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UN INTERVIEW  
General Carlos P. Romulo  
October 30, 1982  
Interviewers: William Powell  
and Rebecca Akao

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(Founding of the United Nations)

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Narrator's Name: General Carlos P. Romulo  
Tape Number: Roll 1, Set B  
Date of Interview: Saturday, 30 October 1982  
Place of Interview: Philippine House, New York  
Interviewers' Name: William Powell  
Rebecca Akao  
For: Oral History of the United Nations Programme

Powell: And before asking you some questions, General, I have been asked to record this introduction.

General Romulo, you are a man of great distinction and diversity. Few can equal your experience and accomplishments as a teacher, reporter, editor, publisher, soldier, lecturer, writer, and diplomat. With immense dedication and drive, you have achieved excellence in your varied endeavors. Given your active role in drafting and signing the UN Charter at San Francisco in 1945, as Head of the Philippine delegation, your presence today revitalizes the ideals of the founding fathers envisaged as they laboured to bring this new organization into being. From your initial participation in the first session of the UN General Assembly to the present, you have remained steadfast in the cause of peace. In the shadow of adversity, when others have long grown weary, your faith and zeal have remained unflinching. You have always been and continue to be a man of great vision; one who has been able to transcend insurmountable obstacles with hope. We are very privileged to have you with us today to share your personal experience of the drafting of the UN Charter and to evaluate the nature and functioning of the Organization as it has developed to this day. Your insight and unique perspective of the events of the past may provide us with a clearer vision as we look toward the future.

Now, General, I believe that you were appointed as Head of the Philippine delegation to the San Francisco Conference at a rather late date. How, when your President asked you to assume this responsibility, how did you begin your preparation?

Romulo: I don't see why you say that I was appointed at a late date. When it was announced from the White House that the United Nations was going to be organized at the instance of Pres. Roosevelt who first got the approval of several other nations, this was about one month before San Francisco.

Powell: Yes,

Romulo: So, it was not a late date. So, one month before San Francisco, I was called up by the President of the Philippines who was in Florida undergoing surgery, in Jacksonville, Florida. And he called me by phone at about 11 o'clock midnight and said to me, "I'm appointing you as Chairman of the Philippine delegation to the United Nations." I was prepared for that because I was in Washington at that time, as the Resident Commissioner of the Philippines. We were not yet independent; we were still a Commonwealth. And so, instead of an Ambassador, we had what is known as the Resident Commissioner of the Philippines to the United States. And I was that. So,

when he called me up, I said to him, "Well, Mr. President, thank you. I expected that because I have been studying this matter and thinking about it ever since we were fighting in the foxholes of Bataan. I thought that the sufferings we were going through, the sacrifices we were going through should end in a peace that will be shared by everybody in our world." And so, when I said to him, "Mr. President, thank you for this appointment. I'll begin working on it right away."

So, the following day, I went to see Secretary Stettinius, the Secretary of State whom I knew. I informed him that I had been appointed by the President of the Philippines, whose name was Sergio Osmeña, as Chairman of the Philippine delegation to the United Nations. And I said to him, "Mr. Secretary, I came to inform you of that and to tell you that the Philippine delegation will work closely with all the other delegations and with American delegation provided you'll have a liaison officer with us in my delegation and that we will know what is happening." I said "There had been other conferences where the Philippines was apparently inside the conference but outside, insofar as the inside stories were happening. So, he said, "Certainly, I will be glad to appoint a liaison officer with you in San Francisco." So, I said, "No, Mr. Secretary, I want it now so that I can prepare." So, he said, "Okay."

So, he appointed somebody - I forgot his name - who came to see me the following day and we began talking about what I believed should be the United Nations. Well, I began to tell my staff in Washington to get ready and I wanted a complete dossier of all the statements made by President Wilson. I wanted to know what happened to the League of Nations. I wanted to know why the American people refused to join the League of Nations and all the incidents that took place during President Wilson's administration and how he tried to convince the American people that it was worthwhile for them to join or to be interested in the League of Nations. That's the first thing that I did.

Then, secondly, I wanted to know the biographies of all the leaders at that time like Churchill, Orlando of Italy, Clemenceau of France and the other leaders during the war. So that's how I began working on the United Nations.

Then, I heard that there was an informal meeting in Dumbarton Oaks of some officials of the State Department. So I asked if I could be allowed to be present in some of the meetings. So, one of the State Department officials said to me, "Well you can but you'll have to get the permission of the Secretary of State." So I said, "I have it already!" So they said, "Well We'll let you know what days we meet." So, they told me they used to meet three times a week. So, I went to about three meetings and after that, I realized that it was important that there should be a sort of an outline for me to follow during the conference. So, I drafted an outline and then, I called up the President of the Philippines in Florida and I said, "Mr. President, in compliance with your order, I have seen the Secretary of State, I have been present in some meetings as an observer in the Dumbarton Oaks meetings and I've drafted what I believe should be my guideline during the conference." So, I said, "I'll mail it to you." So, but at that time, one of our assistants, whose name was Leo Virata, was going to Florida anyway, so I gave him the draft that I had on what I believed was the important features that I could espouse in the conference. And I remember now, the main feature

was that there should be some sort of a Pacific Charter, something like the Atlantic Charter, and that we, the small nations, could espouse and fight for. So, the President, after one week, called me up and said, "fine. I approve your outline. So, go ahead."

Then, later, when I arrived in San Francisco, I had my staff with me and the American liaison officer called on me in that St. Francis Hotel and said, "I have orders from Secretary Stettinius to continue being the Liaison Officer between your delegation and our delegation." I said, "Fine."

So, then I saw some of the Latin American delegations. They were - some of them were - my friends. Some of them I didn't know. But particularly, the Foreign Minister of Mexico, whose name was Ezequiel Padilla, and so I talked to him, and I had a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Australia, Herbert Evatt. So we discussed what we thought would be the important phases that would be discussed in the meetings of the organizing committee.

The day before the opening of the conference, a caucus was called of all the chief delegates. So, we met and that was when Molotov, the Prime Minister of Russia, proposed formally in the meeting that there should be five rotating chairmen, that is, all the chairmen of the victorious allies, the five nations. (sic) (editor's note: actually the proposal was for four co-presidents) Foreign Minister Padilla of Mexico opposed the proposal. He said that it was against all international precedents that in all conferences in the past, the chairman of the host delegation should be, and was always, the chairman of the conference. So, Molotov answered that, "No, this is different. This United Nations of all nations of the world who are willing to join." And he said he believed that there should be five rotating chairmen. I then stood up to second Foreign Minister Padilla's opposition to the proposal. And I remember I said, "How can a ship or an airplane fly with five pilots?" Molotov looked at me, rather stared at me and said, "What right has this gentleman from the Philippines to be in this conference? The Philippines is not yet independent. It's only a Commonwealth. So, I don't believe the gentleman from the Philippines has the proper credentials to be at this conference." So, I addressed the Acting Chairman, Stettinius, and I said, "Mr. Chairman, may I answer the question of the Prime Minister of Russia?" And said, "Certainly." So, I said, "Well, may I ask the Prime Minister of Soviet Russia why Ukraine and Byelorussia are here when they are not independent and they are part and parcel of Russia?" And that was greeted by an applause by the crowd. I suppose the applause silenced Molotov, who didn't pursue the question further. But it was decided, after a brief recess, to approve the proposition of Molotov. So, we were to have five rotating chairmen. One day, one chairman; the other day,, so on. And that was what was decided that first caucus meeting, which, apparently, was called by Molotov in order for him to make that proposal of the five rotating chairmen. So that was the first victory of Russia in the conference.

Powell: May I ask you a follow-up question since you referred to the commonwealth status of the Philippines. Did you find this a disadvantage in working at the San Francisco Conference, or did it give you a special position?

Romulo: No, no, no disadvantage and no respected position either. I was just set equal after that. It was not a favoured position; it was not, in any way, a disadvantage. But after my statement in the caucus, apparently, that settled that question..

Powell: Now, you were mentioning Mr. Evatt of Australia. I believe that you and he worked very closely together on two matters: the trusteeship system and the veto. Is that correct?

Romulo: No, only on the veto.

Powell: Only on the veto.

Romulo: Yes, and I'll tell you how that happened.

We were inviting some delegations to either breakfast or lunch with us to explain our side against the veto. It was not known as the veto; it was known as the unanimity rule. So, I think we were progressing and somehow, I think our liaison officer with the American delegation knew my activities in that regard. So, one day, he said to me, "Secretary Stettinius would like to invite you for breakfast. He has also invited, "he said, "the Foreign Minister of Australia." So, I said, "Fine." It is in his penthouse in one of the hotels in San Francisco, Mark...

Powell: Mark Hopkins.

Romulo: Mark Hopkins. Yes. So, I asked Foreign Minister Evatt if it's true that he was invited and he said, "Certainly." This is for, I remember, Wednesday, Wednesday morning. This was Monday. So, I said to him, "I'm sure it is about our fight against the unanimity rule. Secretary Stettinius would like to discuss it with us." So, he says, "Yes, I think you're right." he said.

