miles Cary started. But be interesting to find out exactly when did it get started, how it operated.

WN: I’m wondering today, something like this is pretty much commonplace thing, but I’m just wondering in those days would you remember any reactions to this type of a mutual aid society kind of a thing? I mean this is in the ’40s.

RK: This is in the ’30s, really. No, at that time, as students, we didn’t think about the larger questions of, philosophically, what this meant or, politically, what the implications were. We went to McKinley and accepted that as part of the McKinley culture under Cary, where here’s another example of how he actively involved students. He gave them responsibility.

MK: And then in those days, you have the students involved, how about the faculty? What was the role of the faculty in things of this sort?
RK: Well, most of the faculty had, I think, agreed with the principal Miles Cary so they fostered this student participation, student responsibility, there were a few who were against it, but much depended upon, I guess, the class that you taught. If you had a chemistry class or biology, you got it pretty straight, although I remember taking geometry, where that was a teacher who really involved students. Her teaching was teaching geometry as logic, so not just having to memorize theorems but she would pose the problems and we'd try to figure out logically and then develop the theorem. Then she would say, “Yeah, this is the theorem of right angles,” or whatever.

WN: Sort of Socratic method.

RK: Well, you can call it that, yeah.

MK: You mentioned that maybe there were some teachers who were not totally in favor of the program. How did you know that these teachers were not in favor of the program?

RK: I think students are sensitive to how.... It may be poor teachers or whether students regard them as poor teachers because they don't trust students, which is something that I think is bad but it happens. I don't think you should be a teacher if you don't trust people or trust students. But some of them were skeptical that we were given so much responsibility. As one of them told me after I graduated years later, she said, “I think we spoiled you because we gave you so much.”

I said, “Well, I don’t know.” It was a burden in a way. The only way you can teach responsibility is to have you shoulder the responsibility. When I look back, that’s what Cary’s philosophy of education was, he was a disciple of John Dewey, and the proof of the pudding is in doing, not reading about it. Not just theorizing but actually doing it, you learn by doing. Schooling, in a way, is not a preparation for life, it's life itself. You can get real life experiences as a student.

MK: And I was wondering, in those days, how was a student motivated to really be part of this program?

RK: I think basically we felt that we were given responsibility, and it was a real responsibility. What we were asked to do was real, it wasn't a shibai, going through the motions. Not that we could have everything, so-called, our way, but we had actively participated in decision-making and in the carrying out of that decision.

MK: Were there any situations where, say, a student’s decision on something was not accepted or changed in some way?

RK: I can’t think of specific instances, but there were cases when students would lean one way and maybe the faculty or administration lean the other way. But in most cases we would come up with some kind of a compromise or a consensus. I don’t think there was any open opposition to anything. I mean the whole idea was building consensus, it wasn’t confrontational. So I don’t remember real clashes.

On many issues, the students were divided. And that’s what made it interesting. This is why there was a lot of emphasis and I learned a lot in McKinley about parliamentary procedure. We were told how to conduct meetings, how to listen to different sides, how to try to reach consensus.
WN: I was wondering, were you aware at that time how innovative this philosophy and program was? For example, you were student body president of a student-centered school. Did you, at any time, talk with other student body presidents about what their experiences were like at other schools?

RK: Yeah. At that time—I don’t know if we still have it today—but there was an organization called THSGA, Territorial High School Government Association. And we had annual meetings, and I attended, I think, almost all of them. And the meetings were held in different parts of the state, and the meetings were usually held during the Thanksgiving break. So before December 7, just a week or two before, I led a McKinley delegation and we attended a THSGA conference in Honoka’a on the Big Island.

I remember going to an earlier one when I was a sophomore to Hāmākua Poko, Maui High School sponsored it. It was fun to meet students of other campuses. McKinley, in a way, I don’t know if we were targeted—some people were really interested when I look back at how much authority we had as a student government. But, if anything, McKinley was targeted because we were, by far, the largest school in the state, or in the territory at that time, the oldest one. And, I thought we were, sometimes at the beginning especially, sort of treated differently. Not so much in awe, but envy or even some resentment. “These McKinley guys think they know everything.” We were the so-called city slickers then. We were from the big city, the biggest school. But generally, we got along very nicely.

MK: How much personal involvement, was there from the principal Miles Cary?

RK: There was a lot. He made himself available. He was one principal, and it was a large school, but he made it a practice to go around to talk to students. Many times, in the beginning we were startled because he was a faculty member who did not use the faculty restroom. He used the boys’ restroom. So he would barge in on you, and do it with everybody else, and that impressed a lot of the students.

As I said, I think every Friday or so we had this council meeting—I don’t know what it was called—but all of the leaders of the classes, the student body government, the class advisors, some other faculty, and the principal Miles Cary participated. This is where we met for about an hour and we discussed projects, problems. As I recall, the student body president presided at the meeting. Cary sat as sort of a resource person. Of course, he would speak freely as to what he had in mind. So you got to know him and his philosophy. The main thing is you got a feel for his personality, which was very warm. He was caring and warm. As I said, I thought the greatest tribute paid to him was years later, I guess it was in the Hawai‘i Herald, one of the several articles they mentioned about McKinley and Cary. They talked about meeting the student who said, “I was just another average student, but I still feel very close to Cary because of the way he treated us. He greeted me on campus as though I was somebody.”

I guess in those days, there was more of a plantation mentality, although McKinley was a city school, because initially it took in Waipahu and other areas as well. I guess that made an impression. Cary was someone who really believed in equality and didn’t look down on students. I think that showed. Later on, I got to know him much more personally. When he was a professor at the University of Minnesota, my wife was his teaching assistant and we did a lot of things socially. We had picnics; we went fishing. I got to know him much better, and his warmth and his feeling for people were very genuine. He
had the warmest hello over the telephone, no matter what, you could feel that, in his voice.

WN: You talked about some faculty that may have not embraced the philosophy, what about parents? Were there any reactions from parents?

RK: Well, most of our parents were happy we were in school and were able to go to high school. Although at that time they had a pretty active PTA [Parent-Teacher Association]. I still remember when we had an open house, we had quite a turnout of parents, much more so than you find today, I think, because the parents were interested in what the students were doing.

