

11-5-2014

Statement by Dennis Tomah collected by Rachel George on November 5, 2014

Dennis Tomah

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General Information

Private or Public Statement?

Statement Provider: Dennis Tomah

Date: November 5, 2014

Location: Bangor, Maine

Previous Statement?

Statement Gatherer: Rachel George

Support Person: Allen Sockabasin

Additional Individuals Present: Sandy White Hawk

Recording Format: Video

Length of Recording: 59:26

Recording

RG: All right. It is November 5, 2014. We are here in Bangor, Maine. My name is Rachel George. And I'm here today with —

DT: Dennis Tomah.

AS: And I'm Allen Sockabasin (00:11) here for Dennis.

SWH: Sandy White Hawk.

RG: And the file number is W-201411-00132. Dennis, have you been informed, understood, and signed the consent form?

DT: Yes I have. I've complied and consented the forms, yeah.

RG: Great. And I have to let you know that if at any point during this recording you indicate there is a child or an elder currently in need or protection or that there's imminent risk of serious bodily harm or death, that that information may not be protected as confidential. Does that sound okay?

DT: Yes. It sounds pretty good, yes.

RG: So you are welcome to start wherever you feel the most comfortable.

DT: In that case—

SWH: Any questions?

DT: Okay. At the Dana's Point Reservation where I was born—when my father and mother—they took me from Dana's Point to Sipayik (00:01:12). In one case my father and mother, but my father brought me back from Dana's Point, from Pleasant—Sipayik, they brought me back to Dana's Point and turned me in to my grandparents. I don't know why I was a toddler or something, you know. But the thing was, eventually they were like my guardians, you know. My grandmother, and grandfather, Betty (?) Tomah and Sabbatus (?) Tomah, you know. But the only thing was that I learned many traditions from my grandfather which were native to our people, and my people too, of Dana's Point. But I ventured into other reservations at least, Penobscot, Sipayik, and Tobique, and (*inaudible*) (00:02:00), and the Connecticut branch of Indians, and the New York State branch of Indians, and some of the western part of the state of Maine Indians. Mainly the city Indians, they call them. I graduated many years of subject with Indian anthropology, which I was a graduate of the University of New Mexico with. And the thing is that I worked with—not in coercion but with—to coordinate, as much as possible, the Indian movements and the Indian way of life to the extent of Indian people for their good and for their own protection. But it has a very serious type of an effect to some people that have no understanding what the movement was, you know, of Indian people back then, you know.

AS: (*Speaks in Passamaquoddy to DT*)

DT: Oh Motahkomikuk, oh yeah...so the thing is, that at Dana's Point, my grandfather taught me the traditions and my father taught me how to work, physically work, you know? At that young age, you know. I was constructing underneath the church a destination to faith and other formations of religion. But I ended up adopting the religion of the Indian people. My grandfather, he taught me, my father and my grandmother did the same thing. My grandmother taught me the medicine. My grandfather taught me the traditions and my father taught me education of today's work. And it was in many formations. I went to school at Dana's Point Reservation with many of the past clients, people of Dana's Point, the students back then.

Albert Soctomah was one of the persons that I went to school with and another was Ben Dana and his brother, Charles and his other brother—I forget what his name is. Anyway, I was with a great number of people. This coincided with the church, you know? I came under when I was eleven or fifteen years old into another area of the church. Probably the area I was—consiliated to the power of—of a minister that had—that was the head of...this is God's church. God's church, you know. This is God's church. (00:04:52) And the adaptability the of the church parish from—not so much Dana's Point and St. Anne's, in reference to St. Anne's Parish at Dana's Point, but with the state it was kind of discomodified for something else, you know? But my grandfather and my—my father drank quite a bit. And my Mom was very worried about him through a great deal of years, you know. And the other fact is that my grandmother sometimes tipped the bottle to, you know? And so did the rest of the family; the aunts and the uncles. There was quite a party going on in my grandfather's house, you know. He must have been trembling in the woods somewhere, and watching us (00:05:37) raid his



house, you know (*laughing*). The thing was back then, in the perspective—I graduated from the elementary school at Dana’s Point and at Pleasant Point. I was a certain times at Pleasant Point to encourage (00:05:54) (*phone ringing*) the same things for ourselves to go to the education of the students (*waves hand to stop recording as phone rings*).

