

SOUTH DAKOTA ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Library Cataloguing Service Data

Name of Informant James E. Emery
Address 724 Mallow, Rapid City, South Daktoa
Date of Interview July 11, 1972
Name of Researcher Stephen R. Ward
Others Present _____
Location of Interview 915 Main - Hdqtrs, Mayor's Indian Welfare Coordination Committee
Added Notes Mr. Emery is Chariman of Mayor's Committee

Subject Headings under which you feel this interview should be filed:

Formation of Mayor's Indian Welfare Coordination Committee; Problems establishing committee credibility; Functions of committee; Personal Views on treatment of Indian flood victims.

Demographic Information on Informant

Age 68 Sex Male County Pennington
Socio-economic status Retired - Black Hills Power and Light Company
Occupation _____
Education _____
Religion _____
Date of Arrival of Family in South Dakota _____
Where? _____
From where? _____
Number of Moves in South Dakota _____ Reasons for moves: _____

- Q. This is James E. Emery, Mayor's Indian Welfare Coordination Committee. This is James E. Emery of 724 Mallow Street, Rapid City, July 11, 1972, Stephen Ward, and we are speaking from 915 Main, the headquarters of the Mayor's Indian Welfare Coordination Committee. Let's begin by talking first of all about how you got into this particular position. You are a retired employee of the Black Hills Light and Power, is that correct?
- A. That's right. The way I got into it, the mayor called me up and he says, "Jim, I know you're retired," but he said, "I need someone like you and I'd like to have you be on our special Indian committee between myself, my office and the Indian people, and I would like to have you represent the Indian people." So I told him that I would accept it and I have been on ever since and have worked every day except the Fourth of July. And the people asked me to take the day off, so I took it off as best I could. I was busy somewhat, regardless. And it was on a voluntary basis, after a couple weeks then, the United Sioux Tribes began to pay us at a rate of \$15. a day.
- Q. Well, now, how many people do you have working for you on this committee?
- A. We did have 34, but, how many people do I have working now? Yeah, I don't know how many we have working now, but _____ what we have working for us. And the number we have working now may fluctuate one way or another, I think we'll have a few people on that we do have now. Because there's spots that need to be filled.
- Q. _____ what kind of positions did you have?
- A. Well, what I'm speaking about are our security guard out at Camp Rapid. That's what I'm speaking of at the moment. And we want to maintain services, security services out there 24 hours a day. And then we have drivers and we may need

another driver or two. Because recently we have found out that we need some transportation, for instance, we should have a truck and probably two pickups that would aid us in helping the people move. There's some of these people that have belongings and have moved into a trailer house. Many went back after the, flood, back to the reservation; we have to go back there and get those people and bring them back up, because they have no transportation. So we're _____ flood victims on the reservation and to the reservation. If someone wants to go back and remain permanently, then we will move. But we don't intend to move people down through the reservation and stay a couple days and then go back and get them again. That's what we're trying to eliminate.

Q. In terms of, now yourself, are you full-blooded Sioux, or. . . ?

A. No, I'm not a full-blooded Sioux, I'm one-fourth. My grandmother was a full-blooded Sioux, making my mother a half, and I'm one-fourth. I read and write and speak Teton Sioux fluently.

Q. Have you always been involved in Indian affairs here in Rapid City?

A. Yes, I've always been involved in Indian affairs everywhere I've been. Yes.

Q. What sort of things have you done in the past?

A. What sort of what?

Q. What sort of committees or organizations have you been involved in?

A. Oh, organizations and committees just off hand, Indian Men Club, the Mahpiya Luta, and, oh, I can't think of any, any more, but I help any organization that I can help, any Indian organization that I can be of help, why, I'll be glad to help them. War Eagles, when they started, I helped them although I'm not a member. And any Indian cause, if I can be of help, I will.

- Q. Yeah. Now, on what day did, what day did you start this particular office?
- A. This particular office, I think we started the eleventh, June eleventh.
- Q. Did you move into this building on Main Street?
- A. No. No, we had no office, we had no phones, we had a terrible time getting phones even after we got the office, and we weren't recognized, evidently by the Bell Telephone Company, because I went to them, they said they would get a phone in, and they practically promised to me that day, we never got it, then we had to go get the mayor's okay. We waited a few days more, still no phones, and to work in a place like this without phones, is extremely difficult. So then I went to the mayor again. And in the meantime, they went down for a second okay from the mayor. In other words, seemingly they did not recognize the authority that the mayor placed upon us for the reason that they had to go back for the mayor's okay for a telephone. Now, you would think that we, representing the mayor, would have authority enough to order a telephone.
- Q. Yeah.
- A. But evidently not.
- Q. Now this office here you have several sort of make shift desks, and then do you have anything up above, or. . . ?
- A. Yes, we have an office upstairs with the same cardboard furniture. Now, you could see how shaky that is, put an adding machine on that and try to write. So we hired a couple young boys to go down to the Mother Butler Center and dug those two tables there out and washed them up and delivered them up here, and they were three boys that done this, and we gave each one five dollars apiece for delivering them up here, washing them up and cleaning them. That's how come these tables are here. But these were borrowed from SBA, Small Business

Association. Out of the _____. That's where we got these. And the chairs all belong to _____.

