Nevada Test Site Oral History Project
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Interview with Ian Zabarte

April 4, 2007
Tecopa, California

Interview Conducted By
Mary Palevsky

Oral history is a method of collecting historical information through recorded interviews conducted by an interviewer/researcher with an interviewee/narrator who possesses firsthand knowledge of historically significant events. The goal is to create an archive which adds relevant material to the existing historical record. Oral history recordings and transcripts are primary source material and do not represent the final, verified, or complete narrative of the events under discussion. Rather, oral history is a spoken remembrance or dialogue, reflecting the interviewee's memories, points of view and personal opinions about events in response to the interviewer's specific questions. Oral history interviews document each interviewee's personal engagement with the history in question. They are unique records, reflecting the particular meaning the interviewee draws from her/his individual life experience.

Produced by:

The Nevada Test Site Oral History Project
Departments of History and Sociology
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 89154-5020

Director and Editor
Mary Palevsky

Principal Investigators
Robert Futrell, Dept. of Sociology
Andrew Kirk, Dept. of History

The material in the *Nevada Test Site Oral History Project* archive is based upon work supported by the U.S. Dept. of Energy under award number DEFG52-03NV99203 and the U.S. Dept. of Education under award number P116Z040093.

Interview with Ian Zabarte

April 4, 2007
Conducted by Mary Palevsky

Table of Contents

Interview with Ian Zabarte

April 4, 2007 in Tecopa, California
Conducted by Mary Palevsky

[00:00:00] Begin Track 2, Disc 1.

Mary Palevsky: *Ian Zabarte, thank you so much for agreeing to speak to me today, to speak to us, and if you could begin by giving me your full name, date of birth and place of birth, and some sense of your early life and how you come to the activities that you've been involved in, that we've been speaking about off tape.*

Ian Zabarte: Well, my full name is Ian Dominic Zabarte. I was born July 2, 1964 in San Francisco at the Presbyterian Medical Center. My mother is Shoshone and growing up I knew I was Indian. I have brown skin and with all of the people in, you know, the Bay Area over there. I went to high school—I spent four years in a Catholic boarding school in Sonoma [California], growing up with my brothers. I have three other Shoshone brothers and I grew up in the Bay Area there. My father and mother met when my father came to this country and was a cook in the Washoe Medical Center and my mother was a nurse over there. And they were happily married for, I don't know, sixteen years, I believe. I don't know how happy it was. Growing up as a kid—my father's strict upbringing—he was raised by priests and nuns and always beat by them; and of course at twelve years old in the Philippines when the Japanese invaded, he was always harassed and beat by the Japanese, too. It went both ways, you know. But that was part of the strictness which I was brought up with, and I think that kind of clashed with my mother, who's more soft-spoken.

And from there we lived in Pacifica [California] as a kid. And I grew up like most American baby boomers at that time, lunch was a bologna sandwich and a bowl of Campbell's soup with a glass of Kool-Aid, you know, and that's the way it was, growing up.

Let me back up a little bit. Your parents met in Washoe County [Nevada] and then they came to San Francisco at some point, is that right?

Yeah,, Washoe County Medical Center. And growing up as a kid, I mean I always knew where home was, where Duckwater [Indian Reservation, Nevada]—we always went every summer. My father, I wouldn't say he's much different than other people, you know. We look for something authentic and real. And my father being an immigrant—well, my mother was beautiful and he, you know, loved her in his way and appreciated her and native people. And we always had—going to powwows and things in the Bay Area—then he was involved in supporting the 1971 Alcatraz takeover. Of course my uncle Adam Nordwall in Fallon [Nevada] was really big involved in that takeover anyway, so there was a lot of support, if not real understanding or knowledge on my father's part. He just wasn't an Indian and never grew up that way. And so the upbringing I **[00:05:00]** had, there was opportunities and those are the things that never went away, whereas five years of Catholic boarding school didn't really penetrate, you know. It never grabbed me. I was more rebellious of that than anything.

How old were you? Was that for high school?

That was eight through fourteen, up to thirteen, something like that. And, yes, nuns and priests and psychologists once a month, and it was all boys. And so I was shy when I got out of there, when I was in high school, and of course my upbringing.

I went to Campbell High School in Santa Clara County. So in high school, we used to go to Santa Cruz as many weekends as we could, and just kind of did goofy things around Santa Clara and grew up on the west side over there.

That was my early days, and then I started getting really crazy. You know how kids can be in high school, pursuing more goofy things. And at some point I decided, I need to get out of

this place. Jobs were not—I worked with my father in San Francisco for two years. He was a salesman for a wholesale tool distributing company. And that was about the first time I started to realize—become cognizant of war and the war machine, because back at that time, early eighties, that company got a contract, Western Hardware and Tool, to refit the USS *New Jersey*, and that was a battleship. And so my father would talk, Yeah, we can get anything from Gatling guns to go on these things to the wrenches to brass fittings, and so I remember him talking about that. So that's when I—then, being in San Francisco with the Pacific Fleet being anchored there, I used to go, I mean at boarding school, they used to take us to these [places]. I've been on the USS *Ranger* and had lunch in the captain's dining room, but it just never grabbed me as being, wow, cool. It was OK. It was big—they'd take us on a submarine or something. But there was just so much thrown at me, some of these things just didn't penetrate.

But that was when I first became aware of weapons or armaments, in that job where civilians or the public come in to supplying that need of the military. And then as I grew older, later, much later, ten, fifteen years later, you start hearing of all the stories about the sailors, the black sailors who revolted over in Oakland and the explosion; and then conspiracy theories and the potential nuclear weapons that went off.

And at the same time, I was actually—that company provided—so I was—I had a driver's license and I would drive tools over. And lasers were the big thing, just coming around and I would take tools down to some company, or Moffett Field or something, some company down there that would begin to put laser numbers on all of these tools or torque wrenches. And then we'd deliver them to Moffett Field, for example, or I would take other equipment and deliver them to Berkeley, at the university at the national lab there, Lawrence Livermore National Lab, before I even knew what these places were. So I was just a delivery guy and

delivery driver. But these are places later on that I began to—my vague familiarity with them and the whole area—put together the foundations for really understanding today how they support what happens at the Nevada Test Site, and a much larger national laboratory system.

But really how I became involved in this is after going back to the reservation and **[00:10:00]** hearing sonic booms and living in a place where I was able to be free. You can look out there and go there, without fences and without anybody disturbing you. That was freedom to me, that was knowing how to live off the land, you know, going hunting. And knowing this place all my life. We'd go back in the summers, you know, my father wasn't one to hold back going someplace or doing adventure. I have my knowledge of being native, which is more intimate, you know, because of the more real being or sense of place that I have with this land.

And when I came back to the reservation, I think I was eighteen or nineteen, that age, right there, nineteen maybe, and my uncle had cancer and he passed away, and then my grandfather passed away in '86, a couple of years later. I think I got back there in '82, '83. Eighty-three, probably. And that's when I started going to council meetings. Some of the people on the rez says, `Hey, come on, let's go to a council meeting`. OK. So I went to the Western Shoshone National Council meeting, and that was with a lot of really what we call traditional people, the elders. Some of, for example, Corbin Harney's teachers and spiritual people were there. Eunice Silva and Saggy Williams [sp] and Glenn Holley and those kinds of people. Lily Sanchez, Joe Sanchez Junior and Senior, Carrie Dann, Raymond Yowell. And my grandfather had been on the Indian Claims Commission. And the Western Shoshone National Council was created by those people in 1984 but it was that period right at the beginning of the creation of the council, I was there. And for two years I didn't say anything because I didn't know anything, so I didn't begin saying anything until 1986, I believe.

And I just started becoming more aware of what was happening. After my uncle passed away of cancer of the esophagus, even though there was no clear cause-effect relationship—the stories of people and the talk of people and seeing these jets overflying the reservation. And knowing that it's a jet coming later on, knowing it's a jet coming, I can hear it, and I'm going in and I said, `Hey, everybody relax, there's a jet coming`. And then to be overflown, and knowing that—still having your heart just racing and my elders and uncle Bill [William] Rosse over in Yomba [Indian Reservation], and talking about his unlcle passing away after one of those things going over, had a heart attack—that kind of stress and anxiety over something and knowing it's there and knowing it's coming. I remember those things and going in and telling the kids at the [reservation] school one time, you know, in Duckwater, `There's a plane coming, it's OK.` And a lot of those people fly right over so close to the ground, and so fast, and then I see the geese flying up, and I'm thinking, Man, why are you going to bother the birds, you know? Why do you have to do that? And so, people used to shoot at those things, because that's just wrong. And so in '86 I remember this Stealth fighter used to turn right over my house.

My grandpa's house. It was always there. When I was a little kid, I remember when we'd go to Duckwater, there was no running water, and I remember just being a little guy, five years old or so, maybe younger than that. No running water. We used to play in the creek **[00:15:00]** with the chickies. There was no indoor plumbing. We used to go to the outhouse. And so, even though I had this California upbringing, I also had this time on the reservation, during the summer for months or whatever. It was OK.

I have a couple of questions. I would like to know a little bit—I'm going to ask you both and then you'll see why I can ask you both at once—I'd like to know a little bit more about what makes

you decide to actually go back after this summer life to actually—it sounds like you go back to live at Duckwater. And then the detail question is, what was your grandpa's name?

OK. I think it was just trouble in California. You know my father and my mother divorced, I don't know exactly when, but that was—at that time we were living down in Oak Hills between Salinas and Carmel someplace over there. And it was very nice, big rolling hills, big houses, and my father was working hard and had big plans; and he and my mother divorced, likely because of his very harsh treatment of us kids, harsh treatment of her. That was his ethic, and for him it was OK, and all I can say about that is, it gave me a very clear understanding of right and wrong. Today they might call it child abuse, but corporal punishment was the order of the day, and yes, I had many, many spankings, beatings as a child—.