[PART ONE ENDS, PART TWO BEGINS]

AS: (*Speaking in Passamaquoddy to Dennis Tomah...DT and AS conversing back and forth shortly in Passamaquoddy*)

DT: Yeah, it was a very interesting type of transferal from Dana’s Point. My father got sick—(*shaking head, correcting*) my mother got sick. And my father—drinking and stuff. And the aunt, you know, verbal arguments, oral arguments and she took us back to Dana’s Point. There’s—she brought the children with her. My other brothers and sisters, I mean. And we travelled to Sipayik with the help of David Soctomah, he was an elder chief of yesterday’s promptness at the—Chief of the Passamaquoddy. (*Knock on the door, female enters*)

SPEAKER: Dennis?

DT: Yes ma’am.

SPEAKER: Oh, okay. Sue was looking for you to see if you have your oxygen tank.

DT: Oh, okay.

AS: We have enough, but he’s giving a statement. We have enough for another 45 minutes.

SPEAKER: (*Whispered*) Sorry.

DT: The thing is, in that, in the respect of Indian people on Pleasant Point, I got to know a lot of elders that are, I named a few—it’s one of the critical people in the other room there—about the demention of that frame elders in that timeframe (00:01:09) and thought of mine, that privilege and cornered them for the succession of the Passamaquoddy, you know. Sort of like an inspiration, to become under a militancy or something, you know, is what they inspired within me, but I was not bracketed in the militancy. The thing, the altercation of—at Pleasant Point was—my mom was very poor, she had a very poor little house. And it was only a certain area of a house, you know, it was very small in other words. But she took care of us, she would cry sometimes over the loss of my father. When my father was busy working in the main

formation of his work. He was working (00:01:54) in Wood apetrnall (*phonetic*) in Haynesville—

AS: (*Speaking in Passamaquoddy to DT*)

DT: Oh, that was about eight of us, or seven of us children he had to support, you know. But the thing was, that, at some point I started was working for him, you know. I shook the bark off the pine trees, you know, for the dimension and dimension of the (00:02:23) wood cuttings of probably TP, _____, Great Nothern, other lumber companies in that time area where he worked. But the only thing was that I was a debarker, is what I was. The trees were cut and I debarked them, but ones that we were branched off. But the thing was I went down to work successfully under _____ of a box, the only time like him—

AS: In that period of time, all the kids that could work would work. And one of the easiest work that we were able to do was to peel—they call it drop and peel, when you'd drop the wood. And he and I and many others would peel either poplar or the fir. That's what—it's what he talks about getting work. But he was going to tell you the number of children in his family.

DT: The number of children my mother took us was all of us—and Alex was the oldest, you know, Alexander Doyle (sp?), he called himself my mother's maiden name but his actual Indian name was Bibba. You know, Bibba. And the thing was, the nurses, sisters of Mercy helped us quite a bit, and the parishional minister of Pleasant Point, you know. But I did some work to the effect of delivering milk for the milkman in the formation of delivery on reservation with consent by the Governor of the state of Maine. To contribute to the Indians, the milk. The the only thing was that—I did that for a few years, and then I did some work in the formation of candy delivering, and pastry, what do they call that—assessment, you know. And the thing was that I did small time work until I had got to the University of New Mexico where I did some major work myself.

But in the way of raising my brothers and sisters, they were very consistently teasing my mother all the time, you know. So I would have to be her police officer (*laughter*). And it was kind of a detailed situation. I would have to spank my brothers and sisters if they didn't listen. And my grandmother would teach me how to spank, you know. With all the (00:05:00) ayah, all the seeyah brushes, and when that would start, they hid from me, you know. And I used to get the same treatment from my aunts and uncles. When I made a mistake, or too many mistakes, they would knock me a couple times and send me to bed or to my room. And I'd be crying over things, or (00:05:25) _____, but in the community sorts it was very valuable, significant to adults. But, as time went on in the agency of Pleasant Point and Sipayik, the reservation of Sipayik, the elders and the church were concerted with the tribe of the Passamaquoddies, which I did not know I was the deliverance of, you know. In other words, I didn't know I was a member of such people. I wasn't deserting them, I wasn't repulsing them, but I just didn't know as to what kind of a people they were, you know. But I went to the Mohawk reservation, most people—I said, "The people on Sipayik," I said, you know, but never heard of it. Check on the map—I had some maps going back to Sipayik. And they'd been there quite often, the reservation of Sipayik, the Mohawk people, in New York.



