BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: EMIGDIO CABICO, retired store owner

Emigdio Cabico, an Ilocano, was born in Pangasinan, Philippine Islands on August 9, 1909. He completed the fifth grade there, then emigrated from Manila to Hawaii in January, 1926. At Waialua Sugar Company, he was assigned to work in the plantation store because he was able to speak English which he had learned in school in the Philippines. He attended adult education classes in Waialua.

Emigdio became a plantation store manager after ten years and eventually had his own store for about ten years. He sold his store and became a custodian at Waialua High School and part-time clerk-cashier at Kemoo Farms.

Emigdio helped organize sports on the plantation and was active in the Waialua Filipino Association. He was married three times and has raised five sons and two daughters. He and his wife live in Waialua.
PL: This is an interview with Mr. Cabico at their house on June 9, 1976. Tape 1, Project 1. Interviewed by Pablo Lazo. Okay, Tata, how did you decide to come to Hawaii?

EC: Before I answer your question, Mr. Lazo, I want you to know that I'm not expert in conversation in English due to the fact that I reach only few step of a formal education in the Philippines before I came abroad. First of all, I wanted to come Hawaii to earn money, particularly to help my parents, and thirdly I wanted to continue my studies. So, I arrived here in Hawaii. That was January 1926, and fortunately, we...in a group, we are about 65 people arrived here in Waialua, and when we arrived in the plantation office, most of us does not know how to speak English and write. Naturally, the clerk on the plantation office, especially haole, they could hardly spell the name of all---our name. But, they ask us who can write and spell the name, and I raise up my hand that I can write and I can spell the name of my group. So, I finish write all the names of the group, and they saw my handwriting, the first thing they ask me, if I attended or graduate in college in the Philippine. And I said, "No." And they said, "How can you write that way, if you are only low grade in the Philippine, because your penmanship is so nice, that you can write better than us." "Well, that's it. That's my way of writing, so that's how I write." Then, they ask me what kind job I wanted. I said, "I'm not very choosy. Any kind of job, because after all, I come here to Hawaii to earn money." So, that was Monday morning. They assign us to Kawaiola, and they told me don't work on that day, because they wanted to talk to me---oh, the plantation manager want to see me at the plantation office. So, that morning, I didn't show up to work in the plantation. So, early in the morning, the policeman came to my house and told me that, "Eh, boy, you going jail!" I say, "Why?" "You go in the plantation office, because the manager want to see you." I say, "O-okay." So we went to the plantation office, and the manager talked to me, and he ask me what kind of job I wanted. I said, "I'm not so particular. I'm not so choosy. Any kind...." Do you want to work
in the hospital? Work in the office? Or work in the store?"
"Well, I prefer to work in the store, if they give me a chance."
And he said, "Well, you take the test. If you pass the test, then
you are qualified to work in the store." So that day, we are
about eight to take the test. So they give us pencil, tablet,
and all the written test was written in the blackboard. So, is
very simple. Within—-no more even 30 minute, or 35 minute, I
would say, I finish. It was so simple.

PL: Like, what kind of question they are?

EC: They wrote in the blackboard, like, for instance, "One bag of
rice, 100lbs it cost $4 a bag. 25 pound, how much?" It was very
simple. Also, "One roll of poultry wire is 50 yard, and it cost
for $10, and if a customer will buy 15 yards, how much the cost?
How much the price?" It's very simple. Well, due to the fact
that I went to Spanish school, I know all this, ---addition,
subtraction, long-long division, and fraction and all what not. I
learned that from Spanish school, and more especially, when I went
to school in English, I know all those thing. So it was very
simple for me. So, the examiner is very surprise because with
25 minute, I finished. And then, all my group still didn't finish.
So, they took my paper and show all around to the bosses in the
plantation. And then they came back again, after all everybody
finish, about spelling again. So, they give us spelling again.
Like, "Waialua," "Honolulu," "Oahu." It's very simple. And, of
course, I can write good, so I make it fancy; more nice, the way
I write. When I finished, I handed my paper. He said, "Cabico,
you cannot write this way if you only low grade in the Philippine.
Must be you graduate in Santo Thomas University."

(Laughter)

EC: I say, "No, sir. I'm not." Then the policemen trying to scare me.
They said, "If you don't tell the truth, you going jail." So, I
was new, then, and I was kind of scare. "Why I didn't---I'm
telling the truth." But, they wouldn't believe me, and they still
---tell me go in jail. So I went to see the manager, and I told
him, "Sir, is that right? You put me in jail? By not telling the
truth?" He said, "No, they only kidding you." So, since then,
from that time, the next day, they took me to the store. On the
plantation store. That's how I get, my job in the plantation store.
As a store clerk.

PL: Oh. And as a store clerk, what duties did you have?

EC: Well, my duty is to sell to our countrymen or customer. In fact,
to everybody. As a clerk. As a clerk. Whenever they come, well,
I would have to ask them what they like, and, of course, that's
how with a store. And the trouble again. When I went to the
store, there were five men (stock clerks). And they were Visayan.
Their manager the Visayans and the problem, again, they don't like me.

PL: Mhm.

EC: Because—I am Ilocano. They don't like me very much. They don't even care to talk with me. So how can I learn the prices? Especially, they don't mark the prices on its good the item. I don't know. So, I ask one of them. I said, "Why don't you teach me?" He say, "It's up to you to learn." And I say, "Oh, okay, that's how you feel." Then I went to the manager. The one taking charge. They call him branch manager. I went to him, and I said, "My goodness,--how do I know? How you expect me to sell the stuff, the goods, if you don't put the price?" All, he tell me. But he don't write. So whenever he tell me, I put it down. Naturally, in---three months, gradually, I know all the prices. Every item inside the store. And then the problem, again. Since I'm only the Ilocano working in the store, most all the Ilocano, they all come to me, and they don't go to the Visayan people—Visayan clerk, because they speak to them Visaya or English. They cannot understand one another. Then, the Ilocano speak to them Ilocano, they cannot understand Ilocano, either. So, I told them, "Please, don't talk, Visaya to them, after all, they are not Visayan. Why don't you talk Tagalog to them? Probably some of them can understand Tagalog." But still,---they don't do that. And instead, they talk English to them. So, majority of them, they cannot understand English.---They just arrive from the Philippine Island. They didn't even learn how to speak pidgin English. So I get hard time, again. Then, one day, well, of course, after three month or four month, I complained. I wrote a note to the general manager that I get hard time in the store. Then he came up and he ask me why. "Because these people here, (clerks) they don't work. Only myself. How can you expect me to serve more than 200 people come everyday? And only myself serving them. They don't even help me." He said, "Why?" "Because, mostly all these people, our customers, Ilocano, and they speak, Visayan to them, and they don't understand Visayan. And the Ilocano, they speak Ilocano, to them they don't understand Ilocano. So naturally they all come to me."

PL: Mhm.

EC: And even I ask help, at least, when I pick up the good at least they put in the bag, uh? But they don't do that. They didn't do that." Then, the following day, they fired two guys.

PL laughs)

EC: They fired two guys on account of doing like that. Then, also, the truck driver that used to go around and deliver goods. He's fired. The boss ask me again. Do you recommend somebody? "Yes. I want the Ilocano to come in."
So the two Ilocano (Chuckles) came in, that's the time, I feel good already, because, after all, we are all three Ilocano. So when those Ilocano come, we can serve them very well, because we are already three. And, get three more left, Visayan. So, they only serve the Visayan people. But, like me, seems I easily learn their language. I can speak Visayan. So whenever they come I can serve them also.

PL: Oh.

EC: ...Visayan come, I can talk Visayan, because I quick, I learn their dialect.

PL: Oh. You learned how to speak Visayan here?

EC: Yes. When I work in the store. I learn quick. In fact, I learn most all the language in the camp. Like, Japanese. All the simple word, Japanese, Puerto Rico, and Portuguese. I learn all their language. Whenever they come, well, I cannot speak very well, but, at least, I understand. We understand each other by talking in pidgin Japanese or pidgin Puerto Rican. Because, after all, well, I can speak Spanish because I went to Spanish school, you see. That's why we have good service in the store.

PL: ...When you was working as a clerk, do you start work same time as the people who work out in the fields?

EC: No. We open the store 4 o'clock early in the morning.

PL: Who so early?

EC: Well, you see, the man taking charge trying to make good to the plantation. So he open early, then, in the afternoon, we go home 5 o'clock, take a bath, eat, for supper, and go back again to the store. 6 o'clock. And we close again at 8 o'clock PM. Without any overtime. And... mind you, $1 one day. That's all we are getting. $1 one day.

PL: How long did you work as a store clerk?

EC: I work as store clerk, oh, I think about, three years.

PL: About three years, and then....

EC: Then, by working honestly, finally, they put me as branch store manager. The other guy who used to be a manager, they fired him out, because he did something wrong. He did something wrong, and that moment, they ask me, and I told the truth. So they fired him out. So they put me as branch store manager. I'm the head, in the store.
PL: And, when you get paid, what kind of things did you spend your money most on?

EC: Well, I said, I had to think about my parents. I earn a little and I save a little. So in that way, after six month I worked here, I send money to my parent to make them feel happy. I worked for six month, I send them--I'm able to send them $100. And that $100, equivalent to $200. No, I mean, 200 pesos, because two for one, and that money, they bought land. There is two hectare. And one hectare--what I understand equivalent to more than three acre. And, of course, it was undeveloped. So is cheap. So one hectare, they bought it for 50 pesos. In other word, the 200 pesos, they bought four hectare. Four hectare. And with that, they clear up the place, and they plant any kind of vegetable. That's how they live, happy, and they don't have to be hard like it used to be. And then the following six month, I send them again. And they did the same thing. So, at least, my parent, they all happy. They worked for our land. That's how they was so happy that I came to Hawaii.

PL: I mean, what else besides, sending most of your money back home? Did you eat better here?

EC: Well, I eat better here.

PL: Than from the Philippines?

EC: I eat better here, because, everything's so cheap before. Here. Because you buy one can of sausage. That's only 10¢. You buy one can of spam. It's only 20¢ or 15¢. It's better then. Everything cheap. Meat, I think, only 15¢ a pound, stewmeat. Fish, like that, so cheap. So...

PL: And you bought all your food at the store? In the plantation store?

EC: Yes, we bought all our food in the store. So, as I said, you earn a little, but you save plenty. Because everything so cheap. That's how I save money.

PL: Where did you save your money?

EC: Well, I keep it in my house. I didn't even know about the bank before. Nobody tell us about the bank. So, we keep in our house or in my wallet. I carry all around with me. When I had $100, I sent to Philippine. To my parent.

PL: Going back to the food that you buy at the store, didn't you, grow any vegetables at your yard? The plantation camp yard?

EC: On my part, I don't have any time. I don't have any time. But my
housemate does. They grow vegetable behind our, or front yard. Oh, we had plenty vegetable. We don't buy vegetable, because my housemate, they really work hard when they come home, although almost dark already. When they come home, they able to plant anything outside, behind backyard. So we don't buy vegetable. What we buy only rice, and maybe some dry fried shrimp ebi and some can goods. That's all we buy. Meat or fish. But we don't buy vegetable because my housemate grew any kind of vegetable—Filipino vegetable.

PL: You're talking about, housemate. Is that some kind of roommate, or...

EC: Roommate, yeah.

PL: How many people used to live in the house?

EC: In that house, we have, two bedroom. Two bedroom. And each room, three. We are six in that house. One room is three. And we have a small parlor and we have kitchen, in the house.

PL: How about bathroom?

EC: Bathroom, have a public bathroom outside.

PL: Oh.

EC: After everybody come home, everybody go take a bath in the public, bathroom. Everybody.

PL: How many houses use that bathroom?

EC: In that camp, practically all in that camp alone. Because in each camp, they have a bath house room, in our camp, almost, about, that's the biggest camp among the camps, and, it was about 250 people.

PL: And they used one outhouse?

EC: One, yeah, That's a public because even 20 one time, can. Or 30. or more.

PL: Oh, I see.

EC: You know, that can take a bath one time. That Japanese style, they get one square tank and so hot. What you do, take the hot water, with your own scoop and pour on your head, and body and everything.

PL: Who take care of heating, the water?

EC: Ah, somebody take care. That's his only job.
PL: That's his job, he getting paid from the plantation?

EC: He's getting paid, from the plantation. That was from the beginning. And then, after six month, they have a new policy. That you have to pay the one who take care...who's taking charge. You pay only 10¢ one month. (Laughs) That's all you pay.

PL: For each person?

EC: ...taking a bath, you have to pay 10¢. So cheap. Very cheap.

PL: And how about cooking food, like that? I mean, how did you folks used to eat?...Who cook food?

EC: Well, like myself---like my housemate, they cook early. Sometime 3 o'clock AM, they get up early and cook. And, of course, they already cook for me. We all live the same house, on the same pot, and everything, so, whenever they cook, they cook extra so that I don't have to cook anymore. They cook rice and some can goods, you know. And some vegetable. And well, they had to make extra, because I don't have to cook anymore, because, when I go home and eat lunch, only ....30 minutes so I no more time to cook so naturally, I told my housemate to cook for me already. Although it's cold, but it's already ready to eat. (Laughs) That's what we used to do before. So it the same thing with supper. When they come home, they have to cook extra. Because when I go home 5 o'clock PM, take a bath, change clothes, go back to work again. No time to cook.

PL: How about, cleaning the house?

EC: In cleaning the house, well, one of us have to clean the house. He does the sweeping and do the mopping. We have a good house. We have, in fact, everybody in the house does the cleaning. If it's necessary to mop, gotta mop. No need, wait for somebody. Just if you think that needs cleaning you have to clean.

PL: Oh, I see.

EC: So we have a good house. And the flooring like that. We have to shine the floor, you know. We make it clean. We mop it---it's something with, candle mixed with kerosene.

PL: Oh, I see.

EC: Make the floor shine. See, that's what we used to do.

PL: How did you prepare that candle and kerosene?

EC: Candle, you heat the kerosene and then put the candle. Melt, it you see. So, you put that on the mop when you mopping the floor.
Shine. Because not like our style. Some, when they come in, with shoes. So our style, people don't come in with the shoes. Always take out your shoes. Because it's so nice, the floor. So everytime clean.

(Laughter)

EC: Not like some houses. The time when you go inside, with shoes on. That's American way. But like us Filipino, no. See, even today, Filipino, when you come in, you take off your shoes, because it's hard to clean, the house.

