

[music]

Yvette: Good morning, Ada.

Ada: Good morning, Yvette.

Yvette: Can you tell us how you got to know Lucy Covington?

Ada: I got to know lovely Lucy in Washington, D.C when we were both working to assist our tribe who are both victims of the termination policy. The Menominees were the first tribe terminated and we were the first tribe restored. And Lucy was in the struggle to reverse the termination of her tribe, which was-- I don't know if it was really finalized at that point or but it was supposed to be. It was strong on the path. Maybe you could correct me on that.

Yvette: Well the Colvilles, they were in the fight on termination from 1956 to 1970. Lucy really worked to organize and bring together a group who could challenge the people who wanted to terminate the reservation, so Council was split. 8 of the 14 Council Members wanted to sell the reservation, and they had convinced Congress to move forward. Can you tell us a little bit about your interactions with Lucy and the Congress?

Ada: Thank you for that question. We didn't see each other a lot, but when we did we exchanged a lot of information. When she explained to me how she was organizing her tribe, it was a similar to our organization. We were from the Midwest and we had a beautiful forest, which is world famous. Many people come to see our beautiful forest. As a matter of fact, at the time, we learned that the Menominee Forest was one of two areas seen by the satellite. There was the Great Wall of China and the Menominee Indian tribes', wonderful forest.

I was very impressed with the leadership that Lucy demonstrated, her compassion, her caring, her devotion, and her persistence, and strong determination to help her people. It was very, not only interesting, that's a very weak word in this context, but it was very helpful to me to know that another woman was fighting the same policy that I was fighting.

But I want to say that this whole termination was not the Indians' idea, and it would take more time than we have here to go into this whole explanation of why it happened. But usually at that point in time the policies came down from Washington and then the tribes had to deal with these decisions that they were not fully informed about, did not give their basic consent to.

Now there's a anecdote about this. It's not an anecdote, it was interpreted as consent. We carried out a long lawsuit against the federal government for mismanagement of their trust responsibility. There was a big blow down early in the history of the tribe and the Bureau of Indian Affairs refused to allow the Menominees to their harvest many, many aspects of the blowdown and hundreds of board feet or I would say, probably thousands of board feet were just left lying in the forest to rot.

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The reason that the BIA would not allow the Menominees to harvest it was because of the outside interests that would harm them. Of course, it's even infuriating to even think about that now, considering that we have a trust relationship with the federal government. And so each Menominee was to receive \$1,500 as a result of that. The tribal people wanted to have some individual money, rather than just putting the results of the lawsuit which we won against the federal government.

The then Senator, Arthur Watkins, came out to our tribe. He was a Republican from Utah. He waived the \$1,500 in front of the Menominees who were very poor, individually. They thought that they were agreeing to accept the money. They did not understand that they were agreeing to termination. Of course, many entities also did not know what termination really was. The State government of Wisconsin, the tribal people, and even the federal government.

They didn't understand, they want to obey the federal government. At that time the paternalism of the federal government was very strong. They wanted to help our people. I took my \$1,500, saved it for graduate school. My brother asked me what I thought about him getting a car. My brother Joe, he's two years younger than I.

I said, "Joe, you will get your car from some sleazy car dealer in Shonto," which is the white town south of the Res. "Your car will be gone, your money will be gone and you'll have nothing." So of course, why would he listen to his woman, or his sister, a woman telling him what to do, even though he asked me? That's what happened. Many of the people were extremely poor at that time, and so they've spent their money.

When I was in Washington lobbying for the *Menominee Restoration Act*, one of the senators on the committee said, "We understood that you all had agreed to this." I said, "You waive \$1,500 in front of poor people, naturally they are eager to receive the money." It was not an informed consent, and that is very unfortunate. I learned later on that the Senator was really angry with me because I corrected him. Of course, that did not sit well with the Senators at that time.

Lucy explained what she was doing, organizing her people to work against the termination. There was an election and new people came on the tribal council. They worked strong and long and hard to reverse it, but Lucy was so articulate, so devoted, so determined. It was very encouraging to me to encounter her at that time because we were both fighting the same policy. We both actually won over time. So I think people need to know the hard work that it takes to reverse a federal policy. I was recently called by the Executive Director of the University of Wisconsin Alumni Association. That was a year or so ago. She said, they were making an Alumni Park. She wanted to ask my permission to be included in that work. I said, "Wow. Wow." We now have an Alumni Park." She said and there are various people. There are over 400,000 graduates of the University of Wisconsin. There were some process that they went through to approach people that they wanted to have in this park.

