



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

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Interviewer: David Hausman

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HAUSMAN: This is David Hausman and I'm here in Parliament in Honiara, Solomon Islands, with Sir Peter Kenilorea, First Prime Minister of Solomon Islands and current Speaker of Parliament.

KENILOREA: *Right.*

HAUSMAN: Sir Kenilorea, have you consented to be recorded for this interview?

KENILOREA: *Yes, I have.*

HAUSMAN: Great, so let me start by asking you a bit about your background in the public service and how you came to be Speaker today.

KENILOREA: *Thank you very much indeed. In terms of public service, as a public servant I spent twelve years in Solomon Islands, nine years in the public service before going into active politics for further sixteen years after which I became Regional Civil Servant, when I became a director of a regional organization that deals with fisheries in the South Pacific called a Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). After my term which was three years with the Forum Fisheries Agency I was then appointed the ombudsman of the Solomon Islands for five years between 1996 and 2001. Since 2001 I have been the Speaker of Parliament. The term of the Speaker of Parliament is a four-year term and I am now on my second term, towards the end of my second term now. We are having general elections next year, 2010 and following that there is normally the election of the Speaker. I might be kicked out, I might continue I don't really know what the future holds for the moment.*

HAUSMAN: Okay, thanks so much. Let me ask you a bit now about the goals and motivation for the current program of public service improvement or strengthening or reform here. Could you talk about the issues and challenges facing the public service when the current program of strengthening started, so I guess after the tension?

KENILOREA: *After the tension, oh well, the public service collapsed during the tension and therefore all institution of governance although they were there in the books they were not really practiced as they should have been and so following the tension we have this Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) one of whose objectives was to not only revive the economy and bring in law and order but also help with strengthening of the governance institutions. So they brought in the various activities and programs to strengthen the public service.*

There have been some very specific programs to strengthen the accountability departments like the Auditor General's office, the ombudsman's office the Leadership Code Commission office and of course there is one for parliament's office, parliament strengthening program. So there have been some specific, direct programs involved by RAMSI following the tension to help strengthen the public service generally.

HAUSMAN: I wonder if you could say a little more about how exactly the public service fell apart during the tension.

KENILOREA: *I guess just nonperformance by public officers because the militants, I suppose we could say they were in power then. They had guns and public officers were simply frightened of the situation. It amounted to either working under duress or just nonperformance because of fear generally and nonattendance at proper*

times because of the situation then. I think one of the major weaknesses in the public service in my own observation is one of attitude, attitude of the human component of the public service. In terms of institutions of governance, there's no lacking in that. There are guidelines and institutions are in place but the human component of the public service, attitude, has much to be desired in terms of work ethic, in terms of having a pride in what you do, in terms of attendance and therefore result in affecting work performance and product. So that I think, to be fair, on the tension, existed before the tension.

The tension is now gone and I think one of the human components of the public service, one of attitude, I think continues to be a challenge to us. Solomon Islands is a typical island, laid back attitude. Tomorrow is another day kind of attitude. So I don't know whether there are schools for attitude or how the system can change attitude. It is a very important area to consider, maybe motivation through certain things, reward, good condition of service. But attitude is the main enemy to our public service at the moment.

HAUSMAN: I wonder if you could tell me a little bit more about the genesis of the current improvement efforts, how they first started after RAMSI arrived.

KENILOREA: *Well, the improvements certainly started after RAMSI arrived in the sense that in RAMSI program there is the civil aspect of the—not all military—the civil aspect of that particular program helped in actually working the public service, working along with the public service staff as advisors. Some of them were in-line posts actually doing the work. Hence the public service as opposed in their performance was revived through that means. We continued to have the advice of RAMSI personnel in various capacities.*

My own personal observation and concern simply is you can have the best advice in the world provided and available to you, but unless you didn't make use of that advice, take it and run with it yourself, advice is only as good as you accept it and do it, use it. So that will continue to be my own personal concern.

