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6/22/86  
Date of Agreement

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12 April 1988  
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Paul and Judy Hovan, interviewed in their home in Elko, Nevada by Teresa Jordan, 6/22/86. Paul is a former Anaconda/ARCO employee.

Notes taken from tape. Not a transcript except where noted.

Paul was born and raised in Walkerville, grandparents on both sides worked in mines in Butte. Father didn't; he had two brothers, one of which did work in the mines for a short while just before he died, in '72 or '73. On mother's side, one of her brothers worked in the mines for five or six years. No one in Paul's immediate family worked in the mine.

Q: Do you think your grandparents discouraged their sons from working in the mines?

Doesn't know; didn't know his grandfathers. Father's father died from miners con. Spent quite a few years in Galen before he died; Paul is sure there was some discouragement because of that. Doesn't know when mother's father died, probably early '30's. Working in the mine was the one thing to do around Butte.

Q: What was the attitude toward your working for the Company when you were growing up?

Very anti-Anaconda. Other kids whose fathers worked in the mines never had anything good to say about the Company. P's dad was in the Teamster's Union; for a few years in the late 50's and early 60's, was president of the Teamster's Union, so he had to negotiate w/ officials of Anaconda. "He never really said anything bad; he was probably one of the more mild union officials they had in Butte, and that was why he was only in there a few years. We never really talked much about Anaconda in our home."

Q: Your father was a teamster but he didn't work for the Company?

No, he was a truck driver. He worked for Montana Ice and Storage, he was a delivery man for ice cream and a warehouseman, and he worked at the Safeway milk plant until he retired.

Q: Was there one union for both the Anaconda Company and the town?

Right. There were separate contracts, but there was one union, one local.

Q: Judy, were you born and raised in Butte?

No, born and raised in California, but parents moved a lot. 13 different school by the time J was out of high school. Didn't move to Butte until after she and P were married; and then they lived in Anaconda rather than Butte. Met at MSU in Bozeman; Paul worked in the dorm, J in the kitchens.

Q: What were your impressions of Butte and Anaconda when you first came?

Not native Montanan; had lived in Montana off and on, but not in Butte or Anaconda. In college, would hear about Butte from others who were very anti-Butte -- it was ugly, real tough, the people who came from there were tough. Those were J's two big impressions. Ugly mining town, a lot of fights, not one of the real cultural centers of Montana. First time to Butte was with Paul when he took her to meet his family. She thought Butte was ugly. Bozeman is so gorgeous and any mining town is going to be dirty -- at least the older ones are. Had lived in Globe, Arizona as a child -- remembers the dirt and heat, and they were on strike. Other thing J disliked was that she had a very anti-union attitude. When met Paul, happened to make an anti-union statement in front of his family, he said 'ssshhh! everybody's in the union, don't say that in front of my family.' J was studying to be a teacher; a couple girls had student taught in Butte, they said they did not like it. So she had a bad impression of Butte until they moved to Anaconda and she saw the good sides.

Q: P, what field were you in at MSU?

Electrical Engineering.

Q: Did you get married in school?

Graduated in 1966, drafted in 1967, served a little over three years in the army in Taiwan. When went to school, always said he would never work for Anaconda. That was because of his upbringing, he had never heard anything good about the Co. When he got out of the service, tried to get a job w/ Mountain Bell, working w/ telephone systems because that is what he had worked on in the service. Contacted people in Denver and AZ, Helena -- they just weren't hiring. A college roommate had a friend working at the smelter in Anaconda; contacted P to ask if he wanted a job at the smelter. P, "just to find something to do," went over and interviewed, and they hired him. P worked four years at the smelter, worked three years at the Arbiter Plant, then transferred to Butte, worked in the engineering office, Superintendent

of Utilities," dealt a lot with MPC, Butte Water Company, the telephone company. In 1980 or '81, transferred out to the Pit and worked in the Pit in maintenance and construction. When it shut down in '83, stayed on until June of '85, then moved to Elko. "I shouldn't say I stayed on; I was able to stay there. They kept me."

Q: So you were in that force of 70 that stayed on.

Yes, there were about 35 when I left. In January of '85, P had pretty much made up his mind -- when they shut down in '83, he had decided that he would give it 18 months to two years to see if it would turn around; things didn't look too good then, so P started looking around, made contacts with professional recruiters. One called him up, wanted to know if he wanted to interview for a job in Arizona with another Copper mine; "I told him I didn't really want to jump out of the frying pan into the fire. If I was going to change jobs, I would just as soon get out of the copper business. A few weeks later, he called me and told me there was a mining company in Nevada who was looking for a maintenance type person with an electrical background, so I inquired, came down and interviewed, and told Judy on the way home from the interview that if the money was right, I was going to accept the job; it looked pretty good. And that's how I ended up here."

J: "I have to laugh. I'm not going to take the first job that comes along." And then he did.

Q: When were you married?

1968 in Taiwan. Judy graduated, went over there. She taught in Taiwan for two years. Dominican school run by Phillipine nuns, about half military kids, financed by US gov t; other half were either wealthy Taiwanese, or a lot of embassy kids. As many non-Catholics as Catholics.

Q: At that point, what were your thoughts about moving to Montana?

At that point, they wanted to live in the mountain West, any of the Western states without the dense population; four seasons; mountains, and skiing. P thought for sure he could get a job with the telephone company; had spent so much time working in the field, had good letters of commendation from high officials in Western Electric and different Bell Companies. J notes that he didn't really pursue it that much; you get out of the service and lose that security, and you want a job. Got out of the service in August; P went to work for Anaconda in September, so didn't spend a long time without a job. Interviewed with phone companies in Helena and Everett, Washington.

Nothing panned out. A lot of engineers looking for work at the time. P took the job at Anaconda, not thinking he would stay there that long. 1970.

Q: J, how did you feel about the Anaconda Company?

In college, J had heard the bad things, too. But she always leaned toward the Co because she was so antagonistic to the unions. But she thought they were pretty powerful. Still, when P went to work for them, she thought it was fine, it was a job. She was pretty insecure.