She said, "You know, Ada, you're the first person I'm calling about this." I said, "Really? Oh, wow." She said, "Yes." And so she explained what they were doing. It was a parking lot and they wanted to transform it into a ball park. She said, "I was reading about you." I said, "Oh, okay." She said, "I liked what you said." Of course, now I'm a very talkative person and I have an opinion about everything and everybody. I said, "Well, what did I say?"

Well, she said, "It was a very strong statement. It said, if there's a federal law in your way, change it." I would have also said, "If there is a law in your way, change it because there are many laws that are passed that affect American Indians." At any rate, there I am permanently ensconced with my quotation in the University of Wisconsin, Madison Alumni Park. I'm certain that there are certain remembrances of Lucy around the nation and also at her tribe, but I actually don't know for sure. Maybe you can tell me?

Yvette: Well, Lucy went on, once they sort of change the tide and change the tribal council from a minority to the majority, they move forward with self determination and trying to preserve and protect and advance the tribal sovereignty at the time. I know that her individuals like, Mel Tonasket, my father, Andy Joseph. There were others, Dale Kohler, they were successful in convincing others to support Self-Determination. They also tried to help shape the education of a lot of young people.

I know you've been doing that in your life in your career, is helping to nurture young people and to believe in their identity, to believe in their tribal sovereignty. Can you talk a little bit about that? Did you ever have chances to ever discuss education with Lucy at the American Indian Graduate Center?

Ada: Well, I was on the first board of that committee. John Rayner and I ran into each other with our mutual work for Indian people. I agreed to serve on and I was very happy to. We set up a list of priorities that we wanted to fund, that would mean that the students would have their reason in their request what they want to study. Education was high on the list. I think it was first on the list.

Over time now, that has evolved and I know that they recently celebrated their 50th Anniversary a while ago. They've made a difference in the individual students who applied.

It was really important at the time that this was done because there were very few fellowships and scholarships available, especially for graduate school. And so that was important. She took advantage of that for her people.

I'm not sure if that was well known enough at the time for my tribal people because there were no newspapers at that time in my tribe. We didn't have a tribal newspaper. Over time though, it's served thousands of young American Indian students and helped them on their way. Of course, that would be something that Lucy would embrace and promote.

Yvette: You were also one of the first American Native Women to run for Congress. Can you talk a little bit about that?

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Ada: Yes, I will. Well, I like people and I like to know where the power is, and Congress has a lot of power. Back in the '70s, I got roped into running for Secretary of State of Wisconsin. The reason I got roped into it was the decision of the staff member of the Democratic Party at that time. I was the chair of the Menominee Restoration Committee, which was the interim tribal government.

After the *Menominee Restoration Act* was passed, we had to elect an interim tribal government. We had to then carry out the directives that were outlined by the Restoration Committee. We had to set up a new tribal government and establish a new relationship with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. I wanted to then also work to have a Democratic Party among the Menominees because we're a Democratic tribe, as in the Democratic Party and that seemed to me logical.

I drove down three hours, went to the Democratic office and the person there said, "Well, we're not going to talk about that, we're going to talk about you." I said, "Well, I don't want to talk about you." I said, "I drove down here for three hours and that's what I would like to do, to get your information about how to establish a Democratic Party there on my reservation." She said, "No, we're not talking about that." I said, "What are we talking about then?"

She says, "Well, I think you should run for public office." I said, "What?" I said, "Well, why?" She said, "Well, it's empty." "What is it?" "The Secretary of State position," which is one of the constitutional officers as it stated in the Constitution of the State of Wisconsin?" I said, "Why?" She said, "It's empty, it's vacant." I said, "Oh, that's a good reason to run for public office." I decided, "Okay, I'll do this."

Then I found out that I really liked to meet people and to campaign. I especially liked going up to northern Wisconsin. I went up there just a few times because Wisconsin has about 11 tribes. Up in northern Wisconsin, Indians are not well regarded. There's a lot of racism and classism. I would come into various offices and I would say, "Hello, I'm Ada Deer and I'm running for Secretary of State."

Of course, they're trying to readjust their glasses to see who is this person? I said, "I'm Ada Deer. I'm running for Secretary of State, and I wanted to come up and talk with you about it." Most people were still trying to process this because here I am this Indian and I'm this woman and I'm running for something. They don't know what the Secretary of State does. I told them, "Well, it's a constitutional office and one of the duties is to maintain the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin."