But most of the parents, Oriental parents especially, didn’t feel that their role was to criticize or protest. Their role was to be thankful that their students were in school. You hear stories about the teacher is never wrong, so if you’re scolded in school, even if falsely accused of something, the parents would say, “No, no, the teacher is right.” So parents played a role but it wasn’t that critical role, I think. And the teachers who were not in tune with the core program, I think some of them were just the so-called old-fashioned teachers who, as far they are concerned, is “Teacher knows best,” and “You listen to me,” who taught in an old-fashioned way, more or less in authoritarian mode.

MK: When you look back on the faculty in those days, did they tend to be younger teachers at McKinley?

RK: No, they weren’t any younger than others. I think the DOE—at that time DPI, Department of Public Instruction—still had a seniority rule. So if you’re a junior, you start out in the neighborhood islands, in the boondocks, and you gain seniority and work your way in. I don’t know how much leeway the principal had in selecting his staff and how much leeway the faculty themselves had in choosing the schools that they worked in. But on the whole, the McKinley faculty, I think, were in tune with the Cary philosophy, especially our core studies. The ones I had were all very much (with Cary).

MK: And then during your years at McKinley, how do you think the community viewed McKinley and the program, say, in newspapers or in community discussion whenever McKinley would come up?

RK: Oh I don’t know. I think mostly favorably but there were mixed reactions. Because Roosevelt was also becoming a big school—it was English-standard school—and the big rivalry was McKinley and Roosevelt, especially in football. I don’t know that. I think maybe the hierarchical thinking was already there that we seem to have in this city on the whole. Now ‘Iolani and the private schools are better than the public schools, in different degrees. And, here at McKinley then, because of the large number of Japanese where it was called “Tokyo High,” I myself didn’t hear that too much, and it didn’t bother us. We enjoyed school, we had a good time.

Later on, I think more of us realized that the local newspapers in their editorials were much against Miles Cary. They thought he had too much of a socialist leaning. Of course he was a Franklin D. Roosevelt Democrat, and the town was solidly Republican. The newspapers were very much so.
MK: You mentioned that in those days the students were aware of this hierarchy, private schools, then Roosevelt, then the other public schools, in terms of yourself and your peers, did you think, “I’m as good as them or better”? What did you think?

RK: I personally didn’t feel that. I enjoyed being in school and I enjoyed McKinley High School. It was good experience. We had good instruction. I had very good friends, so I don’t think we were in a business comparing what others were doing.

MK: And then before we leave the topic of Miles Cary and the core study program, I came across a quote that said that, “An objective of the core study program was to awaken the students, so that he will want to change his environment.” What would you say to that? Was that objective achieved?

RK: Well, I think we were told that we should be citizens and active citizens and that meant that you get involved in public affairs so that you help make decisions. So if you need change or want change, that’s the way to go. But what the McKinley core studies program did was make the school itself a community in which the decision-making is done by the McKinley citizens, the students participating. And also, I guess, there was an idea, too, that even then, you could affect community affairs, because we had a lot of programs in which we participated, especially with the war starting. Community drive, going out Kiawe Corps, clearing land, vegetable gardens, helping with the draft procedures, and things of that sort.

WN: Miles Cary was an FDR Democrat. There was a lot going on at that time, the New Deal was enforced, and a lot of innovative programs. I know the purpose of core program, too, is to sort of integrate real-life situations with what you learn in school. Did you, at that time, see that connection between FDR and the New Deal and what you were doing in, say, student government, student participation, so forth, at that time?

RK: I don’t know that we saw that connection, but I remember, in the core studies program, we did a lot of current events. And so, the National Recovery Act, NRA, we tried to understand what he was trying to do. Especially in the labor field, with the coming of the Wagner Act and other things, I remember having a lot of discussions about what those labor acts were trying to do.

MK: And then, part of this core study program is to be highly involved in student government. Did this involvement in student government at McKinley cause you to continue that sort of involvement at UH [University of Hawai‘i] and later?

RK: Yeah, I think so. Because we had a feeling, the students, we had a say and we could participate. I remember, there was a controversy on campus, later on at the university, where they tried to make the ASUH [Associated Students of the University of Hawai‘i] government more of that nature. I don’t know if we really succeeded. But I remember once, we had a sociology professor who did something in class. I guess he was talking about birth control and family planning. He brought condoms to class, which at that time, you know, alarmed some students. There were some protests and the president backed (them) up. And there was a question about whether this professor was fit to teach. We, some of us students, went to see the president and said, “Hey, he’s a good professor and there was nothing wrong with what he did.” But, in essence, we were told by the president that was none of our business.

MK: So at the end, what happened to that . . .
RK: He wasn’t fired. We felt that our protesting had an effect even if it wasn’t officially admitted.

MK: And then, back at McKinley, you had like yourself, Dan Inouye, Fudge Matsuda, maybe younger would be George Ariyoshi, a number of men that later on would become very active in Democratic politics in the government. Were the ties that were begun in, say, intermediate or high school, were those the ties that were just continued later on?

RK: Well, it was a large class. We had several reunions and some of them were quite successful. I don’t know the numbers we had. In one of our—I don’t know which one—it was the fiftieth reunion, we had about four hundred members or so or three hundred which was a pretty good number. And I have to say that a dozen or more of us still, every two months, get together for lunch. There’s a core, but then others join in. So we still retain the friendships and laugh and have a good time. Because, when I think about it, especially those who didn’t go to college immediately really prized that high school relationship.

And all of them had turned out to be very successful. I don’t know how true, but when we had the testimony for Danny Inouye by the McKinley High School Foundation, Dan repeated a statement that in our class of over a thousand, no one has gone to jail, none of us have been convicted of a felony. (Chuckles) All were good law-abiding citizens.

WN: Is that documented truth or . . . ?

RK: I don’t know if . . .

(Laughter)

. . . we can document that. But the whole point was, they were a real a bunch of very nice guys. Even today my wife says, “Yeah, some of your McKinley friends are real decent and sweet.” To this day, they’re very helpful.

MK: And then back when you graduated in ’42, upon your graduation, what were your aspirations? What were your plans?

RK: At that time, I thought I’d be a lawyer. I’d go to University of Hawai‘i and hopefully make it to a law school later.

WN: Did you have any role models at that time who were attorneys?

RK: No, not really.

MK: But why law and not medicine or business or something else?

RK: Well, probably because I was more into student government, community affairs. I didn’t do badly in math but I wasn’t that interested in math. I wasn’t interested in chemistry and the natural sciences. At that time, I guess, for us, if you were ambitious you’d become a lawyer or a doctor, medical doctor, if you could afford it. Of course, you can always be a schoolteacher. I mean, the options didn’t seem to be that numerous.