Q. Your surroundings then, are hardly plush, are they?

A. Well, not plush, but we, we're used to that. We're used to that type of thing.

Q. Well, tell me a little bit about some of the things that you were confronted with in the first, the early period from about the eleventh on. What were the things you were trying to do, were part of this Coordination Committee? What did you do?

A. The things we were trying to do was to get flood victims into temporary housing. And by temporary housing, that means they doubled up mainly with Indians, other Indians, we have as many as three, and I've heard of four families in one dwelling, and I don't think there was very many of those. But they did double up and are still doubled up. And we're still trying to get housing for these people, we have somewheres in the neighborhood of sixty people out in Camp Rapid, we finally. . . .

Q. What is the highest number you ever had?

A. The highest. . . .

Q. _____ in various centers, _____ come up with those figures?

A. Well, that, I'd have to do some figuring on that. . . .

Q. Well, you can approximate.

A. This figure I'm giving you is Camp Rapid only. I don't know how many was over at various places that were placed. That's with HUD. So we didn't keep track of that, because that was out of our line. What we were trying to do was, at that time, was to place people temporarily in motels. Then, after two or three days in these motels went to their summer rates, and prices were exorb-

itant. The Red Cross refused to pay these prices, so that people had to be moved out to other places. Then not too long after that is where they received permission to go out to Camp Rapid. And the people are still there, and the people want to get out of there, we want them out of there, _____ (Army) is trying to get them out of there.

Q. Now, what did you have in the way of people, what do you now have in the way of people out at Camp Rapid?

A. _____ says that there is thirteen families and I believe 47 people out there. You see, we have had as many as sixty out there, and as people move into mobile homes and other places, they're removed from Camp Rapid. And _____ wants to get them out of there, which I have just mentioned. Now, there are about 23 workers working for us now. And for a while, we had 36. But this 23, we may have to increase that, that a few more than 23, because we find that we're shorthanded. Especially at two, for instance, that are in the security job.

Q. This is security at, at Camp Rapid primarily, is that correct?

A. Yes, that is. We have 24 hour service out there for the people.

Q. Besides, besides the activities of securing places for people to live and so on, what else, what else have you been involved with in this particular center?

A. Transportation. And then (information), they well come here wanting to know where to go to get a trailer house. Now this was at the start, where do you to to sign up? And then we have many of our Indians that prefer to go to an Indian if possible. Because they don't seem to get the treatment that they should be accorded in other places. So therefore, they put Indian bi-lingual speaking people at various offices, (Donaldson) Building and Central High

School, and to begin with out at St. John's. And in the higher echelon, there is no discrimination.

Q. What do you mean by the higher echelon?

A. By the higher echelon I mean the people who are running the Salvation Army, the highest officers, and the general at the air base and the officials at, well, at all agencies. The higher echelon at all agencies. It is the locally hired people.

Q. Now what do you, what do you mean by discrimination, what are we in particular talking about?

A. Well, now, what I mean by this is, we'll say that two girls were hired by the Red Cross to go out here to St. John's. Where they were interviewing flood victims very early. What I mean by that is June 12, 13, 14 and in there. All right, they put these two girls out there, they were disregarded for two days. They didn't have an office or they didn't have anything but sat around, stood around, finally after the higher echelon as I'll call them, the more permanent people that came in here got ahold of it, these two girls were given desks and then as the people would come in, the Indians would automatically go to the Indian people for help. Now that, after that they got along splendidly. With the workers and everybody. Then they were moved over to the Donaldson Building. And the same thing happened there as at St. John's. And it was finally over come too. And I don't like to be speaking about this discrimination and so on. It's not what I like to talk about, I'm willing to talk facts, the truth should not hurt anybody.

Q. All right. Then in terms of getting people located, getting transportation around for various people and so on, these were sort of the two main functions

which you worked on. In addition, were there any other things that you did or have, are doing now, I should say?

A. Well, yes, early in the game, now, when we had no office, no place to go, no permanent phone, we were using other people's phones, why we were telling people where to go to get something to eat. And at that time the city auditorium was open, then. Rapid City was calling for help. Many people from the reservations came up here. I know one carload of people from St. Francis that came up here. . . .