Of course, I am hawing to myself and so I said, "Okay, I'm just here to let you know." I didn't win. There were nine people running for that office at that time and I came in fourth in the field of nine. Well, then my campaign group said, "Well, you can't just run once, you have to run again." I ran four years from there the next four years, was the next election. Then I came in second in the field of four, which I thought was good. If my name had been Ada Deer La Follette, I would have won.

The person that one was Douglas La Follette. He's been our Secretary of State all this time. La Follette name is a very famous name in American history. He was the Founder of the Progressive Party back, way back when. Then I said, "Oh, well, that was a good run. I enjoyed that." Actually, I didn't quite understand that there would be some attention paid to that. It's very hard for a woman and for a person of color to break the glass ceiling. The next time then, my campaign troop said, "Well, now," not that I was directing them to do this. They called me up and they said, "Now you have to run for Congress." I said, "What? That's a really big step." I wasn't so sure, and then I started thinking about all the people I had met in Washington. There were too many mediocre people, including many members of the Congress in the Senate, and I thought to myself, "Well, I'm as smart as they are. Okay, I'll do that."

So we conducted the wonderful campaign. Gloria Steinem and Wilma Mankiller came to campaign for me. Senator Bill Bradley called up and asked if he could come in and help me. Maxine Waters, the Representative came-- She didn't come but she offered her support, but I got very poor press. That was because I didn't fall into the traps that some of the media tried to get me into it. They wanted me to make a comment about my campaign.

The other person in the primary was very nice and good person. He had been planning to do this for a long time. His name is David Clarenbach and his parents were intellectuals. They worked at the university. I know one of them was a professor and the other one was very prominent in civic affairs. At any rate, I also did not take PAC money, Political Action Committee money. They were surprised. All kinds of people, both Democrats and others.

I didn't take any money from the good PAC from the social worker. I'm a social worker and I'm proud of it. That's helped me be the person I am today, the social work profession. We have a very low profile in the minds of the public. If we didn't have social workers, they'd have to invent them anyway. I said, "I want to be unbought and unbossed." The people will look at me with these blank stares and I say, "Well, that is the title of Shirley Chisholm's autobiography."

Of course, that didn't mean anything to them either. She was the Congresswoman from New York. I think she was from Brooklyn. She was also, I think from somewhere in the Caribbean islands. She went on to be the candidate for Congress back in, I think-- no, President, that's what I mean in 1972, or about that time. When I told him I want to be unbought and unbossed, they said, "Oh," because most people had PAC money, but I didn't.

I'm very proud to say that, over the course of my campaign for Congress, I won the Democratic primary, which nobody thought I would win. We had a very excellent campaign going. My name is Deer. We had buttons printed that said, "I'm a deer person and nobody runs like a deer." Actually, the John Deere company called up my campaign and objected. I said, "Well, they're the fancy Deere, D-E-E-R-E. I'm the plain and simple Deer. D-E-E-R." Of course, people would laugh at that.

I won the primary and I collected over \$500,000, from individuals, which at that time in 1993, was a lot of money. Now, of course, there are millions of dollars that go into every campaign. I felt very proud about that. When I had the press conference on the election night, I said, "I've been waiting all this time all my life to say this." When I told my campaign troops what I was going to say, "Oh, you're not going to do that." "Yes, I am." I said, "You're the campaign troops and I don't always have to obey what you tell me." They laughed.

What I said was, I raised my hand and I said, "Me, nominee." My tribe is Menominee. I still have people today quoting, "Me nominee," because it was a double meaning. It took a while for it to sink in at the conference and they all started laughing and it was great. Then I'm reading in the paper how Mr. Clinton wanted the government that--

I didn't win the primary. White guy, well educated. He was white he was the TV personality, newscaster. He had been doing this for several years, so he was well known. He won but he didn't really do much, which is very sad. He just followed, getting rich around for 12 years. I think it was 12 years. Now, he's just in private work there in Wisconsin.

I'm reading in the paper how Mr. Clinton wanted a government that looked like America. I said, "Oh, well, that's an idea." I said to myself, "Well, what am I saying this for? Here I am." I decided that I was going to try to be an Assistant Secretary. I called up my campaign troops this time and I said, "Well, get ready." I said, "We're going to have a campaign for me to be Assistant Secretary."

