

Interview
JOHN WHITEHEAD
December 18, 2005
Tape 3

- WHITEHEAD: Okay; with—with Joe Farrington's death then in 1954, uh, the enormous goodwill that he had established in Washington with being there during the war, and then the friendship with Truman—with Farrington's death, the—the Farrington dynasty died. Uh, though his wife succeeded him the ... the—the clout that Joe had didn't transfer to Betty.
- QUESTION: John, could you tell us something about what happened in 1954; the Democratic revolution [UNINTELLIGIBLE] the Territorial Legislature, both Houses [UNINTELLIGIBLE] a Republican Territorial Governor Sam King. Could you describe that dynamic?
- WHITEHEAD: Um, well, the—the revolution of 1954, which is often touted in Hawaii as being the first time large numbers of Japanese Americans came into the Territorial Legislature, um, was actually a time in which Democratic Japanese Americans replaced Republican Japanese Americans um ... in the Territorial Legislature. But nonetheless, the newcomers thought they were going to try to change the agenda ... of what was going on and the kind of laws that were being passed in Hawaii. And I would say in the initial years, with the—with the defeat of the statehood bill in '54, uh, a lot of people in Hawaii, particularly the newcomers into the Legislature, were more focused back on the Territory and the State, than on—I mean, more focused on the Territory than on statehood. After '54, there was an enormous amount of despondency that three times, statehood bills had passed and had been thwarted, uh, and so ma—maybe it wasn't going to happen in our lifetime. So I think a lot of that initial energy of the new Democratic AJAs in the Territorial Legislature went to changing things in Hawaii, more than necessarily uh, getting things changed uh, on the national scene. Because after all, uh, r—right after the—the revolution of '54, Mrs. Farrington is the Delegate to the Congress, so she's not really the representative of the people who took over in the Legislature. Uh, and so in that uh, period, '55 to '57, uh, there was quite a bit of—of frustration, mainly because the uh, governor, the dem—the Republican appointed Governor Sam King vetoed a substantial portion of the legislation that these new—the new—new people wrote. Now, even Senator Inouye admits that a lot of that legislation was not very well written. That there were—it was not well crafted laws, and they should have been vetoed. But nonetheless, it gave the appearance that the Territorial Governor was thwarting the will of the people. And I would say that the most significant thing that happened as a result of Sam King's vetoes was that the Republicans in Congress said, H-m ... if Hawaii does become a state, it's not likely to elect

Sam King as its first governor, and we need to put in a different Territorial Governor who stands a chance at being elected should statehood come. And that—so in many ways, King's vetoes really lead to the appointment of this new mainland lawyer, Bill Quinn, who has just come over after World War II.

QUESTION: And he's appointed in 1957—

WHITEHEAD: Seven.

QUESTION: --if I'm not mistaken, right?

WHITEHEAD: Yes.

QUESTION: In between there, of course in 1956—

WHITEHEAD: Yes.

QUESTION: --the chairman of the Territorial Democratic Party is elected to Congress, John A. Burns.

WHITEHEAD: Yes.

QUESTION: You haven't mentioned Burns at all yet. Is there anything you want to say about him?

WHITEHEAD: Okay. Um ... in 1956, Burns defeats Mrs. Farrington, uh, having lost to her the year—uh, two years before. Uh, it's often said that there were two famous people in Hawaii; John Burns and Judge Delbert Metzger, who lost to both Joe and Betty for the Congressional Delegateship. But finally, uh, Joe—uh, John Burns triumphs and goes to Congress. Um, uh, arrives in the Congress um, a—as a potential legislator in late 1956 to sort of see the lay of the land, and then is a—is—becomes a full de—uh, full Delegate in 1957. Well, by 19 uh, 57, the statehood movements uh, in Alaska and Hawaii had changed a bit. Alaska has now become quite energized uh, having held a constitutional convention of its own. Uh, and also, it has adopted something called the Alaska Tennessee Plan, which a Navy veteran named George Lehlcitner from New Orleans, Louisiana, had first proposed to Hawaii, which was a stunt of electing two Senators and a Congressman, and sending them to Washington in advance of statehood to push for statehood. Uh, this plan had actually been aler—um, uh, Lehlcitner had learned about it from a political scientist up at UH named Dan Cohen [PHONETIC], um, who had researched this plan for

