

I don't even remember what year it was. I think it was five or six years back. That was at Barefoot. I was the only one selected that year. They have to be approved by the whole Arapaho tribe before they can be a chief. But Cheyennes are different--they just pick theirs out. And the Arapahoes--once you become a chief, you can be chief all your life. And you can be suspended.

(What could you be suspended for?)

Oh, something the people don't like or something like that. And the only way you can get back in is through your sisters or something like that. They put you back out. Well, it takes four or five years before they can do that, though. You have to prove yourself. Prove yourself--you made a mistake and you're trying to correct that. If your sisters think you are--or your brothers--or any of your relations--think you're all right, can still be a recognized chief, they have to--go through a little ceremony of giving away. That's the part they have to show that--you've seen these head dancers give away--it's something similar to that.

(Has it ever happened that you know of that a chief has been suspended?)

No. There were lot of time it almost happened. But I don't know of anyone.

(If it were to happen, who would decide on it?)

The council of chiefs. The tribal chiefs. It's brought in through the tribe. The tribe makes a complaint against one, say, and if the chiefs think he'll have to be suspended, they'll do that. But he's still an Arapaho chief. When once you become a chief, you're a chief the rest of your life. However Cheyennes are different. They pick theirs. And every ten years they pick again, or else they can retain them, you know.

(Have the Arapahoes always had this system of Chiefs as long as you can remember?)

Yes. There were more--they were the ones that used to decide everything. But here lately after we got this Business Committee, since that started the chiefs stepped back. But they still, if any issue comes up that pertains to the tribe, they have to make their approval of it. That's the way it goes.