And your mom, too, you're saying? Would he—?

No, I never saw that and I'm not aware of that. It's possible. It's plausible to assume—

I misunderstood you. I'm sorry.

It's plausible to assume that, but I mean definitely verbal. When he's yelling, that's one of the things I remember, growing up. And running and hiding. But it seems like even in Duckwater we did that because when my grandfather would get mad or something, you know. But it was not so bad. Kids will be kids. It was just a different era. People took care, you know, they took care of children, and I don't know that I could make that same argument today.

My grandfather's name is Raymond Graham, and he was on the Indian Claims Commission, which the United States says is the process where they paid us for the land. And they could say whatever they want but that process doesn't affect the title transfer, and it was never actually finalized and we can't get in all the detail about that.

So after my parents broke up, I spent four-and-a-half, five years in a Catholic boarding school. I went to high school in Campbell, California, and that high school was shut down. My father wasn't—he always worked, worked hard, and he never achieved what he wanted, so there's a little bit of frustration. He always took care of the kids, and he remarried, and I think he was married three or four times, and he's been with that wife since 1980s, somewhere in there. And, we lived in apartments, and I left home there and was just running around on the streets in Santa Clara County, and didn't do that for too long, you know, I don't know how long, several months; and then finally got in touch with my mom and went back to the reservation. So they were divorced.

She had gone back after they divorced?

Yes. One time when I was growing up, too, before I went to boarding school, my father brought my brothers to the reservation for a year or two. I was like seven or so, and I spent a year-and-a-half, two years with my grandmother over in Smith Valley at this Arabian ranch, so there was always horses around, and I was with my *Dogo* there. Grandpa. And my grandmother.

Yes, Shoshone are tough people, you know. So it's hard to contrast it with **[00:20:00]** my father, who was also—I think I got many more, more consistent and harsher beatings always from my father than from either—see, that was my step-grandfather over there in Smith Valley, not my paternal grandfather, and both grandfathers were hard. We'd get spanked, we'd get beat, but it was more cause-and-effect-related; whereas my father, he didn't need much, he was always hot-blooded and ready to go to take care of any child that's too loud. And yes, it was hard.

So there was really nothing for me in the Bay Area. I needed to go someplace and I just didn't like the options there, working in warehousing or being that young and not having the direction to go to college or something. When I went back to the reservation, at least I knew what

there was, and I could live off the land, at least try to learn some of those things, and there was always a place there. I remember my great-grandma from growing up as a kid, and that's kind of different than a lot of other Americans. So I had like both of these worlds, growing up, and when I get back to the rez, then everybody knows who I am, and they remember us, from kids. And it wasn't just there but every other place. Indians travel, they visit and there's family there. So the uncle in '71, we'd go to the powwows over there and one uncle, my grandfather's brother, had a little chow wagon and he used to sell food at the powwows; whereas my other uncle and my grandmother's sister, my grandfather's sister was also at the powwow and he was a big dancer, and artisan and activist, and he even ran for Congress back in the early seventies. And so these people, there's a community there, even if it isn't clearly seen, with housing in the Bay Area, you know, the people are there. And so it wasn't foreign for me to go back to the reservation. However, it certainly was an eye-opener when I started to connect the refitting military ships, or some of these companies in San José that are producing armaments that go on aircraft or bombs. And when we would go into some of these computer companies—I did janitorial cleaning for a little bit, part of that couple of months that I was on the street, so to speak; I was staying at a friend's house here, a friend's house there, but I'd do a little job here—they didn't seem to fit but we would go into like FMC Corporation and do the cleaning of some of these places, or this other computer company, and, well, you see tanks, designs on the wall, and armored personnel carrier designs and mock C4 plastic explosives, just these different articles and things. And of course the computer chips and the big Intel and all of the major [computer manufacturers], you know. Other friends would work at the Seagate in Scotts Valley, doing all of these different kinds of jobs. So I was thinking, boy, I sure wish I had had one of

those jobs, but I was not experienced and too young and I didn't have the support to get in there, and I guess luckily I didn't.

So it was kind of that. Moving back to the reservation was an opportunity, even if I didn't see it clearly at that time, and I'm lucky that I had because computers are here too. They're everywhere.

[00:25:00] So my grandmother, her maiden name was Ada Mike, and her mother I believe was Amy Hicks Butler. Amy and two girls. Pat Hicks. That line is related to Jim Butler, so this Jim Butler guy, the guy who founded Tonopah [Nevada], I guess, yeah, I'm related to him, he's like my great-great grandfather or something. But let me see, Amy and Annie Hicks Butler, I guess, and those were the two daughters of Jim Butler, I believe. So, you know, we don't talk too much about him. He's just kind of out there somewhere. And I believe that's the line there. And then my great-grandpa Bodie Graham, that was on my grandfather's side, and my grandfather had like eight sisters and three brothers, I think, something like.

And then you said Uncle Bill Rosse. Was he your uncle?

Yeah, over in Yomba. Well, we've got to start with the bottom line about Western Shoshone. All Western Shoshone are related. OK? And so I have more difficulty than the last generation finding a Shoshone partner; and in the community, especially in Duckwater, there's just none. It's a small community. And even in the next community, it's small but then there's still the possibility that you're related; and the way my elders told me is that even if you know up to tenth generation, you know, that's taboo.

You can't marry a relation?

Yes, if it's known, whereas other people might say it's OK, but you know what? I err on the side of caution against inbreeding because on my father's side. You know what they say about

Western Europeans, especially the aristocracy, we're descended from—we're the product of good inbreeding [laughing]; so I just kind of have stayed away from that and growing up in California I've not had any aversion to other ethnic groups or identities.

And that brings along a funny story. You know my brother was in Ely [Nevada] with my grandmother and he was a teenager, sixteen or something, eighteen, and my grandmother and him were in the store. I don't know where I was, someplace else. They're in the store and he's telling me, Yeah, you know, Grandma was looking at this black woman, and she's about ten feet away and she's looking at her, really looking at her, up and down, and when we got to the checkout I said, "What's wrong, Grandma? Haven't you ever seen a black woman before?" And she says, "Yeah, but not this close." And that was like 1985, 1984, you know.

And it's not that long ago. We didn't get electricity on the reservation [until 1976]—like I said, as a kid, we used to get our water from the creek that ran by my grandpa's house. And that's my house right now. That's where I am living right now, except that I'm helping out down here at Corbin's place at Poo-Ha-Bah. So that place was always there. The fences—we have big cottonwood trees there next to the road. Well, those were fences. My grandfather took those from Fallon and put them in the ground there along that creek, along that ditch, and that's where those trees come from, so that was the fence line. And you know there's reasons for things being the way they are. The fences are old and rickety and falling down and it looks to people like trash, or there's all junk cars and running around. Well, there's a reason for that. Because they're old and because my grandfather helped build a house and you fix and repair it, daily almost. And the tree line, the trees are the way **[00:30:00]** they are because they were fence posts. That's why they're so close together and in a straight line. And then all those junk cars. You never know when you're going to need something out there, and it was a two-day trip to go to town and back. And

my uncle and my aunts tell me about those things. And you never know when you're going to need something. The only difference that people don't see is that they're so busy judging and just driving by and outsiders are not stopping. When you get out, there's no cigarette butts on the ground. There's no broken glass laying around. It may look trashy, but it's clean, really; and there are cans laying around here, people do do things, but people pick things up, too, and overall, you look out there, it's clean. Our biggest problem is weeds now.

So anyway, that's what life on the rez has, and most people tend to focus in on an area, the place with fences or where there's a house. Their inspection is inside, closing down, whereas, as a place for my identity and being, it expands outward from there, so I'm not looking at the rez, looking into it, I'm looking out from there, and as far as the eye can see is my property. And I'm not rich. Rich is something, you know, you earn money, you make money, you're a millionaire, you're rich, whereas wealth is inherited, and the Shoshone people are wealthy. We've inherited this from our ancestors and with wealth and with inheritance, particularly land, there is responsibility. And that is where our morals and spirituality is rooted. It's in the land, in our sense of place, in our identity and being. And it's not just a house. I ask people all the time, I say, `Where's your house? Oh, it's in Las Vegas. Where's home? Oh, it's in L.A. Where's your homeland? What are you talking about?` Whereas most native people, it doesn't matter where they're at, you can ask them those same questions and they can tell you right back to where they come from and their ancestors. And that's important. So that's why, when we talk about "the land," all the land, we share the land in privity with each other, so my rights here at Poo-Ha-Bah, at Corbin's house on his property and all around out there, it's the same as his rights in Duckwater and other places in Shoshone territory. We share this land in privity with each other. That's a legal concept.

That's an interesting term. I don't know that term. But it means—?

In privity with.

That means what you just said it means.

Yes. In privity with. And that's the concept. It's a legal concept. So, you know, hunting, I'm telling Corbin, I'm going to go hunting for you this fall, let me go take your rifle and then go have it fixed up and I'll go hunting for you this fall. And I say that to Paul, I'm going to go hunting for Corbin. He says, Oh, are you going to bring me some, too? And I say, Yes. But I'm probably going to get arrested before, whatever, but I'm going hunting this fall, and I never have ever got a state tag; what we do is we're forced to follow those laws because we've never had lawyers and we've never had people defending the rights of the people to the exclusion of, or—let me restate that. We've never had a clear enough understanding to effectively defend our sovereignty and the sovereignty of the people individually against the assaults of the United States, or the failures of the United States to follow the obligations that the United States solemnly has sworn to observe in the treaty of peace and friendship. Now, we could say that that is as much the Shoshone's fault because we **[00:35:00]** didn't speak English, and that may in part be true, but we also have never suffered as a people as much as we have since the United States came into existence and has occupied our territory. So I can tell you about some of the past American history that you may not have heard but these are things that influence our understanding with regard to the Treaty of Ruby Valley [1863] and why that was signed. Corbin has some very interesting stories where he talks about forced march of Shoshone people, first to Owyhee [Nevada] and then all the way up to the Vancouver Island, and then the treaty signing—and the people being fed a meat that they never ate before and they believe it was the two Shoshone men that were hung at the treaty signing,

that were taken away. And, you know, those kinds of stories. And that pot was up there, that they cooked them in, for a long time.

