

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Liberato C. Viduya, Jr.

Liberato C. Viduya, Jr., second of four children, was born in 1937, in Lānaʻi City, Lānaʻi.

His father, Liberato Viduya, Sr., who emigrated from the Philippines, was employed by Hawaiian Pineapple Company. Starting as a field laborer, he rose up the ranks to *luna*. His mother, Loreta Viduya, a Filipino immigrant raised and educated on Maui, held various jobs, including that of court interpreter.

The Viduyas actively participated in community, school, and church-related activities.

Liberato C. Viduya, Jr., grew up in the Stable Camp area of Lānaʻi City. He attended Lānaʻi High and Elementary School. As a high school senior in 1955, he was awarded first place in public speaking at the National Future Farmers of America Conference in Kansas City, Missouri.

He earned BA and MEd degrees from the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa.

During a forty-five-year career with the Hawaiʻi State Department of Education, he held various positions: teacher, counselor, and principal; assistant superintendent for the Office of Instructional Services; and superintendent for Central and Leeward Districts on Oʻahu.

He and wife, Loretta, have one daughter and three grandchildren.

The Viduyas reside in Pearl City, Oʻahu.

Tape Nos. 56-1-1-10, 56-2-1-10, and 56-3-1-10

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Liberato C. Viduya, Jr. (LV)

Pearl City, O‘ahu

February 9, 2010

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN) and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

WN: This is an interview with Liberato “Libby” Viduya on February 9, 2010. Interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto. And we’re at his home in Pearl City, O‘ahu.

Good morning.

LV: Good morning.

WN: First question I want to ask you is when and where you were born?

LV: I was born at home in Lāna‘i City, 1937.

WN: And what were your parents doing in Lāna‘i City?

LV: My dad [Liberato Viduya, Sr.] was a field worker and he eventually rose in the ranks and my mother [Loreta Viduya] was a housewife who eventually got employed in different occupations. But I was born and raised up through high school in Lāna‘i.

WN: So tell me about your father. What’s his background and how he got to Lāna‘i.

LV: My dad came as a bachelor from the Philippines in the early 1930s. He worked on Maui on a sugarcane [plantation] and wed my mother in Maui. They decided to move to Lāna‘i, where they stayed up to when they were retired. So my dad was a field worker for nearly forty years for the plantation.

WN: And what part of the Philippines is he from?

LV: He was from the San Fernando La Union in the major island of Luzon.

WN: Was that a common leaving point for Filipinos, that town, that district?

LV: Well, the Ilocos area was a group that moved and sought places where they could improve themselves. So it wasn’t uncommon for them to venture to Hawai‘i after several pioneering Filipinos came to the [Hawaiian] islands. The quest for a better life was in them. So it was not uncommon that they would move to America and to Hawai‘i to work in the fields. And they’re agrarian people, so plantation work was not uncommon to them.

- WN: And what did he tell you about his life in the Philippines before coming to Hawai'i?
- LV: Well, he was also a soldier in the Philippine army. He was schooled to some degree but not completely, but felt that he had a calling for a better life. So he was adventurous and came alone to Hawai'i as a bachelor where he met my mother.
- WN: And do you know anything about his parents?
- LV: No, not much except that they lived a humble life. They were a close family. He had sisters and brothers, who have all since passed. But I don't know that much about their livelihood.
- WN: So when your father came over here, do you know what year that was?
- LV: It was about 1931 when he arrived.
- WN: And you said that he arrived in Maui. What part of Maui?
- LV: Lahaina. Worked in the Lahaina area in the sugar cane plantations.
- WN: So this is Pioneer Mill [Company]?
- LV: Pioneer Mill [Company] in Lahaina. The entire area was sugarcane on Maui where he started his work.
- WN: And you said he met your mother in Lahaina?
- LV: My mother was born in the Philippines and was raised in Hawai'i. As a young child, she was raised in Hawai'i on Maui and attended high school. She was a graduate of Lahainaluna High School, which in those days was rather uncommon that women would complete high school on a plantation. But she was a very ambitious lady, very aggressive. My dad met her there.
- MK: At about what age did your mom come to Hawai'i?
- LV: At about three or four when she came to the islands.
- WN: And did she ever tell you about her family background? What her parents did?
- LV: Well, we knew much of the family because since she grew up in Hawai'i, her father was a field worker. But he was also an entrepreneur in that he tried the fishing industry, tried fishing, but when the depression came, they all had to change whatever they were doing and eventually ended up working as field workers on Maui. Her parents also moved to Lāna'i with my parents.
- WN: And do you know when her parents came to Hawai'i?
- LV: They must have come in the late—let's see, maybe 1920s.
- WN: You said that your mom was about three years old.
- LV: Yes. She was born in 1915, so prior to 1920 or thereabouts. So they experienced the depression in 1932.
- WN: You said that your mom was the first Filipina graduate from Lahainaluna?

LV: We were told she was the first. Probably the class of 1932 or so, in Lahainaluna.

WN: Do you know how they met?

LV: Well, my dad was an aggressive suitor.

(Laughter)

LV: But it was interesting. They had movie-like stories how there were so many bachelors, field workers, so few women of the same ethnicity. My mother was rather popular. She was socially very active in community affairs. Of course, she had lots of suitors. My dad won out in the end. But they had to be aggressive and bold. And she ended up with him.

WN: How many years apart were they?

LV: Six years apart. They stayed married for a long time. My dad died at ninety-four and my mother died a day before her eightieth birthday, so they had a long marriage.

WN: Do you know what the circumstances were in coming to Lāna‘i?

LV: Well, they felt that there may be a better life than the sugarcane life that they lived. The camp life was not necessarily what they wanted. So when they came to the island of Lāna‘i, what was interesting was that it was a planned community. The homes were all nice homes. Nicely built, in rows, in camps. But they weren't shabby homes. They were nice individual homes and they were able to have a nice dwelling, better than the sugar plantation homes at that time. So the camps were well organized, the homes were well built, and [Lāna‘i] seemed to have offered a better quality of life for them. As it ended up, it was a one community that had a lot of harmony in it. A good part of the population, of course, was Filipinos. Filipinos and Japanese were the dominant ethnic groups at that time. I think there was lot of harmony in the community that made it very interesting.

WN: Did he ever compare sugar work in Lahaina to pineapple work in Lāna‘i? Did he ever talk to you about that?

LV: Well, they felt that the pineapple work was difficult work in the sun, but they didn't have to cut the canes and haul the. . . . See, they had the *hāpai kō*, as they called them, cutting the cane in those days before technology came about. They had to haul them down with burros to dropping-off points. It was hard work to cut the cane, clear the cane, carry the cane on the burro, driving them down, cleaning the flumes. It appeared to be very labor-intensive that it appeared to be harder work than pineapple. But this was not realized until they lived through the pineapple industry. So they went with an adventure, not fully knowing what was in store for them. But in the end, it proved to be a wise move.

WN: And I was wondering, too, your father and mother were already married when they came to Lāna‘i, right?

LV: Yes.

WN: Was that common at that time for a couple to move from sugar to Lāna‘i?

LV: I think it was common in the sense that they all were looking for a better quality of life. They felt that the adventure and the lure of a new place begged them to move on. So it was not uncommon to have families immigrate to another island. That happened for years. People from this plantation to the next plantation. It was not uncommon. Especially for the people who had the adversity in their lives where the living conditions were not as pleasant. Remember in those days, everything was community-bound. Your bathhouses were community, your wash houses were community. The quality of life was somewhat different. Lāna‘i offered a different adventure. Individual homes that people could live in. Rent was free at that time because part of the perquisites of plantation life was free rent at that time. This was prior to purchasing homes and all of that. So the lure was there.

WN: Would you say that moving to Lāna‘i, if you had a family or you were a couple, that’s an advantage? There must have been bachelor quarters, right, on Lāna‘i?

LV: There were bachelor quarters, but it wasn’t until 1946 when the major influx of immigrant workers were imported into the islands where you have a massive amount of bachelors. But the early pioneers that came to work in Hawai‘i did not bring their families, either. They always had the dream that they would come from the homeland to America to make their money, send money back home to the family, and eventually return to the Philippines. So it was not uncommon that they would live in bachelor quarters. Many of them did return, but many also remained and they raised their families. So you had lots of bachelors in plantation towns, sugarcane as well as pineapple.

WN: As parents, how were they as parents to you?

LV: My parents were ambitious, you know. They felt that we needed a better life, so in their minds, going to school and education was a must. They felt that we should enjoy a better life. My mother was influenced a lot also by Japanese parents, of which the value of Japanese culture, one was education. She could see by the generations how they pushed their kids to attend private schools, to attend schools. So the Japanese were a strong influence on her thinking and so she abided by those ideas. So we were fortunate in that she was aggressive about education.

WN: Okay. We’ll get into that shortly, but I wanted to ask you, you were born in 1937, how many brothers and sisters did you have?

LV: I have an older sister and a younger sister and a younger brother. So I’m the second of four.

WN: But oldest boy, yeah?.

LV: Uh-huh [yes].

WN: And what part of Lāna‘i City did you live?

LV: You know, Lāna‘i City is one city, so.

(Laughter)

WN: No more districts?

LV: There weren’t any districts. But we lived in an area, they called it the Stable Camp, but it was only because that’s where mules were housed for a while. But they had Upper Camp and Lower

Camp and all of that. But we lived in an area that had mixed ethnic groups. It was called the Stable Camp area.

WN: By mixed ethnic groups, mostly Filipinos and Japanese?

LV: That's correct, yes. Those were the dominant ethnic groups at that time. There were some Koreans on the island, too, but mostly Japanese and Filipinos.

MK: You know, that area was known as Stable Camp. By the time your family established themselves over there, were stables still in use?

LV: Yes, they still had foremen on horses. They watched the workers. They still had horses for a short while during my childhood. But eventually, that went away in the early [19]40s. They started doing away with all of that. New technology came into being. New trucks, new equipment, new style of harvesting, and all of that changed. Cars were more dominant. But they did have at that time, mules and horses.

MK: You know, from your memory, if you could describe for us what your family house was like, that would be really good. What did your family house look like?

LV: They were interesting, well-developed. Little cottages but well developed. They had a two-bedroom house. It had a kitchen of its own large enough so the family could eat in the kitchen. It had a ten-by-ten, maybe, living room, two bedrooms. What was interesting, we lived during the period of outhouses, so there were outhouses. But eventually, in the late [19]40s, they started to bring bathrooms connected to homes. They called them "lean-tos" because they were built connected to the main house. They started doing that throughout the city. So that's when flush toilets came into being in the [19]40s. Each home had its own yard. You know, people all had their own home gardens.

So it was interesting because when you think about it, people didn't have small families. Four, five, six, eight, ten children in one household. So it was not uncommon that the living room also became part of the bedroom. You had eight or ten people in the home, so it was not uncommon. As the boys became older, they went into bachelor quarters away from the house. But they'd come home, have their meals, and live in the bachelor quarter. It was not uncommon for the large families to do that. But you know, you didn't feel that you were poor. There were no poor sections of the city because everybody had the same type of home, everybody was in the same industry. You only felt that you were impoverished when you came to the city maybe, like Honolulu. But you never felt that you were disadvantaged by living in a plantation town.

WN: So the working areas where the working people lived like Stable Camp and other camps, you were saying they were mostly all pretty much the same . . .

LV: Yes.

WN: . . . in terms of . . .

LV: Construction . . .

WN: . . . the size of the homes, quality of the homes, and so forth.

LV: There were some modifications, but not really major ones.

- WN: So the only major difference was [between] the working people and the managers?
- LV: Yes, and there were also lots of bachelor quarters. And for bachelors, they also had boardinghouses. They called them boardinghouses where they'd feed the men before work, after work. They'd bring their lunch pails there. They'd fill the lunch pails, they'd go to work. So they had boardinghouses where maybe fifty bachelors could go and have their dinner at a boardinghouse away from—near the residence, but off on the side. So lots of bachelors also went to boardinghouses.
- WN: Were these boardinghouses and bachelor quarters in one area of one section of Lānaʻi City?
- LV: It was throughout the city. Each section of the city had its own boardinghouse. So the people maybe half a mile away, they would have their own. So it was pretty close, adjacent to where they lived. So at that time, people took advantage of these boardinghouses, which was actually helpful. But eventually, as families came, they started to have their own kitchens and started to cook. But boardinghouses were very popular in the early days.
- WN: And who ran these boardinghouses?
- LV: That was the plantation boardinghouses, so the cooks were workers of the plantation. So go there four thirty, five o'clock, get the breakfast ready for the men. Get the lunch pails ready so the men would go there, eat, pick up the lunch pails, go to work. In the evening, they would go there again for dinner because they took the lunch pails for lunch. So breakfast and dinner were served to the people.
- WN: Now did the men pay for these meals?
- LV: It was deducted from their pay as to how much that would be, so.
- WN: And did Stable Camp have such boardinghouses and bachelor quarters?
- LV: We had one of the larger bachelor quarters. There was a quadrangle of maybe twenty-five bachelor quarters, plus they had two boardinghouses in the area.
- MK: You know, you've talked about bachelor quarters and boardinghouses. What's the difference between the two?
- LV: The boardinghouses were the meal kitchen. The boardinghouse, I didn't mean it as a place to stay, but it was more of a kitchen.
- WN: Mess hall?
- LV: Mess hall. Yeah, a mess hall. The boardinghouses were referred to as a mess hall. The bachelor quarters were living quarters.
- WN: So they would walk over from their quarters to this boarding house to have their meals.
- LV: It's maybe one or two blocks away.
- WN: And how many people would these boardinghouses hold?
- LV: They could feed fifty, sixty people at one time.

- MK: And the people who stayed in these bachelor quarters, were they mostly newly arrived immigrants or second-generation kids?
- LV: They were mostly immigrants that came in. The second-generation kids stayed at home already, so they had their families and they lived in those cottages. But it was mostly immigrants. In a sense, they would be like the first generation because they're the first to arrive generally. It was interesting because these were young bachelors kind of in the prime of their social life, leaving the homeland to come to a land for adventure and money. There weren't that many women in their social lives, so it was quite a sacrifice in a lot of ways to be a young bachelor in a plantation town.
- WN: So what was it like as a kid growing up amongst this bachelor society on Lānaʻi?
- LV: Because there's harmony in the community, it was not troublesome. The behavior of young men are like all young men, sometimes rambunctious and live. But there were enough families that balanced, so there was no animosity. Filipino bachelors who came in are very familial in their style. So they longed to belong to a family. So it was not uncommon that as a child was born, upon christening, they would have twenty godfathers to one child. To some extent, it showed that they liked the familial aspect, they liked to belong to a family. They also contributed to that child's growth. So they were very family bound as a culture. They liked the idea of belonging. In fact, some bachelors also started to board or have their food at different family houses. They would pay the family to eat at their homes.
- WN: Did your mom do that?
- LV: We didn't do that. She had enough kids to deal with. (WN laughs.)
- MK: You know, in your case, did you have godfathers among the bachelor population?
- LV: Yeah, I was of an earlier—before the immigrants all came. But I had some, yes. I was born before the large influx, but I did have, yes. I had my share.
- WN: And what did you father do? You lived in Stable Camp, but did he have anything to do with the stables?
- LV: No, my dad was a field worker and he rose through the ranks of a field worker as he went from level to another to eventually become a job foreman on the plantation. They referred to them as *lunas* . . .
- WN: So was it common for a Filipino to become a *luna* at that time?
- LV: It was common, but that had to be grown in the culture. Because prior to that, if you read Hawaiian history, you had to be somewhat like a white. So Portuguese were common supervisors in the plantation. It was not common to have Orientals or Filipinos become. But eventually as education took place and people proved themselves on the plantation, it started to integrate Asians into the foreman aspect.
- WN: You mentioned Portuguese. Were there Portuguese on Lānaʻi?
- LV: Yes, we had Portuguese.

- WN: And did the Portuguese and the Hawaiians live integrated amongst the camps . . .
- LV: Lāna‘i was somewhat very integrated because we lived in one community, as I mentioned harmony. There weren’t groups that were sectioned off that they would not get along with one another. There was a melding of a number of different cultures in the community: Portuguese, Hawaiian, Filipino, Japanese. Even though we did have organizational activities that said Filipino group or Japanese group. Nonetheless, they competed, they played. There was harmony in the community. That was one of the beauties of being on Lāna‘i. You felt comfortable and there was no animosity from one ethnic group to another.
- WN: You read about sugar plantation history and how the planters deliberately segregated all the ethnic groups. You had Japanese camp, Filipino camp, Portuguese camp, and so forth. So what you’re saying is Lāna‘i was different? They actually planned it so the different ethnic groups were together from early on?
- LV: They may have had concentrations of more Japanese here and Filipinos here, but they were more integrated. They weren’t exclusive. My Filipino family, we lived among Japanese. The town was more established already when I was born. So the integration and the living together was more common there. It was not segregated by cultures. Even though you may have a cluster of different people who loved to live close to each other, it wasn’t segregated at all. Except for the supervisory group and the plantation group. There was a dichotomy in the community about whether you were in the supervisory class or the working class.
- WN: And where did the supervisors live?
- LV: They lived, interestingly, they lived on the hill overlooking the city. The homes were bigger, wider, greater expanse, but it also prevented plantation people from going up the hill without special permission. It was nice. At that time, all supervisors were white and they frowned upon integration, fraternization, of the white supervisors to the Asian plantation group. It took a while before it was okay. In the early [19]40s, it was still a matter of segregation of white supervisors. Most of the top supervisors were imported to the islands. They were well educated, they were smart. But it took a while for the Asians to reach a level of high supervisory positions.
- MK: You know, when you talk about the supervisory positions, what were they? Like you have the plantation manager. Who else were included in that supervisory . . .
- LV: There was a hierarchy. The plantation manager was the boss. And then he had like assistant superintendents below him who would be in charge of large operations. There was another tier who were maybe field-oriented. So you have the higher echelon of the manager, assistant superintendents group, and then you had another field-oriented group, and then you came to the working class. It took a while before the Asian group could move, which they eventually did, though. They never became plantation managers, but they reached a high level of superintendents.
- MK: You mentioned that as workers or children of workers, you were not allowed to go up to the hill. Were you actually—was that like a rule that you folks were prohibited from going into that area of Lāna‘i?
- LV: They had camp bosses, we called them. They used the term “camp bosses.” They’re more security. They’ll roam, they’ll drive through the place, and they’ll definitely not have you go up on the hill. You could not go to the hill for any purpose at all. It was truly segregated from the

group. But eventually, in the late [19]40s, it changed. People could integrate, they could go there. Or maybe mid-[19]40s. As World War II came about, things changed a lot. But prior to that, it was not possible.

WN: You mentioned these camp bosses. Now were they like substitutes for police? Were there policemen also?

LV: They had a large force. They had three policemen, three or four on the island.

