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3-19-2015

### Statement by Travis Murphy collected by Rachel George on March 19, 2015

Travis Murphy

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### General Information

**Private or Public Statement?** - Public

**Statement Provider:** Travis Murphy

**Date:** March 19, 2015

**Location:** Windham, Maine

**Previous Statement?** No

**Statement Gatherer:** Rachel George

**Support Person:** N/A

**Additional Individuals Present:** Commissioners Carol Wishcamper and gkisedtanamoogk

**Recording Format:** Video

**Length of Recording:** 58:44

#### Transcriber's Note:

This is a non-anonymous statement. However, redactions in the transcript and alternations to the video have been done at the request of the statement provider in an effort to protect certain individuals.

### Recording

**RG:** It is March 19, 2015. We're here in Windham, Maine at the Maine Correctional Center. My name is Rachel George, and I'm here today with —

**CW:** Carol Wishcamper, Commissioner of the TRC.

**GK:** And gkisedtanamoogk, Commissioner, TRC.

**TM:** Travis Murphy. I'm MCC, (*laughs*) I guess I would say.

**RG:** All right, and the file number is C-201503-00161. Travis, have you been informed, understood, and signed the consent form?

**TM:** Yes, and all my rights.

**RG:** Okay. And I have to let you know that if at any time point during this recording, you indicate there is a child or an elder currently in need of protection or there is imminent risk of serious bodily harm or death to an identifiable person or group, including yourself, that that information may not be protected as confidential. Do you understand?

**TM:** Okay. Yeah. I understand. I know how that works. They had the same thing at the (*inaudible*) groups.

**RG:** So you can start wherever you feel the most comfortable.

**TM:** All right. Well, I figured you guys would start with some questions, but I guess I got to start somehow? I really don't know where to start. I guess this wouldn't just be about my daughter or just me. It's about everybody, right? How it works? My step-father and my grandparents — Well, um, I know how the Child Welfare stuff works, and it really sucks. I have to deal with it first hand. Like, I was going to ask you if you had anything this weird. My brother and my sister were literally within five miles of me growing up. All growing up, and I didn't see them. Weird. Back then — How old are you, if you don't mind me asking?

**RG:** Twenty-five.

**TM:** Twenty-five. Okay, this is a little bit before you, but you guys would understand more, probably a little bit. In the early 90's, we were on a res, and we were, like, free to roam. We'd get to do pretty much whatever you want growing up because it's safe, for the most part. When you get a little bit older, it's more violent. You get in more fights and all that crap, drinking and drugs or whatever. But, growing up, when I was a kid, we were able to run around and do quite a bit. So, my sister lived in Perry, which was literally like a mile-and-half from my house. My brother lived in Eastport, which was about five miles away. And uh, neither one of their stepparents or foster parents really liked it if we hung out with them, and I never understood why. To this day, I still don't know why. It's kind of weird. But, I still don't know the exact reason of why I wasn't allowed to, which sucked. I had to go and sneak down there with my 4-wheeler or my bike or whatever, and hang out with my brother, and he knew that he would get in trouble if he was hanging out with me, and his stepmother would get really pissed off. It was really weird. With my sister, it took me a little longer to figure out where she was. I figured out where she was, and I started hanging out with her a little bit. Then they finally started bringing her to Indian Days and bringing her around a little more, because she was getting older. So it was inevitable that she was going to be learning where she's from. My other sister, she lived on the res for a little, while until she was in kindergarten, first grade. We were really close. We were getting really close; then, all of a sudden, her foster mother knew that. She lived on the res, too. As soon as she found that out, she moved to Georgia. That really sucked. But, I accepted it as she didn't want her to grow up on the res, because she knows how it is there. You know what I'm saying? It sucks there. I mean, did you ever grow up on a reservation?

**GK:** Yeah.

**TM:** What reservation did you grow up on?

**GK:** One on Cape Cod and on Mashpee.

**TM:** What was it?

**GK:** It's called Mashpee.

**TM:** Mashpee. Okay. I've heard of that. I know where that is. I don't know if yours sucks, but on mine, it's a lot of fights as kids, you know, you see kids fighting all the time. Like now, it's more like needles everywhere, which is worse, I guess. But, it sucks, and she knew that. She moved her to Georgia. I don't know if it's any better, because now she just hates black people. Whatever, I don't know. Have you ever found anything that weird? Like, that kind of close proximity to siblings that couldn't see each other? Have you seen anything like that?

**CW:** Haven't seen it, but we've heard some Statements where one of the things that has come across is how brutal it's been for people to be separated from their siblings and the urge to find them, and to bring them to reunite later in life.