the Legislative Reference Bureau. But um, Mr. Lehleitner, a devoted friend of Hawaii, who was a—a veteran after World War II, wanted to see colonialism eliminated in the form of territorial government in Hawaii and Alaska. He could not convince the Farringtons to take the Tennessee Plan. Uh, called the Tennessee Plan, because Tennessee was the first territory to elect these two Senators and a Congressman and send them to Washington uh, back in the 1790s. Well, Lehleitner convinced the people of Alaska to adopt this plan, so the Alaskans had quite a lot of momentum and enthusiasm in 1957, when in Hawaii a lot of people were still ... despondent that they'd been in the battle so long and it just hadn't worked. So by the time we got to the Congress, late '56—oops—early '57 ... uh, there seemed to be a change of momentum. But the big change was a change in seniority. Both the uh, Bob Bartlett from Alaska and John Burns from Hawaii were Democrats, so the partisan issue was over. But Burns was now a first-day Delegate to the Congress. Bartlett had been there since 1944; he was thirteen years in. And previously, Bartlett had always deferred to Joe Farrington as the senior Delegate, that Hawaii could definitely become the 49th state. Uh, they even have—they have many pictures of Joe Farrington uh, posing with signs of Hawaii, the 49th state. Also by '57, the statehood plotters from both Alaska and Hawaii had discovered this trick of the Congress which was to unite the two states with bills in order to defeat both of them. [And so um both Burns and Bartlett agreed that the best strategy was to send only one statehood bill forward; not even to allow hearings on the other statehood bill, not even to drop a bill into the hopper, which is what Congressmen do just pro forma. Uh, that a Hawaii statehood bill would not be released to the Congress until an Alaska statehood bill passed. And this was called the Alaska First Strategy. Why does Alaska go first? There was this issue of momentum, but I think the real issue was seniority. That Bartlett now had the choice to go first. He didn't have to defer to the Farringtons anymore. Uh, and so that was the agreement, and Burns and—and Bartlett agreed that this one bill at a time strategy was the only thing that would work. So the Alaska First Strategy uh, then um, was implemented in early '57 with only an Alaska statehood bill entering the Congress.

QUESTION: Tom Coffman has said that he felt [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: To bringing Hawaii [UNINTELLIGIBLE], that people like Lyndon Johnson and people like President Eisenhower and so forth and people in foreign policy was bringing Hawaii in as a [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] That it was important that this multi-ethnic state be brought in. And yet at the same time, I mean, Alaska had far fewer people.

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: Economically, they hadn't discovered oil yet [UNINTELLIGIBLE] and yet [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: Yes; the—the Cold War was very important in maintaining the attention of the nation on both Alaska and Hawaii as military installations. After World War II, there was a deployment of troops in both Alaska and Hawaii. Their World War II numbers were substantially reduced. But then as the Cold War gained force, both Alaska and Hawaii are now seen as major spots for reem— redeployment of troops, that the troop levels are then built back up from forty-eight to fifty-two as permanent Cold War military installations. Hawaii is obvious again, um, as—as—with its mid-Pacific role, uh, particularly after the fall of China. Alaska is then seen as important because a Soviet air attack would come over the Pole, uh, and would come over Alaska first. [CLEARS THROAT] So the Cold War keeps the attention of the nation on both Alaska and Hawaii for military purposes. Though unfortunately that Red scare, the dock strike of 1949, the—the trial of the Hawaii Seven uh, keeps the Red scare alive in Hawaii. So there's that kind of negative. Well, then when we go into '57, uh, Lyndon Jo—um, Sam Rayburn of Texas—and later it will be said that Sam Rayburn becomes a great friend of John Burns. Which I believe he does. But I don't necessarily think it happens in the first day John Burns ... enters the Congress. Th—there—there's a certain sense, then, by 1957 that the kind of goodwill that once shown to Joe Farrington needs to be shown to Bob Bartlett. This man has been there now for thirteen years; shouldn't his bill be allowed to come to the floor for a vote. Up and down, accept it or defeat it; we owe this to Bob. Bob, like Joe Farrington, and later like John Burns, was very much liked by members of Congress; they liked him. Uh, and often, the Congress was strange; if they liked a member of Congress from the territory, then they liked anything he proposed for the territory. Um, and so Sam Rayburn uh, seemed that by mid-fif—1957, he said, Bob should have his day in court. Now, this is a thing with the Texans; and I haven't