Q. Is that at Pine Ridge or Rosebud?

A. That, St. Francis is Rosebud. They came up here to help. And they got here at night, they knew nothing about a curfew, they were an Indian speaking people, as their primary language, they got up here and they didn't know there was a curfew on or anything, they happened to get down into the curfew area because that is where the only place they knew in Rapid City is this curfew area where the Indian homes had been wiped out. Then they were caught. One particular couple spent two days in jail. The car was towed away. I spent part of one afternoon looking for it. They finally found the car, which was impounded, it had a sixty-some dollar tow charge against it, but in the meantime this city set a flat rate of \$15 for a tow job. And after they're towed to these places, they were charged a dollar a day. However, after these people finally located their car, among 2250 other cars, they located their car, so they came to me, and I helped them get out of town. The fine was suspended and it cost \$18 to get the car out. I paid the \$15 tow charge and filled their car up with gasoline, they put their spare on, and fixed the other one after they got home, I presume. I hope. And there are incidents of that kind,

but that isn't the primary object of my interview here and so I would like to leave that out, and if there's anything else you would like to talk about, I would be glad to do it.

Q. Now, in the pursuance of your activities here, have you, have you been involved with federal orgaizations such as HUD and OEO and so on?

A. Yes. Yes. We're involved in that we send people over there and they send people over here. For verifications and we're operating quite nicely now.

Q. What about legal assistance, where there is litigation involving homes and this sort of thing. Do you provide that help, or do you send them someplace else?

A. There is a group here for awhile there were several attorneys here, and naturally we sent them over to the legal department which was Room 217 at the Central High School. Were it is now, I don not know, and everybody that we talked to or had any dealings with, we tell them to, tell them to sign absolutely nothing without consulting legal aid.

Q. Now, in what major, is there such a thing, I have not observed it, but in the flood area, what would you, what would you estimate the loss of homes to Indians? Can you come up with some kind of an estimation?

A. Well, the number of people who own homes are like the other people of Rapid City. Most of them were renters, however, there were some that did own their homes. And the number I can't tell you. I've never heard because HUD and those people take care of those things, and I've never heard a figure on it. But most of them are renters, now for instance, I know of one family, they rented this place for twenty years. It was wiped away and they were sleeping in the car and eating at the St. Mathew's Church, that's Grace and Johnny Larvey

of, well, Mission, South Dakota, we'll say that now. They're from the Rosebud reservation. Red Cross finally gave, I believe \$50 to each family or something, that there now, on my part is hearsay. But they did receive \$50 from the Red Cross, so they went back to Mission to live, their sisters in the meantime had secured a house there and they're living there. And I was back there a couple weeks ago, and while I was back there they seen me pass by the window, I inquired about them, so I passed by. And they were so glad to see somebody from Rapid City, or number two license, which is our county here, that they both stood outside and was waving their hands. So I turned around and went back and we went in and visited and they didn't like it down there, they wanted to return to Rapid City. They had lived here so long that back there, their home, they didn't know anybody any more. That, too, is my home. And I feel practically the same way, that I don't know anybody back there anymore, and I live here, and I want to remain here the same as many of these other people. Now, at the city auditorium for instance, there were a lot of people from the reservation standing in line eating. And there were objections to that. Because they said, "These people are not flood victims, I seen them get out of a car down there with a Pine Ridge license on it, how come they're in here waiting?" Those people were helping in the flood! They asked for help, they were up here. That's the reason they were here. And surely they were entitled to a meal. Because you couldn't buy anything. I was up to the Holiday Inn one morning there, I took a notion that I was getting ready for something to eat. At my house we had no electricity, no telephone, no gas, no water, it was terrible there without anything. And no roads to get out of town. And then all of a sudden I decided I needed some gasoline, and none of the pumps in

the city would work. It's fortunate that I could go out on the edge of town and buy some gasoline. So I took my daughter down to Buffalo Gap to live with some friends of mine, Bergstroms, and then after we got water and lights, took quite a while to get the telephone, but that we could get along without. So I went down and got her and in the meantime my son came from Los Angeles to see how I was getting along because nobody could get ahold of me, and my daughter came from Long Island, New York, and she is still here and _____ needing some help in the SBA, so she's in there working, and that is her office right over there.

- Q. What about, in the, some of the tentative talks about the, putting this area that was damaged by the flood into a park, or condemning the entire area? Is there any sort of feeling as far as you're concerned about what ought to be done with this area? Or have you had a chance to think about it?
- A. I, I've done a lot of thinking on that, and it most certainly, if I lived there and my house was gone, I certainly wouldn't want to put another house there. Absolutely. The reason this people lived there was because there's no place else to go. That is home to the Indians, and it was fortunate that this had never happened before, quite as bad, and from now on, I don't believe that anybody should live there, I don't know what the city plans, whether they are going to put some dikes up there or now, but we had a city auditorium election here a few months ago, and they were going to build a city auditorium near this area, and now I understand that there are other plans. And naturally other plans is that it's not going to be where they originally intended, it's going to be moved farther away or higher up, or something else. And so I don't believe that the Indian himself will go back there and live. Just like

any other people. I know I wouldn't want to go down there and live. They

could give me a piece of that land, free of charge, and I wouldn't live there. I, I would go somewhere's else. Where the, the Indian says that where the

water was once, it will come again. So, if you leave it up to the Indians,

they're not going to move back there. And I think that in their long range

programs, we're going into phase two now, from phase, phase one in our

emergency program, and by the time we get to phase three, why, there'll be

more permanency in our plans, and these trailer houses, that's just temporary.