Back up a little bit so I understand what you're saying better. I heard you say that two men were hung at the treaty signing?

Well, they were hung or they were taken away and shot, killed, but later on, the people were hungry and the soldiers brought them some stew or something with some meat that the people weren't familiar with. You'll have to get that story from Corbin or from Raymond Yowell. But those are, and there's- the Shoshone people look at the treaty in the National Archives and there's a stain on it and there's some speculation that that may be a bloodstain from one of the signers who was bleeding.

The United States was desperate to sign that treaty and so the story that I'm going to tell you is what we know about the time and issues, the political climate that precipitate the signing of the treaty. So you may have seen on television these days or on the History Channel about the treasure ship. They had it recently on the History Channel about the treasure shipment. It was the two-part shipment from the Comstock or from the gold in California, the Sierras, from San Francisco down to Panama, transported up over the shortest part of the jungle, that's how rough it was an overland route. So they went down all the way to Panama, to the shortest place by ship, up over the jungle, and on to the USS *Central America*, up to Washington [D.C.], and they had a shipment in 1857, September fifth, I believe, twenty-one tons of gold bullion. This was the technology of the day, this steamship, this paddlewheel steamship. It had 470 passengers and a crew of fifty, and these passengers got on there, they were loaded with gold, money belts in gold, and they would gamble, you know. They ran into a hurricane in that September trip, and the ship went down and I think they saved maybe 150 people off of that ship or so, but the ship went

down with twenty-one tons of gold bullion. The next month was the first major stock market crash in the United States. They decided that, the government officials at the time decided, we need an overland route, and that precipitated the need for signing treaties at the time with Indians. Well, within a year, year-and-a-half (1857, October—September, October) within a couple years, 1861, the Civil War broke out and then Lincoln became president and they really needed that overland route to get gold across [to finance the war between the states], and so that is why the Western Shoshone negotiated treaties do not cede land to the United States, because the United States could not afford another war with the Shoshone. But they really needed that treaty and there is speculation and stories from our elders that when they got some Shoshone together, they really needed that. So the soldiers had their guns **[00:40:00]** stacked up in Christmas tree configuration, and they brought the Indians out there, and at that treaty signing, it was forced, and that's about how bad it got at that time [in Ruby Valley]. But the United States needed that treaty more than anything and so I don't think that whether they wanted or didn't want a war, they couldn't help doing things the way they had done it elsewhere or being who they were to come treat with the Indians and treat with the Shoshone. But anyway, that's our understanding of the basic foundations or circumstances that precipitated the signing of the treaty. The United States couldn't afford another war.

When you say it's forced, are there particular stories? I just read the text of the treaty in Corbin's book and there are certain leaders that sign it, so is there a sense that that was forced in that sense? From the Shoshone side, how does that story go? There was some amount of trust that the United States would actually uphold it or what? Are there stories about that?

Well, you know, the Shoshone people are strong people. We were probably already suffering from the effects of disease long before we even knew where it was coming from or what it was

or it being documented. And those things could've come with Lewis and Clark, their men were sick and carrying a lot of disease, and Sacagawea; but even at those times we've always had this obligation to observe as a courtesy to the United States, to provide aid and comfort to American nationals within our country. And we laid down our arms at that time and I'm sure our leaders understood that, and had heard from other tribes, of what had happened to them, that we didn't want war either. And looking at what was happening, likely from the disease, even though it's not documented, and the destruction and in-migration of settlers and others passing through, that we needed to do something. And that was at a time when killing our people was OK by the settlers, by the foreigners, and our leaders made that decision. So coming together at that time, they probably saw an opportunity, but the soldiers being who they were could not resist the temptation to do a little rubbing our noses in the ground or a little slaughter here or there. That's just the way they were.

And some of the stories that some of our other warriors tell is that we cut the Spanish Trail on the south, we fought with the Spanish on the south. We fought with Mormons on the east and we fought with Russians and British on the north. We fought with everybody. And the Civil War generals, your great Civil War generals in the 1840s and '50s cut their teeth fighting Shoshone in the northwest. General Cook and some of these generals, you know, Custer, they came out this way and they fought our people.

And so there was probably bad blood before that, but our people signed that treaty and we understood our obligation and so, from our perspective, whether we got a war back then, or even today, the greatest act of a warrior is to stop fighting, to lay down his arms. And we have a problem, witnessing what's happening in Iraq, our warriors do because we want to do something, whether it's here or it's there, to protect our land, to **[00:45:00]** protect our people, and it's very

hard not to take up arms. But we are obligated and we honor the spirit of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship [Ruby Valley]. It's not against the people of the United States, but this government, and if there was some way we could educate the military man, or if George Bush had understanding of what the military man's responsibilities are, you know, that every order that he gives, people die, us or them; and he doesn't have to pay that price, and that's sad and it's not an understanding that our leaders have, you know, and we're obligated to upholding the terms and spirit of the Treaty of Ruby Valley. So you're here in my country as a courtesy to your government, and we restrain ourselves from acts that would violate your being here, and instead we provide aid and comfort and we share an understanding of our custom and the common law that protects both of us, going back to international law and the signing of the treaty of peace and friendship. This is some complicated political—

It's very clear, the way you're saying it, and I really appreciate it, because I'm beginning to have a—well, I already have a better understanding of that view, of that world that you're coming from, so that was very clear, actually. Thank you very much.

So being with Corbin, I'm cut from that warrior class. If I may, and I pray, and I hear my spiritual people, and we know who they are. And I get up and I pray with them and I hear them talking and I know what they're saying in Shoshone, not everything, you know, but I know the general tone and thought and the words that they say and they try to inform us.

As I said, the greatest act of a warrior is to lay down his arms and stop fighting, and that is really the only time I have to listen to Corbin. We need those people we trust. But there are also war chiefs and there are peace chiefs, and then we have our other principal men and warriors, and though I'm cut from the warrior class, I am the secretary of state for the Western Shoshone government, which makes me the principal man for foreign affairs. And when I went

to Geneva [Switzerland] once, it was the first time I had met, at that time it was Bill Richardson. He was the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. And I was quite young and it was the first time I met with him and he's trying to tell me, Oh, that treaty is historic and it doesn't have any meaning today. And I said, If that treaty was not in place, things would be much, much, much worse. And I said, You'd better take notice. And I got up and walked out. And there was about thirty Indians in that room from the United States and Canada, and half of the room got up and walked out with me.

So that was my first experience with Bill Richardson. And then when he was Secretary of Energy, we met at the airport once and Corbin has a photo with him with Sister Rosemary Lynch from the Nevada Desert Experience [NDE] and I refused to be in that. I do not collaborate. My intent is to paralyze the adversary by not supporting that, so that's why I have my greatest concern with this interview and the funding coming from the Department of Energy [DOE]. I hope they're aware of these things. I'm talking to you about these things which effect genocide. We haven't got there yet but if something happens to me, that story needs to be told. And so for me, I'm not afraid of the government, I'm not afraid of the surveillance, I'm aware of it, and it takes a little bit to get used to, but it's a story that needs to be told and, for myself, and for my people, we are worthy of surviving, and personally I feel I have to **[00:50:00]** be worthy of surviving. My life has to have meaning and value, and I get that from taking care of the water here, from seeing Corbin, feeling better that he sees these things. Even if I'm not directly doing it for him, I'm doing it, and that is part of my sense of being and place. I'm home here. I'm home up there. I'm home wherever I am on this land. And so I read your paper [UNLV deed of gift for oral history interview]. And I sign it and it says whatever it says and I think, oh, it's a legal document, but it's done here in my country, and it's different here. The things I do here in my

country, the United States doesn't have jurisdiction. This land has never been part of the United States, never has. And this goes to the signing of the treaty, so the United States Constitution for Americans, and I have to balance both of these two [views], my identity as a Shoshone first and foremost.

You know, I grew up pledging allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and all of that and I'll still stand up for the Pledge of Allegiance, but I am proud when—for example, most people don't know that after Custer was wiped out at the Little Big Horn, the Seventh Cavalry was reformed with Native Americans at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and Comanche were a large part of that contingent. It's called Seventh Cavalry L. And Comanche are Shoshone. Long ago, Shoshone children, youth, were playing a rock-throwing game and one of the warriors' sons was killed in that game, and the Comanche family was banished to the east of the Rockies and they took up the Plains way and went all the way down. So Comanche are Shoshone, and they actually own Fort Sill and they've leased it for ninety-nine years to the U.S. Army for a buck. Ninety-nine years. But that provides the economy for the area and they have other reservation lands and five casinos over there. And so we just went to a Shoshone reunion in the Comanche Nation last August and it will be coming up in Reno later this year. But anyway, I found Atomic Annie at Fort Sill. So the Comanche own the land that the atomic cannon that was fired out here at the Nevada Test Site is on [Grable nuclear test, 1953].

That cannon is out there at Fort Sill?