completely sorted this out. Though the Hawaii National Guard, the—the 442nd, I should say, saved the Lost Battalion, the Texas National Guard, it doesn't seem that the Texans always grasp this. Uh, a Senator from—another Senator from Texas, John Connelly, was a major opponent of statehood for Hawaii. He didn't—then people said they didn't know about Lost Battalion. So the Texans didn't—the Texans still seemed to have reservations about Hawaii. And in mid-1957, uh ... Sam Rayburn said to Ernest Greene of Alaska, who was one of these territorial, um, Tennessee Plan Senators, I'm really not for territory for either state. But if I was gonna go for one, I'd go for Alaska 'cause it's on the mainland. And this is Sam Rayburn's statement; And Hawaii has too many Japs. Now, that's Sam Rayburn in mid-1957. So we still have this mainland prejudice. Um ... so he tells, though, the Delegates from Alaska, I'm gonna let you have your day in court, but I think not until the second session of the 85th Congress until 1958. Just wait. And so that was the strategy then, by '58. Meantime, John Burns is supposed to be building goodwill in Washington with members of the Congress, but he can't mention statehood for Hawaii because that's the agreement, that it won't even be mentioned until Alaska passes. And so what do John and his wife [UNINTELLIGIBLE], they hold their parties at their home, and talk about gaining support for the Arizona Memorial. This is—he brings legislation to Washington, his first bill that he introduces into the Congress is to get Congressional support to build the Arizona Memorial. And this gives him a reason to contact every member of the Congress with a list of the names of the boys from your district ... who are buried with the Arizona. And—and I think something like two thousand men ... and I think it was all men; I don't think there were any women killed in the sinking of the—of—of—at Pearl Harbor. That's two thousand people. Fo—five hundred and thirty-five members of Congress, nearly every member of Congress, had someone who died on the Arizona. And or course, the Senators had their own state. So that's how—that's how John and Bea gradually built up goodwill. And I've often said that I—and I think Jimmy Burns says the same thing; that Bea built enormous goodwill because as we all know, Bea had polio and was in a wheelchair. An enormously charming and gracious person of—of bravery under stress. And I'm convinced to the present day, though no one has ever told me this, that many older Congressmen, when they met Bea, were reminded of Franklin Roosevelt, and thought this was sort of the strength of World War II coming back to them. Uh, and so John and Bea built up goodwill. And so ... uh, as that year of '57 and then '58 went on, I think as people—um, members of Congress got to know John and Bea better, uh, they were—they were persuaded uh, that Hawaii was going to go too as soon as Alaska passed.

QUESTION: And then of course, in 1958 session [UNINTELLIGIBLE] the 1958 session, the Alaska statehood—

WHITEHEAD: Yes.

QUESTION: --bill passes.

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: And there's a movement to try to get Hawaii in real quick in the—

WHITEHEAD: Yes.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] Could you talk about that?