So, Wednesday morning at 9:30, we went to the suite of Secretary Stettinius, who was very amiable. As we came in, he stood up and put his arm around me, so I knew he wanted something. So we sat down for breakfast. I remember we had scrambled eggs and bacon. So, after having finished our breakfast, Stettinius said to both of us, "Gentlemen," he said, "I want to know from you, do you really want the United States in the United Nations or you don't?" So I answered, "Why, certainly, Mr. Secretary. We want the United States in the United Nations. Otherwise, it will be another League of Nations. So we are very much interested in having the United States in the United Nations. Not only that," I said, "this organization of the United Nations is also an American initiative. It was proposed by President Roosevelt." So, certainly, we want the United States in the United Nations." So, he smiled, he looked at both of us and then he said, "I'm glad to know that. Because if you really want the United States in the United Nations, I'll have to ask you to stop your campaign against the unanimity rule.

Beacuse," he said, "The United States, I assure you," I mean, he said, "the United States Senate will not ratify the Charter without the unanimity rule provision in the Charter." And he said, "if you don't believe me, you can go now to the session, I will go with you and you will confront Senator Connally and Senator Vandenberg. They are there in the delegation and you can ask them." So we said, "Yes, we'll do that." We made no commitment to him. We shook hands, and Evatt and I went to the Veteran's Memorial Building, where we were meeting. And so, I said to Foreign Minister Evatt, "Well Herb, I think let's go and see those two Senators."

So the session was about to open so they were there, both of them. And you know, you remember. Senator Connally is a big man with a white mane, wearing a coat tail, you know, the fur coat. So we went to them in their seat in that conference, and I asked, "Senator Connally, we've just been from Secretary Stettinius' hotel and he told us to ask you whether it's true or not that the United States Senate will not ratify the Charter that we are drafting without the unanimity rule in it." And Connally, big fellow, looked down on me and he said, "Young man, mark my words. Without that unanimity rule, the United States Senate will not ratify the Charter." So, I looked at Evatt and Evatt turned to Senator Vandenberg, "What do you say, Senator?" Senator Vandenberg said, "Amen." That ended that.

Akao: And how did you feel about that?

Romulo: Well, we thought that that was a wrong move that the United States was taking. We foresaw that veto power could be abused. As it was, Soviet Russia exercised it 200 times plus. But, as I said, we wanted the United States in the United Nations so we didn't say anything. We didn't tell Connally or Evatt that we were not going to stop our campaign and we both went to our seats and then I consulted the President of the Philippines who was in Florida, by telephone. I said, "Mr. President, the Foreign Minister of Australia and I just saw Stettinius and the two Senators in the American delegation. And they told us that without the unanimity rule, the United States Senate will not ratify the Charter. And, therefore, the United States will not be a member of the United Nations." And the answer of President Osmeña was very clear: "We must not insist on your opposition. If the United States is not in the United Nations, it will fail. So I leave it to you. I feel that we need the United States in the United Nations." So I said, "Alright, Mr. President, then I will not insist on our fight against the veto power."

So, I told Evatt. And Evatt said, "No, I'll continue fighting. I believe in the fact," he said, "that the United States should not insist on that veto power." And he said, "I'm sure time will vindicate me." And I told him I had talked to my President. He said that we must have the United States in the United Nations and so I will not continue fighting the veto power.

Powell: Do you think that, looking back at it in retrospect, was the question of the veto the great crisis of the San Francisco Conference or were there other times when it might have appeared that there wouldn't be a Charter at all?

Romulo: No, the veto power was not questioned by the other delegates and when I stopped fighting, Evatt continued opposing it. But apparently, he did not get enough support.

Akao: Who else supported him?

Romulo: I don't remember who are those who... But you can get that in the voting record. But I could stop fighting the veto power.

Powell: Over the years, you have spoken from time to time about modifying the veto.

Romulo: Yes.

Powell: Do you have any particular proposals, suggestions in that direction?

Romulo: Now, you used the wrong word - not 'modifying'. I am advocating the restudy of the Charter because when we signed the Charter, there were only 54 nations. Now, there are 157 nations. So the balance between 54 and 157 did not have any chance to express their opinions on the Charter. And so, I believe that these nations must now be given the opportunity to express their views on the Charter. So, I have been advocating, for the last five years, a restudy of the Charter, as a result of which a special committee has been appointed to study and restudy the Charter. And now, one of the meetings of this committee was in Manila, when we approved what is known as the Manila Declaration, which was endorsed by the Sixth Committee here and which will be before the General Assembly Plenary Session sometime the middle of this month. Now, what change do you think I should make or should suggest?

Our campaign to restudy the Charter has been opposed by the superpowers. The main reason for their opposition is they are afraid the veto power will be abolished. I am not in favour of abolishing the veto power. I'm in favour of diluting the veto power so that it cannot be used for trivial cases. That the veto power should only be used on matters affecting war or peace. And that's my stand on the question. Now, I don't believe in the abolition of the veto power. Because when we wrote the Charter and decided on the 'one nation, one vote' in the General Assembly, there was need, we felt, of a counter-balance of a veto power in the hands of the superpowers in the Security Council. So, while there is the veto power in the Security Council, there is the 'one nation, one vote' in the General Assembly. And that was our theory; it did work that way. So that when the nations of the world began to join the United Nations and were approved to be members of the United Nations, in compliance with the rule in the Charter that there should be universality for the United Nations, there began what is known now as the 'tyranny of the majority' which is counter-balanced by those in that majority as the 'tyranny of the minority' in the Security Council. Now, I believe that when we restudy

the Charter, as we are studying it now ---- you see, there are two United Nations: the successful United Nations which is the specialized agencies - the UNICEF, the Food and Agriculture, the ILO, and all these other specialized agencies, the UNESCO - the successful. It's been helping the world. The other United Nations, which is not successful as we envisioned it to be, is the United Nations endowed with the power of the peace-keeping operations. Now, the world blames the United Nations, specially the Americans, that it's a failure; it's useless; it should go home, get out of New York and all that. Now, when we organized the United Nations, there were 54 nations and there were more than 20 Latin Americans, all of whom, more or less, always sided with the United States. So that was then called the 'mechanical' or the 'automatic majority'. At that time, there was no uproar from the American public about the decisions of the United Nations. But then came in the Afro-Asians and all that, which increased the number of the members of the United Nations. The "mechanical majority" was absorbed by these new nations, who had other views, who entertained other ideas quite different from that of the United States. So then, the uproar began in the American public. But this was a ...

Akao: Did you ...

Romulo: Yes,

Akao: Did you anticipate that the number of members would increase when you ...

Romulo: Oh, yes!

Akao: ... wrote the Charter?

Romulo: Well, in this connexion, the year after the signing of the Charter of the United Nations, I attended the Bretton Woods Conference in New Hampshire. When we signed the agreement, I make the statement that, I said, "Last year, 54 nations signed the Charter of the United Nations. I envision that as the years roll by, there'll be more members." And I said, "This Agreement that we are signing now here in Bretton Woods was really fashioned and patterned and drafted in accordance with the wishes of the victorious allies. The time will come when there will be more nations and this economic order that we are fashioning now will not be agreeable to them. And they'll have to demand changes in this economic order.

Powell: The New International Economic Order.

Romulo: That's now the New International Economic Order. This was in 1946 when I said this. I just mentioned that in connexion with your question.

Powell: Yes. Now, I have read that you feel that perhaps your proudest accomplishment at San Francisco was to get the word 'independence' into the Charter.

Romulo: Ah, well, that's some other question. When we were discussing the Charter, there were, of course, several committees. And in the Trusteeship Committee, we were discussing a proposal of the superpowers or the colonial powers then, that the aspiration of non-self-governing peoples should be self-government. I opposed that. I said, "That's not complete. Their aspiration should be self-government or independence. Because self-government is not independence." Well we had a real fight on that. Lord Cranborne of the United Kingdom opposed that. So did Henri Spaak of Belgium, all the colonial powers. So, I went to Harold Stassen who was the American member of the Trusteeship Committee and I explained to him our views. He was non-committal. I told him that I believe I was speaking for the small nations, the not-yet-independent nations

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and, I said, that we must insist on "self-government or independence." So, he said, "Well, I'll refer this to our delegation. We'll discuss this."

We discussed that point for 2 nights. Finally, we won. It's "self-government or independence." And I don't remember the number of votes. But I think, in the Committee, we won by 12 or 14 votes. So, I got a note from Stassen after my reply to the statement of Lord Cranborne: "Congratulations. Well done." So, I think he's still living now - Harold Stassen.

Powell: I think he is.

Romulo: Yes. He was a studious member of that Committee. And his interventions were always well taken. I'm not sure now whether the Americans voted with us, but I think the records will show whether they abstained or they voted with us. But I remember now, we won by 12 or 13 or 14 votes. But they took it to the General Assembly. Again, we had a debate there. Spaak was a very fiery orator, spoke against it. I answered them. When the final vote was taken, we by, I think, 19 votes; I'm not sure. Let's check it up in the records. So that's why I always say that the contribution of the Philippines to the Charter were two words: or Independence. But that opened the door for the non-self-governing peoples which were under trusteeship at that time, to enter the United Nations.

