

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL
CENTER FOR LOWELL HISTORY
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INFORMANT: HENRY DESOUSA
CONDUCTED BY: BARBARA FERTIG
DATE: DECEMBER 3, 1987

D = DESOUSA
F = FERTIG

LFP BF-A010

Tape begins with informant in mid-sentence:

D: That we have for the, the, the group, for the folk group.

F: All right, and who are those ladies?

D: Those ladies, they are just housewives. They are just like (--)

F: But is this in the Azores?

D: No, this is here. (F: This is here) In the Holy Ghost, (F: ohhh!) Holy Ghost Park here in Lowell. (F: Uh-ho) We have here, like you just mentioned Mr. Martinez. This is her mother, his mother, (F: Oh, uh huh) Ahhhh, this is another [first name unclear] Espinola here. (F: Uh-huh) Ah, she's a lady that used to help me on [unclear]. Those old ladies they are really experts. (F: Uh-huh) Because over there in the old country, in the Azores, they do this type of food. This is a type of food that you do really just the special occasions like for Holy Ghost occasions, and weddings, big festivities, they do this type of food. It's more or less like eh, ahhh New England boiled dinner. (F: Uh-huh, uh-huh) Except they use, all the juice they take from that uh, that uh, the soup, they put on the top of special bread, homemade bread. (F: Mm-hm) And they make a special bread soup with it. And [unclear] takes everything, she's our [unclear], or our linguice. Sometimes even mozzarella and ahhh, bacon, ahhh, meat, pork, everything goes inside. (F: Mm-hm) Cabbages, (F: uh huh) and potatoes. And they make and they serve it as you can see here. After this is served, they are preparing, preparing the, the, the, the dishes that we, this is another type of thing that I'll go over that. (F: Oh) Cause you see all the bread here all over (F: yes) the place? (F: Yes) And this is, they are preparing those soups. So (--)

F: And that's the bread floating in the soup?

D: That's right. (F: Yeah) It is not really floating in the soup. That's almost dry. Because after they put over here on the bread, they let, let it suck into (F: uh-huh) the bread. (F: Uh-huh) And they put (--) They, they top it off with, with some cloves. So the thing, like the steam goes inside of the bread. (F: Uh-huh) And the bread's almost dry. Steamy. (F: Uh-huh) If you know what I mean by that. (F: Yes, uh-huh) Steamy, but dry. And uh, as you can see, (F: they're serving it?) here they are taking to serve, and they start serving. Here it is. (F: Uh-huh) See? (F: Uh-huh) The, the, one of the girls and boys of the group they are serving over here. This time we had the Portuguese Consulate then. Doctor [name unclear], he was here. Our priest, Father Eusebio. (F: Mm-hm) Some ah, representatives of things around here. And we had, as you can see, we had like a, a U-shaped table to accommodate all, everybody that was here then. A lady they respect very much eh, eh, [name unclear]. She was with uh, the, the (F: oh, yes) Institute International (F: yes) of Lowell. (F: Yes) She just happens to be here because, she's really some, some, she was really something in the Portuguese, still is something in the Portuguese community. And after that we dance, we play. Then we, we, as you can see, we uh, present our group folkloric dancing and eh, several numbers that we had. That, and it's starting over here with eh, with eh, the musical. The people play the music. (F: Mm-hm) As you can see there is a Portuguese guitar here. That's a very Portuguese instrument here. (F: Yes) Uhhh, a pandolin and eh, two guitars. Uh, and we have people serving. Eh, we have uh, our folk group in action (F: uh-huh) here really on the Holy ghost. Then used to have twelve eh, pairs. So it would be twenty-four uh, uh twelve boys and twelve girls (F: uh-huh) going on, on this, on this thing. We had a special eh, eh, special band, (F: mm-hm) Portuguese band eh, playing for us. And uh, we used to do this in every single anniversary of the group folklore, (F: mm-hm) the folk group that we have for seven years here in Lowell. (F: Uh-huh) After was [few words unclear] himself. But even though we went to Canada one time, representing us, representing Lowell. (F: Mm-hm) We went several times in some um, contests in New Bedford, as well as in Cambridge, and eh, Peabody, which you have some trophies over here. From there we get the second prize over there on the tenth of June, 1985. In 1985 we get the second prize as the best group in action on the streets. (F: Uh-huh) It's a parade that we have on the ten of June. Our ten of June is something like your Fourth of July. Our ten of June is the day, day of Portugal is ten of June. (F: oh, is it?) Yes. Like here is Fourth of July. (F: uh-huh) It's [Camonage], our poet. Like [Camonage] would be like the Portu, the Portuguese Shakespeare, let's put it that way. [Laughs]

F: Oh, is it his birthday?