MK: And in those days, there weren’t that many Japanese-American attorneys.
RK: I guess not, yeah. There were a few. Masaji Marumoto, one of them. There was Yasutaka Fukushima. There were few others. Maybe I should [share these letters]...

MK: Oh, yeah, you might want to talk about that, the letters that the students wrote.

RK: Yeah, it's part of our participation in community affairs. Shortly after the war started, all the rumors were running around. I was old enough then. I went out and bought every extra that appeared in the morning [Honolulu] Advertiser. I have their whole week's collection. The first day, war; the second day, "Saboteurs Land Here," says a big headline, which was wrong. There were a lot of rumors, of course, given the circumstances.

Time magazine published one of the rumors, which said that some of the downed Japanese aviators had McKinley High School rings or at least were graduates of the local high schools. And here again, this idea of McKinley as "Tokyo High" and we had produced people who were fighting on the other side. So we discussed this in our core studies class and some of us wrote a letter to the editor of Time. And lo and behold, Time magazine published our letters. I received a very nice note from the editors apologizing and saying, "We're planning to publish your letter and a representative selection of others in our March 30th issue." And saying, "Thank you very much for letting us hear from you in this connection." But here was an example, I think, of our being encouraged and our feeling that we should actively participate in current affairs.

MK: When you folks sent the letters to Time, did you think they were going to publish?

RK: I don't know. We thought it was fifty-fifty. But as I said, they not only published it, I got a very good letter from the editors, thanking us for what we did.

WN: I notice, you have it as Hiromichi, when did you become Richard?

RK: At the end of my junior year, I got elected student body president. And McKinley sent each student body president to a national student body presidents' conference. It was called the National Association of Student Councils, I think, some such. I was lucky because when I got elected my conference was in Boston at then Tufts College, which is now Tufts University, right out in Boston. So when I went to the conference, they couldn't pronounce my name. So they said, "We got to give you an English name." Hiromichi sounded closest to Richard, so they called me Richard, made it easier for them. So when I came back and I got this correspondence, my parents said, "Yeah, maybe you should have an English name." So eventually I legalized that, as Hiromichi was not easy for many people.

MK: But your original name came from a Japanese Christian minister?

RK: Yeah, the characters the same, although he wrote it—I think his name was Osaki Kodo, and mine is Kosaki Hiromichi—but it's the same Chinese characters, kanji. That's what I was told.

MK: There's a lot of background to your names.

WN: Do you think you could just read the letter?

RK: Oh, the Time magazine letter?
WN: Yeah.

RK: Well, what they published was most of it, not all of it. But under the headings, in quotes, "Ugly Rumor," it says, “Sirs: In the article entitled ‘The Stranger Within Our Gates,’ Time, January 19, you state that, quote, “Jap High School boys from Hawai’i had helped pilot the planes that attacked Pearl Harbor,” unquote. Although it is a fact that words to that effect made the rounds here in town, there is no confirmation or proof of such a happening. Our local papers and army officials have openly denied this charge after examination of the bodies of Japanese pilots who took part in the December 7 raid. Furthermore, the comprehensive Roberts Report makes no mention of, quote, “Jap High School Boys,” unquote. In other words, this is just another ugly rumor.” That’s the letter that I submitted to them, which they published, and there were other letters. And they put down, in my case, Hiromichi Kosaki, of Japanese descent, president of the student body at McKinley High School.

Another letter, “Sirs, this was evidently a rumor which had been carried over to the Mainland by evacuees from Hawai’i. Laura Mau, of Chinese descent.” Another one, “Sirs, we Americans all study, work, and play with Japanese high school boys here in the islands, and I’m sure I am in a position to know them perhaps a little better than others. They show their feelings and speech and, indeed, that they’re behind the U.S.A. to a man.” That’s Colleen Lau, of Chinese descent.

WN: I’m just wondering, do you think it was Time magazine that made it a point to put in the non-Japanese letters, or was it maybe on your part to try to get as much different ethnicities submitting letters?

RK: I don’t know. The class was always mixed, so as long as you don’t say only—and I don’t think they would even think of saying only Japanese descent write. Just those who felt like it wrote. Yeah, I still see Laura Mau, and Colleen Lau, and Peggy Arita.

MK: You mentioned that the local dailies also picked up this publication.

RK: Yeah, they reported that our letters were in Time magazine.

MK: So after your letters were published by Time, did your social studies class kind of discuss the outcome of it and everything? That fact that they were published or . . . ?

RK: No, as I said, our core studies teacher at that time was this visiting teacher from Evanston Township High School near Chicago, who was the high school expert on Shakespeare, but he was the one who encouraged us to write.

MK: I think we’ve caught up to the point that we had lost last time. So now we have you at the UH [University of Hawai’i]. In those days, what was the application procedure like to get into UH?

RK: Oh, I don’t know. All I remember is that people think that it was easy to get into, it was not. Well, to begin with, not everybody applied and I think, as I said before, a lot of very able students, especially who were female, did not apply to go to the University of Hawai’i. Some of them went directly to work or others just, the girls especially, went to business school. There was Honolulu Business College and I guess there was Cannon’s School of Business. That was a more usual path.
But many of us didn’t go on to college, although I thought most of my classmates had the ability to succeed. In fact, some of the smartest girls in our class did not apply and did not go on immediately after graduation to college. I can think of three examples of bright girls who eventually, later, got the baccalaureate degree and had professional careers. But the climate at that time did not expect and did not encourage everyone, especially females, to go on. And the University of Hawai‘i was not (easy to get into). We had limited choices. Most of us, as far as we’re concerned, going to the Mainland was out of the question. So the only university we could attend—there were no community colleges. There were technical schools, but the technical schools were bent towards automotive repair, electrician, and so on.

So those of us who modeled an academic career, the only place we could go to is University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. And it wasn’t easy to get into, as I recall. I would think maybe only the top 20 or 30 percent would be able to get in. I thought they rejected some of whom I thought were very able. If you could afford it, you could go to the Mainland. It was much easier to get into a Mainland (college). Everyone thought that Mainland school may have been better, but that really wasn’t the case. There were colleges on the Mainland who had open admissions and so on. So they were much easier to get into as long as you paid the tuition.

