

<b>CHET TCHOZEWSKI. Born 1954.

TRANSCRIPT of OH1513 A-C.</b>

This interview was recorded on November 12, 1997. It was later donated to the Maria Rogers Oral History Program and the Rocky Flats Cold War Museum. The interviewer is LeRoy Moore. The interview transcript was prepared by Cyns Nelson.

NOTE: The interviewer's questions and comments appear in parentheses. Added material appears in brackets. The archiving of this interview was made possible by a grant from Colorado Humanities.

[A].

[Beginning of audio is clipped.]

00:00 ( &mdash Wednesday the 12th of November, 1997. I'm sitting in my own living room, talking to Chet Tchozewski about his experiences with Rocky Flats and, particularly, the creation of the Truth Force and his work with that group as well as other work he did with the American Friends Service Committee, and so on. So, good morning, Chet!)

Good morning.

(I'm particularly curious to hear you say, again, how you learned about Rocky Flats and how you got involved with it in the first place. As I recall, you moved out here not long before you got involved with Rocky Flats.)

Well, that's true, sort of.

(From somewhere else.)

Yeah. I had lived in Michigan, where I grew up, until 1974. So it was a few years before I became involved in the Rocky Flats campaign. But I moved out here to live with some friends in Georgetown, Colorado &mdash 75 miles west of Denver &mdash where I mainly enjoyed mountain life: skiing and hiking. After a few years of that &mdash by 1977 and early 1978 &mdash I had learned a little bit about Rocky Flats from the popular news media, I think. That's the best way I can recall first knowing about Rocky Flats. I imagine that it was from stories in the <i>Denver Post</i> and <i>Rocky Mountain News</i>, which I read. I had very little contact with any other sources &mdash any progressive sources &mdash of information. So it was probably some news coverage about the work of AFSC [American Friends Service Committee] planning the 1978 rally, at the crossroads or something.

I knew people who knew something nuclear went on at Rocky Flats, but nobody knew very much, in my circle of friends. But I was &mdash I had quite an appetite for learning about

not just Rocky Flats, but, sort of, progressive matters. I began to find the trail of literature in magazines, and things, that had information like that.

So I knew about the AFSC only from newspaper accounts. I called them up and asked what I could do to help.

(Oh. Uh-huh. When was that?)

That was probably in March, February or March, of early &mdash

('78.)

'78.

(Okay. Not long before that big demonstration.)

No, only a couple of months, or a few weeks, something like that. You know, I was 24 years old, or something, at the time. Although I'd never been involved politically, I'd grown up in the '60s and early '70s and really felt attracted to the energy of the political movements of the time but was just not in a place where there was much going. My family wasn't active; I didn't know people who were involved. So I had been seeking something like what was about to happen at Rocky Flats.

There had been a period of kind of drought of political activity in the mid '70s, after the end of the Vietnam War. People were burned out, I think. There wasn't a whole lot visible. So new people &mdash like myself &mdash wanting to get involved, couldn't find very much. The Seabrook demonstration in 1977 was a big inspiration. It was national news; 1,400 people had been arrested and held for some period of days, so it constituted a national news story.

That, I think, helped inspire a lot of people to look at the anti-nuclear movement as a place to put their energy, and Rocky Flats then, of course, became the focus in Colorado.

(Yeah. So you were living in Georgetown, and you came down to the AFSC office? Or &mdash ? In Denver?)

Yeah. I talked to them on the phone a couple of times. They sent me some material. Like I said, even though I hadn't been involved, I was sort of emotionally prepared to make a big leap. So I wasn't just looking to come to a rally &mdash which would be my first, and would be important &mdash but I was also interested in the civil disobedience they told me that was being planned.

(I see.)

05:00 It's kind of surprising, I suppose, in a sense that: I'd never done anything

political, but yet here I was, willing to do civil disobedience. I felt pretty grounded in it. And I didn't know anybody among my friends &mdash they were mostly skiers, and hikers, and climbers, and had an appreciation for the outdoors but weren't, again, particularly involved &mdash so I was planning to go to this by myself. I really couldn't interest anybody else I knew in it.

The first thing I did was, I went to a non-violence training that I'm pretty sure Chris Moore [?] ran. We, of course, later became good friends. He was out from Philadelphia, working for AFSC and the Program for a New Society &mdash

(To conduct those trainings.)

Right. But it was the first public thing that AFSC was inviting people to that weren't already involved in the organizing. And I was living, you know, 75, 80 miles away, so it wasn't like I could get involved in nightly meetings. But they were doing this weekend training the week before, I believe it was. I had the weekend off from work, so I went.

There were several hundred people there. That day, that weekend, was one of those watershed events in my life, I suppose, just because I met people &mdash for the first time, face-to-face &mdash who shared values that I held but had never really been in a position to express. So it just felt like coming home, in a way. Also being awed by the knowledge, commitment, and depth of experience of many of these folks &mdash and, the energy and enthusiasm and articulateness of a lot of young people.

You and I both know lots of people who are still involved today, 20 years later, who I met that day.

(Yeah.)

Some of whom were as novice as I was; some of whom were people like Daniel Ellsberg, who &mdash

(Was he there, that day?)

He was there. And he made himself known in his, sort of, fairly humble way. He's just this sort of ordinary guy, but when he would speak, clearly people would listen. What he had to say was clearly better-informed than any of us could hope to be. That was impressive. But, I think, equally impressive was just this wide variety of other people &mdash

I suppose one of the things was: I expected, mostly, to find young people who were just sort of ready to rebel. But what I found was a room filled with grey-haired old Quakers, and nuns, and people that I was just stunned would be part of such a thing.

That was what I remember. Really, the non-violence trainings were very engaging: a lot of role playing, acting, activities that allowed you, really, to get to know people well,

really fast.

(Uh-huh. Yeah.)

That was important. It really helped shape everything I've done since. It was just a feeling of &mdash

(So then the next weekend &mdash or that Saturday, anyway &mdash was the demonstration; the largest demonstration up to that point. And that was on the site, out there. Then people moved onto the tracks. The weather was getting bad, right? And the people moved onto the tracks to occupy the tracks.)

Uh-huh.

(Did Ellsberg &mdash I'll ask you a question, to see if you remember &mdash did Ellsberg, from the platform, invite people to join him on the tracks? And did he say anything about staying indefinitely? Do you remember? Or staying for an extended period?)

That sounds familiar. I don't really remember &mdash I don't know whether I'm remembering that from hearing it, or I'm remembering it from discussions later. Because that kind of thing HAS been discussed. Like, how did this Rocky Flats Truth Force thing get out of control?

(Right.)

What I remember, that is sort of pertinent to that, is: As I said earlier, this training, the week before &mdash where I met people like Ellen Klaver, Roy Young, and folks who I've since become closest friends with &mdash the person who I remember raising the idea of an extended occupation &mdash and at the time I was still so new to all this, had very little grasp of the rivalries between the groups involved in organizing it or the different strategies. Civil disobedience was civil disobedience, and I didn't really know what that meant. But, what became clear is some people were talking about &mdash the AFSC was talking about &mdash a symbolic disobedience.

10:15 (For one day?)