But as time goes on, my brothers and sisters were organized enough so they had respect for my mother and father. And my mother was very (00:06:35) constituent in the way of teaching me the ancestral things of the Passamaquoddy. One was the language, another was the basketry and the other traditions I was learning from my grandfather, you know. And grandmother at Dana Point. And so I quick making a buck for her and went for myself. I got change for myself, she would give me about 50 quarters for two weeks of work and weaving the baskets and making the standards for her basket association and between—

AS: (*Asks question in Passamaquoddy*)

DT: Oh, Bibba was the eldest of my family. And he was very mischievous, you know, a very mischievous teenager. When my aunts used to call me up to—“Let him grow up,” she said. “Let him grow up”—go after him and Allen is the same way too. In the later years he would have a lot of (00:07:40) alcohol consultations with my guardian and his too, out of delinquency, out of formations of—not of corruption but of dependency of an intoxicant, you know is very inflammable to the Indian people. Very inflammable to myself too. And Maureen and Allen were sort of like (*knits fingers together*) coexerting (8:06) with themselves. So every now and then they would, you know, rough me around. We’d be playing but they’d rough me up a bit and I’d go crying back to my mother when I was a certain toddler age.

But as time go on, they were a very respectful brothers and sisters to me. And then Maureen, Maureen turned to drugs, you know. But she was reconciled by the state into the mental health institution. Which I ended up in latter years, too, in the confirmation of the state and also of the church, you know. In responding to myself, as a personal formation of coexistence I might say to that effect instead of the rebellious rebel, or something, you know. And Louis Peter and Alice were the next two—I had other sisters in Dana’s Point too, such as Hazel. Hazel Pulchise and her sisters—her daughters—my father, but they were his daughters, not my mother’s association. It was a different lady’s association. But in—Louis and Alice were—in Dana’s Point Alice started going off with the wrong people. She’d head out the door with her friends and go off with the wrong people. (00:09:40) So not to indulge the pain or consternate her mind but to free her from the aversion—the mistaken in the outside world. You’re mistaken with things of identity, you get into trouble very quickly. People might mislead you or consume you in some way.

But Louis was very quick. He didn’t drink, he went to school. (00:10:10) He was very—he wasn’t abused very justified with the clevercy of his mind, and his body, his soul and spirit. The thing is that he was a very clever boy. But he wanted to learn, you know. He wanted to learn the arts and crafts of Indian people, you know, which I had repossessed by my (*coughing*) by my grandfather, my father. But the thing was that as we went to school, we stayed at school too at Pleasant Point. That was another school at Dana’s Point, you know. But in the respect of what it is, Dana’s Point has very smart, intelligent teachers—sisters of Mercy. So were the

sisters of Mercy at Pleasant Point. But they sometimes would rough off somebody, you know. Adult ladies, you know, and we're young kids, you know.

SWH: The sisters roughed you up?

DT: A few of them were disrupting the thing so they punished them. Their way of formation was to be consistent with the punishment.

AS: (*Asks question in Passamaquoddy*)

DT: There was some point there was some abusive formation, especially in the power of faith. I didn't structurally understand until later that I had met Father (00:11:36) Peree which intercepted me into the interpretation of the power of faith, like with the state, the power of faith, or with God. So, which was misunderstood at Pleasant Point even at in the '60s and '70s, as to what God is the termination of, you know? What distinction is he? But the thing was that in respect to the sisters, (00:12:05) in ____ of way of manner, torment the boys' dialect. And, "You don't have to speak to me so loudly," they used to say. Otherwise, you're going to have to come up here and sit in the corner with a dunce cap on your head, turning the other way to the corner. Which means that you wasn't passing your grades. That was good encouragement because I had never dealt with discouragement before, so they trained me after a while to (00:12:33) cycle onto the state of eruptancy, of what is discouragement. What is the first downfall of somebody.