So the University of Hawai‘i wasn’t easy to get into. They had cutoffs. And I guess it wasn’t so at McKinley, I think. Most of us who came here at the University of Hawai‘i—I don’t know how it was at private schools, but I know in some schools on Kaua‘i, for example, or in Hilo, the advisors played a very strong role. So, I don’t know. It wasn’t during our time but later on I found a lot of Kaua‘i students. Kaua‘i has a very high college-going rate, and they had the highest number when we did our community college studies in the early ’60s. They had the highest number going out of state. And the reason, when we went there, was two. One, “If we’re going to send them away, it’s going to cost money anyway.” The room and board in Honolulu, especially if you didn’t have relatives. It may be cheaper on the Mainland for room and board, although the initial airfare maybe more.

But, secondly, there were teachers on Kaua‘i who had strong ties with San Jose State or Northern Colorado, so you found a lot of Kaua‘i students on those campuses. Later on, you found quite a number of Kamehameha School people at Pacific University. And there were patterns, I guess, encouraged by an advisor. Some students would go there, like it, and then before you know, you have a colony of Hawai‘i students in those schools. So that pattern.

In Hilo, I was told that there was an advisor who was a very strong advisor and practically was the admissions officer. I was told that Hilo had the best rate of success in getting to the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. They found out that this advisor would say to her students who she thought were not smart enough, “Don’t apply to University of Hawai‘i, you’re not going to get in anyway.” Or, the better students, she let them apply to Mainland schools.

MK: In the case of McKinley, what was the role of advisors?

RK: We were just encouraged to go if we could and it was mainly the University of Hawai‘i.

MK: And then, I know I asked you before, but, to apply, would you remember what you had to do in those days? Letters, tests?
RK: I guess there were tests, there were letters. Yeah, I tried to get a territorial scholarship, which I didn’t get. Miles Cary was very—and my teachers all encouraged me and wrote strong letters. Miles Cary had me meet Joe Farrington, who wrote a very strong letter. I think Joe Farrington was the delegate to Congress then or something of that sort. But I think, as I told you, I didn’t get the scholarship. I was told unofficially that one of the reasons, well, a scholarship is quite political. There were very few scholarships. The territorial scholarship was set up by the legislature, so the individual legislators could help to select a student from his or her district.

But I was told that because that summer before I came to the university, I had worked as sort of a stevedore and, at any rate, I had a very good defense job, which paid very well. So they thought I had enough money to come to the university, which was my aim. But the second year, they did give me a scholarship to the university, but then I left school in the second year.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MK: And then in those days, what was the tuition and fees like?

RK: I don’t really remember. That’s an interesting question because—we should look at it—maybe it was fifty or a hundred [dollars]. But you have to think in terms of what the dollar meant at that time. I had a feeling that the tuition was not that low for the times. Later on, especially when the Democrats came into power in the ’50s, I think they lowered tuition to the university, which was remarkable. Now, everything goes up. And the whole idea was that it should be accessible to all.

Along that line, when I did the community college study for university in 1961, one of the major recommendations that they did not adopt that we made, was that the community college tuition be two-thirds of that of the university, which was a hundred dollars then, I think. So the community college was sixty-six dollars. But the legislature said no. I think at that time they could fix tuition. They kept it at the technical school level, more or less. Technical school had fees of this or another, so it was twenty-five dollars.

WN: Right, I remember that. When I was going to UH, this is in the mid-’60s or later ’60s, I remember it was $116.25 for Mānoa. I remember the community colleges were $25.

RK: We recommended two-thirds, partly because we thought we needed the money for teachers, we needed the money for facilities. One of the interesting things, we did a survey, went to all the high schools, public and private, and we got a terrific return of almost 90 percent. We ran a sample questionnaire in two high schools before we had the final version. The one question we had to change was the question we asked about tuition. We had said, “If you were to go to a community college, how much would you be willing to pay?” We had very low amounts. Everybody piled on to the top. They were willing to pay, so we had to change that to give the choices so that they could. Most of them said they’d be willing to pay almost the same as the University of Hawai‘i tuition.

And the psychology, I was told that if it’s so cheap, it probably isn’t good. “I’m willing to pay for something that’s good.” But I think it’d be interesting to look at tuition at the
University of Hawai‘i and how it’s changed in terms of not only now that tuition money goes to the university and not to the general fund but how it’s fluctuated. But, I guess, you really have to make the study in terms of what the dollar meant at that time and what tuition rates were in other universities and colleges.

MK: In your day, when you first started at the UH as a freshman, did you think, “Oh, I got to pay up a lot,” or did you worry?

RK: Oh yeah, it was always a factor. But this is why we had to take good summer jobs or whatever. Most of us didn’t want to expect our parents, although our parents were willing to borrow I guess, to help us out. But most of us tried to do it so we could pay on our own.

MK: In your case, what were your jobs that helped you?

RK: Well, the summer job that I had, I guess I told you, Bill Wise, who was a McKinley High School boys’ adviser and other things, had a contract with I don’t know whom. And his job was to get a bunch of men or boys to help unload and store food supplies in Honolulu, because we’re always afraid that we’d be isolated, be cut-off since we don’t produce enough of our food. We’re importing a lot of rice, a lot of wheat, a lot of flour, canned goods, all kinds of things, butter, and so on. I was one of those hired by him to work in that area, and they paid quite well. I started working, even as I weighed 130 pounds, as a stevedore and that was very hard work, my gosh. I used to go home dead tired and I could hardly move my fingers because all day long we’re stacking, especially the wheat from Brazil which came in 130-pound bags or something like that.

But anyway, before long, he promoted me to become a checker, which was just sitting down, (chuckles) and keeping records, and also was an increase in pay. We had a lot of overtime and so forth, I had nothing else to do. I was paid a good sum. Also, as I told you, when the war started I was a supply clerk at the first-aid station at Jefferson School, and I had a great salary, $125 a month, that was a lot of money. So all those things helped me.

MK: And then you mentioned that your parents were willing to help as much as they could, but what were their responsibilities? You had other siblings so how . . . ?

RK: Especially as kids, we were given a small allowance when we were in school to pay for lunch, pay for carfare and then maybe a few other items. Nothing regular but they were quite generous with us in terms of what we needed but on the other hand, we knew that we didn’t have much discretionary funds, we didn’t expect to have, so. Especially there were six in our family and everyone did part-time work, all of us.