PL: How about, did you use to wash your clothes?

EC: From the beginning, I use to wash my clothes, because I want save money.

PL: Oh.

EC: Because, like Sunday, like that, you wash clothes. But after one year, then I gave to my laundry. Mostly all the Japanese lady go around, you know, asking for laundry.

PL: How did they used to wash it?

EC: By hand. You know, no such thing as washing machine, before. They use by hand. So, I paid my laundry $2 a month. That's all I pay. Then, later on, after that, they raised up $2.50. One month. For wash my clothes. But most all the working guy, they wash their own clothes. So only very few people that gave to the laundry. Only very few, maybe if you are new, of course. you want to save money. You have to wash your own clothes. At least you save that $2.50 one month. (Chuckles)

PL: When did you get married?

EC: Well, in 1931, I get married. I'm married, so I have to live in one house that, only my wife and I get one house together.

PL: Did you rent a house?

EC: No, we don't rent the house. Free, the plantation gave us, a house, because I will be getting married.

PL: Where did you meet your wife?

EC: Well, here.---Although she was born in the Philippine, and she was only three years old and then when she came Hawaii, so we meet together, and it happen that we love each other, so we get married. And, we have one son. And unfortunately, that, in so many years, after three years we live together, we don't agree together. So
you know that how it is. She love someone, maybe, so I said, "Okay. She love someone, go ahead, go. It's nothing to me." I'm not that kind guy that does lots of trouble for on account of wife, and the wife no like him, and, they fight. But me, no. "If you want to go, if you think that you love him more than I, you love him," I said, "go." Nice way. We took it nice way. So...

PL: You mentioned that, you had one son.

EC: Yes.

PL: He was born at your house or elsewhere?

EC: When she take off, she leave the baby that was almost one years, the baby. So, since I had hard time, because I work day and night I gave it to my friend. To take care of my baby. I pay them $10 a month. To take care of my baby.

PL: Where did she have the baby at? Home or at hospital?

EC: ---At the hospital. We have, hospital for free. Everything free before. We don't pay anything. Only what we paid before is only electric current. Electricity. That's all we paid.

PL: Where was this hospital then?

EC: In Waialua, the old Waialua, right by the Puuiki. Right there, the old hospital.

PL: I see, the hospital is that for people who get sick, too, like that?

EC: Yes, that's right. For everybody. All the people in the plantation. Is anybody sick, well, they always can go to that hospital free. And, of course, in olden days, that if you don't work everyday, and if you are not sick, the plantation fire you out. If you stay home without cause, without sick, they going fire you out. So naturally before, new man all kind of scared. He does not learn anything to go around yet, so he has to work everyday. Unless he's a little sick, then he stay home. Then, if he's real sick, he has to notify the camp police, because there is no transportation before, eh. So at least the plantation police pick him up, take him to the hospital, if real sick. But there's some catch cold, like that, they can work. Sometime.

PL: Oh, they can...

EC: Because there's no transportation. Mind you, from Kawailoa to Waialua, it's almost seven mile. You see? So we got to work. Early in the morning, you walk. But if you real sick, well you had to notify the police. Policemen. Or else, they come to the store. Since the Ilocano cannot understand the policeman because
he's, Hawaiian and he spoke only English and Hawaiian, so I had to call the policeman. Telephone. "So, this man is very sick. He cannot walk to the hospital, so I want someone bring him to the hospital." So, they doing that. Plantation so kind enough.

PL: And did you ever get really sick, that you needed to be hospitalized?

EC: What do you mean?

PL: Did you ever, stay at the hospital for more than a day or so because you were sick?

EC: So far, thank to God, I never get sick. I never did go to the hospital. I never did go.

PL: Oh.

EC: Thanks to God,...I'm healthy, and I hope it will continue, I am healthy all the time so that I'll be able to maybe someday go back to the Philippines make my residence in the Philippine.

PL: How about recreation? What did you do for recreation?

EC: Ah, yes, in regard of recreation, the beginning was 1929, because in 1926, not much people yet. So they start coming in '28, '29, '30, like that. So, since everybody's young, 17, 18, 20, 21, they like to play. So we organize ourself. In each camp, they have their volleyball team and they have a baseball team. And every Sunday, in the park--we have a baseball park--big crowd. Because we challenge it--each camp. We challenge. I do the score, and, I do the planning and everything which team going play. So that's what we did, those days. And sometime, of course, those who wanted to play volleyball, they make their own team. See? So, when Saturday night, we challenge in each camp.

PL: So, did they have any different ethnic group teams, like that? Like Japanese teams, or...

EC: No, no. There is none.

PL: No?

EC: Only the Japanese, have, baseball.

PL: And they play among themselves?

EC: They play every rural, Japanese team.

PL: Oh, I see.

EC: All the Japanese team. We cannot compete them, because they too good. Yeah, they too good. But like us, we just learning, and
we just practice only among ourself...we don't compete with the
Japanese, because they are really strong. They compete one to
another with, Waipahu, Ewa, like that.

PL: Just other camps?

EC: Just like any game, in the other camp. Especially volleyball. In
each camp, all around, we have volleyball. The best player was
in Helemano Camp. They really can play good volleyball. Nobody
can beat them. They were, really too good. Then, those people
in the camp, in Helemano, I make an arrangement that they could
play any other plantation. So, I took them over at Waipahu, Ewa.
And they really too good. They smart. Nobody beat them. They
really too good.

PL: What sport did you play?

EC: I played baseball. (Laughs) And, I'm one of the catcher. I like
baseball as my favorite sport. When I was young, I used to play,
baseball. So, in that camp, Kawaiola, our team in champion.
(Laughs) You see, champion. But we challenge different camp, we
lose, because (Laughs) well, that's how, anyway, the game. We
don't expect to win all the time. But, sometime we lose. It's
just for fun, anyway. That's the only recreation we had before.
And, of course, the plantation was so kind enough that they make
clubhouse in the camp. Theaters, like that. So, we have a movie
once a week. We pay only 10¢. That's what we pay.

PL: Oh, to see a movie.

EC: In the camp. And then, later on, after that, they make a big gym.
Gymnasium. Then, after that, they make a swimming pool. Then, a
tennis court. Then, some of the young boys, learn any - any kind
of sport. Any kind. Tennis, and also, swimming. Oh! We even
used to learn how to swim, too in the swimming pool. (laughs)

PL: How about --- tennis? Did, you every try that sport?

EC: That one thing I never try, tennis. I didn't try it. I try
softball, and I try the... hardball. That's all. But I never try,
tennis. I was only, looking around, and watch the game, and, lot's
of fun. Big crowd---around. (Laughs) Because, some of the boys---
they learn so fast. One of the, tennis instructor live someplace,
I don't know what place they came from---they teach the people how
to play tennis. And, of course, you had to pay. I think the
entrance pay was cheap. Five dollar. Five dollar. That's all you
pay. So, gradually, they learn how to play tennis. Like, all the
young boys, some of them 20, 18, like that 19, that's all. So we
have, good fun --- in the camp.

PL: What else, besides, playing sports, like that? What other kind of
fun, you folks had? Like maybe dancing, or...
EC: We have a social dance sometime, once a month. You see, before those who wanted to join the social dance, you have to find your own partner. Because hardly no girls before. But if you have friend, well, invite your friend. So, it's up to you how much you give or—you don't have to give anything, but,---at least you give something. So what we do. So, sometime we are about 20. Group, like that. Found some partner, and then we make, blow-out to feed the girls and the parent. So just like, picnic. Then we dance. Of course, if anybody come in---they can come in, but they cannot dance. Because they have no more partners.

PL: So those people who have partners, those are the people can dance only.

EC: Those, no partner, they cannot dance. Unless you have friend, "give me a chance to dance with your partner." And say, "Well---" if your good friend, you give him a chance. That's how what we used to do. We have for once a month or sometime twice a month, we did that.

PL: Who used to play for the dances then?

EC: Well, in the camp, there are some boys that really, they have a talent. They know how to play music. Some play saxophone, some play bandoria, violin, guitar, like that, we no problem. Because some of the boys, they know how to play. We don't pay any single cent, but you had to feed them, see. That's their payment, just to feed them. That's what we used to do. No problem in those days, and there was some of the boys, they have a talent, you know. And every year, like that, when we have, holiday, specially Rizal Day, we celebrate—oh! we have bigger program, big occasion in the camp. Because, I gathered all the leaders in the camp, and at least, we had to make a program, such as, specially Rizal Day like that. So we donated 75¢, each guy. See, each guy. So, with that money, we could buy pig, we could buy cow. So Saturday night, like that, they make a blow-out. We invited all the plantation bosses, all different race in the camp. And then, all, they like, because they like eat Filipino food, eh. Then we had a cook—we had a smart cook. He can cook about 15 different kind of type of food. To all the bosses, they really like to eat the food. They surprise because so many kind of food. So, every year, we have a big, occasion. Plenty people. We invite all, even your friend who live someplace, they come. Free. We don't charge. We give them eat—you must think before, one cow, maybe, only $25, one cow.

PL: Wow.

EC: Because it's so cheap, we can afford to buy two cow, you see. So even 1000 people. We can afford to feed, see. That's what we used to do before. See, the problem, again, since majority Ilocano, dig up 75¢. Not one Visayan cooperate with us. And yet, when come to program, all like that, all the big bosses all
come, all the foremen Visayan foremen, they all attended. And they all in the front. So not only the manager and all the bosses, they think that the foremen Visayan, are all the leaders, making the celebration. They don't know. But the last one, since I am the one, I'm the treasurer. And in that night, big crowd. All the haole, even some from Ewa and all what---all the people, all haole. And all the manager, and all the haole in the camp. They all invited. Big crowd---so many---long table. So many---how many table. I happen to speak, and I attack all the Visayan. I told them in that night that this occasion every year is done by Ilocano. Not one Visayan. All the managers and all the big shot here in the plantation, they thought that all the foremen Visayan is the one that did this. I says, "No. Not one of them contribute a single cent." So all the---the foremen, they all, really feel shame, because they mingle with, all the boss. The boss---thought that they are the leaders, and that, uh....

PL: The Visayan foremen?

EC: The Visayan. Yeah. So, when I spoke, my goodness, I cannot even speak in good English, but when---I write it down, my speech I can, and I read. In front of them. Because, as I said, I am very poor in oral. I'm not smart in conversation, but when I write my speech, I can write good. I explained to them. So that's how they find out. The next day, all the Visayan people, the foremen, they all come to me. "Cabico. From now on," they said, "how many? I give you five dollar. Donation." (Laughs) "Whenever you have celebration" They feel shame, eh, already, because all the managers, they know, already. So, Monday, the foremen or the big boss, manager come to the store and ask me, "Is that right, Cabico, what you said last night?" "Yes, sir. Every year, we have celebration. Not one of these people that you folks think that they are the leaders in the camp, and the foremen, all the foremen here, no. And, in fact, they criticize us. They despise us. Especially, our program, because not so good. What you expect---Only the boys, that they know how to play.---They can sing, and they can play guitar, and play, you know? So why don't they find some girls to at least sing? Cause they have their own daughter, but they don't want to participate. So what can we do? Mostly all the Visayan, they have daughters. But they do not participate just because we all Ilocano.

PL: So Ilocanos and Visayans, they don't really get along together?

EC: They---no can get along. They cannot get along. When, I arrive in Kawaiola, mostly Visayan people. Hardly no Ilocano.

PL: And how did you get along with them?

EC: Well, I play. I can talk English to them, and I....just---make myself low. Because, after all, I'm new, eh. But when I learn
their language, that's the time I talk to them. See, so easy that I learn their language, you see. So, like before, when they see a Filipino or Ilocano, they said, "Bagoong" And yet,---they are the worse one! To eat bagoong because they don't say "bagoong" but they say "gonamos."

PL: Oh.

EC: Then whenever they come to the store, I said, "You are calling the Ilocanos 'bagoong,' but you the worse one. The bagoong you eating, we don't eat that. Genamos, maggas."

PL: (Chuckles) Is that the same, I mean, "ginamos?"

EC: The same. They say, "genamos", but that's "bagoong."

PL: Oh.

EC: But different kind type fish we call it "maggas". We call it Ilocano "maggas". I don't know. That's how we say. Chee, they are the worse one. And when they come to the store, I told them, all of them, "You folks, whenever you folks talk, 'bagoong', and you folks are the worse one. Even the Puerto Rican, before, they said, 'Oh, bagoong.' You the first---you the worse one. What about the bakalaw? It's made of salt. What about the salt fish? It's bagoong. Why do you folks go on, say 'Ilocano bagoong'? Because all you guys, all Portuguese don't say 'bagoong', because you guys the worse one. 'Bakalaw' is 'bagoong'. Is dried fish yeah, but....the ingredients salt. Same thing with the fish. Bagoong is small fish. The ingredient is salt." I said, "What is the difference? You folks are eating salt salmon. So salty. That's 'bagoong'." I explain to them all that. Visayan, the Puerto Rican----well, the Japanese didn't criticize. They don't say "bagoong", because some of the Japanese, they eat the shrimp same bagoong see. Even Japanese eat shrimp bagoong. You see, the shrimp, you know what I mean. Shrimp.

PL: Mhm.


PL: Okay. So the Filipinos used to have big celebration, like that Rizal Day. How about the other ethnic groups, did they have, celebrations ---that they invited the Filipinos...

EC: ---Our camp is the biggest camp. Sometime they do that in Waialua, too. But they don't do as much as we have been in Kawailoa. So, they have a different day. We have Saturday night, and they have Sunday. In Waialua.

PL: No, I mean ---did the Japanese group have a different type of celebration, where they invited the Filipinos, like that?
EC: Yeah, we went. All the Filipinos, because all the Japanese said, "Come to the dance. Koribitsu." So all, big crowd. In the camp. --Not only Japanese. Mostly all Filipino that know how to dance, so they go.

(PL chuckles)

EC: Follow the Japaneese, learn how they---dance. Oh, good fun! Like that. But when we have a celebration, we invited all---mostly all of them. To celebrate. Mostly all of them come.

PL: And how about going to town, like that, to have fun? Did you ever go to town?

EC: Well, to tell you the fact, four years, I was living in Kawaiola. I don't know about town ---I never did go town ---I don't know so much in town, and, beside that, with no transportation then. After that, one Japanese, he came to me. He told me, "Cabico, if you wanted to go Honolulu, I have three cars available. So you tell all your friend, all Ilocanos if they wanted to go Honolulu, I can show them the place. I can take them all around." Oh, boy! Everybody wanted to go! This is Saturday night like that, oh, everybody...sometime two, three trip one day.