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Powell: In connexion with the words 'or independence',

Romulo: Independence, yes.

Powell: Ms. Spencer, in her biography of you, quotes you as saying at that time, presumably during the debate, "I am not advocating that brown colonies be given their freedom at once. They are no more prepared for the responsibility of freedom than we were 50 years ago in the Philippines."

Romulo: Yes,

Powell: "I advocate, instead, that their goal be freedom and that the vested powers begin in instituting of that freedom."

Romulo: Correct.

Powell: Now, this raises, in my mind, a question. You have mentioned 50 years. That was in 1945.

Romulo: Yes,

Powell: Now, in less than 40 years, all of these countries have become independent. Do you think the process has gone on too fast?

Romulo: No, not at all.

Powell: Not at all.

Romulo: I think the 50 years that I said was an arbitrary number.

Powell: Yes.

Romulo: But what I wanted to have the colonial powers understand is that they must prepare all these nations for independence and not merely self-government and that it may take time, maybe 30 years, 40 years or 50.

Powell: You think they did a good job, General, in preparing these countries for independence?

Romulo: Some, yes.

Powell: Some.

Romulo: Some, yes. Now, in connexion about trusteeship, one of my distinguished opponents was Henri Paul Spaak of Belgium, who already became President of the General Assembly. And one day I was in the cafeteria-in the Veteran's Memorial with my tray-and I took a table, sat down at the table and I saw him coming with his tray. I had no personal relations with him. All I knew of him was what I hear in the Committee meetings and his replies to me and my replies to him. So, I said to him, "Mr. Spaak, why don't we share this table?" He said, "Oh, certainly." So he sat down. So, we had our lunch together.

After our lunch, when he was about to stand up, he said, "Now, General, I want to take this off my conscience. Listening to you in the Committee, I hated you. I thought you're a monster. And I hated your guts." But he said, "After talking to you, and I'm glad I had my lunch with you, now, I know you better." Well, I said, "Mr. Spaak," I said, "what does that show?" It vindicates my theory, which I've always said, that in every human being, there must be, somewhere, a spark of the Divine. "Now," I said, "You spoke to me, I spoke to you, the spark of the Divine in you struck the spark of the Divine in me and there is mutual understanding." We shook hands and he said, "you are right." And we became very good friends since then. And that was an incident in connexion with this Trusteeship Council Meeting.

Powell: Yes.

Romulo: Yes. Now, as to your question about the 50 years. Well, that was an arbitrary ...

Powell: I understand.

Romulo: ... number that I set. But.... Look at the Philippines. In one year, we were given our independence. This was in 1946. We were speaking of 1945 in San Francisco. But in 1946, we won our independence from America. It took only one year. But in the meanwhile, in the Commonwealth, we were being prepared for independence. That's why commonwealth was self-government. We didn't want that at all. We want self-government but in preparation for independence.

Akao: When you were drafting the Charter, did you anticipate that the Trusteeship system would be so successful and did you think ahead of what the role of the Trusteeship Council might be, if any, after all the Trusteeship territories had gained their independence?

Romulo: Well, I was hoping because I attributed to myself the title "the voice of the voiceless millions" in the Assembly there. Because I was the only one really at that time - only China and the Philippines were members of the United Nations. So, I credited myself, quite immodestly, as the "voice of the voiceless millions". And so, I felt that in the near future, the universality characteristic in the Charter of the United Nations will be carried out and that more nations will be members of the United Nations. Now, I can understand that the Americans cannot really go with the idea of all these small nations, with say 50,000 population or 100,000 population, having one vote as against the 200 million Americans. Well, that's understandable. And yet, in the world today, we must be compelled to understand that because if we follow what the Americans accepted in the Charter as the universality of the Charter, we have to accept all nations whether they are small nations or big nations.

Powell: At San Francisco, General, was there a discussion of other possible voting formulas besides 'one nations, one vote'? Did they consider, for example, the system of weighted voting?

Romulo: Yes, yes, that was discussed in the caucus meetings. There were discussions of the weighted votes. But that did not win. They say 'one nation, one vote', vis-a-vis, the unanimity rule in the Security Council. We thought that that would ....

But what happened in the United Nations is this, unfortunately for the world: The United Nations became the battleground of two ideologies, which we did not foresee. So we became a bi-polar world. That, I think, was unfortunate. There was polarization and that helped to make the American mind prejudiced against the United Nations. Because the simple American in Kalamazoo cannot understand why Tobago or Seychelles, with a hundred-thousand population or two-hundred thousand, should have the same vote as the Americans who have 200 million people. Now, this simple American cannot understand. Forgetting that when the Charter was drafted, it was because the 'one nation, one vote' was approved as the counter-balance of the unanimity rule in the Security Council. Now, again I say, the American people do not understand why certain nations should have views opposite to theirs. Well, that's understandable. I understand that side; but I also say, we have, in the United Nations, the only world forum that we will ever have. You abolish the United Nations and we'll have to create another one. Voltaire once said, the great French writer, "if we didn't have a god, we'd have to create a god." The same thing is true.

Now, another thing. When I read an article the other day, "United Nations Go Home", well, in San Francisco, I was fighting for San Francisco to be the site of the United Nations. And my reason was that the future drama of

the world would be in the Pacific not in the Atlantic. I was fighting for that. Mayor Ross of San Francisco was my friend and he was enthusiastic to have San Francisco as the site of the United Nations.

But one day, about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, my good friend Nelson Rockefeller came to me. And he's a very good friend of mine. And he said to me, "Romy," he called me Romy, "I know you are fighting for San Francisco. "But," he said, "really, my Government wants it to be in New York." And he said, "tonight, I am flying to New York to convince my brothers to donate money and real estate so that the United Nations can be in New York."

So, I called up Mayor Ross in the presence of Nelson.

"Mayor, Nelson Rockefeller is here with me. He's going to New York tonight to convince his brothers to donate, "I think "2 mill..."

Romulo: "8 million", I don't remember, "and such real estate as is needed there," I said, "for New York to be the site of the United Nations Headquarters. Can you top that?" Mayor Ross said, "I have to think that over and consult our council here."

So, two days later, he called me up and said, "we can't." So, then, I said, "Then, I want to serve notice that I'm going to change my fight from San Francisco to New York." He said, "Well, I can't blame you. Go ahead."

So then, Philadelphia wanted to be the site also. So the Mayor of Philadelphia came to San Francisco. I don't remember his name. And he said, "I understand you are fighting for San Francisco and now, there is the bid of New York. We also want to bid in Philadelphia." Well, I said to him, "Mayor, I've given my word to Rockefeller after giving up for San Francisco, I am going to vote for New York. And if I change my mind now, both San Francisco and New York will think I'm a cad. So, I'm sorry," I said, "but I will stick to fighting for New York."

So, when it is said now, that we must go home and get out of New York, it was the American insistence again, like the veto power, that we are in New York.

Another reason, when the First Lady of the Philippines decided to invite the General Assembly to a meeting in Manila, there was an uproar of opposition from the Mayor here, from the Senator and all that. And then, I asked them, "Why can't you let the Assembly go to Manila for one session?" They say, "We stand to lose about 400 million dollars. Our restaurants, our taxicabs, our place ..." They said, "We ask you not to insist on having that Assembly in Manila."

So, everytime I read these things, like "Go Home United Nations" I laugh because I know the background of these things.

Powell: Tell me, on balance, do you think it's been a good thing, the decision to put the UN in New York City rather than another site in the United States?

Romulo: No, I still believe San Francisco would have been the ideal site. I still believe that - that San Francisco is the ideal site for the United Nations.

Powell: Coming back to San Francisco and the Conference, General, there's a question that always intrigued me and that is about Article 99 of the Charter - the one which empowers the Secretary-General to draw the attention of the Security Council to situations that may be a threat to international peace.

Romulo: Yes,

Powell: Was that much debated at San Francisco? Do you think the delegates realized the significance of the power that they were giving to the Secretary-General?

Romulo: No, not so very easily.

Powell: They didn't.

Romulo: Yes, because it was felt that somebody in the United Nations should have the power to call the attention of the Council on some grave problem facing the United Nations. If we didn't have that, who would do it? Not the belligerent nations. So, somebody in the United Nations should have the power to draw the attention of the Security Council to any zone of danger that is facing the United Nations.

Powell: Now, the new Secretary-General, Perez de Curllar, in his recent report to the General Assembly, has indicated that he intends to use the powers under Article 99. Do you think that this is a constructive suggestion?

Romulo: Well, you see, I've been reading the report of our new Secretary-General. It's one of the best reports ever submitted to the United Nations. This fellow, having been Permanent Delegate to the United Nations for many years, and having worked under his predecessor as Under-Secretary, he knows the needs of the United Nations. And I think he is one man who can objectively assess the situation in any area of the world. And on that point, call the attention of the Security Council. So far, his decisions have been objective. And that's what we need in the UN - objective decisions by the

Secretary-General. When he admitted, for example, the weaknesses of the United Nations, well, that has never been admitted before by a Secretary-General. And a fellow who knows the weakness of the United Nations certainly can do something to improve the mechanism of the United Nations.

