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Adam Nordwall is interviewed by Jeff Kennedy in 1977

Series: Potlatch series

1977

Jeff Kennedy said for centuries western cultures believed that the New World was discovered by explorers from the Old World. They imposed their religion, customs, language and laws on the aboriginal people. The explorers and not the original inhabitants took credit for the discovery.

Adam Nordwall talked to Jeff Kennedy from Nevada. He said they have been involved with a reenactment of Columbus discovering their country. They have felt this is wrong for a foreign country to claim a discovery in a land that had been occupied for tens of thousands of years. He was going to turn this around. He felt it was proper as an American Indian to go to Italy to make a discovery. On September 24, 1973 he flew to Rome, Italy and he claimed the land in the name of the American Indian. He felt it was proper to give the Natives of the land as much right as possible to name their country. He didn't want to press his religion on them. He said this was a turnaround in history. He talked about being termed pagans even though they had a belief in the Great Spirit in our country. They are in the process of bringing civilization to that country. Italy has always been in the midst of turmoil. They wanted to introduce harmony in that country. It is a polluted country. They want to bring cultural advantages to them. They wanted to establish the Italian Bureau of Italian Affairs. He does not believe the aborigines of Italy are not ready for self- government. He hopes to bring them around to understand that there is a superior lifestyle to theirs. He hopes to return to Italy. He did meet with the president of Italy and with the pope. He didn't want to push his own spiritual beliefs on the pope. Nordwall said the Italian country isn't celebrating September 24 as Nordwall Day, yet.

Song by Peter LaFarge

Nordwall said they will discover the Scandinavian countries, too. They weren't credited with the discovery of America. They were also savages, heathens and barbarians in the eyes of the Vatican. There is still a dispute about who did "discover" America. Only Christian nations were given the right of discovery. He discusses the Doctrine of Discovery. They were also given title to the land.

Jeff Kennedy said last year aborigines from Australia planted a flag on the White Cliffs of Dover. Nordwall said he recognizes this claim. He said Third World people should assert themselves. He said ultimately they will be able to discover all the countries of the world as well as rivers and mountains. He talked about the "discovery" of the Mississippi River. He intends to discover major rivers in Europe. Hudson named a river after himself. Nordwall may name a river in Europe after himself or Chief Joseph or Tecumseh. Nordwall said he is Chippewa from Minnesota. He was removed from the reservation and taken to a boarding school and then to technical school in Kansas.

### Song by XIT

Nordwall said he didn't know if they would pay Russia money for Alaska. He might give trade goods. He would not recognize aboriginal claims of Europe. He talked about Indians having to claim land in the 1850s and losing their land by default. He said the Natives of North America should pass a law that all nations of the world must register land with them. He said laws have been made that take land from the inhabitants of the land. Nordwall said as an explorer and discoverer there is little reward. He earns his living on the Stillwater reservation as a rock artist. He carves on rocks. He hopes to reproduce ancient designs.

### Song by Peter LaFarge

Nordwall said a statement came out in the press that he was impressed with the land and people that he discovered that he decided to give it back. He claims that he did not make that statement. He has not made any statement to give the land back to the aborigines of Italy.