WHITEHEAD: Yes; the ala—the Alaska statehood bill uh, passes um, both the—both the House and the Senate in the late summer of 1958, uh, to the great surprise of many of its supporters. I asked the man who chaired the bill through the House, Leo O'Brien of Albany, New York; I said, Can you explain the vote on the Alaska statehood bill? He said, No, I can't; it was a miracle. Twe—uh, thirty years after the bill, I still don't know whether the votes came from. The Alaska bill from the House then went to the Senate, where it was miraculously accepted without amendment. The—the same thing that did not ha—or the opposite thing with the Hawaii bill going to the Senate in 1954. So the Alaska bill is accepted by the Senate without amendment, June 30th, 1958. Well, Congresses tend to adjourn in August, or before an election. Or they did back then, because the Congressmen go back home and gotta run for office. Well, at that point, particularly the Republicans in Hawaii, uh, now want to know why can't we have a Hawaii statehood bill. So Bill Quinn goes to Washington. Uh, Bill Quinn now seemingly uh, a quite attractive candidate from Hawaii, goes to see Lyndon Johnson, who if he wasn't a great friend of John Burns by the summer of '58, as soon as Bill Quinn came and told him to vote for ... a Hawaii statehood bill, he said ... I don't do anything you or your President tells me to do. Meaning Eisenhower. So by this time, uh, Lyndon Johnson has now committed himself to John Burns uh, and the passing of a Hawaii statehood bill. Uh, but every member of the Congress said, We can't launch a bill into the House, have hearings, get it passed by the House, send it to the Senate, have it passed, uh, and if the bill fails, that will be a negative to Hawaii. A failed bill is worse than no bill at all. But Johnson then promises um, Burns uh, that this will be an item of first priority when the new Congress convenes in 1959, though the Republicans in Hawaii did use this as a

campaign issue against John Burns in uh, the elections of '58; you didn't bring home a statehood bill.

QUESTION: But he's reelected.

WHITEHEAD: Yes.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

WHITEHEAD: M-hm, m-hm.

QUESTION: And the in '59 the bill [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: Oh, yes.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

WHITEHEAD: Uh, no. Uh, in fact, there's a ... everyone knew that when one state passed, the other one would pass. Uh, the non-continuity argument collapsed; if you admitted Alaska, uh, and the not Hawaii. Uh, also the uh—it made no sense to admit one economically undeveloped territory and not to admit an economically developed one. So everyone knew that when one passed, the other would pass. In fact, what amazed everyone was how quickly the Hawaii statehood bill passed. Um, when it was entered into the Senate, it had fifty-three co-sponsors. So that meant that a majority vote was there, even before it came to the floor. I mean, fifty-three Senators co-sponsored uh, the ala—the Hawaii statehood bill. Um ... the—the Congress convened then in late um ... January of '59. Uh, the ... hearings were quickly held; it passes the uh, uh, the—it passes the Senate first um, in early March, and it then goes to the Houses and passes within a few days. Uh, the—uh, it—it's all passed uh, by early March of 1959. Uh, at—at—at which point then, the issue becomes the great partisan flap to see who will be elected as the governor and the Senators from the new State of Hawaii. Uh, and then this is when you have the famous issue in which Eisenhower did not invite John Burns for the signing of the Hawaii statehood bill.

QUESTION: Could you go back a moment and tell us something. Of course, with the coming of statehood [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

WHITEHEAD: M-hm, m-hm.