Like at the university, I worked on campus. There was a program. What was it called? NYA, National Youth Administration, it was a federal program in which you could work for faculty. I worked for Earl Ernst, who was in English and drama, and Carl Stroven, who later became librarian, but Carl Stroven was then, I think, chairman of the English department. I remember a whole semester in which he got catalogs from Blackwell’s and other booksellers in England, heavy on English literature, and he would mark-off books that we should have. My job was to go to the library to see if the library had them. If the library didn’t have them, I had to order them, which was fun. I got to know and, in fact, when I went to graduate school, I used to, myself, get the Blackwell’s and what was the other? Two or three big booksellers in England, I would get their catalogs and I would
order books because at that time it was cheaper to get the books from England rather than United States. Especially I had an interest in political philosophy, and a lot of the books came out of England.

Later on, I also worked in the cafeteria. One of the jobs I did was washing dishes. My wife Mildred—she wasn’t my wife then—Mildred worked as cashier. She did a lot of on-campus work.

MK: And then when you eventually worked for Dr. Ernst, Dr. Stroven, at the cafeteria, were these like when you were freshman or later?

RK: No, when I was freshman.

MK: When you were a freshman?

RK: Yeah, freshman. I left at the end of my first semester as a sophomore. I volunteered in the army. And the semester was, at that time, from, I guess, mid-September to mid-January or so. I liked that because final exams were after the two-week Christmas break. That’s when I could do all my reading and cram everything in, because I wasn’t doing all my homework like some others might have. But those of us who were going in the army on January 1 or whatever were excused. If we had passing grades, they’d give us whatever grade we had. Except I had Charlie Moore in philosophy, and he insisted that I finish all the readings. I had to read all of Plato, I had to read all of I don’t know what else. Bless his soul, here it is, Christmas vacation, I had to report to him in the morning to tell him what I read, to discuss it with him and everything else. So they were caring teachers.

One thing I remember is Paul Bachman—Bachman Hall—Paul Bachman was then dean of faculties. So I think that is comparable now to being the vice-president for academic affairs. I remember Paul Bachman saying to me as I went to say, “Goodbye, I’m going,” he says, “You know, if you can come back alive, the government might pay for your tuition in continuing college.” He said there was a program like that after World War I, which I [he] benefited from. He said there’s a good chance that they will have that sort of program to subsidize your education if you come back alive. Sure enough, that was the GI Bill. So that really helped, the GI Bill really helped. I did work after I got back on campus after my three years in the army, but the three years in the army gave me the equivalent of almost six years of undergraduate and graduate work. GI Bill paid for your tuition, books, and also gave you a monthly stipend. You could even afford to get married.

MK: Going back to that freshman year at UH, I was wondering, what sort of class population was there on campus? The freshman class population, how would you characterize it?

RK: By that you mean numbers?

MK: Numbers, ethnicity, just your impressionistic view of that freshman class?

RK: I don’t know how many there were. I got elected freshman class president, but it’s primarily because, I guess, we had more McKinley people than others. As I said, McKinley was still the biggest high school, but then Roosevelt. I had some good Roosevelt friends. In fact one of them, they put me up for sophomore class president, which I didn’t want to because I knew I was going to leave. John Ohtani was from Roosevelt, and he became the sophomore class president. I knew him well because we
had gone to Japanese[-language] school together. But there was good feeling all around. Gee, I don’t really recall that the student body was that different.

MK: How about any military presence because it was a war period on campus?

RK: Yeah, right after the war, the military used some of the university facilities. For example, Hemenway Hall was used as a nursery for young mothers in the military. But by the time I got here, which was a year after the war started, the military pretty much—oh, they were here. They took over the Farrington Hall, made it the army theater, Maurice Evans was the captain in charge of special services. So there were some military here. And, come to think of it, when we had some dances and stuff, we invited some of the military to join us.

WN: Were you in ROTC [Reserve Officers’ Training Corps] at that time?

RK: As I said, I’ve been able to avoid ROTC, that’s why I went into the band. So if you’re in a band, you march in the band and you don’t have ROTC. McKinley was very strong in ROTC, almost everybody took it, but I did not. As I mentioned before, I think, I didn’t find that to be a handicap when we got in the army. I said to my classmate who took ROTC, “Hey, in two weeks, I learned all you learned in three years.” How to do about face and . . .

(Laughter)

MK: And then you mentioned that you took band and so you avoided ROTC.

RK: Yeah, if you were in a band, they excused you from ROTC.

MK: So you continued with the clarinet?

RK: Until I found out that I was not musically inclined. And in my sophomore year, I was so busy with student government. That’s another thing. McKinley student government was very time consuming, and maybe I spent too much time there. I had to devote a whole class assigned to student government. Get there in the morning, late in the afternoon, weekends, we had a lot of activity. And band took up time, too, because we had to go to concerts, other things, too. I couldn’t make the two match and, as I said, I found out I wasn’t good in music, so I gave up band, and my activity became the student government.

MK: And then, when you started here at UH, what kind of classes did you take your freshman year?

RK: Well the usual—English, history, philosophy, whatever, psychology. And we had some good instructors. I had zoology; I had botany. Botany I had from Charles Engard, he was a young professor who had come from Wisconsin, just graduated. Brilliant man, very friendly, too. He asked me a question once and I said, “That’s not fair, that’s a chicken-and-egg question, which came first?”

He said to me, “The egg came first.” He proved to me (about) mutation and so forth. I’ve never been able to convince others, but he convinced me that the egg came first. But he was a good instructor, brilliant. Unfortunately he died of a heart attack at a very young age. He was, I understand, I found out later, that he was a track star at Wisconsin, a sprinter, and I think that’s too much for one’s heart anyway.
We had some very good instructors. I had in English Miss [Laura] Schwartz at that time, who later became Mrs. Korn, one of the few senior female professors, she was another brilliant person. And she really was good. She was not so much—although she did emphasize it, too—correct grammar but she was more interested in how you expressed yourself, the thought, the spirit. I remember her constantly reading—he wasn’t in our class but there was another chap who came from the Big Island, Hakalau I think. I’ve forgotten his name, I knew him. But he wrote in the most colorful way about bon dances, and she read them to us. Grammatically, not good, but by God, the spirit was there, it was so fun.