Temporary housing. So, sentimentally, there's a lot of people that'd go

back there and walk among the flowers. If the city plans a park there and

puts a few trees up, why, they'll be back _____ walking among the flowers,

but I don't think you'll ever see a tipi there on their own accord.

Q. Before I came out here, some of the news media and so on, talked about a so-

called Red Ghetto in Rapid City and how it was destroyed by the flood and so

on. First of all, was there such a thing, and then secondly, do you think that

the new media, this is _____ an unrelated question, but a second question,

news media treated the flood and the victims fairly and so on?

A. Well, now, as far as the Red Ghetto is concerned, the Indian never called that

a Red Ghetto. That was called that by other than Indian people. As far as

the Indian was concerned, most of these places was home sweet home to him.

That was the only place he knew. He loved it there. There was home life

there. You can take some of these 150, 100 thousand dollar homes that you see

on our disaster pictures that had less true love, sacred home life than many of

these so-called ghettos. If they're called ghettos, they're called that by

newswriters and other than Indians. The Indians who lived there loved their

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newswriters and other than Indians. The Indians who lived there loved their

home. They believed their home, and that was home, sweet home. Now as far as a Red Ghetto is concerned, that's other than Indian.

Q. What about the Indian of your people by the news media and so on, did you think they gave your people equal treatment?

A. Well, now. . . .

Q. Fair treatment, I should say.

A. Yes, well, go according to that little axiom that you see on various office walls: "Before you make judgement, walk a mile in the Indian's moccasin tracks." Now, take Life magazine and look that over. Put yourself in the Indian's position and see if you think it done justice. In many cases justice was provided by news media except for various digs.

Q. Except for various what?

A. Digs. D-I-G-S. What the badger does with his front and hind feet when he digs a hole and. . .no, I don't believe it gave a true reflection in that. . . .

Q. This is Life magazine?

A. Yes. It is like all others. Now, when I went to Denver and was on channel 2, the first thing they briefed us on was the preliminary of a movie that they had taken for TV and they showed us the flood, the disaster area, they started out at Cleghorn Springs, Canyon Lake, Jackson Boulevard, came on down to West Boulevard, and then what did it do? It jumped. This home, sweet home to the Indian and Red Ghetto by others area. To East Boulevard, then showed us Campbell Street. The first thing they showed on East Boulevard was Frontier Ford. Just skipped this other. So there I objected. And they called a cameraman in, and he said the reason he didn't take anything, there was nothing to take, so that is exactly the reason we were there in Denver, was because

there was nothing to take. They could have at least take a picture of the ground where there had been a few foundations, uprooted trees, and said, "Here was an Indian's home." All right, if he wanted to take a picture, he could have went over a little farther and took a picture of the community service center. With the water line showing, have a man standing there and show where the water line was. Way above the windows. And then went over highway 90 on the other side of the highway, and took a picture of Mother Butler Center where everything was at least half inundated, where a big huge two-story house was moved and bashed against the highway where two priests barely escaped with their lives, and at that same moment or thereabouts, Father Collines, the parish priest of the Mother Butler Center was fighting for his life or . . . lay there drowned in the gymnasium. And I think that is about all I have to say.

Q. Thank you very much.

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Q. Now, what did you have in the way of people, what do you now have in the way of people out at Camp Rapid?

A. _____ says that there is thirteen families and I believe 47 people out there. You see, we have had as many as sixty out there, and as people move into mobile homes and other places, they're removed from Camp Rapid. And _____ wants to get them out of there, which I have just mentioned. Now, there are about 23 workers working for us now. And for a while, we had 36. But this 23, we may have to increase that, that a few more than 23, because we find that we're shorthanded. Especially at two, for instance, that are in the security job.

Q. This is security at, at Camp Rapid primarily, is that correct?

A. Yes, that is. We have 24 hour service out there for the people.

Q. Besides, besides the activities of securing places for people to live and so on, what else, what else have you been involved with in this particular center?

A. Transportation. And then (information), they well come here wanting to know where to go to get a trailer house. Now this was at the start, where do you to to sign up? And then we have many of our Indians that prefer to go to an Indian if possible. Because they don't seem to get the treatment that they should be accorded in other places. So therefore, they put Indian bi-lingual speaking people at various offices, (Donaldson) Building and Central High

School, and to begin with out at St. John's. And in the higher echelon, there is no discrimination.