At Fort Sill, yes, Atomic Annie, and they have the photo of it and they show the soldiers that were marched into that cannon. So, one of these days I'm going to slap an evidence sticker on that thing if I live that long. Yes, that's going to be part of the issues that we address, and that's evidence of the fact that they detonated that—shot that cannon off and that test went off and

hopefully we can look at some of the wind patterns and look at the land and find more evidence about what they did out here. So, we have the smoking gun, still have a little radiation in it, and we have the place that it landed, the bullet. For all intents and purposes, all we need is some people ["victims"] with a little bit of cancer, unfortunately.

So that was the story with the Comanche. So the Comanche are Shoshone. The Seventh Cavalry was reformed with native people, and the Comanche are Shoshone.

What was the purpose of that reformation as you understand it after Little Big Horn? The reforming of the Seventh Cav with Shoshone, with Comanche people?

You're going to have to ask Comanche of that. Another thing most people probably didn't realize is that the Codetalkers, the first fourteen Codetalkers, were Comanche, untrained. They went into the Pacific theater and I think there was another fifteen or so that were for Choctaw. So they were untrained and they went right into the Pacific theater. And then the Navajo came along, but they had 200 or so who were trained formally in that codetalking, and that's what the movie is about. So there's a lot that isn't known. And per capita, Native Americans are the highest-serving in U.S. armed forces since the Civil War.

OK, this is where I was going. That goes to the signing of these treaties and the treaties emanating from international law, and they're there to conserve and provide peace, not to exclude the friendship but it is to maintain the peace and the existence of nations. And the United States Constitution, the commerce clause, you know—Congress shall regulate commerce with the **[00:55:00]** Indians—as well as the supremacy clause—treaties are supreme under the United States Constitution, that is the basis for maintaining nations. If wars break out, and as I said, we allied ourselves with the Union to allow for that gold shipment to provide for the financing of the Union against the war with the South there is an obligation and debt owed the

Shoshone Nation by the United States for our alliance at that time. We need to keep those things in mind. International law was—treaties, which emanate from international law, were engaged in between European powers and Native Americans. It was developed in relation with indigenous people. The Revolutionary War, treaties with other tribes and European powers. So when France, Great Britain, and Spain discovered this continent, they said, hey, let's not use—coming out of the Dark Ages—let's not use cannon and warships and storming castles. We'll engage in relations, formal relations that we among ourselves will recognize as legitimate and lawful and call it international law. And we'll use an instrument that will recognize, among ourselves and with them; you sign treaties with those indigenous people, those natives, those Indian tribes, and we'll recognize your treaties and you'll recognize our treaties, whether it's North Africa or this continent. And so that's what happened. But by implication, by entering into those relations, recognize the capacity of these Indian nations to formally enter into those same relations.

So when people ask about the Western Shoshone treaty of 1863, the Americans particularly try to downplay that and say that, oh, it's United States law. No, it emanates from international law. And international law was developed in relation with indigenous peoples. It wasn't just Europeans or the United States. And when we look at the treaty with the Western Shoshone that the United States signed, a lot of Americans tend to believe that the United States *gave* us the land. That is in error. Our lands never were part of the United States. The United States cannot do things illegally. They cannot steal land, you know, they have to purchase it or they can say it's abandoned or they can have a just war. These are the several ways that land can be obtained. Now, the United States did not have to enter into treaty with the [Western Shoshone], but they couldn't go to war with us at the time. And so that's very, very important.

We signed a treaty of peace and friendship, which is the most formal recognition between one government and another under international law.

Let me back up a little bit to make sure I understood you. The United States didn't have to enter into a treaty with the Western Shoshone, but they did because they didn't want another war.

Yes, they could've gone to war with us, and tried to conquer us. And another thing, to go back further—so the United States cannot do things illegally. They could not just steal land. So by signing the treaty, the treaty process, for most other tribes—we know why the Shoshone treaty does not cede land to the United States. Because of the war going on, they couldn't conquer us and they couldn't take our land, so they needed that treaty. Most every other tribe in the United States ceded land to the United States. That's how they obtained the land. That's why there's no reservation created for the Shoshone. And they essentially forgot about it, you know. So that is kind of how that fits together.

That's very helpful. Thank you. One question about, if you have anything that would help me understand, the early days right after that treaty is signed, then that allows for the gold—back to your original story—for those gold shipments to go overland, through those sections of California and Nevada. Do the lands go up into Idaho? I don't know what the border is of that treaty.

From the Snake [River]. There actually is a—

I've seen the map. I just haven't—

[01:00:00] There actually are border markers in Shoshone territory, borders between the Bannock and Shoshone, Western Shoshone, and these are monuments that we are aware of. There are actually some specific, but then there are also well-known joint-use areas, you know, joint use with the Southern Paiute, joint use with the Northern Paiute. But then there are some of

those battle monuments. Battle Mountain got its name because of a battle. Northern Paiutes came into Shoshone territory and did some wrongs and the Shoshone warriors hunted them down and drove them onto the mountain in Battle Mountain and slaughtered all of them to just one, and let that one go back to tell the tale. So I think that's the same kind of situation that was happening at the treaty signing, where the soldiers killed one or two Shoshone, just to make a point, and that point still exists today, and we don't like it.

So, not to have a complete history lesson but my assumption has to be that once that is signed, then there can be this transit of gold and other resources across.

Yes, I think at that time the Pony Express then came into being. You know, President Ulysses S. Grant signed the treaty but President Abraham Lincoln is the one who developed the vision to create the transcontinental railroad and the Railroad Act of 1862. And then I think 1866, and those are the ones which created the railroad grants. The railroads were granted for ten miles every other section and then up to twenty miles every other section across the railroad right-of-way. And so the railroads came through, surveyed the lands that they would need to lay those tracks, and then surveyed the other land that they would receive, and then began to patent those lands; those lands could be taxed later, and then they would be able to sell bonds on those lands in order to finance the railroad. One of the things that isn't well understood is that—I don't know if you know what a white pine tree is.

I know what a white pine tree is.

OK. There's an eastern white pine and there's a western white pine. In our Great Basin, all of our mountaintops—not all of them but many of our mountain ranges have evergreen forests on them. And the record white pine tree for Nevada, this is within my country, within Western Shoshone territory, is twenty foot in diameter and 240 foot tall. This is a tall white pine tree. It's a western

white pine. And it has actually three sides with the needles, whereas the eastern white pine has two, I believe. I think that's an important way to tell the difference. But after the signing of the treaty, when the railroad came east, it was that second act that applied the twenty-mile every other section each side of the two tracks, which allowed for that to go through, and wherever gold was discovered and explored for, wherever there was ranches and towns, the forests were decimated. So we had these white pine trees, and they were chopped down and used for cordwood to run in those engines. They were used for planking back East in homes. You've maybe seen old Western movies where they're shipping these big logs back on these trains. And they shipped them back there and used them for telephone poles and telegraphs and railroad ties. When you think of that—so that first cutting, 1860 to 1869, they used them in charcoal ovens and every one of our—if you look on these old maps, every one of our mountain ranges had a sawmill canyon, where these trees were cut down and turned into planking or they were used in charcoal ovens to make charcoal for smelting or whatever. And if you look in these old gold mines, you know, they have the big timbers in it, there's our white pine. **[01:05:00]** That's the shoring, the wood used for shoring up those mine shafts. So there's our white pine. And you can't hardly find a white pine anymore, a stand of white pine. So they were decimated.

So that 1860 to 1890 was the first cutting. They cut all the mature, as much as they could find. And then the second cutting took place 1920 to 1950. And when an effort by Nevadans in the 1950s to reforest the Great Basin was undertaken, the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] came along and said, `Oh, we don't want to be hunting for our planes in these dense forests if they go down.` And this kind of information with regard to the trees came out of some of the early recordkeeping in Nevada's industries, mining, forests, you know, how

much wood and planking was sold. And then the knowledge that these kinds of trees exist out there and now they don't.

And what happens is, when those trees were cut down, or before the trees were cut down, there used to be these evergreen forests on top of these mountains which provided a canopy for a lot of life. And so when it would snow, it would allow that snow to percolate into the ground water and provide streams. Now, without that canopy, when it snows, the snow just evaporates and goes back up in the air. And then we have the problem of all the smog coming from California and the water molecules collect around dust particles, and when you have so much dust in the air and pollution, there's not enough water molecules to accumulate and so that moisture just goes over us. And we see this condition in the Great Basin.

Right. Let me just make a time mark. Let's take a brief pause.

[01:07:02] End Track 2, Disc 1.

[00:00:00] Begin Track 2, Disc 2.

I would like to get back to why I was on the reservation and how I got involved in nukes.

OK. Let's do that.

Because that's important. Like I said, my uncle died of cancer of the esophagus and, from what I understand, when he was—it wasn't actually esophageal cancer. It was a throat cancer which isn't one of the primary cancers [compensable per programs for test site related illnesses]. My aunts and the rest of the family and everyone there knew he was a kid in 1951, playing in this white ash. And there's all kinds of those stories. People saw the flash and they saw the clouds come and saw the people sick the next day, or their gardens dead; other people talk about the sagebrush around Duckwater used to be ten feet high and now it's one-and-two-foot stubble. And you know you can't blame that all on cattle. These are from elders from the thirties and

forties they remember these things. And then other relatives there in Duckwater got sick and for two months they had to be carried to the bathroom, to the outhouse, as children, eleven, ten-year-old children. A lot of stories like that. So, you know, those were talked about and I kept hearing it at the national council. And at home, then my grandfather [Raymond Graham] passed away from—he had a heart attack but my later learning is that that was potentially brought on by the stress to his immune system, stress to his anxiety. Who knows? There are so many causes. And then other Shoshone, such as Joe Sanchez Jr., I think he was thirty-something when he passed away, but he was actively involved in Citizen Alert Native American program, and these are the people that inspired me to know more and it was the death and loss of these people that flamed the passion for me to do something about it. I got involved with people like Bob Fulkerson at Citizen Alert in the mid-eighties and who was to have gone to Bravo, Bravo 20, you know.

