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KATAYAMA: This project is sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Education particularly by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Sciences (JSPS) and it is intended to cover key technocrats who worked for President [Ferdinand] Marcos particularly during Martial Law years. The main question we're addressing or we have in mind is that, although so far, many documents, literatures have been published on Martial Law, and we know, we have some ideas about what were the achievements and what were the failures, there is little information on the technocrats who were involved in the Marcos administration. Most of them, including you, the best and brightest at that time and well-motivated, have kept a low profile and have maintained their silence even after the downfall of Mr. Marcos. They seldom express their own opinion or position so we would like to listen to technocrats like you__ how did you feel, how did you perceive the programs at that time, what kinds of programs did you come across...? We'd like to listen to you personally... if not inconvenient for you we'd like to tape record our interview of course with your consent. We will give the updated and the corrected transcript to UP (University of the Philippines) Diliman and also to my university, Kobe University. But if you would like to remove some portion we would do that and by the time that we publish the transcript of course we will ask [for your comment and corrections]... so we will never publish anything without your consent.

BENITEZ: That's ok; it's not a problem. I read some of your interview questions, which are exhaustive and well thought-out in terms of trying to capture some of the issues. I guess, we have a lot to say and we have been very quiet through the years. It has been 23 years since 1986. I will try to remember but there are some elements and components that I can no longer remember in terms of the details. I think, the overall issues and strategies, we can discuss. I noted in your letter that you have interviewed or are interviewing quite a number of people, so I'm sure it could not be handled in just one interview.. You see, I know Cesar, Virata. I know all of these people, Ting [Sixto] Roxas, Jimmy [Jaime] Laya, we worked together. Manny Alvarez is still very close to us; he's our vice-chairman here in the Philippine Women's University (PWU). So ... anyway, your first question was how did we get started, how did we get involved in the Ministry?

First, I graduated in 1965 from the Ateneo de Manila University. I grew up in the city. I hadn't been to the countryside so I went on a hike to Lake Sebu where I lived with some tribes for six months. It would take three days to get to Lake Sebu in Cotabato where the

T'boli tribe lived. There were no roads; I lived with the T'bolis and got them organized in 1965: their weaving and crafts work. We tried to preserve the culture and it gave me an insight into the countryside. Then, I thought that I'd really like to help in that aspect in government, so I needed to go for further studies. I just graduated from Ateneo and I applied to Stanford University. I took my MA in Stanford in January 1966 and I stayed there for three years, at least. I finished my MA and I went straight to a PhD in development planning, development education, so in 1969-1970...

... I graduated from Stanford and came back; I tried to do some studies like what you're doing in the Third World Studies [Center]. In PWU (Philippine Women's University), I activated the CRC (Center for Research and Communication, now University of Asia and the Pacific) Systems Research Corporation and we made a nation-wide study on sources of social unrest. It was the first social survey that we started long before [Mahar Mangahas' Social Weather Station]. We decided that the country really needed a think tank so Onofre D. Corpuz, and myself; Ting [Sixto] Roxas was at the NTC (National Telecommunications Company) then, and we formed the Institute for Development Studies as a private think tank; and so we tried to do studies that the Philippines needed. At that time, we conceptualized a study called PREPF (Philippine Resources Environment and the Philippine Future); then martial law was declared in 1972, so we tried doing studies on population resources, environment, and the Philippine future. Leo [Leonides] Virata was then the chairman of DBP (Development Bank of the Philippines) and he said to OD Corpus and the group— "You know, we have this building in Tagaytay that was built by [Gregorio] Licaros; it's supposed to be a training center for DBP managers. But it will be anomalous if this big building will just train DBP managers." [So he said] "Why don't you form a group to conceptualize what we can do to maximize this building?"

... OD Corpuz got me and we also recruited Horacio "Boy" Morales. Ok, so it was Boy and I. I also recruited Ping [Jose] De Jesus because he was with **PBCP [spell out]** at that time. So together with Ping, we did a study on the sources of social unrest. Ping and I were very good friends. Boy [Morales] handled the administration and we conceptualized the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP), and we said that DAP should be the one that would create the programs for the New Society under martial law. We conceptualized the DAP as a think tank and we asked ourselves, "What are the research studies that we should do?" I

became the head of research for DAP; Ping [de Jesus] became the head for training; Boy [Morales] was the executive director and the administrator of DAP. In training, one of the first things that Ping [de Jesus] did was to create the Career Executive Service (CES) so that we would have a professional civil service. In research, we activated the population resources environment and Philippine future studies; we also activated... the social indicators study so that we could create some baseline indicators.

We created the task force on human settlements, in 1973. One of the recommendations was to create a housing authority, or an agency, and we identified the issues related to housing that should be undertaken. The task force also envisioned the metropolization or metropolitan growth of towns and cities in Metro Manila, and that needed a central coordinative body like the Metro Manila Commission (MMC)--this was Prod Laquian's position. He was a Canadian-Filipino technocrat who suggested the need for a central coordinating unit for Metropolitan Manila. So, an executive order created the Human Settlements Regulatory Commission (HSRC) as the zoning regulatory body... [and] the Human Settlements Commission (HSC)... That was the first regulatory commission and then, we found out that there were no town plans at all. An LOI (Letter of Instruction) created the National Coordinating Council for Town Planning, Zoning and Housing. The first task we did was to train, and organize, etc. in terms of who would do town planning because there were no town plans after the war in the Philippines. Remember, even Escolta was zoned as a forest... and so the whole issue of land use came up. We tried to train, organize, and mobilize all kinds of people who would prepare town plans all over the country.

And we realized that there was an ongoing UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) project with the Department of Public Works (DPW). They were doing two major studies: ... the National Physical Framework Plan and the Manila Bay Regional Development Plan. It was under David Consunji when he was running Public Works. Anyway, we coordinated with Teddy Encarnacion at that time. PPDO (Planning and Project Development Office) was the physical planning office of DPW. I said, "Let's join forces so that under the Task Force on Human Settlement, we can prepare the National Framework Plan, the Regional Framework Plan, and the Town Plan."

The most important thing was we introduced nationwide the spatial dimensions in development planning. Before that, there were no locational and spatial dimensions so these became important [planning] components. With the spatial dimensions, we started to go into geographic information systems [and] aerial photogrammetry. We tried to see what was available and then set up a system to address that need. We also launched the Technology Resource Center (TRC). One of the first things TRC did was to get a Japanese grant from **OVCF (spell out), the OVCF's grant from Japan on export modernization as a major** program. We started asking: "How can we modernize Philippine exports? What are the technologies that can be adopted and developed?" And TRC (Technology Resource Center) became involved in aerial photogrammetry; they had a whole mapping and technical group... to identify the technologies that the country needed, including the export modernization strategy. We had interfaced with PPDO (Planning and Project Development Office); they became part of the planning process. We prepared national framework plans, regional plans, and town plans. And we had a livelihood technology resource center advocating modernization and export promotion.

At that time, there was a Habitat conference in Canada and Helen Benitez who worked with a participant there had just come back; she talked to President [Ferdinand] Marcos who pointed out that we should participate in that conference. The president created a task force for the participation of the Philippines in Habitat. It was suggested that Imelda [Marcos] should get involved and attend the conference in Canada. After that conference, in 1976 or 1977, Imelda was being considered to head the Metropolitan Manila Commission (MMC). They were forming the MMC (Metro Manila Commission) and she was very much involved because of Habitat. She became involved in human settlement and the whole issue of creating a human settlement ministry...— to create a whole housing system, covering housing finance, housing construction, housing development and shelter... About seven different agencies were created to orchestrate the housing effort.

We created the Human Settlement Development Corporation, the MAC became reactivated, the Housing Finance Corporation; we also conceptualized the housing savings bank, which is now PAG-IBIG. PAG-IBIG stands for "Pag Ikaw, Bangko, Industriya at Gobyerno". When the four elements —you, the bank, industry and the government get together — we would be able to solve the housing problem. So that was how PAG-IBIG got organized; the term stood

for a home mutual fund or a savings system where the employee would save and the employer would match the savings. That became initially mandatory, during Cory's [Corazon Aquino] administration; it became voluntary, and then it became mandatory again under [Fidel] Ramos. It is now a large entity, and I'm told that it has almost over P250 billion now because everybody contributes to PAG-IBIG and now they're doing well. Anyway, the HSC, which is now the HGC (Home Guaranty Corporation), the NHMFC, the National Home Mortgage (Finance Corporation), created the whole mortgage system and it provided a 25-year mortgage and low interest rates at six percent, nine percent, and twelve percent. The whole housing sector became involved so the Ministry focused on the overall housing component. It had its own ideological perspective about development. It argued that development should focus on the individual, on the human being. It shouldn't just be a statistic. We took on a very humanistic posture and we said that "if you really want to develop the human settlements community, it is imperative that you set up coordinative mechanisms with the other sectors."