For one day, and maybe one night. I think it was actually &mdash there was a tacit agreement with the &mdash what was it at the time? I guess it was Department of Energy. Although it might have been &mdash it still might have been ERDA [Energy Research and Development Administration].

(It was the Department of Energy by then, I think. But anyway.)

So AFSC was sort of talking about this civil disobedience, which would go overnight, and people would do the following things and leave the next day. And this very young guy, with

a very babyish looking face &mdash he looked like he was, he WAS probably a teenager; he probably was 19, maybe 18, he looked even younger &mdash stood up and said &mdash when we were forming affinity groups &mdash that he wanted to invite people to join his affinity group, which was going to be called the “Monday Morning Breakfast Club.”

Well, the rally was scheduled to happen on a Saturday, and the civil disobedience would start Saturday afternoon and end Sunday morning, or Sunday afternoon. So, without knowing anymore about it &mdash again, to my novice ears &mdash that was a subtle, but not too subtle signal that this guy was looking at breaking the rules, even in this civil disobedience situation. That person was Todd Buchanan.

(Oh! Oh.)

And Todd was the first person, I think, that suggested to the rest of that group, in the training period, that there should be an indefinite occupation of the railroad tracks.

(Okay.)

And I’m sure that didn’t just pop into his mind. He, no doubt, knew many of these people already and was talking to them about it. Others probably had it on their mind. As you know, Todd, at the time, he was either just graduated from high school &mdash or maybe in his first year of college &mdash and had been involved in Boulder politics &mdash as his family had, for many years &mdash and was involved, I think, mainly with the Mobilization for Survival but was definitely one of the youngest people involved in any of this. But also very thoughtful and polite; not a fist-shaking, bomb-throwing radical.

So then, the first person to respond to his invitation was Ellsberg, who just was hard to miss in this crowd, because he had become known to everybody. He just walked over and joined Todd. And, of course, the whole thing, then, became a bit of a \_\_\_\_\_.

(This was in the training?)

It was in the training when, I think, Chris &mdash or others &mdash asked the group to &mdash they explained about affinity groups, that we needed to break this 300-person group up into &mdash

(Small groups.)

&mdash small groups of 10, 15 people each. And they could be from churches, or whatever &mdash from a certain town, or part of town &mdash whatever their affinity was. So Todd, then, took that opportunity to invite people who were interested in staying until Monday to join his affinity group.

Then, a hubbub happened around those people. [Chuckle from LeRoy.] And some of the leading radicals in this group, like Roy and Ellen, immediately joined him. Then the shaking

radicals, and the more flamboyant and combative types of activists, seemed to go to this group &mdash which wasn't my style, and it was a bit intimidating, so I ended up in another affinity group. But all the times I had my eye on "what were THESE guys going to do?" That's how I remember that developing.

(So this is well before the demonstration, then, that all this happened, as you recall.)

I think, and I may be wrong. I think it was the week before. Because, for me, I was working a full-time job at the Eisenhower Tunnel.

(You don't think this was the training that happened the Friday before the \_\_\_\_\_.)

You know, it could have been. I'm sorry, my memory's not good. But maybe someone else you talk to would remember that. Judy might.

(Okay.)

But that might be. Yeah, it could have been. It wasn't likely that people from out of town would have been here, then, a week before. They would have been coming in a day or two before, for the training. So that's likely. So maybe it was on the Friday before.

14:41 (Let's go back for a moment. I went to get, on this tape, what you were doing. You said you were working up at Eisenhower Tunnel.)

Right.

(So, you were working as &mdash )

I was a paramedic there. I had been working for a couple of years. It was my first real job after leaving college and moving to Colorado.

(So that's what you were doing. You had the time off, and you came for these events.)

Well I was, at that time, working rotating shifts. Work at the tunnel was 24 hours a day, so I usually volunteered for the afternoon shift, which was 4PM to midnight, which gave me most of the day off to do things like go skiing or hiking. In this case, it was to go to Denver to this training. So, I had to probably &mdash if that was what it was, it was on a Friday &mdash I probably had to leave and then &mdash

(Go back to work.) [Chuckles.]

Yeah. The other thing that was important to me, at the time, was that same weekend &mdash I was working as a paramedic, which meant that I was driving the ambulance at the tunnel when they were constructing it. That meant &mdash in a federally funded project like that, unions were involved. I was a member of the Teamsters Union. Teamsters contract ran out

that very same weekend, and they were poised to go on strike. Another first for me. My dad had always been a member of the union, but he'd never been out on strike, that I recall. But I was kind of excited about THAT possibility, too, and ready for it. I wanted time off, more than anything; to be on a strike would have been great.

But it also meant that I was a little apprehensive. At the time, I was not the kind of guy who'd miss a day of work. That was, like, really not allowed. So I was trying to figure out how to do this without missing work. It seemed great: Go to the demonstration Saturday; spend Saturday night blocking the railroad tracks; Sunday, do whatever activists do the next day; and then go back to work on Monday. That was my plan, knowing also that we could go out on strike, in which case I could stay indefinitely, and that would be great. That was what was in my mind, going into the weekend.

It turned out we DIDN'T go out on strike. But another sort of developmental process, for me, was very clearly begun and almost immediately concluded that weekend, which was that I was going to quit my job and do this, whatever it was: Become an anti-nuclear activist. I had been working long enough &mdash; for two years &mdash; working for what, to me, was a lot of money and saved MOST of what I was earning. I was living very simply and had enough saved that I knew I could go for a long time &mdash; months, maybe longer &mdash; without having to earn money. All the activists I knew didn't earn ANY money.

Anyway, that led to me going back to work and taking a few weeks to really reconsider what I was about to do, because it was a very good job, and I liked it a lot. Even though it was limited &mdash; it would have gone on for a few more years &mdash; I could have saved even more money. I decided during that time that I would give notice. And by June, within six weeks, I left.

(Okay. Let's go back to the civil disobedience, then. Were you on the tracks, then, that first day? And people stayed there. Did you stay, and were you arrested then? Or did you leave the tracks before the arrests happened?)

What I remember is that the AFSC-planned events brought people from all over the country.

(Right.)

AFSC was involved in all their offices, and there were 6,000 people who attended, ultimately. And that was the first time there had been more than 100, I think, in a demonstration. There were two parts to the Saturday events. One was down at the Federal Building &mdash; and I'd never been there before. There were speakers and maybe 1,000 people there; and then, later in the afternoon, there was a much bigger rally and the more famous people at the west gate of Rocky Flats.

I remember, sort of, wanting to follow the plan that had been laid out in the training. So my group went &mdash; at a time during the rally, the legal rally &mdash; I don't remember who it was; it may have been &mdash; I don't know if it was a local organizer, or someone

like Helen Caldicott might have been the person who said: "And now these 200 people trained in nonviolence are going to go over and block the railroad tracks in protest of the nuclear arms race." We all felt very righteous, of course. But then we separated from this big group and walked &mdash this is 3 or 4 in the afternoon, I think &mdash across this field to the railroad tracks.