Bravo 20?

Yeah, the bombing ranges, the [U.S.] Navy bombing ranges over there outside of Reno. It's actually outside of Fallon [Naval Air Station]. Stillwater. Then I became aware of the Project Shoal site, outside of Fallon—weapons, a lot of weapons, a lot of bombs. Dr. [Richard] Bargan was a doctor, a rural doctor that used to fly in and out with his airplane, and we'd go out to those bombing ranges, Bravo 19, Bravo 20, to protest the bombing. It's just a big mess out there, craters everywhere. And then the supersonic operations areas which are all over the skies, and like I said, back in the eighties, '85, '86, the Stealth fighter used to turn over my house, and I could see the pilot, flying that low. It was a quiet flight, but at the same time every day, they'd make their training runs. And it wasn't annoying but there was a certain anxiety to it, you know, to see them and know that they're doing something over my house, that wasn't a peaceful thing, and it was unsettling, I guess is the best way to explain that. So knowing what's happening and

seeing this thing, and then knowing that they're doing violence either by their direct acts and the effects from the weapons testing, in the people's mind, there is a cause-effect relationship. And there's an experience that informs their belief, informs my belief that those things are not safe. Weapons, weapons of mass destruction, they're testing, and being told and lied to and told that they're safe. And so when I bring it up to the people on the reservation, in about '85, **[00:05:00]** '86—who are also my relatives, that have fought hard to get what little there was there, from no electricity to getting electricity in '76, so when we had electricity, then we could put in a well to pump water and have running water and telephones and all of those types of things—and when I bring this nukes up, it was still very fragile. There was still a lot of racism and oppression evident and there was a little bit of backlash from the people in the community that have worked hard to try to get these things in, and they said, `Do you really want to raise those issues?` And for me, coming from outside of the community, I said, `Yeah, it's not right. It's not right`. Of course I didn't have to fight through all that racism that they did, growing up with the boarding schools, my aunts and uncles and cousins, so that was foreign to me. I was immunized against that. So when I begin to build a context—growing up in California, we had microwaves, we had the Quasar radar range, the best institutional settings, taking us to aircraft carriers and submarines and growing up in a city and seeing people dressed in fine clothes and having fine things and all the computers, those things weren't foreign to me. But when you go to the reservation, there's none of that. And that was OK, just riding horses and driving cars or when we were kids, it was driving tractors, growing up, and driving cars at ten, eleven years old, driving trucks and feeding [cows], you know, stuff like that. It was OK not having those things. Those weren't really important. But when I put it together later, the nineties or even today and I think back, we didn't get electricity until 1976. Once we had electricity, then you can, if you had

the money, purchase electric appliances. I brought the first fax machine into Duckwater in 1986, the first computer in 1987, and the finance office there didn't start using computers, switch over, until 1991 or 1992, for their fund accounting. But it was still a long, hard learning curve. As well as it was still a ranching community, so there wasn't a lot of income to buy VCRs and TVs. There was three TV stations that came in all snowy in the eighties, and so there just wasn't that much electricity there. There was no solar. None of that, no solar, no wind. So that goes to the claims of the Department of Energy and this promise of the nuclear industry that electricity will be too cheap to meter. Well, even though they were operating reactors for twenty-five or thirty years, prior to us getting electricity, the jobs in building those reactors and the funds to build those reactors, the bonds and all of those things and the revenues from selling electricity, and electricity itself was consumed elsewhere. And we didn't have—when we did have electricity, we didn't have the money to buy the appliances to use that. So that's many years before the nuclear promises or any of that energy went into the grid that we may have consumed. It had been going on for many years. So now this nuclear waste policy comes up, it started in 1980 when they were talking about it, in 1982 was when it came through, and we were still kind of really vague on it, particularly me. I was young and naïve and didn't really understand all that and really didn't care until later, like mid-eighties, '85, '86, when I started really putting it together, that my family was really hurt, really hurt, and the land is really hurt by this. That sage, one of my theories is that the fallout, and I finally found a picture of this, that the fallout came across the land and sterilized the flora and fauna, outright killed the indigenous plants, and this creates huge vulnerabilities in the land, that now the weeds can come in unchallenged **[00:10:00]** and grow. As well as all the other plants and hot spots that are plausible to assume exist out there.

So the problem is that we have been adversely impacted by the testing of weapons of mass destruction, and we are being victimized again in a different way—being told this is good for us because we all get electricity and it's in the grid and we all benefit from it. And that just is not true, and we know this from our experience that that is not true. We didn't grow up that way.

So this goes to the issue of Yucca Mountain and nuclear weapons, the issue of environmental racism, or just outright racism. Our history, our experience as a people, and the stories our grandparents and great-grandparents told, a lot of good stories about the land and the people and the way the people are, the strength and the places that we go and the things that we do. But as we tell those stories, they're interrupted by, oh, yeah, you know, Ted Shaw—that's my uncle's father-in-law—used to hunt out at his cabin over there at White Rocks on the test site and, wow, can't go there anymore. So there's these interruptions in the story. Oh, yeah, this person died of cancer, or this person suffered, or, yeah, we remember that and everybody got sick, you know, and now this person has thyroid. There's these interruptions in the good stories that our people tell and our relationships with the land and how we are not benefiting as much as we had in the past, there's a loss there. And so when we talk about these promises of the nuclear industry and how we benefit from the protection of nuclear weapons, that's not our experience; and we look at the proposal to store high-level nuclear waste within our country. Well, the treaty never allowed for our lands to become uninhabitable. That is just not part of the treaty. And the United States is obligated to prevent those acts, and we are as well, that are violations of that treaty to restrain acts of aggression by us or by the United States in order to maintain that peace and friendship. And this is why we look to the process and address these issues within an appropriate context to

exert pressure in a peaceful, civil process to halt those acts of aggression, those violations of law and those violations of our basic human rights.

When we talk about all of those benefits from the nuclear industry being taken and used up somewhere else, and we are to be burdened and threatened and put at risk or the hazard from that to be disproportionately burdened upon our people, that is wrong, and that is environmental racism. That is an issue for the United States of environmental justice. In classic risk assessment, the gambler in Las Vegas knows classic risk assessment. Shipbuilders in the sixteen, seventeen, eighteen hundreds knew about classic risk assessment. You balance the positive benefit—that would be your nuclear energy and the jobs and the revenues from all of your investments—versus the negative, adverse impacts. So it's a balancing act. A gambler goes into **[00:15:00]** a casino, he's got a hundred dollars, he's going to risk losing the hundred dollars—that's one side of the equation—against balancing that against the potential riches of winning untold riches. Shipbuilders did the same thing. They built ships and they put their money up and they decided, we're going to go, send those ships over there, and hopefully they'll come back loaded with riches that are unknown at this time. But that was a risk assessment. And when we do risk assessment, when we haven't seen the benefits yet, we're being told that we're to bear the burden for the profit of Americans and the American nuclear industry, and we're to bear all of the burden of the threats and hazard. So when we look at nuclear waste coming from all these seventy-five sites with 115 reactors at them, that stream of waste to come into Shoshone treaty territory, a traveling hazard, that stream becomes a river as it enters our country and comes to Yucca Mountain. That is unacceptable. That is unacceptable. That will not happen. Not if it's going down these highways or these rails. That will not happen. So then we have to reevaluate

our relationship with the United States. That's a bad thing. That's just unacceptable to us and I think it's unacceptable to Americans. That won't be allowed.

When you say "won't be allowed," there are court cases, obviously, so I'm just wondering what the recourse is, although it seems politically now that it may not happen [Yucca Mountain Repository] .

Well, I've been fond of saying, "Over my dead body," and last October or September I heard Congresswoman Shelley Berkley say the same thing, "Over my dead body." So I had to call—called her chief of staff up, Richard Urey, and I said, `Hey, it's good to hear the congresswoman using the same words I'm using.` It is just unacceptable, and I say it will not happen, and I think the most appropriate thing is, "Over my dead body." Maybe it will happen but it'll happen over my dead body and other people will have to live with that. But like I said, we have to be worthy to survive and our lives, my life has to have meaning, and it just does not improve my life to see that type of hazard and that type of so-called development, over the destruction of my people. And I will not witness that. So I understand when Shoshone such as Clifford Dann lights himself on fire, I understand when a Buddhist monk lights himself on fire, and I understand that if my sacrifice is necessary, I will stand and not allow that to happen. It doesn't mean I'm going to light myself on fire; it doesn't mean I'm going to attack anybody. It just means that, when that time comes, if it comes, I will take appropriate action to preserve my integrity, my sense of being, and my morals and ethics and the values which inform my choices.

Thank you for that explanation. But you said something about Clifford Dann and I don't know that event.

Well, when the government went to the Dann Ranch, I think it was 1997 or 1998, to round up the Dann horses—again, you know, the government is saying, `You're trespassing and we have`

to employ our grazing regulations on everybody fairly—see, the Danns were initially charged with trespassing, the Dann case. They were acquitted of trespass. And the BLM [Bureau of Land Management] consistently said that they have to employ, deploy their regulations upon everybody fairly, even though we haven't been in a position to respond with appropriate defense **[00:20:00]** to demonstrate that they don't have any jurisdiction. You know, that goes to the racism and the abuse. It's institutionalized racism, is what it is. That abuse is carried out without regard for our identity in relation to our land or in relation to the treaty which recognizes our existence as hunters or herdsmen, and our lack of ability to defend ourselves against the United States that is so-called superpower. Again, like I said, the greatest act of a warrior is to stop fighting, to lay down his arms, and here we have an American government with individuals that use force against the weak and the indefensible. And so Clifford Dann—I understand that after years and years of abuse and attack and courts and litigation, where justice is not served fairly to an oppressed and abused people, there's only so much a person can take—when they came for the horses, and had the horses in the trailer, that was his livelihood, that's what he had taken care of all of his life, he was going to set himself on fire, and those sheriffs and those FBI and the Indian police, who all was there, federal rangers, they doused him with fire extinguishers and he wasn't able to carry that off. They charged him with assault on federal officers, and so he did nine months in prison for that. And so I understand why that is done, and he did it out of protest. And again we suffer.