PL: Oh.

EC: You see, he got three car...

PL: ---Who's the guy?

EC: Tanaka. Tanaka. He said...

END OF INTERVIEW.
PL: Okay, Tata, how did you find about the jobs in Hawaii? Did anybody came down, talked to the people in your town? Or village?

EC: There is one agent, sent by the H.S.P.A., that recruiting labor to come Hawaii. And, when he came, he explain to us about Hawaii. He says it's good to come to Hawaii. So, naturally, we, the young boys, was listening him one time. We told him that we are interested to come to Hawaii. But, he said that only those person the age of 21 or 22. That's the only one he will recruit to come to Hawaii. So, lots of us in the age of 21, 22, 23, 24. But since the younger boys, they don't take because we are too young.

EC: We don't have the personal tax. So when they went to Manila, to the H.S.P.A. office--Hawaiian Sugar Planter Association office--I went with them. But since I went with a group, and still they told me to go back in the province to get the permit to my parents. Otherwise, I cannot go, you see. So what I did, I went to the province and borrowed the personal tax of my brother. I went to the H.S.P.A. office at Manila. They don't know me anyway. So, I said, "I am Severino. Here's my personal tax. I'm at the age of 21." So they took me. So I used the name of my brother. Severino my name when I came to Hawaii.

PL: That's your brother's name?

EC: That's my brother's name. That's the only way I could come to Hawaii.

PL: Oh. You was underage then?

EC: I was underage. And besides that, there's lots of red tape. They have to go get permit for my parent, go to the municipal mayor to sign, so this, I never did. So what I did, I just borrow my brother's personal tax. Because they don't remember anyway. So many people, eh? So when I said, "I'm Severino. Here's my personal tax. I'm the ages 21." "Oh, okay." Then they ask me what grade. Oh, I attend only three months in the fifth grade. Because, I know they wouldn't let those who graduate in high school.
See, they only take those, low grade, that they never attend high school. So when they ask me what grade I am, I said, "Oh, I attend only fifth grade." That's how I came to Hawaii.

PL: Did the agent promise you anything?

EC: The agent promise us that if we could stay here for three years, we have free passage go back home. And then if we wanted to come back again, we all can come back Hawaii free passage. See, free. Yeah, that's what they promise us. And, of course, when you reach Hawaii, he said they give you free house and everything, you know, all the facilities--what we had in the house. So is true enough. And that contract, when we sign, only for $18 a month. You see? $18. If I'm not mistaken, $18 it was contract a month. But I think the plantation is so kind enough that instead of giving us $18 a month, they give us one dollar one day. So I remember, I think--you can ask some of this oldtimer--that the contract they went sign is only $18 a month. That's the contract only when you come to Hawaii. So, some of us, especially those people, laborer, that they really working hard, after two, three years they went back home. Philippine. Free passage. Some, they came back Hawaii. Some, they don't come back. Because the job is so hard. Maybe I'm very fortunate that I never work in the field. I work in the store, but whenever they come home from work, I see them, oh, terrific. They are so tired. Well, that's why they wouldn't recruit old folks. So, the age only twenty, 21, 22, 23, they stop. So majority of us in the camp, after three years, we don't want to come back. We don't want to go back. Anymore in the Philippine. We rather stay here in Hawaii. But, of course, some of us send money to the parent. Like myself. Whenever I get payday or I get money, I alway send to my parent, because that's the only way I can repay my parents. So I beg some of my friend to send their money to their parent at least, to help them out. Some did. Some, they don't.

PL: Okay, you mentioned that they had to check the age and they need your parents', you know, permission for you to come to Hawaii.

EC: That's right.

PL: What else besides, you know, age and permission?

EC: Well, that's as far as I know according to the age. That go according to the age. See, if your age is twenty, 21, 22, they will take you. And if you graduate in high school, they won't take you. Because they know that if you graduate in high school, probably, you don't care to work, see. So, they even choose those people that never go---at all in the school.

PL: How about your physical appearance? They check any...
EC: Well, they have to pass the physical. You have to go to doctor. And if you pass, then they will take you. But some of us—like us in our place about 125 of us—only five of them, they found out that they have something wrong in them. So that five people cannot come, because they were sick. They said they have some kind of cold or fever that day when we took that physical. So, we all happy. And, of course, in the immigration in Manila, lots of people, plenty people all mix already. Some Visayan mix in the immigration. But those Visayan, they stay in one corner all mostly Ilocano in our corner, because we don't understand each other. So the Visayan stay one corner. But not much Visayan. Not much Visayan. Like us when we came, in our place only hundred so much, I think, about two, three Visayan. Two, they stay one corner. So that's what they did in Manila, because majority Ilocano from Panonganinan, La Union, Ilocos Norte. Most Ilocano. They don't recruit Tagalog. None of the Tagalog came with us. I remember. Because, they know that Ilocano hard working people. That's why the agent choose those Ilocano. That's the reason why majority Ilocano came here in Hawaii. There's no Tagalog at all. Not one Tagalog came with us. I remember only three Visayan came with us. And they were assigned same place, too. They were in Kawaiola, the three Visayan.

PL: So when you came here, and then, you got the job at the store...you mentioned that you got the job at the store because you can speak English, you can write...

EC: That's right. That's right. Because when we came, the clerk—one Japanese and haole—they cannot pronounce good the name of the Filipino in the beginning. They cannot write good. They ask us who can write, and I raise my hand. So, naturally, I have to write all the names, and when they see my handwriting is so nice, they thought that I'm well educated man. That's what happened ---they give me a job. (Laughs)

PL: So how did you learn to speak English like that?

EC: Well, to tell you the truth, I was big already when I went to English school. I went to Spanish school first, when I was young. Then, after that, I went to English school. I attended two years and a half in English school. One year, was first grade and second grade. I was promoted.

PL: How old were you then when you...

EC: That was already 14 year of ages...when first attended English school. But since I had to learn English. But in arithmetic, I don't worry, because I know. I went to Spanish school, and I know all arithmetic, the algebra. So first and second grade, I attended one year. Then third and fourth grade, one year. Then I was promoted to fifth grade. So I attended three months in the fifth grade. That's the time we came to Hawaii. See, in other
words, I attended English two years and three months. In English
school, that's how I learn English. I can read. Well, I cannot
talk fluently, but at least I understand what I read, and I can
write. 'As the main thing. Then, I improve myself when I came
to Hawaii...

PL: Did you go to school here in Hawaii?

EC: In Hawaii, I went to adult continuation school in Waialua. In
Waialua. So, since I don't have much time, sometime I just
attended one hour. One night. See, three times a week. From 6:30
to 9 o'clock. So I attended a little at Waialua High School. Then,
since I had plenty time when we come to NRA (National Recovery Act)
as I say, I got plenty time. So, we took the course. English and
citizenship course. First we learn about citizenship. About the
history of our government. Then after we finish the citizenship
course, then we learn the basic of English. But not so long. I
think about only two months. So they rated us, beside myself
among my classmate, they rated me a seventh grade, in English. But
my classmate, (Laughs) they were more slow than myself. So our
teacher told me that continue my studies to enroll Farrington High
School, because that's the only place where you can get your
diploma. In Waialua, you cannot anymore. So they told me to go to
Farrington High School. But, since then, I was so busy I didn't
go. That's the reason I didn't get my diploma. Then after that,
they wrote me a letter again. If I wanted to continue to get my
diploma, go to Waialua. So I don't have any time because, I work
late. I didn't go. So they rated me a seventh grade here in
Waialua. (Laughs) But, my classmate in Waialua, some, they rated
in fifth grade. Some, fourth grade. But only me, myself, they
rated seventh grade, because I can write. I can talk a little. So
they give me a seventh grade. But our teacher and the principal,
said, "Cabico, better go to Farrington to continue. And then you
can get your diploma. I'm sure you can get your diploma easily
because you smart. You can read. You can write. The only thing
you have to learn about the basic of English to use the proper way.
Talking English."

PL: But then you couldn't go class. You were so busy that time...

EC: I cannot go, so...that's how I really regret that I never continue.
If I continue, may be I'm just like some (Laughs) other guy, they
continue to study. They took so many course, and they learned.
They really smart. But right now I'm behind. But at first, I beat
them because I work only store. Not hard job. But (Chuckles) some
of them, they work in the field, eh. So I'm lucky, because I work
in the store from the beginning. I didn't work hard. That's why
it pays that you have a good penmanship, because they believe that
you graduate in college or high school in the Philippine. But the
fact that I wasn't. Just because maybe, I learn the way how the
Spanish way of writing, and everybody don't believe that whenever
I write letter, eh, they don't believe that that's my own handwriting.
Even my children. I had to teach them how to write, penmanship. And, my children--three of them--follow my way of writing. Because I taught them how to write. Because I explain to my children that even you are not well educated, as long as you get hand, good penmanship, you are considered as a well educated man. But, since, as I said, I cannot get a good job on account of I didn't attend high school or college in the Philippine. See. And, in fact, when they interview me at the Civil Service, they told me who fill up the application? I said I did. "Are you really sure that you fill up your application?" "Yes, I did. Why?" "You know how to fill up," he said. "You only attended three months the fifth grade. You know how to fill up." "Yes, I did." "Is this your handwriting?" "Yes, I did. That's my handwriting." So they won't believe. So what they did? They give me a piece of paper and give me one ball pen and sign my name. So I did. I make it more fancy again. More nice again. And that's the time they believe. And they said, "If I were you, why didn't tell that you graduated in the Santo Thomas University? Because nobody believe." "Well, I'm telling the truth. What if they will find my record?" "Well, just tell them that during the occupation (Japanese) was burnt. You cannot trace your record. Because everybody believe that you are a high school or college graduate in the Philippine. You understand. You fill out the blank. You can talk. You get nice handwriting. Who wouldn't believe that you graduated in..."(Laughs) Well, to be honest. I have to tell the truth. I have to be honest. So, after that, when come to another job--state, not federal anymore--so I lie that I was graduated high school in the Philippine, see. So they give me the test. Because the qualification in that job has to be graduate in high school. So I did again. So in my application, I put I graduate in Panganinan high school. When they ask me "Where's your diploma?", "I cannot find my diploma, because during occupation was burnt." They believe that I graduated in high school.

PL: I see. But just, you know, writing and a good penmanship.

EC: Yes. Penmanship. And I know how to fill the blank.

PL: Okay, going back to when the plantation sold the store and then you sold the store to Mr. Fujioka and you didn't get along with Mr. Fujioka...

EC: That's right.

PL: ...and you bought a place at Haleiwa.

EC: Yes, I bought a place in Haleiwa. Before I quit, I have to prepare myself. I bought a property at Haleiwa. I bought one lot. 'As a big lot, almost one acre. It cost me only 37¢ square foot. So cheap. So--first I built my store, which every Sunday, oh, I call all my friend to come help me. We didn't hire contractor. Until today, the store is on that location. So, after I build the store, then I hired contractor to build my house. When my house was ready,
then I told them I will resign. I resign. That's the time I resign.

PL: M. And how long did you have the store?

EC: Well, I think, almost ten years. Almost ten years that I have my store. I sold that place, my place, because I really don't have the capital already. I cannot buy supplies due to the fact that some of our customer didn't pay. Was about eight thousand. I extend too much credit outside. About eight thousand I cannot collect. So naturally I cannot get supply. I had to hustle up because after all, my children, they all attending high school. St. Louis. They commute everyday. I cannot afford anymore. So, I had to look around a job. Then, when I get the job, still, my pay is so small that I cannot afford anymore. So I sold my place. I sold it.

PL: After you sold your place, what job did you have, after that?

EC: Well, I am already a custodian in Waialua High School.

PL: ...when you sold the place?

EC: When I sold the place. Then, that's the time I bought this place. I sold for thirty five grand. You see? I don't know. I'm hard luck man. I sold it for thirty five grand. After one week, somebody come offer me fifty grand. You see? Then, of course, I bought this one only....twenty one thousand. This place. So I have reserved money, then, for my children. Even I don't have to work hard but I cannot go back in business again, because I sold the place. If I had that capital again, I rather go again. If I had the five thousand, ten thousand more. So that I can be able to start my business again. See, I have reserved for my children. But still then, that piece of money, well, I had to work day and night, because only me working. So I had to work day and night. I like all of my children...

PL: Where you used to work?

EC: At Kemoo Farm. See, I work as custodian at Waialua High School. And then, when I come home, I take bath. Then go to Kemoo Farm as a clerk and cashier. 15 years I work there. I work all around. Believe it or not. I work all around I work in the store until 8 o'clock. Then, after 8 o'clock, they put me in the kitchen as a fry cook. I'm not very particular. I like learn how to cook. Sometime they put me in the bar to be a bartender. I am very interested. I learn. Sometime they put me in the bakery. I learn how to bake pie. Anything, what kind pastry, I know how to bake. Custard pie, pumpkin pie, I learn how to bake those things. Then, sometime they put me in a cashier in the dining room. See, that's how I make my experience, by meeting so many people. Especially
soldier. When payday—mind you, all line up. All line up in the store to buy liquor, like that, see. By mingle with other people, that's how I improve my social standing. By mingle with the racial group. I can get along with people. I like to meet people. Especially when I was working in the store. Because, of course, when they come to the store, you have to be nice to them, and very courteous and, they like you that way. Suppose to be that way. If you work in a store, when a customer come, regardless who they are, "Sir, what can I do for you?" You have to talk nice to them. That's why I have good name with Kekoo Farm because I know how to deal with people. I have no trouble at all. Not like the other guy, they have trouble with customer. So far, me, no. 15 years I worked there. No trouble.

PL: Going back to the way you spend your recreation time at that, you know....

EC: When I was in the plantation? When I arrived in the plantation in Kawaiola, there is no recreation at all. When I arrived in 1926, not much people in 1926. So, when 1927, 1928, then lots of people came in.

PL: On the other tape you mention that, you folks used to have games, like that. Softball games.

EC: That's right. Yeah. We organize ourself. In each camp.

PL: Who organized these things?

EC: I did. Myself and some of the boys. I did, just to be something. At least we do something. So we went around in the camp, in each camp, convinced them that why don't you make a team in your place? And we challenge each other. So those who are smart how to play volleyball, they make a team volleyball. Those who smart in baseball, they make team in baseball. So in each camp, they get volleyball team and baseball team. So every Saturday night, each camp, we challenge. Sunday, baseball. (Laughs) Sometimes three games one day. In the baseball field. They have a good baseball field in there.