(Laughter)

WN: And so these camp bosses, were they employed?

LV: They were employees of the plantation, yes.

WN: What, did they have a uniform on or anything?

LV: No, but they also did a number of different chores. One, keeping them away from the hill, that was one. They wanted to see order, also. And if you didn't work, they'd come and knock on your door and say, "Why aren't you working today?" They wanted to be sure that the laborers would attend work. So they kept a close tab so people would not slump off their jobs.

WN: And these camp bosses, what ethnicities were they?

LV: They were mixed.

WN: Okay, but they weren't white. They were . . .

LV: They were Asians, yeah.

WN: Okay. And did the camp bosses actually live in the camps that they were bosses of?

LV: Yes. They did.

WN: Can you name some of the camp bosses you remember?

LV: I remember one, Basilio (chuckles) Pestrana. He was an old man. He would wear long boots. He dressed well. He's an older—but they were respected. The people there were not rambunctious and neither were they disrespectful of authority. See, in as much as these people were security to a large extent, they were also a link to the plantation. If you want to live on a plantation and be a part of the plantation, you don't want to violate plantation policies or rules. So they knew that these people had the power to report them, so they had the respect of the people. So they maintained order.

WN: When you say "plantation rules and regulations", what were some of the rules? What were some of the things that you could not do while living on the plantation?

LV: Well, things like, the city was well maintained. So, you could not litter throughout. Technically, they allowed you to go in the fields to get pineapples. We used to take them out. It was okay in the early days until people became abusive; they allowed you to go into the fields. As long as you did not destroy company property, you had a lot of freedom to move. But you had to honor work times: when to report to work, when not to work. Working on the plantation, we were governed

by the whistle. You've heard of that, haven't you? In the morning there was a warning whistle to get up, another whistle to say, "Report to work," another whistle at lunch, a whistle when work was over, a whistle at curfew so that the kids would be off the street. So those were things that the plantation also encouraged. Because they were a strong part of the island, the voice of the plantation had a lot to do with how the community was run or if it was not functional or if there was a problem because they wanted to maintain harmony. So whenever the supervisors were involved in community affairs, they were respected because people felt they were in the interests and the welfare of the community. So they were honored.

WN: How were the camp bosses selected?

LV: That's another appointed supervisory position. So the plantation said, "He's responsible. He'll be respected. He'll be okay in the job."

WN: So it was the plantation, it wasn't the community choosing the camp boss?

LV: No, it was a plantation position. They would appoint people whom they felt would be responsible workers.

MK: You know, I was curious, since there were rules and regulations on certain behaviors, what would be the sanctions if a rule or regulation was sort of violated? What would happen?

LV: There'd be several sanctions. One is, they could put them in jail because they would call the police. Drunkenness, disorderly conduct, or any violent—they would be jailed. We had a jailhouse there. Or they could be suspended from work, which could also be very difficult because of the livelihood that they needed. So the plantation had a strong influence in community behavior.

WN: What about you guys as kids growing up on Lāna'i? Well, let me ask you, what did you do to have fun as a kid growing up on Lāna'i?

LV: What was interesting is that we were the pre-television days. So it was important to be creative. In fact, I have some implements I can show you later, things we made and things we played with. You had to be creative because, while there was the radio, which everyone was glued to, there was no television. So we made games, we played games, we created games. We did a lot of that in place of any other thing like a television. And not everyone was keen to listening to the radio. So we were creative in the games and the things we did.

WN: When you say radio, was there like one station on Lāna'i or you caught the Maui stations?

LV: Maui and Honolulu. But at that time, they only had three major stations that probably reached Lāna'i.

WN: So when you say games, what kind of games did you folks play?

LV: Oh, they had things like hide-and-seek. We also created *peewee* games. We created games, toys where we would create and walk on. We were also adventuresome. Hiking was a common thing to do. To go fruit picking, going to the mountains to hike. Fishing, of course, and hunting were common. Going to the beach. And playing games, all of the ball games like baseball, football, basketball. All of those. See, on a plantation, you have lots of bachelors and young men. So athletics was an important part of plantation life. As you look through the history of the

plantations, you'll always find a very vigorous athletic program. As small as the town was, 3,000 people, there may be eight baseball teams. On a small island, baseball, volleyball, basketball, all of those things, were common. Athletics, boxing. Athletics occupied a good part of the people's time in the evenings and weekends. Eventually, in the later days, hunting became a big, big activity. Earlier during the war [World War II], people could not own guns. It was prohibited. So it wasn't until the late [19]40s that people could have ownership of guns. It was not considered to be any kind of a problem, so hunting, to this day, is one of the bigger activities of the island.

WN: And what did you folks hunt?

LV: At that time, they had thousands and thousands of goats on the island. They had deer. Then they imported sheep and guinea hens and other animals to be raised on the island for hunting. There are very few, if any, wild pigs, though, on the island. Mostly goats and deer and fishing. But to this day, it's a big enterprise. The plantation allowed its lands to be used as hunting grounds. In other words, they were not private land that people could not go and hunt on. In fact, at one time, there were so many deer and goats, that at times they had to have eradication hunting. You could hunt in the afternoon or early evening. Because the animals were going to the young pineapple plants, and they'd eat them because they're young and they're wet, and so they're destroying the plants. So they had eradication hunts to get rid. They are too many wild animals eating the crop. And that's uncommon. So they had to have these. That's how much game there was on the island.

MK: And how did you folks use the game that you folks hunted down?

LV: People were very creative, you know, consumption. It became food. People were creative in their cuisine—Japanese, Chinese, Filipino—in how they cured the animal to remove any kind of smell or taste. So barbecuing was very common of goats and of venison, deer. Some people could not stomach goat because, like lamb, it had kind of a gamey smell to it. But people would put it in teriyaki sauce for a long period of time and then eventually do it. So it was common. Some people had a liking for it that they would pay hunters to get goats for them. They were all hunters, but they would pay to buy a goat or a deer.

WN: What did you like better, goat or venison?

LV: I was not a goat person. I've tasted it. I liked venison better. It didn't have the gamey smell.

WN: And which is easier to hunt? Deer or goat?

LV: Deer was harder. One, they're flighty, fast, and there weren't as many deer as they had goats. You look at the hillside, thousands of goats. There are thousands of goats on the island.

WN: Okay. Shall we change tapes?

END OF TAPE NO. 56-1-1-10

TAPE NO. 56-2-1-10

WN: Okay, this is tape number two of session one with Mr. Libby Viduya.

We were talking about hunting. Is it rare for a kid to grow up on Lāna'i and not go hunting or not be a hunter?

LV: No, because there were different activities for people to do. For instance, the Mormon church had a strong following. Many of those kids in the Mormon church, because Sunday was a very sacred day, many of them did not engage in hunting or did not engage in Sunday athletics because church was important. It wasn't uncommon that—not everyone went hunting. Some parents were very enthusiastic about it, there were others who had other things to do. As I said, athletics occupied a good part of community life.

WN: And what kinds of fishing did you folks do?

LV: All kinds. Lāna‘i was a good fishing ground. To this day, it still is a good fishing ground. They had people who trolled fish. Lots of boats. Some go as groups. There are some fishermen who go out on boats alone at night, stay overnight in the ocean. Lots of spear fishing, shoreline fishing, nets. Every phase of fishing was there, except it didn't have the large bill fishing like Kona. But it has plentiful game. It took care of a lot of people's food. During the strikes, fishing was an important part of the menu. Not the menu, but fish provided a lot.

WN: I think we'll talk about the strikes maybe next time, but I wanted to ask you about as a kid, what kind of fishing did you do?

LV: It was more spear fishing and bamboo [pole] fishing, some boat. And Lāna‘i had its share of *'opihi*. We'd have a banquet and we'd have . . .

(Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

. . . we'd have a banquet, we'd have ten gallons of *'opihi*. That's how much. Plentiful.

WN: And you would go all around the island to go fishing?

LV: Fishermen are interesting. They all had their spots, yeah? This was our spot. They don't reveal everything to everyone.

(Laughter)

Throughout the entire island, everybody has a different spot. Some would walk an hour and a half from leaving their cars to get to a fishing ground. It was not uncommon. To this day, fishing is still a very popular . . .

WN: Did you do any freshwater fishing? Is there a reservoir . . .

LV: There was no fresh water.

WN: No reservoirs?

LV: Not natural reservoirs, only manmade rain reservoirs.

WN: And what about streams? Did you folks go for like *'ōpae*, *'o'opu*?

LV: It was rare, rare to have a stream. But on the mountainside, deep in the valley, they might have one or two, but it was not a continuous stream, more seasonal than it was. . . . Lāna‘i had a good watershed, a rich watershed. It was plentiful in water—the trees, the forest, and so forth provided a great watershed for the entire city. So as they built the hotels, as they built other things, Lāna‘i's watershed was very productive.

- WN: You mentioned that you folks used to go hiking and you used to go get fruits. What kind of fruits grew on Lāna‘i?
- LV: It was guava, *liliko* ‘i—passion fruit, plums. Those were the basic ones. They’d go for bamboo shoots. A bamboo forest. You know how people like the *takenoko*. They go for bamboo shoots and some berries. Those were common ones.
- WN: Mountain apple? You had mountain apple?
- LV: Rare. It wasn’t a common fruit on the island. Lychee was not common, either. Lychee or mountain apple were not common fruits.
- WN: Mango?
- LV: Oh, yes. Mango. Common mango. More common mango.
- WN: And how did you guys eat the common mango?
- LV: First, with *shōyu*. (Chuckles) You know, plantation, you didn’t have those shops that prepared them in those days. Everybody created their own concoction of how mango ought to be eaten.
- WN: (Chuckles) And yours was?
- LV: Oh, it was *shōyu* and vinegar. Common mango was plentiful on the island.
- WN: So had more common mango than Haden mango?
- LV: Haden was rare. It was [available], but it was rare. More common mango. We had maybe a couple of trees, but we didn’t have defined orchards of mangoes on the island.
- MK: You mentioned earlier that families had their yards. Did families have gardens?
- LV: Nine out of ten families would have a garden of some sort. But they were edible food. When you talk about a green state, plantation days lived the green state. Common things were *bok choy*, head cabbage, radish, string beans, long beans, onions, green onions, eggplant, tomatoes. It was really a green state. Asians, for one, loved fresh vegetables. So to bring vegetables in large quantity, there was no truck farming on the island. So everything was brought in at that time by barge. So it wasn’t the freshest of vegetables. It would be from Maui, to come to Lāna‘i, go into the markets and distribute it. So people, nine out of ten homes, had some kind of a garden. It was productive. So when you talk about being green, they lived the green.
- WN: And you folks had a garden?
- LV: We all had. Where patches or plots of land were unused, they allowed the residents to use them outside of the yards. Maybe a large plot of land, maybe one or two acres unused, people would go—and this would be Michi’s section and Warren’s section—and they respected that. So people took full advantage of growing their own vegetables.
- MK: How much sharing of vegetables or fruits was there in those days?
- LV: You know, plantation life is a sharing life. I say that because if you had lots of a product, produce, you would share it with your neighbors. You would give it to them. You have lots of

fish. One would have one kind of fruit today or fish, and another would have another type. It was a very sharing community. That's where, I think, we all learned about *omiyage*. The plate is never empty, especially in Japanese culture. You give them something today, you give them the dish, when they return the dish, there's a canned good or something that goes back with the dish. The reciprocal idea is common in the islands, so they reciprocated, if not by produce, by fish, it may be by service. Sometimes people could not produce or get, but I'm going to help them because they're building something at the house. I'm going to help them, and they would share. So, it was, when you think about it, a very sharing community, a very sharing culture. Even during the festivities. For instance, Japanese celebrate New Year's Day in a large way. Filipinos and others share Christmas in a large way. So it's not uncommon at Christmas, you would distribute and share your goods with your neighbors. At New Year's, the Japanese families would share all of the *mochi*, and that was common in the island.

WN: You mentioned Christmas. Talk about Christmas. How did you folks celebrate Christmas?

LV: Filipino and Spanish culture celebrated Christmas. It was a very festive period, a very religious period, as well. In the early days, they would have serenaders at night going from home to home to serenade Christmas songs. You would call them in the house, give them some goods, maybe a few dollars, and they'd be on their way to the next group to entertain. And another group would come to your house to entertain. It was common at that time. So it was very festive.

Filipinos did a lot of partying at Christmas. That was a major period of celebration.

WN: And what kind of food did you folks have?

LV: Pork is common to Filipinos. Pork, in many different ways. Chicken, it would be in many different ways. Fish and vegetables. Those were common kinds of food.

WN: And besides Christmas, what other holidays did Filipinos celebrate?

LV: There was a major one that became almost a national holiday. Rizal Day. Rizal Day is at the end of December. The people were so devoted to his martyrdom that they would stay home from work on that day. It was not a holiday, but it was not uncommon that they would stay home from work. They would have parades, food, celebrations. Almost like the Fourth of July celebration because Jose Rizal was probably the most esteemed, respected Filipino martyr for what he did and wrote that they have Rizal Day to this day. That was the biggest Filipino celebration. And of course, the Fourth of July was for them emancipation day for the Filipinos. So Fourth of July was also celebrated. But Rizal Day was probably the largest Filipino day.

WN: And that was just around Christmastime, too.

LV: About the end of the month [December 30].

WN: So it must have been a long celebration for you folks. (Chuckles)

LV: Yes, it was. They made parades, they made floats. They did all kinds of things to celebrate.

MK: How did the plantation management feel about Rizal Day, people taking off from work like a holiday?

- LV: They respected that. They respected. No work, no pay, of course. But I don't recall them being adverse to that. It was not a holiday. They made it into a holiday. But the plantation respected that.
- MK: How about the celebration of, say, All Hallow's Eve or the celebration of saints' days within the Filipino community?
- LV: It was more—that was more of a religious matter. It did not have any extraneous kind of activity. It was mostly, All Saints' Day, they would go to church, they would pray. They might visit the graves and all of that, but it was not celebrated as other things were. More religious.
- MK: I was curious, within the Filipino community on Lāna'i, what were like the dominant religious groups? More Protestant, more Catholic, or. . . .
- LV: Mostly Catholics. Most of them came as Catholics and some developed new churches. But because of Spanish rule of 300 years in the Philippines, it was predominantly Catholic. From there, people created other religions.
- WN: Did you want to get some water?
- LV: Yeah, maybe take a break here.
- (Taping interrupted, then resumes.)
- LOV: I'm Loretta [Viduya, LV's wife], by the way.
- MK: Hi.
- WN: Hi, hi, hi.
- LV: Excuse me. Loretta, meet Michi, Warren and Holly.
- LOV: Hi.
- MK: And thank you for having us at your home.
- LOV: We don't mind—our house is very lived in, you know. We have a house full of people. (WN chuckles.) We're a typical Filipino family with a house full of people. We have only one daughter, mind you.
- WN: (Laughs) Seems like more, I bet.
- LV: We have more in the household, yeah?
- MK: Good, though.
- WN: Okay. We were talking about religion and the different religions that were on Lāna'i. You said it was primarily Catholic.
- LV: Yes, it was because of the homeland, the Philippines. The Spanish occupation of 300 years throughout the Philippines. Most of them were Catholics. From there, they went into other kinds

of religions. But mostly Catholics on Lāna‘i. So you’ll find that irregardless of the kinds of Filipinos, whether it was Visayan or Tagalog or Ilocano, Catholicism was the dominant religion.

WN: But the restrictive one in terms of participation on Sunday was Mormon?

LV: Mormon, because they honored that day so their activities revolved around—everybody went to church, practically, on Sundays. Buddhists had services, too. The [Lāna‘i] Union Church had services, Hawaiians had church on Sunday. Everybody did. But I mentioned about the Mormons because of their devotion to religion, they sacrificed a lot of social activities on Sundays. So they would devote it to church. But others had Sunday activities as well. But the Mormons, I know, were good athletes. They could have done a lot, but they felt that religion was extremely important, and they did not participate in social and athletic events on Sundays.

WN: You mentioned about the organized recreation, sports and so forth and so on. Were these all run by the management, plantation?

LV: They weren’t really run by the [company], but they provided support to the event. They had a community association [Lāna‘i Community Welfare Association]. The company contributed to that community association. There were other means of funding, but the community association ran the events. But the plantation was very supportive. They provided the grounds. They provided necessary funding or manpower if necessary to maintain the facilities. But they didn’t necessarily coordinate the events. But they were very supportive from the standpoint of allowing the community to use the facilities and provide support to the events.

WN: And what kind of facilities were there on the island when you were growing up?

LV: Somewhat limited, but they had several ballparks. Free golf course, free golf. Golf course that was free to the people. A gymnasium, a tennis court, archery. And hunting. They didn’t have a swimming pool on the island.

WN: They still don’t. I mean, they have a swimming pool, but . . .

LV: Unused.

WN: Unused. Sorry.

LV: Because maintenance is high. But they provided all the amenities that were needed to sustain athletic events. I think they felt that it was one way of occupying productively the workers’ time. They would be engaged. The plantation maintained the [Cavendish] Golf Course. They had workers working on the golf course, working on the greens. They didn’t charge any fees at all. It was free golf, but it’s expensive to maintain a golf course. But that’s how supportive the plantation was to athletic events. On occasions when funding was needed or certain equipment, they would repair and provide scoreboards, back screens, and all of that. So they were supportive in that sense. They could not generate sufficient funds to maintain an athletic program without the community support.

WN: And you mentioned teams. How were the teams chosen?

LV: It’s interesting because athletes are very competitive. They want the idea of a spirited game. So they had an AJA [Americans of Japanese Ancestry] team, largely Japanese. They had a Cardinals team, Japanese and Hawaiian and others. Then they had an all-Hawaiian team. Then they would

have a Filipino team. Then they had an international team. But they had ethnic groups. There weren't too many Chinese on the island, but they had Japanese and Filipino ethnic groups. The rest were mixed up. So they were called names like International, or Cardinals. But they were very competitive, very competitive in all of the sports. So that was a healthy activity for a community to have where people participate.

WN: And who were the coaches?

LV: The coaches were senior members of the community. On occasion, they would import a star like Joe Katsunuma, who used to be an outstanding umpire. They would import him to the island to do clinics about the game. Or they'd bring in a team from Japan to play baseball. They'd bring in a team from Honolulu. They rotated and did things like that and conducted clinics. So athletics was an important part of the health of the community.

WN: And what sports were you active in?

LV: Fifty pounds ago (chuckles), I was in football, basketball, and baseball. But it didn't mean you were good, you know. (WN laughs.) So few kids, anybody who turned out would make the team. So don't think as though it's an outstanding . . .

WN: Oh, you're so modest. (Chuckles)

MK: Earlier you mentioned like the golf course and the tennis course that were available. I was wondering, you know, usually you associate golf and tennis as being rich-man sports, but on Lāna'i, everybody could participate in golf . . .