So we haven't had legal defense and we haven't had the benefit of knowledge and understanding. I mean we have knowledge but we haven't had the benefit of legal understanding of how to defend ourselves. And I think we do now. But we're dealing with the most serious

issues facing humanity here, and it's a very steep learning curve. We have the understanding of our capacity, our sovereign capacity to do those things.

Now, you were talking on the phone and you mentioned also this morning, and you're obviously touching on it now, this notion of genocide and continuation of genocide, so help me understand that better.

When I began going to meetings regarding onsite tours, regarding Yucca Mountain, we were misled by the researchers. They had developed a study and they were funded by the Department of Energy. Dr. Richard Stoffle at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research and David Halmo, John Olmsted, and Michael Evans. So they worked together and they came to Shoshone communities and interviewed Shoshone and they came across as real nice and they would say, `Come on over here to this meeting we're having and we'll pay your travel.` You know, back in the eighties, it was one of the first times somebody came with money to the Indians, and so it was good to go and travel and go to places. And they took us **[00:25:00]** places and it was a beautiful friendship, except we didn't really understand what they were doing, and they were vague about that. They said it was about Yucca Mountain. Actually they said it was the Nevada Test Site, I believe, my first understanding that it was about the Nevada Test Site and that's when I started to learn more about the test site and we went down there. Later on I thought, boy, I was going to these places before I even knew how dangerous they were, before I understood radiation and that I was potentially exposed by those things, and I'm only twenty-something. So I try not to go down there as much anymore. I've been underground at Yucca Mountain and because of some of the hours underground I'm at risk for developing silicosis, you know, but I still have to go over there, I still have to go down. I'm planning to go down there before too long. And I think about the workers, I think about the test

site workers and the soldiers and I think about the Downwinders and my family, and it just doesn't end. So it's very hard to just associate or represent my people as victims, as Downwinders, but I do it because that is what is most clearly a presentable case, and which I can relate to most clearly.

So we would go on these trips and after a time, a year or two of doing these things, I began to become aware. And then that so-called Nevada Test Site portion was over. Then we were being told, oh, now we're going on to Yucca Mountain. They're doing Yucca Mountain. So my first awareness of what these researchers were doing was, first, they were doing the Nevada Test Site, then they were doing Yucca Mountain, when actually they were doing Yucca Mountain, then they went on to do the Nevada Test Site. That was what was clear in my mind. So I felt we were being misled. And Corbin was there and Pauline Esteves from Timbisha, and my uncle Boyd and Ted Shaw, his father-in-law, and Southern Paiutes, a lot of different people from Moapa [Nevada] and people from Duckwater and Yomba and Ely. So a lot of different people. And so as I became aware I was telling the people that this is what's happening,, and we didn't really still understand. And later on I understood that he [Stoffle] went along to do the same kinds of things [contracts] at the Nellis Air Force bombing and gunnery range.

Let me interrupt you for a second. When you say you begin to understand what's happening, what's occurring to you? What insight are you having about what's happening?

That these researchers were facilitating the projects being conducted by the Department of Energy and we were being used to support them being able to do what they do. So when our people were told that we're protecting these burials or we're protecting these funerary objects or we're protecting the plants and the animals by going there, that was not what we were doing. We were actually helping the Department of Energy being facilitated through this research to allow

the Department of Energy to continue to make roads, to continue to place buildings, to continue to disturb our things, and it came to a very clear and, for me, at a meeting in 19—what date was that? I think it was 19—it's in here someplace. There was a meeting at the Las Vegas Paiute **[00:30:00]** Colony and I remember Pauline and Corbin were there, and they're crying. Because I was told by my elders, even then, that we don't move our graves, we don't re-inter our people that have passed on, we leave those things there, we don't do that. But these researchers were telling us that we had to do something. What should we do? What do you want to do? And he had done these—the thing that really bothers me, he had done these things before. That was 1987 or 1988, maybe even '89, was that main meeting, and it was like after a couple of years of him doing this study, he said, `Well, you have to do something. Here's what the tribe over here did in Utah or whatever, in that project. Do you want us to cover it over with cement, or should we just let them bulldoze it?` You know, this kind of pressure to make a decision, or should we just avoid it and just mark it or not mark it? And so he made the proposals of what our options and alternatives should be, and later on in his final report, this study here, this *Native American Cultural Resource Studies at Yucca Mountain, Nevada* that the Department of Energy funded and produced, our recommendations became what he [originally] recommended [at that meeting] in the study. They were not ours. And so at that time I was ostracized because my elders are saying, `Well, what should we do? We have to do something`. But that's what they were saying. And I said, `We don't do that`. And ever since then, collaboration has not been something that I participate in. I seek to use these peaceful processes. It hurts to see my people crying that way. It hurts me to know that I cannot go there, and that these people are in my way, destroying my opportunity—well, there isn't an opportunity—destroying my spiritual relationship, my moral and spiritual place of being, and

interfering with that. I don't know if I'll have a calling or some of our young people, they come up, they get a spiritual calling to go to a place, they go to talk to the plants and the animals or a spring or—the land calls us. We don't know where that will happen. I'm here right now, the land called me here, and there's things around here that I'm supposed to do, you know, where these chuckwallas are over here. We're talking about, hey, maybe we should grow some chuckwallas, and I hear that not only are they good eating but they're good medicine, too. And there may be a time that we need to go to these places. But we don't know when that is and we don't know who is going to be called, but we know who our spiritual people are and they may need to put us and take us someplace.

So when I'm seeing these things, what we're talking about is beyond environmental racism, it's beyond environmental justice. What we're talking about here is the United States Department of Energy facilitating and being a broker—the facilitators were these researchers. These are the people who developed a study protocol of cultural triage. Triage used in its normal sense is of French origin. It means to sort or cull according to quality. And what we're talking about is our living lifeways, our living culture, our living relationship with the land, these springs, these petroglyphs, these animals, these plants, and our understanding about the lessons that these things teach us so that we can be complete human beings. Those relationships inform us who we are. It's not money, it's not the casinos, it's not the nuclear bomb that informs us about our identity. It's the land and the animals. So when these facilitators, working for the Department of Energy under contract, come to us—it's the United States government brokering a solution for the commercial nuclear industry's waste problem, for the profit of the nuclear industry that we don't even benefit from—it effects genocide because the destruction of **[00:35:00]** our people through the use of cultural triage, again triage being of French origin, sort

or cull according to quality, according to the research, cultural triage is the forced choice decision-making by an ethnic group in response to a development project. Triage in its normal usage is in a just declared war, and you have rules of war, so that's acceptable, even though it's war, or a flood, famine, or natural disaster. You triage to see who you can save with what resources are available and who you can't save. But in this case we don't have a situation of a flood, famine, or natural disaster or a just war. We have a situation which is intended to create profits for the nuclear industry and the United States is the broker, using facilitators that make money, to determine which parts of our culture can and can't survive. And that's our identity. That's alive, that's real, and that's something we use on a daily basis. And since 1987, under the UN Convention of the Punishment and Prevention of the Crime of Genocide and the U.S. enactments which are the Proxmire Act [Genocide Convention Implementation Act] of 1987, that has become a crime in the United States. And as far as I'm aware of, that has been a crime since 1987 and I'm probably the first one to actually clearly state that and make that case.

Now, maybe I should have said this first, but I'll say it now. I do not use that term lightly. The term genocide has been used recklessly in the past, and I don't mean to conserve exclusively or reserve the right to use exclusively the term genocide. It has happened in the past but there wasn't a term for that until the UN Convention of 1947, I believe it was, and most nations signed the UN Convention. The United States waited until 1987 to sign it. Then it became a crime in the United States. I do not reserve exclusive use of the term. However, I do conserve the use and attempt to provide an appropriate context for using the term within that context of the UN Convention on Prevention of Punishment of the Crime of Genocide as well as the 1987 U.S. enactments and the Proxmire Act. And I don't see the United States bringing itself to charges of genocide. And it's very difficult for other people to understand because we have a very

sophisticated—I think this is a new generation of ethnic cleansing, if I may, and it's a very sophisticated process, a technical process, and most people don't have technical or social skills sufficient to understand and then address this, whether it's my people or others. It's very hard to communicate this and like I say, I do not use this term lightly.

So it's important to have an appropriate context and it is my hope and intent to at some time, with the strength of the Shoshone people growing in our understanding of what has happened to us, that we will address this issue under our own judicial superintendence, by creation of a tribunal that we will indict the United States or bring charges against the United **[00:40:00]** States in our own tribunal, duly formed and authorized to address this matter. So this goes along to whether we can create money. Well, I suppose we can do that. Whether we can create passports. Yes, we do that, and use our own passports abroad. Well, can we actually create a tribunal to charge the United States with crimes against humanity? As soon as we accede to the UN Convention, our national council could authorize it and we could develop a tribunal and we could do that. And I believe the evidence is clear in my mind.

OK. That's very clear.

Sometimes I say it better than others.

No, you said it really well.