You go to Iloilo's Department of Health [and they are] doing a health survey when they want to do something ... an intervention. They realized that they couldn't affect health without affecting water source or without affecting all the others... The eleven basic needs of the identified sectors need to be coordinated whenever you are building communities. The idea was to build communities, not just a house, but a whole community. The thrust became very community-oriented, and there was a need to organize within the Ministry the coordinative mechanisms with the other sectors because government had been organized sectorally. You know, you have health and you have all the different sectors but when you go to a community— those sectors are not independent, and are not spatially separated. They are all intertwined. We've realized that you really cannot do housing unless you tie it up with livelihood, because people, when they get a house and if their incomes do not increase, they will become dependent and they will not be able to meet the amortization schedules throughout the year. So [we saw the] need to promote on a systematic basis the question of livelihood. We took a very strong policy position relative to countryside development, with small- and medium-scale livelihood as a component together with housing. We took a different posture from the concept of the eleven industrial projects that Bobby [Roberto] Ongpin and the Department of Industry organized. We took a counter point of view to that; [we said] that "what the country really needs are small and medium industries and

countryside development, and not just the big industrial projects...” We identified at that time the program called MASICAP (Medium and Small Scale Coordinated Action Program) with **Toy Cardo (full name) and Ting [Vicente] Paterno but ... Bobby [Roberto Ongpin] was** advocating that the country needed the eleven industrial programs. We argued that what we needed was countryside [development] and job creation, livelihood, and all that ... We were concentrating on housing. We were concentrating on livelihood promotion, community development, and community services. They shifted the community development function from the DILG (Department of the Interior and Local Government) to the Ministry [of Human Settlements] and so, we were looking at the issues of environment and community, livelihood and shelter. Those were the main programs. We were doing coordinative work with many affiliated agencies and groups... that became tied up to the Ministry because the chair was Imelda [Marcos] ... For coordination purposes, whoever was the chair of an agency coordinated with the Ministry. So over time, the Ministry had a very strong program; in housing we created these programs not only for the improvements of sites and services-- levels 1, 2 and 3. We created flexihomes. We created the National Housing Authority (NHA) to deal with the squatters ... and then, we wanted to create the University of Life so that would take place. We organized a number of development agencies and groups. The Ministry ... coordinated with the other sectors because you really cannot develop the community, or provide mass housing, and generate livelihood if you don't coordinate and relate to the other sectors of society.

At that time, the [focal] concern was the livelihood component. [Ferdinand] Marcos pointed out the need to create a national program on livelihood and that was how the KKK (Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran) was launched and took on an ecological paradigm. Remember from the view of human settlements, we were concerned with the spatial dimensions of development and planning; we had all kinds of arguments... You have to give a face to those who would benefit from development... Development without a face, from our point of view, was not real development. We tried to focus on the individual. The slogan of the Ministry was “*Higit sa lahat tao*” — the human being was the center. Therefore, in the process of livelihood generation, we had to look at the terrain... the aquatic environment... the lowlands... the uplands and... the mountain areas... to develop livelihood programs. You have to create different industries with different livelihood programs depending on the terrain... Then, you now go into the secondary industry, you go into cottage industry...into

the various handicrafts; you go into some kind of processes and then you go into the third level. So, it took on a spatial-locational dimension in the promotion of livelihood projects. We identified prototype studies all over the [country]...[We asked] ...”If you have a thousand square meters, a hectare, 10 hectares or more —what kind of livelihood programs, what kind of projects should be promoted...?” and the KKK became a national program where everybody was involved in the promotion of countryside development. Now 25 years later, they’re talking about microfinance, countryside development... but at that time, nobody was really doing anything about livelihood generation. Now, everybody is talking about livelihood. Then, it was a major transformation in the whole development strategy. So the idea was we should be able to provide credit because it was not readily available. If you looked at KKK, we have prototypes... You have money for funding prototypes; you have a guarantee fund that will provide guarantee and rediscounting. And you have the *puhunan* [initial capital] fund, which was collateral-free. In other words, if you had a good project, you would be able to borrow money or get financing strictly based on the project. Up to today, it’s very highly collateralized and in order to implement the KKK, we had to get the three banks, DBP [Development Bank of the Philippines], Landbank and PNB (Philippine National Bank). We had to redo their regulatory systems. There would be no money in the countryside if for a loan of 50,000 pesos; it would have to be approved from the central office. So, we had to create systems and arrangements so that money could flow and credit could go into the countryside. I think the most important thing was the whole credit mechanisms that were established to bring countryside development. Before that, everything was Manila-centered. We were trying to create development outside Manila, and into the countryside. That summarizes it.

I think, the most important thing that I would like to point out was there was no spatial-locational dimension to development before the Ministry. And the most important thing we did was we introduced the spatial-locational dimensions. Today, there are about 1200 town plans that have been prepared. Previously, there were no town plans and zoning ordinances; there was no environmental issue. In addition to the spatial dimension, the whole housing sector was organized. There were seven agencies that we created to come up with an orchestrated effort at housing, and we realized that housing could not take place without livelihood. Those were our three major efforts on community development with environmental considerations and all kinds of innovative programs that were introduced

nationwide into this development strategy. But those were the main concerns and there was a very strong mobilization of the *kabisig*, barangay, or human settlements officers. In other words, self-reliance and community mobilization work took place. I think that summarizes largely what we tried to do.

KATAYAMA: Yes, thank you very much, very...let me go back to one initial question. We would like to know more about your family background ...

BENITEZ: My grandfather was Dean Conrado Benitez. He founded the School of Business at UP (University of the Philippines). His brother founded the School of Education, the Benitez Hall. So you see, they were committed to education. My grandmother was already considered the little girl treasurer of the revolution in [Emilio] Aguinaldo's time because she was from Imus and so on.... Ok, and then the coming of the Thomasites, the Americans teachers. They established the whole public education system, but at that time, education was not available. My grandmother and some other women, but basically my grandmother, organized the Philippine Women's University because they wanted to get women to participate in national development...

TADEM: Can we have her name?

BENITEZ: Francisca Gerona Benitez. So, I grew up with that kind of environment. My grandfather also helped, and organized the Jose Rizal College... He was considered one of the seven wise men with Claro M. Recto and others in the drafting of the Philippine constitution in 1935. We grew up with this whole tradition and he did a lot of work.

I have a story to tell because I got so impressed by the community development work being done in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija by PRRM (Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement), so I was talking about community development... what PRRM is doing. We used to have every Sunday, family meetings, discussions and even though we were kids, we were allowed to speak out and voice our opinions. So, I was saying that I was very impressed by this PRRM and my grandfather was just listening and sitting very quietly. He said at the end of the day, "You know what Jolly's saying sounds good and it sounds new but it's really nothing new," and I asked why. I didn't know he was the chairman of PRRM and he founded it with [Dr.

Y.C.] James Yen and he was very much involved with it. They founded it and I was raving and talking to him about it not knowing that he was the one who started it all ... so, he was just laughing at me. That's just indicative of the things that we used to do, and so we were very much involved. Then, my aunt Helen [Benitez] and I imbibed what I learned from my family and we were involved in public service.... even when I was 11 years old, the whole orientation has been what do you do for the nation, [for] nation-building, what can be done...

TADEM: Sir, if you were based in Manila, what was your provincial root?

BENITEZ: No, my grandfather was from Pagsanjan; my grandmother was from Imus because they were close to the whole Aguinaldo-Gerona revolutionary group of Cavite.

TADEM: Sir, was this a land-owning family...?

BENITEZ: Yes, they had land, but they were known for education.

TADEM: Education.

BENITEZ: More than anything else.

KATAYAMA: How many hectares did your grandparents own?

BENITEZ: They had about 300 hectares in Cavite and they used to go there and plant mango trees. We did a joint venture, the whole family, and we sold it so it became an orchard-golf course now. They did not have a large... [tracts] of land... not like the Madrigals, the Zobels, or the Ayalas.

TADEM: Sir, in your educational background, you studied in Ateneo...?

BENITEZ: I went to La Salle for elementary and high school in Taft Avenue. And after class at three o' clock, I had to go to PWU (Philippine Women's University) to study how to paint. But basically, we just went there and hang out. I did have an art orientation but after La Salle high school, I decided to go to Ateneo [de Manila University], and I took up sociology

TADEM: Ah sociology, I had a lot of teachers there.