QUESTION: --the idea of the Monarchy and Hawaiian sovereignty and so forth. And we talked to an entertainer here [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: --Don Ho, about [UNINTELLIGIBLE] Kamehameha Schools in the 1950s. And he said that the low point for Hawaiians, and Tom Coffman said the same thing; the low point for the Hawaiians was during the 1950s. Their morale was low as the statehood thing heated up. [UNINTELLIGIBLE] the Hawaiian community was brainwashed in that area, that we were just [UNINTELLIGIBLE]. I wonder if you have any thoughts on the Hawaiian community during the 1950s, the late 40s and 1950s and their feelings about statehood and whether they approved of it or not, or whether [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: Um ... difficult to come to a definitive answer. There were a number of polls conducted in 1958 and 1959 as to uh, the—what groups in the—uh, in the islands supported statehood. And these public opinion polls seem to indicate that older Haoles and Hawaiians might oppose statehood ... to the level of thirty percent. Uh, but—and so there was some ambivalence. Uh, when the—when the statehood bill passes in March, uh, Kamokila is celebrating her seventy-fifth birthday at a lavish party—well, a party at the Willows. Um, where she made a toast to statehood and said ... I have not supported statehood in the past, but many of my friends like statehood, and I will try to like it too. Uh, Abraham Akaka, made a speech at Kawaiahao Church in which he said that he supported statehood, and he hoped ha—other Hawaiians would, but he understood that there was ambivalence in the Hawaiian community as to whether this would lead to an erosion of Hawaiian culture. Uh, but he thought statehood should be given a chance. Then in August—uh, no; then in June, uh, in June of 19 uh, 59, uh, in the primary election which was going to elect the—the—the candidates for both parties to run for the uh, run for the State government, uh, a plebiscite which had been required by the Hawaii Statehood Bill—that's why it was on the ballot—required Hawaiians to vote um, on three propositions, the first of which was the most important. Do you favor immediate statehood for Hawaii? In that plebiscite, in the largest voter turnout in Hawaii history, that plebiscite passed seventeen to one. To give you an indication of the enormity of that vote, a similar plebiscite in

haw—in Alaska had only passed five to one. Which was considered to be overwhelming a year earlier. So seventeen to one. Uh, in the eighteen representative election districts of Hawaii, the plebiscite passed in all districts with no less than a ten to one majority; and in some cases, a twenty-nine to one majority. And when examined, the lowest votes were in what used to be called the Gold Coast Haole districts of Kahala to Koko Head. And even that was ten to one in favor of statehood. And in a district that was thought of as uh, heavily Hawaiian, uh, m—Molokai and Lanai, though it was a small vote, that vote was twenty-nine to one; nineteen hundred in favor, seventy-five against. So ... Hawaiians ... in the plebiscite voted for statehood. Uh, whether they were in favor of statehood or wanted to move beyond territorial government, uh, I think Bill Richardson told me that some Hawaiians then saw statehood as preferable to being ruled by the Big Five of the Republicans. It was a way out of uh, what had seemed to have been a sort of a uh, an unfair dominance in the territorial period.

QUESTION: What did Professor Trask tell you about the Hawaiian [UNINTELLIGIBLE]?

WHITEHEAD: Um, now, I interviewed uh, uh, Haunani Trask in 1988, uh, by which time she was well established with the so-called Hawaiian movement. Uh, she remembered uh, at the time of statehood um, that the—ma—many of the male members of her family, the Trasks, uh, particularly her uh—some of her uncles, who had been Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, favored statehood on the grounds that it would be a way out of uh, Republican Big Five rule. It was a—it was a way for ha—uh, Hawaiians to get uh, a stake in—in the poli—uh, a bigger stake in the new political community. But that her mother uh, who was from Maui, uh, was not in favor of statehood uh, because she was a gradual eroding of Hawaiian culture. Um ... uh, largely that it—uh, in fact, she—she mentioned that in—in the public schools, that Japanese American schoolteachers were now teaching Hawaiian culture. Uh, the—you know, the—the hula, Hawaiian traditions, and that seemed somehow—somehow out of kilter, uh, that Hawaiian culture should be something in the hands of Hawaiians.

QUESTION: Now, what about other ethnic groups in Hawaii? You talked about the Japanese and Hawaiians; what about Filipinos and Chinese and Koreans and so forth? Did they have any [UNINTELLIGIBLE] in terms of position about statehood that you can [UNINTELLIGIBLE]?

WHITEHEAD: Well, certainly Chinese Americans were in favor of statehood, um, as exemplified by Hiram Fong. And certainly ... what I could discern was that

most people of Asian heritage in Hawaii, before statehood, saw both their Asian background and the fact that Hawaii was a territory as a mark of second class citizenship. And uh, particularly when we—we think that uh, Asian immigrants weren't allowed to be naturalized until 1952. So my—my sense is that those groups uh, with—with the exception of—of—of native Hawaiians, saw statehood as an inclusion into first class citizenship; it would be the end of discrimination against them because of their race.