D: Yes, (F: uh-huh) it is. Of his death. Eh, so (F: Oh, of his death) it, that was, that was the ten of June. (F: Uh-huh) Ten of June eh, 1580. That's when he died. And eh, that's eh, Day of Portugal and Portuguese communities all over the world. (F: Uh-huh) And eh, then eh, we have the big parade usually in Cambridge, because it's put up by the Portuguese Consulate in the area of eh, Boston. But because all the Portuguese in the area of Boston, they are concentrated in Somerville and Cambridge, it is there that we do that [unclear] (F: Mm-hm) So in 1985 we were there and we got that eh, second prize because what we do, we go in parade, but we keep dancing on the streets. We are not just showing off. (F: Mm-hm) Dancing and going, and (F: uh-huh) dancing and keep going, dancing and singing. And that's what we did. Here we, we

ehh, made part of ehh, several eh, eh regattas, when they had that on ah, on Pawtucket Boulevard. (F: Uh-huh) As you can see by the pictures here.

F: Is this (--) These were taken on Pawtucket Boulevard? Are they?

D: No. (F: No) They were taken before we took over. (F: Oh) They were taken in ahh, in our St. Anthony church grounds. (F: Oh, oh) In the back of the parking lot, as a matter of fact. (F: Uh-huh) That's where we put (--) The City of Lowell gave us this big truck and we decorate with something very Azorean. Some flowers, they are Azorean. And the windmill, because the windmill is really a symbol of eh, of Portugal. We still have a [museum?] as you can see over there in that [prospects?] you see over there, (F: oh, yes) the windmill over there? (F: yes) We, it's a symbol of the Azores, really. (F: The Azores) The Azores. Not really Portugal. I'll say the Azores. (F: Uh-huh) The Azores we use a lot of windmills. Ahh, now they don't use it no more, but eh, they still have a lot of them there. And they keep it in shape as eh, for purposes, and to show the tourists and so forth. And we have several things showing that we are Portuguese, and over there when we were, because we had so much space in this trailer, we were dancing all over. Singing and dancing and jumping and eh, doing our thing. Uhh, so as you can see there was the windmill. Would be like a replica (F: mm-hm) really of the windmill over here. And there we are in action going on somewhere in ahh, downtown. This is downtown. It's almost in City Hall as you can see. (F: Uh-huh, uh-huh) In ah, Merrimack Street. Yes and uhh, our folk group, we start this folk group in nineteen uh, let me see, in nineteen seventy-nine, nineteen eighty, in nineteen eighty we start our folk group. A couple of girls approached me, young girls as a matter of fact. They were fifteen years old then. (F: mm-hm) And I (--) Fifteen and thirteen year old girl. She came to me, was this Fatima Silva, and another lady, Guadalupe Espinola. This girl they came to me to ask me for help. They would like to put eh, group folk, a folk group together. Just because I've been all my life involved with theater and eh, eh (F: oh you have) folk things. Yes. (F: uh-huh) In Portugal I used, I used to sing with a band and so forth. Something on the family life, you know. I, I have a background. And that, they thought about me. They came to me. So I didn't know much about the folk. I knew the folk, our folk, Portuguese folk, very, very much so, but I was never uh, I would never coach one. So I sent for music from Portugal and I start to, you know, to taking some uhh, uhh talk with people to do this, this type of dance, because there is some special steps for each type of eh, of eh, of eh music, (F: m-hm) for each type of song. (F: mm-hm) And eh, I would put the girls and boys together and I did my best. And we were very successful as I said. Ehh, we went to, one time to Canada, Toronto, and we were (--) Montreal, I'm sorry, to Montreal. And we were very successful there. People liked us. We worked strictly with islander folk. By islander I mean the Azores and Madeira. (F: Uh-huh) Because eh, there is a differences between the, the, the Portuguese folk, ehh the one we practice, they practice in eh, in continent, on the mainland, (F: Uh-huh) and the one we do in the Azores.