19:52 I remember walking across there with one of the speakers &mdash I'm afraid, after 20 years, my memory is not what it was &mdash but it was this guy from MIT. I could probably look him up. He was some physicist or other who we all relied on as one of the spokespeople for the anti-nuclear movement. He happened to get in my group, for some reason. He's dressed in wingtip shoes, and a suit and tie, and he's walking across. And there are rocks all over out there, the west gate road. He said something like, "Now I know why they call this place Rocky Flats." Things like that made an impression, because it was just such a powerful event for me.

The groups, then, just spread out. The affinity groups spread out along the railroad tracks. And the authorities just sort of moved back and let it happen. There seemed to be almost a cordiality between the organizers &mdash like Chris Moore, and Judy Danielson, and others &mdash and the authorities, because they had done the planning and all.

At that point, there were all these people on the tracks &mdash two or three-hundred of them, I think &mdash but there was still this group that Todd, and Roy, and Ellen, and Ellsberg were part of. I didn't really know where they were, what their specific plan was. As we got settled in, people started to mingle and just socialize. It was clearly &mdash there was not a BIG threat of being arrested, because there seemed to be an agreement.

But then people started to reorganize themselves. In other words, I would find people that I knew or had met. So the affinity groups didn't just isolate themselves from one another. And then, somehow or other &mdash I don't need to go in, too long &mdash but I think what happened is that it started to rain, get cold. And then it was getting dark. So a lot of people were deciding: Well, this is just symbolic anyway; I'm not staying here in the rain. People really weren't prepared for it. So a lot of people started to leave. They figured that was it. By then the big rally had broken up, most of the people were gone, and it was starting to become a little more lonely and threatening out there.

And incidentally, I also remember being really, powerfully impressed with one of the statements made by the lawyers who briefed us during training, the day before. And again, I'd never, ever been around lawyers much &mdash or politically active lawyers &mdash but I remember one of the lawyers saying, "You could be charged with anything from trespassing to treason. And treason is punishable by death." You know, I took every word to heart. And I thought, holy cow! I thought this was just, you know, a protest! I never really thought &mdash it didn't seem like anybody else thought that was going to happen. Some people, in fact, complained that the lawyers were trying to frighten people away from doing anything like this.

So by later that night, when it was dark, and the security people started to get more afraid &mdash and they began to also sense there were some more militant people there, who may not leave &mdash and, to tell you the truth, it could have been that the plan was to leave by dark, or something. I don't really remember; but it was an important fact, I suppose, in terms of how the Truth Force emerged from this larger group. But the weather certainly contributed to a lot of people leaving. And it certainly, I think, began to show who was hardcore, and who wasn't leaving.

By late that night, people were beginning to be cold and wet and hungry. And so, some people showed up with food. A few of us were trying to make sure that no one was really sick, or no one that was really frail was planning to stay out in what was becoming a pretty major storm. I spent the night there. I had my sleeping bag, so I somehow knew I was going to spend the night. I got soaking wet, because I didn't really have &mdash I had a tarp, or something. There were &mdash at that point, it seems to me &mdash more than 50 people still there. But, the next day is when things started to gel. People started showing up &mdash

Two or three things that happened. One is: People who had been at the rally heard that some people stayed all night; and everyone knew it was raining all night, so they started coming out with tents and tarps and hot food, and things, to support them &mdash which was an incredible boost in spirits to those who stayed. And &mdash

(Did they walk in from Highway 72, along the tracks, to reach people?)

No, from [Highway] 93.

(They came in from the &mdash )

Remember, the first rally was right at the west gate, where the guard shack is now, right on the road.

(Yeah.)

People walked to the south &mdash

(From there onto the tracks.)

That's right. The tracks, right where the tracks turn &mdash

(Where they bend?)

Right. It was somewhere along there, so it wasn't very near 72.

(Okay.)

They walked in off of 93.

25:11 (And the guards let them come in? Bring supplies?)

Well, I think that's when it began to get more contentious. Yeah, some people got in, but others were stopped. And then they tried to sort of isolate it, because they thought, "Well, if we let them get resupplied, they're going to stay, a long time." But I don't really know what was going on. That's when leadership structures started to emerge in the group that stayed. Some people would begin to take on certain roles to facilitate the food supply. And then the press, of course, was, like, perking up their ears big time. They'd covered the events of the day before, so they were all coming back out to interview people: Who is the spokesperson for this group? There were a lot of strong personalities, needless to say.

But I don't remember much conflict about things like who would speak for the group. It became apparent that some people kind of represented the group. And Ellen and Roy kind of emerged in that role.

(Ellen eventually became the spokesperson. And I guess, at some point, the group confirmed her in that role.)

Right.

(I want to ask you about one other thing that I've heard happened that day: that Pam [Solo] and Mike Jendrzejczyk &mdash however you say his name &mdash )

It's jen-DREE-zick.

( &mdash Jendrzejczyk appeared. They were key organizers in the plan to do a symbolic blockade. And Pam felt like things were &mdash the whole strategy they'd been working on the basis of was suddenly being taken away and changed, transformed. They came out that morning &mdash because they heard people were staying on the tracks &mdash and there was some argument between them. Did you hear that argument at all?)

Between who?

(Pam and Mike, evidently.)

Oh, really.

(Maybe it was an argument between them and other people, but &mdash )

Huh. Well I knew OF Mike &mdash because he was a key organizer &mdash and Pam. But they were both sort of involved at such a high level that someone like me, I hardly knew who they were. I was dealing more with Peacekeepers and folks.

(So you didn't hear this argument.)

Not directly. But I did hear things, hubbub around. And Chris was the person who I felt like I knew best, who was among them.

(Bird keeps flying in and out, out there; I wonder what in the world [said as an aside]. Anyway, go ahead.)

Chris, as the lead trainer, was the person that I identified as sort of the representative of the organizers. He was there all night, and negotiating between he and the guards and the group, at the same time trying to let the group have its own identity and not trying to take over &mdash; which I thought he did a good job of. Judy was there. Again, some of this is like &mdash; I've hashed this over so many times, with so many people; seen it in interviews and everything else &mdash; but I remember Judy being reduced to tears at some point, over this whole matter. Again, I didn't know who was who, so it was hard for me to know, at the TIME, what it represented.

Pam and Mike were always &mdash; they seemed to me &mdash; as the co-directors of the AFSC on project. They were pretty well aligned. Even if they disagreed publicly, they were pretty inseparable. I would be surprised if they had a public fight about it.

(Yeah, okay.)

It might have been, more, something like Judy and Roy [light laugh]; a real firey personality like Roy and a really sensitive person like Judy &mdash; both of them deeply involved and committed, but very different approaches.

I do believe that Pam and others felt like if this were to go on it would undermine their strategy. And I have to say, even now, 20 years later: While I have huge respect for Pam, and Judy, and the AFSC approach, they started something which I joined; but it was in no position &mdash; I didn't, certainly, intend to undermine anybody's strategy, but I didn't know any better! I had no idea what their strategy was! This just seemed like a group of committed people who were willing to take personal risk to make a difference. And that had enormous attraction.

29:50 (So, they had not &mdash; for instance, as part of the training &mdash; explained that they had tried to develop a relationship with the Rocky Flats workers, and that they promised the Rocky Flats workers that this would be a symbolic demonstration to show the power of the movement; and that they would then press the governor and others to move in the direction of converting the facility, which would save the workers their jobs and their dignity; and that they didn't mean to do anything to harm their relationship with the workers.)