P: "The unfortunate thing about Anaconda, from the time I went to work for them -- shortly thereafter, they lost their Chile property, it was downhill, one thing after another. they sold off their forest products, shut the underground mines down in Butte. I was treated very well. A lot of people were upset when ARCO bought them; I don't think they were so upset when ARCO put all that money into the Company, but when they decided that it wasn't going to pay off and they started to pull out, a lot of people were bitter. But I thought I was treated more than fair, with my salary and other things."

Q: How did ARCO salaries for engineers compare with the same level position in the phone company or in another major company.

P: "ARCO, being an oil company, paid probably some of the highest salaries in the country. Anaconda salaries weren't all that good when they were just a mining company. I shouldn't say "all that good," -- they were good, but not that high. But ARCO's policy was to upgrade all their staff in salary to equivalent levels in the oil business. So we got some pretty nice increases. Being a mining company, we were paid pretty well. I think that's one of the things that made it difficult when people left Anaconda and were looking for work other places. The salaries just weren't comparable for the same work. You had to accept that you were doing the same job but weren't making as much money. I was very fortunate when I came down here, I got a better job and a higher salary, so as far as that monetary adjustment for our family, there wasn't.

J: Well, the cost of living down here is out of sight.

Q: Had you worked outside the home after you moved back to MT?

J: Not for 10 years; I wanted to stay home with my children. When my youngest was in kindergarten, I went back and got my accreditation so I could at least do substitute teaching, or got my certification updated, and for

the least five years in MT, I did substitute teaching, both in Butte and Anaconda. But if I had wanted to work full-time, I would have had to left. There wasn't any work for teachers that weren't in the union for twenty-some years.

Q: What was your reaction when the Company announced they were going to shut down?

P: My initial reaction was that it was time to go looking for a job. When they made the announcement in January, '83 that they were going to shut down, we were all told that there would be a core of people left to maintain the plant and equipment and get things in a state of readiness so that when they were ready to start up, there would be a core of people to do that. I didn't place any hope in that; I figured there were a lot of people a lot more experienced, and with more time there, so I just assumed I'd be let go in June. And in March they came out and announced, they told everyone individually whether they were staying or going, to my surprise, they said I would be kept on. I was the only electrical engineer they had at the time. Two had died and one had retired. So I thought there was a chance, but I wasn't going to hope on it, so I updated my resume, I sent out a few letters, dropped all of that once they told me I would be able to stay. That's when I said I would give it maybe 18 months to two years to see what would happen. Fortunately, this job came along at just the right time.

J: Paul has always been lucky. Any time a job has been terminated, he has always managed to get another job just before it.

P: Yeah, I stayed ahead of the smelter shutdown, ahead of the Arbiter Plant shutdown, left Butte before ARCO decided to sell it.

J: I don't think anybody was surprised when they shut the mines down. We had talked about it even before they came out with the announcement. You just can't keep making copper and losing money on it.

Q: Starting when did it become pretty clear?

J: Well they shut that smelter down in '80.

P: When they made the announcement that they were going to close the smelter, I guess I started to think then that the Anaconda operations were in financial trouble. They did a lot of things, they signed a contract with Japan to handle the concentrates, made some provisions in Butte, started up the moly, and it looked good for awhile, they were going to go back into the

Kelly, but when those things didn't come about on schedule, we began to wonder if there was really any chance. For a long time -- we built a home, we bought some land up north of Anaconda in 1975 figuring that we would be in that area for quite awhile. After two years, we built a nice log home on it and just after we started building the house, they announced that the Arbiter Plant was shutting down. Fortunately, I was offered a job in Butte, so we were able to stay there. But from 1980 on, we really didn't feel like putting much money into landscaping or finishing our home. Everything was so uncertain. I think other people felt that way.

J: Well, the bottom dropped out of your property value, for one thing. When the smelter was running, you paid a lot of money for a house. But as soon as it closed, your value dropped about 30 thousand dollars on a house.

P: That was one of the hardest things to leave when we left Montana, was our house.

[The house was at Lost Creek, about 8 miles north of Anaconda; lots of trees, they had horses.]

P: When you build your own home, you have a special interest in it. To just walk away and leave it . . .

Q: Did you sell the house?

P: Fortunately, the company I went to work for had a policy of buying the home and reselling it -- Carlin. So we were fortunate. We didn't break even on it, but we could have done a lot worse.

J: I could still be living there, trying to sell it. We found out after poor old Carlin bought it that there were a couple problems that we did not know about. The well is contaminated with bacteria; I don't know if we just built up an immunity -- we were never sick so we never bothered to have it checked. [more about house].

Q: Did the announcement of the shutdown come to you at the same time as everyone else, or were the professionals told earlier?

P: Same time. I'm sure there were people higher than I was at Anaconda who knew before the announcement, but I didn't.

Q: What was your reaction, Judy?

J: I wasn't surprised. We had been discussing it, and I wasn't surprised at all that they shut it down. But you kind of worry -- you know, what are we going to do with our house, will he be able to get another job. Kind of just decided -- it's easy to say, don't worry about it, but every once and awhile you did. But I pretty much tried not to worry about it as long as he had a job. Paul has always been highly thought of wherever he worked, so I thought he had a good chance to get a job elsewhere. He had good recommendations.

P: Not having lived anywhere else except for my time in the service, I was a little concerned about moving to somewhere else. But it was just one of those things that you had to make up your mind that that was the way it was going to be. So we sat down with our children and told them, after I interviewed for the job, that we would probably be moving. Even before that, we decided, we told them that it probably wouldn't be too long before we left Anaconda. Our oldest daughter was the most reluctant to accept that situation. When Judy was going to bring the children down to look for a home down here, she wouldn't even come.

J: But she said a couple months ago, "Boy I'm glad we moved down here, Mom."

P: Since we moved, I think even they notice that the school system is much better, more activities.