F: Is there, is there, are there differences between the Azores and Madeira as far as (--)

D: [Interrupts] Exactly. As well, as well, as well. Our eh, the, the, the folk of Madeira, it's very gay like put it that way. It's very happy, songs and everything, happy, songs. (F: Mm-hm) Continent, the mainland, depends on the location where they are. Ahh, but mostly they are happy songs as well. (F: Mm-hm) The folk by itself. When you go to the Azores something

very different happen. The folk will start being a little sad. That is why, that is why, why this folk is very sad and smooth, and not a jumpy and gay (F: uh-huh) as would be in Madeira and continent. Because the islands, they are islands, eh surrounded by sea. The people, they don't have uh, uh, they are strongly by, by the [horizons]. They, they can't go away. Sometime they wish to they can't. And eh, eh there is a lot of emigration from the Azores. (F: Mm-hm) Always have been since the sixteenth century, (F: mm-hm) that's as we can remember. Because the, the, the, the Azores they were habitating on the fifteenth century. So they started emigrating just a hundred after to whatever, Hawaii or whatever. They, they found places to go. They went to (--) And the folk is always the sweet heart that they had left and never came back. And eh, it's about ahh, always ah, about boats, and sea, and fishermen, and fishing. Of course fishing is a dangerous life. Sometimes they go to fish and they never return back. (F: yes) So you can see why there is always, eh there is some songs eh like one, [Silvard?]. [Silvard?] it's like homesick, being homesick. The word means I miss, I miss you. If I say to you "I have [silvard] from you" means I miss, I'm missing you. It's a word, [silvard] that means that. And there is eh, eh, eh, a song called "[Silvard]." Eh, to have the other one would be my sweetheart and eh, would say [speaks in Portuguese], "Oh my sweetheart, if you go as you say you are, please send me a letter once in a while, because I'm here still on the docks waiting for your return." (F: oh) So it's always eh, eh, eh, eh, songs like that. So the folk, the Azorean folk, it's been very smooth, very quiet. It's not as gay as the other. (F: Mm-hm) And I try to speed up the melodies and as well as the steps, to give it [snaps fingers] some, something, you know. (F: uh-huh) [Laughs] Because was otherwise would sleep, people would sleep and say (F: yeah) all right, what, what is this! (F: uh-huh) Ohh, I was very successful in that. We tried to speed up a little bit and make it a little more gay, (F: uh-huh) with steps and movements, and uh trying to, and to, we did it, we did it. (F: Mm-hm) Ah, it's very hard to work with eh, the, in our days with, the Azorean folk, as I said, because of that. All of the songs that I can remember, they are really smooth. They are not happy. They are not like they have [unclear] on eh, on eh, on eh, on eh, mainland. [Sings in Portuguese and taps foot] Eh, you go to Madeira they have [sings in Portuguese] See, another beat. (F: uh-huh) You go to the Azores, you got nothing like that. Everything is smooth. [Sings in Portuguese] So, is really, see, because you see it's really, that's the song I am repeating again. "Oh my love, if you go as you say you are, leave your name on one, one of the harbor stones, so I can see it once in a while when I'm, I have survived when I have miss you." (F: uh-huh) You know, when I miss you. So it's really hard. But the folk here in eh, in Lowell, they were very successful. That's too bad that it stopped. Why did we stop with it? Oh, two years ago we went to the Azores with the folk group. (F: oh!) Last year, I'm sorry. In nineteen eh, eighty-six we went to the Azores. Ahh, we, then we had so girls, just girls. We (F: oh) couldn't get no boys. (F: Oh! Uh-huh) Boys here, they start working in the Portuguese community. They buy a car and they don't care more for dancing. They start showing off his car. So the girls started growing up, and becoming eighteens and twenties. Eh, they were more to come. But they, but the boys they, we stopped having [unclear] boys and we, when we had the [rialsas?] [few words unclear] no boys! I said, so in time I say "Hey, there's nothing we can do. Let's do it with girls." (F: uh-huh) So, the last times we did with girls. We did with girls and we were successful with just with the girls. When we took the, the, the folk group to Graciosa, which one of the islands of the Azores, this last eh, eh July, July 1986, we were very successful there. Eh everybody liked it. We took our songs, we took our plays (F: uh-huh) and everything was very nice. Ahh, except when they came back, somehow they start [disburse] you know? One day I called for a meeting and eh they say "I don't want to do it no more," blah,

blah. I think they admit the goal was to go out. (F: Uh-huh) And all of a sudden (--) And because of my professional life also, (F: uh-huh) and maybe my age. [laughs] I am fifty years old. So I start saying "hey, I have kids of my own. Hey, shee, I don't want to get involved with this." I says "Why don't you just keep go and get somebody else." I guess nobody want to take care of that and that was the end of it. Was the end of it. Ahh, even if we are together and I [unclear] quite sure if there a special event we can, we have to go, probably I can make a (F: uh-huh) couple of calls and put a, a group together in a, in a couple of months or so. (F: I see) Because I know where they are. (F: uh-huh) Because now it's easy. Don't forget, I start with boys. They were americanized, they were americans. They didn't know even the steps. They knew, they didn't know even know to dance. They have no rhythm, they have nothing! (F: Uh-huh) I start to almost putting my hands on their feet and say "You do this!" You know. And eh, but it was a lot of fun. I loved it. I love it.