[Pause in recording]

Well, Chief Tutuwa is from over there by Big Smoky Valley, Yomba, over there. Actually that's where my family on my mother's side come from. My grandmother was born in those springs there around Round Mountain [Nevada], southern springs there, and she grew up at Pine Creek Ranch. Well, that was where my grandmother was born and that's from Tutuah, and I saw a picture of him in—Shoshone use tattoos, like a clan marking on their hand or wrist or some other

place, and that was one way that you knew the different clans. And we hear a lot of different stories about the way the people are. Sometimes you'll hear about a mountain range or something, you know, Chief Blue Eagle there on the Grant Range, from Duckwater and we look south.

And I've been so busy, like I said, for two years I didn't say anything at the council meeting, and I was just telling Pauline Esteves down from Timbisha and Joe Kennedy who's the chairman down there that I never really was taken into, or used, I say used, or educated in traditional ways. I hung around with a lot of traditional people, but I was more of a resource for them to go out and bring in those other things or bring understanding of other things to them. So when I was in those cultural resource studies, it was the same situation. I was bringing an understanding to my elders and my people, but I was up against these researchers who ostracized me and forced me out of that process, and ever since then, ever since that meeting, I think it was in 1987—.

We can get that date and insert it, if you want.

Yeah, May something, May 26—it's in this book here someplace. At that meeting, they—I was not invited but nor would I participate in there and I kept on arguing with my elders, they told me, `We don't do those things`. So how could they then sit there and tell me, and I read in these books that this is what's done. I think they did so under duress. I know they did. I saw them crying there. And I see them fight with other people and my own people and I still fight with my own people when I tell them we can't do that. So collaboration is not something I do, and my intent by not participating in those things is to draw attention to the fact that they do damage, that they do violence, those activities have an impact. They **[00:45:00]** impact me, they do not involve me, they hurt me, and they need to understand that that happens, through other ways, but

that by not involving people [appropriately], that they are doing violence. We use these nonviolent processes to draw attention to the fact that they are doing things wrong and that their actions have consequences. Even my own people, you know, they thought that they're doing the best that they can, and that's what they believe and that's fine but their actions put all of us at risk. They put all of us at risk. And I do what I can. It hurts us. It hurts us now. It hurts me when I talk to them, or try to talk to them about these things, talk to any of my people about these things. There are many of us that understand this, because it affects us all deeply, and to have those feelings, those beliefs and values out in the open, and to have to challenge our own people, their hearts, their spirit, is difficult, it's hard, it's painful. And to know that they are wrong, even though they try to do good. We were lied to, and I cannot participate in the destruction of my own people, my own land, my own being. So we'll find another way. We'll find another way. And that other way is hurtful and it's not intended to be hurtful but it hurts, it's painful to non-Shoshone, to the others, to you, to Americans. So my responsibility is to both our peoples. And you know there's a debate in the United Nations on the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People about the use of the word peoples versus people.

Oh, really.

Yes. The United States and some of the developed nations don't want to use the word [letter] "s." Lately they've changed but that debate's been going on for fifteen years, peoples with an s. I have a reasonable understanding of that as well. It's taken time. I didn't have any particular position on it. And it is about the collective peoples versus people. Now, in terms of the American people, in terms of the Western Shoshone people, that is an appropriate use of the word. But when we have a treaty, which is the most formal recognition of one nation and another, we use the s in peoples because we are referring to our peoples collectively. What we

are talking about, use of the word peoples represents a formal term of diplomatic engagement. That's why I understand what is happening, why there is a debate on that use of the S.

I wasn't aware of that. Let me see if I'm understanding you. Is it that if we say people, then everything is under that collective, but peoples identifies—

Yes, but the United States doesn't have relations with every indigenous people in the world. The Shoshone Nation doesn't have relations with every indigenous people in the world. So it is not the same as having formal relations and speaking about a treaty of peace and friendship between the people of the United States and the people of the Western Shoshone Nation. We're talking collectively our responsibility lays in protecting our peoples. And so by using these—you know, our obligation is to both our peoples, to address these things in an appropriate—

[00:50:00] *I understand. So in that case, you'd say the peoples, the Shoshone and the American peoples, and you identify them as separate entities, using that word, whereas people makes it sound—I'm asking.*

It's collective.

So broad and collective that there's no differences between any of us.

With regard to other indigenous people, we have formal diplomatic relations. So my responsibility to both our peoples is—and there's an appropriate use—to both our peoples is to help us get beyond this blame, beyond this abuse, and get to the spirit of what our relationship is among our people, our peoples, and our respective governments. And I've gone through it. Like I said, I grew up pledging allegiance, you know, and they've thrown the cross at me, and you know—

Thrown the cross at you?

You know, the flag and the cross haven't stuck, whoever would throw that. But I went through the psychological trauma, I guess, of realizing that this American government isn't everything that we were told to believe in. I don't know—and so the roots just never ran as deep as maybe they had in the last generation of Americans, or the generation before. But I don't go about with any ideas or thoughts of harming Americans or American citizens or the government. As I said earlier, non-collaboration is my approach and I intend to paralyze the opposition, the adversary, by not participating in those processes which would lead to my demise and my people's demise. So that's my approach and some people say, Well, you have to be involved to get your point across. And I said, No, I do not. I will bring attention to this in another way, and that way is to let the adversary know—in this case it would be the Department of Energy or the United States government, or the American people—know that their actions or the lack thereof have an effect, an adverse impact, and that it hurts people. And so this project, by speaking about this, it is painful. It is painful for Americans to believe that today, that their government's actions, or their lack of action, is harming people. Oh, that happened. I'm not part of that, they say. I didn't do that. That happened a long time ago. That's denial. If it wasn't hard, then people wouldn't deny it. It is hard, it hits like a fist, and it does harm people to be rejected and to be denied and to be demeaned and undermined and abused in those ways. That's what's happening to the Shoshone people today. But we're strong and we're worthy of survival and we hope to lead Americans to an understanding that when you face this and you get over it, things will be much better, there'll be equity and fairness. When you stop worshiping the bomb—it brings back that movie *Planet of the Apes* in 1976, I grew up with that, where they worshipped the bomb. That is not where human roots, American roots, lay. We need to dig those things up and replant them someplace fertile.

Thank you very much.

Yes, my roots are planted from here to the Snake. They're planted in the rivers with the fish, they're planted in this alkali with the various plants and the birds, and it's not rooted in the bombs, it's not rooted in the casinos, it's not rooted in those kinds of things. Our values go a lot deeper than that, a thousand generations here, and I think a lot of Americans are set adrift and **[00:55:00]** they're lost and they're seeking for some—they're looking for something authentic and they see that in Native Americans. Used to be a time in America when they seek to find it in their car, what they drive, what their house looks like, even if it's unsustainable. There used to be a time in America when your political leaders, your priests, your evangelical leaders, even your singers, they sang from their hearts and their words, they believed in and they were rooted in human values which made life better, for real people and for the land, you know, that was a good thing. Now we have corporations that have subverted those traditional American beliefs and values, and canned them, so now your songs are canned and they can whip out a Britney Spears or a Christina Aguilera, as fast as they can find the blonde to fill that spot, or your politicians, you know, George Bush buying out the election in 2000, that kind of situation. Your evangelicals, it's about making money and they know how to do it and it's been boxed and canned, and now we have a market culture which is not making life better for human beings, but it's about making more money than can possibly be spent for more Americans, and not taking care of the poor and not making life better for people. It's about buying crap, buying more things, more appliances than you have outlets to run in your house. It's that kind of lifestyle. It's a throwaway lifestyle. And so I'm living a better lifestyle the way I am, as I said, focusing on what's really important to me to maintain a quality of life, where other people are lost and looking for something real, something authentic. I have that, I haven't lost that, and I share that

every day with my elders, I share it with the young kids, I share it with the animals. I talk to these animals, I talk to the trees, I talk to the water, and they like it. So that's what's important, that informs me of who I am, and most people are lost to that these days.

I have a question that's related to that. I just want to make a mark on my recording.

[00:58:03] End Track 2, Disc 2.

[00:00:00] Begin Track 2, Disc 2.

I was curious before when you were talking—I'm going to go back a little bit—when you were talking about going out to these—when you went out with the researchers and looked at these various sites, were there places that you hadn't been before? Aside from the issue with their preservation or their destruction, which you've already really eloquently told me about, was that experience in and of itself educational for you about your history? Because I imagine that that would be the case, if I had a chance to go out and look at sites that were related to my particular past.

Initially it was, and as I look back I tend to feel that these people orchestrated the situation such that we were made to feel relaxed, we were kind of lulled into submission, that they were our friends and they can be trusted, you know, while they were able to obtain what they needed to do what they did.

But the sites themselves. I mean you went out to the test site? I'm asking. I somewhat have a sense that—

Yeah, we went to the test site. It was also part of the relationship with the people and that's what I was getting to when I said these researchers were friendly to us. But you know it was like a con man playing a game, and my elders were sucked right into that. So was I. But as I became aware and I started saying `Hey, well, you said it was about Nevada Test Site and it's`

really about Yucca Mountain. Then I started seeing this bigger picture develop. But for me it was wonderful being with my elders and talking about this place and that place at the test site, and going up Forty Mile Wash, and seeing the petroglyphs, but also experiencing the destruction with them at those times at these places. And now I look back and I say, those sons-of-bitches, those researchers, they pretended like they really cared and we shared with them these things and they were liars. I think that's a slander. No, it's not a slander, it's the truth, but what I'm saying, it might be one of the things you discussed in the paper. But that was the truth of the situation, that we were betrayed, and we were used and that's part of that abuse. And today I cannot forget that. Our confidence was betrayed, and we were used and that is part of that abuse. It may have been this site or that site—and I look at the good feelings we had among ourselves and being able to go to these places that others hadn't, we haven't been able to go to, and my elders say, You know, we have in the past and that there's good hunting up there. And when we look at Yucca Mountain, there's nothing on it; but just knowing, over the next hill, in Pahute Mesa there's a forest up there and it's beautiful and that they [the DOE] are doing those things in this place. What possesses them? What possesses them is that nobody knew how bad what they were doing was, and now we do.