LV: As long as you could afford to buy your own golf balls, you could participate. Yeah, because they had some outstanding Japanese boys who did well. The Tamashiro boys. One became the distributor for Titlelist. Well, he was from a Tamashiro family. He [Richard Tamashiro] was a merchant. His entire family golfed. Then a Filipino group from a certain section of the island, they were good. And they had other groups as well. What was fun was they could go and golf after work. Plantations got through early in the afternoon, three-thirty, four o'clock. They could play nine holes or a few holes, have a few beers. They could do that every day because they didn't have to pay for it. Saturdays and Sundays, they would have their tournaments. So golfing was not necessarily a rich man's sport on the island. Everybody could play. They had no fees and they could borrow clubs.

WN: And this is what, nine holes?

LV: Nine holes played twice. They had the Cavendish Golf Course which was the nine-hole free golf course maintained by the plantation. But now they have two world-class golf courses.

WN: Changing subject little bit, what were some of the chores you had to do growing up?

LV: It was interesting because we all had chores on the plantation. We all had livestock to feed. I had rabbits, turkeys, chicken. We had to get the grain, get them fed, get them cleaned. That was a daily chore, in addition to playing athletics and others, you had to do that. There was some gardening, but poultry, was common for lots of families. We all had our share of doing chores. We all had yard work and all of that.

WN: You mentioned rabbit. Was that for food, too?

LV: That was for food largely, yes. So turkey, rabbit, chickens, eggs. Two dozen eggs a day, we produced. It was interesting because everybody created their own kind of cages and coops. You know *totan* and all of that? Fifty-five gallon barrels were cut in half and used as *totan* roofs. People were very creative. It was the days when hardware was hard to come by. What was interesting was, when I moved here [O‘ahu], my dad took a nail and started to straighten the nail. I said, “Dad, what are you doing?”

He said, “Oh, this nail is good yet.”

It was crooked, it was used. But when we were on the plantation, we never threw nails away. It was interesting because it was useable and we had to recycle them. Recycling things was not uncommon on the plantation. So the days of living green and recycling was a part of the theme of living on the plantation, because you didn’t have the luxury of going to the hardware store, or picking this up. During the war years, those were scarce to come by.

WN: Let’s talk about World War II. You were just a real small kid. But what do you remember about the war years on Lāna‘i?

LV: There are some interesting experiences. I was young. Every home was told to build a shelter. So we all had to go outside of the living area into an open area to dig tunnels and dig shelters. In the event of a raid, we’d all have to run to our shelters. Every family built their own shelter. Dug by hand, L-shaped, round shape, roof covered, uncovered, but shelters had to be built by every family in the event of an attack. In addition to that, windows had to be blackened every night. Lights could not be peeking out of the windows. So we had tar paper on frames on every window in the household at night so light would not be seen in the event of enemy attack. In addition to that, we had to learn to live outside of electricity. So if you don’t turn on the light, candlelight became your source of light. There was also a curfew where people could not be out in the streets at a certain hour. But as it was, the social life, gamblers and others went through the darkness, went to a gambling house in the dark, and they had their own games on the plantation. But there was definite curfew on not being out on the street. We also had to carry our gas mask. Everyone was issued a gas mask and you had to carry that in the event of gas. So all of those things had to be learned. We also had practice raids. This is a test (snaps fingers), how we do, test on different days when people had to evacuate and move. So those were all conducted.

That was also the period when perquisites were still provided to the people. Kerosene, food things, and so forth. So that in as much as we were deprived of many things during the war, the plantation also provided perquisites that helped the people live.

WN: So the perquisites that were provided before the war started continued through the war?

LV: Yes.

WN: So, kerosene, what else? Oh, free housing.

LV: Lima beans, rice, foodstuff. Food products were provided as well as fuel and other things. They’d sound the horn. People in the plantation would go to that section and they had handouts. Everybody would take the handouts home. And they were needed items. But the perquisites were common before unionization.

WN: So you said the siren would sound and people would gather around to a central area, and these goods like rice would be passed out.

- LV: Yes.
- WN: Was that just during the war or was that all the time?
- LV: That was. . . . Because I recall this only the war years.
- WN: I see.
- LV: Maybe it was before that, but I recall the war years. So that was not uncommon for me.
- WN: After the war ended, then the union came in.
- LV: Unionization.
- WN: Perquisites were gone.
- LV: And perquisites were gone.
- WN: I see. So your recollection were those war years.
- LV: And shortly thereafter. Plantations were, to a large extent, very paternalistic. Because the workers, to a large extent, were their well-being. So they were paternalistic in taking care of the community.
- MK: During the war years, you know, you're taking all these precautions of blacking out the light. Were you fearful of anything during the war?
- LV: Not that fearful because we were somewhat detached. We didn't know the effects of Pearl Harbor. We just knew that war is bad and it could happen. That's about the fear that we had. It was not imminent or it was not as if a bomb would explode. So it was another dimension away from the immediate threat of war activity. If maybe there was a bomb that landed on the island, maybe it would have created a greater emotional reaction. But because we were away, it was somewhat detached. But we did have an army brigade stationed on the island.
- MK: Where were they stationed on the island?
- LV: Some in the [workers'] bachelor quarters, many of them. And they built some barracks. There were some barracks built for the military.
- MK: And were they Mainland soldiers?
- LV: Yes. Mostly Mainland. The island soldiers were not there. Mostly Mainland soldiers.
- WN: So this is the time of martial law, so these soldiers were, in essence, like the policemen to you folks?
- LV: Yes, because they would help maintain order, see that the curfew was respected, and the rules were followed. There wasn't a regiment.
- WN: Was there any conflict with the camp bosses at all?

LV: Not really. They coexisted well. Each had its role. They coexisted because they needed one another. The plantation needed the order and they needed the protection. The military people could always go to the plantation if they had any problems. So they coexisted well.

MK: And then how were relations between the military presence there and the plantation people?

LV: It was pretty good because they socialized well. Some people got to marry some of the soldiers. So there was no severe animosity. The socialization was well received. So the social life carried on in spite of the difference of places in the community.

MK: And earlier you mentioned that even if there was a curfew and even if there was blackout, people somehow managed to go to their gambling houses?

LV: Yeah, plantation people are creative.

(Laughter)

It would still be conducted. In the shadow of darkness they could find their way to the spot and those things were held.

WN: Talk about the gambling culture you remember growing up on Lānaʻi.

LV: Lānaʻi had an interesting gambling culture as I mentioned some time ago. There were card games, there were chicken games, and there were other kinds of games. Well, let me talk about the chicken, the cockfighting. Filipinos were akin to cockfighting. It was not, to them, a brutal thing to do. It was cultural. So there's a difference in how we look at it. But they enjoyed that. Lānaʻi had so many bachelor Filipino men. The gambling was a great social event. Every weekend they would go to this banana patch. Banana patch because it was surrounded by banana trees. The arena is in the middle, so it was well defined. And then cockfighting would go on. Because they were bachelors, they would be reckless with their money. Betting was high. They didn't have to buy milk for the kids or support the family. It was not uncommon they would lose their entire month's check (slaps hands) on one weekend. So betting was vigorous and high. And it was a very common thing. People from neighbor islands would come to the island to gamble on Lānaʻi.

But then one judge had said, "We're not raiding the gambling on Lānaʻi as would other places because, to a large extent, it prevented sexual and abusive crimes from these young bachelor men by being engaged in a social but gambling activity. And if they were not, they may be behavior problems." So when they would raid the gambling arena, they would walk up to the raid. It wasn't a secretive matter. It's a raid. They walk up to the arena, the cops would set their caps, they walk quietly into the arena, and they would arrest two men that were holding the chickens to fight. And then they would go to the courthouse. Two men would go, be fingerprinted, pay a five-dollar fine, and return to the arena. But the fine was paid by the casino itself and these men could care less about their record of being fined. And so the gambling continued. But when the cops came, they respected it. They would stop the crap game, they would stop the card games, and they let the chicken fight continue until it was over. So it's different. Whereas, if you had it on O'ahu, they would get a large number of police squads and raid the place and prevent it from happening. But Lānaʻi, it was a known casino, accepted. But, as you say, they hoped it will thwart other crimes.

WN: So they, more or less, turned the other way.

LV: Yes. They would arrest once a day.

WN: Okay. But the house paid the fine.

LV: Yeah.

(Laughter)

LV: That's right. And there was very little violence in spite of all of that.

WN: So the participants were mainly the bachelors?

LV: Not bachelors. Filipinos, mostly Filipinos. There were some Chinese and some Japanese, but mostly Filipinos. And mostly bachelors because, like I say, they didn't have families yet at that time. Then as families started to come, they started to mediate themselves to not be as reckless because they had families to support. So, as the early [19]50s came about and families were coming to Hawai'i, it was not as vigorous an activity.

WN: I think I'll ask about Lāna'i City next time. I want to ask you about part-time work that was available in the pineapple fields for kids like you.

LV: You know, every kid who grows up on the plantation looks forward to someday they got to work in the fields. It was a common thinking. So at my time, as a fourteen-year-old, you could go work in the fields. You were paid fifty-seven cents an hour at that time. Hard work, but we looked forward to being seasonal part-time employees. As we grew up, throughout high school, and even during college, it was not uncommon we'd go back and we would be employed. In fact, there was a time when school had started and the harvest was large, we would work at night in the fields, sleep a few hours, go to school for a few hours, and go back to work at night in order to help with the harvest. And we were all part-time workers, so. But there were no other working places, so working in the fields was common and accepted. But today, if you offer the kids field work, they're going to look at everyplace else before they go into the fields. (WN laughs.) But for us, it was the greatest thing to be able to work in the fields.

WN: And what kind of jobs did you do? Harvesting was one.

LV: Cleaning [out] the weeds. You know, as weeds grow in the field. Weeding.

WN: *Hō hana.*

LV: Planting. Picking the pines. Eventually, the most active [job] was picking the pines, putting them on the conveyor belts, putting them in large bins, shipping them to O'ahu. That became the most vigorous of all.

MK: What was the attraction for you? Why did you want to work?

LV: Money. Everybody felt that if they did work, they would earn money. That was one. The other part, working was fun because you work with your peers. It was hard work, it was also fun work. Everybody felt they'd be paid.

WN: I'm wondering, you know, you talked about fishing on Lānaʻi, hunting, hiking and all these things that were free. So what was the attraction to having money back when you were like thirteen, fourteen years old?

LV: The plantation income is somewhat limited when you think about it, yeah? So you always think of the things that you would want without imposing on your parents. We grew up with the idea that the parents needed the money to support the family. We grew up in that culture. So when you desire material things, it was difficult to ask the family to buy this and get that. So people didn't mind earning their own money.

WN: Did you have to give any of your money to your parents?

LV: No, my parents did not expect that from us. Every household was different. Every household need was different. But in my case, it was not necessary. So when you earn forty dollars. (Chuckles)

WN: And what was your favorite job?

LV: I guess picking pines—well, I eventually became a *luna* as a young college student. That was better.

(Laughter)

LV: You didn't have to pick the pines.

WN: And by that time, you were harvesting, they already had the boom harvester where you walk along, you put it on the [conveyor] . . .

LV: The picking machine was invented by then. But prior to that, you know how they picked the pines? Prior to—in fact, our peers, some of those two years older than us, would have a bag. They put the pineapples in a bag, carry the bag out to the end of the line, unpack the bag into boxes, and they go back in the line to pick some more pines. By the time I went to work, the conveyor belt, you'd pick the pine and put them on the conveyor belt.

END OF TAPE 56-2-1-10

TAPE NO. 56-3-1-10

WN: This is tape number three of session number one with Mr. Libby Viduya. And he's joined by his wife, Loretta Viduya. And so we'd like you to talk about some of the implements and games and tools that you have brought here. And if you can just, let's see, why don't we, can we start by having you talk about here?

LV: Maybe you can explain what this was.

LOV: Okay, this was in the elementary grades that we used these. These were for our penny drinks during recess break. Because Lānaʻi was so cold, you know, so they usually had juice or something warm—cocoa, I guess it was.

LV: For two cents.

LOV: Yes, for two pennies. They served our lunch in these.

WN: There's no handle on that.

LV: Yes, I know.

WN: How did you eat something hot?

LV: I guess they just didn't make it very hot.

(Laughter)

LV: These are the lunch plate, reusable, and costs us ten cents a plate for lunch.

LOV: Which was about . . .

LV: But in the fields, what was this called now?

LOV: *Kaukau tin.*

LV: These are known as *kaukau tin*. You'd put your entree or *okazu* in here [i.e., the top portion of the two-layered container]. If you were eating in a circle like we are, you'd place your entree or *okazu* in the center, this portion [i.e., the lower portion of the two-layered container] would be your rice, and you'd share your food with other people in the group. When you're done, you take this back and take it home. The bachelors would bring this *kaukau tin* to the boardinghouses and get it filled and take it to work, and bring it back in the afternoon.

WN: For example, what kind of *okazu* did you bring?

LV: Oh, we were very Americanized at that time. Mostly dry food. I think my lunch was probably more expensive than my earnings for the day.

(Laughter)

LV: Meat stuff. Pork chop and chicken.

These are two very interesting plants. These were all made on the plantation. In order to plant a pineapple, you'd take the shoots of the pineapple, then you'd strip it off, then you'd poke this in the ground, push it forward, and put the slip back, lift this up, and that plant would take twenty-four months to bear fruit. So this is a planting knife. They planted ten thousand a day. They bent down. They worked from eight to ten hours every day. This is another planting knife, which is much smaller, but it is used to plant the crown of a pineapple. When you take the crown off a fruit, this knife is smaller. You'd poke through the ground, put the crown there, remove it, and that crown would eventually bear fruit. So these were important. But they [i.e., the planting laborers] made money because they were on contract. But it was hard work.

WN: You mean, the slips had to go in deeper? Is that why you used the different kind of knife for the slip, as opposed to the crown?

LV: Yes. That's right. So you had more force.

WN: What was harder to plant, the slips or the crowns?

LV: The crown because they're so small yet. You had to bend over and place it.

These are cane knives that were used. We didn't have much cane on the island, but this is how they cut the stalk of the cane, and they would pull it. Pull the cane with this. But they would chop the cane into smaller pieces. Put them on the burro. So everybody had a cane knife. They called it "machete." Somewhat like a machete knife. But we called them "cane" knives.

WN: So you would hit and then pull so that . . .

LV: That's right.

WN: . . . it would hook on that.

LV: That's what this was.

But these are games here. What was this down there?

LOV: *Peewee*.

WN: Looks like *peewee*, yeah?

LV: The *peewee* game. We had to create games. As long as Mother didn't know that we stole the broomstick, we were okay. But there was no television, see, so people had to create games. So these were competitive games by scores. This is known as a *peewee*. You'd hit it on the ground, hit it in the air, and there's a way of scoring. But this known as *peewee*.

WN: Now why is one small stick biased and the other stick not biased?

LV: Because it's a different way of hitting it. This slanted one, we placed on the ground, you're supposed to hit it. As it goes into the air, you have to hit it again in order to score. This one here is different.

WN: This one, what? You put it in a hole or . . .

LV: Toss it up and hit it.

WN: Oh, you toss it up and. . . Okay.

LV: And we made use of cans. These cans are stilts. They'd walk on it. It was not uncommon to do that.

WN: You would stick your feet right in here and over here, and hold with your hand and walk.

LV: Hold it and you'd walk.

WN: I guess we can't do that now.

(Laughter)

LOV: You can't even jump rope anymore . . .

LV: But it was important to be creative because there were no ready-made toys. Especially during the war years, plastic was not discovered until so much later.

And you know, the rice bag, interesting as this product might be, people made clothes, dish towels, it was a well-used fabric.

WN: What kind of clothes? Underwear?

LOV: Mostly underwear. Dish towels.

LV: Some may make tank tops. But dish towels, it was not uncommon.

LOV: They were the best dish towels. (Chuckles)

WN: Yeah, I guess all-cotton, yeah?

LOV: Or panties. (Chuckles)

WN: Okay. Questions? All right. Thank you very much.

LV: Okay, thank you.

WN: That was fun.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape Nos. 56-4-2-10 and 56-5-2-10

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Liberato C. Viduya, Jr. (LV)

Pearl City, O‘ahu

February 17, 2010

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN) and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

WN: Today is February 17, 2010, and we’re interviewing Mr. Liberato “Libby” Viduya at his home in Pearl City, O‘ahu. Interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

Libby, good morning.

LV: Good morning.

WN: We were talking last time about your small-kid time. Right now, we want to ask you about Lāna‘i City itself. What was Lāna‘i City like in terms of stores and churches and things like that?

LV: It was interesting because small as the town was, there was a marketplace in a large quadrangle like. There were merchants on both sides of the large quadrangle area, which was the center of the city. And that’s where a lot of the activities took place.

And the stores, they were individual buildings. They had a yard in front of each building. They were not connected. Each store had its own yard. It had its own warehouse. It had its own merchandise area. The markets were interesting because they carried everything from boots to clothing to meat and liquor. Everything was in one, like a small [general] store. There was also a jewelry store, which was part of a Maui store, which was in Lāna‘i. There was a tailor shop and a laundry. Eventually they became an electronics store. And the rest was merchandise stores, grocery stores. But what was interesting about the markets is that you could call the store, order your goods, and it would be delivered to your home. We lived interestingly in that the homes were not always locked, so when you asked for your merchandise to be delivered, they’d open the kitchen door and put your groceries and produce in your kitchen. That was common. So people would just call and they would deliver the goods to the [home].

WN: Even if they were not home, they would just go into the kitchen and just drop off the . . .

LV: That’s how we were and lots of other families did that. They would put it in the kitchen and they would leave. It was a very trusting situation.

WN: And you said by your time, you would call and place your order by phone. Was there a time when people would come to take orders?

LV: Yes. There were people who said, “What would you like to have delivered?” They would take a list and they would have that delivered to you. And so, the merchants provided a lot. There was

also a unique thing, a charge system. People were paid once a month. And sometimes not everyone could live a cash-flow situation, so the merchants allowed people to charge. Instead of using a social security number, many of them had a four-digit *bangō* number. And by giving your name and your *bangō* number, they would be able to charge rice or whatever you needed and they would have it delivered. What was difficult about that kind of an economy was that you're always in debt. So by the time you received your paycheck, you owed a good part of it to the merchant. So that was the grocery stores. The people were very community-minded. They were also very kind in times of difficulty, like when the strike was on. Other times, they allowed credit to be extended. Could we take a second? (Coughs) Let me get a cup . . .

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

WN: Okay. We were talking about credit.

LV: We were talking about credit so, in a sense, there weren't credit cards, but the *bangō* numbers served like credit cards. They didn't use social security numbers, but the *bangō* number was individually assigned.