HAUSMAN: So how was it, I guess step-by-step that the first RAMSI Machinery of Government programs got underway, so the accountability institutions and the parliament program.

KENILOREA: *I suppose they came and had a look at what the current situation is and then decided to develop the various aspects of improving them, strengthening them. For example in the Parliament Strengthening Program, we had what you call legislative need assessment. We found out that our parliament was very much lacking in facilities, in manpower, in professional personalities. So under the financing or funding of UNDP (United Nations Development Program) and the Australian government through RAMSI this particular program was instigated. We had a project manager of the program who we got from New South Wales Parliament.*

HAUSMAN: Was that Warren Cahill?

KENILOREA: *Yes, Warren Cahill. We were very lucky to have this particular person because he had such an experience in the kind of work that parliament does. He was not only a manager he was also a mentor. His personality went down well with Solomon Islanders liking and so he was able to encourage the young graduates. One of the main reasons for the success of the program in my view was that we recruited new graduates direct after their qualification from university. They had not gone through the public service. So we got them straight from the university*

and Warren was able to work with them and then show them the important ropes, what to do.

He worked very closely with them as he worked too. He was not only working through them but he was working with them. Now he left us after four years or so but the system still is working very well to my liking at the moment. Hopefully we'll keep the young graduates we've trained so far and they will not run away from us to greener pastures elsewhere although they've got their own freedom and some of them have already gone elsewhere.

HAUSMAN: I'm going to ask you a lot more about that program but before I do, let me ask you a bit more generally about the initiatives started by the Solomon Islands government and RAMSI I suppose in 2005 or so with the accountability institutions as well as the parliamentary program. Was there a process of consultation between RAMSI personnel and the Solomon Islands government personnel? Were there consultations that you were involved in?

KENILOREA: *No I was not involved in any of the consultations with any other accountability institution except the parliament one. The parliament one I was very close with it because I was involved even during the assessment needs part of it. When we were approached as to what our priorities might be for assistance through RAMSI I said we need to be strengthened. If there is a program for that we would appreciate it very much. So this particular program came about.*

HAUSMAN: What would you describe as the motivation for these reforms? Was it driven by Solomon Islands government? By public demand? By RAMSI?

KENILOREA: *I think by both I would say. The government sets the policy guidelines and RAMSI actually makes use of their professionalism and expertise to actually produce the programs and the results. So much so that sometimes politicians were complaining that RAMSI was running the country or there was a parallel kind of government running the country. I was concerned that there was some perceived—some perceptions along that line but I knew that they were here to do some work and if there is a clear policy by the government they had to do something anyway and we had to let them go ahead and do it the way they knew. It may have been perceived by some as RAMSI running the country.*

HAUSMAN: I have been told that there was a process of consultations and planning for what is now the Public Service Improvement Program.

KENILOREA: Yes.

HAUSMAN: Were you involved in that process?

KENILOREA: *When the MOG (Machinery of Government) team came I suppose I can say I was involved with that in the sense that they asked questions like you're doing with me now about the public service. Outside of that kind of visit and giving ideas of how and where to go and what do you think we should do, beyond that I was not very much involved. But there were consultative arrangements followed by RAMSI personnel. They went around from ministry to ministry, department to department, seeking views of various ones. The teams consisted of members of RAMSI and Solomon Islander counterparts.*

HAUSMAN: Can you say more about how they consulted with you?

KENILOREA: They simply made appointments to see the Speaker and whether or not the speaker has something to say about what they're about in the public service. Their ideas about public service revival of various institutions. So that is the kind of consultation I was involved in, nothing else.

HAUSMAN: In terms of the other consultations that you described, how extensive were they and do you think they have had major effect?

KENILOREA: I think they went out of their way in my view to actually give opportunities for people who like to make an input into their consultation process to be involved. I know that much. I do not know whether the consultation was intended to get outside of Honiara to the provinces and that sort of thing. There must have been provincial consultation too because there is also now a program of provincial strengthening program. So I'm sure relevant consultations, maybe through the ministries, provincial government must have been adequately done.