J: I don't know if you've noticed it, but I was glad -- in fact about six months before Paul took this job, I said, I am ready to get out of here. The school system in Anaconda was just going down the tubes, there was no money to support it, and all the good teachers are getting laid off and all the ones that have been in there -- and I'm not saying that just because a teacher has been in there for twenty some years that they aren't any good. But the point was that I knew some of the people that were being kept on and some of the ones that were being bumped, and I wasn't real happy. and the whole atmosphere of the town -- it was just really discouraging.

P: They had to raise taxes to fund the government and schools.

J: Our taxes were going to be over a thousand dollars.

P: You could see that the burden on the property owners . . .

J: And the whole nature of Anaconda was changing. When we first moved there, it was a safe, nice town to have your kids in. By the time we left,



there was all sorts of -- I guess, somebody told me, and I'm not sure of my facts, but supposedly Butte and Anaconda, it's easier to get welfare than it is in a lot of other places, and you could see, in the schools, you were getting all the people, all the kids that were kids of engineers and educated people were leaving, and the kids that we were getting in were the kids from people that are on welfare. There were a lot of people from welfare coming in. I guess my main source of information was Dee Dee, she worked for the post office, she could see from handing out food stamps and that kind of stuff, the more people we were getting in from out of state and stuff, and there were so many more kids that had to go into the resource programs and such. So I was really glad to get my kids out of there.

P: Not that there was anything wrong with that [the welfare kids] but it was just that the financial burden on the school system was all oriented toward that, and they tried to start an accelerated learning program in Anaconda which would have been fine if they could have financially supported it.

J: They were going to take one of our teachers . . .

P: They had to orient the programs toward the average and under average students rather than the better students, which we felt, because our kids were pretty good students, that they were suffering because of it. It's just the opposite here. The tax base in Nevada is much better than it was in Anaconda.

J: People in Anaconda are wonderful, and I'm not trying to be derogatory toward the town. I'm just talking about the changing nature of the people who were moving in as opposed to those who were moving out.

P: Well, even in Butte, my folks still live up in Walkerville, and we never used to lock our house, but when some of my brothers were still living at home, they had things stolen right out of the locked car right in front of the house. It's the changing personality, I guess.

Tape 1, Side B

Q: What were your early impressions of Elko?

J: I was impressed.

P: It wasn't negative. We came here for the interview, and the circumstances there weren't the best, everything was messed up because people didn't schedule. [Talks about schedule mess up] As far as the town,

really nice neighborhoods, the homes were well kept. Of course there is, on the south side of the river, there's some lower income type housing, and there is an Indian reservation, two Indian reservations -- colonies.

J: But you know, we are coming out of Anaconda rather than Butte. We never lived in Butte in our married life; we spent a lot of time there because of his folks. So we are coming from a smaller town to a bigger town; we have more facilities here than we had in Anaconda.

P: One of the problems here is that the stores don't stock a lot of clothing, furniture, anything. So anything major you want to buy, you go to Salt Lake or Reno or Twin Falls.

J: You can get it here, but it's a lot more expensive.

P: And recreation up around Butte -- fishing, hunting, skiing, everything is really close. Here, you just adjust. And if you are a downhill skier, you just realize that you are going to take a whole weekend to ski one day. You don't do as much of it, but maybe you enjoy it more when you do it.

J: The town is nice, though.

P: We never spent as much time as we probably should have enjoying the recreation and nature around Butte and Anaconda. We did do it, but it was always there. We recognize here, it's quality time when we go out to go fishing or something. It's a lot farther to go.

J: That's the biggest disadvantage that we've found in Elko, is that you are so isolated, you have to go so far to do anything. But the town is lovely, the people are just as nice as can be. They go out of their way to be nice. We have nothing except good [to say about them]. There are a few disadvantages. The cost of living in Elko is just unbelievably high.

Q: What accounts for that? Why, for instance, is gas 20 c higher?

J: I think they've got you over a barrel for one thing. You are far away from anything. In Anaconda, if you don't like it, you just go to Butte and get what you don't like in Anaconda. It seems like the gas in Anaconda was cheaper than it was in Butte, but other things. But here, I took my daughter to an orthodontist; we went to Twin Falls to one, which was a three hour drive, and then I took her to Reno to the other, which is a five-hour drive. [more about isolation, cost of living.]

P: Elko is actually just a tourist area. Even though there are a lot of gold mines in the area, there are really only one or two that are in Elko County that support the tax base; all the rest of them are in other Nevada counties. So really, other than the people living here who work at those mines, there isn't a lot of economic support other than the three casinos they have. [more about Elko.]

Q: did you build this house?

J: No. We figured our last one cost us \$30,000. [more about housing in Elko.]

Their kids: Julia will be 16 next week; Amy just turned 14 and Drue is 11.

P: Julia went to school and didn't make any friend immediately, and she was still down on moving here. But after she got into basketball and a few activities, she made some friends and I think she is pretty happy now. Amy hit it off really well right off, I think her personality, she met some kids.

J: I thought she would be the one that would be hardest, because she has had this group of 12 girls that she's run around with from the time she was in kindergarten, but she came up with a good attitude, and she made a bunch of friends right off the bat. She still runs around with them.

P: Drue had a little bit of a tough time. Drue is a little bit different, his personality, not that he's weird or anything, but he's kind of a loner, and he didn't make a lot of friends, and he would go to school and tell the kids at school that he had this or that in Montana, and the kids didn't believe that he had horses or whatever, so they teased him a lot, and he sort of went into a shell for a long time, and now, he doesn't say much about it anymore, he has a few friends, he still doesn't have a lot.

J: I've had several people that have moved into town that have boys and girls say that boys have a lot harder time adjusting than the girls do. I don't know why that is.

Q: How did you feel about the necessity to move? You had said you had some reluctance.

P: I had job opportunities from the middle '70's to move to Arizona, Wyoming.

J: We looked at a couple of them but they weren't . . .