**TM:** Yeah. It sucked.

**CW:** Painful.

**TM:** Yeah. That's probably like the number one issue that I had about all that.

**CW:** Were you with your own natural family, or were you with — ?

**TM:** I was with my grandparents. They raised me. They were awesome. I grew up relatively good, mostly. *(laughs)* I'm in prison now, but that was one mistake, and, you know, 18 years later, I'm still dealing with it. But, you know. I guess I learned a long time ago that I shouldn't be doing that shit. It was just one incident, one night, and here I am. It's unfortunate, but I know better now, and I've known better for a while. But it's the way the State does it. Let's keep pounding it into him that he should know better. I didn't even do anything, and here I am, but whatever. I guess that's how they do it. Whatever.

But, uh, I grew up with one sister. She was older and not very nice. I was a younger brother and got a little more attention than she did, and she'd get pissed off. I was the unfortunate recipient of all her rage and whatever. *(brief laugh)* It sucked. Other than that, for me, growing up, I had two other sisters, but they were on my father's side. They were Sioux. Well, I wouldn't say they're Sioux, per say. Like in the blood, where it shows, like my Passamaquoddy. But, I mean, it's in their genes. It's further down. They're from, like, North

Dakota. My father's father was a quarter Sioux and he lived on the reservation up in North Dakota. I don't really know anything about his side that much. I guess a lot of people, when they have kids with Indian people; they like, 'See you later.' It's weird, but whatever. Shit happens, I guess. You've seen quite a bit, you know? I mean, you guys got any questions about any of that stuff?

**CW:** I have a question in terms of interaction with either the Tribal Child Welfare people in Sipayik, or State Child Welfare people. It sounds like you stayed with your grandparents, but a number of your siblings were placed out?

**TM:** Yeah. I'm the second oldest, and what happened was, my grandparents took my sister, and they took me. And, my mother, she kept having kids. She was with some guy for a little while, and they had three kids, whatever, and they never stuck around with us. My grandparents were in their 50's when they took me. So they were like: 'We don't want any more.' Two was fine, and they raised us. When we started, we were in, like, a little shack growing up, but we moved into a nicer house. A program they had built a bunch of houses for us. We were in a nice house. We grew up there, and it was decent. I knew I had siblings, but I didn't know where they were, and I finally found them. I'm not sure exactly what happened. I don't honestly know. I don't know why. I guess I probably could have asked, but I really didn't want to go there. You know? I didn't really want to put my Mom in a spot. Obviously, my siblings probably wouldn't really know for sure. They might. My grandparents had enough with just us, and they didn't want the rest. I guess my Mom probably put them in foster care, and they were like, 'Well, she doesn't want them,' and then they go. She's got better things to do, I guess. Party and whatever have you. Seventies, early 80s.

**CW:** None of them were placed together?

**TM:** No, none of them.

**CW:** Were they at Tribal homes?

**TM:** One was in a Tribal home.

**CW:** The one in Perry?

**TM:** No, the one on the res on Pleasant Point. She was in a Tribal home and the other two — Well, one of them took Native American children. They had, like, two or three other foster kids that were Native, which was kind of decent of them. They kept all Native American kids. They knew how the system worked. They knew that there's going to be a lot of kids coming from the res and they're going to be like, we can get some Native kids because they're easier to come by, because they flush them out all the time. So, that'd be kind of great, you know, money. I'm not sure what their motivations were, but they seemed like nice people. After I got to know them, and found them, they were decent. So, it wasn't like my brother, where I couldn't see him very often, and I wasn't allowed to. Well, it wasn't that I wasn't allowed to, but she just didn't like it when I hung around him. She grounded him more or whatever, when she knew I was around. It was weird. It sucked. But that's pretty much how that went.



**CW:** So, as adults, do you have contact with each other?

**TM:** I don't talk to any of 'em. I don't write to 'em. I haven't gotten a letter from any one of 'em for five-and-a-half years. Whatever. You know? Out of sight, out of mind.

**CW:** But, in your heart, it sounds like —

**TM:** It sucks. It hurts. But what am I going to do? Some of them might be on drugs or in an intensive care center and OD'ed. I have no idea about nothing. I'm healthy. I'm alive, if they notify me.

**CW:** It sounds like from your Statement, your beginning comments, that you have some particular concerns about your child?

**TM:** Oh, my daughter? Yeah. My ex is not a very good girlfriend. I'm not going to say her name, but she's not a very good girlfriend. And I really don't want to bash her or anything, but *[REDACTED]* She just let happen — I seen one of them on the national news. They were, like, ahh, freaking out. Same thing happened to my daughter, probably wasn't even as bad. But Native police didn't care. I called them and they didn't give a shit. It was unfortunate, but they just did not give a fuck. They were like, 'Oh, she looks like she's fine.' They called and were like 'Yeah, they're in the window waiting for ' — You know, chill out. I'm like, are you kidding?