PL: Did you plan all the....

EC: The game?

PL: The game, like that?

EC: Yes, yes. And with my friend, he help me to organized. We make a notice. We put on the bulletin board that so-and-so will play a game. So-and-so and tell all—just like what we doing now here in Waialua. Just same thing with the volleyball. So what we did so that we have something of this to show to the people. If we agree, the loser will buy five cases of soda water. At least, you
know, when they lose, well, there's people that watching them. At least give them drink, eh, make them feel happy. (Laughs) They make noise, eh, for your team. If you no more game, nobody make noise, so. But you lose, you bring five case soda water, or what, everybody, he can drink. Then you to pass all around the people. That's what they used to do. Same thing with the volleyball. The loser have to buy everything. See, whatever decided--ten case soda water and doughnut, if buy ten dozen doughnut, whatever they agree--see, before they start the game, they agree that way, "What you going to buy? How many cases soda?" Oh, ten cases soda water. (Laughs) And doughnut. Ten dozen! Whatever they agreed. After the game, everybody full, eh, because they get doughnut, pastry, and drink, see. But there's no liquor. No liquor. Only soda water. There's no liquor. Some, they make homemade brew (Laughs). ---We cannot buy liquor before,

(Laughter)

PL: Who used to make homemade brew, like that?...Where did they used to make those homemade liquor?

EC: Homemade liquor. Mostly were Japanese. They make sake. But you have to be very careful, because if you get caught, well, too bad for you. Well, some Filipino, they learn about. They make their own brew, beer, like that. Because, after all, they sell in the store all the ingredient for make beer. They sell in the store. Why would we sell in the store, if they don't allow people make the brew. How can we sell the ingredient in the store? Oh, we sold plenty. Those Filipino, they smart. Buy one can of hops, like that. To make beer. Home brew. But they cannot sell. Only they drink among themself.

PL: Do you know how to make?

EC: Oh, yes! I know how. Even wine, I know, because I used to do (Laughs) a little bit when I was in the school. Even pineapple, swipe the whole pineapple, swipe, you know. I know. I learned that. I read that in the book. So I had to pass around with the people, so that they know how to make their own brew. (Laughs) They had to buy the container. Then, I can sell more another container, because, as I said, the more I sell, the more I make money. So I have ten gallon container, and five gallon, fifteen gallon, so I had to sell that. I sell it to make money.

PL: Can you describe how to make a simple, you know...

EC: Home beer? You see, one can of hops. They call hops. H-O-P. Is hops. One can. That equivalent to 15 gallon.

PL: What's that? What's inside the can?
EC: It's, uh, shee, that's the ingredient--hops, they call hops. One can of hops. Number two and half. The number two and a half, you see. I mean, one can, like that--twenty two a half. And then one cake yeast, that's all we made. You fill up the container for at least--if the container, it hold 15 gallon, you put only 13 gallon, because that sometimes, come up. Alright. Put one can, and then one cake yeast, one cake. Just put one, because you put two, too strong. Then, you put together. So you cover that in two, three days. Then, after two, three days, you put it in a bottle. You put in the bottle. And then the cap. So we had--somebody to put the cap if too strong, oh, boy! It shoot up. (Laughs) It shoot up! So strong. It shoot up. It was getting stronger. If you make em tight, the cover, you have to get some kind of material that really jack up, just like one jack, just give em. You know, to make the cover tight. Then after two, three days, you can drink. Home brew. (Laughs) You invite all your friend, go ahead, have a good fun. (Laughs) You see? I had to introduce my customer, because after all, I have to make money, eh. I sell them the container, I sell them the hop, I sell them the yeast, yeast cake. Anyway, each cake is only five cent before. But the hops is 75¢ one can, you see. And the container, two dollar half. See. I show them, so at least I get something to sell, and (Laughs) I had to show them. Same thing with typewriter. See, in order to sell, you had to show them how to type. Me, I don't know how to type, and yet --when I put all my finger, I know all the letters. When I put up my thumb, I know what letter, so I show them that how to go write typewriter, you can write without looking. Until you memorize. And so I sold plenty typewriter. (Laughs) Some really more smart than me, how to type, because they learn. I teach them how to type so that I can sell the typewriter, you see. I really learn all those thing. Before if they don't know how to type, so you show them how to type, you see. They can read the Filipino magazine, so just as good, they know, already the spelling specially the Bannawag (name of P.I.magazine) eh? So I show them how to type. I'm not expert in typing. I can type my own letter, but not so expert, but I can teach. Especially I bought one book, you know. I was really surprise those people, they can type without looking. But when I studied, ah! This the way. You see, from studying, I can write without looking, but not so good because I don't practice. But I can teach them. "Sure, it's up to you to practice." That's how I sold plenty typewriter.

PL: Okay, you also mention during the preliminary interview that you folks used to have parties like that at the camp, like that. Okay, you used to have Rizal Day celebration, like that...where people came. Different ethnic groups came to the party. And you mentioned that you---did you organize these celebrations?

EC: The celebration. Myself and some of friend of mine, that they really smart, we organize ourself that at least during the Rizal Day we make big affair. But since our---some of the boys, they have a talent. They can sing with the music, we don't have to worry.
So we organize them that at least we pay or donate 75¢ each person, so that you could buy pork, pig, like that. Cow, you see, those days cow alone you can buy for $35. The whole cow. Pig you can buy $25. Is cheap. Every year, we have a big affairs. Big affairs. We have a program and we invite all the plantation manager, all the overseers. And they all come. They like to attend that affair because, really, they like Filipino food. And, mind you, we have a good cook. He learned about—he's a housekeeper before in Manila during the Spanish—he used to work with Spanish, so he know how to cook. Spanish way. So we had three men knows how to cook. We do not worry. They can cook fancy kind. So we invite all the people. Portuguese, Japanese, those who wanted to come, they all can come anytime. Because I make a note, pass around: "Filipinos holding big affairs. Everybody can come. We have plenty food." As why they come. So all the haoles, managers—from the manager through down; they all come. Every years. Then, it happened that the last year we make a celebration in the camp, because before the Visayan people—they really so high-hat before, because majority of them before, most of them is foremen with the Japanese, I mean, the Visayan. They do not know how to speak Ilocano. And they does not know how to speak even Tagalog. They know only English little bit. Pidgin English. That's how they talk. And they call the Ilocano "manong bagoong" and all everything. But since I'm already have experience, one day, whenever they come to the store, the foreman, whenever he call the Ilocano "Eh, bagoong!" When I heard them talking, "Don't say that word to the Ilocano. Bagoong. You the worse one. Eating bagoong. You know the one you buying in the store here, that's bagoong. We don't eat that. That's the worse bagoong. We don't eat that, Ilocano. So don't say bagoong." So the people, especially the Ilocanos, when they know, find out that Visayan eat bagoong. I pass around, "If they tell you bagoong. 'You bagoong yourself, too.'" Then that day, it happened that Rizal Day, I am one of the speaker and, I explained that to them. I explained that among the Portuguese, among the Puerto Rican, I told them that "You telling only the Filipino bagoong. Portuguese, Puerto Rican, just as bad. You know that bakalaw, codfish, the ingredient is same, same as bagoong. Salt salmon is bagoong. You folks eating bagoong so don't say 'bagoong' to the Ilocano. The Ilocano, of course, we cook bagoong, the small fish. The ingredients is salt. Same thing with the salt salmon. Nothing but salt and water and little bit. Just like bagoong." So that's the time that people know. They don't call the Ilocano anymore bagoong, because everybody eat bagoong. (Laughs) You see? Same thing with the Japanese. They get the miso. That's their bagoong. That's same like the bagoong. In fact, Japanese, they eat bagoong. Aramang bagoong. So since that time, the Visayan people,—they don't tell anymore bagoong to Ilocano. And even the Puerto Rican and the Portuguese, they don't call the Ilocano bagoong anymore. Because I explained to them that they are the worse one eating bagoong. See, bakalaw is bagoong.

PL: Mhm.
EC: You know what is bakalaw?

PL: Yeah.

EC: A dry fish? The ingredient it's salt. That's bagoong. Same thing with the salt salmon. That's bagoong.

PL: Okay, you also mentioned that, you know, okay, the different ethnic groups, they used to come to the parties, like that. How about the different ethnic groups, did they have celebrations, big celebrations, like that?

EC: That's one thing in the camp---in our camp, there's only one group. Among the camp, they all come. They all make it into one. Like, see, in Waialua, they had a different group in Waialua. But in our place, we have a different group. But only us doing the biggest affairs to celebrate. Only in Kawaiholo. Mostly all the people from Waialua, they go up.

PL: And you said the different ethnic groups, like the Japanese, okay, the Japanese is mentioned that they used to have a bon dance.

EC: Bon dance, yes, right.

PL: Okay, how about the Chinese? Or Hawaiians?

EC: Oh, no.

PL: The Portuguese? Did they have any celebration where they invited...

EC: No, they don't have any. They don't have any. Only the Japanese when they have a bon dance. So, they said Filipinos welcome. So we like to dance. We follow them how to dance their way. We just follow the line. We dance. As I say, when we have affairs, we invite them to come over. Those who wanted to come, they all welcome to come. As I said, whenever we have a Rizal Day, the Visayan foreman, they are the head. They think that they were so high-hat, and they think they are the one who organize the affairs. And that night, the last night, I attacked them. Especially the manager and all the foreman that were sitting on the special table. I mean the Visayan. I attacked them. I told them in the group that this Rizal Day happening every years, not one Visayan contribute. Only the Ilocanos. And yet when it come like this, the Visayan people were in the front and talking with the bosses. All the manager, they think that they are the ones sponsoring this affairs. Tell the truth. I hold them, in the audience. "Is that right, Cabico?" They ask me question. "Yes, not one of them, foreman or their common worker. Not one of them contribute. Even a single cent." After that affairs, I tell you, next day, all the foreman Visayan come to me. "Cabico, from now on," they said, "whenever you go around and ask for donation, call me. I give you five dollar. I give you five dollar." (Laughs) Sure, most of them,
Visayan people. They cooperate with us already. It's more strong, more big celebration. After that. Then the next day, plantation managers, they came to me. "Is that right, what you are talking last night?" "Yes, yes, sir. Even in the store, that's what happening." I said, "Yes, sir. That's what happening in the store. But people don't know what's happening in the store, just because I'm the only Ilocano, I get really hard time, because I'm only the Ilocano. That store clerk were all Visayan. They don't know how to talk Ilocano, and the people, Ilocano they don't talk English, they don't know. The Ilocano does not know how to speak English. They beginning to learn pidgin English, yeah."

PL: I would like to find out during the preliminary interview, you mention that you met your wife here.

EC: Right. In Waialua. You see, I meet my wife during the social dance. As I said before, when you have a social dance, you had to find your own partner in order to join the social dance, because if you have no partner, no sense to go in, because you cannot dance. So that's what they did. So I found that, especially she's townmate and she's Pangasinan, she's full Pangasinan. Although she was born here in Hawaii, but she know how to speak Filipino. In fact, she speak three languages. Tagalog, Pangasinan and Ilocano. So that's the beginning. I court her. We get married in 1930. And 1931, we have one son. Then, you know how it is. That's how life, maybe. After 1932, she take off. She take off, she leave the baby; I got hard time. With the baby.

PL: Oh. You took care of the baby?

EC: I took care the baby, but, since I'm working, I cannot take care, and so, I let my friend to take care for me. See, my friend. My neighbor is only one lady, and, I pay them $15 a month to take care my baby. $15 a month. Then when the boys grow up, then, I took her to the real mother, because the real mother said she willing to take care the baby. So---I don't have to hire somebody to take care--I gave to her until he grow up. Then when he go to school, then, the boy came back again to me. Because he goes to school. So at least that much, I don't have to worry anymore because at the time, he's big already. Is big already and I don't have to hire somebody to take care my son.

PL: Oh. So you send your son to school?

EC: I send my son to school. Through high school and through graduate in high school, and then when he went to the States, he attended the New York University, and he's a good boy. And when he graduate in the New York University, he like it or not, he had to serve Uncle Sam. That's what before. You like it or not, you have to serve Uncle Sam. So as soon as he graduate in college, then Uncle Sam took him. But they send him to the Officers' School.
Office school. So, he make good, then they send him to pilot school. And there, he came up. Now he's a full colonel. Full colonel, now. If one more promotion, he will be a brigadier general, because he came here last year and told me that "One more promotion, daddy," he said, "I'll be brigadier general so you be proud, daddy. I will be a first Filipino brigadier general." So I wish him luck. Now, I don't know, I never heard from him lately. I can afford because he's only my first boy. So I can afford to send him college. Then, I remarried again.

PL: When was that when you remarried?

EC: I remarried again in 1940. I remarried again 1940. Then I happen, have three son, again.

PL: From your second wife?

EC: My second wife. I have three son and two, what you call that now, two, just like adopted, because when I meet my second wife, she has two baby. One years old and two years old. When we meet.

PL: And she's from here?

EC: She was born in the Philippine. She was five years old when she came to Hawaii. She has his own---two child with her first husband. One boy and one girl. But they were considered as my own, because they took my name. Cabico. So in other words, we have four boys and one girl.

PL: And you send through...

EC: I send them from kindergarten to college, all private school.

PL: All of them?