P: One in Utah . . . But having a good job, I wasn't very particular as far as getting a better salary and working conditions. And I wasn't anxious to leave the area, because all my family were still there. There really wasn't any incentive to move. Even when it came down, there was a little reluctance because I liked the area, but I just had to convince myself that to maintain the standard of living we were, we weren't going to be able to stay there. And once I got over that hurdle, I really didn't have any problem.

Q: Judy?

J: I was glad. Like I said, I had decided about six months before that I wanted to get out of the area. Not that I wanted to leave his family, because we are real close, there is no in-law trouble at all.

P: But the schools and the facilities and shopping . . .

J: Everything. It was such a depressing place to live.

P: For years, to go Christmas shopping or anything, we ended up going to Missoula or Bozeman because we just couldn't find anything in the Butte area.

J: I'm sure it was there. Butte and Anaconda isn't really my home area, but I lived there for 15 years, and I feel it's more home than anywhere else I ever lived because I never lived anywhere long enough to be attached to it. But like I said, when he decided to take this job, I was anxious. You know, I had mixed feeling. That would probably describe it better. I didn't really want to leave all the friends and family we had down there, but I did want to get out of the area for the sake of the kids more than anything. And myself. I kept thinking, if I ever wanted to go back to teaching, that I just didn't stand a chance in Butte-Anaconda.

Q: Are you teaching here?

J: Just substituting. I'd just as soon not get a permanent job for a couple more years.

P: You did more than substitute. You took the tutoring job with the Indian kids. But we had some -- I guess Judy more than I -- had some reluctance about moving to Nevada because of the gambling, prostitution activity.

J: Yeah. But you live here, you don't pay any attention to it. We don't ever play the slots. They are just part of the background, you don't even see them. [more about casinos.]

P: But even in Butte, you go into a bar and you see all those poker machines, we always walked by them, and we do the same things with the slot machines here.

J: And we don't live in the downtown area, so you don't see the people that are doing the drinking, and you don't have any association or contact with the prostitution or anything, so it's just like it's in its own little world. I kind of worried about it, but my kids are never downtown unless we are driving through, but there's no reason for them to go down there. If we go shopping, it's usually down to Albertsons or that little shopping center down there.

Q: In Butte, a lot of people have moved away, and a lot of people have found full time employment one way or another. But there are still a core of people in Butte, some who haven't worked since the smelter shut down and others who haven't worked since the layoffs at the Pit. Among those people, there is a real reluctance to move. And one thing you hear a lot is that there are no jobs out there; that they know people who have left to work for jobs, spent all their money, come back broke. One thing that's been surprising to me on this trip as I've been interviewing a lot of people who have moved away, is what good jobs people have found. Why, when there are so many success stories really, do you think there is still that feeling in Butte that there are *no* jobs out there.

P: I think that it's probably because they don't want to find one. I can understand a lot of -- I shouldn't say older, but workers in their 50's, and their house is paid for and possibly their children are grown up, and they have a lot of family in the area, that would be tough to just start over. I was 41, 42 when I moved here, and I got to thinking of the rest of my working career. I thought, if I am going to move, I want to do it now in my early 40's; I can spend 20 years with a company and still get a decent retirement. You know, when you're 55 years old

J: but there are a lot of people in their 20's and 30's that won't leave Anaconda.

P: But the younger ones, I don't know. Like you said, there are a lot of jobs, even at the place I work, we've hired probably 40 maintenance mechanics in the last six months just at our operation. What keeps them in Butte, I don't know.

J: A lot of them -- you're an engineer, you have a lot of skills, you are a skilled person. But I don't know about ones that just worked as laborers and stuff, it probably is harder for them to find work. But like Paul said, there are places that are hiring.

P: And maybe there is some truth that they are not able to find jobs, because I know the union cloud that hangs over a lot of the workers. I'm not saying that all the people that belonged to the union are bad, but everyone that belonged to the union in Butte, Montana has an image that stuck with them, and a lot of the companies know about that, and for them to shake that image, they have got to demonstrate that they aren't going to cause the same difficulties with who they go to work with.

J: That may be another reason that people don't work there. There are so many people that just can't believe that Butte actually shut down. And they are just sure that it is supposed to open up again, and of course Washington is talking about starting it up again. I think a lot of them have hung on just because there is no way that it would always shut down.

P: Some of our neighbors in Lost Creek, where we lived, when the smelter shut down, they were put out of work, and we talked to them, what are you going to do -- a lot of them, their wives were working, you know.

J: They could make as much on unemployment . . .

P: They got their unemployment and welfare or whatever and their wives worked part time or full time, and they adjusted their standard of living, and a lot of them said that they were just not going to leave the area. One person that lived in Anaconda and worked with me in Butte, he was a maintenance foreman, when they announced the shutdown I asked him, are you considering going someplace else? He said, I don't care what happens, I'm not leaving Anaconda. Pretty good mechanic, he gets part time jobs here and there, their home was paid for, they didn't want to get into another mortgage on a home with maybe 15 or so years left to work. They just decided that that was the way they would live.

J: I guess I just can't understand that type of thinking.

P: I don't agree with it, but I guess you just try to understand. A lot of people are close, in the Butte area, close to their families.

J: You know, being an outsider -- I'm not a Butte-ite or an Anacondan, and I can look at people that come from Butte, and to those people, there is no place in the whole world that is ever going to be as good as Butte. And I'm not knocking that, but they do have that, and I've noticed a couple -- we were talking about that one day, there was me and a few other women, and one of them said something about people who came from Butte, they got tired of listening to how great Butte is. So a really born and bred Butte-ite, it's hard for them to adjust anywhere else. I don't know if any other place has that difficulty. I don't know if people who have been born and raised and lived generations in Elko have the same problem if they move someplace else or not. I can't judge, because I never lived anywhere long enough to have that happen. But I notice that, too, being an outsider, from Butte and Anaconda, they just never thought anyplace could be that great.