(They didn't explain this to the rest of you, as part of the strategy, as far as you

remember?)

I don't remember that. But, I'm almost sure they did.

(Uh-huh.)

They would have. I know that now. But at the time it didn't sink in, and I don't know why. Maybe I was just predisposed not to hear it, or something, or just thought that seemed like a long-term approach that we didn't have time to do. Or maybe there was no role for me. But I don't remember it; and I'm sure it happened. I'm sure they wouldn't have avoided explaining to people what the long-term plan was.

I guess now, in retrospect, I assume most people knew that, because they'd been involved in many other campaigns together, and it was obvious. It was just a tension that had existed &mdash a strategic difference &mdash that had existed long before and long since.

But for me, it was more: I felt welcomed by this group &mdash

[Audio cuts off as tape runs out.]

31:33 [End of Tape A.]

[B].

[Audio begins in mid conversation.]

00:00 ( &mdash civil disobedience continued, and it actually turned out to be an off- and on-again civil disobedience that lasted for months. But, right at that time, it continued for several days, and people &mdash did you stay then, until the arrests occurred? Or did you go back to work? You said you worked for a while, before quitting your job.)

Right, I did. I did go back to work. But what I recall is that on that Sunday the group really began to take on an identity.

(And that's when the Truth Force came into existence.)

Right. And that's when the way in which the split was dealt with &mdash because the Department of Energy guards, who were &mdash I also remember, another important part of it, for me, was having these guards come around with their rifles, picking up tent flies and looking in. Basically, becoming quite menacing with the protestors who stayed.

But by the next day, after all this drama had played out among people who I didn't really know, and AFSC said, "Well, our protest is done. If anything continues now, it's somebody else and we can't take responsibility for them." That's what they said to the Department of Energy, who were saying, "You betrayed us; you've not kept your word." I'm sure that

was very difficult.

At that point, the leadership &mdash people like Ellen and Roy were sort of the emerging leadership. But folks like Ellsberg and Peter Ediger &mdash who was an older, 50-year-old Mennonite minister with a long beard and a wise man's voice, and all that &mdash those folks &mdash and the sharing that went on, during the course of that night and the next day &mdash the stories, the personal stories &mdash just catalyzed the group. Many times, people were in tears with one another. There were, as I recall, 33 or 35 people who, the next day, signed a statement saying that they were no longer affiliated with the original protest, the AFSC, that they were a new group, calling themselves the "Rocky Flats Satyagraha," Truth Force.

I think that half of those people are people I'm still in touch with today. And almost none of them, except a few, may have known each other before hand. And as I recall, also, among us 35 there was something like people from 20 different states, \_\_\_\_\_, which was another source of tension. And that was sort of what the leadership looked like. I mean, Ellsberg was a hard-to-ignore figure. And then you had folks like Todd, and Ellen, and Roy, who had been involved in the planning and organizing in Boulder, but not so much in Denver, already.

So that group split off, then, and AFSC washed its hands of it. There were no rules, then. It was just: They're staying. I stayed on the second night, I believe, Sunday night. Because, at that point, I wasn't going to be a quitter! [Light laugh.] So, I think there were maybe 35 people the second night. And we were part of what became &mdash it was Todd's original idea of a "Monday Morning Breakfast Club."

But on Monday, I had to decide whether I was going to go to work. And I had to work at 4:00 that afternoon. So, in the middle of the day, I told folks, "Well, I've got this job! I don't want to lose it. But we might be on strike; so I'm going to go into town and call the union and see if I have to go to work or not." Well, when I did, I found out that the contract had been settled and that I was expected to go to work that afternoon. So I told people that. I said, "This has been amazing," and "Good luck. I'm going to work." And I did, not having any idea &mdash at that point no one had any idea &mdash what was going to happen. I assumed that they would all be arrested and that would be the end of it. They would somehow be tried, or something, and maybe we'd be in touch some day, maybe not. AFSC was going to be around, it seemed, but nobody knew what was really planned, next. So, I went to work.

On Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, something like that &mdash a few days later &mdash I was at work and reading the paper, as I always did, and there was a story about these folks being arrested, all of them but me! [Laughing.] I was doing my duty, you know. That Saturday, I was off work again. I think maybe then the news was starting to be filled with this crazy group, people that just keep going back.

04:59 What started to happen, is &mdash and I don't remember the exact sequence, so this

is certainly, from this point on, is well documented in movement literature &mdash but something like: During that week the weather was still tumultuous, and the newspapers and TV coverage of these folks out there in this rain and snow just GOT to people. People started coming out in support, in unexpected numbers.

And by the weekend, when people &mdash I think, maybe &mdash were first arrested &mdash or maybe, I don't know which day it was &mdash but then, when the group was arrested &mdash and this is, I think, a key point &mdash is that somebody, and I don't know who it was, who WASN'T arrested, who lived in Boulder or Denver, went out after they were all gone, after the DOE thought, "Well, this is it. We've arrested them, removed them, and it's done." And that's when people got the idea of going back in waves and just continuing.

(So new people went, new people were arrested.)

That's right. And that is when I was struck by &mdash this was reported, and I knew of it &mdash so the next weekend I went down, I went back out there [laughing]. I didn't know what I'd find! But people were there; people I knew, and people I didn't know. Momentum was building.

(They were still camping in the same area?)

I think so. Although, it could have been &mdash at that point it was sort of moving around. And there are some very dramatic stories in "Document: The Year of Disobedience" [?] about certain individuals; people like Marian and Nancy Doub, a mother and daughter that went out in the middle of the night and found another guy, who nobody knew, who was out there on his own to do the same thing. And they were in different places along the tracks. It may have been a week or so before the group decided to move a mile or so to the south, and block the tracks &mdash the access &mdash in a place that was further from the plant, but still effectively blocking the tracks and maybe more tolerable.

(Off of the Department of Energy site?)

Yes, I think so. Nobody knew for sure, but it seemed like, because the ownership of the land was in question, it may raise some interesting strategic problems for the lawyers, on both sides. And it turned out, I think it was state land, south of Highway 92 and east of 93, in a section that was very accessible from two roads and was only 100 yards instead of 400 yards; very visible from the highway, from two highways. That was the key thing. It was just unmistakable, what was going on there.

So I found them there, and joined them for the weekend, and at that point, personally, reached this conclusion that I was going to do this full time. I wanted to take a month to wrap up my affairs, get out of my apartment, sell everything that I owned; buy a Volkswagen van and go to Seabrook! [Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant] [Laughter from narrator and LeRoy.]

(Well now, did you go to Seabrook?)

I did.

(Okay. And that must be a story in its own right, but I think I'll not get into that one right now. I had the impression that at some point, along there, the Truth Force &mdash having come into existence as an organization &mdash hired you as an organizer, or that you worked as an organizer. Maybe you volunteered, I don't know.)

That was somewhat later.

(Somewhat later.)