QUESTION: What did statehood mean for Hawaii, and the other side of that, what did Hawaii [UNINTELLIGIBLE] mean for the nation in your mind [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: Well, I think for Hawaii, what statehood meant uh, was first class citizenship. We could now vote for our governor. Uh, we could now elect members of Congress who stood on equal terms with those of the other states. Uh, and of course, that then made Hawaii uh, entitled to all of the benefits that would be given by the Congress to other states. For example, highway appropriations. Uh, there didn't have to be a separate bill for Hawaii appropriations to um ... um, from the appropriations for all states. Of course, sugar could never be discriminated against. Uh, and there would never be a chance that Hawaii ... could be so easily put under martial law or have a proposition that it would be ruled by a military commission. It could not be discriminated against the way it had been done in territorial period. Uh, so those were the political advantages to Hawaii. Um, advantages to the nation; well, we've talked a little bit about this. I think John Burns' greatest contribution as a national politician is when he brought Dan Inouye to the House of Representatives and introduced him; and said, Now the United States will have a representative of Japanese American background. This changes the composition of the Congress of the United States and will make it a better place of equality for all Americans, regardless of their racial background. And then later when Patsy Mink is elected to the Congress, uh, she is bringing not just inclusion for Japanese Americans, but for women. And I think we've discussed before that her contribution of Title 9, for equal facilities for female athletics in colleges, has probably done ... more for women than any other single piece of legislation in the post-war period. Uh, there are probably more gold medals from the Olympics hanging in the trophy rooms of American colleges won by women who now had uh, full support in intercollegiate athletics. Uh, so I—I think the nation greatly was benefited by this ... this sense of multi-ethnic, multi-racial, mul—uh, both genders being included in the American body of politic. And I think that was one of the uh, the great contributions that Hawaii has made to the nation.

QUESTION: Nowadays, as you probably know, if you walk around the—

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: --UH campus and listen, you would think that Hawaii politics was only about the native Hawaiian movement.

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: But you [UNINTELLIGIBLE] that statehood was a bad, bad thing and—

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] But you [UNINTELLIGIBLE] the idealism—

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: --and enthusiasm of the statehood movement both in Alaska and Hawaii, and how that was part and parcel of something good and—

WHITEHEAD: M-hm.

QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] Could you expand on that? [UNINTELLIGIBLE] thoughts on that?

WHITEHEAD: Well, one of the things that impressed me as I interviewed the statehooders from both uh, Alaska and Hawaii um, is that most of the statehooders had come out of World War II, either having served there, or having been involved in the politics of the two territories uh, during the war. And once the war was over, the veterans said, We didn't fight this war abroad to come back home and practice second class citizenship in our own country. And also, how can the United States ever have role of world leadership if this is what it perpetuates in its own land. And what—what I heard these statehooders say was that, we as individuals are capable of building a better community. Uh, we're civic-oriented; we can build a better state that allows more different people to be representative and to have a role in shaping the future. Uh, we can develop better legislatures, we can develop better judicial systems that will bring justice to more people who've been discriminated against in the past. And they believe that these individuals could do this. They could join together. They didn't simply have to be dictated to from Washington, DC.

Good
Exp.

And when you listened to their enthusiasm, it was absolutely infectious. Um, you, Dan, found that in interviewing the Burns supporters; that they were gonna build a better society. Uh, I—I think I've mentioned that when I interviewed um, Bill Richardson, he talked about that what he did in becoming Lieutenant Governor and then uh, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was to build a law school in Hawaii. Which he said was originally opposed by the Hawaii Bar Association, but he said many of the people of the islands don't want to go away to be—to get a legal education. And if we don't have a law school here, our legal system will be dominated by lawyers imported from the mainland. And we want local people to take control of the legal system. And so he said he used his clout as Chief Justice to get the law school established. And then it took a number of years for law firms to start employing graduates of the UH law school. Uh, and then it—it happened. And—and he viewed that as sort of the concrete contribution that could be made. And I—I think that was an example of the optimism and the idealism of the statehooders. It—it was absolutely infectious. And for those of us who talked to ten, twenty of these people, whether it was Hebden Porteus and Chuck Mau uh, in Hawaii, who were no—enormously civic-oriented; we're going to build a better society. Or the people I—I talked to uh, in Alaska, uh, uh, things were going to get better. Uh, and—and now, those voices ... there are many fewer of them. Uh, there's only a solo voice instead of a chorus. And—and for those who didn't experience that optimism and idealism from that generation, uh, of twenty-five years ago, uh ... uh, I—I'm sad that it's gone, because it was—it was absolutely uh, mesmerizing.