Now one of the changes that we would like to make in the United Nations which we hope will not be objected to by the super powers as they would object to the veto, abolition of the veto, is the fact that in the peace-keeping operations, every nation, every Member State of the Organization now should be ready to have a number of its troops as part of a United Nations force.

Powell: Standby.

Romulo: Yes. So that in case of any emergency, we have the power to back up our resolutions. As it is now, our resolutions are pious resolutions without any power backing them up. So that every Member State of the United Nations must be ready to contribute to that force its men. So that at a given moment, we have a force to back up our decisions.

Another change that we would like to make is the International Court of Justice, it's now optional. Now, if you have an International Court of Justice where the Member States are not bound to submit their cases before it, it's useless. Now, the International Court Of Justice decides six, five cases a year. Now, we believe that if we have an International Court of Justice, every nation must be bound to submit its case whenever necessary to that court. That's another weakness of the United Nations.

Akao: How difficult do you think it will be to get these changes actually made?

Romulo: Well, it's a long, long fight. Any attempt to change the status quo is difficult.

Powell: Were you envisaging, when you mentioned restudying the Charter, having a general Charter review conference?

Romulo: No, it is provided in the Charter.

Powell: I know it is provided for in the Charter.

Romulo: So far, we've ignored that provision. And I voted for that provision because I believed that in 10 years, there'll be changes in the world. And that was before we knew anything about the atom bomb

Powell: That's true.

Romulo: The atom bomb has changed the world. Now, we believe that the time has come when we should have this general conference, but the super powers are tooth-and-nail against it. Gromyko once came to me and he said, "Now General, why are you insisting on this restudy of the Charter?" He said, "You are a father of this baby and you want to kill it." I said, "Mr. Gromyko, I'm not killing this baby; I'm just trying to give it more vitamins to make it stronger. That's all I want to do." But they feel that any change in the veto power is going to get threats of withdrawal from the United Nations. And certainly, we don't want any super power to withdraw from the United Nations. We want the super powers there.

Powell: Tell me this, General. In the course of our conversation, you have mentioned 2 or 3 personalities at San Francisco. You mentioned Mr. Molotov, you mentioned Paul Henri Spaak, Lord Cranborne. Who were the outstanding leaders? We sometimes hear the name of Field Marshall Smuts, South Africa.

Romulo: Who? I want to talk about him. Yes. One of the ironies of the world is that Field Marshall Smuts of Africa was the one who wrote the Preamble - the Preamble of the Charter which is an immortal declaration of human right and was written by Field Marshall Smuts of Africa. That's one of the ironies of the world. That it is his country now who is reneging on the provisions of that Preamble. And I am told, I don't know if it is correct, one of the reasons of his fall from power in South Africa was that Preamble.

Akao: With regard to the wording of the Preamble, how did you feel about Field Marshall Smuts' ....

Romulo: Well, I want to ...

Akao: Draft?

Romulo: ... you to know that I used to walk from the St. Francis Hotel with Field Marshall Smuts to the Veteran's Memorial and we used to talk together. Of course, every step of his was two steps for me because he's a tall man and he was discussing this Charter and he said, "Well, we'll write a Charter, in my belief, that it is not so much for today as for tomorrow." He said, "And that's what I'm putting in the Preamble." And he was a convinced man that the Preamble was the hope of the world. That was Field Marshall Jan Smuts. And he was a dedicated man. And convinced that what he wrote in the Preamble is what the world needed and needs. But, as you see, it's his country that is reneging on the Preamble of the United Nations.

Powell: And I think you also mentioned that you became good friends with Jan Masaryk of Czechoslovakia at that time in San Francisco.

Romulo: Yes, yes, yes. He's one of the prominent leaders of the ... We crossed the Atlantic together. When I was on my way to Geneva to help write the Declaration of Human Rights, we were on either Queen Elizabeth or Queen Mary together. And we used to walk around it on deck. And in one of my talks with him, he said, "You know, General, this may be the last time I can come to the United States." I said, "Why?"

"Well, I have that foreboding."

Of course, you know he was the son of the patriot Masaryk and he knew the ideals of his father. And he once told me, "You know, my father had his vision and I want to see that vision realized." Well, he never said anything against the communists. But his country was already under communism. And he was going back to Czechoslovakia. And that's why he said, "I have the foreboding that this is the last time that I will be in the United States." He was a great man and he spoke English fluently.

Powell: And I believe on the final day of the Conference, President Truman came out to address the meeting, didn't he?

Romulo: Yes.

Powell: And then you had the signing the following day.

Romulo: Well, there is an incident about his going to San Francisco which he told me himself.

He had a friend in San Francisco and he had the address. So, instead of calling him up, he decided to tell his driver to go to this address. Apparently, it was the wrong address. So, he got off the car, he pushed the button and somebody inside opened the door and said, "Why, God damn it, you look like that son-of-a-bitch Truman." And he said, "I'm not a Republican." He tells that story on himself. So he went to the wrong house, yes.

At any rate, when we speak of the United Nations, I remember an incident after my election as President of the General Assembly in 1949. The Mayor here then was Mayor O'Dwyer.

So, he decided to give a lunch to the chief delegates in Gracie Mansion. And, of course, he invited President Truman, who happened to be here. So, as President of the General Assembly, I went with Tryve Lie, the Secretary-General, and Count Denué who was then the Chief of Protocol. And as we were greeted by Mayor O'Dwyer with President Truman with him, Mayor O'Dwyer said to me, "Now, General, you see those two flagpoles there? One is for the

United Nations flag and the other for the United States flag." He said, "I'm going to ask the President to hoist the United States flag and you, the United Nations flag." I said, "fine, thank you." So then, the loud speaker announced that I was going to hoist the United Nations flag and President Truman, the American flag.

So as we were walking towards the flagpoles, an elderly American lady representing maybe the extreme right here, stopped President Truman.

"Mr. President, may I know why is it that the United Nations flag is going to be hoisted by the President of the Assembly representing a very small nation like the Philippines? Why not France or Great Britain?" Truman stopped, bowed to her and said, "My dear lady, this is a new era, an era of change and the small nations are coming to their own." I never forgot that.

Powell: Very, very good answer, wasn't it?

Romulo: That was Truman. Then, the ticker tape parade. I don't remember any General Assembly President who was ever given a ticker tape parade as I was given that day by Mayor O'Dwyer, who was a very close friend of mine.

So we were in the car - the President to my right, I was in the centre, and Mayor O'Dwyer to my left. As we were driving, President Truman, with a sparkle in his eyes, said to Mayor O'Dwyer, "Bill, do you realize that you are the mayor of the greatest city in the world?" And Mayor O'Dwyer said, "Of course, Mr. President."

"But of course, you see, you also know that I am the President of the greatest country in the world." And Mayor O'Dwyer said, "There's no question about that, Mr. President."

Then, he looked at me, "And General Romulo here is the President of the world."

Powell: That's a lovely story.

Romulo: That was Truman.

Powell: Yes.

Romulo: That was Truman.

Powell: Yes.

Romulo: Another.

We met him at the Pennsylvania Station. He arrived at about 6 o'clock in the morning. (End of side 2) And the Chief of Protocol was a French man that arranged the sitting arrangements for the cars. So he said, "Mr. President," he said "this car is for you and for the Secretary-General, Tryve Lie. The next car is for the President of the General Assembly and for the Chief of Protocol." Truman said, "No. The President of the Assembly sits with me. The Secretary-General in the next car." That was Truman.

Powell: Tell me. You have worked with and been closely associated with each one of the five Secretaries-General.

Romulo: Yes.

Powell: Would you like to characterize ...

Romulo: Oh, yes! I can - I will. Tryve Lie was a great organizer. He has not been given enough credit for having organized a Secretariat from nothing. He was a great organizer. And the Secretariat was organized and formed by him. And that credit should be given to Tryve Lie. He was followed by ...

Powell: Hammarskjold.

Romulo: In my opinion, Hammarskjold was an excellent Secretary-General. He had also visions of the future. Three of us used to breakfast with him in his apartment: Lester B. Pearson of Canada, Andrew Cordier and I. And he used to outline to us his beliefs and his ideals about the United Nations. And his contribution to the United Nations is something that you don't find either in the Charter or the resolutions in the General Assembly. It's the United Nations presence. He invented that. And the time has proved that that was an excellent contribution, the United Nations presence, which, in my belief, could have been strengthened by the United Nations force contributed by all the other nations.

U Thant was a quiet, meditative Secretary-General. He didn't believe in spectacular decisions. It was a quiet diplomacy that he exercised and he was quite forceful in that. So those are the three.

Now, Waldheim. Waldheim, as an Austrian, had also the ability to moderate and negotiate. As you remember, in the history of the world, Austria used to be the marriage broker. The great dynasties used to get married in Austria. When Waldheim was the Secretary-General, as an Austrian, he was the power broker of the world.

Now comes this new one, who starts very well. And I hope he will continue. And he told me confidentially, "Five years is too long for a Secretary-General."

Powell: Tell me this, if it is an indiscreet question, General. Last year, you were on the Security Council when the question of the appointment of a Secretary-General ...