WN: I was wondering, there were, you said, half a dozen stores run by families. I was wondering, was there a store that was actually owned by the company, like a plantation store, on Lānaʻi?

LV: Not at that time, except that if you needed certain products that the stores did not carry, like gloves or tools, there was a warehouse that was a plantation product store. It wasn't necessarily a retail, but you could also go there and order your construction material, or your tools, and other things. And the warehouse as we called it, or the storeroom as we call it, the company would order and have it brought into the city for you. But they did not sell merchandise of clothing or anything else. It was just construction and home things, which the stores did not carry. But it was more for the convenience of the customers. It was not a profit-bearing situation, but very accommodating.

WN: I find it interesting because most sugar plantation areas had a plantation-run store that competed, in essence, with the family businesses. But in Lānaʻi, there was not?

LV: Well, let me take that back. Earlier, much earlier, the company had a bake shop, they provided a bakery. It wasn't a merchant store necessarily, but they'd provide bread and baked goods. That's about the extent of it. But they provided individual entrepreneurs to be able to come in and run the stores. So it was in the [19]40s—I don't know what happened in the [19]30s, though. But in the [19]40s, we already had individual merchants in the marketplace.

WN: And generally, who were the individual merchants?

LV: It was interesting in the sense that we had single owners or family-owned or a co-op of some kind. So in most cases they had a small group of family members. Like the Tamashiro Market or Richard's Shopping Center, which was one of the bigger stores, was run—there was a head family member, but the rest of the family participated in it. They had an individual store owned by Mr. Rabbon, who was an individual storeowner. Then we had Pine Isle [Market] that was a small co-operative store. And we had Yet Lung [Store] that was individual. So there were a number of entrepreneurs or businesspeople who had the opportunity to sell things.

WN: Did they all deliver? Did the same kind of services? Sold the same kind of goods?

- LV: Yes. Delivery was part of the business at that time. They all had pretty much the same things because much of the merchandise to the island, they didn't use planes at that time, came by barge either from Honolulu or by sampan [i.e., ferry] boat from Maui. They would bring it to Lānaʻi, and from there it would go to the stores. Many things were ordered from Maui because sampans, which had an alternate day run, could bring goods from Maui to Lānaʻi.
- WN: And the sampan delivery was controlled by Hawaiian Pine[apple Company]?
- LV: That's right. At that time it was Hawaiian Pine. They're bringing the goods, and each merchant had to go down to the pier and haul their own goods to their store. So if you had a hundred hundred-pound bags of rice, you had to bring your own staff down to load up the trucks, and bring them in. Every merchant went down to pick up their goods. That's how it was. There was no delivery—any other external delivery service. Everybody did their own.
- WN: So even though there were these individual merchants, Hawaiian Pine still, in essence, controlled the flow of goods into the island.
- LV: And the use of the sampan that went from Maui to Lānaʻi. But also the large barge. The barge is the same barge that hauled the pineapples from Lānaʻi to the cannery [in Honolulu]. It would take overnight for that to happen. But that's how the large things were brought to the island, by using the same pineapple barge to bring in cars or large equipment or large items to Lānaʻi. And that was still controlled by the plantation. And people could also use that sampan, besides merchandise. You could board the sampan from Lānaʻi to Molokaʻi, from Lānaʻi to Maui, at no cost. So if a football team was going to play at a game in Maui, all thirty-five boys would board at six-thirty in the morning and take a two-and-a-half or three-hour ride to Lahaina. They'd stay there for several days, and on the return day, they'd board it again and come back at no cost to any of the residents.
- WN: How big were these sampans?
- LV: Enough to take fifty people.
- WN: Oh, yeah?
- LV: Forty or fifty people.
- WN: Talk about the ferry and all that, they were doing this way before.
- LV: Yes. And that was the only means of getting off the island at one point. The airport was only for emergency. The airport didn't come in until the [19]40s. You know, it was just an emergency. There was no real airport at that time. You had to go to Maui on the sampan, take the plane and then come to Oʻahu. There was no direct flight. It wasn't until the [19]40s that they started to have the airlines come in.
- WN: Now when you were growing up on Lānaʻi, did you take the sampan to go to the other islands?
- LV: That was the only means. Yes, absolutely.
- WN: So you would go to Kaumālapaʻu Harbor . . .
- LV: Yes.

WN: . . . and board over there?

LV: At that time, they didn't use the current black sand area, the Mānele area. That was not a pier at that time. But now with the business and the new technology, you could board from the Maui side of the island and take you only forty minutes to get to Maui. But in the old days, from Kaumālapa'u used to take almost three hours to go around the bend and go to Maui. But today, they do it in forty minutes or so.

WN: From Kaumālapa'u?

LV: Now, it's from Mānele.

WN: Mānele, okay.

LV: In the old days it was from Kaumālapa'u.

WN: Okay. And you know, these businesses—Richard Tamashiro, Rabbon, Pine Isle, Yet Lung, you said they sold the same kind of things?

LV: Pretty much.

WN: Same kind of services?

LV: And they had their own meat markets. All of them had their own meat markets, too.

WN: Rabbon is Filipino?

LV: That's right.

WN: And Yet Lung is Chinese?

LV: That's right.

WN: Tamashiro is Japanese [Okinawan]. Did they sell their own kind of ethnic goods or everybody just sells the same . . .

LV: Everybody pretty much sold. There was also an International [Food and Clothing Center] market owned by the union leader, Pedro de la Cruz. They pretty much had the same goods.

MK: You know, so far you've talked about stores, and then now I'm sort of interested in what kind of services people purchased. Like if someone wanted to go out to eat, how was it done back then?

LV: It was limited. (Chuckles) It still is limited. There are few places that you could go. If you really wanted to dine out, there was what they would call the Inn. Before the resort hotel was built, there was an Inn on the hill. That was probably stepping up. The rest were little fast-food places. They carried candies, and ice cream, and maybe hamburgers. But there weren't too many *bentō* places or plate-lunch places. It was mostly sandwiches. It wasn't until later that they started to have meals. *Saimin* was a common thing to be sold. But not too many places to go.

MK: And then, say, if someone needed a ride from someplace to another place on the island, were there such things as equivalent of a taxi or a little bus or something?

- LV: They had a cab, individual cab person, but that was rarely used. The cab was mostly used from the airport. To get people from the airport to the city. Cab within the city was rare. They would call a friend. It was really a friend or a neighbor or someone. There was no bus service at all. So it wasn't uncommon at our age—cars were not that plentiful—to walk your date to the movies or walk to the dance. It was really a plantation town because the center of the city was only half a mile from everybody else's home. So it wasn't uncommon to go there in the evening or walk home in the evening. So it wasn't uncommon for people to be on dates walking to where they were going, except of course, if they were going to school dances or proms. If they didn't have their own cars, lots of people borrowed cars. They shared. Not every family had cars at that time. They would share the use of cars. But otherwise, going to or walking to places was not uncommon in the plantation days.
- MK: And then in those days, how about a service station?
- LV: There were two on the island. And they also had to provide for the whole city and part of the company as well. The company had its own to some degree, but there were only two gasoline merchants and mechanics on the island.
- MK: And were they connected with stores or were they actually free-standing?
- LV: Free-standing gas station only. Gas station mechanics. You didn't have the food marts (WN chuckles) that you have with stores today. So they were just strictly gas and mechanics, was all it was. And they were closed on certain days (chuckles), on Sundays, so you had to be sure to gas up before the weekend. (Chuckles) The stores closed up at five [P.M.]. Places closed on Sunday. There were no evening places, except for maybe the soda fountain—the only place that was open. There was one bar open on the island separate from the hotel. It had a short life. It was there for a period of time, and then it stopped. There was no other bar for people to go. So to this day, the only place they can go to, is really the hotels.
- MK: And I know from way back there was a hotel on Lāna'i. What was the name of the hotel that was in operation prior to the big ones?
- LV: That's called the Inn. It's near the marketplaces. It's still there.
- WN: [To MK:] That's where you stayed?
- MK: Yeah.
- LV: It's still there.
- WN: Wasn't there a restaurant bar in there?
- LV: Yes. That is it. I don't know who owns it today. The company owned it, but they leased it to people to run it at that time. That was the only place that people could go to before the resorts were built. But it was a nice, decent place. It was clean. They served well. Quaint but it was acceptable.
- MK: And then I'm also curious like, you know, people usually needed personal services like going to a hairdresser or going to a barber. How about during your time? What was available?

LV: They had two barbershops and they had a main hairdresser who was there for many, many years. (Telephone rings.) That was the extent of it. And the two barbershops and the hairdresser serviced the whole island.

MK: You know, you mentioned the barbershops. In those days, would families kind of cut boys' and men's hair at home or would people go to the barbershop?

LV: The barbershop was very busy, but a number of people did their own also. People did it at home, but the barbershops were both very busy barbershops. In those days, was fifty cents a haircut. (Laughs) (Telephone rings.) I'm sorry about that phone.

MK: That's okay. And one other service I'm interested in is things having to do with medical services and dental services.

LV: The plantation had a plantation hospital and they hired doctors who were resident doctors of the island. One or two doctors. And they were general practitioners. If they had a major or very sensitive procedure to be done, then that person had to take the boat to another island like Maui. So there were plantation doctors. They delivered babies and did minor operations. They had a little hospital, maybe had ten beds in it. They also had a dental office and they hired—the dentists were more private dentists. But they leased the property or the facilities from the company. But the doctors at that time were plantation doctors, but eventually as time moved on, the plantation gave up the doctors and private owners like Straub became the hospital that manned the hospital on Lāna'i. To this day, I think, that still happens. So it's no longer a plantation hospital.

MK: And then the other people who worked in the hospital, say, like nurses or technicians, were they like island residents?

LV: They were island residents. Sometimes they imported nurses if they didn't have enough registered nurses. But the people in the wards and so forth were basically island people. And if there were trained nurses on the island, they would use them. But it wasn't uncommon for them to bring in a professional nurse to live on the island. The plantation was rather accommodating to whomever they brought in. Accommodations would be made so they would have residence to be had and so forth.

And so connected to the hospital was also services like cemetery, burial services, and so forth. The plantation provided the hearse and the digging of the graves. It was on plantation property. So there was no private burial company, except they would have to bring in a mortician if necessary to treat the body. But otherwise, plantation people would dig the graves, cover the graves, maintain the graveyard. They also provided the vehicle to transport the deceased. So the plantation provided that. They would send work crews to the cemetery on certain days to maintain the cemetery. That was provided by the company.

WN: I want to ask you about churches. What kind of churches were on the island when you were growing up?

LV: Lāna'i was really a multi-denominational island. The churches lived in harmony right next to each other. There's a Catholic church, has a large parish. They also had a strong group with the Union church. And they're across the street from one another. There's a strong Mormon development that occurred on the—developed in the islands, I should say. And there was also a Hawaiian church. The Kaopuiki family was a large family and they ran pretty much the Hawaiian church. There's also a Buddhist church. All lived within the same camp area. There's Jehovah's

Witnesses that are active on the island. There may be a few others, but those were the major religions on the island. And they lived in harmony. Very ecumenical in the sense that they were community-minded people. They serviced the community. They accommodated activities. They were very generous in their service to the community and highly respected. The church was honored throughout the . . .

WN: What church was your family a part of?

LV: We were Catholics. To this day, we still are.

WN: And there was one Catholic church?

LV: There was one Catholic church. It has a large parish. Lots of Filipinos, too, so lots of Filipinos were Catholics.

MK: What's the name of the church?

LV: [The Lānaʻi Catholic Church of the] Sacred Hearts [of Jesus and Mary].

WN: Can you give us an idea of the role the churches, in particular Sacred Hearts church, played in the community itself?

LV: They reached out to the community, being able to provide. . . . They had church services. They also went out to visit homes. They visited the hospital. They did burials and so forth. But they also had youth activities and adult activities. They would have particular kinds of club work, youth work, where they would be guided. For the adults as well. They provide counseling and services of that kind. So the church was somewhat of a pivotal place for lots of things to happen. People went to the church for advice. They also went to the church as part of the social activity because the church was very active in providing these activities, wholesome activities, for the both the young and the old. So they had resident pastors—only one on the island. But the people were very participative and they were very helpful in maintaining the parish. And all churches were well maintained.

WN: And were the ministers all full-time, living on the island?

LV: Yes. At that time during our youth, they imported Belgians from Belgium. Many of the Sacred Hearts priests came to the Hawaiian Islands and they were Sacred Hearts priests. But today, you have many of them from Asia as well. But they didn't have as many Asian priests then as they do today. But they had Belgian Sacred Hearts priests pretty much in Hawaiian Islands.

MK: And they stayed for a long time on Lānaʻi?

LV: They stayed for a long time. They became very attached to the community. People would get along very well with the pastors. All of the pastors seemed to have a really good life. They would have youth activities that provided club work and dances. They're all an integral part of the event. So every church on the island was very enthusiastic in helping their parishioners. The Buddhist church was active also during the *Bon* period. The entire city would attend that. They had services on Sundays, and so forth. So it worked very well. I think the churches are still held in high esteem, lot of dignity, and lots of respect. Lots of *aloha* for the church. The ministers they had there were very giving people, which was very good.

WN: When you were fourteen, there was a strike, 1951 strike, on the island. Can you tell us how it affected you?

LV: Well, it was a difficult period for everyone. Because, of course, even though my dad was part of management, we had a salaried income. So we did have an income [during the strike]. But we had relatives who were not and we had friends who were not. So you feel the pain of your family and your friends. We experienced some things that we would not otherwise feel without a strike. There'd be lines at the union hall for people to line up to have their meals. You know, people had a lot of dignity, but they felt somewhat humbled and they had to do it out of necessity. The union hall provided meals. They would cook in large quantity. People [i.e., strikers and their families] would go there for their meals, and we could see that happening. They also provided a little something for each family. It also was a period of austerity. The great events like a prom, a banquet, and dances were cancelled because it was extra money that people would have to spend. So those events at that time could not take place because they could not afford it. So they cancelled many of the school and community events because of the strike.

Seven months of strike is a long, long period. For a while, you see the boisterous movement of a strike coming on, but after a while, hostility took place. The anger, the emotions, the difficulty that people had to go through to the extent that they threw people in Kaumālapa'u Harbor. They were so mad at some of the management and others that some landed in the water. They were so frustrated that they went almost as a mob group and just behaving in a way to lash out at something. It got hostile. People would lie in front of a truck so it could not move. They would prevent movement within the city. People began to get very emotional. And you don't blame them because it was a long period. So relatives would help relatives, but when you don't have that many relatives, your support system was really through the union. So it was a difficult period. After the strike there were lots of court proceedings that had to take place, unfortunately, because of the misbehaviors. Civil actions would take place. Lots of them had to go to court because they were arrested for doing this and arrested for doing that. My mother was a court interpreter, so that's how we got to know lot of these things. Lots of them would do it out of frustration. But there were a lot of court proceedings that followed the strike because of the behavior. But it was difficult. But thank goodness, the harmony of the community, as difficult as it was to live under such stress, the community came together also. Those who were on strike and not on strike. So there weren't embattled things to occur—physical situations, violence of that nature—because everyone practically worked for the plantation and they looked for the day when the strike would someday be over.

But you see, they [originally] went on strike at the same time as other plantations did. It was a large pineapple strike through ILWU [International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union]—was a big organization at that time. But the others negotiated and completed the strike. But [for] Lāna'i, [the] strike lingered on. The fruits would rot in the fields; the weeds would grow. There wasn't much economic activity. It was somewhat depressing. But what was good—well, not good, but a good place to be at, was really the school because the school had to go on, strike or no strike. There was lunch that would be served at the school. There were extracurricular activities that would take place. There'd be social events that would take place. And it was a good event that would take place. So the school was a good place for the young folks to be at. Athletics would take place. And the fact that a lunch would be served is also a good thing that would occur. So the school was some kind of a centerpiece of a community like Lāna'i. Lots of events took place.

WN: And yet you said there were some events that were cancelled?

- LV: Like a prom or a major dance or a banquet because that would require additional funds to be spent. Those were cancelled because of the strike. But athletic events took place. Athletic events and other low-cost social events did take place. That was a saving grace because otherwise, it would be very difficult. So the school served an important role during that period.
- WN: You know, of a plantation town like this, you had your workers, and you had the supervisors, and then you have the higher officials, and so forth. In essence, you're saying there was sort of harmony before the strike. Now during the strike, people had to, in essence, take sides?
- LV: There was management and there were workers. Management people had to report to work every day.
- WN: Like your father?
- LV: Yes. Well, they had meetings, they had other things. But they had to report every day because they're on salary. Because they got along well before that, you didn't see the animosity taking place. Maybe there may have been inner feelings, but they were not demonstrated in a hostile manner. But it was difficult to see those who were on strike and those who were not on strike. But they were able to somehow to coexist in difficult times, even though others were not at work. But it was, like I said earlier, a sharing community. During the strike to augment the food supply, people would go on their boats, fishing all night, bring in a whole load of fish. They take it to the community kitchen and fish would be served. They counted on that kind of thing to happen, but people were able to share what they could contribute to the cause. Lāna'i also got some support from other unions to sustain the strike. Lāna'i could have taken that strike to a large extent because you had lots of bachelor workers. They weren't all family members. When you have lots of bachelor workers, their needs are different, and they can be bold in that. So it was hard. But they were on strike for a long period of time. The family people, of course, suffered, but because they had lots of bachelor workers on the island, that kind of a strike could have been sustained. Had it been different, where you had more families, that may not have been the situation.
- MK: Earlier, you mentioned there were conflicts between management and the workers. And your father was on the management side. And you being the son of someone who is still working, being with kids whose fathers are not working and on strike, how was it for you?
- LV: It's funny, but we never experienced the hostility to one another. We played ball together, we did things together, knowing that the incomes were different. But thank God, I never experienced the animosity or the hostility of the feelings that they may have had. We continued our activities as though—realizing there's a strike—we carried on many of our fellowships and our activities. We seemed to all be in it together. You know, it's not as though. . . . While my dad was in management, we're all in it together. It was always the feeling like we're on strike, so people were humble in their manner, so I never experienced the hostility or the anger or the depressed feelings others may have had. If they had it, I could not sense it or feel it. Our fellowship seemed to have been strong.
- MK: And then, how about your father? I don't know if you would know, because you were a fourteen-year-old boy, but how did your father fare during the strike? It must have been hard.
- LV: I was fortunate that my parents were very community-minded. So as immigrants came to the island, my parents were very accommodating, very hospitable. My mother would give speeches to community groups. They got along very well. We had lots of friends. Even at this period, I never heard of them saying or mentioning any problems or hostility of any kind. I think to a large

extent, they were respected for what they had done in the past. The relationships, I think, were strong that it withstood the difficult times. Whether the feelings were there, I don't recall them mentioning of anyone or any incident that occurred. And I thank God for that. I think it was their manner and the way they lived. I think they got along well prior to that and they developed lots of friends. They also helped accommodate the coming of the 1946 [Filipino immigrant] group to that. So they were very hospitable residents, accommodating young bachelor workers coming to the islands. And somehow, that respect and that relationship sustained itself through difficult times.