Another thing that was personally important to me &mdash and I think is an example of how every little act has enormous impact &mdash is that, again, remember there was no structure to this. There was no way to stay in touch. I didn't know whether I'd ever see any of these people again; didn't really expect I would, I didn't know how it could happen. I knew they were from all over the country &mdash Jay came &mdash was from Maine, and people like Gary \_\_\_\_\_ and others who I remember distinctly; I can't remember their names.

But they &mdash I expected they'd all be gone, and I'd never see them again &mdash but what happened was: Some of them, after they were arrested, were transferred from the Jefferson County jail, in Golden, to Clear [?] Creek County Jail, in Georgetown. And Ellen came up to visit them &mdash this was all within the first ten days &mdash and she just happened to remember that I lived in Georgetown, and this list that we had all signed, with our names and addresses, gave her my address. And she came by my apartment and left a note on the door, saying: "You probably haven't forgotten about this thing at Rocky Flats, but I just wanted to let you know that there's some of the folks that you met last week in jail, in Georgetown," a block away. [Chuckle from LeRoy.] "I'm here to visit them, and here's my number in Boulder. Call me." And I did! Otherwise I'd never have known how to connect with any of them again.

So, Ellen &mdash I'm sure she doesn't remember that. Some of this is coming back to me, now. She probably doesn't remember doing that; it probably was not important to her at the time, but it may have made all the difference for me, being able to reconnect.

10:09 Leaping forward, then, the occupation's wave effect just spontaneously grew. Before long, there were groups organized to be on call, to go out anytime anyone was removed from the tracks. The symbolism was gone, and people were going to do a direct action that really would prevent trains from coming and going.

Over the course of the next few weeks, it became clear that this could go on for a very long time. Money started to flow in; support of all kinds. St Thomas Church offered its rectory &mdash or whatever &mdash its office building. People were hearing about it and

coming from across the country to join. It was planned so that not hundreds of people would be arrested at once, but that one at a time, or ten at a time. Enduring became the goal. Teepees were erected; the teepee kind of became a symbol of the permanent occupation. Lots of people could get in it, and we could straddle the tracks. It was unmistakable from the road. Plus lots of other smaller tents, and just ad hoc structures built on the tracks.

All of which just built momentum for the next six weeks, or eight weeks. And then, many of the people who had been kind of active &mdash or had been active &mdash were going to the East Coast, to the Seabrook demonstration, at the Seabrook nuclear power plant &mdash which was a year later than the first major protest there. But it was expected &mdash at that point, the anti-nuclear movement was peaking &mdash that there would be tens of thousands. Nobody knew how many. I can't remember how many, but it was probably 25,000. It was, I think, maybe, the biggest political protest in five years, since the Vietnam Aar. A very exciting thing to go to.

So, I went with five or six people in my van. During the course of that summer, then, I'd left my job and just spent a week at Seabrook. Then a bunch of us went to Washington; I spent a month in Washington. Actually, just sort of parenthetical to all this, I ended up moving &mdash I was arrested there, for the first time, protesting at the NRC [National Regulatory Commission]. And by that time, Ellsberg was traveling with us, and we had this little cadre of people going, that were just doing this, doing protests. There were LOTS of people. We were starting to hear things on the West Coast, of Diablo, and other nuclear power plants. It was a very dynamic summer, in the anti-nuclear movement.

I spent a month or more in Washington, where I met Bill Davis, who was this Jesuit priest who later became the main investigator for the Christic Institute, and the Karen Silkwood case, and Danny Sheehan, who was the lawyer that won the Silkwood case &mdash they invited me to park my van at their house, which was at the American University campus. So I lived there in my van, in the god-awful August heat, and started doing what I thought of as "lobbying." I would just go to the House office buildings, and go to Pat Schroeder's office, and Tim Wirth's office. Every day, I would just spend all day visiting the anti-nuclear, and environmental, and peace groups in Washington. I didn't know anything about any of this 'til then. I just sort of threw myself into it, all summer.

And then I came back here in the fall. And things were still going, and I knew it. It had stabilized. There were probably 200 people regularly involved; there were weekly meetings in Boulder.

(Of the Truth Force.)

Yeah. All kinds of infrastructure and support in place. Lots &mdash what, for us, seemed like a lot of money. People just sending in hundreds of dollars; churches raising money. The broad base of support was remarkable. Even now, looking back, there were people taking big risks in their communities, and their jobs. The arrests had gone on. By then there had

been several hundred people arrested. The Jefferson County justice system was beginning to be staggered by the prospects of all these trials. National media, and hot-shot lawyers. So there was a consolidation of trials. There was an agreement that they understood &mdash; that they thought, if they could consolidate all the trials. So, I think 10 or 12 people were selected to symbolically represent all those arrested between April and August of that year.

14:56 A team of lawyers, hot-shot lawyers &mdash; dozens of them &mdash; were volunteering to take on the case, largely, I have to say, because of Ellsberg. At that point Ellsberg was still a stellar figure. Even now we're learning, 20 years later, the bigger impact than any of us even imagined, following Nixon, and Watergate. It wasn't just the Pentagon Papers, but that started a series of events that really &mdash; some people sensed [?].

So Ellsberg's involvement, at that point, had continued very strongly. He was here most of the summer. The lawyers then lined up to defend him, because he was a celebrity. Celebrities lined up to raise money. Dan Fogelberg did a benefit concert and raised \$15,000 dollars overnight, to pay to fly people here like Karl Morgan, and Alice Stewart, the world's best expert witnesses. So this trial became the focus of that fall &mdash; planning for it and carrying out this trial, which happened in early November of '78. It was an attempt to use civil disobedience to put Rocky Flats on trial, by presenting expert testimony in the "choice of evils" defense.

That's when I really got hooked. I mean, I was already hooked, but it became just a fascinating exercise to learn about how to use this process to effect change at Rocky Flats.

(The judge ended up making two important decisions, that I recall. One, he rejected the "choice of evils defense," didn't he?)

He did. But not until after he allowed six days of testimony that was videotaped. In other words, the testimony, the mechanism &mdash; the judge said &mdash; is you can do the testimony in the absence of the jury. The trial went on for weeks.

(The testimony was filmed.)

It was filmed with the idea that if, in the end, he ruled it as admissible, the film would be shown to the jury. Because the experts had to go back home. And after all of this powerful testimony, that was covered widely in the press &mdash; everything from experts to people personally affected &mdash; the judge &mdash; then it was publicly reported this is happening &mdash; then the judge said, "Well, it's not admissible."

At that point, most of those &mdash;

(The second decision, then, was that the jury never got to see this &mdash; )

That's right.

( &mdash this expert testimony. But it had been revealed in public.)

That's right. And not many people were surprised. Those who were experienced knew that's probably what was going to happen. But they also knew that the more important thing was to get it out publicly.

(Oh yeah.)

Being acquitted was not the main goal. Being able to &mdash

(Public education.)

Public education was the goal. So then, the actual trial itself was just testimony about trespassing. Were these people there? It was about: Who owned the property, did they have permission, and all this. It was kind of cut and dry, then. Even though they were deeply moved by the testimony of people who were allowed to testify to their motive, why were they there. They could talk about the arms race and things, but they couldn't present experts to back them up. So the prosecutors would simply say, "That's all very nice. You're entitled to your opinion, but you're NOT entitled to trespass, to express it." So the jury, despite being moved, was given instructions by the judge only to consider whether they trespassed or not, not whether it was justified or not. So they, of course, had to convict.