Romulo: Yes.

Powell: was being considered. What was the attitude of the Philippines towards, let us say, the Tanzanian Foreign Minister, and Mr. Waldheim?

Romulo: Well, yes. Well, I had instructions from my President to vote for both. There were separate ballots at that time. The Tanzanian President in Cancun talked to my President. And the President said, "Yes, we'll vote for Salim." So the Prime Minister of the Philippines came to New York to transmit to me the instructions of President Marcos that I should vote for both. And for every ballot, we voted for Waldheim and the next ballot, for Salim. That was our stand.

Now, Salim would have made a good Secretary-General. But at the sametime, I believe it was a good choice that this fellow ...

Powell: Mr. Perez de Cuellar.

Romulo: Yes, yes, de Cuellar. I don't know where he got that name; so hard to pronounce. Yew. In South Africa I think, they called him several ... five names before they got the right spelling.

At any rate, he is doing very well, so far. And I agree with the tribute paid to him by Secretary of State Schultz, that he is a Secretary-General from whom we could expect a lot of good.

Now, when you come to the criticisms of the United Nations, which are many, most of which are from the American people, I think that we should give our second thoughts to these criticisms. The Americans are against the 'one nation, one vote'. That to them, they cannot swallow. That they pay a large share of the contributions and yet they have the same vote as the country that pays say 1/100 of the total budget. That, of course, is understandable from the point of view of the American taxpayer. But I think the time has come when we should think of the world. There was a time when power was supreme. The United Nations has created a world opinion. So I ask, "What prevents America from using its nuclear power on Cuba? In ten minutes, Cuba would be

under the power of the United States with the nuclear bomb." But the United States dare not do that because there is a world opinion for America to reckon with and which America respects. That is the United Nations. It is the world opinion now that has been gradually formed and which all nations must reckon with. Where can you find a forum of 157 nations? In the general debate, you hear not a kaleidoscopic view but a view in depth of the grievances, the feelings, the ideals of the world. Now, Seychelles, yes, Tobago, they pay maybe 1/100 of the budget but this is the first time that they can appeal to the world. Otherwise, they have no forum. Your western press is too involved in the affairs of the western world.

Roll 3, Set B, Side 1

Romulo: My American friends, when I won the United Nations Peace Gold Medal, all of my friends, American friends, congratulated me and said, "But what does that mean? To us, that doesn't mean anything. There is no peace in the world today." I said to them, "My dear friend, if there is no peace in the world today, why are we talking right on the sidewalk? You told me a minute ago that you're going to see "A Chorus Line". If there is no peace today, how can you go see the "Chorus Line"? There are danger zones, yes, as there will always be in the world. But humanity is evolving and developing. Now, take a look at the history of the world. At one time, feudalism was sacrosanct. Nobody dared touch it. The fact that the lord of his fief had the right to be with the bride of his fief for the first night and not the bridegroom - that was accepted. It was sacred. Nobody dared touch it. But the world develops. Humanity develops and that went by the board.

Then came the divine right of kings. Louise XIV said, "I am the state." That was also respected. Nobody doubted that. But there were voices that gradually rose and that disappeared.

Came imperialism, colonialism; the right of a strong nation to rule over the weak and get all its material resources. Well, that's also disappearing. Whether we like it or not, humanity is evolving, is developing.

Now, the United Nations is another sample. It has its critics now because we have our failures. We have our defects. But sooner or later, the world will realize that like feudalism, like the religious wars, the Holy Crusades, now we have ecuminism. All these disappeared. Now, this battle of ideologies, I hold that will also disappear in the near future. The handwriting is on the wall. It cannot subsist. When humanity develops and evolves, all these things that are basically immoral will have to disappear. Why? Because one ideology you have to hate another human being. That too, is untenable in the future. We have to be one world. Now, those who believe in one world now are dubbed as "do gooders", visionaries, idealists. Well, those who preach against feudalism, at one time, against holy wars - imagine a Thirty Years War and all that. That will have to be: the truisms of today will be known as the heresies of tomorrow. And that's because humanity develops. And that's why I say, no matter what you say against the United Nations, this will develop. It is now the world opinion and woe be unto him.

who dares and ignores that world opinion. And the super powers know that now. As I said, Cuba that is a thorn in the neck of the United States, if the United States wanted to use its naked power, in one hour, Fidel Castro is incinerated or less. But America is too sensible to use its naked power now. Because America knows there is a world opinion that will brand America as an aggressor. And America does not dare use its megaton bomb against Cuba. What happened in Vietnam? A small nation, insignificant nation. Of course, I said to the Hanoi Ambassador in Manila. He said, "We licked the Americans." I said, "Oh no, the Americans licked themselves." That was a divided people that fought that war. So I said, "I must correct you." I said, "the American licked themselves."

And so, when you look at the world from a perspective of one who feels that the world is improving with the years, well certainly, you have to be optimistic as I am.

Powell: Now General, you have held two of the most important posts in the United Nations - the President of the Assembly and the President of the Security Council. And you, I think at one time, were a likely prospect for the third important job. That of the Secretary-General.

Romulo: Yes, I was vetoed by Russia. Yes.

Akao: Can you tell us something about that?

Romulo: Yes. Well, one day, Secretary of State Dulles called me up here from Washington.

Powell: This was about 1953, right?

Romulo: Thereabouts, yes. And he said, "General, I am nominating you in the Cabinet to be our candidate for the Secretary-General." Well, that took me by surprise. I said, "I'm generally not speechless, sir, Mr. Secretary. But you've caught me. You are nominating me to be the American candidate for the Secretary ...?"

"Yes. And I'll tell you why. This is not a second inspiration of the moment. I have instructed Edgar Hoover to look into your record. He has presented me with a dossier about your record. And I think you'll be the best manto be the Secretary-General." I said, "Thank you. Thank you very much."

One week later, Ambassador Cabot Lodge went to my office at the Empire State Building. And he said, "The Cabinet decided yesterday that we'll nominate you to be Secretary-General." Well, I said, "Thank you."

"And I have instructions from President Eisenhower to nominate you at tomorrow's meeting of the Security Council." I said, "Fine."

A joke was among my staff. You know, they're saying about the Lodges and the Cabots only talk to God. When they saw Lodge enter my office, one of my assistants said, "Now, a Lodge is talking to God".

Well, at any rate, the following day, I was nominated. Vyshinsky, who was then President, vetoed me. So Cabot Lodge called me up and said, "I'm sorry, General, but you were vetoed. You can't be Secretary-General." So I said, "Okay, fine. I didn't aspire for it anyway."

Then, two days later, he said, "Pres. Eisenhower instructed me to nominate you again in the next Security Council Meeting." So I said, "Well,..." I told my wife, "Let's pray. Maybe, I will be nominated Secretary-General."

That time - heatedly Vyshinsky said, "I have instructions from my government to veto the name of Romulo as often as he is nominated by the United States." That finished me.

But then, I was in the Delegates' Lounge and pretty soon, I saw Vyshinsky coming to me with his interpreter. So I said, "This is the fellow who just murdered me." So he extended his hand. We were friends. He said, "General, I'm sorry I had to do it." I said, "That's alright."

Before he left for Russia, he sent my wife 24 red roses and a package of caviar and vodka. That's how he thought of me personally. And that ended my career as possible, I was a frustrated Secretary-General.

Powell: Would you have liked the job, you think?

Romulo: I would have enjoyed it, yes. I would have liked it very much. In fact, I think that's one of my greatest disappointments. Yes.

Akao: Was there any specific reason why you believe he was instructed to veto your nomination?

Romulo: Well, of course, we had always the debates. I was always against Russia. The first one was in caucus when Molotov questioned my credentials. Secondly, in the general debate, I always had a... for example when the Balkan Commission was in Greece, the Russians presented a resolution to abolish it. The night before, Secretary of State Dulles, called a meeting of the delegates of the free world in his suite at the Creon, no, George Sand. And we decided

that we were going to oppose the resolution and we decided on the order of the speakers to oppose the resolution. And, fortunately or unfortunate for me, I was chosen to be the first speaker against the Russian Resolution.

So, the following day, when the House was to discuss the resolution, I was the first speaker and I gave it all I had. And I noticed that Vyshinsky was on the third row. And as I spoke, he was turning red. Without asking for the floor, he immediately moved to the podium. I thought he was going to have a stroke. And he said, "Mr. President, that small man from a small nation dared attack the motives of Soviet Russia. He reminds me of that Russian saying, 'his ambition is worth a ruble but his ammunition is only worth a cent.'" So I heard that. Spaak, who was the President, winked at me. He said, "I'll recognize you." So as soon as Vyshinsky sat down, I stood up and I said, "Mr. President, we just heard the personal ventriolics of the distinguished Foreign Minister of Soviet Russia. I want to remind him, "I said, "that we, the small nations here, are the Davids who are not afraid to fling our pebbles of truth between the eyes of the blustering Goliaths and make them behave." You know, in the Assembly, they applauded that. And I said, "Mr. President, as to my ambition being worth a ruble and my ammunition only worth a cent, may I remind Mr. Vyshinsky that with the present rate of exchange, the cent is worth more than a ruble."