WN: So you're talking about the *sakadas* who came in 1946 to work . . .

LV: That's right. They came in, hundreds of them.

WN: So it really changed the population?

LV: Absolutely.

WN: Demographics.

LV: Absolutely.

MK: And you were saying your mom and dad kind of helped out or accommodated their needs. How did they help out the men that came in [19]46?

LV: They explained how things went. I know my mother was called upon a lot to be able to explain to community groups about community life. They related well in the fields and in the work. Because they were older, too, from these bachelor men, they had some degree of respect as it was. They were able to relate with them. When you think about it as we grew older, these were actually young men not far from their teens, maybe nineteen, twenty-three in the robust period of their lives coming to a foreign country to work as laborers and have a life that was—it wasn't an easy life, but they were strong, tough men. And they respected elders. You know, there was that value of respect, and I think that carried through. They [LV's parents] could be able to relate because they could speak the language, they could empathize with their feelings, and advise them as they needed. So in that sense, they were highly regarded. And I think that relationship was helpful.

END OF TAPE NO. 56-4-2-10

TAPE NO. 56-5-2-10

WN: Okay. Tape number two of session number two with Liberato "Libby" Viduya.

MK: I was just going to ask you about the role of the churches during the strike.

LV: The churches, as I said, were very community-minded. They were sensitive to the needs of the community, of their parishioners. But the church cannot provide much themselves for survival. They could not be giving that much. To the extent that the parish and the members who could support them, they were very accommodating to the parishioners. I don't know how much foodstuff and other things they would supply, but because the church in the plantation community, it's not a rich situation. But they were accommodating in whatever way they can be. So people found salvation being able to go to the church and being able to find some material

things. But they could not provide that much in material things. But to the extent that the parishioners could, they got together and helped one another.

MK: In terms of having a place to meet or a place to eat facilities, how did the people on strike manage to have facilities to gather and everything?

LV: There wasn't that much gathering, even without the strike. By the time of the strike, people pretty much have their own homes. And there's a community kitchen where they would go, like a mess hall, and they would be provided the meal. Then you don't go to restaurants when the economy is low either, yeah? So pretty much, people were private in their own homes. Not much restaurant-going, but going to the community kitchen, getting your meal or taking it home, or taking whatever goods, that was the extent of it. But they could go to like churches to meet. But even the theaters and other places were affected by the strike because you don't have a cash flow of any kind. The bowling alley and all those things. There weren't meeting places because it wasn't a time to be spending money.

MK: When you mention like a community kitchen, where was that situated?

LV: It was situated at the union hall. You know, every union hall has headquarters. At the headquarters, they also had a kitchen that could accommodate that.

WN: So the soup kitchen was actually set up at the union hall?

LV: Yes, uh-huh. And they'd make do whatever tents they had to make do. There were people who could cook in large quantities.

WN: You mentioned in the last interview about these mess halls that the Filipino bachelors would go and eat? Was that still going on during the strike?

LV: No, by then, it was used only periodically. During the strike, it didn't go on. But after that, it was used only for people during the summer periods when people would be imported to work as laborers.

WN: Yeah, students and . . .

LV: Then they would open it up. Other than that, it was already closed. But they used it during the summers when harvesting was busy. Then you'd have people from the Mormon community in Utah, from Mexico, from Honolulu. Then those boarding places would be open.

WN: And you mentioned about stores extending credit during the strike. How did that work?

LV: I don't know to what extent, but they had to do some crediting to people because they had to get some means. They may have limited the amount of purchase because there was no cash flow. So I don't know the extent. But I know here on O'ahu, as an example of a merchant, Toraki Matsumoto in Whitmore [Village], during the strike, he would continue to provide credit to the workers. To the extent to which Lāna'i [merchants] could, I'm not really sure how great it was because otherwise, they'd never be able to pay back. But they did to some extent, because otherwise, the store would also close without business. So it was a difficult situation, and yet businesses had to go on. So credit had to be extended to some degree.

WN: And you know, Lāna‘i stayed on strike while the others settled. They hung on for seven months. And you said that lot of them, the island was getting along by a lot of hunting and fishing. Did you notice a lot more hunting and fishing during the strike?

LV: Fishing more than hunting. Because people would go regularly, would go out and bring it to the community kitchen. They would regularly go fishing to supply the food. Hunting, I don't know how much greater it was, but I'm quite sure that would have been possible. Because Filipinos also like to have—they don't mind goat meat. Not everybody can take it, yeah? But it was easy to get goat meat at that time. Is there another name for goat meat? I know deer is venison. I don't know what's goat meat. (Laughs)

MK: Oh, yeah.

(Laughter)

LV: Like deer is venison, yeah?

WN: You said you weren't into goat meat?

LV: I tasted it, but I don't care for it that much.

WN: And I would imagine that chickens, so forth, were so plentiful that strikers were able to survive for a longer period of time with the fish and the chickens, and so forth.

LV: Yes, and they had to be creative in feeding these chickens because it's expensive to buy feed. So they would cut special grass, mix it with a little corn, so it would stretch the chicken feed. You cannot give them straight feed, that would be too expensive. So greens would be chopped into the mixture of the feed to do that. But you know, in those days, chicken was not as economical as it is today. Chicken is cheaper today than it was during those periods. It was a dollar a pound of live chicken. You think about it. Dollar a pound, a live chicken, that was the common price on a plantation. Today, you get dollar a pound, dressed. Plus you don't have frozen foods much in those days, so it was not imported. So they were all fresh. But it was a dollar a pound during those days.

WN: And community gardens, I'm sure, played a big role, too?

LV: Community gardens played a big role throughout the years even during the non-strike periods, but more so during the strike periods. What was helpful about those—some people call that victory gardens or community gardens, the plantation allowed water to be brought into those areas. So they provided. There was plumbing so people could irrigate their crops. There were different places in the community where gardens could be maintained. Because this was a plantation town, you didn't see or hear much about people stealing (chuckles) other people's produce or anything because there's a lot of harmony in the community.

WN: What were some of the vegetable staples during the strike?

LV: During the strike and even during non-strike, Asians were very good at any kind of a crop. Chinese cabbage was common, head cabbage, lettuce, tomatoes, eggplants, parsley. They would have carrots. Just about name any produce—rhubarb—they were good. Asians were good farmers. They're farmers by nature, anyway, so they were good at almost any crop that you could think of. And it played an important role in the kitchen table.

WN: And then, again, like the chickens, getting the fertilizer and so forth could have been a hardship, too, during the strike.

LV: Chicken fertilizer was also used a lot (chuckles) in those days. They didn't necessarily import fertilizer. But they used their own chicken fertilizer. It was not uncommon to see that being used on the plantation.

WN: You mentioned conflicts that were settled after the strike in court. Can you sort of talk about what you remember? What kinds of conflicts? You said, some were throwing people into the harbor.

LV: Yes. That was when the strike was on for so long. The anguish developed with some of supervisors at Kaumālapa'u Harbor. They went in truckloads, they went in carloads, they went down. And they just, out of anger, they made sure that some of the supervisors got thrown in the water. That was one of the incidents.

Another incident was people would lie on the road and not let any cars or trucks pass. Just disrupt the event. They were arrested for that. People were arrested for that harbor thing. I don't know what the settlement eventually was because during periods of strike, sometimes labor events are handled within labor rules, not necessarily by circuit courts. I don't know. Many of them had to face the judge. And the judge at that time was a part-time judge. He was the banker of the island who also served as a judge.

WN: Who was this?

LV: Judge [Arthur] Carlson. He was also the judge on the island. So he handled the money during part of the day, and certain days, he'd conduct court, and that's how that went. Many of them had to face that. When they did some unneeded certain kinds of unlawful picketing, they were arrested for that. So those were some of the kinds of things. But there was no murder, or rape, or vicious violence that I can recall that happened. Maybe it did happen, but not to my memory, anyway. I don't recall that kind. Because the island is so small, if something of that nature would happen, everybody would know it within the hour. But I don't recall those things happening. Thank God for that.

WN: And looking back, what, in your opinion, did the strike mean to Lāna'i? Did Lāna'i change at all because of the strike?

LV: Yes, I think there were some mixed feelings. There were multiple feelings about the situation. Some felt victorious that they could sustain themselves. They won the strike. But winning a strike is a matter of question. What is winning a strike? What does it mean? So to some people, they felt the victory of having sustained it. To some, the depression set in because all of what they had were absorbed in daily living and they realized that it could never be recovered. Some people moved out of the island after that. Some people felt they would never want to experience a strike for the rest of their lives. So when strike talk came about some years later, family members stood up in front of the union to plead the case and said they never want to experience that again. So it left a bitter taste in the mouths of many. But like I said, it was mixed, yeah? Some felt they had won something. Some felt it was so bad that they left for the Mainland or left the island to come to O'ahu and start new. Some left during the strike and said they would never be able to make it again. So during the strike, some left. After the strike, other people left. So it left a really difficult situation.

And from the plantation side, seven months of non-cultivating the field and so forth, there was a large recovery to be done. The fields had to be plowed. The fields had to be cleaned. Planting had to take place again before harvesting could. It takes about twenty-three months for a [pineapple] plant to bear fruit. So to clean all of the fields, to plow them again, to replant, and hope for harvest. You know, the harvest would not come for two years. That was a long period of non-economic gain because it was just preparing the crops for harvest someday. But it was a difficult time because cleaning the fields and doing all the work was hard work. That's when they employed lots of students, like we were students, to go and work part-time. We'd work during the summer when we'd get paid. We started at forty-seven and fifty-six cents. Forty-seven cents and fifty-six cents an hour.

WN: What did you get? Forty-seven or fifty-six?

LV: First we started at forty-seven and later we got a raise to fifty-six cents.

(Laughter)

Well, plantation pay prior to that wasn't too high, anyway. Even the adults were making like a dollar and forty cents. It wasn't until much later, that agricultural workers started to make eight to ten dollars or more. The highest paid agricultural workers in the world were actually in Hawai'i.

WN: Right.

LV: But it took a long period to get there. But the recovery of both emotions and feelings of the community, recovery of the economic side of the plantation, those were rebuilding years. It was a defining period in the sense that what would the community be like when this is settled. And it made a definite difference, the consciousness of a difficult period, the recovery coming on, and the hope that things will be better in the future. Also, the idea of it never again coming into the minds of lots of people.

WN: We know the economic reasons for why Lāna'i stayed out longer and so forth, but in terms of why did Lāna'i's people stay out longer, even to the risk of not having employment for seven months and then, in essence, benefiting the rest of the units throughout the state.

LV: They wanted more than what they were getting. But you also have to remember the demographics at that time. As I said, there were many bachelor workers. And the outlook of a bachelor as compared to a family person was also different. So they felt bold enough that they could sustain it to get the better goods they were expecting. Realizing, of course, they may be at the sacrifice of other plantations. But they're also proud of the fact that they could sustain the strike.

WN: Were there more bachelors on Lāna'i than, say, Wahiawā?

LV: Well, proportionately, yes. But Wahiawā is the bigger town. So when you look at it, there may have been as many bachelors there, but proportionately speaking, Lāna'i had a much larger proportion of bachelors because it's only 3,000 people as compared to Wahiawā. But Wahiawā had its bachelor groups as well. But then, there were other things on O'ahu, where people could move away, they could get other jobs, they could do other things. The base is a larger base, even though there are lots of plantation workers. The base itself is a larger base to work with.

WN: Do you remember animosities between Lāna'i people and people from other parts of O'ahu who were in pineapple who benefited from Lāna'i staying out?

- LV: I don't recall that. In fact, some Lāna'ī people had to be transferred to Wahiawā after a while to work on the. . . . Because it was the same company, the Dole plan[tation]—it was called Dole at that time. I don't recall that. The unionism was so strong that they felt that union, they're going to do it regardless. And they did it, so.
- WN: And tell us about Pedro de la Cruz. He was the leader of the strike. What kind of a man was he and how did he lead?
- LV: He was interesting in that he was from the Philippines originally. He would have been a West Point appointee. He could have been a candidate to have gone. He was an intelligent man. He was also articulate. He was maybe about five-feet seven. But he was articulate, spoke well, and generated a lot of respect from the people. Before becoming the union leader, you see, he was management. He was a high foreman, a high-graded foreman with the plantation. But when they realized, however, he was involved in union business, then they terminated him. Then he became a full-time union leader. And he became strong because he was bilingual. You have more Filipinos, so he had a strong following. He was regarded so highly by them that when he said "left," everybody went left; he said "right," everybody *wen* go right. He was a strong, articulate leader. He got along also well with the other Filipinos who were in management or workers. He was a respected community person. Eventually, he became a legislator, too, as you know. So he was highly regarded for having engineered the long strike. From that, he gained a lot of respect for maintaining the union. He was a strong ILWU person. He was one of the strong pineapple ILWU leaders in the state. Then eventually, besides the union, he became a merchant. He opened up his own store [International Food and Clothing Center]. He had lot of support from other people. So he was a leader that had a lot of charisma to the people. He was bold, he was articulate, he was intelligent. And they felt that they were going to battle with him. So he was a strong leader in that sense. He was charismatic in that he could draw and command the groups well.
- LV: How did your father get along with him?
- LV: Very well. They were close friends, as a matter of fact, regardless of being on opposite sides. He maintained his relationship with management and others, fully realizing they were on opposite sides of the plantation when it came to matters of union. But the relationships were well maintained. And Pedro de la Cruz maintained his relationship well with the other community members. He was highly regarded in the union world.
- WN: So non-Filipinos like the Japanese also respected Pedro de la Cruz?
- LV: You also had Japanese leaders, you know, in the union ranks. So in as much as Pedro de la Cruz had a lot of Filipinos, Filipino following, the Hokama brothers, Shiro and Goro, among others, were also articulate Japanese [leaders]. One was in the office; one was in the mechanics. But they were also articulate, and strong, and bold. They followed Pedro very well, and they were highly regarded union leaders. So it wasn't only Filipinos. They had also good—in the rank and file—strong Japanese leaders in the union. So it was a strong bond. Unionism bonded them well. So you had Filipino leadership, as well as Japanese leadership, even though Pedro de la Cruz was the head [i.e., de la Cruz was president of the ILWU Lāna'ī unit]. But he did have other ethnic groups in it. Mostly the Hokama brothers. Those Hokama brothers, Goro and Shiro, were excellent leaders in the union rank and file.
- WN: Pedro de la Cruz was Ilocano, correct?

LV: Yes.

WN: And there were Visayans on the island as well, right?

LV: Yes.

WN: How were the relationships between Ilocanos and Visayans?

LV: That animosity that they said [existed] between Visayans and Ilocanos, it's more of a traditional conflict, you know. As people moved to Hawai'i, those things began to wane. I have an uncle who's Visayan and an aunt who's Ilocano. My dad was a mediator. And you're talking about the early [19]40s. As I said, the animosity of those feelings somewhat diminished in Hawai'i. It wasn't as pronounced. Maybe in different communities. But generally speaking, it began to wane in Hawai'i. People realized that. . . . (Chuckles) People said, "You're not Filipino, you're Visayan." They would kid like that. But actually, that thing didn't exist as strongly. It's mostly the old folks that thought about it. And in a sense, it was a matter of security for folks, the prejudice that they felt even among Filipinos. Because Ilocanos want to be with Ilocanos, and Visayans want to be with Visayans. So in a sense, it was a matter of security that they would maintain their own ethnic or cultural feeling. To a large extent, the prejudice is based more on security more than hating the other person. I think so, anyway.

WN: Plus the languages were totally different, yeah?

LV: There are eighty-six dialects in the Philippines. But the dialects were so diverse, so different, that they could be classified as eighty-six languages. Because a Tagalog person would not necessarily understand an Ilocano. But of course, today, many of them are bilingual in the sense that they understand Tagalog and Ilocano. My dad could understand some Tagalog, Visayan, and Ilocano. So lots of them, like in Europe where you learn multiple languages, in the Philippines and others, they learned multiple dialects as well. They call them "dialects," but they're distinctly different. There may be a few words that may be recognizable, but basically speaking, they're very different.

WN: And your mother being a court interpreter . . .

LV: Ilocano.

WN: It was all in Ilocano?

LV: She was an Ilocano court interpreter. And most of the bachelors were Ilocanos on the island.

MK: I have one question before we get into your schooling. I noticed that you folks moved house in [19]52, [19]53, some time when you were in high school. How come you folks moved house?

LV: Because we were in a two-bedroom house. The home we moved to was a three-bedroom house, which was larger. But it was also the time when the plantation began to sell the homes. Prior to that, it was rental. At that time, the late [19]40s and early [19]50s, they began to sell the properties. So when we moved in back of the school new development area, which was a larger area, the homes were selling for \$4,000 or \$5,000. And they started selling the cottages we lived in for \$1,800 or \$1,500 or \$2,000. House and lot. There were plantation-built homes, plantation cottages, and you could buy the house and lot. So it was a chance to purchase the home and move

to a bigger home. And that's when they started selling the homes. So that made lots of people move because where they could find better quarters, it was worth the move.

WN: So this was going on even before the [19]51 strike?

LV: Yes.

WN: So it wasn't a result of the [19]51 strike that they started to sell . . .

LV: No.

MK: During your high school years, you were living nearer to the school, then.

LV: Yes, right in back of the school, in fact.

WN: Okay, before we get into high school, let's talk about going to elementary school. What was elementary school like for you?

LV: School was always a pleasant place for me and for many other kids. Going to school barefooted was common in those days. *Zoris* were not that common, you know, because they didn't have the rubber. Those were war products. You didn't have too many rubber products available. *Zoris* were not made or were not as common to be used. People could make *getas*, but they could not make *zoris*. So it was not uncommon that we'd go to school until we were intermediate to go to school barefooted.

School was always a pleasant place to be at. We were exposed to new foods because it was American cafeteria. They had flush toilets at the schools. Not every home had flush toilets at that time. Somehow schooling was a place that exposed us to many things besides social events and a new environment. Of course, learning. The teachers had to be brought [i.e., recruited] to the island. There weren't too many resident teachers, so it was not uncommon to have different teachers every year because they didn't have enough teachers. So that's why they provided cottages for teachers, just as they did on O'ahu in rural areas. So they could bring them to the island. Some of them came from the Mainland, some from O'ahu. School was a pleasant place for us.

MK: You know, when you look back on the teachers that came to the island, your elementary school grades, are there some that kind of stand out in your mind?