KATAYAMA: So you shifted from De La Salle to Ateneo?

TADEM: And not to UP?

BENITEZ: I don't know but I guess it was because we were close to the Ateneo tradition... even when I was in La Salle I had some professors like Onofre Pagsanjan from Ateneo teaching English and debating. And I got really involved in the debating society. In first year high school, I was the editor of the school paper; in the second year, I became the overall editor; in the third year, I won the New York Herald Tribune Forum Essay contest. We were sent abroad to study so at that time. I felt I had everything I could get from La Salle. When I came back, I was in my fourth year, and then I decided to go to Ateneo because I could not even participate anymore ... because I had already won in the Voice of Democracy, at that time, those were the debating societies, the clubs and so on, so I went to Ateneo ...

KATAYAMA: When you went there, was it your 1st trip to US?

BENITEZ: No I've been there before. In 1957, the President asked my aunt Helen [Benitez] what would we do with the Philippines in terms of participation in the exposition, (Brussels Universal Exposition) and so we created the Bayanihan Dance Company in 1957. We went to the exposition and that was the first time the Philippines was represented. I was a kid that time, I went with them and they were featured in the Ed Sullivan TV show. They became well known; now the Bayanihan's about 60 years old and almost every year, they travel all over the world. They're now the national folk dance company, and they have won so many awards but that started in 1957....

TADEM: So from Ateneo, Sociology, Sir you didn't think of UP as part of your plans?

BENITEZ: ... We were close, with some good professors in Ateneo [de Manila University] like Father [John F.] Doherty and Father [John] Carroll. They were doing a lot of sociological work so I got the department honors for it. I decided I had to go and get further studies so

when I went to Stanford, I finished an MA Economics, not MBA, and I went straight to development education which was more on policy planning.

TADEM: Sir when you took your PhD, what did you envision for your self when you were coming back?

BENITEZ: Policy service. I mean, I took political science, anthropology, sociology, and all the different social sciences because I was really gearing myself up for policy sciences.

KATAYAMA: How did you find Stanford...?

BENITEZ: I enjoyed it, I stayed almost six years; it was a nice atmosphere and quite exciting for me because I had very close friends there. Paul Hannah, who was in education, was a dear family friend. I enjoyed my stay in Stanford.

KATAYAMA: ...Didn't you have any difficulty catching up or competing with your colleagues?

BENITEZ: No, not at all.

KATAYAMA: Ok. Secondly, did you experience any racial discrimination?

BENITEZ: On the contrary, I had a very enjoyable situation because I got married in January with Betty Bantud Benitez...my first wife. She worked while I was studying but I was lucky because we had a cook... Then, I enjoyed having the latest Mustang in 1965, 1966, so everybody was looking up to me...

TADEM: Sir I'm also curious because you mentioned people that you worked with and your relationship because I noticed that a lot of them are from UP... like Cesar Virata. Did you know him from before?

BENITEZ: Yes, we knew Cesar [Virata] but he was control-oriented. He was the counter-strategy, in terms of what we were trying to do. We were not hostile with each other but ... he was always very suspicious of what we were trying to do.

TADEM: Sir when you were saying how all the projects went, I am wondering about the method of coordination, particularly with [Cesar] Virata at that time who was Finance and Prime Minister...

BENITEZ: We would have to think of exceptions. [Cesar] Virata would always come up with a new rule to control us and we always say it would be an exception.

TADEM: Sir was there a need for President Marcos to also come in and say...

BENITEZ: Yes, but we got a very small budget. We had to create new sources of money. So, we created the savings system, the *biglang-bahay* bond, the *pabahayan* bond. We had to intuitively look for resources because we could not rely strictly on the budget relative to the programs. We had to come up with financing resource-generation schemes. For example, the *biglang-bahay* bonds, the Treasury would say that it would launch Treasury bonds, and six percent of the Treasury bond would be for the *premyo* savings bank. We said nobody would want to buy your bonds because of the six percent *premyo* savings. We said, "why don't we change the concept, use the same mechanism, the same strategy and, come up with *biglang-bahay* bonds? In other words, we would award out of the six percent, a house every week from the Treasury, so people would buy the Treasury bond, the *premyo* savings bond because they'd get a chance of owning a house-and-lot package. So, we just changed the award and the incentive and it became very concrete because people could understand a *biglang-bahay* [an instant house] rather than a six percent *premyo* savings bank. I mean, it wasn't appealing to them. It was using these strategies and mechanisms that created the housing fund. It was the same with the *bahayan* bond, and the national home mortgage bond. PAG-IBIG is a savings system.

TADEM: Sir there was no government agency that was thinking about these kinds of schemes?

BENITEZ: Well, each one was thinking of their own schemes but we had a very young group, a creative group. We had the best and the brightest, a young Ministry and we imbued the group with a developmental orientation, so we became like a movement rather than just [a government office].

KATAYAMA: Let me just confirm, what year did you come back from the United States...?

BENITEZ: 1969...

KATAYAMA: ...but you didn't join the government...?

BENITEZ: No. [I joined] IDS [Institute of Development Studies] in 1969-1970-1971.

KATAYAMA: How did you become a friend of OD Corpuz?

BENITEZ: He was a good friend of mine; in 1969, I helped my aunt, Senator Helen Benitez. So when I came back, I helped in the Senate so I got to know OD [Corpuz] because he was with FAPE (Fund for Assistance to Private Education) which was using war damage money given by America to help private education. OD said, let's do something in terms of setting up a think tank. We tried to do that, we went to Brooklyn Institute, we went to the IDS in Korea, looking at something like a Korean National Development Institute think tank types.... We said, "let's try to get these things organized". So quietly and on a small scale, we tried to set up the IDS but it was 1972-73, and martial law was declared. So, they said what kind of programs would the New Society under martial law do and that's where [we focused...]

KATAYAMA: So you never thought of the authoritarian regime when you started to work on the think tank?

BENITEZ: No.

KATAYAMA: But for a time you visited South Korea?

BENITEZ: ... I went there when I went to New York Herald Tribune and visited for a while just to see.... Then, South Korea had the Saemaeul movement, the whole community, new village movement, and we were already considering things like human settlements... and so on. So, they had this notion of a new village movement, the Saemaeul movement. We wanted to create a third world think tank.... so, we said why don't we convert this building in Tagaytay into DAP from which all kinds of programs emerged. And that was how I got involved in government, in development, and everything else.

TADEM: Who was funding the tour...were those personal funds?

BENITEZ: Yes, personal. But those were just visits. I didn't stay there long and studied.

KATAYAMA: So how many people were involved in that kind of...?

BENITEZ: Well, I and (Antonio) Tony Hidalgo, and somebody else from the Senate office of Helen Benitez. We created this Institute of Development Studies and when the DAP came, we started to recruit young people. Mahar [Mangahas], [Horacio] Boy Morales, and that whole group, we created a technocratic age, because we wanted to do town planning, zoning, and housing. We had to recruit fresh college graduates — train and set them up. We didn't have to rely on the old bureaucracy; we could rely on the new bureaucracy because we were creating new programs.

KATAYAMA: What were the differences between PCAS and your...?

BENITEZ: PCAS (Philippine Center for Advanced Studies) was not yet organized then. It came later. Adrian [Cristobal] organized PCAS, but that was when the Ministry already existed, and he said there was a need to organize something like PCAS. At that time, DAP (Development Academy of the Philippines) had already expanded... and in 1977, we won the TOYM (Ten Outstanding Young Men) award. So I got TOYM for community government service. Boy [Horacio] Morales won TOYM too but at the night of the award, Boy decided to go underground and joined the NDF (National Democratic Front), so I spoke and his mother was there. So he [Horacio Morales] went completely underground and he organized the NDF [National Democratic Front]. In 1963, I ran for the presidency of the College Editors' Guild

[of the Philippines]. My opponent was Satur Ocampo. There was some confusion in that election. Satur and I, we had an organized group; then Satur went underground. Boy [Horacio Morales] got caught, and he was detained in Bicutan. We were helping and working with him, and then Cory [Corazon Aquino] came and they released all the political prisoners... In the 1960s, we were together; in the 1970s we were in opposite camps, and then in the 1980s, we were in the opposite sides again.

TADEM: Sir, were you surprised that he went underground? Did you have any idea?

BENITEZ: We were considering [the possibility] since we knew that he was going around but of course, we didn't realize that he'd go all the way out... It was the same with Ping [de Jesus]. I brought Ping in, and then he became executive secretary...