She said, for example, “I passed this around the department and most of them gave him an F because of his poor grammar.” Some of them, two mistakes in grammar, and you’re automatically out. But she says, “But look at the spirit, look at how he describes these things.” She was a good teacher. They segregated the class—I don’t know if they do it today—and some of us who did well in some of these English tests—I don’t know how they tested us out—were in this special English class with her. There were a lot of bright students there. A lot of them wanted to become engineers. That’s another field that [attracted] very able students, especially males. And a lot of them would say, “Well, why do we have to take English?” They want to take math and other things. She tried to tell them all the time that it’s a tool for thinking and larger horizons. Most of the successful engineers and architects had to have the language. Of course, we had, in town, Johnny Wilson, who was an engineer, becoming mayor. And her point was, you don’t get to become mayor or head of a firm if you can’t write and read. So she really pushed English as a communicating, civilizing tool. She was a very good teacher.

MK: So you had a Mr. Engard?

RK: In botany, I remember as being outstanding. And . . .

MK: Mrs. Schwartz.

RK: Schwartz, yeah. And I had Charlie Moore in philosophy.

MK: How about in history?

RK: Whom did I have in history? I don’t remember this teacher, I’m afraid. I had a professor in economics. I just bluffed my way through the course. He gave me a good passing grade because my handwriting was good.

(Laughter)

MK: And you mentioned like in English, there were some profs who were very strict about grammar, not so much about the content but they were into correct English. I had heard from other people who had gone to school in those days that were was a lot of emphasis on English correction, oral as well as written.

RK: Yeah. There was still a very strong emphasis on speech even at McKinley. To this day when we get together, a lot of the jokes are about having speech classes and how we had to be very careful. We had to say, “He is right.” All the emphasis, try to avoid pidgin.

University continued this with a vengeance. You could not graduate if you didn’t pass a speech test. So if you had a very strong Oriental or pidgin accent, and that happened to some students, especially the boys who were in math or science, who didn’t give a darn.
about English, they failed. There were examples. I think one boy was held back because he couldn’t pass his speech test. But when the regents were considering this, I understand—it’s an anecdote, I wasn’t there—but at one point the regents said, “Maybe we should abolish this.” And one regent who was very much in favor of retaining it was told by another, “Hey, you won’t pass the test.”

(Laughter)

WN: Now is this a local regent or was this a Mainland regent?

RK: University regents are all local, mostly.

WN: But were they all local?

RK: There were mixtures and some of them had strong accents that were not quite—it wasn’t enough American or British. And some of it was extreme here as to so-called correct English. That’s another thing, they tested you in speech and if you didn’t reach a certain level, you had to take a speech class. Fortunately, I didn’t have to do that.

MK: So in this speech test, what would they have you do?

RK: You had to recite or do something. And then you were assigned, whether you were exempt from speech or you had to take speech. But if you didn’t pass your speech class, you couldn’t graduate.

WN: So it was an oral. . . .

RK: It’s oral, yeah. But there was a very heavy emphasis on speaking so-called correct English. Some of our professors today would flunk the test as given.

MK: I know this one woman who said that when she came to UH, she had to take that test and she just felt so insulted that she didn’t pass the test. It bothered her for many years later.

RK: It’s just like a test that was being given to go to English-standard school. If you want to go to Roosevelt you had to take a test and it was mainly an oral test.

MK: And, you’ve talked about the good profs. Were there any who were disappointing to you during your freshman year?

RK: Economics professor. You still have it today. It’s a mixed bag and some are better than others. And there are some who are just borderline. But also it depends on what kind of professor you like. So as a freshman, sophomore, you don’t have much of a choice. You have these so-called required courses. But most of the instructors were good. I had [Andrew] Lind, sociology; [Bernhard] Hormann in anthropology; and they were good.

MK: I know that during your freshman year, you were elected class president. How did that happen?

RK: At that time, the university had very strong student activity program and in those days, we graduated in four years, so you were a freshman, a sophomore, a junior and a senior, these steps were very clear, and each class organized. And ASUH, the general. And all the kids voted, we had a very high voting rate.
WN: Did you campaign at all?

RK: I guess we did. I don’t remember so much my freshman year, but I remember when I got out of the army after three years—after the middle of my sophomore year, I left—three years later I came back on campus. The elections are held in the spring semester. I came back for the spring semester, three years out, I’m not known. But a lot of my buddies, veterans, who got out of the army sooner than I did, were already enrolled in school. So when they found out I was coming back, they put me up to run for student body president, ASUH president. I said, “Hey, I’m just coming back, I don’t know if I qualify.”

You have to be a junior standing or something to run, and I had a year and a half at the university. But they went to the registrar. I had taken a lot of courses. I had taken more than twelve credits each term. I usually took fifteen, eighteen, so I had a lot of credits. Plus they gave us credit for ROTC, military, and for phys ed because we’re in the military, and just gave me enough to be considered a junior, so I could run for ASUH president when technically I was a second-semester sophomore.

They ran me, especially Robert Kimura who later became a member of the house of representatives here. And Bob was from Farrington [High School]. There were others. Ralph Miwa. There were other people. Ralph was from Farrington, too, but they put me up and ran me. And I was running against Raymond Ho, who was very popular because Ray had just been chairman of the carnival that made a lot of money on campus. And I was so-called the dark horse. That was quite a campaign. I had to make speeches. They passed out flyers. They put a picture of me and my uniform and so forth. I still laugh at the joke. Because my name was Richard, my neighborhood friend—this is Bobby Crowell. Bobby is part-Hawaiian and so forth, he’s from Waikīkī. He was the campaign manager for Raymond Ho. Until he saw me he didn’t---he said, “You’re the guy?” He said, “I didn’t know your name was Richard.”

(Laughter)

Anyway. So it was quite a campaign. In fact, as I recall, so many people came to vote. Because my group was the returning group, outsiders were coming back on campus. There was a question as to whether those who voted were really eligible to vote. Someone said that they had more votes than students. (Chuckles) And they said it’s because Kosaki’s friends from the outside came to vote.

But anyway the voting turnout was in the high 90s [percent]. In those days it wasn’t unexpected. Of course, now if you get 5 percent of the vote, you get elected. There’s a great difference in how they viewed student activities in those days as against today. But that was quite a campaign when I got back.