She's walking down — this is the side of the road from the yellow line to the drop off to where she lives. As wide as this table. And, uh, was foggy. It was nighttime. I don't know if anybody's been down to Pleasant Point before? So, you've all been there. Okay, they've got these new houses. You guys drove around everywhere? Okay, when they made these new houses, everybody drives fast, which is fine during the day when you can see everything, but when it's foggy and it's nighttime, you're not going to see somebody that's three foot. If they hit your bumper, they're going to go flying, and you're going to think it was a cat or a small dog. It would have been unfortunate, but I couldn't even — I wanted her out of there.

I should have just ran over there and just grabbed her. I don't know why I didn't. I thought I was going to go to jail, because if I go near my ex, then I would have went to jail. But she walked literally, probably 50 feet on the side of the road, and there was a ditch, like a steep decline to where her house was. The other house she was coming from was like next door. It wasn't very close. The two driveways were quite a ways apart, and she walked down the road like that. It scared the shit out of me. I was freaking out. I was losing my mind...

*[REDACTED]*

**CW:** How old is your daughter now?

**TM:** She just turned ten. She's a little more able to deal with herself now, so that makes me feel better. You know.

**CW:** How often do you get to see her or hear from her?

**TM:** I haven't seen her in six years.

**CW:** But that's why she looks about four in that picture.

**TM:** Yes. This is one of the only pictures that I have of her, and her mother doesn't bring her to see me. You know. Just another reason to keep her away from me, or whatever. It's unfortunate, but it happens.

**CW:** Beautiful.

**RG:** She is beautiful. Do you have any sense of what's going on with your daughter right now in her mother's care?

**TM:** Well, I almost gave up all my rights to her. I didn't think of what I was doing. I was going to let her stepfather adopt her, but I was like, if I do that, she's going to be pissed off at me when she gets older. But right now, she's like, 'Yeah, thank you for letting me get adopted by my Daddy.' Because she bangs it into her: This is your Daddy. This is your Daddy. This is your Daddy. It's one of them things that you don't want women to do, and she did that to me with her son, and it weirded me out. It made me feel weird. It made me feel uncomfortable, and I just didn't like it. Some women do that, and it's unfortunate. And, uh, I don't agree with it, and I didn't like it. She did that to me, but I made sure that his father was there, and I didn't have no problems with him coming around. He was a nice guy. Is a nice guy, rather. It made me feel weird. Really weird. But I don't know how that feels to the guy that's taking care of my daughter now.

**CW:** So there's someone living in with them?

**TM:** Yeah, she got married to somebody. I don't know him. Some weird dude. I don't know who he is. Someone that likes gettin' told what to do I guess, I don't know.

**RG:** So, did you end up giving up your rights?

**TM:** No, I didn't sign anything, so hopefully — I mean, they're probably using a different name now, or thinking that they did. But no, I didn't sign nothing in front of no judge or anything, so technically I shouldn't have given anything up.

**CW:** Is this between you and your ex?

**TM:** My ex.

**CW:** There were no official child welfare workers or anything?



**TM:** No. The only thing that I did was I agreed to a — what do you call it? — A mediation. I agreed at mediation that this is what we would do, and that was it. And then I backed off. I was thinking, ‘I can’t do that. I’m giving up all my rights.’ I mean, I know, being Native, I’m going to have a little more rights than the average person, but it’s still — I can’t have my daughter be pissed off at me later on. She’s going to hate me, and that’s just not gonna happen. I couldn’t do it. Sorry, Tia. *(brief laugh)* Couldn’t do it.

**CW:** So, they’re living on the reservation now?

**TM:** She lives in Machias. It’s not that far from here.

**CW:** But she’s not at Pleasant Point?

**TM:** No. That’s what I worry about. Seeing how dark she was. It’s like, Machias is a little more elevation on our racism issue. It worries me a little bit, but I mean, I know she’s a girl, so it makes it easier. I mean, you and me *(gestures toward GK)* grow up in Machias right now? Yeah. Have fun. *(laughs)* It wouldn’t be as fun or easy as it would be for a female. I hope she’s doing good right now. I only get, like, sporadic letters. I’ve only gotten like two little letters from her so far. She doesn’t feel comfortable yet, writing to me. It sucks. But I feel uncomfortable with her being with her mother, but I can’t stop it. I can’t fix it, because I’m in here; I have no money. I can’t pay for lawyers and shit that she can. You know. But that’ll end eventually.

**CW:** Is the man that she’s with a Native man or a non-Native man?

**TM:** I think he’s some white dude. I think he lives in Machias, or he used to. I think it’s where he’s from. I think it’s the dude she cheated on me with. *(laughs)* You know. Whatever.

