

Transcribed tape of conversation between Dan and David Blankenship while Dan was down in Borehole 10-X at 145 feet and casing started crushing at 95 feet almost trapping him in the hole. This took place ~~xxxxxx~~ November 25, 1976.

(tape has a lot of hissing noise in the background; caused by air hose dan is using to clear out small cavities that have been found behind the casing. These were inspected after cutting out one-foot diameter holes with a torch.)

dan - o'kay, I said there's a wall out there (beyond the casing where dan is working) and ~~xxx~~ we'll try and find it david. I'm going to have to blow as much mud out as I can first. I don't know how deep you had this one (hole); I have no idea how far back (the hole went).

david - I think that's the one I had back ~~kkxxxxormfomxxxxxxx~~ about three or four feet.

dan - when you left here?

david - no, the other day.

dan - seems to me like that was the hole but i'm not sure david. there's a hole (cavity in the earth behind the casing) up above me. I reached my hand up to pull the clay out and there's a big hole above. The damn clay stopped up the hole. Now, if I could only get that open. I'd need another hole in (through the casing higher up). I'd give anything if I had a clear hole (in the casing) down below me to chuck this stuff (mud) out. As it is now boy I'm going to get nothing but a face full of mud because I'm going to have to just flush out (the hole) straight (ahead of him).

(Dan starts feeling pieces of earth dropping on him from somewhere up in the hole).

Dan - you're going to have to bring me up a bit. Now bring me up another foot please. (Then he starts screaming): BRING ME UP; BRING ME UP; BRING ME UP; OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT, OUT. (in the background rocks and debris can be heard falling down around dan's head). I'M OK; BRING ME OUT, OUT, OUT.

(Dan starts back down the hole again) Dan - I'm laughing
I'M OK; BRING ME OUT, BRING ME OUT, BRING ME OUT, BRING ME OUT;
I'M OK; KEEP BRINGING ME OUT; DON'T STOP; BRING ME UP; IT'S STILL
OVER MY HEAD (the material that's falling); OVER MY HEAD; BRING
ME UP. Woa; hold it; I see it (the crushing section of casing -
he's now just above it at about 90 feet.) Whoop! Hold it. Whoop!
Ok, bring me out; I've had enough for one day. Easy now. I've
had enough for one day. WHOOP! I'm shuttin down the other pump
and we'll check the damage (in the 10-X casing). WHOOP! What
pressure; what pressure! Wow! I was caught in that pressure and
I was ready for it. Almost. I never thought that she would go
about at the 95-foot level. Whoo! I was a goner. Whooup! Whoo!
I'm glad it's me down here and not you. Whoo! Ninety-five feet
down the casing broke. That's how come she came (the earth) on
top of my head David.

David - It broke?

Dan - That's why I was saying: keep going, keep going; above
my head. (Dan at this point is still being hoisted out of the
hole by David).

(Dan gets to the top and is pulled out of the hole.) Dan - shut
that one (pump) off and let the other one go.

David - the casing actually broke?

Dan - Yeah. I don't think she broke; I think it's just a crack.
Let me down again while I'm all wet, ~~and I'll find~~ and I'll find
out. I don't mind it now. Thank goodness I was watching it. I
want to go down below and see how bad it is. Phew! You should
see the pressure on the bottom. The hole you made (in the casing)
it's a big hole; the one you got that rock out of. All this
shit (earth) stuck out that far. All the way out of the casing
to the middle (of the 10-X hole). That's why I said get me above
that. Thank god you had me above that, and I was watching.
Whoo! She just broke through with mud; thick, thick mud. This
whole thing is getting ready to cave. (Dan at this point hadn't
realized what had happened - that the whole casing ~~xxx~~ at 95 feet
had been crushed like an ~~eggshell~~ egg shell from the pressure outside.

(Dan starts back down the hole again) Dan - I'm laughing now but I wasn't laughing down there because I didn't know what was happening. What'd Dan (Henske) do, shut off the compressor? Did Dan shut off the compressor?

David - Yeah.

Dan - He should have it ~~xxx~~ on. (for ^{air} supply). (David is still ~~winching~~ ^{WINCHING} Dan down. Ho! Woa! I'm hung up on a fitting (weld joint) that's all. Raise me up a little bit. Has Dan got the compressor on?

David - No, he hasn't.

Dan - Well tell him to put the compressor on please. If there's bad air down there I want the compressor on. I can't smell anything bad. But it would help to clear it up a little bit. Alright, easy does it. Hold it david; something's thumping like hell. (crashing noise audible on the tape). It has to be below me though, don't it. Did you hear that big thump?

David - Yes.

Dan - Boy, there's a lot of smoke below me too. Hold it now, I want to look at this (welding) joint just down below me. I should have waited until it cleared up, cause it's all ~~gx~~ foggy from that stuff that fell down. Lower~~x~~ me down slow please. Hold it until I look at this joint. That's the one you welded so much. Ok, now that look's alright. Boy it's awful foggy. Lower me down slow. Can you look above you (at the cable on the winch) and see whether the 90-foot mark is over.

David - I can't see it yet.

Dan - My god you should see the fog down here. Hold it, hold it, easy does it, easy does it. Woa; up a little bit; I'm on a fitting. Ok now just a sec; ok down easy. Dow easy. I don't want to get pinched (wedged) down here. I don't know what the casing (below) looks like. If we were smart we'd let it go till the morning!

David - Ninety foot just coming over the top of the derrick now.

Dan - Oh, we still got a long ways to go then. I can only see david... I can only see about three feet below the bucket *(the cage that dan is being lowered in.)*; there's so much fog.

David - You want to wait till it clears?

Dan - Well, I think that would be smart to wait till she clears. Just make damn sure you don't put me down (any lower). You stay right there and lock me (in position). There's something shaking like hell down in the bottom. Whatever's falling in this hole, it's shaking like hell. So that means you got another 35 feet to go before you.... You say it's just coming over the top of the derrick, right?

David - Yeah, it's about two feet down.

Dan - Alright. Now David, I can't smell anything ~~but~~ but I'm afraid of gas. I can't smell anything. Lower me down slow please. Real slow. Real slow. You better believe I'm scared now, after having that happen. ~~Don't~~ Don't tell your mother, David; my god. How much more to go? I can't see nothing yet.



David - About 25 feet (to get to the ⁹⁰⁻~~115~~ foot depth.

Dan - God, is she coming in David ~~(xxxxxxx)~~ (the rocks and debris are still falling down below and audible on the tape). She's shaking the casing. You know, she's (the debris) falling on the outside (and knocking against the casing). David, I don't want to go down no more. (crashing is now getting louder). Bring me up. I don't want to go down no more. I'm chickenshit today. One time like that's enough. Just call me chickenshit. Wow, do you hear it thumping. Whooo; one right after another; thump, thump, thump. Wow do you hear that! (very audible now). Whooo! Wow!

Handwritten scribbles and numbers: 90, 115, 65'