Q. What do you mean by the higher echelon?

A. By the higher echelon I mean the people who are running the Salvation Army, the highest officers, and the general at the air base and the officials at, well, at all agencies. The higher echelon at all agencies. It is the locally hired people.

Q. Now what do you, what do you mean by discrimination, what are we in particular talking about?

A. Well, now, what I mean by this is, we'll say that two girls were hired by the Red Cross to go out here to St. John's. Where they were interviewing flood victims very early. What I mean by that is June 12, 13, 14 and in there. All right, they put these two girls out there, they were disregarded for two days. They didn't have an office or they didn't have anything but sat around, stood around, finally after the higher echelon as I'll call them, the more permanent people that came in here got ahold of it, these two girls were given desks and then as the people would come in, the Indians would automatically go to the Indian people for help. Now that, after that they got along splendidly. With the workers and everybody. Then they were moved over to the Donaldson Building. And the same thing happened there as at St. John's. And it was finally over come too. And I don't like to be speaking about this discrimination and so on. It's not what I like to talk about, I'm willing to talk facts, the truth should not hurt anybody.

Q. All right. Then in terms of getting people located, getting transportation around for various people and so on, these were sort of the two main functions

which you worked on. In addition, were there any other things that you did or have, are doing now, I should say?

A. Well, yes, early in the game, now, when we had no office, no place to go, no permanent phone, we were using other people's phones, why we were telling people where to go to get something to eat. And at that time the city auditorium was open, then. Rapid City was calling for help. Many people from the reservations came up here. I know one carload of people from St. Francis that came up here. . . .

Q. Is that at Pine Ridge or Rosebud?

A. That, St. Francis is Rosebud. They came up here to help. And they got here at night, they knew nothing about a curfew, they were an Indian speaking people, as their primary language, they got up here and they didn't know there was a curfew on or anything, they happened to get down into the curfew area because that is where the only place they knew in Rapid City is this curfew area where the Indian homes had been wiped out. Then they were caught. One particular couple spent two days in jail. The car was towed away. I spent part of one afternoon looking for it. They finally found the car, which was impounded, it had a sixty-some dollar tow charge against it, but in the meantime this city set a flat rate of \$15 for a tow job. And after they're towed to these places, they were charged a dollar a day. However, after these people finally located their car, among 2250 other cars, they located their car, so they came to me, and I helped them get out of town. The fine was suspended and it cost \$18 to get the car out. I paid the \$15 tow charge and filled their car up with gasoline, they put their spare on, and fixed the other one after they got home, I presume. I hope. And there are incidents of that kind,

but that isn't the primary object of my interview here and so I would like to leave that out, and if there's anything else you would like to talk about, I would be glad to do it.

Q. Now, in the pursuance of your activities here, have you, have you been involved with federal orgaizations such as HUD and OEO and so on?

A. Yes. Yes. We're involved in that we send people over there and they send people over here. For verifications and we're operating quite nicely now.

Q. What about legal assistance, where there is litigation involving homes and this sort of thing. Do you provide that help, or do you send them someplace else?

A. There is a group here for awhile there were several attorneys here, and naturally we sent them over to the legal department which was Room 217 at the Central High School. Were it is now, I don not know, and everybody that we talked to or had any dealings with, we tell them to, tell them to sign absolutely nothing without consulting legal aid.

Q. Now, in what major, is there such a thing, I have not observed it, but in the flood area, what would you, what would you estimate the loss of homes to Indians? Can you come up with some kind of an estimation?

A. Well, the number of people who own homes are like the other people of Rapid City. Most of them were renters, however, there were some that did own their homes. And the number I can't tell you. I've never heard because HUD and those people take care of those things, and I've never heard a figure on it. But most of them are renters, now for instance, I know of one family, they rented this place for twenty years. It was wiped away and they were sleeping in the car and eating at the St. Mathew's Church, that's Grace and Johnny Larvey

of, well, Mission, South Dakota, we'll say that now. They're from the Rosebud reservation. Red Cross finally gave, I believe \$50 to each family or something, that there now, on my part is hearsay. But they did receive \$50 from the Red Cross, so they went back to Mission to live, their sisters in the meantime had secured a house there and they're living there. And I was back there a couple weeks ago, and while I was back there they seen me pass by the window, I inquired about them, so I passed by. And they were so glad to see somebody from Rapid City, or number two license, which is our county here, that they both stood outside and was waving their hands. So I turned around and went back and we went in and visited and they didn't like it down there, they wanted to return to Rapid City. They had lived here so long that back there, their home, they didn't know anybody any more. That, too, is my home. And I feel practically the same way, that I don't know anybody back there anymore, and I live here, and I want to remain here the same as many of these other people. Now, at the city auditorium for instance, there were a lot of people from the reservation standing in line eating. And there were objections to that. Because they said, "These people are not flood victims, I seen them get out of a car down there with a Pine Ridge license on it, how come they're in here waiting?" Those people were helping in the flood! They asked for help, they were up here. That's the reason they were here. And surely they were entitled to a meal. Because you couldn't buy anything. I was up to the Holiday Inn one morning there, I took a notion that I was getting ready for something to eat. At my house we had no electricity, no telephone, no gas, no water, it was terrible there without anything. And no roads to get out of town. And then all of a sudden I decided I needed some gasoline, and none of the pumps in