HAUSMAN: Do you think the consultations had much of a role in building good will?

KENILOREA: Yes, yes, I think in Solomon Islands lifestyle we believe in consultation. A lot of time-consuming consultation in our traditional kind of lifestyle. So we appreciated that that kind of approach was employed by the professionals when they came to try and assess what program was needed in order to bring about the strengthening of the public service in general.

HAUSMAN: I guess out of curiosity. What sorts of consultation is there traditionally in the Solomon Islands?

KENILOREA: It is just a lot of time-consuming sit around and talk about certain issues until it is understood, it is believed to be understood by everybody and it always ends up in consensus agreement or approval.

HAUSMAN: Do you think that the consultations affected the outcome or the actual planning for the program?

KENILOREA: Yes, I think not necessarily the outcome, but I think it helps towards the planning of the program. The outcome really depends on the human element that works the plans to achieve.

HAUSMAN: Do you know of any specific ways in which the planning was affected by consultation?

KENILOREA: I think simply because they visited various ones to get information before they got down to their planning for purposes of these various programs. So I think the consultations contributed towards whatever the plans eventually came up with.

HAUSMAN: What relations have the government and politicians had with the reform process. I know it has happened under three governments.

KENILOREA: Yes, I suppose in terms of the politicians, as I was saying, their responsibility was firstly setting the policy guidelines, that they approve this various basic development to improve the public service. I suppose that's the executive government. But the parliament mainly continues to have their involvement in their general oversight activities, whether these programs through reports that come through parliament have any effect or whether or not there has been some progress in some areas of the public service because of these various developments. So members of Parliament have the benefit of these reports

coming to them, to Parliament and therefore have a chance of scrutinizing them and therefore involving the oversight role. The executive government I'm sure were involved simply in the policy guidelines working closely with RAMSI people.

HAUSMAN: Have there been major changes in the level of political support for the programs?

KENILOREA: I suppose there's not been obvious change in the level of support one way or the other; it has just been understood that these plans are in place to help strengthen the public service. I think that's the attitude that the government has taken.

HAUSMAN: I guess that the reforms have followed a sort of incremental process of a few reforms at the beginning and now a broader plan.

KENILOREA: Yes.

HAUSMAN: How do you think that has worked out as a strategy?

KENILOREA: I think it worked out well in the sense that as you said initially there were some, the activities were long vesting various ministries and departments and trying to work to strengthen these various areas, almost concentrating on areas that they found were weak. Recently they've developed an overall plan which the government refers to as a Framework of Partnership which brings together the guideline for activities. There is no end to it anyway so one would not talk in terms of toward some exit time period. There is nothing to that effect in the partnership framework I suppose they leave that silent for a while. But in my view the partnership framework cooperation is now able to bring together ideas of the mission and the government to continue serving the country.

HAUSMAN: Do you think that broader framework came at about the right time or too early or too late?

KENILOREA: I think it may be too late in my view. Yes, I think it might be too late. But then I suppose when we consider it as they came and simply want to pick up the pieces first of all and then had time to think about how to rationalize development after the pieces have been picked up, I suppose in that sense it came at the proper time as well. I suppose it has been difficult too because RAMSI has been operating through three governments now I think or is it four?

HAUSMAN: I think it is three.

KENILOREA: So I think it is the right time because the immediate needs have been attended to and now the present government sees it's fit to actually consolidate and have some kind of framework to see how to go from here. So I suppose in that sense it's good timing whereas the two previous governments were simply picking up the pieces. They were busy the different divisions just to ensure that things operate.

HAUSMAN: Do you know if in the planning for these measures, some options were discarded and if so what they were and why?

KENILOREA: No, I'm not privy to that kind of activity. I'm not sure the Ministry of Public Service will be very useful there.

HAUSMAN: Let me ask you a bit more specifically about the Parliamentary Strengthening Program that you have been involved in and I guess about the genesis of that. How did it first start?