So, everyone agreed to abide by &mdash

(They convicted the symbolic amount, and all the rest of you had separately &mdash had agreed ahead of time to accept whatever decision was made?)

That's right. So that left &mdash you know, it still had energized the movement. It was widely reported, and more people seemed to be joining. It was really a beginning of a major shift in public opinion. People who knew a little about Rocky Flats now knew a whole lot. And AFSC, of course, was meanwhile continuing with all of its campaign work &mdash which, I think, by that time had begun to mesh pretty well with this. People like Jock Cobb were among the experts. And he was deeply involved with AFSC's work. The AFSC adapted to this movement that it had helped create, but then it had grown much larger than anything it could control. New groups, campus groups on every campus &mdash not only focused on Rocky Flats, but almost only. Denver, the \_\_\_\_\_ Justice and Peace Center, the Archdiocese, the Catholic Worker. Like I said, all the campuses of the states had active anti-nuclear groups by that point.

20:06 But the Truth Force was still the lightning rod, and probably pretty well suited to it. That was when &mdash in that fall &mdash you had asked earlier about being on staff &mdash there was money then, and there was a lot to do, and people recognized a need for

coordination. So, Evan was actually hired.

(Evan Freirich?)

Yeah. Because I was gone, much of the time. I was newly free from my job, I had this cool Volkswagen van, and I was going all over the country. I was back and forth to the East Coast several times. And at that point I wasn't flying, or anything. I was just driving everywhere &mdash; visiting friends, visiting family. I actually spent a month sailing on the Clearwater, the environmental ed boat Pete Seeger helped start, on the Hudson River. I had come into contact with them during the course of that summer.

So that fall I spent in New York, in Clearwater. While I was there, I called to check in with Evan about something, and he said, "You know, I'm burned out. I'm going to Florida for the winter. Would you take over this job?" He said, "We can pay you \$400 dollars a month." I said,

"I can live on that." So I came back and did it. Six months, something like that.

By then, still, all of this time momentum was building in the year following this. And the occupation continued, almost &mdash; there was very little time when there wasn't somebody on the tracks. And that's where people like Patrick Malone [chuckling] were &mdash; had become notorious. He went back dozens of times, arrested dozens of times. Spent most of that year there.

By Christmas it was starting to get pretty hard to keep people out there. But that was part of my work. I had moved to Boulder by then and was living in Appletree Co-op, in a 75-dollar-a-month room, in the basement, and just having the time of my life, learning and organizing.

That was about the time, too, that there began to be plans for the next big rally, in the spring of '79, which is &mdash; I think &mdash; when I met you.

(Right.)

So, all of that time I was working full time, sort of, and had developed a more amiable working relationship with folks at AFSC, because it just seemed prudent. They were still working with a staff of several people and lots of volunteers. So I was in Denver all the time, working with them. We did &mdash; you know, another major &mdash;

(You were working with them, but you were on the staff &mdash; )

&mdash; of the Truth Force.

(Yeah.)

Which, at that point, had been moved out of the St. Thomas Church and had rented first one

office, and then another on the Hill. It was a real communal situation; people were living there. We rented a big house, and there were probably a dozen people living there. And then that changed, and we rented an office above what is now Bova's Pantry, that little convenience store on the Hill.

(Uh-huh.)

And that's where we were for several years, and started to do merchandise sales, to support the organization.

So, the occupation more or less continued until the next demonstration in April of 1979. There were gaps, but that's where the phrase, or the title of one book, *The Year of Disobedience*, came from. The occupation started in April of '78 and continued, with very few interruptions, until April of '79.

(Right.)

That year really had made Rocky Flats a major public issue in Colorado.

(Nationally.)

And nationally, too.

So, in '79 the whole thing kind of repeated itself and continued. At that time we had a lot more celebrity support &mdash; musicians who would come to the rallies, who would attract many more people. Sometime during that year, AFSC had gotten some money to hire a new staff person &mdash; some youth interns, something like that, which I was hired for.

(When was that, that you were hired?)

You know, it may not have been until 1980, as I recall now. I spent two years, basically, working.

(For AFSC?)

No, for the Truth Force.

(Oh.)

And then AFSC hired me. It was, you know, more stable pay. Much of the time &mdash;

24:54 (Truth Force came to an end about, what '81?)

Yeah, yeah. I'd say that was true. Some people claim that the spirit of it continued after that, but &mdash;

(As an organization it did &mdash formally ended.)

Right. After about two years.

By then I wanted to keep doing the work, and AFSC gave me the chance to do that. So then I went to work from 1980 until '83, late '83, for AFSC, \_\_\_\_\_. I started working from the Peace Center in Boulder.

(Right. You were working &mdash with AFSC, you were responsible for helping organize the canvasses and drawing young people in? Is that the primary &mdash )

Yes &mdash

( &mdash task, or assignment?)

Yeah. I think my responsibilities were generally for organizing the Public Outreach Speakers Bureau, literature, and events like the rally. That was the thing I had, mainly, experience with. Everyone else had a much richer and deeper political organizing experience. So, I was more, I think, helping facilitate coordination between all these groups that had been created out of early organizing. And to sort of represent AFSC in the activist planning of rallies and demonstrations, and things like that.

(Uh-huh. The Rocky Flats Action Group was really the coalition &mdash )

Yes, that's right.

( &mdash organization at that point.)

Right. Yes, and the Rocky Flats Action Group had been around for, at that point, since '74, I think, maybe earlier.

(Yeah, something like that.)

People like Morey Wolfson were non-AFSC people who were still deeply involved. RFAG, as we called them, had an identity of its own. In other words, it was sort of an organization with an agenda and people that identified with a particular point of view, in the campaign, and NOT as a coalition. In other words, by that point there were so many groups with an identity and an approach to the Rocky Flats campaign, that RFAG was seen as one of the groups, not as the coalition.

By '81 or '82, we formed Rocky Flats Coalition, which was a new entity: an umbrella, without an agenda, which was meant to equally represent all of these groups &mdash including the sort of powerful players like AFSC and RFAG &mdash but to level the coordinating field with smaller groups like Aurarians Against Nukes, the Catholic Worker,

and the Truth Force.

(RFAG, you say it was not really an overall coalition; it had its own character. There was tension between the Boulder organization and Denver. RFAG represented a Denver pole of that, I assume.)

Right.

(How would you characterize that tension, itself?)

Well, it was a lot like with AFSC. I mean, AFSC and RFAG were different. AFSC was a staffed, bigger organization with a pacifist agenda. RFAG was a group mostly of environmental activists and solar [?] activists who shared a goal of doing something about Rocky Flats but was secular organization. So they worked very closely, had similar approaches. RFAG did a newsletter; that was important. There's great documentation of what happened during that period, in that newsletter. Morey was the main person responsible for that.

But the tension was mainly, I think, around strategic approach. The direct action approach of the Truth Force and, to a lesser extent, the Boulder Mobilization for Survival, which was the more moderate Boulder organization involved in this. People like Kathy Partridge and Mary Hey, and lots of folks. It was a larger, community-based organization that moderated the effects of the Truth Force.