the city would work. It's fortunate that I could go out on the edge of town and buy some gasoline. So I took my daughter down to Buffalo Gap to live with some friends of mine, Bergstroms, and then after we got water and lights, took quite a while to get the telephone, but that we could get along without. So I went down and got her and in the meantime my son came from Los Angeles to see how I was getting along because nobody could get ahold of me, and my daughter came from Long Island, New York, and she is still here and _____ needing some help in the SBA, so she's in there working, and that is her office right over there.

- Q. What about, in the, some of the tentative talks about the, putting this area that was damaged by the flood into a park, or condemning the entire area? Is there any sort of feeling as far as you're concerned about what ought to be done with this area? Or have you had a chance to think about it?
- A. I, I've done a lot of thinking on that, and it most certainly, if I lived there and my house was gone, I certainly wouldn't want to put another house there. Absolutely. The reason this people lived there was because there's no place else to go. That is home to the Indians, and it was fortunate that this had never happened before, quite as bad, and from now on, I don't believe that anybody should live there, I don't know what the city plans, whether they are going to put some dikes up there or now, but we had a city auditorium election here a few months ago, and they were going to build a city auditorium near this area, and now I understand that there are other plans. And naturally other plans is that it's not going to be where they originally intended, it's going to be moved farther away or higher up, or something else. And so I don't believe that the Indian himself will go back there and live. Just like

any other people. I know I wouldn't want to go down there and live. They

could give me a piece of that land, free of charge, and I wouldn't live there. I, I would go somewhere's else. Where the, the Indian says that where the water was once, it will come again. So, if you leave it up to the Indians, they're not going to move back there. And I think that in their long range programs, we're going into phase two now, from phase, phase one in our

emergency program, and by the time we get to phase three, why, there'll be more permanency in our plans, and these trailer houses, that's just temporary. Temporary housing. So, sentimentally, there's a lot of people that'd go back there and walk among the flowers. If the city plans a park there and puts a few trees up, why, they'll be back _____ walking among the flowers, but I don't think you'll ever see a tipi there on their own accord.

Q. Before I came out here, some of the news media and so on, talked about a so-called Red Ghetto in Rapid City and how it was destroyed by the flood and so on. First of all, was there such a thing, and then secondly, do you think that the new media, this is _____ an unrelated question, but a second question, news media treated the flood and the victims fairly and so on?

A. Well, now, as far as the Red Ghetto is concerned, the Indian never called that a Red Ghetto. That was called that by other than Indian people. As far as the Indian was concerned, most of these places was home sweet home to him. That was the only place he knew. He loved it there. There was home life there. You can take some of these 150, 100 thousand dollar homes that you see on our disaster pictures that had less true love, sacred home life than many of these so-called ghettos. If they're called ghettos, they're called that by newswriters and other than Indians. The Indians who lived there loved their

home. They believed their home, and that was home, sweet home. Now as far as a Red Ghetto is concerned, that's other than Indian.

Q. What about the Indian of your people by the news media and so on, did you think they gave your people equal treatment?

A. Well, now. . . .

Q. Fair treatment, I should say.

A. Yes, well, go according to that little axiom that you see on various office walls: "Before you make judgement, walk a mile in the Indian's moccasin tracks." Now, take Life magazine and look that over. Put yourself in the Indian's position and see if you think it done justice. In many cases justice was provided by news media except for various digs.

Q. Except for various what?

A. Digs. D-I-G-S. What the badger does with his front and hind feet when he digs a hole and. . .no, I don't believe it gave a true reflection in that. . . .

Q. This is Life magazine?

A. Yes. It is like all others. Now, when I went to Denver and was on channel 2, the first thing they briefed us on was the preliminary of a movie that they had taken for TV and they showed us the flood, the disaster area, they started out at Cleghorn Springs, Canyon Lake, Jackson Boulevard, came on down to West Boulevard, and then what did it do? It jumped. This home, sweet home to the Indian and Red Ghetto by others area. To East Boulevard, then showed us Campbell Street. The first thing they showed on East Boulevard was Frontier Ford. Just skipped this other. So there I objected. And they called a cameraman in, and he said the reason he didn't take anything, there was nothing to take, so that is exactly the reason we were there in Denver, was because

there was nothing to take. They could have at least take a picture of the ground where there had been a few foundations, uprooted trees, and said, "Here was an Indian's home." All right, if he wanted to take a picture, he could have went over a little farther and took a picture of the community service center. With the water line showing, have a man standing there and show where the water line was. Way above the windows. And then went over highway 90 on the other side of the highway, and took a picture of Mother Butler Center where everything was at least half inundated, where a big huge two-story house was moved and bashed against the highway where two priests barely escaped with their lives, and at that same moment or thereabouts, Father Collines, the parish priest of the Mother Butler Center was fighting for his life or. . . lay there drowned in the gymnasium. And I think that is about all I have to say.