P: Other than Montana Power, I don't think there's been an influx of new blood in the Butte area for a long time. So a lot of kids that have graduated from high school and go onto college, they leave and they don't come back, so what do you have left? The people that don't go to college and maybe drop out of high school, and you don't have a population of business-type people or engineers. They have all gone. Our neighbor here, Jack Davis, he ran Davis Motors in Butte, and I don't know when he left, he runs a parts store here, he says that he just couldn't make it in Butte. He likes Butte, but he recognized the fact that if you want to do better, you've got to get out of the area.

J: You know, your cousin lived there all her life, and when they moved someplace in Colorado, they love it down there. I was real surprised. I thought she would be one of the die hard Butte-ites that would never live anywhere else. But she was all enthusiastic when I saw her last summer. They like the area, they like the schools, the kids are happy. So maybe they just need to move out and find out there's a world outside Butte and Anaconda.

P: We haven't been there; I guess we were up there for last Thanksgiving, but we never talked to anyone other than family. I don't know what has transpired since ARCO sold it. I don't know whether Butte is on an economic upswing or downswing or what.

Q: There's a lot going on there; it's really surprising. Whether or not the mines will get going or not is a question. They've been talking 300 or 350 jobs. When I left, there had been 1200 applications; somebody told me yesterday that they had just heard 2000.

J: All those people that stuck around for all those years expecting it to open up.

P: And probably a lot that are working elsewhere and would come back?

Q: I don't know. I've been surprised, in interviewing people who have moved away, how content many of them are.

J: I think they have to get out to find out.

P: Unless you are really unhappy where you went -- and then you look at going back to the Butte area with nothing, where you are at has got to be better.

J: But you know, a lot of those people have never left Butte, and they don't realize that you can be just as happy some place else. I'm not trying to knock Butte, but just from talking to all the people that I've known. Most of our friends were born and bred Anacondans or Butte-ites. They just can't realize that -- I mean, you love, you have your family, you have school, you have a job -- it doesn't have to be in the Butte area. You still have the same . . . It's just like their attitude is that you can't be happy unless you are in Butte. And when they move away like Sharon, Paul's cousin, they realize that you have just as many opportunities to be happy someplace else. I guess it's hard for me to describe it when I'm not a native, but I used to see that all along, all the time I lived there, people were so reluctant to live because they didn't think they'd like it anywhere else. It's amazing that people do adjust. But then it's your basic personality, too. You can go with the attitude that you are going to hate it, and you will. I guess if people would just give it a chance, move away from Butte, find jobs someplace else, they'd find that they'd like it.

P: I'd really like to see Butte get back on its feet.

J: So would I.

P: My parents are retired, so the mines shutting down hasn't really affected them, but I have one brother that still lives in Butte, works for the highway department; I have another brother that lives in Whitehall but he works in Butte, and I don't know what his attitude is. He's a hard worker and I don't think he'll have any trouble finding a job wherever, but they like the Whitehall area. He works for the Water Company in Butte. And I haven't had much contact with him. He called me up one day, wanted to know if I was interested in going to work for the Water Company. I told him no. I



talked to one of the people I worked with out in the Pit, one of the supervisors asked me if I was interested in coming back and -- I don't know if I like the security of where I am: I'm not ready to give up what I've got here to go back there, to just live in Butte. We've found that life here in Elko is just as enjoyable as we had there.

Q: There are a lot of Butte people working here. What is the reputation of Butte workers here, Butte labor?

P: Not very good. I don't know how many laborers there are in the area. Some -- well, I don't know if any people from the labor are even working at our place, and I don't know many of the people at the other mines. I know there was a John Mansani (sp?) that worked for Freeport here, and he's transferred to Winnemucca, job conditions were better. I had brought a person down as an electrical foreman here to work with us and just this last month he's decided to accept a job back with Washington. He wasn't very happy here, and I don't know if that's the Elko atmosphere that did that, or if he was unhappy at work.

J: His wife was happy here, though.

P: I think it was a combination of both.

T: Was that Paul McCue?

P: Yes. I know what he told me, and I'm not sure that I believe that's the only reasons for his leaving.

J: Margaret was happy here, though. She told me before they ever knew they were moving back, that she was really happy here and she liked it and she said that she wouldn't want to have to move again.

P: I think -- and I'm not sure that Paul would ever tell you this, and maybe you shouldn't put it in. [tape off].

P: We haven't had any trouble finding people to work at our place here. The wages are less than they were in Butte, for comparable work. They are getting about \$12.50 for a mechanic. Good life insurance, dental plan, eye care, fairly good benefits, at least at our mine. Now there are some non-union operations, and I don't know what the benefits and the wages are there. I know that there are a lot of people that work at Freeport and some of the other places that have put in applications with Newmont, where I work.

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Q: Carlin and Newmont are the same?

P: Yeah, we changed names last month from Carlin Gold Mining Company to Newmont Gold Company. Newmont stands for New York and Montana. The founder of Newmont is a guy named Thompson that lived in Alder, Montana back in the early 1900s. So Newmont -- Gordon Parker, president of the company, graduated from Montana School of Mines, his predecessor did, several of the corporate officers graduated from Butte.

Q: A man who had left Butte to work elsewhere said to me a few days ago, "Have you ever seen anyone from Butte who has left and hasn't succeeded in whatever they've done?" Do you think this is true?

Tape 2, Side A

P: From the time I went to work for Anaconda, one of the electrical foremen at the smelter told me -- this was in '71, because I was threatened with a layoff myself because of the strike, and it was a company policy that they were going to cut back 10% and me being one of the younger people there, I figured I was leaving -- he told me that very same thing that you just mentioned, he said, don't worry about it, everyone who has left Anaconda has done much better than by staying. I'm sure that's not true in all cases; maybe you only hear about the good ones.

Q: But in terms of Butte people who have grown up in Butte and then become very successful ... Mike Mansfield to Even Knieval.

P: The School of Mines, Montana Techn, still has a very good mining reputation. I don't know if they are attracting many people to those fields of study anymore, mining and geology and that. But there are a lot of people out here who are familiar with Montana Tech.