EC: All of them. See, that's why I have to work hard. You see, when they attended St. Louis, the oldest one will drive the car, and they commute everyday, eh. I get hard time, oh, really. But it's one thing my son, they really, willingly, they work hard. We had to raised pig, and we had to raised cow. Every six month, we sell the pig. Because whenever they come home, somebody had to feed the pig. Somebody had to feed the cow and give water. That's how I can, you know. I cannot afford to pay their tuition one time, but in the school, they know. Because during summer, they had to work in the pineapple field. One payday, they bring home plenty money. Four boys work, eh. See? The first payday, they gave me all, I go to St. Louis High School. Pay all the balance. That's how they know that I can pay one time they balance. You see? My boys, they worked hard because when they joined ROTC, they are so particular, he had to press all their clothes, eh. So we have three iron in the house. Because in the morning, they have to wake up early. If only one iron, they bother the mother to iron,
to press their clothes. So I taught them how to iron. Because, you have to be neat all the time when you attend the private school. You have to be neat. Wear necktie, you know, especially you are in ROTC. So I teach them how to iron. So early in the morning, they get up early to iron their pant and shirt. And necktie and all like that. So every year, like that. So if the oldest one graduate, he has to work. He has to work. Because, as I say, he has to help me, because, after all, my goodness, I'm only the one working. The second one, again, to do the driving the car. After he graduate again, the next one again going to drive the car. They commute everyday. Then, after they all graduate, they all finish already high school, and they work, six month in Schofield, they make good money. The oldest brother advised them, "If I were them, join the National Guard. So that when they join the Army, or Navy or Air Force, how many years they serve in the National Guard, that will count." So that's what they did, my son. Then they volunteered, and they all went to Air Force. Until today, well, two of them came out already. They are married. And till today, three of them in the service. The full Colonel, the full Sergeant, and the Master-Sergeant, they all stay in the service. I wrote them a letter that since they have high rank, might as well keep up. Because hard to find job. So that's what they do, you know, so probably now, the other boy is 15 years. The other boy is 17 years in the service. The older brother twenty one years. So, I think, they stick on that Army--I mean, Air Force, and, of course, every years, they come home and visit me. Well, I have one son here. They send him to be a priest. But I think he change his mind. He come out as a priest, so now he's living in Honolulu. Mostly every Sunday he come visit us here. And he can work in the office, but he rather work outside because he make more money than work in some office in Honolulu as a travel agent, see. He took that course. And now he's holding as a first class carpenter, he's making over ten dollar one hour. So, now that he's making so much, so he can afford to buy one home. He bought a home. He bought a home, now in Mililani. And he's married now, too, and he has no children.

PL: How about your daughters?

EC: My daughter, when she graduate in St. Francis Hospital as a nurse, she graduated in there. Then, she went get married to one service-man. She's now in New York. She's now in New York. That's what happened that I went New York myself, because she gave me as my birthday present--when she was in New York. So I went in New York. (Laughs) I saw the tallest building in New York. Empire Building. (Laughs) At least I travel, eh. Well, now, again, my oldest one, when he got married, he cablegram again, that at least I have to attend his wedding, but I cannot take off from my job. I was a school custodian. I ask permission to the principal, he said, nobody can take over my job. 'As why I never attended wedding party of my oldest son. So I never go. But the boy that attended the seminar college, they send him to Santa Cruz California when he graduated, then they call me again, so I went. That's why I went
to as far as San Francisco. I went all around San Francisco. All around San Francisco. I went there. Then, in fact, I went four times in States. Because, my boys, when they were small, they played baseball for Little League. When they were champion, they were sent to the Mainland. I follow them again. See, I followed them. Because, my son, they play good if they see me. They feel good when they see me. They say, "Daddy, you have to come." Whenever they play, I just follow them. Whenever they play here in Oahu, I'll just go. Because I have to cheer my son. One is a catcher, one is a pitcher. Combination, eh. The younger one is catcher, and the eldest one is pitcher. So I had to go with them whenever they played. To cheer them, you know. So, that way, they feel good. When they play, they play hard. (Laughs) If the daddy stay.

PL: How about discipline your kids when they were small? Who used to do the discipline and all that?

EC: That's right. That's right. I give a good discipline my children. That, boys, they wanted to play. But 5 o'clock, they be home and take a bath. After take a bath, then we eat, then they had to study. No radio or anything. No play. Because when they come home, I give them permission to play around in the yard. With the other children. But 5 o'clock, they have to be home. Take a bath. Because, that's the only way. You know, boys, already, they wanted to play. They come home sometime 6 o'clock or maybe (Laughs) dark. They come home, boys, like that, they wanted to play, eh. But, I give them this---5 o'clock they have to be home. That's one thing, they really good boy. When I say 5 o'clock, they will be home. Especially, when they attended the private school, my goodness, when they come home, rest, sleep. After they sleep for a while, they wake up, play little while. Then come back, take a bath, then study. After all, I pay big money, eh. So they got to study. They got to study. And, of course, I'm only primary grade in the Philippine. So, sometime, they don't know in their homework, they ask me, because they thought that I'm graduate college, my children, because I teach them. Especially, when they make a speech, like that, outline, eh, so I make the outline. And it's up to them, because they smart in English. I'm very poor, but I can outline. See, I can outline. And when they went high school, sometime their homework, they don't know, algebra, like that, especially, when they were seventh grade, eight grade, come to algebra, they don't know, so much, so they say, "Daddy, how you make this?" Well, I know little bit algebra. Because I said I went to Spanish school. I learned algebra. I know little bit even till today. So I told them my boy, my adopted children. And they ask me what grade I am. "Only fifth grade." He said, "How come Daddy, then. I'm fifth grade. But you more smart than me." (Laughs) He was surprise. That's right. You know, fourth grade in the Philippine, you smart already. So that's how, again, they were surprised about how come I know their homework.
PL: So Nana is your third... wife.

EC: My third wife.

PL: Where's your second wife?

EC: My second wife, she's in Mainland. See, ladies, when they reach a certain age, they changing life, you see. She went to Mainland and is still there. And I follow her. I don't want to stay in Mainland, because cold. When you think cold, it's cold. See, I get used to the weather here, so I came back. See, I don't want to stay there, to live in there. So she wrote me a letter. "Since you doesn't want to come back, and you stay home. You stay home. I won't come back anymore." So my children, they all surprise, convince the mother to come home. Come home. I'm alone here, and every year my children come visit me. They all in the service. And I'm alone in this house one of my son said, "Daddy, I going get married. And my wife will stay with you here." I said, "No, no. If you get married, bring your wife with you. Don't worry about me. Because nothing to worry. I can take care the house." Then after a while, she said, well, "Since mama doesn't want to come back, might as well get divorce." So the mother came and we talk nice. Nothing to be, you know—just like husband and wife. We went to lawyer, see, we sign up. We agreed that we will separate in a nice way. So we went to the lawyer. Following week, we get our divorce paper. As soon as she got her divorce paper, she got married right away. So, me, what I am going to do? I wanted to get married, too. At least somebody, keep company with me. So my son advised me to go back to Philippine to get married in the Philippine. So I went back in the Philippine. To get married. So when I came back, at least, my children were all happy. I have only one son never see my wife now. The rest they like her.

PL: What year did you go back to the Philippines to get married?

EC: 1965 when I went back to Philippine. See, so, my wife, she was 32 years old then; that time I was 55. It happened unfortunate that she cannot have a baby because something wrong. Although we went to specialist doctor, the doctor said no. Cannot. She has operation. That is the reason why she cannot have a baby. Then I ask my children, since they have kids, one, two kids, one kid, I ask them if they can give me one. They said no. And then, they advised me, "Why don't you adopt? In the Philippine? At least adopt your brother's son or daughter." So that's what we did when I got married to my wife. Went back in the Philippine and adopted that two children. I adopt the boy when he was five years old, and the girl's four years old. We adopt them. Now, the boy is going eleven, and the girl's going to ten. So, next month, I already apply for their American citizen, because they are qualified already. They been here two years, and there's a law, eh, if adopted children, they have to be here Hawaii two years, then you can qualify to acquire the citizen. So by next month, they are American citizens.
We all American citizen.

PL: M. Okay. I think we had enough.

(Laughter)

PL: Enough for today. Because we've been talking since 5 o'clock and now it's 7, 7:30.

END OF INTERVIEW
Tape No. 1-36-3-76

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Emigdio Cabico (EC)

July 12, 1976

Waialua, Hawaii

BY: Pablo Lazo (PL)

PL: This is an interview with Mr. Cabico at their house on July 12th, 1976. Project 1, Tape 36, Session 3. Okay, Tata, what kind of things do you recall about the plantation before the Depression years?

EC: Well, as far as I am concerned, during the Depression didn't affect us, because we had everything. Besides that, we work and we got paid. So it doesn't affect us, the Depression. The only thing affect the plantations is that they are so very strict that people that don't work, even one day, if you don't show up without good reason, you get fired. So naturally, everybody has to work everyday during the Depression.

PL: Did the plantation laid off any people?

EC: Ah, no, they don't lay off no people. As long as get job, get work. But as I said, you have to work everyday. From the beginning that if you don't work...and the plantation camp's police always check up. Because early in the morning, they know already who stay home. Because the camp police check up. Then, right away, he will investigate why you never go work. And if you say, "Oh, I got headache." "Well, if you got headache, you go hospital." And if the people said, that, "Oh, I just stay home for ---you know, I get light headache this morning and I am not feeling well." And still the camp police, "Well, take your suitcase and get out." They don't care about people who are employee. So, naturally, you have to go out.

PL: People from outside of the plantation, did they buy things from the store? During the Depression?

EC: As far as I remember, 'as usual. If somebody come around sometime, just drop to the store and buy some sodawater, refreshment, like that, ice cream. That's all they buy. Those days. They don't buy other thing, only except those...somebody buy cigarette, ice cream, soda. That's all they buy when they come around.

PL: Okay, how about before the Depression? Do you recall any things that
happened before the Depression, like strikes, like that, if you participated in those strikes?

EC: Well, before that, they have a plantation strike, and that was only, I think, about three days or four days. Not more than that. Because I remember that strike is on account of one of our leader in the camp. That we have a Rizal Day that day, and it happened that was Saturday. And then, the plantation want them to work on that Saturday. But since it was fall on Saturday, we already plan that we will make a celebration for Rizal Day. So, since one of our leaders—that is Mr. Sarmiento—is the president of the community, so the next day, they fired him out.

PL: Why did they fire him out?

EC: They fire him out just because everybody never go work that Saturday on that day. They fired him out. They blame him for a lot of people never go work. But since it was happened that was Rizal Day, big celebration, we already made up our mind that we don't work from that day. So, everybody never go work. We made a big celebration. So, Monday, they already fired him. So, what we did, some of the leaders, we talk ourself, that if Sarmiento don't come back, might as well no work. So that...

PL: If don't come back for the next week?

EC: Then, he come back the next week, because we have a Resident Commissioner in Honolulu—that is Mr. Light—came and investigate. The Resident Commissioner investigate why Filipino stop work. So we told him the story that they fired Sarmiento. That's the reason why everybody doesn't go to work. So, the Resident Commissioner went to the plantation office and talk to the management. Why they fire Sarmiento? So, I don't know what they talk. And then, the following week, Sarmiento came back. Then everybody go back work when Sarmiento came back.

PL: How long did Filipinos stop work? How many days?

EC: Was about four days. Four days.

PL: But, then, everybody went back to work after...

EC: As soon as Sarmiento came back, then, everybody goes back to work.

PL: Can you tell me more, what's happening. I mean, like, for example, on the 1926 strike, do you remember....

EC: 1926....When I arrive here in Kawaiola, 1920s, I heard already about the strike in Maui or Hilo. That was, I think, 1924. Then, after that, 1926, I remember the leaders of that strike in Maui or Hilo came to Waialua, and trying to organize the people here in Waialua Plantation to join the strike. But since then....1926, they cannot
go inside the camp and convince the people to attend meeting in the camp. So, what they did, they make a meeting in Haleiwa, outside the plantation. Because outside, the plantation cannot do anything. But still then, some people wanted to attend the meeting. Just to attend the meeting, but it happened that I was there. And I know the plantation camp police is right by the gate, taking all the names and the bangos of the people who go in. So, I happened to be there, and I told, by Filipinos, especially Ilocanos, "Don't go in, because otherwise the next day, you will be fired on the plantation." So I don't want them to be that way, because the newcomers, they don't know where to go and they believe me. So, I went in the camp and tell them "Whenever get meeting in Haleiwa, don't attend. Because that meeting is to convince you to join the strike. So if I were you people, don't go. Because otherwise you'll be in trouble. Because as far as I know, all the striker before in Hilo, Maui, they get hard time. They live by the beach. Nobody support them. So what happen now? If you will join, you have no more money. The leaders no more money to feed you. Why should you join? You come here to work and earn money." So, in that way, some people, they believe me. And some of my friends that were one of the leaders go out in the camp, tell them the story. So, so far, nobody attend that meeting. Only those outside people that doesn't work, living in Haleiwa, outside the plantation, attend that meeting. Mostly every Sunday, before, they had that meeting, a big sign all over the places for the meeting. But since the plantation camp people employee, like that, they no attend the meeting. So, they cannot do anything.

PL: Okay. How about the other leaders who's trying to organize this group for the strike? Did they accuse you of being a plantation man?

EC: Well, at first, they accuse me I'm a plantation man. They accuse me that Cabico is trying to hold the employee. But, they don't understand. They came to me one time. They meet me and even, in fact, they call me in the store by telephone. They told me, "Why you have to do that?" Say, "Yes. Because I pity them if they join you, because you cannot support them. You cannot give them food. What going happen to them? You folks no more fund. See, how you expect them to live? You see, they cannot do anything. I know they get hard feeling to me, but I tell them the reason why. "If you folks got money pay them, or feed them, well, not too bad. But, like this, you want them to join with you. In fact, they will suffer, because if they will join with you, they have to get out from the camp. No more house for them. If you will provide them a house and you pay them, I think, they will join you. Some of them will maybe".

PL: Okay. And how about the six months strike? The 1946 strike? The...

EC: That was the plantation strike you're talking?

PL: Yeah.
EC: Well, plantation strike like this. During the plantation strike, everybody don't work. But, I cannot join the union, because since I was store manager I cannot join the union. I wanted to join with them, but since the union leaders said, "No, you cannot join with us, because we cannot fight for you. So better for you to stay out". So, well, since I cannot join the union... but during this strike, they picket the store. They picket the store so that nobody allowed to go inside the store. Because they all picketing the store. Only myself can go in. But, a good fun (Laughs) because when they need something, they need cigarette, they need sugar, they need coffee, they call me out the window. They wanted to buy. (Laughs) "You don't allow the customer to come inside. Why should I give you?" Say, "No. Only between us, anyway." So, we make that way. Secret way. From the window. Anything they buy, from the window. Not from the door. (Laughs) Although there's picket line in front, but behind, the window open. (Laughs) Those people, they come. When they need something, anything that they want, they buy. Although the plantation said that since they make a picket line in front the store, don't sell any one of them. I say, "Okay. I take the order." But in secret, outside, I sell from the window. Because I pity them. They no more cigarette. Where they going buy? (Laughs) They no more coffee, they no more sugar, and anything, soap for take a bath, anything. So, what they need, they know where to go. By the window. (Laughs)

PL: Oh, I see. Do you remember anything about the effect of that strike cause you getting paid by the plantation.