MK: So back in those days, getting involved in student government was something that people really wanted to do in a natural kind of...
One of the nice things, too, was that there was a lot of activity. One of the nicest things that happened after I get elected was getting a call from Fort Shafter saying, "Hey, we're stuck with all of these (textbooks)." The military had reproduced a lot of books and paperbacks—Shakespeare, and the great novels, and textbooks, and all kinds of things—because they were trying to have us in the army get some education, too. But they were stuck with hundreds of these books. Asked if we want them. I said, "Oh, great." So we transported them on campus and sold them for twenty-five cents each. But we got them free. That was a great buy. I still have some of them—John Dewey's books, collection of Shakespeare, poetry, whatever.

We were able to do some very interesting things like that. But a lot of us helped. Rusty Kawamura came back to school and he was my friend from way back. His father was a carpenter and he was going to be a contractor. In those days, I guess it's still a problem today, communication. I said, "I really wish we had a big bulletin board out here where we could put notices about what we're doing, coming events, and so forth." So he built me a huge beautiful bulletin board with a glass cover, and we put it right in front of Hemenway Hall. We didn't ask for permission, come to think of it. We just put it up. That was our bulletin board. But we did a lot of things like that on our own. We practically ran Hemenway Hall, except the cafeteria.

WN: I'm wondering, you were a freshman class president, when you were a freshman now, going back, you know who the student body president was that time?

RK: That's a good question. Was Doug then? I forgot who it was, it was either Doug or Bill.

WN: And were you aware of the student body president or the student body office at that time?

RK: Oh yeah. Here again, we had meetings with the sophomore council with the junior, senior, and the student body president. Gee, for the life of me—who was it at that time?

WN: Oh, we can look it up.

MK: But like, who were others in government with you when you were a freshman class president?

RK: My vice-president was Rosemary Tongg. Who else was there?

WN: Was she from McKinley?

RK: No, she was, I think, from Roosevelt. In fact, she lived on Hunnewell [Street]. I've forgotten all the others who were with me as freshman. I can't even remember, later on, student body. . . . Oh, yeah, Evelyn Taira was the secretary, Ed Sato was our treasurer. Who was our vice-president at that time? But I remember more when I ran for ASUH president because that was such a spirited campaign. And the editor of Ka Leo, that was Helen Geracimos. She's Helen Chapin now, retired [professor] (of Hawai‘i Pacific University). She opposed me (in) Ka Leo.

WN: On what grounds?

RK: Well, she didn't know me. Raymond [Ho], who had done a good job, they thought he deserved to be (elected). But Helen got to know me. She was Ka Leo editor. We worked very closely.
MK: When you were a freshman president, what issues or activities occurred?

RK: I don't remember too much. In the sense, still we had blackouts and restricted movements, so there weren't too many things we could plan. We tried to plan the usual dances and other parties. The other thing we did was, once a week, we had to work in the pineapple fields. So I remember we had to sign up students for that kind of work and so forth. Anyway, that's where I met my wife Mildred. She was a class above me. She was on the sophomore council. But she and I were stuck on the same table, registering people for pineapple work or whatever it was. She says she thinks that was our first meeting. But if it was, it's recorded in Kapalapala. (MK laughs.) She was from Kaua'i.

MK: And then, in those days, where did you folks hang out? At Hemenway Hall?

RK: Yeah, Hemenway Hall, most of the time, around there. But, as I recall, there wasn't too much activity on campus during the so-called war years.

MK: How about like, Atherton House?

RK: Oh yes, Atherton House was the center of activity, that was active. Hung Wai Ching was there. So, we often went over to Atherton House. A lot of boys was staying there. I think Alvin Shim, there were others.

WN: What I was going to say is that, we're at the point now where we're starting to talk about your freshman year and then jumping over to '47 when he came back. Maybe we should hit the war years. And then continue with the . . .

RK: I'm sorry, maybe I should look at the . . .

WN: Because I know freshman year was just one year. There's probably a tendency to blur, so I thought maybe once we get to the '47, then we can ask Dick to compare what the campus was like or what the government was like between '42 and '47.

MK: Okay. So shall we stop here?

WN: Shall we stop here or shall we just get into the war?

MK: Do you have a 10 o'clock appointment?

WN: It's 10 to 10 now.

RK: I can stay. Fifteen minutes at most.

MK: Before we go into the military years, though, I just wanted to ask, you had mentioned that you worked at the cafeteria. There was a Elsie Boatman?

RK: Yes.

MK: What do you remember about her?

RK: Elsie Boatman, you knew she was in charge.

(Laughter)
She made the best pies. But she was very fair and she was very good. Some people thought she was authoritarian, but, no, she’d listen to the students. She tried to help everybody. Later on I got to know her better as a faculty member. Even after she retired, I used to see her once in a while, we’d get together. She was very good. She’s a great lady. Very tolerant. And I found out, as I said, she made the best pies. She really ran the cafeteria in a very organized manner. Most of us, at that time, regularly ate our lunch at the cafeteria.

WN: And this was over at Hemenway?

RK: Yeah. It was downstairs at Hemenway.

MK: In those days, were there any other options besides the cafeteria nearby?

RK: Not that I know of. After the war, some of us would go down to Mūʻiliʻili, especially some of us who were old enough to drink. But, as a freshman, I still remember, just before lunch I had a class in Farrington Hall, and I tried to take an aisle seat so I could be first in line for the cafeteria. Farrington Hall had so many—about two hundred, three hundred students. A classmate and I, Jimmy and I, would be the first ones to run out and get in line to eat lunch. (Chuckles) But we never thought of eating elsewhere.

MK: And, how was the food back then?

RK: As far as I know, it was okay, it was good. As I said the pies were good, especially good. But whatever they served, we ate. But a lot of it was, we enjoyed the company of our fellow students. The fact that I also worked in the cafeteria made me enjoy the place because you knew the workers.

WN: Coming from McKinley to the university, did you really have this feeling that you’re in a really different place, other than maybe the classes? The classes were different. But as far as the atmosphere?

RK: Yeah, it was different in terms of what college gives you. McKinley, even under Cary, it was still structured in the sense that you were in school from 8 [o’clock] to 2 or whatever, and you had to be in school. Whereas you come to university, depending on your class structure, you have a lot of so-called free time and that makes a difference. And you can freely associate. As I say, I’ve always thought and I firmly believe to this day that what happens outside of the classroom is, in fact, in many ways, more important than what happens in the classroom when you go to college. It’s too bad that I think Mānoa now doesn’t have any campus life to speak of. We stayed on campus while I was undergraduate here. I spent most of my waking hours on campus. I enjoyed it. Mostly talking to friends, but even the professors stayed on campus so we could meet them, too, which made for very meaningful experience. We just enjoyed being together, talking.