Q: Butte *is* haunted by its unions reputation, and it has affected what's happened to Butte workers. On the other hand, Butte workers also have the reputation of being good workers and those who have gotten jobs elsewhere have tended to do well in those jobs. Certainly, a lot of people suffered for the reputation and they didn't have any role in making it. What's the answer?

P: I don't know whether it's a matter of time. I guess I would categorize myself as one -- not being in the union -- but a hard worker, establishing a

good reputation in the work place. Maybe there have to be a few people that get out and get jobs and discourage that bad image.

J: Is it all the workers that have the bad image, though, or just the ones that were the more strong leaders?

P: Well, I think when you apply for a job and you say you belong to the Steelworkers Union and worked in Butte, Montana --

J: Because I mean, just knowing our neighbors, most of those guys were not strong union, they just belonged to the union because it was the only way they could get a job. They weren't out there rabble rousing. And I'm not saying that the unions -- they *needed* to have unions in the mines years ago. Obviously, the pendulum just swung too far to the other side.

P: One of the things that would help is if Washington can get started and some of those people do go back to work and they are willing to accept different working conditions, fewer benefits, whatever. That may help more than anything.

J: When they started up AVCO in Anaconda, the foundry, most of the ones they hired, one of our neighbors is an excellent welder, and he went to work there and somebody came down and wanted them to get the union and they said no, leave us alone. So there are a lot of union guys that don't want the union in there, either. They were just happy to have a job after they were laid off. And as far as I know, AVCO tried to be as fair as they can afford, they pay them what they can afford. AVCO was struggling; I don't know if they still are.

P: I just don't know if there is any answer to that.

J: It's kind of sad that they don't get jobs just because they worked in Butte in the mines.

Q: It's one of those situations that it's so hard to know what to do with. 13 unions. . .

P: I knew some people that worked w/ Anaconda as union people; I've known them from the time I was a kid, went to school with them and some of the older ones. I went to school with their kids. The ones that were really strong in the union, and their fathers worked for Anaconda, they grew up to see the conditions their parents and grandparents worked under -- long hours, low pay, horrible working conditions in the underground mines. The

union did a lot to improve those conditions, get them better pay and benefits. And now Anaconda or ARCO or Washington comes in and says now you've got to start over -- that's a pretty big pill for someone to swallow who has seen his father and grandfather struggle for 40 or 50 years to make things better for him. The image they see is that they are going back to those conditions. I don't see it that way. Maybe they just can't understand that there are different people running the Anaconda or Washington Corporations than there were in those days. I know when Anaconda was making a lot of money in Chile and everywhere else in the world, they didn't have to cater to the people who worked in Butte because they weren't making any money anyway. The story about Butte is that it never made any money for Anaconda, which is probably untrue. I guess if I knew that I worked very hard and got some working conditions that made life better for me and improved my standard of living, I would be very careful to have someone, some official come in and say things aren't going to change but you've got to work for less money -- it's tough to accept that. What happens, these people's children decide that they can't get a job and they want to stay in Butte, decide that I will accept whatever Washington -- seven and a half dollars an hour. The only other place I can go to work is MacDonaldis and make three dollars an hour. So for a younger person coming into the workplace, it probably won't be so bad. But for someone who has spent 10 or 15 years, 20 years working for Anaconda, and goes back to work in a completely new set of circumstances -- it's tough to accept.

J: Will Washington start up non-union?

Q: They will start up non-union, but by law, people are free to organize.

P: I was talking to my father on father's day and asked him about it, and he said they were trying to start it up without the union and he agrees that maybe they don't need 13 unions, but he still has a little bit of the union in him, he thinks they need something. My father is a man who went to work fulltime when he was 10 years old because his father couldn't work, and he partially supported his family from that time on. He had to give up college because he didn't have the money and he had to support his brothers and his mother. And he sees through the years all the things the union has done for him. And when you are in the union vs. the management of the company, all you hear about management is how they are trying to put down the union, take things away from them. So naturally you are going to get a bad feeling from the managers or whatever. So it's tough for them when you grow up from the time you were a kid and everything is anti-company to all of a sudden jump over the fence and say yeah, I'm going to do everything I can to make this company run. When the company would

fire you or your father for the littlest thing and the conditions weren't that good.

Q: That's what you wonder, how can you diffuse . . .

P: How do you wipe that out of everybody's mind?

Q: You look at something like Golden Sunlight in Whitehall, and from what I hear, and I haven't interviewed out there, but from what I hear, it seems to be a pretty good working situation; management gets along with labor.

P: That's right. And when Anaconda started talking this flexibility in the early 80's to try to improve the productivity of the people, being on the management side of Anaconda, I could see where there were a lot of bad practices, and you could sit down and talk with the union people about it, and all they could offer was yes, if I'm not doing it, someone else is doing it, and it gives someone else a job. And that's all well and good, but Anaconda can't support the entire Silver Bow County just because they are there. I guess I always had the attitude when I went to work that if I didn't do enough things during that day to make the company enough money to pay my wages, then I probably shouldn't be there. But a union person -- and this is my own personal opinion -- goes to work with the attitude that the less I do during the day, the more people are going to be here to help me do it. And how do you get everyone to say yeah, the more work I do, the better off the company is, and the longer my job is going to last. When probably in many occasions in the past, the better job they did, maybe did a little thinking for themselves and the boss didn't like the way they did something, so they were fired. It's not all the union's fault, by a long shot. And maybe only 20% of it is the union. Management of Anaconda caused a lot of their own problems.

Q: Almost a reflex action on both sides.

P: That's right. So the Company is mad at the union for all the things they do, and the union isn't going to do anything that the Company wants, just on principle. And that was the problem with the flexibility talks. The union was very suspicious of what Anaconda was trying to do to its people there. All that the new management that is there can do is say, we are different, and this is the way we're going to do it. Whether or not they believe it is another story. But then, you know, I come down here and it is a union, and you have the option of belonging to the union or not belonging to the union. So you have union and non-union working side by side in the same plant, so

it does work. And it should be able to work in Butte, Montana as well as Elko, Nevada.