KENILOREA: *As I said earlier there was a general regional assessment of parliamentary work in the region under UNDP. All the countries, all the island countries in the region had been visited by this particular group and looked at parliaments in the region. In our case I think it happened in 2002, we had our parliament assessment needs in 2002. We were found wanting in terms of staff, in terms of facility, in terms of institutional procedures and that sort of thing.*

So when we were approached whether or not we had anything to concentrate on after the tension and when RAMSI came they were looking for strengthening the public service as we were talking about earlier on. We suggested that they should pick up this particular area of looking at strengthening the parliament capacity and ability to perform its work of oversight and representation properly.

HAUSMAN: Was there someone in particular you suggested it to? How did the suggestion first surface?

KENILOREA: *The suggestion surfaced through the normal consultation of the Machinery of Government group. They had a visit here and I raised it with them that I would appreciate a program or project that would help improve performance of parliament. Of course the report of the legislative needs assessment was available at the time so Solomon Islands parliament needs were quite clear. We raised it with them and hence that particular project came in in 2004 I think it was.*

HAUSMAN: How did you decide on the plan for the program?

KENILOREA: *We had meetings between the likely stakeholders like UNDP who was quite open to help in the particular program. The AusAID through RAMSI representative. So we had meetings of the likely stakeholders and came out with suggested overall ideas as to what this might mean. We set up committees to oversee the project or the program. Then we recruited a project manager who actually put things together and ran it for us.*

HAUSMAN: What were some of the options that you considered when you were in the planning stage?

KENILOREA: *In what sense?*

HAUSMAN: For how to structure the program. For example whether to recruit new graduates or—

KENILOREA: *We started with that idea because the new, the public service had collapsed and there was a training element in the program that was going to be financed by the funders of the program. So I suggested that we should have direct entrance into the program from universities. I suppose you're very innocent and pure from the university I hope and being directly employed by this program. In terms of the number of them, of course, the project manager helped us out with how to assess the needs of the parliament office and parliamentarians. We started off with five I think and it has increased to seven.*

During the training period, during the program that we have now with us, a lot of funding for the training and recruitment of the new recruits came into the program. In the meantime we also developed the establishment that is necessary for sustaining this work after the training phase is over. So we came out with establishment and then went back to the public service to say okay, we need to

have this sustainable, we need to continue with this after RAMSI goes away. We have trained these personnel up to this particular level. We need them to continue to do the work we give to them on our establishment, parliament establishment. That's how we gradually have taken them on our payroll. Then so far it has been working, the public service has not turned us down as yet.

HAUSMAN: Can you describe how the program got going step-by-step?

KENILOREA: I suppose it was just the good work of the project manager. I had great faith in this project manager and the everyday activity of the program of the training with the new recruits. I was not involved in that, that was left to the manager and the clerk to do. When it comes to any change or policy part of it they ask my view and my endorsement and we go from here. In the meantime we have a continuing committee that oversees this particular project. It meets regularly, not very often but regularly.

HAUSMAN: Who is on that committee?

KENILOREA: Representatives of various stakeholders as I said, UNDP is represented, AusAID is represented, RAMSI is represented, Solomon Islands government is represented and I chair it. I am supposed to be the director of the program, that does very little. I trust my staff. I was very pleased to pick the right project manager. They run with the nitty gritty of it..

HAUSMAN: What was the substance of the training?

KENILOREA: We've now trained committee secretaries. We have five parliamentary committees. Before the program it was only the clerk that was secretary for all five committees. Now all the five separate committees have different Secretariat which is run by these trained new graduates. We had an IT personnel officer who was responsible for training of our staff here with computer usage because now this office is computerized. He set up a computer café for the members of Parliament in the members' lounge if they are interested in computers. Some of us found that old dogs don't learn new tricks and we'll leave it at that. Then we start the website for parliament. We have a public awareness officer, education officer of division.

HAUSMAN: Are these all former trainees?

KENILOREA: Yes.