LV: Well, there were a number of them. I was fortunate. I had good teachers. Some of the really outstanding ones was the banker's wife. Everyone remembers, if you talk to others in our age, they'll remember Mrs. [Bertha] Carlson. At that time, it was the Bishop National Bank. She was the wife of the banker [Arthur Carlson]. She was a teacher with a lot of compassion. You learned a lot. But she also had a lot of compassion for individuals. She cared for every student. The curriculum that she brought in was a very enriching curriculum. Study the world; study the states. She would do masterful things in her instruction.

The postmaster's wife was also an outstanding teacher, Mrs. Tom. These were resident teachers. They also had the same qualities. Until I became an adult, I got along well with them, my elementary. High school, I still have some teachers who are still very good friends of mine from our high school days.

- MK: You mentioned that there were many teachers that came from the Mainland. Since you were kind of in contact with these Mainland teachers, did you get to learn about the world beyond Lāna‘i?
- LV: Yes, for instance, one of the supervisor’s wife, my fourth-grade teacher was very good. Her name was Sylvia Welch. She became Sylvia Mitsunaga. She’s passed on, but her husband was a supervisor. They would speak of days of what winter was like. They talked about the Mainland, which we only heard of. And there were no televisions in those days, so we could only vicariously hope we could capture some of the things they were talking about. So we were exposed in that sense, but very limiting when you think about it. So, you know, one of the exposing places was going to the movies. Because in the movies, they would have a [short subject] prior to the main feature. They would have news of the world. And from that, you could see what news was like outside of the island. So the movies became an important part to learn. But our teachers from the Mainland were nice. Lāna‘i was so limiting, unfortunately, for these young teachers. The social events and the places to go, it’s very limiting, so many of them stayed for a year and left and new teachers came.
- MK: I’m a little bit curious about in terms of the languages that you’re familiar with. At home, what were you using?
- LV: My parents spoke Ilocano at home. But my mother was very articulate in English. She didn’t speak to us in the [Ilocano] language. My mom and dad used the language. But we spoke English throughout.
- MK: And then how much Ilocano did you know?
- LV: I can interpret almost word for word, but I can’t compose a sentence to save my soul. It’s so ugly, I can’t remember how to put the words together. But I could interpret. I could interpret almost word for word, Ilocano saying. But I’m not good at responding.
- MK: And from your parents’ side, what were their feelings about your learning English in the schools?
- LV: They were somewhat visionary in that they realized that our world would be an English-speaking world. They wanted to be sure that we spoke well. It didn’t bother them that much that we didn’t speak the [Ilocano] language because we understood the language. So they weren’t necessarily concerned that much about speaking as much as they wanted us to be very articulate in English, be able to express ourselves well, because they realized that this would be an English-speaking world. But we understood the language. Not like Japanese or Chinese, where they had language schools. Filipinos did not have that. They didn’t have any language schools like the others would have, so we didn’t get to learn it.
- MK: You sort of talked a little bit about your elementary school days. I was wondering, what events, say, outside of the reading, writing, and arithmetic, stand out in your mind when you think back about your small kid elementary school days?
- LV: I guess our relationships. We had lots of close friends. In school, you did the things you weren’t exposed to anywhere else other than school, like a May Day event, a social event, and so forth. I guess those are the things I remember the most, mostly the relationships with the students in elementary. But we didn’t have extracurricular like you did in high school.
- WN: What were your favorite subjects in high school?

LV: I was more in language arts and social studies, I guess, were my areas. Not strong in (chuckles) chemistry and physics.

WN: Like English, social studies . . .

LV: Sports was my first favorite subject.

(Laughter)

WN: Okay. Sports or PE [physical education]?

LV: No, actually, language arts and social studies, I guess, would be the areas that I was. . . . And speech, of course. I participated in lots of events at that time.

WN: And when was it that you realized or you felt that you wanted to continue and go on to college?

LV: Somehow, it was ingrained with us. My parents were, as I said, it wasn't a matter of whether we were going to school or not, it was where we were going to school. It was just assumed that we would go to school. Because they sacrificed a lot. My mother was an unusual woman. She was somewhat ahead of her time. She'd sacrifice the material things. Like for instance, we were the only home that didn't have a television in high school. She said that's not important. We didn't get new furniture. That's not that important. But she would go on the street if she had to, to sell eggs or sell something so I could go to Hilo or go to visit another school or go to a conference. She was very concerned about those. To her, those things were more important than getting the material things. So she said, to her, sacrificing material goods was important. So doing things that are school-related or learning-related, to her, were far more important. So going to college was not whether we were going or not, but where we could afford to go. So my sister was older than I and she went to Salina in Kansas to go to school.

WN: And how were your parents in terms of monitoring your grades?

LV: They never asked about grades. They never worried about grades. Whether we struggled or not, they never knew the hardships and the difficulties. They never worried about grades. Are you doing all right? Are you doing okay? That's the extent of grades. They assumed we would not fail. (Chuckles) It was just to be sure that we're okay and we're doing fine. But it's very difficult with one worker and my mother was an occasional worker to send people to college. They struggled to send us to college. So it was unusual. Especially Filipino families at that time, it wasn't that common. They sent all four of us.

WN: That was unusual for your family living on Lāna'i to send all of you to college?

LV: That was. So it was quite unusual that all of us would go to college.

WN: And did you feel any pressure because of this unusual . . .

LV: Well, pressure in the sense that you wanted to be sure that you finished college. Because it was a day-to-day living and we struggled to go to college. Money was not easy to come by, working for ninety cents an hour. My wife supported me. So that brought us through. Economically, it was very difficult to go to school.

WN: We'll get to that next time, about UH and getting married and so forth. I think we're pretty much finished for today, if that's okay. So we'll pick this up next time with UH and your career, okay?

LV: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape Nos. 56-6-3-10, 56-7-3-10, and 56-8-3-10

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Liberato C. Viduya, Jr. (LV)

Pearl City, O‘ahu

March 29, 2010

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN) and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

WN: This is an interview with Mr. Liberato Viduya. I want to say “Libby,” but Liberato “Libby” Viduya. And this is session number three, tape number one, on March 29, 2010. And the interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

Last time we left off, you were just about graduating from Lāna‘i High [and Elementary] School. We didn’t talk about your sports activities connected to high school and, well, outside of high school as well. Can you talk about that?

LV: In a small town like Lāna‘i, sports and social events, there’s a sense of inclusiveness. So you don’t have to be good (chuckles) to be on the team, but it occupied a good part of our time very constructively, athletics throughout the year and social events throughout the year. But that’s part of the nurturing culture, I think, of a plantation town. Rather than exclude people, there’s a sense to try to include them and make them part of it. So I was very active in athletics—football, and basketball, and baseball primarily, and tennis, leisurely. So you were very involved, and it occupied a good part of our time, not only as a league but also beyond the league. So we played with our peers. We also played with senior members of the plantation. So the school was a part of the total community. When athletics was done, it was done for the school and community. So we participated within the community. Of course, we played [in the] interscholastic [league] with other schools, but in addition to that, a plantation town like Lāna‘i or Moloka‘i, you usually get involved with the community as well. And it was very constructive. You had many cultures because the senior members of the community always gave advice. (Chuckles) You know, it was a very nurturing kind of activity.

MK: And like how did the families get involved in these sporting events?

LV: Because there weren’t too many competing events on a plantation, athletics took an important part. Because that was the only game in town. And so, participation, whether day or evening, was very well done by the community. So it became a school-community function, whether it was a day event or an evening event. It was also interesting. In the early days, when schools like Punahou, McKinley, or Farrington went to a neighbor island, Lāna‘i was a common stopover. They used to have these stopovers from one island to the next. It wasn’t directly from Hilo to O‘ahu. But they’d go to Hilo, they’d stop on Lāna‘i, and they would come back. So we had the opportunity to play against really good teams. We got blasted, of course.

(Laughter)

They were so good. But it gave us an opportunity to participate. So interesting, that names like Al Harrington, Espinda, and Smith, and all those names, were popular names. Lāna‘i was a stopover, so we had an opportunity to engage ourselves with people passing by on the island. So athletics was really a school-community. . . . And community was—the plantation—was supportive of these events because it occupied the people’s time very constructively. And there were many interethnic events. The Hawaiians had a team, Japanese had the AJA. They had the international Cardinals team. Filipino team. They had a Puerto Rican team. And they had the high school team. So it was really interethnic and it was strengthened by the spirit of the game. And the plantation was supportive by providing the facilities, and the maintenance, and to some degree, a good part of the supplies of maintaining an athletic program. So it was really a school-community, supported by the plantation, even though there was an agency that coordinated the functions.

WN: Lāna‘i was part of the Maui Interscholastic League, right?

LV: That’s right. The Maui County Interscholastic . . .

WN: Maui County, right. And so, you’re saying then that the plantation actually helped subsidize or helped pay for some of the operation of the teams or . . .

LV: No, only on the island. Only on the island. If it was between Baldwin and Lāna‘i, the plantation was not involved in that. But another supportive part is they provided boat transportation at no cost. So we could board the boat at six-thirty in the morning, arrive in Lahaina about nine-thirty. Stay there for about two or three nights, board the boat again, and then return. So in that sense, the plantation provided that support. But they didn’t pay for anything else when interscholastic. But they maintained community activities. So in that sense, it was very supportive.

WN: And Lāna‘i, being part of the Maui Interscholastic League, you had to do a lot of traveling because you’d have to play Moloka‘i and Maui teams, right?

LV: That’s right. When the boats were available, it wasn’t too bad. But when the boats were no longer there, it was very expensive because air transportation is expensive. So it had to be done more infrequently because of the cost of transportation.

WN: And when did the boats stop going?

LV: I think in the early [19]50s it stopped. I take that back. It was maybe late [19]50s when it stopped. It could take thirty, forty, fifty people on those sampan-type boats. It also took groceries and things from Maui to Lāna‘i. So it served a dual purpose. But it accommodated the community. And to fly to Honolulu when there was still no airport on Lāna‘i, you had to board the boat to Maui, take the plane from Maui to O‘ahu. Those were the early days before the airport was established.

WN: And did you folks ever take the boat from Lāna‘i directly to Honolulu?

LV: It could be done, but that was not a common run. It was a Lāna‘i-Maui-Moloka‘i run. The only time they did that was when they had the barge. The barge was able to bring in cars. During harvest time, tons of pineapple were loaded onto the barge. It took an overnight journey to O‘ahu, unload the pines, return to Lāna‘i to pick up pineapples again. But then it could take heavy cargo as well, but no passengers. That was the only Lāna‘i-O‘ahu run.

- MK: You mentioned that when the Lāna‘i team went to like Maui, you folks would stay there two, three nights. Where did you guys stay?
- LV: It was interesting because in the early days, we weren't hotel-bound as people are today. The Baldwin House was a county-type activity. We would have cots. They'd let us stay there at no cost. Very accommodating in the early days. We even had to stay at gymnasiums if necessary. Then eventually, hotels, but it wasn't until later that hotels became more acceptable or more affordable for people. So there were many places that were accommodating.
- MK: And then when teams came to Lāna‘i, where did they stay?
- LV: That's where the plantation, again, was supportive. They had these boardinghouses that I mentioned earlier. They became lodging places for teams to stay. It was not the most attractive. It had a bed, it had the accommodations of a place to stay, a rooming house, but they'd have to eat elsewhere. So it was lodging, at no cost. The plantation afforded that. So when you look at it, the plantation had a very integral part of the entire life of the community. Things of that nature, we took so much for granted, but. A team from Honolulu would come. They'd place them in the boardinghouse. They'd stay there. They had accommodations for living. But then they'd go to little restaurants in the community to dine. But it was accommodating in that sense. So it wasn't hotel-bound again. The plantation undertook much of the support of that kind of activity. And so we welcomed the participation of outside groups. It was enriching for a plantation community and culture to have people from the outside come in and participate.
- MK: In those days, did Lāna‘i have a recreation director employed by the plantation to take care of these things?
- LV: They had an agency— Lāna‘i Community Welfare Association. But prior to that, they assigned an officer of the community to oversee that. Before the establishment of that community agency, the plantation saw to it that there would be an officer that would help coordinate events. See, the gym was also—it was a Maui County-owned gym, but the plantation was very supportive of the events there. And so, we had to eventually develop welfare—not welfare from the impoverished standpoint but it was welfare in benefits kind of association to coordinate those functions.
- WN: You know, what were political campaigns like on Lāna‘i?
- LV: That went through different generations, you know. In the 1940s, you had people like Eddie Tam, John Bulgo, really profound and bombastic kind of campaigning. They came with an entourage [from Maui]. Lena Machado accompanied them. So it was a really big rally. And they would verbally fight it out. It was colorful, extremely colorful, because Lāna‘i was part of the county of which the mayor of Maui [served]. Eddie Tam was a very flamboyant person. Hannibal Tavares, all of them, they're all part of this large political group that came to the island to campaign. It was extremely colorful, the old days, where the *'ukulele* would come out, the singing and the playing, and the gym would be flooded with people. They would have verbal debates and campaigning was very vigorous.
- That was one generation. The next generation of political activities changed. After that, Lāna‘i had its own representative to the [state] house of representatives. That's when people like Pedro de la Cruz and others became involved. Goro Hokama became the [Maui] County councilman [from Lāna‘i]. Pedro de la Cruz became [state] representative. So that was the next generation of political participation. And so people on the island were wooed by different campaign workers. The plantation, to a large extent, the supervisory portion of the plantation, was largely

Republican. The union people were largely Democrats. So it was a fierce battle between Democrats and Republicans. And Pedro de la Cruz was very popular because he was a union leader, he was a Filipino leader, he was articulate. So he ran. He became [state] representative of the island for a number of years. The other prominent one was Goro Hokama, who was the acting mayor, council chairman of Maui County, and he was there for many years. Goro was an employee of the plantation, but he maintained a close alliance with the union. He and his brother Shiro were strong leaders in the union campaign, even though the majority of the population then was Filipinos as the immigration came on. But they maintained the voting population and they maintained their position and posture as strong political advocates. The post office on Lāna‘i is now named after Goro Hokama. And the gym is [named after] Pedro de la Cruz. They’re prominent politicians.

In the next generation, we have Solomon Kahoohalahala, who represented Lāna‘i on the Maui County council. So I’ve witnessed, I think, from the flamboyant days and the colorful type of political campaigning, to the Goro [Hokama] and Pedro de la Cruz era, and now the Solomon Kahoohalahala generation. So I think we saw different types of campaigning.

- WN: So prior to Pedro de la Cruz being a representative, there was no representative of Lāna‘i?
- LV: No, not to the state legislature. It was [only] after statehood.
- WN: Oh, okay. So Lāna‘i people could vote for a Maui person to represent Lāna‘i [in the Hawai‘i State Legislature]? Is that how it worked?
- LV: At that time, I think that’s what it was. But Lāna‘i people could run for the county council on Maui. But most of the time, we were part of the portion of Maui and Lāna‘i.
- WN: So Pedro de la Cruz, being a union guy, had to play ball with the company, and Hokama, being a company man, had to play ball with the unions. Was that a difficult feat?
- LV: I think so. I think they had to tap dance very delicately. Goro had to be sure that he did not violate his employment with the plantation and yet he maintained a strong alliance with Pedro de la Cruz. And he did it very well. And the other part is that Goro, being on the council, also benefited the company. So when it came to land propositions, certain county policies, county ordinances, Goro was there representing the [Lāna‘i] community. So it wasn’t a union or a company matter, it was a Lāna‘i matter. And Goro was there to take care of county ordinances. Pedro de la Cruz was definitely a union leader, but all union leaders had to learn how to negotiate, compromise, and deal with the opposition or management. That’s part of the life of unionism. It was done very civilly. And people respected that.
- WN: And in your opinion, how important a role did Lāna‘i play in Maui County politics? For example, the election of the chairman [i.e., mayor], like Eddie Tam. Did they treat Lāna‘i seriously in your opinion? Or was it like, aah, we don’t have to worry . . .
- LV: For them to come over with an entourage, a musician, and players, they appreciated Lāna‘i’s participation. Maui is a much larger island, but they didn’t ignore Lāna‘i from the early days. Because to bring a whole group of musicians and singers to the plantation and spend one or two nights there campaigning, that in itself is a serious matter. So it wasn’t as though they just sent brochures. They personally came. Hannibal Tavares. Eddie Tam. [S. George] Fukuoka. There are a lot of big names in Maui County politics. They came to the island. So I think it showed respect

for enough of a critical mass that to them was significant enough to participate. Otherwise, it could be ignored but it wasn't.

WN: So when you say colorful, can you give examples?

LV: It was like having a plantation town, the whole community was there. Like I said, Lena Machado was part of the group. They would entertain, they would sing. And they would have verbal debates. (Chuckles) Vigorous verbal debates. One calling the other this and that. Who's calling the kettle black and all that kind of a . . . So it was really colorful. It was entertaining as well. So that was, in a sense, interesting to see. But it was politics in action. So the Lānaʻi people were very involved. And union members saw a part of politics in their development.

WN: While you were growing up in the [19]40s and [19]50s, Lānaʻi was solidly Democratic? Did they follow the same trend that the . . .

LV: To a large extent, it had a strong Democratic following, but it had strong Republican leadership because much of the supervisory group was a Republican group. But the rank and file of ILWU was strongly Democratic.

WN: Did politics change after the [19]51 strike at all in terms of allegiances?

LV: No, I think it remained the same, pretty much. I think the divide between who was Republican, who was Democrat, pretty much remained the same. But I also think it fortified Pedro de la Cruz's position. The fact that he was the leader of the strike, I think fortified that belief in his leadership. They felt a victory. But you know, in a big strike, how do you define victory? It's not an easy definition. But they felt that they sustained themselves, they maintained themselves, so it's maybe a divided question of what victory is. To some, it was a strong victory, to some it may have been a defeat because of the suffering, draining of whatever resources they had. So it had mixed reviews on that. But it was an experience long to be remembered.

MK: Going back to your personal history, when you graduated in 1955, what were your aspirations? What were you thinking of doing?

LV: I thought of going into law at one time as I first thought about it. So I went with that idea, but when I arrived [at college] I realized that it was difficult. One is you had to be smart, and you needed money.

(Laughter)

So I had to change. See, in those days, there was no law school in Hawai'i. So you definitely had to go away in order to enter law. It wasn't until later that the school of law developed. That was one. But then I changed and I started debating on campus and stuff. So I got to enjoy that. So that became my interest.

MK: And I know that, you know, in 1955, you won a national [speaking] competition. Tell us about that.

LV: That was in 1955 and I was a [high school] senior then. I started [entering] as a freshman, participating. It was a Maui County regional competition. I won the county. I went into the state competition. So sophomore, junior, senior: third, second, and finally I took first place my senior year in high school. It was a Future Farmers of America[-sponsored competition], which was a

very vigorous organization, especially during plantation times. From there I went to the Mainland in 1955 to compete in the national. That was an experience in itself. I had a coach with me for four years, Mr. Kengo Takata. So we stayed with the topic and he coached me. We were successful. It wasn't that I was good, it's just that I surprised them by being able to speak English . . .