QUESTION: And could you comment something about statehood as a unifying event? Because certainly now there's feelings that [UNINTELLIGIBLE] and so on. How is statehood a unifying [UNINTELLIGIBLE]?

WHITEHEAD: Well, statehood was a unifying event because uh, ev—everyone within Alaska or Hawaii noted that unless we unite in favor of statehood, opponents in Congress will look for a negative voice within the territories to use as a reason not to vote statehood through. And also, statehood was an easy thing to be unified about, because victory was clear. All you had to do was get the bill passed through the Congress and signed by the President. And then you had won statehood. Everyone could unite on that strategy. Now, once you had statehood, and you have a state government in both states, well, the unity wasn't there anymore; it was politics. And politics is about different groups of people trying to gain a different distribution of the power and the wealth, um, and the customs in the community. So I think after statehood, what then—in—in both Alaska and Hawaii, what people become disappointed is

that everyone didn't get everything they wanted. And whether that fault in—
and whether that was a problem with the concept of statehood, or the politics
that comes with any government ... who is to say.

QUESTION: Just a couple more questions.

WHITEHEAD: Okay.

QUESTION: What about the sovereignty movement? Do you have any thoughts about the Hawaiian sovereignty movement today from your perspective as a [UNINTELLIGIBLE]?

WHITEHEAD: Well ...

[INDISTINCT CONVERSATION]

QUESTION: Okay. Any thoughts—

WHITEHEAD: Okay.

QUESTION: --about the sovereignty movement from your perspective as a statehood authority?

WHITEHEAD: Well, I think if I were Hawaiian, which I'm not ... and I saw that the culture of my people was being eroded ... I think I would do anything I could to preserve that culture and tradition of my people. Now, exactly how to do it ... becomes another issue. And we've talked about the—the—the creation of a separate kingdom, which is only a part of the Hawaiian movement. But then the question becomes ... in a commu—let's call Hawaii a community in which no one is a majority. What would the kingdom look like? Where would it be? Who would be in it? What about the great majority of the population of the current State of Hawaii that is not Hawaiian? What will their role be, and what would then be the politics of a native Hawaiian kingdom? Um, and that is what I think is left uh, left undefined.

QUESTION: What about the dual sovereignty idea as with native Americans on the mainland? Any thoughts on that option [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

WHITEHEAD: Um, well, again, that option um ... which uh, both Indians on the mainland and—uh, there—there's a certain level of sovereignty with Alaska natives, and their native and village corporations. Uh, what would have to be figured

out is what would be the geographic base of that sovereignty. Um, uh, nearly every other place where there is native sovereignty, there is a place. Uh, in Alaska, there are many native villages. Um, there is the—the Cherokee Nation centered in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. But where would the Hawaiian Nation be centered? Would it be all of the Hawaiian Islands that were once a part of the Kingdom? Uh, then if so ... uh, how—how would non-Hawaiians, what would their role in this—in this new political entity be? I—I—I think as we've talked before, that's—that's been the great question in the history of Hawaii, from the Kingdom to the present day. How are all of these different groups in a place where there is no majority, what is their role in the political community? The—the optimism of the statehood movement was that it was an inclusive movement that all of the groups in Hawaii would now be a part of statehood. Hawaiians, Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, Filipinos, Haoles; they would all be a part of it.

[END]