**CW:** How much longer will you be here?

**TM:** I got a while to go. I got probably, anywhere between four and five years. It all depends on my good time. I don’t know.

**CW:** How old will you be when you leave?

**TM:** I think I’ll be 39 when I get out, I believe. At the latest.

**CW:** There’s still time to make a life for yourself.

**TM:** Oh, yeah. I’m not worried about that. I’m a stock market *god*. I don’t know why I know how to do it, but I figured it out. It’s weird. Nobody listens to me, either. I’m like, ‘Hey

buy this.’ ‘No, you don’t know anything.’ I’m like, ‘All right, whatever.’ And then what do they do? It triples. I’m like, ‘What did it do?’ I’m like, ‘I told you. I told you and you don’t listen.’ All I wanted was 10%. You know, ‘Hook me up. Buy me some sneakers. Give me a little commissary.’ You know what I mean? But nobody gives a shit. I keep doing it over and over. I’m like, after a while, then they kind of figured it out. They’re like, ‘Yeah, yeah. What’s what, now?’ I’m like, ‘What are you talking about?’ I’m all set. Because now, I probably bought a few of ’em cars or houses or something. Nobody is hooking me up, so I’m like, ‘Yeah, I don’t know a thing.’

**CW:** Do you keep a record of your — ?

**TM:** Oh, yeah, yeah. I do it — Every Thursday, I go and watch my — I have roughly about 30 stocks, which you shouldn’t do, but I do it, anyway. I got time.

**CW:** Sure, yeah, you can research.

**TM:** I watch what happens with everything. And, I do well. Not only that, I’m a hard worker and everything, so I’ll be fine. I know where to go. But, uh, that’s pretty much the reason why I worry about her. But I don’t worry about her as much as I used to.

**CW:** Because she’s older?

**TM:** Yeah, she’s ten. She’s safer. She’s not like she was, she was helpless, when she was dealing with her before. She didn’t know better. ‘Yeah, walk down to the house, you’ll be fine.’ Yeah, probably not. It was just bad, bad decision making. You know.

**CW:** Are the grandparents that raised you still alive?

**TM:** No. Yep. Sucks. But my grandfather got to know Tia when she was an infant, so that felt really good. But, my Mom — I called her my Mom. My grandma. My grandmother, she never got to know her. It would have been really nice to have her know her. I see what you’re doing. *(smiles)*

**CW:** What am I doing? *(laughs)*

**TM:** You want me to use those.

**CW:** No.

**TM:** She is, too. She’s trying to make me use those. I think she is.

**GK:** But if you feel you need to use those, go right ahead.

**TM:** I came close a few times. I’ll tell you what. But, my mother, for some reason, doesn’t want to get close to her. I don’t know why. She’s got health issues. That was the biggest



reason. It really sucks. But she lives in Old Town, so it's quite a ways away. He doesn't have a car. I would like for her to get to know her.

**CW:** So does your ex bring your daughter to Indian Days and help her maintain some sort of sense of her culture?

**TM:** I think so. I think so. Um, as far as I know, she does. My daughter's grandfather, he's a pretty good guy, for the most part. And, uh, he would help her with a lot of the Native American culture, and he's probably one of the best influences for her, I believe. A couple of her uncles are really nice, and a couple of aunts. She'll be fine. For the most part, she'll be good, but with her, I just — Years ago, I really did not trust her judgment. It might have gotten better. I have no idea. I believe it's gotten better. I hope it's gotten better. You know what I mean. But, she's gotten older, and I think she's figuring shit out. I seriously hope so. (*brief laugh*) Oh, man.

**CW:** So, this question might be a little bit off the topic, but I'm curious about what it's meant to you to have the group coming in and meeting with other people of your Wabanaki background with Esther and others?

**TM:** It's nice. It's nice.

**CW:** Is it helpful?

**TM:** Well, I knew Esther from the street. I didn't know her, know her, but I knew who she was. But, uh, with like Tom coming in, that was nice. He was really cool. It's cool to have other people that know how shitty it is growing up and, like, what it would be like in here. Like, with Tom having a race issue with him, getting messed with in college and high school and shit like that. I identify with him, quite a bit. It sucks, but it's shit we've got to deal with. Technically, I could probably push myself off as being white, but some people would probably question me. Like, 'Why do you look kind of Native?' (*laughs*) I'd be like, 'I'm Sicilian,' or something. I don't know. They would be like, 'Why aren't you whitening up like I am in March?' You know what I mean? It's just — I don't have an answer for 'em. I'm like, 'I don't know.' Having people mess with you all the time, it does suck, but I mean, it goes with the territory. They'd rather have us all gone. So they don't have to deal with it at all. I don't know. That's just what I feel, what I think. It's a daily thing for me, but I roll with it pretty well. I don't care. Like I said, I pick on them, too. It's everybody. Even the CO's, they're like, yeah, your ancestors are bears, or your family — like you're from a bear. I'm like, whatever.