(Laughter)

. . . in the national competition. So there were about five of us from across the country that competed in Kansas City, Missouri. So that was an experience. I don't think anybody else from Hawai'i has since won that event. [LV finished first in the FFA national public speaking award competition.]

MK: How did Lāna'i react? You know, here's a small island boy winning a big competition.

LV: The state played it big, I gotta tell you. I don't want to talk about myself. But the state [territory] and the plantation played it really big. They had headlines all over. I have a whole booklet of clippings. But the plantation chartered a plane, brought the principal of the school, the teachers, my relatives and friends, and brought them here [to O'ahu]. The [territorial] governor greeted us with a big celebration. Governor [Samuel W.] King at that time had a big celebration at Halekūlani Hotel. And television. So for Hawai'i, they played it really big. And for the one semester, I didn't go to college. I traveled all over the [territory], talking to different schools. It was exciting. But they played it big.

MK: And when you went to all those different schools, what kinds of talk did you give?

LV: They wanted to hear my national oratorical speech, so I delivered the speech at different campuses and answered some questions and explained our tour. That was about it. They had big student-body assemblies on Kaua'i, on Maui, and all of that. I think it was a shock that I won.

(Laughter)

MK: And what was it like for you? A kid from Lāna'i to go to the Mainland?

LV: Going to the Mainland in itself was an experience, coming from a plantation town. Then going into an arena so large was overwhelming to be in such a large arena. I also had a chance to meet at that time big names like Betty Furness, Eddie Fisher, Dave Calloway, and all of those. Because I had won, I had TV participation with them on stage and on television. So it was quite an enriching experience. And you feel humbled by the fact that they made it such a large event, but also gratifying to experience that kind of relationship with people. So I've maintained--my wife Loretta maintained the scrapbooks. So we have lots of memories about that. Of course, (chuckles) my parents were very proud, [coming] from a plantation. And to this day, as old as—I'm seventy-three—I still bump into people, hey, they remember me going to their student body or they came to the university, and people remember. So people have been very nice about it. To this day, I still get comments from people. (Chuckles)

MK: How did your winning that event impact your school and community?

LV: Well, they had interesting phrases written up. The fact that from humble school buildings to be able to compete in nationals. But I had a mother that was very aggressive in training and so she was a home coach pushing me on. She was good about that. But the school itself, from a small

island, was featured because how could anybody from a plantation small school. . . ? So that was gratifying.

MK: That's an accomplishment. And so you actually started UH a little bit late then?

LV: A semester later, because I was traveling all over the islands. Like on the island of Hawai'i, I'd stay for one week and go around the entire island, talking to different high schools. The department [i.e., DOE] paid for all of that and somebody escorted me throughout. So I had an enriching experience. I traveled extensively as a high school student as a result of that.

MK: Having visited different island communities and gone to the Mainland, did that experience affect how you viewed Lāna'i?

LV: Oh yes, I was grateful that we had a very supportive community. The people were always very supportive. You feel good about it. You feel humbled that you could participate from a small school, that you could participate in the larger arena. That itself was a very positive experience. It's just like in sports. When you come from a small school and you beat a big school, you feel kind of good about it. It was some sort of an achievement but still the idea that it was humbling because you felt there were so many people involved in helping coach you through the process. People were very positive about it, even my peers and people around us were very positive about the event. They felt a part of it, I guess, because there was an intimacy in all of our relationships throughout. So I think that was good. They felt a part of that victory.

MK: And this was with the Future Farmers of America, yeah?

LV: That's right.

MK: How important was that organization in Lāna'i, in the schools?

LV: It was a prominent [organization]. In those days, throughout the state, Future Farmers of America, agriculture, vocationally-related events were prominent in the curriculum. McKinley, Farrington, Roosevelt, everybody had agricultural lines like that because there were also federal grants that promoted vocational [education] at that time. So during our era, vocational education was a very important part. Maybe twenty years later, the word vocational appeared to have been given an older twist and people wanted a more modern, technology-related kind of thinking. So whenever you had the word "vocational," they felt maybe it was lesser aspiration. But at that time, vocational throughout the islands was extremely strong, because of the [federal] grants and because of the curriculum, and because this was also was an agricultural state. So you had adult organizations called Young Farmers that supported it, so there was a promotion of agricultural events throughout the state at that time. You had florists, you had agriculturalists, all involved in it. But as industry changed, as things changed, so did the thinking of agricultural and vocational. So you rarely see the term "vocation" in the programs. They like to use anything that's related to information technology and science more than they want vocational, even though there's a definite need. But the term does not have to be "vocational." But there ought to be maybe another title. But the need for the skill, the thinking, and the philosophy is still inherent in the need for that kind of learning. So at that time, vocational was very strong in the department's [i.e., DOE] curriculum.

MK: And then for yourself, you went to UH and what did you major in?

LV: Eventually—I was in liberal arts and sciences. I did major in speech. At first I was thinking of being in speech pathology, but then I changed to general speech because I enjoyed the activities that went with it. Then I went for my professional degree to become a teacher. So from [the College of] Arts and Sciences, I moved over to the College of Education to get, as they call it, the professional diploma.

WN: And for you, personally, was an agricultural vocational direction in your horizon? Did you consider that . . .

LV: I thought about it, but not very seriously at that time. I decided not to. I thought about it, but I never pursued it.

WN: And at that time, was that a common thought, to go away from agricultural vocation, or were you sort of unusual?

LV: No, it wasn't unusual. And there weren't that many people in agriculture, too. I had a few friends, but it was the arts and sciences, liberal arts at that time was not an uncommon thinking during our era when they had arts and sciences and people in liberal arts.

WN: Were you tracked at all at Lāna'i for college prep?

LV: Well, in a sense we were, because (chuckles) Lāna'i had such a small population that if you take chemistry, there's only one chemistry class. If you take physics, there's only one physics class. And basically we were involved in those classes. But we didn't call ourselves college track because in a school so small, you don't have too many tracks.

(Laughter)

But basically, we took the academic offerings that would probably lead us to college.

MK: And then what made you go into teaching?

LV: Because I enjoyed the events of public speaking and debating that I thought education then would be the means that would promote that. So I decided to go into education.

MK: What did your mom and dad think about your choices?

LV: You know, they were very generous in their thinking. They allowed us to be very independent in our thinking. If that's what we had decided, they just went along with it. In as much as they were aggressive in us going to college, they were not dominant in the direction. They gave us a lot of freedom and independence in our thinking.

WN: And what if you told your mom and dad, "I want to stay on Lāna'i and work in the pineapple fields"?

LV: Then maybe we would have (chuckles), I would think that we would have a different thinking, but that never entered our minds. That never entered our minds because I guess we had different aspirations involved in it. But if it did, things would be different.

MK: I have in my notes that you also went overseas. That's before your professional . . .

LV: Before getting my professional [teaching] certificate, we got married. In three weeks or one month after we got married, I went to Midway Island to supervise moving. While going to college, I worked two or three jobs simultaneously. Throughout college, I always had a job. One of the jobs that I had while going to college was driving a trailer, loading up the vans in a moving company. Somebody taught me how to do crating, how to build boxes and everything. I did that during the summer, part-time. So they asked if I would supervise operations on Midway Island. So I did it for almost a year. I went to Midway Island. You know, you have household goods for military families to move in the island, on Midway, and those who moved out. So I brought a small crew with me and we went to Midway Island. Then after a while, I said I don't want to do this for the rest of my life. So I came back and went to get my professional certificate.

WN: So how long were you on Midway?

LV: Almost a year, little short of a year.

WN: So where was Loretta?

LV: Here.

WN: You were married already?

LV: Yeah. So we had—you talk on the phone and you say, “over.” (Chuckles) That was communication at that time.

MK: Oh!

LV: “Over.” Somebody's monitoring and helping you. There was no direct telephone and no TVs or anything. It was really ham stations there. Once a week, we would try to call. So she was here for almost a year. Then I decided to pursue my professional certificate, so going back to the college of ed. Then I went into teaching. So I didn't enter the department [i.e., DOE] until 1963.

WN: At Wai'anae High School, yeah?

LV: That's right.

MK: What were you teaching at Wai'anae, your first teaching . . .

LV: I taught speech. They had required speech. So I taught speech. I was very active in the Speech Association of Hawai'i. So I would take three busloads of kids from Wai'anae, bring them to Punahou [School], St. Louis [School], and the University [of Hawai'i]. I didn't have problems taking the Wai'anae kids because there were only two rules: no smoking and no slippers. And they gave me one rule: I had to stop at the drive-in on the way back.

(Laughter)

For the country kids to come out [to Honolulu], that was a deal. They all paid a dollar for the bus. I would take them to university participation or at St. Louis and at other places. I didn't have enough teachers, so I got some of the football boys. They didn't mind coming to town for the day. So they would be leaders on the bus. So we would take three busloads to Honolulu. It was a big event to come to town. (Chuckles) So I was very active with the kids there. To this day, I still have students of mine.

MK: And teaching at Wai‘anae, did you live in the community of Wai‘anae?

LV: No, I drove in. No freeway at that time. It was one hour, one way. One hour back. There were times when I made the trip three times in one day. Like for instance, I leave five-thirty in the morning in order to come from Honolulu to Wai‘anae. Board the buses with the kids. Bring them to Honolulu. Go back with the bus that day. And then, drive back home. And then go chaperone a dance that night. So that was not uncommon for me.

WN: So that’s Farrington Highway all the way?

LV: Yes, no freeway at that time. Those days, it was not common to have air conditioning in your car.

WN: Yeah, right, right.

LV: That was a long haul. But you know, when you’re young and interested, you get very active in it. It was okay at that time. (Laughs) I couldn’t do it now.

(Laughter)

WN: Was the feeling at a place like Wai‘anae similar to Lāna‘i, you know, small school, country?

LV: It had a country feeling, like Waialua. When I was there, there were no drugs yet. If there were, it wasn’t much. So it was a nice country school when I was out there. It wasn’t until drugs came on the scene back in the mid or later [19]60s that made the place a little tougher. But Wai‘anae was always a tough place because you had such a high percent of people unemployed and on welfare. It was never an easy community. But you know, there was a lot of support. It was an easy country school until drugs came into the picture. That really contaminated the demographics and the socialization of the area.

MK: So you started teaching at Wai‘anae, and how long did you stay in classroom teaching?

LV: I actually taught for three years in the classroom. Then I was never back in the classroom for the next forty-two years. I became a counselor for disadvantaged in the district for two years, and then I went to administration. So I was a school administrator for forty years.

WN: Okay. Why don’t we change tapes.

END OF TAPE NO. 56-6-3-10

TAPE NO. 56-7-3-10

WN: Okay, tape number two, session three, with Libby Viduya.

You know, you were in Wai‘anae High School as a speech teacher for three years from [19]63 to [19]66. Where did you go after that?

LV: Then I went to the Leeward district office. I served as a district counselor on a special project for disadvantaged youth for two years.

WN: Who made or how was the decision made for you to sort of leave the classroom and become . . .

- LV: I was asked if I would take on that position to become a counselor for disadvantaged students. And I thought it was an opportunity. My principal wasn't too happy about that. (Chuckles) And from there, I went into administration.
- WN: That's when you became a program specialist at the DOE in [19]68?
- LV: That's right.
- WN: And what would you say the major differences are between being a counselor for disadvantaged youth or being a program specialist as opposed to being a teacher?
- LV: It's a divided thing because when you work directly with youth or your clients or whatever you might call them, it's different than being a step away. You have to have the interest and the empathy to work with people, and I didn't mind that. That was an important part in being a teacher or a counselor. But then when I move to administration, it was one step removed from a direct participation with students, and that's a different dimension. But the exciting part of administration is the creativity that you could do or you could impact different lives in different ways by the services that you render. So I found interest in administration. So from then on, I stayed in administration. As a program specialist and an assistant administrator, I was like the operations officer of the printing and the multimedia operations. The late Ralph Kiyosaki had a brainchild, that, prior to computers, we got multimedia and print into operations to service teachers. I became the project manager of that thinking, which eventually developed into other things. Then, with the onset of computers, things changed. But at that time, Kiyosaki's vision was to bring in the latest of media [technology]. So I was a part of that. So that was like a project for me. I was there for only three years as the program specialist and administrator. So rather than being a vice principal, I went the other way around. I went to the state office, being an administrator, and then returned to the school after that.
- MK: And when you returned to the school, you ended up becoming vice principal at 'Ewa Beach Elementary [School]?
- LV: Yes, I was a vice principal for one year. What was interesting is that I already had administrator experience, so being a vice principal was different. But after one year, the superintendent felt, oh, I should be ready for a school. So after being a vice principal for one year, I went to Nānāikapono [Elementary School] to become the principal. I was there for two-and-a-half years as principal. Then I was asked to become—when I was asked to become a superintendent, I was called by the [Leeward district] superintendent, and they said if I'd like to go be on the team. I thought I'd probably go back to reprographics. People told me, "You're not being interviewed to go back to be program specialist."
- "What then?"
- "Superintendent."
- I thought they were crazy. But they were right. I always thought I'm going to the state [office] because I may be going back as a program specialist. But I became a district superintendent at that time.
- MK: And when you became district superintendent for Leeward, who was the overall [DOE] superintendent?

- LV: Charles Clark. He was there for about eight years. At the time that we went, the climate of change of administration was not a common thing. To change a district superintendent was not common. It wasn't until after our tenure that it became common to change district superintendents. So I was superintendent that time for about eight years. And I was a young administrator at that time. So it was an experience to be superintendent and to work with your peers that are older peers, but we were colleagues nonetheless. But that was an experience.
- MK: And then so you were in the main office, superintendent's office, until about [19]82 because you went into the Central district, too?
- LV: Yes. I went into Central district. I stayed in Leeward for what is it? I forgot. A total of eight years, anyway. And three years in Central district. And then I went back to principalship.
- MK: Now, which did you prefer? Being in central administration—I mean, main administration, overall administration, or to be an administrator of a school, as a principal?
- LV: School is the most exciting. The dynamics of running a school is probably the most exciting because you have direct interaction. But moving on and being a [district] superintendent, I enjoyed that too, but it was one step removed from direct contact. But you had other reasons to run. What's good about being a superintendent, you had the capacity to be able to create and cause different things to happen. And that became exciting for me. Different projects, different needs, and the exposure is so broad. Being a superintendent, your span of participation is so wide that it gets exciting. At the time that we were superintendent, we were in charge of forty-two schools. The superintendents now are in charge of sixteen or twenty. . . . So there's a large difference in the kind of administration during our time. But we had a larger staff, of course. But the span of responsibility was large because from Wai'anae to Pearl City. Or from Moanalua to Waialua. Large areas of control, so it was a slightly different kind of administration, much larger. When you do that, you also have to deal with multiple communities. Whereas if you're in a high school, you largely deal with one community or a few communities. But as a superintendent, you deal with the military, the general community. You also deal with competing communities, where one community had one interest and the other community has a different interest. So I find it exciting to be able to administer under those conditions.
- MK: Because you did go back to that kind of large superintendency, right, because you went back to Central, and then to Leeward.
- LV: Yes, I was superintendent for Central [district] two times and superintendent for Leeward [district] two times. They also asked me to be at the state office as assistant superintendent for instruction for a while. So I have a varied [administrative experience] and I found it very interesting. I've never been in a place where I never enjoyed working. So for me, that was fortunate. I enjoyed my work.
- WN: And as a product of a public school system and then your entire career in the public school system, what is your philosophy of public education and its role in society?
- LV: I believe public education is a large responsibility and it [creates] a very difficult and challenging situation because you deal with all of the population that comes to your school. In a private school, the difference is, if there are certain segments of the population that may not be in line with the school's philosophy, you can remove them. But in public school, you deal from the very profound misbehavior to the most academically talented students. So in that sense, it's extremely challenging to be in a public school setting. Yet, it has its excitements, you know. Every school

has a degree of very smart kids. The difference is, in public schools you don't have as many as in private schools. So your percentage of the highly academically talented is there in every public school. But the percentage of that population is probably smaller than in a strong private population. You have the [range] of the highly academic to the special education student that needs special attention. So it's an extremely wide range of students that you have to deal with. So I find it very challenging in that sense. But I think that the responsibility of public education is to open its doors to all comers of the community and that becomes the only avenue. For some students, that's the only place of good that they can associate themselves with. The school has to be able to welcome these students and accommodate their needs. It's unfortunate that we don't have as much support as you would want, but you have to deal, of course, with what you have. But I find the responsibility of public education extremely challenging, but very needed in our community, so it needs the support from all levels of our community.

WN: And how unique is Hawai'i public education [system] compared to other parts of the United States? Is Hawai'i faced with a unique set of challenges?

LV: I think so. We're faced like all schools do of trying to become academically talented. All schools across the nation. And Hawai'i has its challenges as well. Part of our problem, however, is that we may not have as much support as we would sometimes like. On the Mainland, you cannot put all of them together because they're independent districts. You have a prominent district, and then you have an impoverished district. We don't rank in the impoverished area, and we may not rank with the most prominent area. Because they float their own taxes and they're independent.

We are probably the most equalizing of all public school systems in the country because of our equal distribution of funding. For instance, if a student is in Kona and a student is in Honolulu, they have the same amount of allocation per dollar whether you're in the country or you're in the city. Whereas if you're on the Mainland, if you're in a prominent district, you float bonds. Your buildings, your funding is high. But if you're in an impoverished area, then you have the hand-me-downs. So we're not at the lowest and we're probably not at the top. But we're competing on both sides.

So Hawai'i is unique in a sense that we have a given population, but people, we have ethnicities that are mixed. Most public schools do. Hawai'i is not unique. You look at New York. They have their own [issues]. You look at San Francisco. We have to deal with—we have largely Asian, but it's still an interethnic group that has to be challenged and have to be provided for. When you look at the successes of our students, both public and private schools, they do very well. But we have to assist, I think, the middle and lower even better. The talented ones will be good wherever they go.

WN: So the centralized school system here in the islands would benefit a place like Lāna'i?

LV: Absolutely. Because if you didn't have the adequate resources, the state provided additional to make up for underfunded schools, so that a foundation program of the department could be established. For instance, physics and chemistry, you don't have a large group, but they'll be sure there'll be a teacher who can teach chemistry, could teach physics, so that they would have a full program even though they have a lack of funding. So additional funding would be provided for those small schools. Because it's a centralized system, there's an equal distribution of funding and special considerations for those communities that may be disadvantaged or impoverished. So a computer can be bought in Kona, it can be bought in Moloka'i, it can be bought in Lāna'i because funding is provided. We don't float special bonds for each community. Everyone has an equal distribution of the funding, so our centralized system has proven to be very useful or very

worthy for communities like Lāna‘i. Then they have their share of the pot. It’s not because they’re a small community. They get less only because of enrollment and not because of per capita.