They probably talked to me, but they also had their pointers, which were very sharp and they would whack you on the backside of your tailbone or on your hands. Or make you leave the school for ten days and just give you your books. And if you wanted to come back, come back. But if you don't, stay, you know. They give us no choice, you know. I took the choice of taking the books back out to study them and passing in the homework. So the rest of the students used to say, "That's a brilliant idea, of giving in your homework." They didn't understand the structural formation of the learning of the books and the information of the books, 'cause that's right on paper, you know. So they said, "You're really getting us ahead and you're not doing us any good." You know, the rest of the children. And the formation of like, it's—(*clears throat*). So when I got off the phone with these gangs, and the FBI and the federal agents way back in the '20s, you know, there were little gangs of children in the same way. Young fellows and young girls. There were treating us the same way in respect to—not to respect of the school but to respect of their own domain. Which I was learning already from the particular treatments of the non-Natives in the associatedness of abusiveness or the intellect we were being taught—

AS: (*Speaks to DT in Passamaquoddy*)

DT: Oh, there was a few that came with us in formation, as far as institutional. Louis was one. Alice was involved. Louis went, Maureen went. I went. Louis went. And—

AS: We're talking about the kids that are institutionalized when the Indian agent in that—in that family.



DT: In the institution, what they—because of alcohol abusiveness, and drug abusiveness, you know. First hand—right with the angle we would know—what we would call addiction which was ten times worse there. And myself, in my present point of view, I was satisfied by the 30, 36 from my age category. But I dropped away from alcohol and drugs through the institution. But as far as the rest of my brothers and sisters, Allen was thrown out by mother. Out of her household and then told never to come back. So we headed out to Boston. And he lived there for many years. And my brother Allen, he was still consistent with the other boys you know, in gangs or whatever. So my mother had to (00:15:45) meet the _____ to take him to the city jail of Eastport, for intoxication. There must have been a thousand times that guy was arrested for intoxication alone. As a young juvenile at Eastport, Maine, you know, which was where the County Jail was back then. The other County Jail.

But the felons and misdemeanors were at Machias, Maine. Machias Jail. And there was a young person which one of my half-brothers who was Anthony Stanley said, “What do you think of Machias Jail?” (*Laughing*) And I was foolish enough to answer. And he would have his camera and he’s filming me to the point where it was kind of colossal for him to be under the same formation I would be under, with the institution, with the lockup, or lock and key for a great number of years, the same as him. So we were coerced with each other. But I did not commit any felons in the way of association. They accused me of arson at one point because I saw one that started the fire in Sipayik that burned down (00:17:05) a home with the elders there, but I was shoveling (*mimes shoveling*) off, I was throwing water onto them, because it was right next to the reservation. I shut it off but the three that were in charge, I’ll leave anonymous, were never prosecuted and I was the one they prosecuted and caught as an arsonist. And I was put away under probation, institutionalization.

(00:17:35) But I was conforming to Louis and Alex who graduated from the school of Connors Brick School and what was the other school? Eastport School, Dana’s Point school. I was—it kind of confuses me now but Louis went to the Academy, North Yarmouth Academy and Charleston Classical Institute, which he graduated from, you know. But of the years of intolerance, (00:18:14) almost dying, others didn’t, we were starving and the others were full. You know, it was like the switching bracket of a—like the ___ line of a ____, you know (*laughing*).

AS: But there was a huge exorcis of people—his older brother went to Boston. So a lot of Native people here in Maine went to Boston; anybody that could work went to Boston to work. And that’s where he went to work. And his other brother, Allen, is basically in the community. He lives in a small shack. And you can read his story, they’re unsettled. And then Louis, right, is still incarcerated. And Maureen is still institutionalized. And Alice, younger sister, she’s still—she maneuvers pretty well. Dennis was the one to get out when the state ruled that anybody that can be transitioned, that can be mainstream, back a few years ago, can get out. And of course the people here helped him, many people helped him to get out. So.

SWH: Oh, that's good.

DT: (19:50) The thing that versed its way in my family is we were always unified into one body, the whole family, the Doyles (sp?) and the Tomahs. My mother was a Doyle. And she was Lola and Sapiel, Sapiel and Lola, and I forget the other one. There's another one, I can't think of what it is—they're her relation at Sipayik. And it was very interesting, so I was going to be given a ride at Dana's Point all the way to Sipayik an elder chief was doing trances, you know. And I was making inventory everywhere, I was at Sipayik. And Dana's Point was kind of a different story, you know. It was—you either go by the tribal formation, the jury of the church, or the jury of the state which is the school. I went both, you know, with my people, Dana's Point. But I learned of the commission of the minister there that I served under, how to give respect to (00:21:08) innateness through the power of God, and to make themselves the holy world of heaven, you know, as activated by or deactivated by so many people in the world today. We just don't—Christian people, you know. The only thing is I came under the obedience of God. I was confirmed—given communion, confirmed and ordained in the principal followings of a deacon, which was a minister of the lower bracket than the Jesuits, the monk. But the thing I said, eventually I was given a cassock and a pontiff—pontiff referendum and I worked in many communities in the northern areas of Canada to reassemble the French, the English, and the Indians to unite under one people. Under God.