KATAYAMA: When you got to know the declaration of Martial Law, were you surprised? You've never anticipated that kind of rule?

BENITEZ: No, we did not, we wanted to find out first when martial law was declared, what kind of martial law would it be. In other words, will there be tanks in the street, will there be harassment? It looked like that martial law had a benign face; they didn't even execute the Chinese drug dealer... It did not seem to us at that time, to me anyway, that you would get all of this very harsh, cruel, and repressive rule. On the other hand, it did seem that development could be accelerated, countryside development could take place, and that a centralized constitutional authority could provide order. At the end of the day, you know with people, the whole orientation was that discipline was much needed. The whole orientation that what the country needed was discipline and organization. We did not look at martial law then as completely negative, and we were somewhat open and asked ourselves, "What is it that can be done? And what is it that will be done?"

KATAYAMA: Even OD [Onofre D. Corpuz] did not anticipate the declaration of Martial Law?

BENITEZ: I don't know if he did. I think, he probably went along with it to the extent that he probably knew something about it. I don't know if he was involved in its actual operation.

KATAYAMA: ... Do you think Martial Law was necessary? Or if Mr. Marcos didn't declare Martial Law would the political goals be more difficult to achieve...?

BENITEZ: Those are two different questions, questions if whether martial law was necessary or not. I made a study on the sources of social unrest and in that nationwide study; it indicated that there was no real basis for unrest. I mean, people were accepting their... [situation] and so...we could not tap or identify major sources of unrest and this was just before martial law was declared. [Our study] did not show that there was significant major unrest. Therefore, martial law might not have been that necessary. However, if you were in Marcos' position and you wanted to implement certain development strategies, you would take advantage of a given situation. One could probably say that Marcos took advantage, or he took the situation of the student unrest, the various things happening at that time and decided that there was enough basis for declaring martial law and carry through their goals and objectives. So that's the second component to your question. I'm not saying that there were no conditions that precipitated the declaration of martial law. I'm just pointing out that if you took the social survey — there wasn't sufficient unrest to bring about necessarily by itself martial law. But if one wanted to take advantage of whatever unrest or situation there was because one had developmental goals and strategies that one wanted to implement, then it became easily understandable how and why those things could take place. I don't know if I'm answering your question.

KATAYAMA: This is also a follow-up question, when you knew that martial law was declared... did you change your agenda? Like did you have in mind a developmentalist state like South Korea or Japan?

BENITEZ: When martial law was declared ...there were programs and strategies that we had to do. We took on a human-centered developmental strategy and tried to creatively set up all kinds of programs that would substantiate and give meaning to this centralized authoritarian government, as Adrian (Cristobal) called it. "But what does that mean in terms of development? What does central government mean or central authority mean in terms of countryside development, poverty [alleviation], education, resource mobilization and generation?" So those were the kinds of theoretical issues and concerns of development that

we had to think about, organize and mobilize for. And that was where the whole barangay movement, the whole *kabisig* movement, all of these other strategies began to take place.

KATAYAMA: But at that time, you were witnessing very impressive development [efforts] as shown by Singapore, Indonesia and South Korea. And those politicians were strong hands; they either oppress or repress the representatives of democracy, while giving authority to technocrats. Was this a relevant frame or model?

BENITEZ: No, not really. We were very self-centered and focused at the problems that we were identifying and working on. One of the first things we did, for instance, was this whole housing and town planning that became the focus and concern. "How do you balance central government planning, state planning, with private sector participation, and community mobilization?" I mean, those were real issues [we were addressing]... We would create the Technology Resource Center [now TLRC], in response to the question of what technologies for adaptation and development that we could utilize in various areas. And those became the paramount issues and concerns, at least for us.

KATAYAMA: I'm particularly interested in Career Executive Service System because...when I came to know that in late 1970s, I thought, early 1980s, I thought that it was a very important effort but I wondered why the system performed poorly and I did some analysis. One of the reasons, I thought that Mr. Marcos was not so serious about the career executive system because he allowed some exceptions.... Is this true?

BENITEZ: I don't know that aspect, but I do know that we had long discussions on the Career Executive Service. And OD [Onofre D. Corpuz] was very strong in saying that we had to professionalize the civil service and they had to create all kinds of training programs. They would stay in DAP (Development Academy of the Philippines) for six weeks to a month or so for the CESO (Career Executive Service Officer) training and so, there were about nine to ten different and continuous training programs. The idea was to reorient the whole bureaucracy. So, it became institutionalized. It became almost like a career orientation but given that, I don't know if there were any other efforts to further strengthen it. It sort of became a routine, and lost its resiliency, it lost that kind of fervor in every orientation. So I don't know if that was a reflection of Marcos not being interested or he was being focused on

other problems, and he just sort of assumed that the bureaucracy will take care of itself. I don't know the answer to the question. It was Ping de Jesus, who became the head of CES (Career Executive System) that was involved in all kinds of training programs, [including] [Carmencita] Abella who is now the head of Ramon Magsaysay Foundation. Those groups were committed to working out the Career Executive Service. We were more on the research, policies, and training programs; they were more on the training and... orientation.

KATAYAMA: When I asked OD Corpuz whether we can say the DAP was one of the most important think tanks for Martial Law but he didn't like that, I don't know why...

BENITEZ: What was the think tank he was talking about?

KATAYAMA: ...maybe he didn't like the think tank during Martial Law...nationalized...maybe he didn't like...the presumption...

BENITEZ: Well, but those are the realities, that was really what happened; I mean, whether he fully accepted it or not, DAP was created under martial law. And one of its mandates was to come up with programs and projects supportive of and contributory to the New Society,,,

KATAYAMA: Do you have clear recollection when you met Mr. [Ferdinand] Marcos for the first time?

BENITEZ: I don't completely remember, but we were in DBP (Development Bank of the Philippines), on the 9th floor, when we were preparing programs to create the DAP and so we knew that Marcos would be very much involved in that...

KATAYAMA: Okay, if you talked to him personally or interacted with him more frequently, what kind of impression did you have about him, his capacity, his intelligence, his integrity?

BENITEZ: I worked under Imelda [Marcos] as she was the Minister; I was the deputy, but we would not be able to get any approval if we did not go and talk to [Ferdinand] Marcos and presented the studies or the justifications for any of the programs. Marcos would always ask me, "what's the justification for this?" and I had to discuss and argue with him. He was very

insightful and intelligent. And immediately, he knew, for instance, when we were discussing housing and he would say, “you have to make sure that over and above the house, they should have additional income because they will not be able to meet [the payments]”. He would argue that we would need to encourage livelihood. But while Imelda was like the energy, the spirit, or the mobilizing force, Marcos was the technical person behind the scenes and [each time] he would say, “It has to be justified”. He would not approve anything if it did not have a justification. So, we worked very hard every time we had a program to ensure that we could justify it. Marcos would ask very critical question. He was a very insightful type, it would appear though he was from behind the scene but he was very involved because he was there to look at all the operations, the procedures, and ask very critical questions. That’s my experience with him.

KATAYAMA: So he understood almost everything you...

BENITEZ: Oh yes, yes, no question about it.

TADEM: Were there any cabinet officials included when you present, or was it just between Imelda and your...?

BENITEZ: No, we’d participate in the development planning process, in the cabinet meetings... [Ferdinand] Marcos was really very smart; he called me up one day and he said, we’d like to do something about Clark Field... do a livelihood program in Clark, so I said, “sir that’s under Roderick [Conrado] Estrella, that’s Agrarian Reform...” but he said,, “those people are kind of old, we better get our young people to do something about it...you just go ahead and see what can be done”.; He wanted livelihood and housing projects in Segovia so I said ok, and when he called the cabinet meeting, he called Estrella to ask and said, “look at what the Ministry’s doing and you’re supposed to be doing this and you’re not”. [He did that] as his way of controlling the other ministries. At the end of the meeting, Estrella came to me and said, “You [better] watch out”. I could not say anything, I mean, that’s confidential, that’s between us, but that’s the kind of technique Marcos [used.] He knew how to pit one against the other...

TADEM: But were there any favorite technocrats [of Marcos]...?

BENITEZ: He was supportive of Cesar [Virata], he was the Prime Minister and even if we ran Cavite and all that, he wanted to make sure that Cesar was supported. He ran in Batasan in 1978 and in 1984. So Marcos was very concerned about that, but of course Bobby [Roberto Ongpin] was very close to him, and Jimmy [Jaime Laya], who was also with Central Bank, but Bobby was the one who was doing a lot of relevant work, and [Geronimo] Velasco... He would deal with his other cabinet [officials] but he would get us to do the mobilization and countryside operations. He was also relying on Peping [Jose] Roño of DILG (Department of the Interior and Local Government) and deputy prime minister, so he had a good mix.