Q: Do you have any idea of what proportion are union in Newmont?

P: No. I know because of the last labor negotiations that the Electricians were upset because they thought they should be getting pay equivalent to someone else and the union didn't back them on that so the electricians decided to drop out of the union. The problem is that because they did sign the contract, they are still obligated by the conditions of that contract. I don't know. We have a lot of technicians that work out there in the lab, they are hourly, but they don't belong to the union. I don't know if it's 80/20 or whatever. I've heard the same thing about Golden Sunlight, that everyone out there gets a salary, is treated as a salaried person. For them, I guess it works. How do you deal -- having no union is maybe as bad as having too many, because when there is no union, everybody is his own business agent and has his own gripes. Then your industrial relations people are really flooded with problems and complaints because everybody is coming to them. In my own opinion, one union is ideal because then you have a small group of people that you deal with that represents all the people. One of the problems in Butte with so many unions, you had so many of those groups, and they didn't always see eye to eye. A lot of times, personnel persons were referees for inter-union problems. Getting back to the issue of Butte unions, I guess it's just a matter of time. Either people are going to have to come in, like what happened in the 60's with the Vietnam War, we had a lot of protests and demonstrations and kids today have a completely different attitude toward our government. Would that work with Butte? People stay there and new people come in and find jobs with Washington and Montana Power and whatever, change that whole antagonistic situation between the Company and the Union. Anaconda or Washington now certainly isn't going to be considered a big company, two or three hundred people. Maybe there's a chance. For the sake of Butte, I hope there is. I've heard some comments that it was a bad decision to ever shut Anaconda down because it would be much harder to start it up than to try to keep it running and work out the problems. Unfortunately, you can't have both conditions at the same time. Either you run or you shut down, so it's really conjecture what could have happened.

Q: How big a role do you think the labor situation played in that final decision to shut down? If labor had been rosy with every concession in the world, do you think the hill would still be running?

P: I think it would still be running, only because there would probably have been less people working there and they would have been more productive. Labor had a function, and that was to keep their people employed, and you can't knock them for that. If they had just given in and conceded all those conditions that Anaconda asked for, I don't know whether it would have still run or not. Unless they sold it to a mining company or to an independent or themselves started up as an independent company -- I think that would have been the only way to keep it running. My impression was that ARCO had just made up their mind that they didn't want it. From the time they shut the smelter down, looking back, you can see where ARCO had decided they made a bad business decision and wanted to get out of it. Now Kennecott, they have asked for concession, and I don't know what sort of luck they've had. Phelps Dodge really took a big task on their hand when they went non-union and they seem to have got over that hurdle, but there are other copper companies including some that belong to Newmont in Arizona that seem to be able to make money. It's not that Anaconda would never be able to make money under different conditions. Part of that was management changes for different operating methods. When you can't make money, you just can't afford to pay the high wages. And it's always tough to go back, you know, when you're making \$10 an hour and come to work the next day and make \$5 an hour. That's tough. You now, when you've gone and mortgaged your house and you have a bunch of kids -- I wouldn't want to do it, and that's probably one reason I'm here. I could have stayed in Butte and found some kind of work, but I sure wouldn't make the wages I am.

A lot of the people I talked to said they would rather work for nothing than to work for less. That I had a hard time understanding myself. A lot of people were laid off, \$ 12 or 15 a hour, they went to work for four or five dollars an hour, were working two jobs, and put the wife to work just to get the same money and were very unhappy doing that. I guess a lot of it is individual, and how do people as a group get the people that don't want to accept different conditions to join them or not cause problems because they won't work for less so they won't let anyone else work for less either. I think everyone should be able to make up their own mind whether or not they want to work. You can go back to the union argument, look at all the union has done for you, and how can you go against the union because of all the union has done for you.

Q: In order to find employment, you went through a private employment office?

P: Yeah, they call them professional recruiters. [more about this.]



Q: Did ARCO give any help on relocation [finding jobs]?

P: Yeah, they did. I don't know if they gave as much as they could. We were offered inter-company job lists throughout ARCO to review; I sent in a few resumes to those positions and nothing ever came of that. They also worked through the employment office in Butte to send down any information that they would have received for professional jobs. And while we were employed and even when people knew they were being laid off, they were given three months full pay to go out and look for jobs; they were given the use of telephones and facilities for typing, preparing resumes, the secretaries still working then to help assist. They brought in professional people to tell you how to deal with losing your job, ways to conduct yourself in interviews, and how to write introductory letters to companies. They really tried to put out as much information and be as helpful as they could in assisting. This was the salaried people. I don't think they did anything like that for the hourly. There were a lot of hourly people that left Butte and worked down in Wright, Black Thunder, and went to Tonopah (sp?), other places they had going.

Q: With the shutdown and your leaving Butte, your life cast in a different direction, you left the house you built -- are there benefits that you identify with that change in your life?

P: Yeah. For one thing, the burden of the job insecurity was left behind. That may not be true for everyone, but it was in my case. I went to a gold mine where we went from being a small operation, we started up a new mine and mill last year when I first came here. Since then we've found three or four more gold deposits, and it's anticipated that we will be the second largest gold producer in the country this year. So everything has been on a positive cycle for me since I've come here, as far as my working and my career, as compared to ARCO, we struggled there with different plans and different mining plans, how can we operate this thing to make money? It was a matter of, how can we shave a few cents here or there so we can keep from losing money. Here, it's a completely positive atmosphere and attitude, how can we spend some money so we can make more money? Not how can we cut our losses so we won't lose so much? It's a real welcome adjustment for me. I just feel that in Butte, in the last years, everything was so negative and we were so worried about how can we keep operating, to get away from the burden of those type worries and have positive type worries, is just tremendous. And like I say, with my family, now that we've made the adjustment, leaving Anaconda wasn't the end of our lives. The family has gotten into a lot of positive things here. And they still communicate

with friends, and we communicate with friends, but we look at it as a step forward instead of a step backward.