HAUSMAN: How long did the training program last? What was the structure of the program for graduates?

KENILOREA: It is an ongoing one throughout phase one of the project and now we are in phase two. The training continues throughout the phases of the program. So the end result in terms of producing these officers have been done but they continue to work together as a team and with the project manager for the period of the program. As I said we are now in our second phase. It will go on until 2011 or 12 I think.

HAUSMAN: How did the training work in practice? Was it more classroom training or on-the-job training?

KENILOREA: On-the-job training, actual mentoring. That's why I said the gentleman we picked from Australia was very good at that. They all worked together in the library so if

he needs them to have some time of actual training they do that themselves. The information technology officer goes around the different departments and helps them in their IT needs.

HAUSMAN: Is that a trainee from the program?

KENILOREA: Yes. Now we've got two IT officers now on our payroll which means that the public service has accepted these posts to be permanent posts of parliament. So we have got legal officers who again have grown up to help us with legal matters, procedural matters, constitutional matters. Now I do not necessarily have to go to the Attorney General all the time, or the Attorney General's office all the time. I can seek immediate legal advice from our own offices here. I hope to develop them into the stage where we can have our own parliamentary draftsman or draftsman.

HAUSMAN: How did these officers learn the substance of IT and law?

KENILOREA: That's their qualification at the university before we take them in. Apart from their practical training here they go out on short courses to Australia, New Zealand, to help them I suppose with their confidence. The kind of short training outside applies to all of our training. They all go out, we've got I think two now in New Zealand going for their Masters. I hope we'll get them back here and we won't lose them to the general public service out there.

HAUSMAN: You mentioned before that Warren Cahill is particularly effective at working together with the graduates. What were some of the characteristics that made him effective?

KENILOREA: I think he was a very experienced person, he was very knowledgeable of the subject matter. He just had a kind of personality that goes down well in terms of teamwork with Solomon Islanders. He has the ability of throwing you in the deep end and then picking you up again when you need to be, that sort of thing. He creates confidence that way. You do it and if you can't I'll soon find out.

HAUSMAN: Are there any particular examples or anecdotes that you remember?

KENILOREA: No, I think maybe the boys who work with him will have better knowledge of that. But I think he was a good listener. He was just good with the human element to really get them interested, excited and maintain the interest. I think the important part was he really knew what he was doing so the young graduates respected him for that.

HAUSMAN: While we're on the subject let me ask you more broadly, are there things about the context and culture here that you think affect the way public service strengthening should be done?

KENILOREA: Oh yes, that's what I was saying. One of the cultural aspects of Solomon Islanders is tomorrow is another day, that kind of laid back attitude. Then when it comes to discipline it is very difficult to discipline here your - we call it here wantok. I guess, suppose basically our lifestyle is living for each other. We live a communal kind of lifestyle traditionally so we don't want to report on others. When it gets into public service it spoils it, discipline becomes weak because you don't want to tell on some of your so-called wantoks. Solomon Islanders are your wantoks. So some of those cultural influences, if not properly recognized and controlled with interfere with efficiency and effectiveness of public service performance.

HAUSMAN: Have you seen any good examples of these things being recognized and either integrated or controlled in public service?

KENILOREA: *I think they've been recognized in our various general orders, rules and regulations and that sort of thing. Then implementing, forcing them, is yet another story. I think that is an aspect that will be with us for a long time. We will have to grow out of it, maybe through education, so that in work you exercise your personality when you exercise discipline. You don't become too personally attached to certain actions which might interfere with the right things to do.*

HAUSMAN: Are there other examples you remember from your own experience in the public service of how these factors practically affect—?

KENILOREA: *Yes, my own personal leadership principle is by example. If I can't talk because of cultural situation I simply do it. So when people know—when my supporter knows that the boss is working we should be working too, that kind of attitude. Throughout my service, throughout my working life, to avoid any difficulties with this traditional kind and cultural influence, I simply believe in leadership by example. You do what you say. You tell people what you do. Don't expect them to do what you say. Again, that has got a lot of respect in our society. You say a lot and you don't do anything they say it is all hot air signifying nothing. He needs to support what he says by his doing.*

HAUSMAN: To what extent do you think donors have been able to adapt to this environment and work?