Well, those were the things that made them hate me.

Powell: And of course, at that time, the cold war ....

Romulo: One day, in the San Francisco, Molotov said, "the matter with that delegate from the Philippines is that he looks at all these international questions with eye glasses bought from an American optometrist." So when I answered, I said, "For a slight correction, these glasses were bought from a Russian optometrist called Purdisky. That's why I seldom wear them because they distort my vision.

Those are the things that they hated.

So, when I was proposed, well of course, they know that we were allied with the United States and they wanted a neutral to be the Secretary-General. So, finally, Great Britain suggested Hammarskjold. That was a good choice. Hammarskjold was an excellent Secretary-General. And I admire him and respect him and I'm glad that he was chosen because he really, at one time, put the United Nations on the right track. He fought the Russians. He fought the Russians.

Powell: Did the Russians also oppose your election as President of the General Assembly?

Romulo: Who?

Powell: The Russians?

Romulo: Yes. They ordered all their stooges to vote against me or to abstain.

Powell: To abstain.

Romulo: To abstain. But Yugoslavia refused and voted for me.

Akao: You mentioned that being deprived of the opportunity to become Secretary-General was one of the most disappointing aspects of your ....

Romulo: my career. Yes, yes.

Akao: career. What are some of the other most frustrating moments for you? You've maintained such high idealism throughout and yet, I'm sure you've faced many ....

Romulo: Well, no. Every man has his frustrating moments in life. But another frustrating moment for me was in the Presidential election in the Philippines. At that time, President Osmeña was a candidate for re-election. I was the Resident Commissioner then. And he called me up and wanted to offer me the Vice-Presidency. But I said, "Well, Mr. President, I have a job to do here. We are fighting for rehabilitation funds for the Philippines. Well, I appreciate the honor but I would rather stay here." So I refused.

When his rival, Roxas, learned that I refused Osmeña to be his Vice-President, he sent two of his friends here, who are my friends, Dr. Sison and Mr. Eloriaga, to ask me to be his Vice-President. And again, I said, "After having turned down Osmeña, how can I accept your offer?" So I turned down both.

Well, it so happened, as they say that if I would have accepted the Vice-Presidency of Osmeña, the veterans of the war and the youth would have voted for me. And while Osmeña would have been defeated I could have been elected Vice-President. That's what they say. Then, if I would have accepted Roxas' invitation and have accepted his Vice-Presidency, he died after two years in an airplane accident, then I would have been President then of the Philippines. But I always have a brush with fate, you know. But the following year, I was elected President of the General Assembly. So that's the law of compensation.

Powell: How would you characterize that session, the 1949 fourth session of the General Assembly over which you presided; what, in retrospect, do you

think was its most significant accomplishment?

Romulo: Not a significant accomplishment, for me, the most significant event under my presidency was the announcement by Vyshinsky that the Russians have broken the American nuclear monopoly. That was the second day after my election. He took the floor to announce to the world that Russians had broken the American nuclear monopoly. That, I think, was significant.

Akao: How did that influence you?

Romulo: Well, I felt that the bipolar world was then in existence, that the world would be polarized into two sections and I felt that we were leading towards a possible war.

Powell: And it was the following year, I believe, that you took an initiative on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Is that correct?

Romulo: Yes, yes.

Powell: Where did that occur, in the General Assembly?

Romulo: In the General Assembly. I announced it as a statement which, fortunately for me, was followed through by Eisenhower with a statement for the peaceful uses of nuclear power. But I felt, after listening to Vyshinsky, that the best thing was to counter balance that use of the nuclear power by two nations to emphasize the peaceful uses of the nuclear power. So I made that statement. And in the General Assembly - - - I know it was not coming from me but the own initiative of the American cabinet for Eisenhower to espouse the peaceful uses of atomic power.

Powell: Then we can sort of call you 'the Grandfather of the International Atomic Energy Agency'.

Romulo: Oh no, no, no. I've been called so many names.

At any rate, I felt then, and I still feel now, that having been Chairman of the Experts' Commission on Disarmament and having seen the failure of the Special Assembly on Disarmament, that I think with this accelerated arms race, I think that super powers should turn their attention from armaments for wars to the nuclear uses for peaceful purposes. So that my original idea, I believe, which is accentuating the positive, should be done now more than ever. Because as we have found in the Disarmament Commission the two nations, the two super powers have really reached the perfection in atomic power and it's a great danger to the world, a great danger to the world. A little mistake of one little finger pushing the nuclear button is

the end of civilization. And I fear that; I fear that very much.

Powell: Well, we haven't discussed one area that I think would be of interest and that is your presidency of the Security Council.

Romulo: Yes.

Powell: You served on two occasions, I believe.

Romulo: Four times.

Powell: Four times, you have.

Romulo: It's a record. I've been president of the Security Council four times.

Powell: And I recall that on the first occasion, the subject was the India-Pakistan question.

Romulo: Yes, oh yes. Well, I remember that because Krishna Menon spoke for 8 hours on that question, the Kashmir question. And he was quite an arrogant fellow, a good friend of mine but quite arrogant. And the first time I presided over the Security Council to take up the Kashmir question, this fellow Krishna Menon said, "Since our President has just come to this podium as the President of this Council, I suggest that we adjourn for one week so that he can study this question of Kashmir." I said, "May I inform the distinguished delegate from India that the President is ready now to discuss this question because I have studied it carefully for several months."

Well, we discussed it. Then he took the floor for 8 hours after which he fainted. Well, we took him to the room next to the Security Council, gave him smelling salts. He revived but of course, that was a ploy. He was a candidate for Parliament in Bombay, and he wanted this. So, they took pictures of him and all that so when he came to, I said, "Krishna, you know, you won the Oscar Award?"

"For the best acting," I said.

"Oh, go to hell," he said.

Powell: And on the other occasions, what were the subjects that the Security Council ....

Romulo: Oh, several, I don't remember now. Several.

Now, recently, the question of Belize and several other questions. I don't remember now. But we have taken very important questions in the Security Council. But I still believe that the veto power should not be abolished but should be diluted.

Akao: In line of what the founding fathers envisaged for the role of the Security Council, how do you evaluate it as it functions today?

Romulo: Yes. Well, the functions are as they are in the Charter but, as I said, the all-powerful exercise of the veto should be, as I said, diluted, I mean ....

Akao: How do you suggest it be diluted?

Romulo: Who?

Akao: How?

Romulo: Well as I said, it shouldn't be used except on trivial cases. It should be used only for cases that involve peace or war. But I believe that will be a hard job. To change the status quo is not easy because, as I have told the Special Committee, we'll approve maybe all these changes that we want but there's still the veto in the Security Council. They'll veto all these. But just the same, I said, we must prepare mankind for what we believe should be done that may not be done but we should start the ball rolling.

Powell: Now, as President of the Council, did you frequently have informal, behind-the-scene conferences?

Romulo: All the time.

Powell: All the time.

Romulo: All the time. Consultations, we call them. Consultations, yes, consultations.

Powell: And this is a useful diplomatic device.

Romulo: Very, very necessary. Not only useful but necessary to get the meeting of minds of the delegates to the Security Council before any decision is made. And I think that's the duty of the President: to get them together on every issue that is of importance.

Akao: Did you find it difficult to maintain neutrality as President?

Romulo: Not difficult because when you are President, you should forget that you belong to a nation, that you are for the world. And that was easy for me because I have always been, I've always had a world viewpoint. And I believe the other Presidents have also the same thing.. I remember the delegate of Tunisia. He's one with the world opinion and several others.

You know, we have a United Nations that is composed of men who, many times, forget their ideologies to vote for the world. For example, when Russia invaded Afghanistan, one month before that, the non-aligned group met in Havana, Cuba. And with Tito there and Castro, Tito was voted down. Castro had the master voice. And the non-aligned group then made commitments along the lines of communism. Came the Afghanistan invasion by Russia. When the vote came to condemn Russia, those members of the non-aligned group who made their commitments in Havana forgot their commitments and they vote over-whelmingly to condemn Russia. The same thing is true about Kampuchea now. So they are voting with the ASEAN condemning the invasion of Vietnam.

Now, of course, your media here does not feature those things. The American people are not conscious of these votes against communism, against Russia. And that's why American opinion is really against United Nations. Sample is that fellow who said to me, who is a business executive, "Well, what the hell is that Peace Medal? What's the use for that? There's no such peace." So I said to him,, "Isn't it peaceful that we are talking together, that you're going to see 'A Chorus Line'?" And then, I added, "that you're still making profits? Isn't that peace?" I said to him.

Well, I tell you, your mass media here is really biased against the United Nations, unfortunately, because the United Nations is an American creation. Just like the Arabs, they want to destroy Israel. Well, Israel is a state created by the United Nations. So I'll favour the Palestinians provided they admit that they will respect the integrity of Israel.

Powell: Let me ask you a question. We've been discussing the public image of the United Nations ...

Romulo: Yes,

Powell: in the United States. Now, what is the public image of the United Nations in the Philippines or in Southeast Asia?