Q: Judy, do you see any benefits that Paul hasn't mentioned.

J: I was trying to think how I really benefit. Except for the more positive atmosphere in the town and the people you talk to and stuff, it doesn't really matter to me where I live.

P: We said that when we had to leave. As long as our family can be together -- for the first two months when I was down here alone. I had no family with me, so those were a little bit negative, but we knew it was a short term thing. Leaving our home and everything was a set back to us. And you look out here and you don't see pine trees and fir trees and things like that, but you do see something different, you see a lot of sagebrush and open country, and you didn't see that in Montana. We came here with the attitude that we were going to look for all the good things in moving and not worry about the bad things such as the gambling and the prostitution. We ignore them.

Tape 2, Side B

P: And there are some negative things, you know. We left my family, which we were fairly close to. But we talk to them, and my grandparents are 88 and 85, you know, we knew they wouldn't be around forever, and my parents are getting up there, but we just had to face the fact that when we are together with them, we just have to make the time more quality. Rather than stopping in two or three times a week, we do it two or three times a year, or once a year.

Q: Do you have any regrets, Judy?

J: No. Short and simple. I miss the friends, but heck, half of my close friends had already moved anyway. So I don't have any regrets at all. I'm glad we moved, glad Paul has a job that's stable, the kids have a town they can live in where they have a chance to work part time, sports events where they get to travel, or band or whatever they are in.

P: That's for sure. Julie in track and basketball and band, she's seen more of Nevada than we have. She's been to Vegas and Reno about ten times. Not that they wouldn't have done that in Montana.

J: But everything was getting cut back.

P: I really don't have any major regrets about leaving. Of course, it would have been nice to keep Anaconda running. We would have been perfectly happy to stay there. But making up your mind to change with the times is the hardest thing. The physical aspects of moving was not as hard as the mental preparation.

J: How would you know? You weren't there! (laughs)

P: I was down here, living out of a motel and small apartment.

J: I know.

Q: What have we missed?

J: Just his family. I miss his mom and dad, his brother.

P: We miss the recreation, we lived out in Lost Creek, we were 15 minutes away from some small stream fishing, the skiing at Discovery was close, having horses.

J: You can have them here, but it's sort of a hassle when you live in town, have to board them out. It's just not the same as being able to throw hay over the fence at night.

P: Accepting that you wouldn't have the same things and you would adapt to new things for recreation, maybe new friends -- but it hasn't been difficult for any of us.

Q: What haven't we talked about that is important?

J: Paul's covered everything! (laughs)

P: You know, you mentioned when you first came here Butte in transition. I guess it's tough to see that on a day to day basis. Probably, us moving away and going back and hearing about Butte, positive or negative things, it seems like the changes are more rapid than if we stayed there. We touched on how do you change the image of bad labor relations -- I really don't have any answers. Time is the only thing that I can say will do it. And you look around at other towns in MT, like Phillipsburg or Basin, which were mining towns, you wonder if that is the destiny of Butte. I've got to admit that the better part of the mineral reserves are gone from Butte. I think it's time for Butte to say we've got to look for industry, whether it be tourism or... And I think Don Peoples really tried, he brought that grain terminal in, and it

isn't even farm country, but he managed to do it, so I think there are some people in Butte that could get the job done if they were given the cooperation and support they need. And the people that are left there from the old Anaconda that are now working for Washington, I think they are going to give it a real good try -- Frank Gardner. And really, there's a guy that got a retirement from ARCO. He really isn't going to benefit that much. He's probably working for less money. I admire him for that. I hope they can make it come about.

Q: What is your sense when you visit? That Butte is doing better than you expected? Worse?

J: We have only been back once, and that was at Thanksgiving.

P: I really haven't been back, and haven't talked to many. I've talked to my folks. But sometime later on, in July, we will probably go up there and I would like to see Frank, talk to a few of them and see how they are. And that statue, that was impressive, I'm glad they finally got that done.

J: That was neat. We haven't seen it yet, but his folks brought us the video and we watched that.

P: You know, Bob O'Bill worked for me in the Pit.

J: Anaconda has to be shrinking. I don't know about Butte, but this lady that I teach with said that there was only 88 kids in the kindergarten this year. So that shows a tremendous shrinkage. So I don't think Anaconda has a whole lot of hope, but maybe Butte, having the mines and stuff, will have a better chance. Because I don't think Butte has shrunk that much.

P: I don't know in population. But politically in the state, you don't see them as having the power in the legislature as they did. Anaconda had lots of power. So how do people like Don Peoples accept that they are no longer the big power in the state and work on getting new industries and tourism -- and it all takes money, and where does it come from? Tough decisions. Some will be right and some will be wrong. Hopefully most of them will be positive. What happens to the church and social type things that were so close to so many families and nationalities like the Irish. I think the days of the little neighborhood, they've been gone for a long time, but people are still trying to live -- the Irish community. They are nice to have, but I think everyone has got to come together for a common cause. I never supported St. Patrick's day, because I wasn't Irish but maybe some other people with my same feelings should do that. There's a lot of them that do (laughs).

Maybe it becomes more of an ethnic town -- develop Meaderville again, places like Lydias. That was a big attraction in Butte in the 1950's. Rocky Mountain Cafe, Club 45, the biggest club. What do you do with all those homes on the west side that were so beautiful and are so deteriorated? What do you do with things like the Alice dump, up where my folks live, right behind it? That's really an eyesore. My folks would like to see that reclaimed. And then what happens when all that stuff is gone and everything is beautiful, and everyone says, well, what happened to the mining atmosphere. What decision do you make -- do you maintain it, or do you get rid of all that image? Maybe that would establish a new image for Butte, get rid of Butte, America for one thing. Everyone else in Montana belongs to a [state], why doesn't Butte? I think that was really a detriment to people from outside Butte coming to Butte and doing things there. Butte always wanted to be set aside as something different. Well, if you want to get along in the state and the surrounding communities, you've got to be part of it. I don't have anything else to say, really.

End of interview.