**GK:** It's not like they're respecting that. It's kind of —

**TM:** Ignorant. And little did he know, all my ancestors *are* bears. Bear guy. *(laughs)* Idiot don't even know! I was telling some of my friends, I was like, 'Yeah, it sucks.' They're like, 'We can go to Alaska and have rifles. Yes!' I was like, 'What for? Why can we do that?' 'Because of bears.' I'm like, 'Well, you lucky bastards. You can all kill my ancestors, but I can't kill one. The thing will eat me, dammit.' It's like we can't — You know how it works.

You can't kill your spirit guide, your ancestral, um, totems. You can't do it. So you can't kill a rabbit. If you're a rabbit clan, or a wolf clan, or anything, you can't kill them. Not a one. I mean, you could probably maim them, beat them up if you can, but you cannot kill them, I don't think. I don't even think you can hurt any of the animals. I'm not sure exactly how that works. When I go up there, I can have a rifle all day long, and it ain't gonna help me. If I get surrounded by a bunch of wolves, I'm shooting all them. *(laughs)* As much as I can.

**RG:** That's *my* family.

**TM:** I'd be like, 'Hey, bro, I'm sorry. I just killed your aunt and uncle. They were trying to kill me, so sorry.' But I mean, they got — Then they'd be like, 'Yeah sorry. Your grandfather's laying on my porch. It's my rug.' I'm like, 'Yeah, whatever.' It's a good thing. It lets you know what you are. You know, it helps. I think it's kind of neat. I seriously would not want to get eaten by my family members.

**GK:** It's like hurting your family.

**TM:** Yeah, you can't do it. Not allowed. Most people don't understand it when I try to explain it to 'em. They just accept it. Well, some of them do. But.

**GK:** What matters is, it matters to you.

**TM:** Oh, hell, yeah. Well, some of the people that I know, they're like, 'Yeah, I understand.' They're decent about it. But, you know, it's weird. Rifle ain't gonna to help me. You can't run around with a rifle: 'Hey look, I can shoot stuff now.' Just not people, anyway.

**RG:** Thinking back on, um, when you were a kid growing up apart from your siblings, is there anything you wished had been different? Anything that you wanted or needed that would have made the situation better for you and your family?

**TM:** What do you mean? As opposed to like, having money?

**RG:** Yeah.

**TM:** Yeah, money would have been good. I tease a lot of these guys, because a lot of them have commissary all the time. You know what I mean? I try not to be a racist. For the most part, I'm not. I admit it does spill out a little bit, like an asshole. I don't mean to; it just happens sometimes. It's just, like, I hear shit all the time. It just comes out, like, stupid. A lot of these guys will have commissary all the time, you know, daily, weekly. It's like, full bags, full bags. I'm like, 'Man, it must be nice to have white money.' *(laughs)* I mean, *you* know



what I mean. (*gestures toward GK*) On the reservation, like, there's 50% unemployment. I'm like, 'Are you fucking kidding me? Really? Who has that? Blacks are crying, 'Oh we don't have employment. We're at 20%.' I'm like, 'You're crying about 20% unemployment? Are you kidding me?' I'm like, 'Hey, here's some tissues.' I mean, really? Come on, man.

I was like, 'See what it's like on the res. Go to the res real quick.' I tell these black dudes, I'm like, 'You're really crying about 20%?' I was like, 'Yeah, you ain't got nothing on me.' I was like, 'I want you to go to the res there, partner.' These black dudes I talk to — Like yeah, I'm like, 'Yeah right. Shut up.' It's just like, come on, man. Only if you knew. I call it white money. So, I tease these guys all the time. I'm like, 'Yeah, it must be nice to have white money.' I tell people, 'Yeah, it's white money.' It sucks. I have nothing. I have to hustle for everything. I mean, I know how to do it. I grew up in it. I grew up dealing with shit all the time, so I know how to hustle. It's an innate thing, kind of. But I just got to do it and do my thing. It's one thing that was invented thousands and thousands of years ago and hasn't gone away. Probably won't for quite a while until the human race kills themselves off, for the most part. What a bunch of dummies. So, as soon as they're done figuring that out, after they kill each other and do whatever, they'll find out that Allah ain't the only god. It's gonna be coming down to money, and then it's gonna come down to water, and then, I don't know what else would be after that. But, money would have been one of the biggest things that would have been nice to have growing up.