Q. Thank you very much.

#527

SW This is James E. Emery, Mayor's Indian Welfare Coordination Committee. ~~XXXX~~ This is James E. Emery of 724 Mallow Street, Rapid City, July 11, 1972, Stephen Ward, and we are speaking from 915 Main, the headquarters of the mayor's Indian Welfare Coordination Committee. Let's begin by talking first of all about how you got into this particular position. You are a retired employee of the Black Hills Light and Power, is that correct?

JE That's right. The way I got into it, the mayor called me up and he says, "Jim I know you're retired." But he said, " I need someone like you and I'd like to have you be on our special Indian committee between myself, my office and the Inidan people, and I would like to have you represent the Indian people. " So I told him that I would accept it and I have been on ever since and have worked every day except the fourth of July. And the people asked me to take the day off, so I took it off as best I could. I was busy somewhat, regardless. And it was on a voluntary basis, after a couple weeks then, the United Sioux Tribes began to pay us at a rate of 15 dollars a day.

SW Well, now , how many people do you have working for you on this committee?

JE We did have 34, but , how many people do I have working now? Yeah, I don't know how many ^{we} have working now, but what we have working for us. And the number we have working now may fluctuate one way or another, I think we'll have a few people on that we do have now. Because ^{there's} spots that need to be filled.

SW what kind of positions did you have?

JE Well, what I'm speaking about are our security guard out at Camp Rapid. That's what I'm speaking of at the moment. And we want to maintain services, security services out there 24 hours a day. And then we have drivers and we may need another driver or two. Because recently we have found out that we need some transportation, for instance, we should have a truck and probably 2 pickups that would aid us in helping the people move. There's some of these people that have belongings and have moved into a trailer house. Many went back after the, ~~xxxx~~ flood, back to the reservation; we have to go back there and get those people and bring them back up, because they have no transportation. So we're ~~xxxx~~ flood victims on the reservation and to the reservation. If some-one wants to go back and remain permanently, then we will move. But we don't intend

JE to move people down through the reservation and stay a couple days and then go back and get them again. That's what we're trying to eliminate.

SW In terms of, now yourself, are you full blooded Sioux, or..

JE No, I'm not a full blooded Sioux, I'm 1/4. My grandmother was a full-blooded Sioux, making my mother a half, and I'm 1/4. I read and write and speak Teton Sioux fluently.

SW Have you always been involved in Indian affairs here in Rapid City?

JE Yes, I've always been involved in Indian Affairs everywhere I've been. yes.

SW What sort of things have you done in the past?

JE What sort of what?

SW What sort of committees or organizations have you been involved in?

JE Oh, organizations and committees just off hand, IndiansxMen Club, the(Noktya Loota), and Oh, I can't think of any, any more, but I help any organization that I can help, any Indian organization that I can be of help, why, I'll be glad to help them. War Eagles, when they started, I helped them although I'm not a member. And any Indian cause, if I can be of help, I will.

SW Yeah. Now, on what day did , what day did you start this particular office.

JE This particular office, I think we started the eleventh, June eleventh.

SW Did you move into this building on Main Street?

JE No. No, we ~~did~~ had no office, we had no phones, we had a terrible time getting phones even after we got the office, and we weren't recognized, evidently by the Bell Telephone Company, because I went to them , they said they would get a phone in, and they practically promised to me that day, we never got it, then we had to go get the mayor's okay. We waited a few days more, still no phones, and to work in a place like this without phones, is extremely difficult. So then I went to the mayor again. And in the meantime, they went down for a second okay from the mayor. In other words, seemingly they did not recognize the authority that the mayor placed upon us for the reason that they had to go back for the mayor's okay for a telephone. Now, you would think that we, representing the mayor, would have authority enough to order a telephone.

SW Yeah.

JE But evidently not.

SW Now this office here you have several sort of make shift desks, and then do you have anything up above, or..

JE Yes, we have an office upstairs with the same cardboard furniture. Now, you could see how shaky that is, ~~XXXX~~ put an adding machine on that and try to write. So we ~~heard~~^{hired} a couple young boys to go down to the Mother Butler Center and dug those two tables there out and washed them up and delived them up here, and they were three boys that done this, and we gave ~~them~~ eachone five dollars apeice for delivering them up here, washing them up and cleaning them. That's how come these tables are here. But these were borrowed from SBA, Small Business Association. out of the . That's where we got these. And the chairs all belong to .

