

CONNOR CHAPOOSE DISCUSSES TENSIONS WITH MORMON SETTLERS

B: Well, Connor, . . . would you discuss with me a little bit how you think the Utes feel about whites in general, and how do you think they felt toward the whites when they first came in contact with the whites, and how that feeling has changed, if it has, over the years since then?

C: Well, I think, Jack, one of my comments on that is that I've always referred to it as I've heard so many of our councilmen comment to a party that appeared before meetings with our older Indians. They always asked at these meetings, "Are you a white man or a Mormon?" Some place in their line of thinking or to their knowledge or experience they believed they had been mistreated by so-called Mormons. When they tried to work with them other than by tricks and other means, they were more or less distrustful of so-called Mormons. But I would say, as far as we say a white person, I think Mormons were just as white as white people, but in beginning those meetings, they would ask that question, "Are you a Mormon or a white man?" I guess there was two distinctions in their meanings there, because they wouldn't trust the so-called Mormon, if he was representing the Mormons. The Indian was not in a position to do business with the Mormons at all, because some place, some where, they had done wrong. . . .

B: Do you know of any reason why this should have been the case?

C: Yes, as I said, the Mormons had mistreated them, and they thought they would not trust them.

B: After the Mormons came into the valley here, they mistreated the Indians?

C: Yes. At the same time that they said they were doing right, I think a lot of them in the histories there, they did discredit themselves. They did much things as were wrong. They falsified their statements and their manners, and their rulings that the Indians were savages and hostile. But they're the ones that damned themselves by disguising themselves as Indians and even killed their own people in order just to discredit the Indians so they could say it was Indians.

B: I see.

C: I think that was one of the main things. They disguised themselves to gain possession of certain things which the Indians were disqualified for. Of course, on the Mormons' side, they did make it look like the Indians were the ones doing this, when they were the ones doing one of the most savage acts themselves and discrediting the Indians who weren't actually doing it. Thinking up these schemes to possess certain things, and they done it through false intent to discredit the Indians. So that was the reason the Indians did feel awfully strong against the Mormons at the time.

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