MK: When you say that the professors stayed on campus, that means beyond office hours?

RK: Yeah. Quite regularly they stayed on.

MK: You felt comfortable going to see the profs to just . . .

RK: Some profs, yes. Some I didn’t care to see, but the profs you wanted to see were around. It was smaller. Maybe that’s a factor, too. Size may be a factor, but it was more a feeling of community, the university. It was mostly undergraduate, it wasn’t a graduate school.
The core was the quadrangle, original buildings, pretty much it. So we weren’t scattered about.

WN: Was there Sinclair Library then? That wasn’t built yet. Where was the library?

RK: It was George Hall.

WN: So that quadrangle really truly was the center and then Hemenway was right off to the side.

RK: Yeah. Exactly, yeah. So it was concentrated in that space. The agriculture, the cows and everything, was where the new buildings are towards the East-West Center. There was a lot of faculty housing. They have it now, too, but some of the faculty lived on campus.

WN: The swimming pool was right next to Hemenway Hall right?

RK: Right. That’s another place people hung out, yeah. Especially with the Tanaka sisters. They had Martha—was it Martha (or Gladys)?—who ran the swimming pool, who knew all the gossip and who’s going with whom.

(Laughter)

WN: Today, not just today but, you can say that especially in Hawai‘i, people who come to the university tend to hang out with their high school friends and it becomes more like an extension of high school. Did you feel that way at all at that time?

RK: Yeah, that continues to some extent. I think it’s a natural thing, but you also had the opportunity to meet others. As I said, I became very good friends with—well, John Ohtani, I knew before I came here, but he was Roosevelt. A lot of the Farrington boys, I got to know. So it was a mixed group. We got to know a lot of Roosevelt girls. I thought we mixed pretty freely.

WN: Was there a Honolulu—not just McKinley but more like a Honolulu dominance at all, did you feel at the university? Neighbor islands were in the dorms.

RK: There weren’t very many dorms, as I recall, but, yeah, there’s a Honolulu dominance, especially in student politics because the numbers. But there were some successful neighbor island—although this is later—I think about Nelson Doi from the Big Island, Wadsworth Yee from Maui—I think he was from Maui—later on.

END OF TAPE ONE

TAPE NO. 31-57-3-00; SIDE ONE

MK: And in those days, where did the neighbor island students generally stay?

RK: I don’t know. The boys could stay at A [Atherton] House. There was Hale Laulima for the girls. A lot of the neighbor islands, if they had relatives, they would stay with relatives—uncles, aunts, for one. I guess they were also around Mānoa, they would rent rooms and things. Some neighbor island stayed in those and there was Okumura Dorm, a number of them stayed there.
RN: Did you have any dances or any kind of social mixers?

RK: Oh yeah, dances were the main mixtures. That was a big social thing, most of us, even I, danced. (Chuckles) It was a big thing, you have a dance and you listen to Glenn Miller. The organized dances, you have programs where you signed partners up for first dance or fourth dance or whatever. The dances were the big social events.

MK: And you mentioned that, later on, there was a carnival held as a fundraiser. This is later on when you came back after the war. But prior to your going out for the war, were there big things like that, say, like a carnival?

RK: Well I think when I was freshman during the war years, I think it was pretty restricted, but before that they may have had things, I'm not sure. They used to have, for example, a Kapalapala beauty queen contest. When you look back at the university, people think we didn't do much, but if you go back and look in the archives, the 1930s, you'll see that the alumni association published a slick magazine. There was a lot of activity going on. The beauty contest was the regular affair. They had by so-called racial categories—Japanese, Chinese, Caucasian, Cosmopolitan queens, and so on. That was a big thing. Dances were big. And, of course, pep rallies.

MK: And then I know that during those days, they did have sororities and clubs.

RK: That's right. The sororities, especially along racial lines. Wakaba Kai and I don't know others. A lot of club activity. In fact, as I may have mentioned, because I want to become a lawyer, I guess in (my) freshman year we tried to form a pre-legal club. We didn't have one and we thought those of us who are interested in law should be interested. What we wanted to do was get a good advisor to tell us what kind of courses we should be taking, invite lawyers from town to talk to us what the profession was about, how to train ourselves and so on. Three of us got together to form the—this was a pre-legal club after the war, I guess. I guess it was after the war. Ralph Miwa. Because Francis Sogi was involved, and Francis was a little older. Now here, again, I'm not sure if it was before or after. It could all be before the war, because all three of us got in the army at the same time, went to military intelligence. So, Ralph Miwa from Farrington, Francis Sogi from Konawaena, myself from McKinley, the three of us formed the pre-legal club. We all went to the army together. Only Francis became a lawyer. Ralph and I became professors.

MK: When you were a freshman, did you consider any other clubs?

RK: I must have been in other clubs as well, because a lot of the activities were channeled through clubs. After the war, we had a government club which was very active, all the political science majors, and that was a very good active club. Maybe we can talk about it later, but we had an annual Prince Kūhiō picnic where we had a pig in the imu and I remember a big baseball game. Allen Saunders is a good first baseman. Miles Cary was a good first baseman, too. I don't know if we had our freshman annual or something. I should look at it again and get an idea of what we really did.

MK: I have the earlier ones from the 1920s. Like you were saying, they had Kapalapala queen competitions back in 1928, '29?

RK: That was a big thing. Well, even after the war.

MK: And then they had the English Speaking Union and debate clubs. Did you consider those?
RK: That's right. Debate was big. No, I didn't get into debate, but debate was big. We had prided ourselves in beating Harvard or beating Stanford. We had some good debaters. Barry Rubin. We had—I don't know if Tom Gill participated, but Tom was good. Tom McCabe, and Ken Saruwatari.

MK: We were talking about the ethnic sororities, there were also ethnic fraternities.

RK: Yeah.

MK: Did you ever become interested in any of those?

RK: No, I don't think I joined in any of those.

WN: Too busy, I guess. (Chuckles)

MK: Should we end here before we get into the military years. There's a whole bloc of questions that we'll have about MIS [Military Intelligence Service]...

RK: Military?

MK: ... and the MIS language school.

RK: Sure.

END OF INTERVIEW