I mean, don't get me wrong. I'm proud of being Native, but sometimes, I guess, when I was a kid, it would have been nice to have been all white. You know what I mean? As a kid, I probably would have been like, 'Yeah, that would have been nice.' But, now I'm just proud of what I am. I'm half, so I mean I'm proud of being both white and Native. I accepted it a long time ago, and I love who I am. I guess money probably would have been the biggest thing for my family. We didn't have much. I remember the shack we used to live in. It was nothing. On the second floor you could see my stove. (*laughs*) It was not fun. What else would have been good growing up? I guess in high school, it would have been better to have a nicer car. (*laughs*) I had the original res bomb like you see a lot of. But it's what I could afford. My grandfather helped me for the most part. But I chipped in a little bit when I could. I had to pay him back eventually, when I could. But uh, I don't know what else there was. I had a relatively good childhood. It sucked because I fought a lot, but ... I can't think of anything else.

**CW:** Whose name do you carry? Is that your grandparents' name or was it your father's name?

**TM:** Oh, Murphy? Yeah, that's a funny story. My Gram, she was married to a Murphy. He was, like, Irish. My uncle was, like, half Irish, half Passamaquoddy. Joe. He went to Ireland to meet some of the family over there, I guess. He put me on the phone with one of his cousins

and some shit. So I just started talking to this guy, and he's like, 'Blah, de dee, blee, blah.' I'm like, 'What? Huh? What?' I'm like, 'Come on. Are you serious?' He went to the bathroom or something and put me on the phone. So, I'm talking to his cousin and I'm like, 'Come on, man.' I'm like, 'Hello?' He just started talking, like, straight deep Irish to me, and I'm like, 'I can't understand what you're saying.' I was like, 'What are you saying?' Because we sound like we're from New York, for some reason. I don't know why. It's weird. I talked to a few people from New York, and they thought I was from Yonkers. I'm like, 'What? I'm from Pleasant Point.'

So, my uncle got back on the phone, and I'm like, 'Don't ever do that to me again. I was, like, 12. Twelve years old, and he's having me talk to a full-blown Irishman. I'm like, 'You can't do that to me. I don't even know what he's saying!' And he was laughing at me. He's like, 'Yeah, I'm over in Ireland,' Dublin or wherever. I don't know where he was, but he was over in Ireland, and he was talking about it. It was cool as hell. I talked to him for little bit. So I was like, 'Hey, did you find any leprechauns?' I was pickin' on him. But, he was over there. That was his father. I'm not sure, exactly. I think he died. Then my Mom, my Gram, kept that name and didn't marry my grandfather for a while. I don't know why. For a long time. They were together forever. Then finally, they got married. But, um, she kept that name. I think in the hospital, she was like he's with me, he's a Murphy. It just stuck, and that's why I'm a Murphy and my brother's a Murphy. We're technically supposed to be, if I looked at it, I would probably be a Bailey, from my real father's side. He was a biker. I guess I would identify more as a Tomah from my Gramp's side. Because that's where most of our family came from was Motahkomikuk, in Indian Township. I lived there. I lived in Pleasant Point. I've lived in the Indian Township. I've lived on Indian Island. It's just weird how that worked out. I just left it. I'm just like, whatever. It's just a name.

**RG:** Is there anything else that you would like to add to your Statement?

**TM:** I don't really know. I mean, I guess, yeah. I thought you guys had, like, some hard questions or something for me, a bunch of questions to let me know what's what and how's life.

**RG:** You answered most of them. I can't think of any.

**TM:** Were they — Is that how I'm supposed to answer?

**CW:** Basically, it's an open-ended process where we're interested in having you share with us your experience and what you think might be relevant to trying to improve Child Welfare processes. Child Welfare process is narrow, but, you know, it's —

**TM:** Is that like — Also, with my stepfather, he's full-blooded Micmac. *(picks up photo)* Everybody keeps asking me who's that chick. But, he's full-blooded Micmac. He's from Eskasoni. You've probably heard of Eskasoni. It's a pretty good-size reservation up in Northern Nova Scotia. So, he was taken from Eskasoni and sent to Shubena-. What is that one in, that place where they did horrendous shit to kids?



**CW:** A boarding school?

**GK:** A residential school.

**TM:** Was it like a residential school?

**RG:** Shubenacadie?

**TM:** Shubenacadie, I think it was, yes. I was trying to think of what that was. He was taken there, and he was just — I mean, the shit that he told me was — I don't really even want to say it on camera. It was messed up. He, ah, when he come out, he got with my Mom, and they've been together for like forever, since I was a kid. Ever since I can remember, they've been together. Everything that happened to him affected how they lived. So, they drank a lot and used a lot of drugs. He didn't really — The funny thing was, is he was a genius. So, it made it weird because, being a genius, I mean, his IQ was off the scale. It was like in the 140s or something like that, 150s, I don't know. It was crazy. But, uh, he went straight to what they normally do. They ended up drinking themselves to death. Some of them committed suicide. I don't know why. It's some weird thing they do. I knew what it was from. It was from Shubenacadie, what happened to him there. He just wanted to forget it, and he used drugs. Not only did that affect him, it affected my Mom.