EC: That's right.

PL: Okay. But, do you remember about the soup kitchens, like that?

EC: Well, after that, they set the soup kitchen. And all these people... all the union leader, they appoint a cook. They appoint some to go fishing early in the morning. They appoint someone to make a garden, to plant vegetable for them. So they did that. Is good. Is real good. When they caught plenty fish, sometime they give me. From the window. (Laughs) Because I'm good to them, eh. Whenever they get plenty fish, they always give me, because I supply them what they need. So, well, some, of course, mostly family, like that, they don't go so much. But the husband, if they got wife, the husband has to go in the kitchen, so... and bring their lunch can. So, have to fill up his lunch an and take 'em home. Because the whole family cannot go in the kitchen soup. That's how I remember.

PL: Okay. How about the 1949 shipping strike? Do you remember that?

EC: The shipping strike. That's the one, it hit us hard. Because hardly no food from the Mainland. Especially rice. Filipinos like that, if he don't eat rice, he is going starve. (Laughs) They going die without rice. So, since sometime, rice come in and that time, since the wholesalers, they know that I have more customer than any store,
so, they give me more. Some of the store, they got five bag. Some store get ten bag. Like me, because they know that I'm selling most rice than any store, they give me fifty bag. Sometime, twenty-five bag. Then, I know all my customer. All the Japanese and all. You order or no, I just deliver. The big family, I give them twenty-five pound. Single man, I give them ten pounds, like that. So, when they come home from work, they know they get, already, package right by their door. So, I marked it: From Cabico. I make the slip. From Cabico. They appreciate that. They appreciate that. That's why I get good relationships with the customer in the camp. That's why they give me all the business. Because without me, I think they all starve. Some of them really starve. (Laughs)

PL: Okay. Can you tell me about the, you know, the tidal wave of 1946?

EC: The tidal wave....they feel sad, because lots of people affect in different islands. Especially Hilo. But, like us, we had good fun, because tidal wave will bring all the fish outside the road. So (Laughs) although they not allow people to go in, we sneak, because we like to eat fish. Lot of fish in the road. Because only that morning was the tidal wave. After that is no more. Only big wave, but it doesn't come up anymore. So we have good fun. All the people in the camp go down, catch plenty fish. Plenty fish. Even myself, I caught one big one. Ulua. (Laughs) About 25 pound. Ulua. Was good. But since, especially policemen all around, but we knew where to pass. The policeman, you see, always in the road, or block, but he don't know up hill, we pass hill. We can go near the beach or near the road. (Laughs)

PL: I believe that this 1946 tsunami was damaging to the railroad run around here.

EC: That's right. In Waialua, the railroad....the dairy and right near the Puuiki Beach, all damaged. All the cows. All like that. And also, some part in Haleiwa, the gas station, the restaurant in Haleiwa, all affected, all was out. That's the only one we feel bad. Because when we heard the news that especially the dairy in Waialua had all wipe out all the cow and everything. So, I pity all the children that used to drink milk, because they run short of milk.

PL: Now I'm going to ask you about the store, okay. Were there any new improvements in the store, like maybe cash register, like that, to make your job easier or anything? Like, maybe price markers that you just---the stamp thing?

EC: No, no. Since I work in the store, plantation store, we had old cash register and all the marking and everything is done by hand. With pencil. So such thing as marking, or, what you call that? What kind of marking?
PL: Price marker.

EC: Price marker. No, we don't have that. You see, what we used to do, we have our cash register that we have to very, very careful with that cash register, because, sometime, you don't know when the auditor would come. So, when the auditor come, naturally, he has to check up the tape and the money. If balance alright. But, if it doesn't balance, why, we have scolding or maybe you get fired or something like that. But since I know what day they used to come, and, of course, the tape, every afternoon, when I close the store, I take out the tape. And I will figure how much the money and it balance. Sometimes it doesn't balance. Sometime, short. Well, I had to cover up. If five cents short, I have to cover up. Because sometime, when it over, well, I have to ring that over....there's no improvement at all. So...

PL: How about scales, like that? You know. Where you will weigh the food stuff.

EC: We have a spring scale. And they call it honest scale. That anything you put on the scale, the price indicate on the scale. If 25¢ a pound, look under 25¢, if one ounce or three ounce. Indicate the price. Honest. Very honest spring scale. Very honest.

PL: So, you have all the mechanical in the store, then. Like scales and cash register, yeah.

EC: Yeah, cash register and scale. We have that. But... price marker, no. Because when a main bookkeeper will mark the price, so you have to copy. The cost and the selling. Everything. And if he is so busy that is simple to do it, he said, "Cabico, you have to do this, Mark up. Twenty percent or twenty-five percent." You add up twenty-five percent. So I had to do that everyday. Every item in the store you have to put the cost price and the selling price. So that during inventory, you know. You know how much you bought, that item. So, you had to be very careful, because without the cost price mark, well, you get hard time. If you know the selling price and you don't know the cost, going be hard time. They have scolding from the general manager. So, have to be very careful on that. Every item, you have to mark up. Put the cost price. Either by each or either by dozen or either by case, or either by gross. You have to put that. So that when inventory, the bookkeeper easy to figure what was the profit and what was the loss. We have also a gasoline pump in the store. And that gasoline pump is kind of old. So, sometime is off. Sometime I don't know. But anyway, every three months, the inspector come around and inspect that pump. If one gallon come right, then, they put the okay. They put the mark in there. That's the government---the inspector. I read in the magazine, somewhere, I think, magazine or something like that, that gasoline evaporate, then I came smart. Because whenever short, I don't have to pay. Before, I know what time, what day the auditor come I check up and if two gallon short, I have to pay. I put under my bango, so that when the
auditor come, well, exact. But when I found that the gasoline evaporate, I don't do that anymore. When the auditor come, he say, "Cabico, you short two, five gallons." I say, "Well, short, that's it. Evaporate, the gasoline. Didn't you know that, sir?" They say, "No." "Yes, sir." Well, I fight them and then they report me to the plantation manager that Cabico is short five gallon. And they ask him why. And he told them the reason that the gasoline evaporate. And then, the plantation manager appreciate very much, because I'm fighting for my right and he know that gasoline evaporate. So, he called me up. He said, "Cabico, you were right. You fight for your right. The gasoline evaporate, you know. So you don't have to pay anything. If short, short." You know, gasoline evaporate. So I feel good, because the plantation manager, he back me up. Because after all, gasoline evaporate maybe two, three gallon, or five gallon every three month. Before, I don't know, I have to pay. Because I don't want to get scolding from the auditor.

PL: Now you know, about the perquisite system, like long hours work and you get free things from the plantation...

EC: That's right. Those days, we work long hours, but the plantation give us good service. They give us free house, free water, free kerosene. If you get kerosene stove, free kerosene. And free water. And free bath house. But you work long hours. Then the union won the strike. So, they get raise, and better working condition, and, of course, the plantation said,"Well, since you're making so much now, you have to pay for the water. You have to pay for the house." So that's what they did.

PL: Okay.

EC: But they don't care, because they get high pay. They can afford to pay because the price, like houses very reasonable. Some is $18. Some is twenty dollar. And how many living in that house. You divide how much. And water, like that, they pay only one dollar a month. It's still cheap. It's better than working long hours and you getting free firewood and kerosene. So, it's better to work short hours and high pay, and you don't mind to pay the house rent or water every month.

PL: Oh, I see. What were some of the good things about the plantation in early days? And some of the not so good things?

EC: Well, in early days, as I said in the beginning, plantation is so good that they provide all what the necessity in the house you need, firewood something like that. If you can afford to buy stove, just notify them that you buy stove then they will give you kerosene free. But, as I said, if you don't work everyday, (Laughs) you better get out, because (Laughs)....That the plantation policy. Well, of course, those days, I tell you this. Although I'm not working in the field, but people, when they come home they talk story in the store. I say, Oh, my goodness. Those people foreman nothing but all Salalabit and
Bayaw, always say 'Hurry up, hurry up, hurry up!' And still we are tired. We working hard, we work, well, still somebody stay behind, 'Salalabit! Mostly all Salalabit. Going, going, work, work!' Then after that, the Filipinos, they getting smart. They know already. They stay here already almost one year, they know where to go. If any big luna will tell them "Salalabit," they pull the cut cane knife. "You salalabit yourself! Come here. Come here!" See. So, they cut out that habit in talking to the Filipinos. "Salalabit." 'Okininan" (mother fucker), any kind. Sweating, working hard and still they swearing of the people. So, when the people smart, they tell me the story. They even chase the field boss, because if he go near they going cut 'em. And yet, the people were working so hard and still somebody, "You salalabit! Come on! Some more, some more, some more!" So they did, you know. In the beginning, yes, because kind of afraid, eh. But after that when they get smart, they cut off that kind habit. Especially all the Portuguese or the Puerto Rico all that. Hoo! Nothing, but all big noise, big noise. And Filipino, foreman make big noise behind. "Bayaw." Any kind. But after that, they cut off that habit. They cut off. On account of one Filipino that's really tough. He don't care. If they'll kill him, they'll kill him. As long as he's right. If anybody will tell guy, "Salalabit!" He just raise his hand with cut cane knife, go. Go chase them. They run away. (Laughs) They run away. So since that time, they cut off that habit, yelling, swearing to the Filipino. They cut off that especially when the strike over. Just like all the foreman they kiss the workers' ass. They being good already. They no make noise already. Because once they make noise they have the union, eh. No such thing as swearing to the workers like that. Because as long as you work, lunas, they don't bother them. Not those days. That's why it's good after the strike. Because nobody will tell them, "Hey, you salalabit! Come on. You slowpoke!" Nobody will tell you that. As long as you work, nobody can tell you..."Go ahead." Because the union right there. They would fight for your right. As long as you work. Don't sleep on the job. (Laughs) That why good with the union.

PL: When you came here, did the houses have electricity then?

EC: Yes, when I arrive here in 1926, all the houses get electricity.

PL: Did you have milk delivered from the dairy?

EC: Filipinos here was new, they don't drink milk. But when they have family, some get married and they got baby, that's the time the doctor advise them to let the baby drink milk. Then, they have to order. Either you come to the store, because we carry milk in the store. You can buy milk.

PL: How about the new housing, did you rent it? Did you stay in those new housing when they had it?

EC: Some houses, especially some old house they repair. They also make
new house. But, mostly all the big families, especially Japanese like that, they all have family, so, naturally, they give the chance to the Japanese for the new house. And some Filipino that get big family, they give them new house. But... all the singles they are satisfied with the house that they live in, because it's good.

PL: Did you make use of the clubhouses, like that?

EC: Oh, yes. That's one thing the plantation is so kind enough. They make in Kawaiola, we have a big gym. And we have a big clubhouse, show house, and we have a swimming pool. And we have a tennis court. Everything that we have in the camp, free. You play tennis, free. We have swimming pool, free. Of course, you use the clubhouse, but after you use, you have to clean it. The plantation make so much money, so they can afford to make a big gym in Kawaiola, a skating rink inside the gym. They skate inside the ring, inside the gymnasium. Then, after the strike, I don't know, maybe (laughs) then, everybody have to pay. Then, after that, like in the camp that's the biggest camp, everybody went out. Not much people left in the camp.

PL: Oh, I see.

EC: So, naturally nobody use anymore the big gym and the swimming pool, so they just left it... until was turn out.

PL: Do you remember anything about this so called Christmas Tree Program?

EC: I remember that every Christmas Tree Program, the plantation provide that. See, they have a big Christmas party at the Waialua Park. And those who are living in far away, like in a camp, they used the train to bring down the people to the park. That's one thing good.

PL: 'As all free food?

EC: All free. So, when they attend the Christmas Party, they give you orange, apple, like that. But since there's no transportation, the plantation provide the train. Like in Kawaiola, people go by train. They don't go haul them by truck, but the train so plenty people can go down.

PL: And how about this monthly dinners for department heads? Did you get invited to that?

EC: Well, I remember, yes. I think, maybe five times or six times; the plantation give that dinner, well, I don't remember what year, but whenever they have a dinner, I was invited to attend that dinner. They invite all the foreman, and all the plantation leaders, like that luna, foreman. Luna mean they call foremen, so they invite me, because I'm store manager, so they had to invite me. So I attended.
It's good. It was real good. I enjoyed that.

PL: When the eight hour day came into effect....what did you do then? On your free time?

EC: I was single when we get that eight hours work, I have more time. I can go around Honolulu or bring my friend to go Honolulu, all around. Because I work only eight hours. If I work early, come home early. Only I work eight hours. So, I feel good, because I can go around anyplace I like. I don't have to worry, because not like it used to be, because you go home for dinner. After dinner, you go back again until sometime nine o'clock in the evening and without pay. But when come to an NRA, eight hours a day, plantation like it or not, you have to work eight hours a day. So, I feel good. I have plenty time to go around and tell my people that now we can make good team. You see, because I get plenty time now. So, we can practice everyday. (Laughs)

PL: Practice what?

EC: Practice every afternoon. Practice baseball, any kind of sport, because I get plenty time.

PL: I know that you used to work at this store, but did you ever go shopping outside of that plantation store?

EC: Well, as far as my grocery, I rather buy in the store. But when I buy clothing, like pants, we have to go Honolulu. Or I go to tailor shop, they make shirts or pants. We have ready made pants, but only working pants, denim pants, like that. That's only working clothes. But I wanted Sunday clothes, so you have to go to tailor shop or go town. Buy in town. It's ready made.

PL: How and when did you pay for goods, you know?

EC: Well, in the plantation store you don't have to pay cash, they call that credit. But....after the end of the month, payday, they will deduct from your pay, whatever you owe to the store.

PL: Besides the plantation, if you go buy things from the other stores in town, you paid cash?

EC: Well, if we go in town outside the plantation, we have to pay cash. You had to have money. You cannot buy without cash. They don't trust you to keep your credit, especially if they don't know you. But in Haleiwa, there's a dry goods store. They always can give you credit. You don't have to pay cash. But, payday, they come collect. We have a dry good in Haleiwa--they get two dry good. That's Tanaka, Sanoshin Tanaka and Oshiyama. They get everything. So people wanted Sunday clothes, like that, nice clothes, they can always buy. If you don't have money, as long as you work on the plantation, they give you credit. But by payday, you have to pay. But if you cannot pay all, oh, they were so kind. They say, "Okay. You pay what you can."
He realize that he get small pay, eh. He realize too, as long as you pay, keep on paying.