29:55 There was tension, both &mdash; Boulder was seen then, like it is now, as sort of more liberal, and "People's Republic," and always willing to &mdash; not willing to, but inadvertently, maybe &mdash; ruining the more traditional approach of AFSC and RFAG, by being inappropriately radical. But I'd say that the tensions were not major. I think that, at least, my role really became one of trying to make everybody work together, because that's how I felt. I felt unable to decide who was RIGHT. Everyone else felt certain they were right, but I felt like everybody had an element of the truth, and the only way we were going to get anywhere was to work together. So, that's largely the role that I played, and I still feel that way. I think the tension was not really very deep. There were egos involved, certainly, but even today, with the victory we have &mdash; to the extent we can claim it &mdash; nobody knows for sure what worked. [Chuckle from LeRoy.]

(Yeah.)

So, I don't know how if I'd characterize that tension. I'd just say that some of it had to do with an amorphous Denver-Boulder split. And part of it was: People just didn't want to travel between them. I understand that. It was \_\_\_\_\_. People like yourself would move from one to the other; and other people went the other direction, and that helped. But there were just philosophical splits there.

[Audio cuts off as tape runs out.]

31:34 [End of Tape B.]

[C].

[Audio begins in mid conversation.]

00:00 (We've had an emphasis on Rocky Flats the whole time. One of the things that a lot of people appreciated, when the Peace Center got started, was that there was going to be an emphasis, in the Peace Center, on direct action and training for civil disobedience. Because, it was felt that there was a need for that &mdash in part because that wasn't a primary emphasis of the AFSC, which was the strongest organization working on Rocky Flats and a lot of other issues in the area; an organization [that] was part of a national organization, and so on.)

(You worked with the Peace Center, and then you continued doing other work in Boulder, for a while; moved away to work for Greenpeace in California; eventually came back to Boulder as a very seasoned environmentalist, with a lot of other work, and pretty soon were drawn into a whole different level of public participation than had existed in that earlier time. You were a member of the Rocky Flats Future Site Use Working Group. I'm curious how you would reflect on the enormous change that seemed to have happened in those years.)

Well, yeah, a lot's happened. And it still seems not much different. I think that the early work of the Rocky Flats Truth Force &mdash AFSC is one of the most important influences of my life, despite the fact I'm not involved directly at all, anymore. But I know &mdash having worked for them and seen what they've done over a period of years now &mdash that it's just helped shape the things that I really care about. So I give a lot of credit there.

The things that spun off from it are almost too numerous to count. Many generations of activists of activists have grown out of, worked out of AFSC and Quakers &mdash including the Peace Center and the Truth Force, are all products of the AFSC, whether they like it or not! [Laughing, lightly]. And now, I think, the changes that occurred at Rocky Flats, they're obviously for two reasons. One is: The environmental laws that were passed in the '60s and the mid '70s, ultimately &mdash to the surprise of many of us &mdash started to be enforced at Rocky Flats, by our own Justice Department.

One of the most stunning things that I can recall was the June of 1979, just a couple weeks before I left Boulder to go to &mdash

('89.)

'89, when, without &mdash I mean, I was still sort of involved, as much as anybody was involved in anything to do with Rocky Flats in those days. The arms race was still at its height, Reagan was in place and calling the Soviet Union the Evil Empire. We were working

hard and getting nowhere. And all of sudden the FBI raids Rocky Flats and closes the place down, effectively, and has never been the same since.

That all occurred by people who, I think, had the way paved for them by the activists and lobbyists who created laws that they ultimately became obligated to enforce. And doing so was &mdash; became clear would have public support, because of the shift that had been created by the movement, even though there was no direct link, exactly. So that was very significant, without a doubt. DOE was stunned; Rockwell was stunned. Rockwell threw a temper tantrum and stomped out, said, "We won't do this anymore!"

I actually remember another very telling thing: At Carl Johnson's funeral, his minister &mdash; Carl's minister &mdash; said, "Well," something like &mdash; [Volume of speech drops. Remainder of exchange is too faint to hear.] At any rate, it's telling about what happened with the Justice Department investigation, the FBI raid, and Rockwell's departure from managing Rocky Flats.

04:55 This minister, after Carl Johnson died, said, "Carl was a public servant who wasn't willing to lie." He said that, basically, all the rest of these folks are lying. Because, what they're being asked to do, by the U.S. Government, is impossible. They want Rocky Flats managed safely, and it can't be done. Carl wasn't saying it can't be done, he was just saying: It hasn't been done; it isn't being done, now. I think that's ultimately what Rockwell feared. When the Justice Department said, "You have to run this plant, you have a contract. You have to run it, and you have to abide by these laws." They just stood up and said, "That can't be done. We can do one or the other, but we can't do both." So they quit; they walked out. And that is really telling. Basically, there are these conflicting demands.

Anyway, that's locally. Globally, obviously the big change is the dissolution of the Soviet Union. My own take on that is: A convergence of events. Thankfully, that happened in a peaceful way. Gorbachev, in a remarkable place in history, but what he was able to do &mdash; in dissolving the Soviet Union, and to the extent that helped diffuse the arms race &mdash; was possible because of the global peace movement. I believe that the peace movement in Europe and the U.S. was so strong at that point, even despite Reagan &mdash; or maybe because of Reagan &mdash; that Gorbachev felt like the time was right, and the risk was low enough &mdash; the global peace movement would not let the U.S. take over the Soviet Union &mdash; that he could dissolve the Soviet Union without dissolving the history; without ruining the good that it had accomplished and without permitting the U.S. to dominate the world.

That was the main accomplishment of the peace movement in the '80s, maybe, was helping protect whatever would come out of fortress [?] of the Soviet Union [?], from U.S. domination. That was never part of our plan; at least, it never occurred to me that was what we would do. But I'm glad we were able to do it. It did help, and may, in many ways, have been responsible. Other people claim: Well, the Soviet economy was in just such a shambles, and things. But, you know, that'd been through many fights before, and they

would have fought again. But I think it just felt like the safest time they had, to try and reorganize things before it was too late. Given the enormity of the change that happened, it was remarkably bloodless, and painless. Even though it's very painful for them now.

I think of those two things. And that, of course, meant the pressure was off Rocky Flats to keep producing more weapons. Gradually the policy and the program there became one of cleaning it up. The main thing we've learned since then is: All of the claims that we made &mdash and I think back to the trial in '78, about how bad things were at Rocky Flats, what the risk to the public was from the fires and so forth &mdash everything we claimed at the time; we were kind of biting our nails, thinking, "Boy this sounds pretty extreme. We sound like real extremists. We're making claims that seem WAY out there." All of that was so much milder than what turned out to be true.

(Yes.)

That's the alarming part. We sounded like alarmists then; now it's the EPA and Department of Health that sound like alarmists. Because claims that we made, that people said couldn't possibly be true, were more than true.

(Yes. In fact, after the FBI raid &mdash and then they eventually halted production in November of '89 &mdash they spent a billion dollars over the next two years, trying to get back into production, and they could not do it safely.)

Right.