KENILOREA: *I'm sure they're struggling to understand because I think they're understanding, but to accept it may be another struggle. The culture of the public service should be an international culture, it should cross all boundaries, it should be a culture of its own to serve the public, action oriented, target achieving, all that kind of thing. It should not be influenced by culture. For those of us who have got our cultural sharing with you need to simply grow up and be able to understand that public service should have its own culture. Not only should, it has its own culture and we need to respect that.*

HAUSMAN: Let me go on and ask you now about the various accountability institutions and their respective roles in accountability in the public sector.

KENILOREA: *Right.*

HAUSMAN: I guess those are the Office of the Auditor General, the Leadership Code Commission and the ombudsman.

KENILOREA: Yes.

HAUSMAN: And although this is in a slightly different domain, the Public Service Commission. Could you describe the division of responsibilities among these institutions?

KENILOREA: *Yes, the Auditor General obviously they work to ensure that government money is spent according to budget and according to the financial procedures and regulations. The ombudsman and the Leadership Code Commission in my view work very closely on issues that are very close to each other. One deals with the leadership, the other one deals with maladministration. But they are dealing with the same people, public officers. The main weakness in all three of them before*

RAMSI came was one of capacity. I was an ombudsman for five years. While we were expected to serve the entire country when I came in the office I had only one investigator and he was also doing administrative work as well. I was successful to have another one. By the time I left in 2001 the office had only two investigating officers. Because of that the ombudsman has to do investigation himself apart from making reports and that sort of thing.

So it is the capacity, the human capacity, the capacity of necessary equipment and finances. During my five years we never visited the provinces because of lack of financial resources to do that. We work only from Honiara although we were dealing with about 400 cases per year from Honiara itself. Of course, provinces write in in terms of complaints and that sort of thing, but we have not visited them which was very bad. So in my view it is a capacity of the accountability institutions that was very poor at that time, pre tension, during and immediately after. Now I am very happy with the RAMSI effort to bring these institutions up to what is expected of them. I think before RAMSI arrived the Auditor General's office for example only had about three staff, they now have about twenty-something I think. It is an example of capacity building in terms of the institution. It is quite obvious.

They are doing the same now with the Leadership Code Commission and apart from the improvement of the capacity of the human beings and facilities they are also looking at the laws, the laws that govern these various institutions. I know that they're working on possible amendments of the various legal provisions that govern these institutions to help them be more effective and more productive I suppose. But it is not so much part of the law, it is enforcement of this law that we need to look at. That is where resources are very important.

When I went to the ombudsman's office, I took over, my predecessor had never produced one report, or any report to parliament although the constitution mandates the ombudsman to produce an annual report to parliament. Not one in five years. His handover note to me was that that was due to lack of resources.

HAUSMAN: I've heard a lot about the success of the strengthening of the Office of the Auditor General, but what about the other two accountability offices?

KENILOREA: *I know that they're working on the human element of it, in other words recruitment for the Leadership Code Commission and the ombudsman, the same are both that way, that they are beefing their staffing up. As I said they are looking at the laws to to help them to be relevant and strengthened and effective. I don't know what other areas in those two commissions they've been looking at. But I know that the ombudsman has a lot more staff now.*

In terms of facilities they're just building offices for them. I think those two institutions are going to be properly housed soon so that might be an impetus for better performance and improved output.

HAUSMAN: Let me ask you another slightly more general question. In the aftermath of the tensions were there issues with tensions in the workplace, I guess ethnic, geographic, religious tensions, and if so how did you deal with them?

KENILOREA: *After?*

HAUSMAN: Or before or during.