KATAYAMA: How did you get acquainted with Imelda Marcos?

BENITEZ: Because we got Imelda [Marcos] to attend the Habitat conference in Canada and then, when she came back, they were looking for development plans for Manila, Metropolitan Manila Commission, so I became the planner for MMC (Metro Manila Commission).

KATAYAMA: MMC, so you took the commission in 1975 but then she went to Canada in 1976.

BENITEZ: I think Canada was ahead and, then we were already preparing the Manila Bay Regional Development Plan together with PPDO (Planning and Project Development Office). She wanted to do two things: housing because of Habitat and the whole human settlement effort, and she became the governor of Manila. When they were looking for development plans for Manila, I was recruited. At that time, it was Ed [Eduardo] Soliman, and we recruited Mel Mathay to help Imelda in the Metro Manila Commission. So I was the commissioner for planning for MMC. Mel [Mathay] was the administrator, the executive director.

KATAYAMA: Why was Imelda [Marcos] interested in housing improvement?

BENITEZ: In Habitat, she realized the need for this human settlement effort and this whole developmental effort.

KATAYAMA: But before that, she did not have any clear ideas of the significance of Habitat or housing?

BENITEZ: I think she got that insight, and she was saying that the notion of human settlements before was narrow in terms of housing only. Imelda [Marcos] was interested in identifying a humanistic position ... making man the center... and relating housing to the other sectors, that was where the idea of the “11 basic needs or 11 sectors” came about and that would be coordinated in relation to housing.

KATAYAMA: The human settlement agency got formally established in 1978; ... it started with very small ideas, small groups, then it gradually expanded and then tried to absorb many functions of other agencies, so you must have come across some very strong resistance from these agencies...

BENITEZ: In 1973, there was a task force on human settlement, and from the task force, we went into HSRC (Human Settlements Regulatory Commission), our regulatory commission, and town planning, zoning, and housing. Then, we said we needed to create the housing sector, the seven different agencies of housing, NHA (National Housing Authority), HFC (spell out), NHMFC (National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation), PAG-IBIG and so on. In the process, we were saying that if you're going to take housing as part and parcel of community development — it has to be related to the other sectors. You cannot take over those functions but you cannot avoid relating to them — so you need to establish some kind of coordinative mechanism, if you're going to emphasize the spatial and locational dimensions of development. So, we created the National Resource Expert System. We had some people, who were deputy ministers or deputy executive undersecretaries of the other sectors, and we would bring them into a committee. So, we would say that our primary focus is housing, livelihood, community, environment and community but the other sectors would play a coordinative role vis-à-vis the other agencies and that was how it operated. Of course, you're correct, the other sectors would be very apprehensive.... We would rationalize... and say that we were only coordinating...

KATAYAMA: Yeah, the issue of human settlement was said to be super...

BENITEZ: It's true. I mean, we did not necessarily get the biggest budget but we had the biggest resources. , We were able to creatively create the resources--through bonds, the saving systems, and other mechanisms other than the direct budget. We did get our budget share but we had other programs that allowed us to maximize resources, but it's true ... that was the real issue that we had to contend and live with.

TADEM: Was this expressed during the cabinet meetings?

BENITEZ: All the time. I mean, in cabinet meetings, they were polite but they looked at us as brash kids; they were much older, and we were much younger, but we moved faster and it was indicative of that strategy that I just told you about [Conrado] Estrella.

TADEM: ...because you were younger...

BENITEZ: Yes, but you see, there were also a number of retired generals ... Imelda and the President said "let's give these generals something to do because they have good experience and so on". So, it started with General [Fortunato] Abat and then we had General Sagala, General Eminente, and General Rosela All these retired generals became regional directors and directors of the Ministry and they worked very well with us because we were all like young college graduates. So, this combination of the generals and us, and it's all in this kind of ideological orientation and strategy.

TADEM: Sir... how was the conceptualization...?

BENITEZ: Imelda's orientation with regard to housing was community service, community development, community mobilization, and so she made a big point of identifying 11 different sectors; and the second component was that the human being should be in the center of development effort. She went to the US and at the UN (United Nations) where she gave a speech on the new international human order. That speech argued that it should not just be 'a new economic order but it should be a new human order, so that human beings should be in the center of development. That became the underlying orientation and philosophy — that development is a humanistic effort, and that gave us the whole rationale for poverty

alleviation, countryside development, mobilization, etc.--the contradistinction to the big industrial projects. Anyway, that became the [source of] tension in cabinet.

TADEM: ...I remember when we interviewed [Vicente] Paterno, he also mentioned the issue with the industrial projects. Aside from Paterno did you know of anyone who was part of the debate...?

BENITEZ: Bobby [Roberto] Ongpin was definitely in favor of industrial projects. The others, who were more politically [inclined]... [Jose] Roño, for instance, would be more for countryside, community development.

TADEM: How about PM [Cesar] Virata?

BENITEZ: He [Cesar Virata] sided with Bobby [Roberto Ongpin], more or less. He would have \$500 million annually with the World Bank, he was very involved with the World Bank (WB) and the IMF (International Monetary Fund) financing, and, we tried to avoid that.

TADEM: [Vicente] Paterno was also very wary about the financing with the WB.

BENITEZ: We avoided it as much as possible. When we were negotiating with the WB (World Bank), they had so many conditionalities. At the end of the day, you get this amount of money and technical consultants and with all kinds of conditionalities. In the end, it looked like it was not worth it... our group was not very enthusiastic about it.

KATAYAMA: Was it also the preference shared by Imelda Marcos?

BENITEZ: Yes.

KATAYAMA: Did she try? What kind of intervention?

BENITEZ: She wasn't really very much against it but she wasn't also really in favor of it. Imelda [Marcos] was concerned with many projects, and she mobilized a great deal.

TADEM: With her energy, I can imagine she had a lot of ideas...

BENITEZ: She would inspect projects at one o' clock, two o' clock in the morning. And she'd call you at that time and she'd give you instructions. And then she'd go home at two, or three o' clock. And by four or five o' clock in the morning, she was calling you again. She hardly slept, she had so much energy.

KATAYAMA: I'm also interested in the KKK (Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran) project. If I'm not mistaken, it started in 1980-81, when I read the different brochures, it sounded similar to South Korea's livelihood project. Did you take South Korea as a model?

BENITEZ: We got to know about their new community development, the Saemaeul movement, but the KKK was brought about when [Ferdinand] Marcos said "you cannot just promote housing, you have to promote livelihood." If you have TRC (Technology Resource Center), you would be able to identify all kinds of technology and do the feasibility studies and prototypes, so those technologies could be implemented. If not, they would look academic. So Marcos said, when we were calling all the governors and mayors in Malacañang, he wanted to launch a nationwide livelihood program. He launched something like the KKK, because the KKK was the Katipunan, you know the old original concept. So he said, let us do this revolutionary concept for livelihood so we had this *kilusan* — a movement — *sa kabuhayan at kaunlaran*, in other words, a movement for livelihood and progress. We were then tasked to prepare the systems and procedures, the prototypes for KKK. Marcos committed some money for it, including the realignment of barangay funds, and some of the development funds into the KKK. That was where KKK got almost four billion pesos to mobilize a whole countryside development livelihood program.

KATAYAMA: I reviewed some assessments of the KKK project toward the end of Marcos administration, they are very critical because they found that those projects were accepted by beneficiaries as loan farms, so it was expected that they would pay back but I think almost 50 percent of the loans were not paid.

BENITEZ: My argument to that issue is that it is true. Loan repayment was not as effective as it should have been. But I felt that at that time, there was capital flight, some of the people in

Manila were bringing money out the country, I'm saying that at least, this money was going to the countryside, and it was generating credit and facilities in the countryside. For me, even if there were no repayments, it was better than capital flight. The argument being, at least, it was not money going out of the country. It was going around, encouraging credit and facilities in the countryside. Now, it took time for people to get used to that, that if you don't bring credit to the countryside, you cannot have development. That's really a major issue and problem, so my only sort of rationalization is saying that even if repayment rates were low, it was because they were accelerated in terms of pushing these projects... I personally felt that even if the repayment rates were lower, to the extent that it generated credit in the countryside I'd say go ahead and do it, at least we were delivering resources and money to the countryside which otherwise was bereft of any credit or resources at all... Of course, over time, the repayment rates improved, the loans were tighter, etc...