Romulo: Different, entirely different. or in Africa. It's different. From the developing nations, it's a different perspective.

Akao: How do they view it?

Romulo: Eh?

Akao: How do you perceive they ...

Romulo: Well, it's a difference in perspective, you know. The Americans, being a powerful nation, who cannot stomach the 'one nation, one vote' cannot favour the United Nations in that light. But, as I said, there is a world opinion growing in the United Nations. Well, just go to the United Nations and you see all the nations there. The world passes you by when you are there. Now, isn't that already an achievement of the United Nations, that you can have all the nations of the world together? Now, of course, as I always say, the longest speeches in the general debate are always delivered by the smallest nations. Why? It's their only chance to be heard by the world. Their only chance. They have no other chance. And they say here, for example, as I read in the New York Times, that the speeches in the general debate are only for home consumption. That's not true. It's true here that they only feature in the New York Times and the Washington Post the speeches of Schultz and Gromyko. But in the smaller nations, these speeches delivered are featured.

End of Side I

Of course, we don't have the means of the mass media that you have here. Yes.

Akao: What suggestions would you have to improve the image of the UN especially in the western mass media?

Romulo: Well, that's a difficult problem because, you know, the American press here is really dictated and ruled by the publisher. The reporters follow what is told them by the copy desk. So they will only write that which they know favours the views of the publisher. Not that they themselves follow that; but they know to keep their bread and butter, they must follow the ideas of the publisher. So it's difficult to change that unless there is a change of heart on the part of the publishers. But the publishers also look for profits and they know the American public opinion must be catered to. And the American public opinion is against the United Nations. So then, it's a vicious circle. If they want to sell their papers, well, they must say, "UN

Go Home".

And in elections, of course, the Jewish vote is very important. Not only the vote but the money, the contributions to the campaign. Now for example, in this election that's coming next Tuesday. This statement that if Israel is excluded from the UN, the US will withdraw its contribution. That's part of the electoral campaign to get the Israel vote. So you have to understand ---- of course, Fulbright, Senator Fulbright, when he was chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and I think one of the most sensible senators who ever had here, said, "Why link American national security with that of Israel?" Well, of course, he can say that because in his district, there are no Jews. But Moynihan cannot say that here. He cannot say that here.

(skip) had dinner here with me once, and I said, "Do you know that you Chinese discovered America before Columbus?" And the Chairman said, "No, that's not true, General."

"Yes. But you see, your Chinese pioneers came by ship across the Pacific Ocean and they climbed over the Rockies and they saw the naked Indians. So then, they returned to China and they were asked why. 'Well, we only saw naked Indians. No laundry business there.'"

Powell: Oh, that is very good. There's one other area that I think we would be interested to explore, General, and that is your very difficult position in 1947-48, vis-a-vis, the Palestine partition plan. Can you recall some of the events around that?

Romulo: Yes, well, I was the first to take a stand against that Israel. Because I felt that we had an experience in the Philippines. A certain Congressman by the name of Bacon, introduced a bill in the United States House of Representatives dividing our island and setting aside Mindanao as another group. And we opposed that. Because that was fragmenting our country. So, in the light of that experience, I opposed the partition as proposed. That was in '47. And when I made that speech, the first one against partition, after I got out of the Assembly on my way to the car to take the Queen Elizabeth to go to Europe, to Geneva for the Declaration of Human Rights - because we were then drafting the Declaration of Human Rights, with Mrs. Roosevelt as our Chairman - group of young Jewish - - - they wanted to attack me as I was going to - - - that was in Flushing Meadows. And when they saw that, they came to me and surrounded me and took me to my car. Well, Prince Faisal, who later became King Faisal, never forgot that.

So when the energy crisis came up, President Marcos sent me to Riyadh to talk to the King so that we could be included among the friendly countries. As soon as I arrived, when I arrived at 2 o'clock in the morning from London, the Chief of Protocol was there to meet me, of Saudi Arabia, and he said, "His Majesty will see you at ten o'clock this morning." That was 2

o'clock in the morning. I said, "Fine, we'll be there." So my assistant said, "Sir, two o'clock in the ... ten o'clock ... we haven't slept yet." I said, "That's alright. Let's go."

Ten o'clock, we went. As soon as the King saw me, he made me sit down, he said, "I know why you're here. About the every crisis, tell your president not to worry. I'll see to it that you're considered a friendly country."

Ten minutes! So, I went back to the hotel, which was called the Great Sahara Palace Hotel; it was neither great nor palace. I saw the Foreign Minister of Japan there. He met me at the lobby. He said, "When did you come?" I said, "This morning. I just saw the King" He said, "You just saw the King?" I said, "Yes". He said, "I've been here four days waiting for an audience."

But that hotel then, they have good hotels now. But I went to my room, the tap was yellow - the water - the bed sheets were yellow. So I told my assistant, "You buy at least 30 bottles of soda water. We'll brush our teeth, wash our faces with soda water." And I went to the john, ah, it was terrible. So I was glad; we arrived at 2 o'clock in the morning, I saw the King at 10. I made arrangements so that we could fly the next day.

So the President from the Philippines called me up. No, I called him up to tell him that it was okay. So I said to him, "But please be very careful, Mr. President." He said, "Why?"

"Oh, this telephone," I said, "is bugged." He said, "What do you mean? Securities ...?"

"No, Sir. Two cockroaches just jumped out of this telephone."

Powell: Well, come back to the partition plan of 1947, of course it eventually went through and it was rejected by the Arabs.

Romulo: Yes, yes, yes.

Powell: If there had not been a partition, if your initial view had been sustained in the General Assembly,

Romulo: Yes,

Powell: do you think that it would materially have changed the history of the Middle East in the last 30 years?

Romulo: It could have changed that materially. But the Palestine question would not have taken the colour that it has taken now. Because I believe, as I told my ASEAN Foreign Minister colleagues when the refugees from Vietnam were going out, I said, "Now, let's be careful we don't create another Palestine here in our area." Because when you have refugees, homeless, getting out of their country, they'll be compelled to indulge in terrorism. So let's be very careful we receive these refugees and make them feel that they are not really homeless. So let us not create another Palestine question here in Southeast Asia.

And so the Philippines created the Refugee Centre in Asia where we have, I think, now about 30,000 refugees waiting for their final asylum. And so, that's the world, I mean, you wouldn't say that a small country like the Philippines can hold refugees, 30,000, I think now, there are 70,000. But we must all join in any effort to help the world.

Now, here, they emphasize human rights, but we have dictatorship and the American press is always .... That's a difference in perspective. So I tell the American correspondents here, "We fought for the Atlantic Charter. In the Atlantic Charter, we fought for what? Freedom of expression, freedom of worship, freedom from fear and freedom from want. Well, it's alright for you here to emphasize the first freedom. You are technologically advanced. You are advanced in education, your refrigerators are full of goodies. You have all the best shows in the world. It is alright for you to express the freedom of expression. But in our countries, in the developing countries, more important to us than freedom of expression is freedom from want: where we'll get the next meal, where we'll get medicines for our children. So that therefore, there must be a difference in priorities. Your priority here is freedom of expression. We don't ignore freedom of expression, but the priority must be freedom from want. You don't know what it is to see your child not have medicines or doctors. You don't know what it is to be hungry. It's alright for you to read editorials here, hear speeches and all that. But in a developing country, some of them cannot read. Some of them cannot understand editorials. Some of them are enthralled by demagogues. So more important than all that, is freedom from want. Give them the food that they need. Give them the medicines that their sick children need. So I say, while you emphasize freedom of expression, we must emphasize in our developing countries freedom from want. That's a difference in priorities.

So, when Mondale went to the Philippines, Vice-President Mondale, and he was lecturing me on human rights, I said, "You're okay, I agree with you Mr. Vice-President. But this morning, I want to take you around Manila."

"Why?"

"I want you to see whether there is one home for old men, ladies' home, nursing home and all that."

"Well, what do you mean?"

"Well, to us here, freedom to survive is more important than freedom that you are speaking about. Because you have a custom and I don't criticize you. Your old men, you send to the old men's home, to old ladies' homes. Here, we keep them until they die. There's a difference in perspective." So again, I said, "That's quite different. It's alright for your Congressmen to speak of freedom of expression. That's fine in the States. I agree with you in the States. But here, you don't see one nursing home, not one old ladies' home, not one old man's home, which, by the way, are creating a lot of scandals in the United States - how they're being administered. Our parents, we keep them in our homes, take care of them even better than they took care of us. And they die in our homes. We don't send them to old men's homes, old ladies' homes. Well, I'm not criticising your custom. That's your tradition. But at the same time, we have a different tradition here. So when you look at human rights, you must look at it from different perspectives."

Powell: You were mentioning earlier on, and I'd like to have you speak now, if you will, about some of the towering figures in the UN that you have known over the years and when you were mentioning human rights, of course, Eleanor Roosevelt's name immediately came to mind.

Romulo: Yes, well, I revere the name of Roosevelt. Then, I remember Acheson.

Powell: Dean Acheson.

