

## Termination Testimonials from Tribal Legacy

### 1) Greg Archuleta (Grand Ronde)

#### "Tribes of Grand Ronde Reservation Termination"

TOMV 2006

<https://www.lc-triballegacy.org/video.php?vid=624&query=termination>

[In] 1936, the federal government passed what was called the Indian Reorganization Act. And under that law, the tribes could adopt a constitutional form of government similar to the Constitution the United States has. And our tribe was one of those that did adopt a constitution, and so then we had a business council that was established here at Grand Ronde. But the reservation at that time was only, I think, around 500 acres. So, from 60,000 acres it went down to 500 acres.

So, they had the business council, and it was ideally to start economic development and things like that on the reservations. But that was cut short in 1954 with the western Oregon Termination Act. And what that act did was terminate the federal status of the tribes here and we were no longer recognized as Indian people by the federal government. So, the people were not eligible for any other services as other tribes were. So, in the next few years then they closed the reservation, and then the tribe only...that we had remaining was our tribal cemetery, which is not too far from here. And termination...um, a lot of times people hear stories about we got a big payment at that time - thousands of dollars. But, we have some of the records here from some of those payments and I believe it was my great grandma - she got like \$28 or \$29. So that was the big payment.

But so, for 30 years, the tribe was terminated and then we had a group of our tribal members here. They began working towards restoration of the tribe. And they start working with Senator Mark Hatfield [and] Les AuCoin, and so we were successful in 1983 in getting our federal status restored. And it restored the status of the tribe as it was at the time of termination.

See also: Mr. Archuleta describing "Tribal Recovery" after recognition was restored and the reservation was reestablished.

<https://www.lc-triballegacy.org/video.php?vid=625&query=termination>

### 2) Tony Johnson (Grand Ronde)

#### "Termination of the Grand Ronde Reservation"

TOMV 2006

<https://www.lc-triballegacy.org/video.php?vid=675&query=termination>

And this is getting us up closer to an important date in Grand Ronde and that was Termination. So, folks may or may not know this, but this reservation existed basically one hundred years with some impact, but it existed with a governing body, tribal sovereignty what-have-you into the 1950s when the federal government terminated the tribe. And what that basically means was that they severed all relations with it as a government. And there was a

pretty good effort at that moment as well to move people from this community...native people from this community into the cities in order to just make more...make them into Americans. That's really the effort.

The idea was by the 1950s that folks on Indian reservations were not becoming enough like the average American and so there was a kind of experimental policy - termination era; Termination Act that got rid of every reservation in western Oregon and the Klamath in eastern Oregon, and some other places in the country; Minnesota is another place that some of this occurred. Regardless, when Grand Ronde was terminated they only had five acres left to their name, and that's the tribal cemetery not too far down the road.

### **3) Gary Robinette (Ponca)**

#### **"Reinstatement of the Ponca Tribe"**

TOMV 2006

<https://www.lc-triballegacy.org/video.php?vid=1389&query=termination>

In the '50s was the Relocation Act. They started moving the working ages to the...to the cities. They shipped them off to Chicago and to Denver, Colorado, and to Dallas and different places like that. A lot of 'em from in our area, from the Niobrara area, were like in Omaha, North Fork, and out working in different places. So, there wasn't enough down there, they weren't getting enough from the government to even survive, so the government, uh, banned 'em, so to speak. They, uh, terminated their federal recognition in 1962. So, for thirty years, from 1962 clear up until October 31, 1990—now we're into the modern-day stuff—the Ponca tribe was reinstated, re-recognized as a federal recognized tribe...federally recognized tribe.

So, they throw 'em into this, totally...they had no idea how to run a tribe, what a tribe was supposed to do. They had an interim tribal council, they called it. They had...their duty was to get a constitution prepared and have an election. I believe it was 1992, '92 before they-'91 or '92—before they had their first election. They had to, of course, run the constitution through their tribal members, get it approved, run it through the...the, uh, Agency, Indian Agent, to get it approved, run it up to the Secretary, climb up the ladder and bring it back down. They accomplished all of this. They had their first election—okay.

In the Act, they were not to be a tribal...I mean a reservation tribe. So, they gave them "service areas" - same as reservation, according to the public law. It sounds good, it's got real good parts about that, but, now you're in as an Indian tribe into the mainstream society, trying to use reservation standards in the city. Unh, uh—that doesn't work very well. So, in order to get housing, like the reservations had, they had to go get compacts with all of the cities and the counties, uh, agreements, so to speak. Everything had a string [attached] to it. They've been fighting very hard to get this done.