(And they knew very well they couldn't do it. Well, and it was after all of that &mdash your remarks about the meaning of the movement, or the contribution of the movement, are very, very interesting.)

09:26 (Go back to this Future Site Use Working Group. How did that seem to you after being away for awhile, to suddenly come back and find yourself a member of a broad cross section of people that included very few of the activists that had actually made Rocky Flats into an issue. There you were sitting in the room, talking to all these other folks.)

When I left in '89 &mdash left Boulder and went to San Francisco to work for Greenpeace and one of the &mdash at that point I hadn't really &mdash I mean, you and I did some work on Rocky Flats, all during that time, but it didn't feel like very much, during the last five years before that. But when I left, one of the things I said to folks at Greenpeace was that: The thing I cared most about, here, is somebody &mdash is people working against Rocky Flats; and that I wanted to have the opportunity to hire a Greenpeace person to work on Rocky Flats. And that's when Jason came into the picture, here. And he worked long after I came back to Boulder.

That was a period when I hadn't been very involved in Rocky Flats. But when I came back,

then, in '93, I think things had changed dramatically. You were involved in CAB [Citizens Advisory Board], and \_\_\_\_\_ had started, and Rocky Flats was trying to change its name and image. I was in a totally altered state. I'd spent the year before that in Asia, and several years before that just exhausting myself working at Greenpeace. I'd followed Rocky Flats, but from a distance, and didn't really know what was going on. So I wasn't really very eager to get involved, at all. I only agreed to be on that Future Site Use Working Group for two reasons: One is, you were on it, and you seemed to want me to be on it [light laugh]; and Mary Margaret Golten was facilitating it and felt that it needed stronger environmental representation. I couldn't figure out anybody else who would do it, and so I did.

But it was also kind of a quandary, because I remember: The one other time I'd served on anything semi-official &mdash and Bob McFarland warned me about this, and one of the things Bob was right about, I think &mdash was that in 1992 I'd done a lot of organizing around the Crisis Relocation Plan, in the county, a civil defense plan. As a result, the county appointed this nuclear war education committee &mdash which was an important achievement; it really brought the issues home. It's happening across the country, and Boulder was the leader in it. And I felt, maybe more than ever before that, responsible for devising and executing a strategy that worked.

But then they formed this committee, and they put all these folks on it &mdash like David Hawkins, and Paul Weir [?], and Anne White &mdash people I really respected. But McFarland said: Don't get yourself on any official committees; it will just sap your energy. Do more work with doing things that other people won't do. And anybody could be on this committee. Everybody in town &mdash they had HUNDREDS of applicants. Well, I was on it anyway. And it was the biggest waste of time, I think, I spent in years.

(Oh.)

I mean, it was important to happen. But it's true that I couldn't influence it in the direction to really be progressive. They wanted it balanced; they had all these right wing views, in the presentations and the booklet. And I spent a lot of energy trying to change that. And it would have been more valuable to do something else.

I feel a little that way about the Future Site Use Working Group. The process was valuable; it was a well-done process. It was community agreement, everybody made compromises. I didn't like lots of them, but I felt like I had to make them to get agreement. And in the end, you know, all the development people, and stuff, that were on it &mdash there was a certain human bond that developed between us. We didn't change one another's minds, but we had developed enough of a common agenda that we thought the DOE and the state would not be able to ignore it. And the \_\_\_\_\_ seemed to ignore them, anyway.

That was the one reason &mdash and Eugene kept bringing us back to this &mdash whenever he and I would agree with you and John, that we had to compromise on something, he'd say: "The only thing worse than this compromise is if we don't get an agreement, because then

the DOE will just say, 'Well, there's no community agreement, so we're going to do what we want.' And they're going to do the wrong thing." And I believe that's true, still. I think that the work of the committee isn't lost yet. We can still, years later, say, "Look, we worked long and hard on this; it still stands \_\_\_\_\_."

But at this point, the service of it is to — as I said, when we came in — is to take the level of understanding among public agencies to, like, the level of understanding about public participation and this mediator process — this community-based decision-making process — to a new level. They've got to understand: They can't just facilitate and fund the process and ignore the results. When they do that, they have to — and maybe in legal papers, to the extent that they are allowed by law — agree to abide by the decisions, even if they don't like them; even if they are completely contrary to whatever else they're doing.

15:31 (That's what we don't have, of course, yet. The democratic process has cleaned up a lot, but it's the people up making decisions; the decisions are still being made by others and imposed on us, so we're developing. In some ways we're still the victims of the decisions. \_\_\_\_\_ executors of our own decisions.)

I think that that's — if there's a service in any of this, all these failures — how people don't give up, they persist in saying, "Look, this didn't work; we're not satisfied. You got your process, you got your document, you got your agreement, and we're not going to go away."

A very clear example is one where — it simply involves money. Where we all agreed — in that group, for instance — about the first choice would be: buy out the mining rights. Settle up with people who have legitimate claims, and if it costs \$10 million dollars, then, it's our money, and that's how we want it spent. And they just won't do it. And that's wrong.

(They're now being sued by Sierra Club to stop the mining site. I guess maybe it's not DOE that's being sued; I guess it's the mining \_\_\_\_\_. And it's too bad it's going to end up costing the citizens anyway if the decision is made to stop the mining.)

Right.

(Well, let me ask you one other thing. When we began talking, you were reflecting on how the activities that you had participated in had shaped the movement. The creation of the Truth Force, and the civil disobedience that happened in 1978, certainly did change the movement — in a lot of ways, put Rocky Flats on the agenda for far more people than it had been, and changed the character of the movement.)

(How would you say the movement, really, affected you, in a few words.)

Yeah.

(In a few words.)

Well, I've said a lot of words about it. Obviously it changed my whole life. I could still be a ski bum, and a paramedic, and be living pretty happily, probably, but not with the fulfilling life that I've had since. I think it changed almost everything about me: what I commit myself to, and how I live.

So, the last couple hours have been about, really, me and my &mdash what difference it made. It wasn't slow or subtle. It was, like, very dramatic. I mean, there were parts of it that were slow and subtle. Somehow the stage was set for me, personally, in the years preceding it. But getting involved that spring changed everything else \_\_\_\_\_. You know, any one of the details I mentioned, had they not happened that way &mdash if Ellen hadn't found my apartment in Georgetown that day; if Todd hadn't announced some silly "breakfast club," or something. All of those things, if they'd happened differently, I could have found my life unfolding differently.

So, it's given me the largest part of meaning and satisfaction of my life so far; being able to dedicate it to something, to the end of the greater good. I just feel lucky to have been able to do it, and make a living at it, and have meaningful relationships at the same time.

(Well, 1978, the actions of you and other people at Rocky Flats is how I learned about Rocky Flats.) [LeRoy continues speaking. His voice is too faint to make out, accurately.]

[Laughter from narrator.]

(So, thanks.)

Oh, yeah. Thank you.

(Anything else you want to add, there, Chet?)

I can't wait to read this.

(Yeah. Do you have anything else? [directed at a third person])

[Third person:] I don't think so, LeRoy. Thanks for doing it.

(Thank you.)

It's going to be a good addition to all these other interesting \_\_\_\_\_, sitting around here.

20:35 [End of Tape C. End of interview.]

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