- WN: So the per pupil allotment is the same throughout the state.
- LV: Per pupil allotment and also level of allotment would be the same. But if you’re a larger school, of course you’re going to have more [funds]. That’s why you can buy a computer on Lāna‘i and Moloka‘i and Kona just as a person at McKinley [High School] could buy.
- WN: So in all your travels, for example, going to the Mainland and looking at other school districts and systems, what were some of the reactions of Hawai‘i’s centralized school system? Was it negative? Positive?
- LV: People were inquisitive about our money. How did we use our money? Because, for instance, Los Angeles, Clarke County, it’s a large community. When I was there one time they said, “In ten years we’re going to build fifty schools.” But they floated bonds in each county, each community, in order to raise those funds. We don’t do that for Kona. We don’t do that for Moloka‘i. It’s on a statewide basis and we hope to be able to meet the needs of each group. So they wanted to know how did we use our money. A number of people studied Hawai‘i’s equal distribution of funding, centralized. But on the Mainland, it’s so wide, so disparate in many ways that a centralized system statewide would not be easy to do. So they have counties (chuckles) as large as Hawai‘i’s [entire] school system. Like Los Angeles county schools and different counties are as large as our statewide system. So maybe they could not get on a statewide, but some counties were looking at how they could do a centralized system. But that’s politically important because our money, we tap on the doors of our legislators. The political climate in different states is different. We are a centralized political system and our money comes from the legislature. I don’t know if the politics of other states would be able to manufacture that kind of a climate.
- WN: Is the centralized system considered progressive today or is it considered sort of anti-capitalist and . . .
- LV: It’s not considered as progressive because they think of the old man in charge kind of a situation, centralized. So it may not. Because the most liberal states: “Give me my money and leave me alone.” So the state superintendent in many districts on the Mainland are not as strong as the state superintendent in Hawai‘i. The Hawai‘i state superintendent is the line officer that can call the shots in Hilo, they can call the shots in Līhu‘e, they can call the shots in Maui. But the state superintendent on the Mainland has to go through the district superintendent. They cannot tell your district on the Mainland, to do this or do that. Our superintendent can because they come under her leadership. But on the Mainland the state superintendent may be politically strong, but when you think of responsibility and command, not as strong. The strength of a state superintendent, however, is they have state monies that can be allocated. But our state superintendent has a very strong sense of command in this state. Probably the strongest state superintendent command than in any other state.
- WN: And throughout your career, you’ve gone through to the Leeward district office superintendent twice, Central district superintendency twice, you even went to the Farrington Community School [for Adults] for fourteen years, then you went back to Central [district]. Are these moves initiated by you? If it wasn’t, what’s the reasoning for moving around so much?

LV: Some, I was asked to move. Some, few choices, I made. When I became [district] superintendent, you don't apply for it. The superintendent calls, he says, "By the way, how about being on the team?" And so you get interviewed. That's how I became a superintendent—district superintendent and assistant superintendent. The superintendent in charge generally asks you. The only choices I made in where I wanted to be were probably the principalships. I wanted to go Waialua [High School], Mililani High School, Nānāikapono [Elementary School]. But all other positions, I was asked to move. So that's how I got to go to different places.

WN: Was there any time when you said, "Shoot, I don't want to move." (Laughs)

LV: There was! At one time, there was one decision late in my career. I was superintendent of Central district. And the superintendent said, "How about being assistant superintendent?"

I said, "Aw, I don't want to. I want to be at Central."

"No, you should strongly consider because if you don't—" this and that.

I waited, then "Oh, sure, okay. I'll take it," I said. That was one.

Another time, the superintendent asked me—I was assistant superintendent. We had an issue in Leeward. So he said, "How about going to Leeward? Could use a hand there."

I did that. And you know, when you're on a team, if they ask you to bat number one or number six, wherever the coach tells you to bat, as part of the team, you may not want to bat number one, but if he thinks you should be number one or number two. So, to me, that's the philosophy I have. If that's what the interest of the coach is, of course I want to cooperate. So sometimes, my own feelings may not necessarily be that, but generally I am cooperative. I haven't found distaste in cooperating.

WN: And how would you characterize yourself as an administrator?

LV: I've had a fulfilled career, you know. To this day, I have teachers whom I don't even remember, "Ey, Mr. Viduya, you were at my school." I went to a wake just last week, "We're from 'Iliahi [Elementary] School." I felt I had a good career and different accomplishments throughout. Or I would see some of my former students, so I felt pretty good about having served. You only feel as good as you've been able to serve. There's no selfish interest in it. But "Did I do a good enough job to maintain or serve them?" And I hope in the end it was positive, but I'm happy that I get positive responses. Of course, I put my foot in my mouth (chuckles) a number of times. Never a perfect situation. There are times you say something, oh God, how could I possibly have said it? Don't get me wrong. I've had my share of foot-in-mouth situations (chuckles) as an administrator. especially if you say it to the media. You say it once. And whether the intentions were understood or not, it was said. I've had my experiences in that.

MK: You know, you basically left Lāna'i in 1955, yeah? You graduated from high school, then you went through college, and then you got married, and you had a life basically on O'ahu.

LV: That's right.

MK: And yet, when people talk about Lāna'i or tell us, oh, we should go interview So-and-So, they often mention your name and your family. There is still this connection to Lāna'i. How come?

LV: There's a strong kinship, you know, on the plantation. We never got in trouble. Thank goodness we were able to do some things that were positive. We've had good lasting relationships, so the linkages and relationships that were established early have been sustained, I think, largely because there's a lot of *aloha*. There's a lot of spirit of relationship to the young and the old. To those who are eighty and ninety today, to those who are forty and fifty. And because we were able to go to college from a small town and be able to succeed to some degree, it may have left some impressions on others. They were nice to my parents and said, "Oh, I'm glad your kids are doing well," this and that. So it perpetuated a good feeling about it. But I think most importantly, we meant well with people. I don't think we're known to badmouth anybody or anything. That has not been our culture. And I think we've maintained a very positive relationship with people that I'm glad that we have been remembered in a lot of ways that have been positive. But we're not the most or the highest contributing from there. There are those who did so much more in achievement and contribution, but I'm glad we're a part of it. You could name people who have done so well throughout. I'm glad they remember. And my parents were respectable people in the community. That established, I think, for us.

WN: And can you tell us how different a place is Lānaʻi today than it was when you were growing up there? And how similar is it?

LV: I think the difference is that, one thing is that the demographics have changed. The industry has changed. The economics have changed. To the degree that there's no loyalty to any one situation. In our days, what was important was to be loyal to the company that you worked for. So there was a degree of company loyalty that people belonged to and worked for. Now there is no encompassing industry that accommodates the people, so what is the common cause of the island? I hope there's a lot of *aloha* for wanting to live there. But the large difference when you look at it is demographics, the economics and the social situation is very different. The school still remains a pivotal part of the community. But there isn't a plantation where people rally around. So the community associations, I think, I don't know if they're burgeoning or not, but they're bits of community groups. I hope they become little more prominent because they become the successful part. But if there is no industry, there is no economy, it's hard to have a sustainable community that will be productive and enjoyable because people are fighting for survival. Unless you have a job that is civil service, state, or private, it's very difficult. So people move away from the island looking for greener pastures elsewhere. That's the difficult part.

WN: So in the past, there was the company that was drawing people to the island because of the work.

LV: Because of the availability of work and livelihood, and they could maintain a family.

WN: Without that company now, the people that came originally, the families, are leaving.

LV: Well, many of them have lived there, the kids are multiple generations. So the old group is an older group now. It's a younger group that has to be able to survive under these circumstances. The older groups are in their eighties already. You know, the plantation generation, many of them are in their eighties. And many of the kids are in their sixties and living elsewhere. So it's a different demographic. Of course, a few of them, there are still some there, but largely have left. And you find people who love that kind of lifestyle, but like I say, what is the economic situation? I think it's not that easy.

WN: And what causes people to go and live on Lānaʻi today?

LV: You know, there are some kids who grew up there, they love the life. They just love the life that Lāna‘i offered. They love the atmosphere, they love everything about the island even though they struggle to find a survival situation. But many of them love the island climate. So you’ve had kids who have moved back to live there and they enjoy. You just have to have the mindset to want that kind of lifestyle. Everybody has a different fulfillment about their life situation. Some people are townies. They can’t (chuckles) stand it. The streets close up at five o’clock. There’s nothing else to do at night. There’s no place to go, no social event, no bar or anything. Some can’t stand it. They can’t stand being on the island. And yet there are others who just love that laid-back feeling. So some people who experience that, interestingly, are teachers who go to the island. And whether they want to stay there or they come back every weekend shows the kind of excitement they have on the island, you know. It’s not an easy situation, especially depending on the kind of lifestyle you have.

WN: What about newcomers wanting to live on the island?

LV: But like I say, how will they survive? That’s the important part. Retirees love that laid-back feeling. Some have money. They could invest in homes. They like that lifestyle. But if you’re a newcomer looking for new opportunities, it’s tough because survival is first of all. Like Maslow’s Theory, yeah? Shelter and food and all of that first, and then the rest comes into being. Unless they have that, it would be a tough situation. You don’t see too many people moving in unless they had either a survival system or a family that would take care of them. Because it’s not a land of opportunity. It’s hard to start a business when there’s no economy going on the island, I think, anyway. But some people, as I say, enjoy that life and they can survive, and that’s okay. But people with different experiences, it’s a hard adjustment. (Chuckles)

WN: For the future of Lāna‘i, what is your best-case scenario for Lāna‘i, you know, what you would like to see happen and what is your worst-case scenario?

LV: I think the best case is, I hope the kids look forward to being educated. It doesn’t have to all be college, but a post-high-school education. If they want to come back to service the island, that would be fine. But I think the best situation is to be able to find enterprising economic situations that can sustain a population to live comfortably on the island. Without an economy that would be sustainable, I find it very difficult. The worst scenario for me is if the hotels should fold up and if there’s no other investment on the island, no business would be able to be maintained. That would be the collapse of a community. Not enough of a sustainable living sense. Right now, the hotels are difficult, very expensive places, and yet it is the only large employment situation. I’m hoping in the future that maybe the windmills, alternative energy, those kind of things. Technology could be developed. Maybe be an incubator community or maybe be an energy-distributing community. That may be the future, but there are some who are opposed to windmill technology being on the landscape of the island. But what other industries? I’m not saying it’s the only industry, but there ought to be an enterprising industry that can employ a sufficient number of people to keep the island sustainable. Without an economy or industry of that nature, it could be a collapse of a community, unfortunately.

Moloka‘i is having a tough time, too. Moloka‘i is a similar community. When they have to take the boat to go to Maui to work and come back and then that stopped, it’s difficult. So my worst would be that there would be no sustainable industry or economic engine that could be on the island. My best is that the kids be educated, they can move on in their lives, and that there be an industry [on Lāna‘i] that will be able to embrace the people’s needs. I’m hoping the energy-distribution thing is a possible factor. I don’t know to what extent the windmills have been built,

but that was a proposal. They've had divided responses to it, though. But that may be a futuristic consideration.

WN: Now, how do you want to answer this question. But Lāna'i is an island, in essence, owned by one individual. Under that scenario, do you see progress being made for the island according to your best-case scenario or would you like to see something a little more diverse?

LV: I like diversity. I like diversity, plus I'd like to see a multiple industrial complex come up. The hotels are now the major, not that it should be competing, but I think it would be nice if there could be diverse economic engines on the island that could be created that could generate employment, like I said. I hope that the owner of the island would be able to embrace incoming development of industry on the island. Because they own the island, they are the gatekeepers of what may come on the island and what may not because of the use of land. My hope is that they would accommodate the vision of a new technological nation to be able to enter into the island and create new industries. And I think there would be people smart enough to create that. But I think the landowner will have a lot to do in terms of who enters the island because of the use of land in that. So I'm hoping that, that thing can be developed. Something, anyway, could be developed.

WN: Okay. I wanted to ask you, you mentioned that you're a member of the gap generation. In other words, you remember the time when Lāna'i was, you know, in essence, run by the company as well as the unions. Well, those were two very important elements of daily life. And then you know the situation today. Can you give your thoughts about being a member of this gap generation? What it means to be a member?

LV: It's interesting because for one thing we can embrace and appreciate the generations before us, the culture. We understand the Oriental values and we see that in operation. We get to appreciate and understand it. And to a large extent, we've become intergenerational, interethnic because we embrace it. And yet, we can honor the values and we can also see the change in terms of the newer generation having different interests and sometimes the behavior of the newer interests may not coincide with that of an older generation. But we could see what the old folks did and appreciate what they did, but we could also see the challenges of what the newer generation and new industries have to do. There was a time when I bumped into an old man and said, "Oh, I'm sorry I don't speak the language."

He said, "That's okay if you don't speak the language, as long as you understand and can appreciate."

For folks, that's important, you know, to understand because they're a dying breed. For people we know, we know personally, in their eighties and nineties, and have moved on. By the time my dad died at ninety-four, there were no peers. They were all gone. And that generation is vanishing. When you look at the 442nd [Regimental Combat Team] operation, that nisei group is vanishing, too. They're in their eighties and nineties. And yet we knew the nisei group. They were the generation before us. We also see the newer generation today, a different kind of feeling. They may forget some of the traditional values that may have been a part of the culture of the ethnicity and of the generation, that sometimes they behave a little differently. I hope they don't abandon or lose the core values of the generations they come from. But there's a possibility that because the new generation may not have folks around, that could happen. Not everyone has grandma's or grandpa's generation available. But I hope they can sustain the value of their own culture.

WN: And the *sakadas* that came to the islands to work, what can young people learn from them?

LV: Well, there are several things. And I didn't learn it until I was an adult. In came these new people: young, vigorous, exciting, sometimes loud, but they were young men who were living their own generation. I didn't appreciate that until I became older and realized these young men gave the best part of their lives to sacrifice to come to a foreign country to make a living, return either to the islands or to send money back. They came to a new land of opportunity. I could appreciate the fact that they came to work and many of them were bachelors, no family, and there's a lot of sacrifice for them to come here. Many of them stayed and they lived and died on the island. They're older now, but I can appreciate because they were pioneers having come from a war-ravaged country to come to a new land of opportunity that could become an opportunity for them to have a better life. That's what they sought. And I think they got that. One thing I can appreciate from them as I got older is the sacrifice they made to make a new living for themselves and for their families. And to a large extent, that did occur. But they would not have had that opportunity. Many of the children were not returned to the native country, not that they hate it, it's just that they have learned to live in a new culture. I think they provided a new opportunity for their children and their children's children to this day, now in a land of different opportunities. So I think they pioneered just as the early Americans pioneered in the 1800s, these people pioneered in the mid-1900s, but they persevered and they were able to provide for themselves and provide for succeeding generations to experience their pioneering and their success. So I think they paved the way for the kids and their kids' kids to live in a new country. They became contributing members of our new society. And they took leadership roles, also. If you look at O'ahu, so many of the Asian people have come and become prominent business people in a short time. But they also came from countries they had to escape in order to come to America. They had to escape and they came and they did well. I think it's a similar kind of situation. A new generation challenging a new environment and making a life for themselves and their families. I think that did happen, so I think we can look at that.

I would imagine, before we close, I've had an interesting career. I had a fairly good life. But from when I went to college, my wife [Loretta Canida Viduya] was always supportive of me.

WN: Let's put another tape in.

MK: Yeah.

END OF TAPE NO. 56-7-3-10

TAPE NO. 56-8-3-10

WN: Tape three, session three, with Libby Viduya.

Okay, you were talking.

LV: I just want to say that I've had a very supportive system throughout life. From when I was a youngster, my family was very supportive. When we went to college, my wife and I are high school sweethearts, but because of her I was able to continue through college. She didn't finish, but I finished. But we went through a lot of sacrifice and we've had a long career. But she's been very supportive of all my endeavors. So I'm fortunate in that sense that has maintained. We've been married for forty-nine years.

MK: Wow.

LV: Thank God for that. We have to be thankful that that has happened. But it's been a very supportive career, so. I've had a rather satisfying career. You always wish you could do more, but I was not regretful of what I had done. You always do something, and you know you could have done it better. There's never a total satisfaction. But I've been pleased. My wife and I have had a good relationship and we've been able to carry on. So we've maintained our relationships with our Lāna'i people quite well. We're going to visit a fellow Lanaian at the hospital, he got into an accident. And somehow these relationships, I think I mentioned before, we don't see people for thirty or forty years, but you see them again. At the time you left them, there was so much spirit in that relationship, that when you see them again, you engender that same spirit. So that sense of *aloha* is still there even though you haven't seen them for thirty or forty years. Anyway, that's the way we feel so there's a sustaining kind of relationship. And Lāna'i in its being is really a sense of place. You know, Lāna'i. A sense of place because for us who came from there, it's a special place. Everyone has nostalgic feelings about where they came from. But for us, it's a sense of place that small as it was, it was a microcosm of a large community because people from there ventured to all parts of the world. And the values of the family, the values of the whole community, were lived, I think. And we got to appreciate that and we went out with that kind of feeling, you know. We didn't necessarily huddle in our own camps and in our own ethnic groups, but there was a large degree of intermingling that I think we went out of the island with a feeling that we could live with many other kinds of people. I think that's a good feeling to leave the island with, even though we came from a small town. At the time we were there, the population was 3,000. When everyone leaves, everyone goes on a vacation, it brings the total down.

(Laughter)

WN: It was small, but it was diverse.

LV: It was diverse in many ways. It was ethnically diverse. You had had diverse religions on the island, but with lot of respect for each other. We didn't have interethnic battles that we had to deal with. Diverse in a sense of culture, in terms of ethnicity, in terms of cuisine, in terms of festivities. But everyone appreciated each other's event, you know. So, that was good in that sense.

WN: Personally, I've yet to meet a Lāna'i person who I didn't like. (Laughs)

MK: Yeah.

LV: And you know what's interesting? You know about everybody. They know about you even before you told them, whether you were in trouble, you got. . . . And you know what's interesting, too? It was a very nurturing community. When one kid is in trouble or one person in the family, they're very empathetic about dealing with a child or the family. They felt one person's loss is another person's burden. There was a nurturing feeling about it. But you got scolded not only from one parent but if you did poorly you got scolded from the neighbors as well. Not good boy. (Laughs) So it was interesting.

WN: Maybe that's what's lacking, you know, that feeling.

LV: And there was a lot of respect. We had a strong respect for the older folks. The old folks did command a respect that I think came a lot from the culture, culture that we came from.

WN: Okay, good place to end. Thank you.

MK: Thank you.

LV: Thank you!

END OF INTERVIEW

Lāna‘i:

Reflecting on the Past; Bracing for the Future

Center for Oral History
Social Science Research Institute
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

December 2014