So, it affected my Mom, I only saw her a couple of times a year, growing up. You know. Why? 'Why did I only see you a couple times a year, Mom?' 'Oh, because I'm out drinking with your stepfather.' Why? I know how that works, and I know other people that have been through that process, and it sucks. I've heard about it, and it's not a good thing. I knew quite a bit of stuff growing up about all that shit because of my stepfather. I knew about all the atrocities that happened to a lot of our people, you know, in the 50s, 60s or 70s. I knew what happened to my brother and sisters, and going through all the stuff. I come to some of these meetings, and everybody's like, 'Oh, I never heard about that, never seen it, never knew anything about that.' I'm like, 'Yeah, good for you, I'm glad.' I grew up knowing all this shit. I knew what happens there. I knew what happened to my brother and my sisters, and, you know, just deal with this shit all the time. It just sucked. You know what I mean? It wasn't good. All around it just was not a good thing. And I knew back then nobody gave a shit. Nobody cared. I'd ask my Mom, 'Where's my brother? Can I see him?' 'Nope.' 'Where's my sister? Can I go see her?' 'Nope.' Nobody cared. Even on the Native side.

They didn't push it hard enough to find them to fix it. It felt like they allowed it. You know what I mean? It just, it sucked. My stepfather, like later on, as I got older, I kinda, slowly figured it out. I took me a while to figure out exactly why he drank so much. He drank himself to death. Smoked himself — The man would be high all day and be drinking all the time. If I'd see a human joint, that would be him. He'd be walking around things constantly

out. I mean, I smoked with him, but I couldn't keep up. There's no way in hell. I'd be like, 'I gotta go. See you later. I gotta go and sober, straighten my ass out.' I couldn't function high all the time. Hell, no. I got shit to do. It's just, it's unfortunate. That's one of the biggest thing that I didn't like what happened. But that's a different thing. That's in Canada. Some from the US went to Canada to Shubenacadie.

**CW:** Some also went to school in Pennsylvania.

**TM:** Yeah, Pennsylvania. That was a group went there. The thing is, a lot of them that came from these other reservations, or other Tribes that are now gone. I think they probably got absorbed by the bigger tribes like the Passamaquoddys, the Penobscots, the Micmacs and the Maliseets. The Maliseets are now the smallest, but they're hanging on. They're doing okay, but all the other ones that were smaller, were just a few, four or five families; they're just gone now. The whole (*inaudible*) Tribes, I'm not sure how big they were back then, but they're just all gone now. They either got smallpox or the last couple kids got taken to those schools, whatever, and now they're not — I'm not sure exactly how that all worked out. 'Where do we put these kids?' 'Where did you get them?' 'I don't know.' 'Where did you come from?' 'That way.' (*brief laugh*) You know? It's unfortunate. I blame Shubenacadie for my stepdad being there. He was, wanted to be like a father to me, but couldn't because of all that shit that happened.

**CW:** He never had been parented himself.

**TM:** He was there for a while. He was one of the longest ones there.

**GK:** It's amazing what people carry with them.

**TM:** It sucks. People don't understand. But I mean, do I have the worst story? Hell, no! Did I live in a place with candy canes and lollipops everywhere? No. I mean, did I have a great childhood? No. Did I survive it? Yeah. It was fine. It wasn't that bad, but it was what it was. It was the res. It was the way it was, and I'm fine, for the most part. I guess you should say I survived it. (*laughs*) It's a shitty thing to say, but it's just the way it was back then. It's probably better now, I presume. I haven't been there for a while. I think it's better now, for the most part, hopefully. Hopefully. But I mean, I don't really know.

**CW:** I think it may be better for some, and not any better for others.

**TM:** Yeah, depending on what family you're in, maybe?

**CW:** Depending on family, and what people are carrying. Probably Esther and Maria, when they've been with your group, have talked to you about the concept of intergenerational trauma, and that stuff that your grandfather suffered comes down, too.

**TM:** My grandfather, he was in Korea and World War II. I think him and my brother, well, his brother, were — I think they did their own code talking for the military. It was just a few people from Pleasant Point Township. It wasn't like a slew of Navajos. There was a lot of



them. So it wasn't like they showed up in droves. It was just a few, some people did a little bit on their own, probably. Because I remember him telling me they would talk a little bit of Passamaquoddy in the War. But he was in Korea, prisoner of war at least three years. He did serious time, and it has nothing on me. I'm like, 'Hey, you got that and I'm just going to go over here and do my little girl time.' That's what I'm doing now. Not saying girl time — (*gesturing to CW and RG*) You know what I mean. It's nothing like what he did. On this video thing, I shouldn't be saying — Can I say names? Or does it matter?