PL: Can you tell me about hospital, did you ever use it, or was if free?

EC: Hospital, free. Anything, everything is free. I remember I was sick. One time, I was hospitalized, and...free. Everything's free. All the laborers in the camp, as long as employee, were free-no charge.

PL: Do you recall any safety programs in the plantation, then?

EC: Well, after that, somebody came around and tell how to keep your cut cane knife. The cut cane knife has to be covered especially, if you ride in the truck. The plantation provide the covers of the blades of the hoe. Because sometime get accident. Big crowd in the truck and you're holding the hoe, somebody get cut. So, the plantation provide some kind of cover for the blades of the hoe. And same thing with the cut cane knife. To cover that while you riding in the truck. Because lot of accident before. Cut, you know. Especially in one big truck. Hoo, boy! Loaded. Just like sardine. So, you have to be careful with your cut cane knife. I used to see them, because right in front the store, see. And sometimes, the big boss called me and to tell the employees to keep your cut cane knife down. Because some of them cannot understand, so mostly every morning, I remind them, "Put your cut cane down on the floor. Don't hold." Because they're bound to get cut. So, same thing with the hoe. But since they get plenty that hurt from the hoe, the plantation thought about that to avoid any accident.

PL: Oh, I see. Okay. And do you recall attending any barbecue at the end of the harvest season, like that?

EC: Well, no. I don't remember that. Plantation, they never gave us a free dinner, I mean, you know, every year, no. Only the dinner party for the foremen and all the leaders. But after every year, no, didn't. They don't give any free party to us.

PL: How about Christmas, did plantation give you anything?

EC: Well, in Christmas, as long as you attend the program, you get free orange, free apples.

PL: Oh, that's all?

EC: That's all. Not lately. Lately, I think, everybody get turkey. But before, no. If you attend the program, you get apple and orange. But if you don't go, you don't get nothing. (Laughs) But lately, every year, they get turkey, all the employees.

PL: Okay. Were there any rule set by the plantation regarding your activities after you finish work at the store?
EC: Well, that's one thing, no. I'm free. As long as I get through on my job, it's up to me. They don't tell me what do do.

PL: How about the people working outside in the field? Did they...

EC: Well, same thing with those people outside. They are free. They can do whatever they want after working hours. We all free. They can do what they like.

PL: Okay. How about complaints by the worker about their lunas and working conditions, camp conditions? When they make complaints... did they ever complain to the management like that?

EC: Well, as I said before, they don't complain, because they don't understand, and beside that, they new. They just hear that foreman "Salalabit" all around, they don't complain. But after that one Filipino he already understand little bit. When you tell him "Salalabit", he go chase them with the cut cane knife. So, naturally, it happened that went to the office with the story. I think the big boss pass it to all the big luna, the foreman, that don't swear to the worker. Because after all, they working hard and still they come to me and ask "What's the problem?" So I told them the story. The manager, they come to me, because I understand English little bit. So, I told them. "As soon as they come home, the Filipino, they come to the store and they tell me their story. 'The guy chased the big luna.' I say, 'Why? 'Oh, because we working hard and he still stay behind, "Salalabit, salalabit."' So he go there he chase with the cut cane knife. So, naturally, I have to tell that to the big manager when he come to the store and ask me what is the problem. I told him the problem. I say, "That's right. You don't swear to the people, because after all, we're Filipino. We don't like swear to us." And yet they working hard. They're trying their best and still somebody behind them still swearing. That's no good. So the manager understand that. So, I think, he give that all the foremen, "No such thing as calling salalabit anymore." At the working place.

PL: And that was before the union then, eh?

EC: That's before the union.

PL: And after the union...  

EC: After the union, oh, boy, they really good. No talk. Friendly, laughing, joking. I know, because they tell me the story when they come. "Eh, what today?" "Very good. No more 'bayaw, no more 'manong', no more 'bagoong! They all good. Everybody's good." As long as you work, don't sleep on your job, you don't have to hustle up like it used to be. Maybe, the union, after the luna if you make a big noise, well, they will report that to the management. I didn't work in the field, but that's how they told me. Whenever they come home and come to the store, buy something they tell me the story. "Eh, everything good. Now days. No such thing as yelling behind."
Everybody feel good. (Laughs)

PL: After there was the union, do you recall any changes in the store like hiking up prices?

EC: No, no, no. Same, the price.

PL: Even after the union? Even then?

EC: Yeah, after the union, the price is the same. No cut, no raise. All same. Well, gradually, every year, the price goes up. So, we had to follow.

PL: Oh, I see. Okay. Let's go into the War.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

PL: Okay, Tata, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, where were you?

EC: I was in the store. I was giving gasoline. That was Sunday morning. I was pumping or giving gasoline to my customer, we saw airplane that almost touch the cane field. We were surprised and we was talking, "Gee, how come this airplane so low?" The first time we see an airplane flying low. Then, after three minutes, I guess, or two minutes, we heard machine gun, in the camp-Brodie four. And there not one or two minute, we heard the big explosion, just like one thunder. That was in Wheeler Field. They bomb the airplane and the warehouse but we don't know what is going on. Until after that, when people in the store went home and open their radio. That's the time they find out that it's war. Because some talking Filipino, Japanese, Chinese and all the nationality. And, of course, they listen that in the Filipino. When you come to Filipino they telling in Ilocano. Well, that's the time we find out that war. After so many hours, we heard all the big trucks passing down the road. All the big cannon and all the traffic. We cannot go out so much, because, all the big truck and all the cannon go around by the beach. In fact, every place. All the munitions what they get in Schofield, I think, came out.

PL: Were there any damages to the plantation, like the field, maybe or burned cane?

EC: I didn't recall any damage in the plantation or in the camp.

PL: How about the conditions that existed in the next few weeks in the camp?

EC: After a week everybody notified that they had blackout in the house. You cannot use your light. So, you come home early. You cook early,
so that you cannot use the electric light. But those who has a baby, they have to put a black cloth in the window. And of course, small light, because only that small baby, you know, they get light. So, every night, there's some guard going around here and if they see light, they knock the door and say, "Your light is on." So very, very strict those days. And after a week everybody had to build their bomb shelter. Every house, had to make their bomb shelter. So, we make. When weekend, like that, when the air raid like that, everybody go inside the bomb shelter. (Laughs) Maybe, I don't know, he said, "Enemy coming." And then siren blow, eh. When you hear the siren, everybody go inside the holes. And then there's a siren, too, when it's clear and then everybody come out. After two months, the Army come around telling us that not only them going fight the enemy, but us civilian going fight, too. So, naturally, they teach us how to use the gun and cannon, machine gun and all what not. So, in each camp, like the camp where I was, we have a drill every afternoon. They teach us how to drill.

PL: Was after work?

EC: After work. Everybody drill. Then, afterward, Sundays, like that, then we go by the beach and fire the Springfield gun. We have to learn how to use the gun. Because they said, not only the soldier going fight the enemy, us civilians too. So, they call us Home Guard. We have to fight, too. In case the soldier die, well, we know how to use the gun. We know how to use the machine gun. We know how to use the cannon. All my gang learn how to use the machine gun, the big cannon in Kaena Point? We used to go over there and shoot the cannon. How to put the bullet inside and how to, pull the trigger, and how to look the telescope. They taught us. That's one thing with the Army. So every afternoon, we have to drill. We have to learn to execute marches. So, we all happy. We all happy, because we know how to march and we know how to hold the gun. We enjoy that. We like that. We know how to use the pistol, because they give us gun to use. When practice time, everybody get gun. (Laughs) We have to use the target to aim. You have to aim good. because if you know how to hold, shoot, and you don't know how to aim, it's no sense. They have to shoot the target. Sometime ten one time.

PL: How about those workers who cannot understand English that well?

EC: That's why it's good that some of us, like myself, can interpret. Then I tell them in Ilocano, what the lieutenant tell me. They don't understand, so explain to them. We learn how to march. How to march, execute---about face, right face and all what not. We learn all that. Good fun. We really have good fun, because we learn all that.

PL: Did you help the troops clear out certain area around here in Waialua to build camps like that?

EC: No, because everybody work. Only when during working hours, then they order the plantation to clear the place, then everybody has to go that place. But everybody get paid. Just during working hours.
PL: Oh. Oh! You mean the workers work for the Army during the working hours?

EC: That's right.

PL: And did they get paid for that?

EC: The plantation tell them to go that side and work, see. So they get paid.

PL: Oh, they get the same pay from the plantation?

EC: They get the same plantation pay. So, I think they have a connection between the plantation and the Army. So, if they want that to be clear they could tell to the plantation. Then the plantation will tell to the workers, the lunas, that they had to go the place.

PL: Plenty times. During the War, everybody wanted to go out of the plantation. That's what the reason why plenty went out from the plantation, because they rather work in the defense job. They get more pay than in the plantation. Some came back, because the plantation convinced them to come back in the plantation. Some, they never come back.

PL: How did the martial law affect you?

EC: Martial law didn't affect us.

PL: Did they have any restriction for...

EC: Well, no. Especially us Filipino get no restriction during the martial law. As long as you obey the rule that blackout, it's good. During night, you cannot go around, because there's a guard around. Nobody can go. Well, I remember that anybody in the camp, especially, this pregnant lady, wanted to deliver the baby, you have to notify the guard and in turn, they have a truck take the lady to the hospital. That's one thing good about the Army, because anybody sick, just tell the guard and they will provide the truck. Take 'em to the hospital.

PL: How about gas ration or food?

EC: Well, they ration gasoline and also the liquor. You cannot buy liquor unless you have a permit. They allow you only to buy one bottle, one quart of whiskey a week. Those who drink, well, they had to have permit. Those who don't drink well, (Chuckles) you don't have to bother about permit. Gasoline, they have ration.

PL: How much you get?

EC: Sometimes, you get fifteen gallons a month. We cannot go around so much, because with the ten gallon, my goodness. You go to town only one time (Laughs). So, hardly nobody go to town, because gasoline
ration. Yeah, was about ten gallon a month.

PL: How did you feel about the Japanese people in Hawaii?

EC: That's the one I'm afraid, before, that Filipinos get mad. Especially when they heard news that the Japanese so cruel to the family in the Philippine. That's the one we are afraid, because some of us, they don't care if they die, or what as long as he will kill somebody, too. But say, "No. You are mistaken, no. No, you have to wait first." So I have to convince them don't do anything about the Japanese, because some Japanese are alien as we are alien, too. And they are not involved, especially American citizen. You better don't touch. Even Japanese, don't touch, because you are in big trouble if you do that. Then afterward, they cool off. They don't bother, because it is war, against the Japanese. So, we get nothing to do with Japanese around here. We all friendly. So, just keep on the friendly as the beginning. Don't make a pass on them, because you are here.

PL: So, there's any instances that a fight broke out in the street?

EC: No, no. As usual, friendly, because all the Japanese very friendly, the old folks included. We talk as usual. No hard feeling, because some people that ignorant, they don't know. They said, "Oh God! My goodness, they kill my mother! The kill my brother! So I going kill some of the Japanese, too." Say, "No, no, you don't do that! Because we are here in America! If you do that, you are going to be killed yourself too. They put you in jail. If you kill somebody, they put you in jail your entire life! So don't do that." So we had advise some people that they don't understand, so... as usual, no trouble. As far as I'm concerned.

PL: When the Philippine had their independence, did you folks in the camp around Kawaiola have a celebration?

EC: Yes, during Independence Day, we celebrate. But those days, we celebrate July 4th, so we are celebrating two. See, American July 4th and the Philippine because those days, they proclaim that July 4th was Independence Day in the Philippine. Only lately they change that into June something. The first year, we celebrate two. July 4th, America and July 4th, Independence Day of Philippine. So, just like Rizal Day. We have program and let the people when they attend, get something to eat. We used to do that Rizal Day and same thing with Independence Day. We celebrate.

PL: How about comparing the life of today and the life of before?

EC: Before. Well, there's no comparison at all, now. The life today is so good. Not like before. We get hard time. Now, everybody, now we can own house. Can own car. Everything what you have now. Not like before. We get hard time. Now, everybody, now we can own house. Can own car. Everything what you have now. Not like before. You
could hardly buy even typewriter or anything because small pay. But everything cheap. Whenever you buy something before, it used to be everything cheap. See, not like now. Of course, you get high pay, but everything high. And one more good thing before, we don’t pay income tax. We just pay five dollar a year. That’s all we pay. Compare now. (Laughs) You make more, Uncle Sam will eat you up. Income tax.

PL: Do you think that Waialua and Haleiwa are good places for your children to grow up in?

EC: Since I live here all my life, I think Haleiwa-Waialua is the best for me.

PL: Why is that?

EC: And especially my children. Now they are matured adults, they all scattered mostly in the Mainland. Nobody left, only me and my wife. When they were young, they like so much over here, because near the beach, we have plenty park. They can play. We have ground, we had gymnasium and everything is good. When they grown up, they had to seek a better place to live, and, so, most of my children on the Mainland. In fact, they all in the service, until today.

PL: I would like to go back ask you about your business then, okay? What I would like to know is how did you get started in your business when you had your store?

EC: Well, I had a small capital, and of course, I knew all the people in the camp, and what they want. I used to go around the camp and whatever they need, if I don’t have, I always can get from the wholesaler. That’s how I make business. I don't stock so much in my own store. And I have all the catalog from the wholesaler, radio, icebox, stove and all what not. I carry everything. I show them the catalog and if they want, I can always call up the wholesaler, and they send it by express, a delivery truck. So, if I order today, tomorrow, it come. That’s how I make business. Like watches, any jewelry, I go out in the camp. You want watch, Bulova, Elgin....

PL: What camps that? All the...

EC: All the camps. They make money, so they buy more watches, newer radio, big radio, like that. So I carry everything. Icebox, stove, electric stove, wrench, washer, any kind. But I don’t stock. I don't have show room in my store. I have a small store. But practically, I carry everything what they need. I always can call up to the wholesaler, the next day he deliver direct from the place to the house. That’s how I remain in business. And I have a liquor store. And all the people drinking, especially in the camp. I supply them beer and they come to me, because I have no overhead. Only me and my family run the store. I can make competition. So I sell more than Fujioka used to sell. In fact, Fujioka's bookkeeper is my own
bookkeeper. And he know that I am selling more than them. Because everyday, I go out. When I goes out, deliver and taking order same time. So I make money. The only thing I didn't watch my credit carefully. I don't know. I'm not so good, I think in business. I get soft hearted. I extend too much credit. Until today, still, I never collect some. That's how I came....little bit fall down. Because I extend too much credit, and besides that, my children getting big. They all attended private school. I cannot afford anymore. Because some of our customer that when they have money, they don't come. If don't have money, they come and ask for credit.