Romulo: Acheson was one of the best Secretaries of State I've ever dealt with. So once, they asked me, a newspaper man here, "What's the difference between Dulles and Acheson?" O saod. "Well, I'll tell you. Acheson was an architect. Dulles was a carpenter. That's the difference between the two."

Powell: Are you thinking of the Uniting for Peace plan?

Romulo: Once, he spoke in the Political Committee, in answer to a tirade by Vyshinsky for one hour. I saw Acheson taking down notes. Then, he took the floor. He just murdered Vyshinsky. He replied. The first time in the Political Committee, that excepting the stooges of Russia, everybody stood up to give him an ovation.

He was very able, that fellow. But he had one defect. He had contempt for the politicians, for the Congressmen and they reciprocated it you see - but he was a good Secretary of State.

Powell: Now, Anthony Eden was at San Francisco.

Romulo: He did participate but he was there for a while and then left.

Powell: But you didn't get to know him.

Romulo: No, no. I didn't get to know him. I got to know Bidault of France. Bidault of France, then the one from Italy.

Powell: And Wellington Koo was there.

Romulo: Oh yes. But he was only an adviser. D.V. Soong was the Prime Minister. So, when they say, for example, that I am the only surviving signatory to the United Nations, that's true. Because there were others who were there but they were advisers. I was the only Chairman who is surviving. Now Molotov is also surviving but he's a "none person", he's being somewhere. Nobody knows where he is now, Molotov. But he was arrogant in those days, very arrogant.

Powell: Did you know Gromyko there?

Romulo: He was one of the assistants there also. Yes, I knew Alger Hiss.

Powell: Oh yes.

Romulo: But he was only an Assistant Secretary. He didn't play an important role in the ....

Powell: This is something I think is very important to get down because he had the title of the Secretary-General of the Conference.

Romulo: No, no, not Secretary-General. He was Assistant Secretary ... no, no, he didn't play any important part there. I only knew him because he is married to a daughter of the head of the English department in the Philippines, Funsler. That's how I only knew him. But in the ... he played no important part at all. (Editors note: Hiss' title actually was Secretary-General)

Powell: I think it's very important to emphasize that.

Akao: At San Francisco, what sort of social activities took place outside the actual work of drafting the Charter?

Romulo: Oh boy, that's another good thing, yes. The Russians gave the most lavish reception there. They had it in a glittering room of the St. Francis Hotel. They had in the centre, the Russian flag in caviar. The sides and the sickle in red and white caviar. Then, they had two orchestras. It was a lavish reception the Russians did.

Then, the Americans had a very modest reception. I mean, San Francisco, the host city, gave a very modest reception. But the most lavish reception was by the Russians. Others gave individual receptions.

Akao: Were the smaller nations included in all of these receptions?

Romulo: Oh, yes. Yes.

Akao: Everyone was.

Romulo: Yes, yes, yes, yes. Because everybody was trying to woo the small nations at that time.

Akao: What sort of relations developed among the smaller nations? Did any sort of coalition ....

Romulo: They became very friendly, very friendly. With the Latin Americans, I was very friendly. That was the merit of Nelson Rockefeller. He was close to the Latin American countries. He spoke Spanish fluently. So he always got the Latin American vote. See, yes. Nelson Rockefeller was, in Spanish, called simpatico. He was an old friend of mine so he came to me about the site. So in a reception that he gave here about five years ago, in Pocantico, I related how we owed it to him that we have the United Nations here in New York as against San Francisco.

Powell: Following on to the question about the social life in San Francisco, have you found the innumerable receptions and cocktail parties and buffets that go on every year here, are they useful to you in the process of diplomatic negotiations?

Romulo: Well, that's another thing that is misrepresented here. To begin with, it makes the New York City... it makes money for the people of New York City. Secondly, the smaller the nation, the more lavish the party. Why? The smaller nation wants to impress, wants to impress the other nations. It's very important, these receptions, because there we get to know each other. In the Assembly, it's difficult to get to know each other very well. We go from these dinners where we get to know each other better than otherwise. So these are very important part. Well, from my point of view, I hate them. Because

I'd rather be in my pyjamas in my room watching the TV or reading than going to these. But that's part and parcel of the duty of a delegate to know the others better. So when you want their vote, you can get their vote. Many deals are made in those dinners.

Now, another thing is the smaller nations, when you don't go to their receptions, they resent it because they way you are ignoring them. So it's important that you appear there because otherwise, they say, "He's too big for our reception." And that's where sometimes, the Americans make a mistake. But Russia always goes to those receptions. The Chinese always go to those receptions. But the Americans, they are too busy. And you know, you can't expect Mrs. Kirkpatrick to go to all these because she has to go to Washington many times. But the smaller nations say, "See, we're being ignored by the Americans. We're not important enough." Now, the Chinese, for example, they invite the delegations by groups. Our ASEAN group of Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Jakarta, and Bangkok, they give us a dinner. So we enjoy their Peking Duck and all that and that's where indirectly, they begin to .... Also Russia gives all these parties. Now, the newspapermen make fun of these receptions. Well, they don't realize the good that these receptions, that we get from these receptions, and which the New Yorker makes money out of them.

I read a story the other day in the New York Times making fun of these receptions. They said that the Philippines had 200. That's not true. That was not in connexion with the United Nations. That was in connexion to the visit of President Marcos. He had his security guards; but they were not delegates to the United Nations. But in the story on the parties of the United Nations, they included that. Even the Philippines had 200. That's not true! My delegation here is composed of what - five (End of Side 4) And I have this office, we have the centre here, we have here, the Consulate-General, the Mission of the UN, the Philippine Airlines, the National Bank, so they're all grouped in this centre.

Akao: To what extent do you think it is possible to cover all the work of the UN as you would like to with five delegates?

Romulo: Well, to begin with, the fare of these five delegates is paid by the United Nations. We give them their living expenses. They get a per diem of maybe \$90 a day which is not enough for the hotels here. Now, can you imagine what I pay the Waldorf, which comes from my own money, not from the government. Because the government of all these delegations allots in the budget so much, you can't go beyond that.

Now, one day, when Seychelles was just admitted, they gave a lavish party in the UN. Oh, the tables were groaning with the .... So one of the delegate said to me "Say, the whole year's budget of Seychelles is in this party." That's true perhaps because Seychelles wanted to make an impression. Because they are so unimportant, so ignored that they wanted .... That's the one chance they have to make an impression with the other delegataes. Well, a big country like America doesn't need that. And the American writer, seeing that, begins to make fun of that.

So, I said to this American correspondent who was in Manila, "It's alright for you to have your own views, your own perspectives. But change those perspectives when you deal with other countries. Don't apply to other countries your standards in America. You can't do that. Your standards about freedom of expression, you cannot apply that to the small countries.

Powell: Well, General, I think we have used our allotted time and it's been a unique opportunity to talk to you this way.

Romulo: Well, that's nice.

Powell: And you have given us a great deal of valuable material for the Archives of the United Nations.

Romulo: I hope so.

Akao: Thank you very much.

End of Published Transcript

Romulo: I hope so, yes. Because maybe, 5 years from today, or 10 years from today, I'll be gone.

Akao: I hope it's 10 at least.

Romulo: All these things that I know will be gone, too. That's why the Branders University had this documentary because one day, a millionaire here, a Jewish millionaire, saw a play with President Grant as the hero. But he was being impersonated by an actor. So he thought "Why don't we get these leading men now, have a documentary about them so they don't have to be impersonated when they're gone." So he gave them a grant of \$20 million at the Branders University.

So they began to get, I think somebody in England, Mendez-France, in France, Eisenhower here, and myself from Asia and I don't know if they finished the documentary. But they paid \$25,000 with free expenses, living expenses. They put me in a house there where I had my help and all that for one week. Well, you know how rich the Jews are. You can't do that with the UN or the Americans will withdraw their contribution.

Powell: Very true, very true.

Romulo: But now, let's settle.

I would want this documentary released only when I am dead. And you can release parts of it now with my permission so that there'll be no misunderstanding about this. Although everything I said, I'm afraid to reveal, but just the same, there must be some portions that may hurt certain people and that's why that provides only when the one speaking in the documentary is dead, when these things can be revealed.

Powell: Yes, sir.

Romulo: But I think the United Nations is so much misunderstood here. They only know here the failures of the United Nations and the question of the Middle East. And the United Nations is not all Middle East.

The other day, this is another point that I want to tell you. There is a prisoner in South Africa who has been there I think, 47 years. And he was going to be executed. The United Nations approved a resolution asking the United States --- the South African Government to reprieve him. The whole United Nations voted except the United States. Now, that's human right. And the United States voted against it. Why? Because now, they're courting South Africa. For what? First, the strategic position of South Africa; they don't want that to get into Russian hands. Secondly, the Chase Manhattan Bank is in Pretoria. It is in violation of the resolution of the United Nations is imposing economic sanctions on South Africa. So these are things that do not escape us there in the United Nations. And while I'm very friendly and a loyal ally to the United States, I cannot gloss over these things. So, there you are.

Well, I think I have a lunch with ...

Powell: You have a lunch with Mr. Akashi.

Romulo: Akashi, yes.

End of Side 1

End of Roll 4, Set B