AS: Dennis and I grew up in an era where we really didn't have any power. You know, the people that had power was the Indian agent or the church, or the teachers. And unless you had a strong family group where Dad and Grandpa were workers, you know, independent workers in the community and in their own way. But not everybody was in that environment. The people that controlled, other than those two foundations, and the church and an Indian agent was the State of Maine. Because of the AFDC. I don't know if anybody ever heard of that.

SWH: Aid for Dependent Children.

AS: Absolutely. And when you had a single mother—that was your livelihood. And that roughly was about ten dollars a month for each child. (*Someone comes in the door, hands something in*) So if you didn't have a working family, if you didn't have a working way for your income to come in, other than that that was your income. In that time when we grew up. And that was another process of power, besides the priest and the Indian agent, was the people in health and welfare.

SWH: And they basically made the decisions of what happened to individuals. So this process of institutionalizing them, you—could they literally, just arbitrarily decide somebody is going to be institutionalized even if they had not committed a crime or showed that they needed institutionalization?

AS: In their conferences away from us.

SWH: Tell me a little more about that.

AS: Well, I can only tell you about my example. When my Mom died, I was eleven years old. There was three kids that were left in my family group. My sister and my brother. And I was eleven years old when I went to work to support my family. Because I figured out, we were

getting a dollar a day. We worked for—we stayed for survival. So the only way you really survive is concentrating on working. By the time you're twenty-one you're already independent from that.

SWH: Already worked ten years.

AS: And you strive to be away from the state. To be away from the services. To be away from the Indian agent. But there are those people that still today depend on social services to survive and that hasn't changed. Although they did—the income level of social services went up ten-fold. But that was the era that we tried—and there were no lawyers to protect you or his family. The only lawyer was whoever made out the papers for the Indian agent to incarcerate.

DT: The formation of the institution that I took—it was state law if the appropriate person they're going to send in to institutional formation, you know, before institutionalization, I mean, is to inform—be informed by a general, not a public worker or a public health worker, but individuals in the community saw that the person is not acting right, they (00:26:52) perspectively as a notitorian with that courtesy. So the thing was, they were informed by, the institution would inform—to pick up the individual that was not esteemed by the community anymore. And given a second life in the institution, you know.

SWH: So how old were you, Dennis, when you were put in the institution.

DT: Close to like twenty-four, twenty-three. Or twenty-four, twenty-five, twenty-six. What were the years, then, up to a great (00:27:26) and honored years. Twenty-five years or something like that, or twenty years. I sometimes exaggerate down, I say forty or forty-five, but it wasn't that far back.

AS: But before then they had the Catholic school they institutionalized kids with, too.

SWH: Oh. Really? So the school he was talking about was a Catholic school.

AS: It was on the reservation. In communities. It was in the schools—but they really didn't teach us anything (*laughs*). I was always coloring and how to say prayers and how to sing. I mean, I benefited from that but that's the only benefit I got. But that was—it was a place where they wanted to make us good Catholics. And if you didn't have a family, they had homes in Bangor. They had St. Michael's home, did you go there?

DT: No, that was just the institution.

SWH: So, was the institution just for Indian people or was it –

DT: No. It was for the general public.

SWH: It was a state institution.

AS: It was anybody that they considered a threat.

SWH: And so there was really no health assessment. They just made a decision based on—

AS: It was—that assessment was made by the Indian agent and by community members that were close to the Indian agent. Everybody had a hierarchy; the church did, and the Indian agent did, and the state did.

SWH: So no one really got mental health care.

AS: No.

SWH: They just—

DT: The thing with the admission of people on the reservation or different community sources, was that the person was not right in the first place. But a lot of that was coincerted with cowardice into community base, you know. Because they didn't like the person. They didn't consent the person to be legally sane. Or the person was under alcohol or drug abuse. And the other was that the person was abusive in the language or to other people or irresponsible to other people so the other people would complain. But what obnoxiousness was the crime, obviously. A lot them got sent back into the institution for the crimelike state that they were in formation with. But the only reason that I was attracted to it, I had a record at Eastport County Jail on intoxication. And the other one I got arraigned in Machias and Calais for arson. For setting the only reservation buildings, which I never did, it was three other people. But neither the judge, nor the jury, nor the other people consented with me that I was telling the truth. It was three individuals. But I never brought the three individuals into court on this and that. That's why I was confined for a long time under the jurisdiction of the state government, you know. And the way of the association, in the court system that's bringing the institution, you would be committed as to—first it was five to fifteen and then a month—a couple of months, six months, two months, four months. And then either five years, ten years or fifteen years. I did fifteen years recently in the institution here, you know. Because of the overtredness of the laws of power in the state of Bangor, Maine. INAUDIBLE (31:12)

AS: And some of your family has been in there for a long time.