KATAYAMA: Going back again to Mrs. Imelda Marcos, we've heard that there were ideas of making her prime minister...it didn't push through, do you know the details of what happened behind the scene?

BENITEZ: People were pointing out that the mobilization effort that the Ministry was doing was, in a sense, like a super-ministry. From our point of view, we were undertaking development programs with more than ten different national programs and coordinative programs and obviously, in the process, it would have a social-mobilization dimension. The concern was if [President Ferdinand] Marcos got sick or went away—who would be our potential alternate? They knew that whoever was the head of Metro Manila would be a threat because Metro Manila then had about eight or ten million people. Whoever was the governor of Metro Manila would be very strong; the Metro Manila governor was like a little president. Imelda became the governor, so in that sense she was not a threat to Marcos; they were supportive of each other. Imelda did a lot of work for Metro Manila, so I think it was in that context that the whole gossip or talk [came up]—that she was being groomed to replace the President, in case anything happened to Marcos. But at the Batasan, she became a candidate. She focused on MMC (Metropolitan Manila Commission) and on the specific projects and the issue of KDM I don't see Imelda becoming the prime minister. [Cesar] Virata was the prime minister, and then you had the snap election...

KATAYAMA: But Imelda [Marcos] wanted to get that position?

BENITEZ: No, she really was very much more concerned with MMC (Metropolitan Manila Commission) and with the Ministry [of Human Settlement], and all the coordination. She didn't care; I've never heard her say that she wanted to be the prime minister. She was a project-oriented person— she started the Heart Center, Lung Center, Children's Hospital, all specific projects.

TADEM: Were there people around her who wanted her to be Prime Minister?

BENITEZ: Not really. [Cesar] Virata was the prime minister and so, we were able to do what we wanted to do even if Virata was there. And then you had snap elections in Batasan, the concern was a different situation altogether.

KATAYAMA: When Ninoy [Benigno Aquino Jr.] was assassinated, you were here. Did you have an opportunity to talk to Imelda Marcos?

BENITEZ: I was in the countryside, I was in Caliraya. We heard about it and I stayed in Caliraya, and then came to Manila. Imelda was already in Malacañang, so I think two days later... not on the same day, and it was already a state of confusion. We didn't know anymore what was happening.

KATAYAMA: But Imelda was very much concerned about the possibility, I mean President Marcos was very ill and she was very concerned.

BENITEZ: Oh yes... they said he was sick since 1978...

KATAYAMA: How did you know that?

BENITEZ: Now, they are saying that but then, I didn't even know. And he had a kidney transplant.

KATAYAMA: You don't know at that time...

BENITEZ: No, we didn't know. It seems there are many things about [Ferdinand] Marcos that we do not know. Up to now, the whole issue of the Marcos gold and the Marcos resources is still an unknown story, and to what extent it is true, or to what extent it has been simply made up. I'm almost sure that there are many false stories about it. Maybe some of it Marcos himself created because he used to tell me that like Machiavelli— you have to protect the truth with a bodyguard of lies. So, it's unbelievable that to this day, I don't know the real situation relative to the so-called resources. I do know that when Imelda was in New York for her testimony, the US government spent this X amount of money to crack down on all of these resources, all this wealth. And it's now turning out that Marcos invested a lot on gold and gold trading since 1946... [with] documented proof that it was at least 17,000 metric tons. He initially traded at 32 pesos to the dollar; now, it's now 940 to the dollar plus interests and everything, so if you look at it, that's a lot of resources.

KATAYAMA: When Ninoy [Benigno Aquino Jr.] was assassinated, did you think that Imelda [Marcos] might be involved in that plot?

BENITEZ: No, not really. I think, Imelda was in Manila Hotel and then, they had to go to the Palace and monitor the developments. She was very concerned with the question—who would do a thing like that? Of course, Marcos was sick so it couldn't be Marcos and Imelda; it's not Imelda's style because you know it was Imelda who got Ninoy to go abroad, got him treated at the Heart Center, etc, so why would she do a thing like that?

KATAYAMA: How about Fabian Ver?

BENITEZ: Fabian, they say knew, or was involved. I mean, to what extent that he actually did, I don't know. We were always in the dark, and as you say, the technocrats were just kept in the dark; we were just to do this job, to do that training... The other issues, we just sort of avoided ...and not concern ourselves with.

KATAYAMA: What do you think about the possibility of Danding's [Eduardo Cojuangco Jr.] involvement?

BENITEZ: There's talk about Danding and the others, it's very hard now to prove it, one way or the other... There are all kinds of suspicions, you never can tell really [what's the truth] at the end of the day.

KATAYAMA: Do you have regular contact with Imelda Marcos?

BENITEZ: Yes, you want to talk to her?

KATAYAMA: Yeah, yeah... particularly regarding the MMC (Metropolitan Manila Commission) and the issue of human settlements, there are many questions...

BENITEZ: Yes, that should be very easy, she's in McKinley I, in Fort Bonifacio... and she's trying to prepare documents, stories... up to now she's still trying to argue the case and all that.

KATAYAMA: She contacted many key persons and asked them to assist her like in Washington D.C., Estelito Mendoza...

BENITEZ: There's conflict there because Estelito [Mendoza] is now the lawyer for Lucio [Tan], obviously, there's conflict.

TADEM: How about her relationship with Danding [Eduardo Jr.] Conjuangco?

BENITEZ: They're not in very good terms because Danding felt that when both of them ran, **[for what position/recheck?] he lost because of that... so that became an issue between them.**

KATAYAMA: We have discovered that at least two technocrats have been very close to her. You and Jaime Laya, right?

BENITEZ: Jimmy still.

TADEM: What about the military, the tension between [Juan Ponce] Enrile and [President] Marcos, did you feel it in the cabinet meetings?

BENITEZ: You're really looking at two things. There's the Fabian Ver group and then, there's the [Fidel] Ramos group. These two groups were always in conflict.

TADEM: Where was [Juan Ponce] Enrile in the conflict?

BENITEZ: Enrile was caught in the middle, he was not yet involved. Fabian [Ver] was monitoring Bobby [Roberto] Ongpin because Bobby was doing all kinds of big projects... the whole Central Bank Binondo operations.

TADEM: So in terms of the money issues.

BENITEZ: It was Fabian's role to monitor these things; we were also monitored, he assigned his security guards to us, I had 38 security men, in three shifts, you compute. 8,8,8--34 plus supervisors...all. So Fabian would have about 5,000 PSGs [Presidential Security Guards] that he would assign to all the ministers, everybody, etc. Marcos monitored all of us. We didn't know what he was doing but he knew what we were doing... [Prospero] Olivas was Metrocom, and Olivas was both pro-Ramos and pro-Ver, so he was like an independent [player]. But under Olivas, it was [Rolando] Abadilla, so Abadilla was the key person, and under Abadilla, it was [Panfilo] Lacson. Lacson was the head of Luzon and, what they called the MISG (Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group)—the core group. So that was where they would monitor and, then [Fidel] Ramos became linked with Gringo [Gregorio] Honasan and [Juan Ponce] Enrile, so Enrile and Gringo coalesced with Ramos and then, the EDSA Revolution happened.

TADEM: Who were the ones with Imelda [Marcos]? Who were her security men?

BENITEZ: It was under [Fabian] Ver who was supportive of her.

KATAYAMA: I read some books, documents in which [Juan Ponce] Enrile wondered why Marcos trusted Danding [Eduardo Jr.] Conjuangco that deeply. Because the coco levy fund

initially was managed by Enrile and co-managed with Danding and finally Danding took over. Of course, Enrile never contested that but apparently he was not happy so he asked that kind of question, why Marcos trusted Danding that much. Do you have any guess?

BENITEZ: No, I don't know about that. I think the relationship of [Ferdinand] Marcos with Danding [Eduardo Cojuangco Jr.] was way back ... the story was that Danding was even part of the Rolex 12, so it could not just be the coconut fund...

TADEM: How about [Roberto] Benedicto?

BENITEZ: [Roberto] Benedicto was a standard crony from the sugar land. [Ferdinand] Marcos had his own people in the twelve sectors-- Benedicto for sugar, [Rodolfo] Cuenca for construction; they organized the CDCP (Construction and Development Company of the Philippines), [Geronimo] Velasco for energy and so on, Lucio Tan for tobacco, etc. His basic position was these people would be like the zaibatsus of Japan, the big trading corporations. He wanted to imitate and follow that kind of strategy of getting these twelve to develop the different sectors like tobacco, sugar, etc. and the model was the zaibatsus.