There's a whole process. You have to go through a full field investigation by the FBI and they contact your neighbors and they do all kinds of things. Well, of course, they passed that. I did tell someone once that they were in law enforcement. And I said--no, I'm not sure if it was in law enforcement. Anyway, some person involved in this process. I said, "The only thing you're going to find on my record is speeding tickets. The world is in slow gear and the deer is in fast gear."

They didn't even laugh. They just looks at me and I said, "That's all," and I left. That was interesting response because I think we don't laugh enough in this culture. I think humor is a good way of expressing yourself. It also makes you feel good to smile and laugh. Then I went through the process. You have to go through the headhunters. You have to have a resume.

Well, I had a very strong resume, strong leadership. I was first woman tribal leader in my tribe. I got elected as the Chair of the Menominee Restoration Committee. I've been active in my profession. I was President of the Wisconsin National Association of Social Workers Chapter. I've been active in a lot of other organizations.

NARF, Native American Rights Fund. I've been on the board of NARF. That is a really important law firm based in Boulder, Colorado, that was formed almost 50 years ago now. I think they're coming up in their 50th year. They helped us a lot in our restoration struggle, provided us with wonderful legal help. Professor Charles Wilkinson and Yvonne Knight.

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Then we had a lawyer from the OEO Legal Program, Mr. Joseph Pilaznik from Wisconsin, but the leadership came from the Menominee people. When my application for--or a resume was submitted, they couldn't ignore my stellar, if I'm allowed to say that, but I think it's a strong resume in many arenas.

I got to be interviewed by the Secretary of HUD at that time. I think his name was Henry Gonzales and Mr. Babbitt, Former Governor of Arizona and he selected me. That's how I became Assistant Secretary. It was also the hard work of people on my campaign. All the Democrats, that's a big deal when you win the primary. At that point, until recently, when the two Indian women got elected just recently, that was a real victory for everybody to have them there.

Yvette: You opened the door to give girls a chance?

Ada: Well, yes, there are three of us now. I'm very happy to say and proud that one of them actually mentioned my name in some interview she was giving. I was very happy to know that. See, most of us who are doing these things, we try to keep track of each other and who's doing what and so on. There are three of us that actually won the primaries and they won the general election. Whereas they had a bigger voting population, one in New Mexico and the other one from Kansas. Then I became the Assistant Secretary, the first woman. People always want to say Indians. I said, "Well, yes, but I was the first woman to be selected as Assistant Secretary." Yes. I'm proud of my Indian heritage, but I claim a lot of women's identification also because I am a woman. I was very active in a number of women's activities, and so that's the one of the other big groups that I was noted for.

Yvette: Lucy Covington had been successful by 1970 and changing the dynamics of the tribal government. She was able to convince members of Congress and I know you had to do the same. Can you talk a little bit about what skills those are that you need to have to convince members of Congress to change federal policy?

Ada: Well, it helps to have a good education and I have a wonderful education, a BA from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and a Master's Degree in Social Work from the Columbia University School of Social Work. Plus, I think I was born a loud mouth and an inquisitive person. My mother was a Quaker and she didn't really specify that a lot, but she just practiced her Quaker values.

She told me when I was under 10, that, "Ada, dear, you're an Indian." I said, "Well, okay, mom." I was very obedient with her because she always treated me as an adult and as an individual. There were five of us and that's what she did with all of us. She said, "You're an Indian and you were put on the Earth for a purpose, and you are to help your people." I didn't quite know what she meant, but I learned the word help. We, social workers always used the word help. That came later.

Help was not a foreign concept to me because I was already helping. I lived in a one-room log cabin on the banks of the beautiful Wolf River, which is a wild and scenic river specified by the government. We had a one room log cabin, no indoor water, no electricity,
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no computers, no cell phones. When I tell my students this at the university, I was recruited by the chancellor of the university to come down and join the faculty there.

I said, "I don't understand this." I said, "Because I don't have a PhD." At that point, I didn't know what the bureaucracy of the university was. This was when I was the Chair of the Restoration Committee. I said, "Well, I don't have a PhD." He said, "Well, we need all kinds of people at the university." I said, "What I have is a terminal degree at that time, a master's degree. I'm busy doing something about the problems in society."

Having a strong value system and a good sense of social justice was really important because I went to Washington, at that point in time, it was important to be a person from the tribe. Right now there are way too many high priced lobbyists that make \$400 an hour as a base and they're usually white people. I have nothing against white people. My mother was white, my father was Indian, and I claim both heritages. But you have to have your goals and your determination and you have to be aware and knowledgeable about how the process works and you can't give up because somebody says no.