DT: Yes. So my gram (?) has been in there a long time too. My Mom was in there for a number of years being—trying to transfer her formation into a better system for herself. But there was coercion in the institution itself, you know. There was drugs in the way of legal medication which was strongly addictive. Which means basically you had actual effects of mental health in their system, the mental health in your system. And under circumstances of the doctors in the court and in the hospital, you were observed for a period of time—observation. And then they would take you to court. And that's when the doctors would—you'd hear the patients say put the boots to you, you know.

AS: In that era when he left, you know, he mentioned—we were all family. Everybody that lived in that village, we were all family members, you know. And that's how I know him.

Because I remember him growing up in the community. And I remember all his family. And he remembers everybody at Dana Point (*laughing*).

SWH: That's amazing.

AS: Yeah. And even though he has been away for a long time there are some times where I don't have words that I can't recall in Passamaquoddy and we help each other out here to remember those words. So it's very valuable, in our society, but not very valuable in other societies.

SWH: Sure. You see—he is a real asset.

AS: Absolutely.

SWH: A real asset here.

DT: We had language class with Allen a few years ago back down at Exchange and York street (?) where the appointed place was Wabanaki Mental Health. And we had gone into such a strenuousness of assertion to some revived language, you know. Both praying and breaking up, you know. But the thing is I was very proud of him. I know some extensive words that were dated way back in my Mom's time, my Grandmother's time. Because it seemed that though my Grandfather and my Grandmother—some others Indians came on reservation but I could not pin which type of Indians they were. When I went to school in New Mexico and Texas and Oklahoma, when the Navaho came into the school I knew their language because it sounded similar to the language my Grandmother and my Grandfather were speaking to those tribes in the—

AS: He's talking about the Santa Fe Indians. You know—

SWH: Yes. I know what that is. I saw it a long time ago.

DT: Arizona and New Mexico, you know. And there's some Apache in Texas, Comanche, you know, Chicasaw, Cherokee. All these people are down there too. Transferred from General—oh I can't remember what his name is—I can't remember his name. General—

AS: In today's world we focus on confidentiality so much that we had a lot of Native people, you know, like Dennis said, that were institutionalized that had managed to survive with this language. In a very hostile situation.

SWH: Isn't that amazing? What a strength. Speaks to the power—

AS: And there are many others in that same situation.

DT: Yes, and with the language, I would see Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, Micmac, and other people's languages from the coercion of the— other points of view at Dana's Point. Some of the native Chiefs and the native warriors at least know seven languages, you know, of different people's, you know. Plus their own, you know. Which are very conversive, ancestral, some of them, like Johnson, my uncle. He still understood the ancestral language of the—what was the—

AS: Dennis' family is of one of the transitional survivors of our community. His grandfather is a traditional medicine man. And mom and his great grandfather was the guy that they wrote about quite a bit during Roosevelt's days, you know. But I have a suspicion that Roosevelt—we were good subjects to photograph with and that's all that ever mattered to them, you know. But Roosevelt never really helped us other than getting our photographs taken by him. When I— of course my interest is in music; traditional music, contemporary music. And one day I was in Washington D.C. and I saw all the—'cause I did a lot of tribal research and I was astounded when I found this photograph of Passamaquoddy Indians playing big band instruments.

SWH: Wow.

AS: Yes. And they wore headdresses, which were worse than—but they also had neckties. And I said to people, "Who are these people?" And they said, "The Passamaquoddy." And they named them. And I said well—of course—where did they learn these instruments? How come they're dressed like that? How come they have a tie? And then—I didn't know about the Indian school in—where was it? Pennsylvania?

SWH: Carlisle?

AS: Carlisle. I didn't know about that.

SWH: Wow.