And I think it should be said at this time that I'm not antinuclear. I'm anti-stupidity. And I am not a pacifist. I restrain myself from committing those acts which would violate the treaty and I encourage the same of my people. Since we've been protesting at the test site, there have been people that say that we're peaceniks or whatever.

But let me give you maybe a clearer example of visiting a site. Last Sunday, when Corbin was there and with me, his daily routine is to go out and go to town and he's sharing with his caregiver, talk stories, and then he's back in. Well, last Sunday, he was up **[00:05:00]** at 2:30

[AM], 2:00, 2:30, getting ready. We left here at four. I got up at 3:15, three o'clock and we went out and met the walkers at sunrise. [Peace walkers at the April 1, 2007 vigil at the edge of the Nevada Test Site]. And then we went over there and he was out there all day till the last person got out of the pen, and I think that was Julia [Moonsparrow]. We were there all day and I think we left over there at three o'clock. We were pretty much the last persons that left. We left after the police left and the sheriff and the highway patrol and we saw everybody walking out of that place. We were still down there. But we were at the place where for ten or fifteen years, we had had events, where the stage had been at different times, where we had placed a medicine wheel, and we would pray around the spire. It was just Indians, sometimes, and sometimes a thousand people. But we had that there. We made this site. And other people had put a peace sign over there and this thing over there and sometimes they'd put things on the fence. But, you know, we had this place that we prayed right there by the road. Well, when we drove down there, looking for that, the Department of Energy had brought their front-end loader up there and they smashed it [everything] into the ground and they flattened it out and they manicured it, so it's no longer there. Now, why do they do that? Why do they destroy that? So we can't pray there? You know, that hurts. That hurts. And we're just sitting there, wondering why.

And we think about those things when we go out to other sites. Why can't we go there? Or is it still there? Or, how are the animals over there? People see things. They see things. They see changes in the land, good and bad, and they see changes in the people, good and bad. People get lost without their roots. People do bad things without direction. Just like children. Children without direction will create trouble.

And one time, at one of those—we were on our way to Yucca Mountain, and there's a bunch of elders in the van, and we're going over there. We'd just gone through badging, and this

is one of those cultural resource tours, we're going to go look at a site. So we're in this van and we got a DOE driver and we're going over that way, and kind of going over the saddle of this hill, or not even to a site but it's in relation to the plants and animals, so we're looking at those plants, and seeing what food's there, what medicines are there, looking for the animals. And the van driver starts honking, and as we get over there, he's just honking, and we start slowing down, and everybody's looking, and he's honking and he's laying on the horn. There's a deer in the road. And I said, Hey, stop, stop, hang on. And we got out and we got over to that deer and we're looking at this deer, and we see it has no eyes. You know what the Shoshone call a deer with no eyes? No-eye deer.

So anyway, that's a joke I tell to people to find out if they're listening, and I did that one time with three thousand people over at Livermore, and so fifteen hundred of them started busting up laughing, and the other fifteen hundred were looking horrified, didn't get it, and it's good to do that and wake the people up a little and confuse them just a little bit more. But it helps them get over the pain and the anguish because I need that sometime, especially after I've been listening to two hours of talking heads myself and I'm the last speaker. It's like, we don't have time to waste. We need to get over there and make our point at the gate, some of those places.

[00:10:00] *We should stop soon because you've been talking a lot and really, I think we both [Mary Palevsky and graduate student, Mindy Oesterman] appreciate it, and you've certainly made a wonderful contribution to this project, so I thank you for that. But you did mention speaking at Livermore. So tell me a little bit about what kinds of reasons or under what circumstances you would be doing that.*

Well, I was on the board of directors of Nevada Desert Experience since 1992, and I was on the board of directors of Citizen Alert since 1997 until about 2005, sometime in 2005. Anyway,

through those organizations, we would participate in various types of witness or campaigns, workers or addressing workers' rights or environmental justice issues, and participating in lawsuits and litigation, as well as the collective activities against the United States Department of Energy from communities around weapons sites. And we were successful in 1996, I believe it was, or 1998, of winning a lawsuit against the Department of Energy brought by thirty-nine plaintiff groups, headed by the National Resources Defense Council [NRDC], to force the Department of Energy to make available information to communities around DOE weapons sites.

Yes. I know what you're talking about.

And it resulted in the monitoring of the technical assistance fund, so I was on that steering committee to hire RESOLVE out of Washington, D.C. to provide those funds to community groups and to review those things. So that was how that came about. And I also participated under contract with the Nevada Agency for Nuclear Projects to provide input into their socioeconomic studies with regard to the Western Shoshone and Yucca Mountain and potential impacts to native communities. There wasn't much work done on that because the state is, in some ways, a competitor with the Shoshone on issues of the land, but with regard to Yucca Mountain, we have a common opposition. So I would go to a lot of meetings and we'd have meetings around the country and those meetings would also give us opportunity to go to various facilities. I've been to, oh, many sites around the country—Weldon Springs, Rocky Flats, Rocky Mountain Arsenal, reactor sites, Lawrence Livermore National Lab, Nevada Test Site, weapons sites around the country, as well as Atomic Energy Canada Limited; I ended up at these places. And I learned more about the workers in these areas, and the types of people that they employ at different positions. And I see definitely people in places that if they understood or knew, that

people shouldn't be—and the types of people that are most vulnerable, women and children. Forgot to look at myself, too, going to some of these places. But it was through some of these relationships as citizens' groups, under contract with the Agency for Nuclear Projects, and going to meetings, to inform ourselves, the groups about risks and hazards and threats at these various sites. And then just being Shoshone and going to Prairie Island with other native groups and organizations and understanding, so both inside and out, and representing the Shoshone people and making presentations on these issues. It was both inside and out.

And today, it still has to be that way, so when I talk about not being antinuclear, it really comes down to realizing that nuclear weapons and nuclear waste and nuclear technology exist **[00:15:00]** and it's on the land, it's out there; I will have to deal with it, and so will everybody else. So creating anti-and-pro-nuclear positions is not helpful, it doesn't facilitate the dialogue, and it would handicap me and anybody else who tries to deal fairly and rationally with the problem. And I'm not saying you have to be a rational person; those are real beliefs and values that provide an intuitive understanding for the way people look at the problems. We know that our communities are threatened, we know that things aren't right, and we don't have to be a rocket scientist or a nuclear physicist to know these things. We know these things. We have a sense of right and wrong. This informs our decisions. We all use our intuition to achieve an understanding of whether we should stay or whether we should go. If there's an accident in Las Vegas, whether you're walking down the street and you step on a—if you're out in the country and you step on a twig, might be a snake and you jump, you know, it might've looked like a snake. That's our intuition. Those are our instincts kicking in. And whether people like it or not, the same kind of instinct will inform their decision to leave an area if there is a nuclear accident, and that's kind of what my personal research deals with and I do that for fun. I did my senior

environmental studies thesis at UNLV. I guess I was kind of working on a second degree, but I was working on my first degree first so I never actually pursued a second degree. But when I finished that research and I presented it, I submitted it to the Society for Risk Analysis and it was selected for presentation at either the 2000 or 2001 plenary session for the Society for Risk Analysis. But I was injured and I couldn't make it. I couldn't deliver that. So, I don't know, maybe I'm a scholar, a national scholar in risk assessment, and maybe not because that wasn't anything that I actually completed.

Well, let's talk about that when we stop the interview. I have something to tell you about that. But I think we've talked a long time and I won't take any more of your time. I want to thank you. There was one other question. Maybe it can be for a further discussion or maybe you can give me some guidance on this. Obviously there were Shoshone and Paiute people that do and have worked at the test site, and I think for myself, not today, but an important part of that story would be to understand the degree to which that was true, especially in the early days, because I think that's an important story, too. But for now, I think we should finish. Do you have a question?

Mindy Oesterman: I have no questions.

OK. Is there anything else you want to say before I turn the machine off? At this point, you've been wonderfully generous with us.

I think that we have a large displaced population and that is a deliberate policy of the United States government to assimilate our people, and that just can't be completed. I also believe that this so-called blood quantum and this claims payment, we didn't even get [to]—we lightly brushed over the legal stuff. We can go on and on and on about that. But I think that the use of blood quantum and the so-called payment, claims payment, doesn't effect a legal title transfer, and the title remains vested in the Shoshone people. And the use of blood quantum is racism.

Payment to Shoshone people, or identification of Shoshone people as the United States would define them, using blood quantum, is racism. There is no scientific basis for determining the **[00:20:00]** inherent quality of ethnic identity based on blood quantum. Our traditional belief is that if you have a drop of Shoshone blood, you have a bucket, so all the genetic material that a full-blood had a thousand generations ago, and more. We've got twice as much. Greater genetic variability today than in the past. And so when I look at genetic studies that are going on at Massachusetts or other places, it's always about less and less and less and less. And so if that means that you have—let's say you're white, or black, or brown and you have half-and-half-and-half-and-half as much again white blood, brown blood, black blood, well, someday you're going to be nothing. And it's just simple, reasonable interpretation of what the use of that would really mean. On my mother's side there's a pedigree as well, from a less honorable, so-called, honorable, less honorable belief system about what it means to be discriminated against. We'll find a better way to say that.

No, you said it really well. Let's stop.

OK.

[00:21:47] End Track 2, Disc 3.

[End of recorded interview]