To answer your question it would take a longer time, but I'll just try to drill down. When I found out that our tribal people were protesting, and I worked at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens point, which was about two hours from our reservation. I thought, "Wow, they're protesting." Well, then I read again that they were protesting. And I thought, well, I have to go and find out about this. My curiosity got the best of me.

I go up there and I say, "Well, what what's going on here? Why are you doing this?" They said, "They're selling our land." "Selling our land." Oh, it just struck me up, my heart, "Selling our beautiful reservation." Now, in the treaty process, we had signed treaties. Now, of course the people were not knowledgeable in English, and so they made a Mark. Then that was verified by the, I guess it was the interpreters or maybe the federal government people that were involved in this.

We gave away and ceded to the federal government, millions of acres, as many tribes have. I thought, "Well, we were supposed to have our current reservation as a Homeland." I thought, "Well, I'm not putting up with this." I talked to people there, but they had been working on this for a while. Then I went and I said, "Well, okay, I'm going to go and find a lawyer." So I went and found the Director of Wisconsin, Judicare.

He looked at me skeptically. He said--I explained what I wanted. I said, "I need to know more about termination." He said, "A number of Menominee's have come to him because they were really suffering, termination took away the hospital. We were under state control." We went from the federal government to the state and our people were bereft and saddened.

I remember one gentlemen, who lived in Zoar, his name was Johnson Wannapi said that, when I visited him and talked about working against termination, that one day he's an Indian and then next day he's not. He said, "I'm still me." I thought that was a very profound statement for him to make at that time, especially since he didn't really know me. I'd been away from the reservation since I was 18.

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I had gone off to graduate school and I had worked in Minneapolis and then they came to Stevens Point. Then that's how I got involved in the early '70s with my people. Because I'm remembering what my mother told me. I said, "Well, this is it." I've been wanting to go to law school for about 10 years, and I decided it was more important for me to help my people than to go to law school. I could always go to law school.

You have to have a clear vision of what you want and you cannot be discouraged by uninformed people or people that are opposed to what you're trying to do. This country still doesn't know what to do about Indians and other people of color. They're not doing right by us. In general, you look at the history of Indian affairs in this country, it's very sad. Only in, since the '70s has it really begun to change with self-determination and other more positive policies.

It was initiated under President Kennedy. Then when he was assassinated, then President Johnson took up the war on poverty. I say it was the so-called war, but it was a skirmish and we, the American people didn't win the skirmish. There are at least two programs from the OEO program. One is legal service that thrived. One is the Legal Services Program and the other one is Head Start. Those are very positive programs for the American people.

I also had an open mind and I appealed to the people that were involved in all of this, for example, our people in Milwaukee formed a group. Well, we decided also we had to form a group name, develop a group name and so my sister Connie Deer, who was who was the younger person at that point, I think she was still in college, but she became a nurse and a lawyer. She helped us.

We were sitting around one day people on the reservation. Also we had a DRUMS group in Chicago and we hadn't invented the word yet. At any rate, we were having this discussion and I said, "We need to have a name for our group. It has to have the word Menominee in it and has to have something about our struggle." My sister who's a very brilliant person, she was kind of noodling around on paper, and so she came up with DRUMS. I said, "DRUMS, wow, that's a really wonderful name." I said, "Spell it out." She said, "Determination of Rights and Unity for Menominee Shareholders." It's very famous name now in Indian policy circles because it started as a grassroots effort of the Menominee people. We had the Chicago Chair, Jim White, and we had the Milwaukee Chair, Lloyd Paulus. Then we had Laurel Otradovec who was the chair of the Menominee group.

They all worked hard to advance this. We had meetings. We had a lot of resistance from some of the people on our reservation because they said, "Well, it's a federal law and we have to obey the law," but then we all said, "Well, it's the wrong law. It's not right. We're losing our land. We're losing our people. It's terrible."

All right, so then we took over. It's a long story, and so I just will summarize that. There were two trusts. There were two entities that were formed and they had some power. The Menominees were at the bottom. We were certificate holders in this state corporation. It

was called Menominee Enterprises Inc. It went from a federally recognized tribal government to a state corporation. People didn't understand that, and so we just had very little power at that point.