AS: A lot of the native people from Pleasant Point that went to Carlisle never spoke Indian again. And they were brought up with Passamaquoddy language. And I always wondered about those people. Now I've got 'em all tacked down and I know who exactly they were. And whenever you spoke Passamaquoddy to them, they spoke English in return. So that's what the Indian school did. In a sense, that's what the reservation schools and Catholic schools try to do. But they couldn't control after we left, you know. But Carlisle did.

DT: The school that I went to in Oklahoma was named after the Pennsylvania school, which is under the same name Carlisle. But it was integrated Lakota people from the Dakotas to be under the nation of the United States census. And integrations into the other Indians, you know, because they were such a sovereign nation. Of yesterday it became a discriminant school—the Lakota people in Oklahoma, (00:39:30) the _____ was recent, Carlisle was _____, but it abusive to the Makota (?), not so much the Comanche and the _____ but the Makota, being _____ from their homeland and the _____ too. But very rapidly the change in environment—

AS: For a while in Dennis' life he hitchhiked all over the country.

SWH: Yes. It sounds like it. The whole family? Or just --

AS: Just him.

SWH: Oh. Wow.

AS: He's used to tell me about places I didn't even know about.

DT: There was an interesting point of view from the Western Indians. I made friends with one of the Apache Chiefs. I didn't know he was the Chief at the time. He was Apache. He was the Chief of the Mescalero Apache. Mescalero Apache reservation is near Carlsbad Caverns, you know. And there was other people. I made other friends with the Pueblo Indians. In which we played a great deal of sports, with the Apache too, in varsity and different schoolings of whatever. I had one friend that was called Hooka, Hooka. And he was a—he was also Apache. He always wanted to talk to me about (00:40:50) _____, you know, I used to tell him, "Here comes _____." And the academy of the school in Santa Fe, the Pueblo Academy, you had to be quite bright to get into the school. But after they changed it to AIA, they had their opponent zones and their rising zones of education. But as time went on I left St. Marco (?) and Carlisle, residential Oklahoma school, then went to Amarillo, then to Santa Fe, then Albuquerque to finish the University of New Mexico, you know. In anthropology, I studied. And law. And commemoration of medicine. (*Laughs*) One of my teachers would say, "These people are medical lore people, you know." They mean the doctors and stuff, you know. "We'll teach you the actual medical formation if you let us." (*Laughing*) But I had a few failures in the way of association with a lot more—and successes too—(00:41:56) in the effect of almost graduating as an intern of sense, you know—

AS: Dennis spent quite a bit of time with the longhouse people.

DT: Our people originally—even like the Passamaquoddies and the Wabanaki and Abenaki people were longhouse too in the ancestral time of Black Hawk. You know Black Hawk, (00:42:20) when he _____ on British houses. you know, that was to invade the United States. And certain bodies of Indian people in North America here, the Penobscots, the Mohawk, they kind of trickled up there in formation of the Mohawk, you know. The thing is that in the way of the effect of the longhouse people where back then in the time of Black Hawk and Hiawatha and Sequoyah and the other one who was—the other Cherokee Chief, you know, I don't know what his name was. Anyway were ancestral people so they were still in the eastern, what we call the eastern woodlands back then. Still uncivilized from the intervention of Columbus and Champlain and the other people, you know. So there's still longhouse people connected into the Passamaquoddy, the Iroquois and the Wampanoag, you know. The rest of the longhouse people back then, you know. But intervention came with their sisters and their fathers or missionaries and separated their plans and the ratio of religion from the longhouse to what is

the faith and religion of the Passamaquoddy today. Their Indian religion, you know, separate from the longhouse today. Where were was some conformality between the Mohawks and the Abenaki fighting amongst each other because of conversion of the church, God, missionaries, and the English people.

AS: *(Speaking in Passamaquoddy)*

DT: Oh. Yes. When I came back from the University of New Mexico—

AS: *(Speaking in Passamaquoddy)*

DT: When I came back on to the (inaudible) I came back to the Greyhound bus here in Bangor. But I brought a friend of mine along with me. His name was Tony Fleming. He's passed away since this spring, you know. Tony, but in the effect that going about in a small city like Bangor from Los Angeles. There was nobody concerned over my safety, protection, or security, you know. In the effect of the jeopardy of yesterday and the institution and the alcoholics and the drug addicts of Bangor, you know. Because I was farting around. There was no responsibility in the effect of myself from other people, you know. So I had to discretionarily somehow get into a fight with the police, you know. Or the doctors or the therapist at the school—institute, I mean. And the thing was that out of respect for the community of Bangor—I knew that Bangor people couldn't care less if we were Indian—then to be rid of them. They almost got rid of me a few years, you know, gang up on me about six or seven times—gangs of men. Gangs, you know. They always got rid of me. Physically got rid of me, (00:45:45) six feet under the—with ___ and Susan and Sharon, intervening in the respect of my protection, safety and security which I'm still under today, you know.