**RG:** You can.

**TM:** Okay, because my grandfather (*says grandfather's name; unclear*) was the one that brought me up, but he was older. So it wasn't like, he could take me to baseball games or be the Dad. But, he was the best he could. He did well. He did well. He raised me pretty good. I'm a little different because of it, probably. But, I wouldn't say I'm the best man, but I would say I came out all right, I'd have to say, because of it. And what he went through. He raised me pretty well. So. I think I have my grandparents to thank for raising me how they did and how I came out.

**CW:** Sometimes it feels good to say someone's name in an honorary way. Know that that's preserved. The memory is preserved.

**TM:** It also makes it good because of that. Because, my great-grandfather was the last great chief. They call them great chiefs because they were the old generation. They're not like the new, 'Let's vote 'em in.' This was what the people wanted and they knew who was going to be chief next. It was how they did it back a thousand years ago. This was the way they always did it. He was the last one. My great-grandfather was Chief Tomah Joseph. He was the last one. It was in Indian Township. Then, after him, I think they started voting them in. They got pictures of him up there.

**CW:** For great quotations, things that he said?

**TM:** Maybe. I think a few of those, and they have pictures of him where he's standing in a canoe and paddled his way down Tomah Lake. I think they have a few quotations of him. It was nice. It was nice to see something like that. I'm not going to turn into a wolf and say, 'Yeah, the last great chief's great-grandson.' Nothing like that. I mean, it's nice to have something like that. I don't know. What else do you guys want to talk about? Children? I think I only had one.

(*laughter*)

If I was able to do it, I would do everything I can to be a great father for my daughter. That was pretty much all I wanted. You know what was weird? I don't know if it was — I can't say it was a Native thing or it was a white thing or whatever I got in me, but the last time I was in prison and I was doing my time, I was thinking, for some reason, I'm going to have daughter. I know I'm going to have a daughter. If I have a kid, it's going to be the first one and it's gonna be a girl. For some reason, I knew about her. I dreamt about her. I'm like, walking around holding this kid, this little baby girl. I kept dreaming about her, not like all the time, but a few times I dreamt about her. Then I just realized, yeah, I'm gonna have a girl. I know I'm gonna have a girl.

**CW:** And there she is.

**TM:** And there she is. It wasn't with the best mother that I dreamt about, you know, but I so appreciate her for having her for me. I thought that was kinda nice. I already wrote to her about it. I wrote to her, I was like, couple months ago, 'Yeah, you know, I dreamt about having you forever, and then here you are.' But, what do you write to a ten-year-old? I was just trying to figure it out. So.

**RG:** Are there any other questions either of you want to ask?

**CW:** Just a great appreciation to you for being willing to speak to us and share your experience.

**TM:** Any differences from how it is from down there as up to —

**GK:** Every community has its own dynamics. It's own rules, too.

**TM:** How big is your res down there?

**GK:** Well, it's about five square miles at one point, but America invaded in the 1970s, and so now, we're almost like an ethnic minority in our own res.

**TM:** So, they like moved in at the same time.

**GK:** Yes.

**TM:** That's kind of weird.

**GK:** Yeah. I could tell stories, but when I was growing up there, um, there was only one way that you could get into my community. It was like a 30-mile dirt road. So, they were pretty isolated for the longest time.

**TM:** And then that went away.

**GK:** Then that went away, yeah.

**TM:** Wow.

**GK:** But, it's a beautiful spot. There are some places on Cape Cod that, uh, you could feel the power and the energy there. It's still there.

**TM:** Same thing where we live.

**GK:** Absolutely.

**TM:** But they own like 99% of the coastline now. *(laughs)* Whatever. I mean, we never owned it, so, I mean, it's not —

**GK:** But it's your homeland. And the neat thing about that is the Penobscots and the Maliseet and Micmac know that it's your territory.

**TM:** Yeah. Anyway.

**RG:** Thank you so much.

**TM:** You're welcome. We can do this anytime. It's kind of neat.

**GK:** I look forward to crossing paths with you one of these days.

**TM:** Yeah. I'll be around. And hopefully, I'll have money. Hopefully. You just never know what's gonna happen.

**GK:** Absolutely. But it's good.

**TM:** Yeah. It's all right. What is it, 10:00? 10:30?

**RG:** 10:30.

**TM:** Did you guys bring lunch?

**CW:** No. *(laughs)*

**RG:** Are you ready for me to stop?

**TM:** Yeah.

**RG:** Okay. Thank you again.

**[END OF RECORDING]**