We decided, at the suggestion and the advice of our Wisconsin lawyer, we could have proxies and we could have a vote. Two of us DRUMS people got elected to the voting trust, but it was still a struggle because we marched from our village in Kachina up to what was one of our most famous lakes, Legend Lake. At that point in time, before termination, the common practice was for people, if you wanted to hunt and fish, you could do it and you didn't need permission from anybody.

Well, after termination, that changed and white people started coming and they started selling the land and they started to not allow the Menominees to go to one of the most easiest-to-get-to lakes, which really incensed people because we were accustomed to respecting the land and to do what we wanted and where we wanted. At that point in 1954 when the *Termination Act* was passed, there were 3,270 people in a tribal role, so it was a small population. The land, and the waters, and the lakes, and so on were available to everybody at any time.

Well, then all of this jurisdiction of the state and the corporations really harmed our people. The first thing they did was install a white superintendent to manage the tribal mill, and he immediately fired 150 men. That was 150 families. There was no jobs. People had to leave. They went to Mark, they went to Chicago, they went to other places, but they always kept track of each other through what we call the moccasin telegraph because the ties of people were very strong to the land and to their relatives on the reservation.

I know I'm telling you more than you expected, but you have to have a background of some of this. We got inspired by our victory in getting elected to the voting trust. One of the first things was to have a meeting. Well, they had a meeting, and so two of us came from the DRUMS group, myself and Georgianna Webster Ignace. Well, the first thing the trustee chair said, "Well, we have to sell some land." I'm sitting here thinking, "Sell a land?" They were all sitting there like this.

Now, there were other Menominees on this, but they didn't have my education and also didn't have inquiring minds, want to know. I raised my hand and I said-- They were not happy that the DRUMS people got elected because we were only two people out of, I don't know, maybe nine or so. I can't remember the exact number. Anyway, I said, "Well, why are we talking about selling the land?" "Well, the state of Wisconsin wants to establish environmental office up here."

I said, "Well, I don't know about the rest of you, I do not agree with selling one more inch of our tribal land. I don't approve of it and you other Menominees should not be agreeing to this either," in this tone. I can still hear myself speaking. Now, they were not accustomed to a woman, much less, a much younger woman, telling the trustees what to do. The chair had daughters my age and I used to go to his house and talk with his daughters and so on.

He said, "Well, let's just table this." I said, "Well, there has to be some other way other than selling the land." Now, I'm a loudmouth, as you can see, and so the next time we had a meeting, he said, "Well, we can lease the land." "Well, that's not selling it, it's leasing it, right?" "Right." "Okay." That's what happened. You have to speak up, you have to speak out, you have to confront and you can't give up.

You ask me, it's the skills about all this. You have to have the background. I loved our land. I love our tribe, not every single member of the tribe, but the tribe. We're a very famous tribe now. We went from termination to restoration, and that is one of the first times, I think it might even be the first, that a very small tribe got the US government to reverse this major policy.

In legal circles, political science circles, sociological circles, this is well-known and well-respected that the Menominees stood up for their land and their people. We have a book called *Freedom with Reservation: The Menominees Struggle to Save Their Land and People*. Most people want to know what is the Indian problem like there's only one Indian and only one problem. That's, of course, not true, but it's always about land and people.

Along the way, to continue just briefly on the-- there were lots of Congressmen and Senators that were for this, Congressman David Obe from our tribe, from Wisconsin, he represented our area, and Senator Gaylord Nelson, the father of Earth Day, Senator William Proxmire, Senator Ted Kennedy. Some people in Milwaukee had context with his office. We went down there, met with him.

Other than being odd, I thought, "Well, this is great," and so I was waiting for somebody to say something. Well, they were a little ill at ease, but then we started talking. Then I said, "Well, I'd like to explain why we're here." I told Senator Ted Kennedy at that time that we were terminated, we wanted to reverse the policy, we're losing our land, losing our people. He said, "Well when you get to Washington, come to my office."

In general, we had a lot of support in the Congress. We had people that I could name, but I'm getting the signal here and we have to stop. Again, it's a very historic reversal of a governmental policy, and this proves to everybody that you can work through the system if you're persistent and determined and you mobilize and don't give up.

Yvette: Well, thank you for all those details, Ada. We've got plenty for the Lucy Covington project. I know they need to ask you some questions for the American Hall of Fame, but thank you for all those great details.

Ada: Well, thank you for asking. As you can see, I have a lot to say.

[silence]

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