KENILOREA: Oh yes, during, the difficulties we had were during the tension, not after because when we had RAMSI law and order was immediately arrested and dealt with. Therefore the only difficulty lies with resources, to help public officers to perform their work and the beginning of all of this development of strengthening programs and projects. But during the tension it was very difficult. It was very difficult because you go to office with guns around, that sort of thing. It was a totally new experience to us. We lost the police altogether. The element of the police that was left was also infiltrated by militants. For some reason the police that were left over also joined with some militants to call themselves a joint operation. So it was quite difficult, especially to go into the finance office and you see them all there.

Really, if RAMSI did not come when it did, I don't know where the Solomon Islands would be now.

HAUSMAN: After RAMSI arrived was there any lingering resentment in the workplace?

KENILOREA: Oh yes.

HAUSMAN: Among different groups? How did you manage it?

KENILOREA: No, not among the working people, the working people and the militant elements. Especially in finance because they were also trying to get their hands on finances and that sort of thing. Of course, a lot of militants were employed as special constables under the pretext of looking after Honiara. So in terms of payment they insisted they be paid first before anyone else. So it was quite difficult to work. As soon as law and order came back through RAMSI, things went back to more normal in terms of law and order although it will continue to be a challenge to law enforcement institutions. But it is not as bad as the tension period.

Afterward now it is okay. Before that there was not very much interference with work, but during the tensions, as I said it was a new experience. It was very unfamiliar to some of us, especially those of us who were trying to be in the mainstream of peacemaking and that sort of thing. I was the chairman of the peace process during the tension and as I said it was a totally new experience. But because the government simply appointed me, a job I didn't apply for, I just had to do it. I enjoyed it. It is nice to get back to a normal situation, yes.

HAUSMAN: Let me ask you a little bit about some employment procedures. You may want to answer either from the perspective of the whole public service or the particular program you were involved in recently. Can you describe the procedures and standards used in recruitment?

KENILOREA: Recruitment is done by the public service. The Public Service Commission finally approves the applicants. So the recruitment is done by the public service in terms of advertisements, job descriptions or job specifications. All these sorts of things. They put up notices for recruitment. One applies for the job and then there is the interview. After the interview you are successful or not successful. So it involved advertisement, recruitment and appointment.

HAUSMAN: How did the recruitment work in the parliamentary strengthening program?

KENILOREA: The recruitment was the same way it applies anywhere I suppose. You look at the CVs (curriculum vitae) of the various ones who apply. Advertisement, we put up an advertisement and people apply. There is an interview, the clerk is involved, the project manager is involved, I've never been involved. I let them do

that kind of work. Then there is the best judgment depending on the curriculum vitae of these new recruits I suppose.

HAUSMAN: Can you describe the procedure for promotions and how it works in practice?

KENILOREA: Yes, I've been out of public service for a long time now, but during my time promotions were based on examination. Of course I do not see examinations now. I suppose now promotion is dependent on performance and experience and time spent on the job. Everyone is entitled to annual increment of course. There is an annual increment provision in the system. But for promotions it is dependent obviously on reports by your superiors. There should also be an annual report by the personnel manager of the various departments or the ministries.

Any proposed promotion is made by the ministry and submitted to the commission, the Public Service Commission. It is the Public Service Commission that decides on promotions. This Public Service Commission is responsible for appointment, promotion and discipline.

HAUSMAN: I've heard from others that there are often significant delays while waiting for the Ministry of Public Service to approve promotion, have you experienced that as well?

KENILOREA: Yes, that experience is very common. Some of the cases end up at the ombudsman for years. You know I've been here for donkey's years and never been promoted? Why? So if that can't get sense of the ministry they go to the ombudsman to help them clarify their own situation. Sometimes it is, either they forgot or it is a defective system or lack of performance but sometimes you can be on probation for a long time than necessary. Otherwise the time period for promotion is two years.

HAUSMAN: Could you describe how in cases like these the ombudsman might work together with the Public Service Commission?