SW Your surroundings then, are hardly plus, are they?

JE Well, not plus, but we, we're used to that. We're used to that type of thing.

SW Well, tell me a little bit about some of the things that you were confronted with in the first , the early period from about the 11th on. What were the things you were trying to do, were part of this coordination committee. Wht did you do?

JE The things ~~was~~ we were trying to do was to get flood victims into temporary houseing. And by temporary housing, that means they doubled up mainly with Indians, other Indians, we have as many as three, and I've heard of four families in one dwelling, and I don't think there was ^{sw} many of those. But they did double up and are still doubled up. And we're still trying to get housing for these people, we have somewheres in the neighborhood of sixty people out in Camp Rapid, we finally..

SW What is the highest number you ever had?

JE The highest..

SW in various centers, come up with those figures?

JE Well, that, I'd have to do some figuring on that..

SW Well, you can approximate.

JE This figure I'm giving you is Camp Rapid Only. I don't know how many was over at various places that were place.d That's with HUD. So we didn't keep track of that, because that was out of our line. What we were trying to do was , at that time, was to place people temporarily in motels. Then, after two or three days in these motels,

JE went to their summer rates, and prices were exorbitant. The Red Cross refused to pay these prices, so that people had to be moved out to ~~the~~ other places. Then not too long after that is where they received permission to go out to Camp Rapid. And the people are still there, and the people want to get out of there, we want them out of there, (Army) is trying to get them out of there.

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JE housing. So ..sentimentally, there's a lot of people that'd go back there and walk among the flowers. If the city plants a park there and puts a few trees up, why, they'll be back walking among the flowers, but I don't think you'll ever see a tipi there on their own accord.

SW Before I came out here, some of the news media and so on talked about a so-called red ghetto in Rapid City and how it was destroyed by the flood and so on. First of all, was there such a thing, and then secondly, do you think that the news media, this is an unrelated question, but a second question, news media treated the flood and the victims fairly and so on?

JE Well, now, as far as the red ghetto is concerned, the Indian never called that a red ghetto. That was called that by other than Indian people. As far as the Indian was concerned, most of these places was home sweet home to him. That was the only place he knew. He loved it there. There was home life there. You can take some of these 150, 100 thousand dollar homes that you see on our disaster pictures that had less true love, sacred home life than many of these so-called ghettos. If they're called ghettos, they're called that by newswriters and other than Indians. The Indians who lived there love their home. They believed their home, and that was home, sweet home. Now as far as a red ghetto is concerned, that's other than Indian.

SW What about the Indian of your people by the news media and so on, did you think they gave your people equal treatment?

JE Well, now..

SW Fair treatment, I should say.

JE Yes, well, go according to that little axiom that you see on various office walls: "Before you make judgement, walk a mile in the Indian's moccasin tracks." Now, take Life magazine and look that over. Put yourself in the Indian's position and see if ~~xy~~ you think it done justice. In many cases justice was provided by news media except for various digs.

SW Except for various what?

JE Digs. D-i-g-s. What the badger does with his front and hind feet when he digs a hole and..no, I don't believe it gave a true reflection in that...

SW This is Life magazine.

JE Yes. It is like all others. Now, when I went to Denver and was on channel 2, the first thing they briefed us on was the preliminary of a movie that they had taken for tv and they showed us the flood, the disaster area, they started out at Cleghorn Springs, Canyon Lake, Jackson Boulevard, came on down to West Boulevard, and then what did they do? It jumped. This home, sweet home to the Indian and red ghetto by others area. To East Boulevard, then showed us Campbell Street. The first thing they showed on East Boulevard was Frontier Ford. Just skipped this other. So there I objected. And they called a cameraman in, and he said the reason he didn't take anything, there was nothing to take, so that is exactly the reason we were there in Denver, was because there was nothing to take. They could have at least taken ^a ~~the~~ picture of the ground where there had been a few foundations, uprooted trees, and said, "Here was an Indian's home." All right, if he wanted to take a picture, he could have went over a little farther and took a picture of the community service center. With the water line showing, have a man standing there and show where the water line was. Way above the ~~ix~~ windows. And then went over highway 90 on the other side of the highway, and took a picture of Mother Butler Center, where everything was at least half inundated, where a big huge two-story house was moved and bashed against the highway where two priests barely escaped with their lives, and at that same moment or thereabouts, Father Collines, the parish priest of the Mother Butler Center was fighting for his life or..lay there drowned in the gymnasium. And I think that is about all I have to say.

SW Thank you very much.

(END OF INTERVIEW)

Institute of American Indian Studies
South Dakota Oral History Center

University of South Dakota, 414 E. Clark St., Vermillion, SD 57069-2390, (605) 677-5209

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