TADEM: Sir why do you think they were referred to as cronies, what brought this about?

BENITEZ: That was really much later, in the beginning, 1978 and so on, that was the issue... In the 1980s, [Ferdinand] Marcos at that time was sick and the cronies were probably abandoning ship and doing their own thing already, they were just probably trying to protect themselves...

KATAYAMA: If you look back now, when was the watershed of the Marcos administration? Initially the performance was very good and at some point it degenerated and the programs became obsolete, so when was the watershed?

BENITEZ: I think, the change really began to take place in 1978 when the Batasan was set up and the shift from a martial law situation to a parliamentary Batasan situation. In that transition, there were changes already in development strategies but that was also when the Ministry [of Human Settlements] became even more active and the burden of development

fell more and more to what we were trying to do in 1978 all the way to 1984, until Ninoy [Benigno Aquino Jr.] died in 1983. The Ministry was just created in 1978 and we advocated for countryside development, for livelihood, for spatial-dimension... In 1980, the KKK (Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran) started, followed in 1981-82 by the ESF (Economic Support Fund). The development strategies from 1978 reflected what the Ministry of Human Settlements was trying to do and it took on a great burden... The stress... was shifting because that was also when we were changing to a parliamentary Batasan system so that became critical. If you start looking at the Marcos years, from 1972 to 1978, six years and 1978 to 1984—those were the two milestone periods and people are now saying that he got sick in 1978. So, that became like the watershed. Anytime you want to talk to Imelda [Marcos], we can call and set up [an appointment] for you...

TADEM: I wanted to go back to your focus on the countryside because that was where the NPAs were...how do you explain that there were people being recruited to the NPA (National People's Army) at the same time the development efforts were being carried out in the countryside?

BENITEZ: You must understand that after 1977, Boy [Horacio Morales] went to the countryside. He went underground and he restructured the National Democratic Front (NDF). The NPA became very pragmatic from 1977 onwards. We knew in 1978, 1979 that we were competing with Boy, the NPA, and the NDF relative to the hearts and minds of the people. So we were doing exactly the same social surveys that the NPA would do. And we came up with a manual called *Aklat ng Taong Bayan*. (A Manual for the People). It's a social investigation survey study on how to mobilize the community, how to recruit the community, which was competing exactly with the methods and techniques of the NPA, Boy, or the NDF. Boy and I, we were best friends. We worked together in DAP (Development Academy of the Philippines) for five to six years, 1972-1977 and then in 1977, he went underground. So, we were doing social investigation work, which we knew that the NPA was also doing. It was like a race. We wanted to get more from the countryside and the *Aklat ng Taong Bayan* was really a manual for social mobilization... That's probably what stemmed the whole NPA expansion movement because it acted as a counter-movement to the NPA. So, that was the issue and the concern. So we were together in the countryside because we had basically argued that social community development is really community mobilization... you mobilize

the community and empower them to bring about development. It was a social mobilization effort.

TADEM: There were also NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) that you worked with?

BENITEZ: Yes, a lot. We organized the whole *kabisig* movement, thousands of people, the whole barangay brigades, some 17 brigades. It became a mass-based, grassroots service-oriented community development and mobilization effort. And [Ferdinand] Marcos felt at that time, in 1978-1980-1981, that the Ministry was [taking care of] the central program; the livelihood program was the main thing. We were once in the car from Malacañang, and Marcos said, "I wish that when I declared martial law in 1972, this livelihood and community development strategy was effected." He was reminiscing that he had wished those were the strategies and programs that were effected. The Ministry, if you get some materials on it, even MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) pointed out that what we did with regard to human settlements, was ahead of and more comprehensive than even what the UN (United Nations) had advocated. If you look at it now, the way Gawad Kalinga is moving; it really is a human settlements strategy.

KATAYAMA: ...we noticed that some of the technocrats also share that kind of pride...similar programs in the 1970s or the 1980s...do you have that kind of pride?

BENITEZ: No question about it. When Cory [Corazon Aquino] became president, she abolished everything that had to do with [Ferdinand] Marcos. She abolished the Ministry, and the other programs. They even abolished, for instance, the Bliss Development Corporation. How can they charge amortization for 25 years when the corporate entity that was supposed to collect and monitor the mortgage payment had been abolished? However, the proof of the pudding is until today —many of the programs that we started are still alive. They may not be functioning in the same way that they should but these programs are still ongoing. PAG-IBIG is still going strong, the Home Guarantee Fund which used to be HFC, you take NHA (National Housing Authority), you take NHMFC (National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation), you know, so you take HLURB (Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board), you take HUDCC (Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council), TRC (Technology Resource Center) is still TLRC (Technology and Livelihood Resource

Center)... I think, they're not as effective as they should be but the programs are still running. The saddest thing, for instance, is that the whole planning process now under NEDA, PMS (Presidential Management Staff) and so on, does not have any spatial dimensions. They've abolished the whole geographic information, the spatial dimensions in their planning process, and so the national framework plan, the regional framework plan, the local development plans are non-existent anymore.

KATAYAMA: I agree. But at the same time... I still wonder why [given] new ideas, talented human resources, why weren't you able to solve the problems during your administration?

BENITEZ: The argument that many are pointing out is that while the programs were good, their magnitude and significance... were like crumbs relative to the scale of the problem. It's like you have a big elephant and you kill it with a small gun and you think you're happy because you have a good program or made a good effort but the magnitude is so big, the effort is fairly small relative to it.

KATAYAMA: But the political environment was more favorable during your time because the Marcos administration gave you discretionary powers...

BENITEZ: The critical question really is to what extent were these programs sustainable and to what extent would they have the magnitude sufficient to bring about the transformation. The argument was the programs were good but they were miniscule relative to the size of the problem. History will reckon whether that is true or not... Why is it that we had rice self-sufficiency during the Marcos years and now we're importing even eggs, chicken, and other meat products. So, the programs were correct in terms of intention but were not sustainable and were not significant in magnitude to bring about structural transformation, that's the argument. I don't know. I mean history will evaluate and review, all I can point out is that, I think, the programs that we were involved with were the right programs. The question really is: Were they significant in magnitude and structurally sound enough to be sustainable and to bring about development or were they almost like palliative measures of good intentions?

TADEM: Was there a need for more... coordination in the overall development because you were saying you were doing this but there were also members of the cabinet who would also be involved in this kind of developmental...?

BENITEZ: No, they were doing other things but the coordination was effectively taking place because we were relating to their undersecretaries, their directors, and their people... We created all kinds of agency committees and groups ...

TADEM: With or without permission of the secretaries?

BENITEZ: Exactly. And we had all kinds of affiliated and coordinated agencies from other departments. We were working with them because if not, you couldn't get anything done.

TADEM: Can I go back...I was just curious about your relationship with Boy [Horacio] Morales...

BENITEZ: We're still good friends. We used to visit him when he was in Bicutan. And I was even talking to [President] Marcos one time and... Marcos said, "No, you won't be able to do anything about it," at that time anyway. Then Cory [Corazon Aquino] came and she released all of the political prisoners.

TADEM: Sir did you have any kind of debate with Boy [Horacio Morales] about his decision to go underground...?

BENITEZ: It was too late ... he was quietly working with us and then, one night in 1977, he just went underground. He was already relating and all that. He wrote a letter and his mother read it. That was also when he split from his wife Jinky and married Belle, the daughter of a left-wing oriented NPA leader.

TADEM: Sir...about Imelda as prime minister, in so far as the economic component, you came out saying that IMF, World Bank really wanted [Cesar] Virata not Imelda [Marcos], did you have that that kind of thought, the IMF, World Bank, in the whole process?

BENITEZ: We tried to avoid it, we did not try to give them that kind of importance...of course it was [Cesar] Virata who was really more concerned with relating...

TADEM: Sir how about the Marcos children, like Imee, she started with this Kabataang Barangay, was she involved with your project in the latter part?

BENITEZ: No, they were very young when we started, and all Imee [Marcos] did was support the Kabataang Barangay. That was independent because that was more with DILG (Department of the Interior and Local Government), the whole barangay situation.... Irene [Marcos] and Bong [Ferdinand Marcos Jr.] were really much younger so...

TADEM: Because as you know we also interviewed [Cesar] Virata and he said there were some issues with Danding [Eduardo Cojuangco Jr.], nothing much with [Roberto] Benedicto but in your case, in any of your projects, did you have any issues or concerns with Danding?