KENILOREA: They receive it as a complaint, it is a formal complaint, so they follow it up with the Public Service Commission as a complaint by this particular officer. Then of course all they can receive is explanation as to why. Sometimes they acknowledge the fact that yes, it's just an oversight. The officer has been in that particular post and we just forgot him or something. If it needs confirmation they simply recommend confirmation of the officer, public service, that is they simply recommend confirmation to the commission to confirm the officer. If it needs promotion then the public service passes the case to the commission.

I find out that if these procedures work well as are expected and provided for under various documents of administration of the public service, the ombudsman would have very little work to do because it is mainly complaints about maladministration. During my time there was an average of say about 34% of complaints that are found to be true, that they've got a case. Most of it is where maybe, is just a non issue, is misdirected complaint, should go to the police or to the labor or to the union instead of the ombudsman or even to the court system. But I found that about 35% or 34% of the complaints received were positive ones.

HAUSMAN: I've also been told that there are significant problems with absenteeism in some parts of the public service.

KENILOREA: *Yes, that's right.*

HAUSMAN: Have you encountered this problem and have you seen some effective solutions to it?

KENILOREA: *That's why I like getting the new recruits from the university direct to my office here. We train them, work ethic, we train them with the idea that you've got work to do. But in the public service generally, that kind of complaint is real. It has been so lax in terms of time, attendance, leaving work before time and all that sort of thing. Then again it shows lack of discipline. Discipline needs to be strengthened.*

HAUSMAN: Let me ask just a couple more questions before we stop. Do you think there are things about the context here that make some of the lessons learned here inapplicable elsewhere or do you think that most of the lessons learned here could work in other countries as well?

KENILOREA: *If public service were to have its own culture it should apply anywhere, everywhere. But of course, some of its weaknesses here are certainly, it is just in context of our own cultural situation. I sometimes wonder why people apply to work when they don't turn up for work. There are so many people out there wanting work, that method does not seem to get home to people who are fortunate enough to be employed by government. I had thought having been employed you would know that there are other competitors out there and it should encourage you to be really doing your work and holding on to it for dear life's sake. But it doesn't produce that kind of result or attitude amongst the, even the component of the public service here because people are still coming late to work. They go out to the market during working hours. They leave work before working hours. Sometimes the service tries all sorts of ways including you sign in when you report in and you sign out when you leave. But of course people could be—they're signing out all right, but they could simply be reporting to sign in or sign out when in fact between time they are so lax about work performance.*

I think in my view I thought that our employment opportunity market here is already saturated but it does not appear to be so when people who are in offices and should be working are not working. But I think it is one of discipline and we will have to continue to work at that. The discipline in the various departments, they have to know that cultural elements must not be allowed to rule the public service.

HAUSMAN: Just a question about support for the reform efforts. Did you experience any resistance to recent reform efforts and if so from which groups?

KENILOREA: *Resistance from what?*

HAUSMAN: Say for example was there any resistance to the parliamentary strengthening project or to the strengthening of the accountability institutions?

KENILOREA: *No, I think everybody appreciated that. Certainly the strengthening of parliament project is highly appreciated by the politicians themselves. In the recent meeting that has just been concluded there was a motion moved in parliament to appreciate the work of Warren Cahill and how excellent and proficient the staff are now to serve as both the office and parliamentarians in their areas of needs, in research and writing of whatever they like to do for them.*

That is one of the areas I'd like to continue to encourage. We now have trained our officers. They are available for members of Parliament to use. They need to know that so that they can make use of them.

HAUSMAN: Great. Is there anything else you'd like to add before we stop?

KENILOREA: No, my only hope is that Solomon Islands attitude will improve, islanders, Solomon Island public officers attitude will improve through time. I don't know what will improve that whether education, a sense of responsibility, love of your work. But it certainly, we will have to continue to work at attitude, attitude to work, work ethics so that people take pride in their work and they do the work to the best of their ability. At the moment there is still very much a lackadaisical attitude by our public officers.

HAUSMAN: All right, thanks very much.

KENILOREA: Thank you.