AS: Dennis still has a strong urge to go back into the communities. But things have changed. When he was here, when we were young—it's a lot different. People don't have the same priorities like we had. So we haven't been able to sensitize communities for Dennis to be able to go back and stay safe in the community because times have changed so much. But he frequently wants to go back.

SWH: I bet.

DT: There have been many years of coercion and the effect of the disabling of rights and the disabling of the presence of the outside world to a closed environment under lock and key. Door locked—locked door and supervision in the way of smoking breaks in the outside yard which are fenced in, you know. In any of the institutionalal—even like in Massachusetts and Bridgewater, I studied law under the conversion of Mr. Poirier who was a Science teacher in New Mexico, so I converted into law, some law in New Mexico and I got a lot of people out of Bridgewater institution to gain their freedom outside, you know, in Massachusetts—representing them in court you know.

AS: *(Speaking to Dennis in Passamaquoddy)*

DT: In the way of the effect of my own personal safety, you know, there was many jeopardies in the way of association amongst the people of Pleasant Point and of Dana's Point. Or the effects of alcohol and contribution of drugs. There was intake in the back—abusing this was



very common and that plays a point amongst most of the people, you know. It was nobody's fault, it was their part to take care of you if you were drinking, if you were stoned or if you were being ganged up on, you know. And there was no response in there at all in the formation of myself. And if you see the source of Pleasant Point, you know, to the effect that nobody cared at all about me. And the community source in Bangor the same way. I found a favor one time with Clayton Cleaves who was the Lieutenant Governor of Pleasant Point to go work at Bath Iron Works, which I was certified into welding, you know. Hard welding and acetylene welding. But the thing was, was that the (00:48:58) faster I grew my money the last day, they took it from me, or the faster I spent it foolishly, you know, it was a very—a regretful life of the semi-present type of situation in which the gathering of peoples...

Sometimes in Penobscot at Dana's Point was very knowledgeable, but in the way of the security level as far as the housing. As far as the formation—recognition of law and rights and all those things. Rights taken away. No housing, you know, in Bangor. Except if I—they say, “Why don't you go run to from Wabanaki, why don't you go run to Central Maine Indian Association, where you belong, Indian.” They call me an Indian but I don't have, as well-featured as Allen is in the Indian formation (*stroking face*). My hair is white, it used to be black, jet black. But it's all white now. But the thing is, the community source of Bangor was kind of a dangerous spot for native people to converge in. If you don't know security measures or critical measures or police measures, you know, you're, good as gone if you don't know any protective formations for yourself.

AS: In a traditional sense, we're the only ones that are in direct contact with him in terms of his tradition where he grew up through language. But today in the communities, hardly anybody ever speaks to people that he remembered growing up in our community. They've all passed on, you know. Or they're so isolated that you can't really converse with them. So I find that very sad, you know. We converse all the time (*gesturing to DT*). We talk about the old days.

DT: I enjoyed Allen's presence (00:51:14) and _____ and Sharon and Susan _____ through the years have carried me. And I have not disinvolved them since that period, sometimes they let me go, the state from here in Bangor and I ventured out into Los Angeles before, then Miami, then Portland, Lewiston, back to Bangor. And got discharged from the institution after a number of years under lock and key, you know. Yes. I went to many places to— even like in New Orleans. Las Vegas—I did janitorial work all throughout Las Vegas and volunteer work for the volunteers in Los Angeles, in the south central area of Los Angeles. Which I was working as a volunteer there with the black people under the correspondence of supervision from Los Angeles authorities, you know. But they gave me volunteer work to police some of the estate—protect some of the estates of the movie stars in Hollywood, you know. Did the special detectives units in Massachusetts a long time ago when my father was still living. And I

learned from them what actual law was, you know. Improvisation of the practice of, the practicality of the law and the sources of the communities or the state, or, you know.

AS: Dennis' story is the same story that thousands and thousands of Native people have in this country. That they want to go back home, you know. It doesn't matter if it's an Indian Center in Oakland, San Francisco, Boston.

[END OF RECORDING]