PL: When did these people come and ask for credit?

EC: That's in 1948. '48 when I started....from 1948 to 1956. I extend too much credit.

PL: To what people?

EC: Mostly all the nationality. Filipinos, Portuguese, Hawaiian and some, Puerto Rican. I extend too much credit, and my children were getting big. And they all attended private school, so, naturally, I don't have enough money, capital. See, that's one thing. I didn't run down our countrymen, because they buy. They buy credit in my store. When they have money, they go to the other store, pay cash. When they come to me, credit. And yet, they don't pay every month. They paid little by little. So I'm not so good. I get soft hearted. If I'm very strict, maybe, I am something today. Because the first three, four years in the store, I make good money. That's why I'm well known around, because I really make money. As I said, I didn't watch out. Besides that, I was one of the victim. For being greedy, that's what been happen to me. Some Haileiwa businessmen, Japanese, some store. During the stevedore strike. One salesman came to me and ask me, "Cabico, you need rice?" "Yes." Well, I knew that salesman, because he used to work for the wholesaler. And he ask me how many bag of rice. "As much as you can. How much you can get me?" And he said, "I have one boat coming. And that boat will get about ten thousand bag of rice. Ten thousand bag. How many bag you want? You want five thousand?" "Sure." I was thinking if they will deliver the five thousand, in one week, I would be rich. Because even I can sell $35 a bag. Being greedy, that's what been happen to me. I been sunk, alright. When I ordered that five thousand bag of rice, cash. All the money I had, I give him, twenty dollars a bag. So, I was thinking even twenty dollars one bag---no $18.50 a bag. I order five thousand. And with that five thousand, how much? Alright. I was thinking that if they will deliver that rice, and if I sell $35 or $30 a bag, I make money. Five thousand, if price is that, how much I make money! That's what been happen to me. Alright. The first week, 25 bag came from the wholesaler. I used to buy from that wholesaler, so I was thinking I believed him. He gave 25 bag of rice. So, I was glad they give me 25, so naturally, I have to give again to all my customer. Those who
like one bag, they can buy one bag. So, later on, when the rice come, everybody can buy two bags, three bags, whatever you want. So, I don't care. I can sell one day. I just, maybe, go around "Hey, you come. If you get transportation, you come. I give you five bag or three bag, because I have five thousand bag." Where I am going put that five thousand bag, if he come. Naturally, I tell the people that, "Come to the store already and get your five bag." Plenty guys order five bag, three bag you know, what happen? The rice never come. The salesman, haole man never come, never show up. So my money's gone. That's what been happen I went sunk. All what I have, all my money gone. Even I was planning to build another two houses behind my store with that money. Since I was thinking that I can make more money, that money was reserved to make another two houses. Because I intend to build another two houses behind. Yeah, I was thinking to build another two houses. And beside that, I extend too much credit. People don't pay me regularly, so, naturally, I cannot keep up anymore.

PL: When you had your store, did you employ anybody?

EC: No. Only me and my family. And this, I never report this to the authority, because even you report, what they can do? Some in Waialua, Haleiwa, too, but, me, the biggest. Even they report, they cannot, because the men already is gone. They cannot find them, the men. I know the wholesaler. He said he's working to that wholesaler, but when I went to the Office they said they don't know this man. See, he just pretended that he's working for the company. And that company is wholesaler supplying the rice. That's why I believe him. For being greedy, that's what been happened to me. Otherwise, I no get sunk. If that never happened to me, today, I'm something today. Because I make so much money in my store. Because I don't have any overhead. I just pay the electricity. The building's mine. Everything is mine. I make money.

PL: Now, is that I want to ask you if you remember any crime around the camps, like that? Did any crime...

EC: I don't remember any crime. Well, sometime, argue. It's natural, but no crime. I didn't remember. No, there's no crime. The only thing I know a crime in the... camp, one Filipino, he stab one girl. Japanese girl. Because those days, this Japanese girl, they like Filipino, especially looking handsome boy. So it happened that my friend, he get girlfriend that they wanted to get married. He is a good friend of mine, in fact, 'as my neighbor. And I know, because I'm the one writing for them. And he promise to get married. The girl side, the parents', they no like the Filipino. You know what he did? It happen that he been stab the girl and he kill himself, too. That's all I remember.

PL: Did the girl die?

EC: The girl died. When the girl died and he know that's died, he kill
himself, too. That's the time all those Japanese girl, they get Filipino friend, they broke up. They scared the Filipino. That's why they call Filipino "Poke knife." That's why they scared the Filipino. (Laughs) 'As what happen. That's all I remember in the camp, happen in the camp. As far as I know. I don't recall any crime or anything. Well, sometime, people, they argue, but no such thing as stabbing one another, you know.

PL: When you came here....you remember any church activities?

EC: Most Filipinos come to Hawaii, Catholic. Some of us, Sunday, we go church. Some, they forget about church, already. They don't go to the church anymore. But like me, when I came to Hawaii, my parents advise me that whenever Sunday, you see a church, you go. So, I attend every Sunday morning in the Catholic church. And, most all... Filipino that Catholic, they go church. But after that, they forget about church already. They had the hobby already, you know. Because our custom that in Philippine they raise chicken, their own chicken and they go cockfight. (Laughs) That's what they used to do all day, every Sunday. So more time to go church anymore. But myself, I always go church. Unless I am sick, I don't attend church. There's another church that they used to come in the camp, the Protestant church. The Reverend used to go out in the camp and make service under the big tree. But those real Catholic, well, Sunday, they go to the church. But like me, even I am the Catholic, but still, I go attend. Because they come to me. They say, "Eh, Tata Cabico, manong, ayabam bassit. Call those Filipino. "We all stay under the tree." So, I am Catholic, but still....because it teach as good, eh. If it's good, you see. Nothing but God, but, so...everybody, naturally, every Sundays, after the Catholic church service they come in the afternoon. And then, I call everybody under the tree. So, the Reverend give a service under the tree. (Laughs) We like that, you know.

PL: Okay, Tata, now, from here, can we go into the part when you was talking about, going to town, to dances, like that, go around town.

EC: When we were new in the camp, hardly don't know nothing about Honolulu. But, there is Japanese man that he's really good to the Filipino. He has three cars. So, he come to me, "Cabico, you tell your countrymen that if they wanted to go Honolulu, I have three cars available."

And he said, "I can take them around if they want to go Honolulu." Naturally, those Filipinos and even myself wanted to go Honolulu, because I didn't see Honolulu. Go, come back, the charge only 50¢. Mostly every Saturday night, oh, sometime, two time, three load, three cars. So, the Japanese man taught us to go to the hotel.

PL: What place, this?

EC: That's in Nuuanu. Now, no more that building. They call Nuuanu and Hotel. And someplace in Aala Park. There are two kind. If you go to the "white meat", they charge....five dollars, one pound. If you
go to the "mix", you can buy even two dollar, one pound. But since they go to the ordinary one, or "mix", some get sick. So, they go to the doctor and he advise them don't go that place anymore. So, everybody go to the white meat in the hotel. Five dollar. So, I learn all those places and I learn already how to go in town, I bought my own car.

PL: What year was that, when you bought your car?

EC: That was, I think, 1939. I bought one car. That, whenever I take passenger and take to the place, hotel, they give me one dollar each.

PL: Who gave you one dollar?

EC: The one who taking charge the house. I bring five men, they give me five dollar. So, I make money, I can afford to pay my monthly payment on my car. Every Sunday, sometime I go Saturday night, Sunday night. Sometime during the day, two time, two trip, because I say, "Eh, you like meat? White meat?" They say, "Sure! Why not?" Although I charge them only 50¢, but in Honolulu, they give me one dollar. I charge them only 50¢ just to go and come back. But in Honolulu, they give me one dollar each. I make more money (Laughs) I don't care, eh. Even if they don't pay me, the hotel, they pay me. So, naturally, I save my money. I can afford to pay my car payment every month, because how much I think I make? Saturday and Sunday, like that. Sometime even week days. Especially after payday, we go Honolulu. But, we have to go to the white meat, five dollar. You know what I mean? (Laughs) You see.

PL: Do you recall if they had these girls go into the camps?

EC: After that, these girl found out... I think, somebody--I don't know, maybe Filipino--invite them to come in the camp. So, they contact me in the store, because that's the only one telephone. They contact me in the store. "Will you tell those people that we are coming?" And I said, "Alright. What day?" So they ask me what day the payday. I said, "Oh, certain day, I told them payday." "So, we come that night." I say, "Okay." Then, they give me 50¢, each, for soliciting their customers. So, I have to notify all in the camp that somebody coming. They come and charge $2.50, one pound. Only $2.50, is cheap.

PL: Is it white?

EC: No, all mix. No more white meat. (Laughs) If $2.50, they make two dollar, because they give me 50¢. I work, too, I notify the people, "Eh, they coming." Then, they give me 50¢. Then, after that, I read in the newspaper that it's not allowed to do that. Be in trouble if you get caught. I quit, because I don't want to be in trouble. It's up to them, see. Whenever they call me up, "Eh, I'm not anymore. I don't want to get involved. It's against the law." (Laughter) Before, I don't know. But when I read the newspaper, it's against the law, I entirely quit, especially, since I'm store manager.
Plantation find out that I'm soliciting people, I'm in trouble. (Laughs) So, I told in the camp, "From now, on I don't anymore soliciting you folks. So it's up to you guys now. If you get caught, that's too bad." So, that's what they been doing all the time until today. That's what been doing. Even now, you get white meat come around, but I'm not soliciting anymore, because I don't want to be involved. (Laughs) If you get caught, you be in trouble. So, like before, well, we don't know about the law. Even in Honolulu, is open. And they do it before. No more policeman or anybody come around. Maybe... they are not so strict before. Although, maybe, that's already against the law, but not so strict.

PL: Tata, you said that you bought a new car?

EC: Is a new car. At first, I bought a Model T Ford. Only in the camp from Kawaiola to Haleiwa, go back and forth all day. We go to the movie, and all my friends, no charge them nothing. But sometime, they help me buy gasoline. And then, when I know how to run and then I get my license then I bought new car, Chevy. I pay only $15 a month. That's all I pay, when I get good car, Chevy, I can go to town. I can make money, so I don't have to worry about the payment.

PL: How about the other people go from the camp down to Haleiwa?

EC: Before, no more car, everybody have walk. Mind you, almost 5 miles. 6 miles, I think, from Kawaiola to Haleiwa in the camp. There's a Model T Ford taxi, before. He charge them ten, fifteen cents. Go back and forth. But cannot accommodate so many people to the movies. So, they rather walk. When I get my Model T Ford car, all my friend come running to me, but they don't pay nothing. They just help me sometime buy gasoline. Gasoline so cheap those days.

PL: How about the other people?

EC: The Filipinos sometime, five of them, they make company to buy car. Most of our countrymen are broke, because they buy new car. And if one will quit and they cannot carry the payment the garage will take back the car. That's why they loss all their money. They agree at first, and later on they have argument that one guy go, everybody not go. So one go, everybody have to go. That's why they have misunderstanding, because if one guy cannot go, they all cannot go. That's what happened with the River Camp. They pay so much down payment on the car and afterwards if only one guy cannot carry the payment, eh... because those days is small pay, cannot carry. If five guys, well, easy, they pay, maybe, four or five dollar each, car pool. Some buy new car, every so many month, they cannot pay. So, they lose the money again. Because, if you buy something in a garage, you miss one payment, they take back. That's why plenty Filipinos broke their money by buying new car. After a while, they buy a new car and they change another new one, they have to pay. So that's why they cannot save money that way. In fact, they lose money. Those who knows how to save like me, well, we save money. But those who are only wanted
to go around, those are people that no more money. (Laughs)

PL: Oh, I see. Okay. I think that's all, Tata.

END OF INTERVIEW
NOTES FROM UNRECORDED INTERVIEW

with

Emigdio Cabico (EC)

July 27, 1976

BY: Pablo Lazo (PL)

(The following are notes from a telephone conversation.)

PL: How many stores altogether and where were they located?

EC: 1. Waialua Store----main store (near old bank)
2. Kawailoa----he worked at this store
3. Halemano store
4. Pump 3 (Opaeula store)
5. Puuiki Store

PL: Who decided amount of credit?

EC: Accountant office in plantation main store. Bookkeeper see to it that people can only have one dollar a day. But the order that workers can only have this amount is from the plantation manager, and the general manager of the plantation stores gives a report to the manager of the plantation. If one store gives out too much credit, then, the manager of that store will get scolding.

PL: Will you please tell me about the merchandise at the store? What kinds of things the store used to carry?

EC: Carry almost burned huh. Everything. You saw what they had at the store before burned huh. Well, it's the same things.

PL: Can you tell about the changes over the years?

EC: No major changes. Except when get new things. Like, maybe new icebox, new kinds of clothes. Well, we have to add up.

PL: When you had your own store, where did you get your merchandise and how was it delivered?

EC: From the wholesaler in town. Make order to wholesaler. They come around once a week. They deliver it free. But if you run out of stock and you want it right away, you can make order to the Express in Haleiwa.
PL: You mean they pick up the order for you?
EC: Yes. Just call the wholesaler and the Express will pick it up.

PL: Who were the owners of this Express at Haleiwa?
EC: Owned by Yoshida and also Kawashima, Express.

PL: How much you have to pay?
EC: Well, you have to pay for the freight. If you order rice, for example, maybe they charge you 25¢ a bag and it all depends on what kind you order.

PL: Who were these wholesalers that you used to order your merchandise from?
EC: T.H. Davies, American Factor and different Japanese businessmen, Shimaya Shoten, Utani Wholesaler, and some others.

PL: Why did you become a citizen?
EC: Because I wanted to apply as postmaster. I was acting as postmaster at Kawaiola. When people in the camp like send letters like that, they give me and I mail it and Parcel Post or money order. If pau hana, people come to the store and ask me for their letters. But before, they opened the post office at Kawaiola, I quit my job at the store. So, the one who took my place became the postmaster.

PL: What year did you get your citizenship? (Naturalized)
EC: 1948.

END