BENITEZ: With Danding? No, we were coordinating and relating with him, we had no problems with Danding. It was only when he ran for president... because Imelda also decided to run. She ran, and Danding ran, so, there was conflict. No, there was no conflict in terms of programs or projects. It... [was] a political issue.

TADEM: Sir to what extent were the perceptions on Imelda, that she was ostentatious, true? Was this an impediment to your project?

BENITEZ: No, Imelda [Marcos] had always taken the posture that she's like a star. She had been saying that she represents or she thinks that she has to bring out the best ... because she is like the star of the Filipino people. In other words, she had that whole attitude. Her basic posture— if you interview her, she would say that there is no such thing as excessive beauty and you cannot quantify beauty or truth and to say 'I love you' at only 10 percent. You either love or you don't, it's a yes or no, it isn't a question of breaking it down into percentage. In that sense, she has an absolute or total orientation relative to what she is trying to project and to become the best. So, it wasn't being ostentatious; for her, it's being the best of what could be to project the Filipino and doing it accordingly. So, it's an entirely different perspective, and you have to enter into that world to understand what it was that she's trying to do.

TADEM: Sir when she would attend a cabinet meeting, how was the dynamics...?

BENITEZ: No, in cabinet meetings, she'd just keep quiet. She wouldn't discuss with them. She would talk to [President Ferdinand] Marcos the night before or the day after. She'd get the approval but in cabinet meetings, she was quiet. Of course, that was the mosquito net diplomacy and nobody could beat Imelda; she would get her way. But in fairness to Marcos, Imelda might have pressured him, or talked to him and tried to convince him, but he would demand the documentation, the proof or the justification. He would not agree just because Imelda said so. That was why our work was so difficult. We had to satisfy two things: we had to justify with Marcos but we had to meet Imelda's time table. Because Imelda every night would inspect her projects and by 7:30 in the morning, she would be calling you even if you left her at two, or three o' clock in the morning. She had such an unrelenting energy. But she did a lot. In 1965 or so, they were building the PICC (Philippine International Convention Center) and they had just finished the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP). When we were building the PICC, I had a fever and I was sick. What she did was to get a nurse who gave me an injection so we could continue and finish the work. And then the PICC was not finished, it was flooded but it was going to be used for the opening of the World Bank meeting. They put a platform over the flooded area and covered the platform with carpets, so there was an artificial platform in the whole auditorium. There were many cases like that, 77 days for the completion of the Folk Arts Center, 11 days for the PICC, the [World] Trade Center. Imagine, you finish that one-mile long structure only in 11 days. They would deliver materials at different stages because everything was being done simultaneously!

TADEM: So you were involved in all that?

BENITEZ: Well, we were involved in many things like that.

TADEM: Sir, about the [Manila] Film Center, what happened there?

BENITEZ: In the Film Center, eight people were buried but they were taken out and given a proper burial. So it's not true that people were buried there. Even when they did the Philippine Plaza, in the main auditorium, the scaffolding fell, so there was an accident with

four or six people that got... ... There were some people who contended that there was some deliberate sabotage... Others said that people were rushing, so the scaffolding fell. By this time, it is not very clear, it's probably some construction accident, but it's not true that we left or did not take out the people who died. After that accident, they restructured and set it up and at least, they finished the Film Center. The eight people who were killed in the accident were attended to...

KATAYAMA: If I'm not mistaken Imelda [Marcos] joined this university.

BENITEZ: She graduated from here.

KATAYAMA: That's why she has a special emotional attachment...

BENITEZ: ...she was given a scholarship for music in the College of Music and Fine Arts and she accepted it. Then, she became Miss Manila. I don't know how many years she spent here but she was in the College of Music, and we gave her an *honoris causa* in 1965 when she was already the First Lady.

TADEM: What is the relationship between your family and the Marcoses?

BENITEZ: Well, my grandparents were always close to all the presidents from [Manuel] Quezon to [Manuel] Roxas, [Elpidio] Quirino, [Diosdado] Macapagal to the Marcoses, so it was natural for us to support and help whoever was the president. There was no special relationship per se between the Benitezes and the Marcoses. It was part of my grandfather's civic duty and my grandmother's and Aunt Helen's — it was our family's orientation.

< Mr. Jolly Benitez gives pamphlets to Dr. Tadem and Prof. Yutaka.>

BENITEZ: There are a few things that will be very important, and I am very proud of two major publications: first, the task force came out with the emerging concepts in 1973; the second one is the four-volume work on the vision of a New Society. We also had the whole KKK (Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran) manuals, with at least four to five volumes on KKK. And those are very important because they would show you the prototypes, the

countryside systems and procedures. It will show you the extent that we had documented and operationalized the programs. And on a regular basis, we had the national framework plan for 25 years, the national framework human settlements plan, and the regional development plan. These are 25-year perspective plans. We also had all the town planning. But the manual on KKK, I think, is an important thing because everybody was doing microfinance, countryside development. Then, nobody was doing all those programs. We started with the Bliss housing, a four-story structure at that time because nobody would want to live in a medium-rise structure ... so the whole housing system was [envisioned] and now, it is not as effective as it can be and should be. Those were our publications, anyway.

TADEM: I wonder what guided Boy [Horacio Morales] also after, because when he went back to PRRM (Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement) he had a lot of these rural development projects; we'll be actually interviewing him also.

MAN NEXT TO BENITEZ: One small correction, factual, when we were starting the Ministry, the secretary of Public Works was Alfredo Guico...

TADEM: From what you were saying, there were technocrats supportive of [Ferdinand] Marcos and Imelda [Marcos] but...there were also technocrats identified with Marcos who were supportive of your projects...

BENITEZ: That's not the real issue except that there were differences in strategies or programs, [Cesar] Virata and [Roberto] Ongpin were very much more for World Bank, industrial projects and so on; [Vicente] Paterno was different, [Jose] Roño was political, Jimmy [Jaime] Laya was in the middle. He [Jaime Laya] would be supportive and he took the sectoral groupings. Manny [Manuel] Alba was very close to us and so on. While they would identify those who were associated with Imelda and those associated with Marcos...the truth is we couldn't get anything for Imelda organized unless we cleared it first with Marcos.

TADEM: Sir where was Totoy [Jose] Dans?

BENITEZ: Totoy Dans ...it was a pity, but he got involved in the LRT (Light Rail Transit) issue, so he was with transport but that whole issue of the LRT and the money that was used

for PGH (Philippine General Hospital) that became a case against Imelda [Marcos]. It was a civil [case]. Of all the different cases, the money from LRT went to developing PGH. That's a political issue rather than...

TADEM: Sir with Cesar Zalamea...was he ever active...?

BENITEZ: Cesar [Zalamea] and I are good friends... when we were active, he was already out. We were together in DBP (Development Bank of the Philippines) but by that time, we weren't relying on DBP anymore. We relied on DAP (Development Academy of the Philippines)...the important thing is you get the KKK (Kilusang Kabuhayan at Kaunlaran) administrative manuals. You would see the whole systems and procedures. I think, that's significant because that was 35 years ago...but the ideological and developmental issues and strategies and the perspectives took on a humanist posture and a developmental dimension. I just want to point out that 35 years later, [it is still relevant.] When we started, we were like voices in the wilderness arguing for medium-rise housing, condominium or high-rise housing, the whole locational-spatial dimensions of development. We would have long arguments... because from a sectoral approach, even with whatever statistics you have if you cannot identify the location or the groups that will benefit from that development, it's not an honest-to-goodness [proposition]...and that kind of philosophical, developmental strategy was significant. When you look at development planning now, there's no locational dimension, which is pathetic because now, you can use Google's satellite maps and you can identify even your backyard. When you look at the development plans, you don't know where they are, they're floating...

TADEM: <Gives some background on her husband's dissertation in Segovia.> What are your recollections of the project?

BENITEZ: That started when [President Ferdinand] Marcos told us that he wanted us to look at the relocation and the whole housing and livelihood community development of Segovia, so we got **General [first name] Sagala** to be in charge of the **Segovia Development Authority (check)**. He wanted us to mobilize very fast the Segovia area, which is part of the Clark Airfield area, (to) use "our old people", the retired generals... but the more important thing was we did mobilize the Segovia development authority...

TADEM: Was this the first time you had this concept of an integrated area development?

BENITEZ: That was not the first time. That was the normal developmental strategy that we adopted in the Ministry. That was why Marcos wanted the Ministry to get involved because it took on an integrated community approach to development rather than a sectoral approach. That was the battle cry and the strategy for all the human settlements programs and concepts.

<End of interview>