F: Does any (--) Does anybody do any of the dances just for social events? Uhh, I mean are there, are there dances that, with, to folk music that go on socially here?

D: Ehh-h-h, sometimes they used to have that. It's like anything else. It's too bad, those things they go away. And people they (--) I still remember about three, four years ago when we had some dances, they used to [intricate]. So putting in on between (F: mm-hm) uh, uh some folk dances. Uh, some old folks would get up, you know. Those old, old (F: uh-huh) folks would get up, Portuguese old folks would get up, get up and go in, on the middle of the, the saloon hall and will dance some eh, old folk music. Of course eh, maybe because of the new generation now ehh, they take over and that [phone rings] and they don't care, they don't care much about the folk. But I know some uh, this happens in Lowell. I know some places eh, like Revere and Lawrence, yes Lawrence from the other side, Lawrence, they, they eh, very seldom they, when they have some dancing parties, they dance the [shamarita], which is a, very one of the few gays eh, musics that we have, [shamarita]. And they do that. They do that. Once in a while they dance the [shamarita]. But from that on, I don't think so.

F: But they, but some still in Lawrence, not particularly here.

D: Not particularly here. In Lawrence they do that a lot.

F: And the, the sham (--)

D: [Shamarita].

F: [Shamarita]?

D: [Shamarita]

F: Is an Azorean dance?

D: It's an Azorean dance. (F: Uh-huh) It's one of the few. I would say. It's one of the, one of the few (--) [stops talking, interviewer is speaking softly to someone else in background]

F: We can stop then. Let me, let me ask you just a little bit about yourself. You come from the Azores?

D: I came from the Azores, yes. I came from the Azores in September, 1970 from uh, island. The Azores as you know they are nine islands. (F: umhm) And I came from this. I was born in Fayal. (F: uh-huh) And after from Fayal I went to Terceira, which is my father's island. My mother is from Fayal. Eh, as you can see nine islands, people they travel in between the islands. They used to then with boats, ehh, now they do it with planes. There is connection between all the islands, except one, [Corveau]. That's the smallest one. There's just two hundred fifty inhabitants. One, (F: oh) the smallest one. So anyhow ehh, I came to fro (--) After I married to (--) My wife happens to be from Fayal also as I. And we met in Terceira. I never knew her. [Interviewer laughs] Originally on the island we both were born. So we, we went to Terceira and I came in 1970 to ahh, to America. I came because, why did I come to America? In 1958 [unclear] there was eruption and volcano in [unclear]. I have some literature in English over here, and I'll be very pleased to give it to you after. You can take it if you want to really go over what I, what I said, dates and everything. There was (--) And uh, because we were born in Fayal we were within a quota, special quota to come to America. Because they uh, the immigration, John F. Kennedy then opened the doors for [both talk] special immigrants from the [volcano], because of the volcano, because a lot of people, houses and [unclear]. My, eldest brother (--) Well we have to live in Fayal. My oldest brother was in still in Fayal, see. He was one of the, the one, the pe, one of the people that were, lost the house and everything through (F: mm-hm) that volcano. So he came to America 1960. He became an American citizen. And so it's easy. After that we just follow up. Five brothers, we were five brothers. So the, the, the oldest one, he's in Hartford, Connecticut, and he's still there. And all the others followed him. I was the third one to come over. And I went to Hartford, Connecticut where, near my brother. From Hartford, Connect (--) But eh, my brother was the only one there in Hartford, Connecticut, my oldest brother. The other three, they were in this area, in Lowell. Things were not so good for me over there, and uh this brother of mine offer me a partnership with him and I came over here. And I realized myself and I figure out that I am going to realize myself here, because in Hartford, Connecticut I was in between people from the mainland, nice Portuguese people, but they were established and everything was. So I thought being in between the people that I know, people that knew me on the Azores all could realize myself. And that happened really. (F: uh-huh) I came up here in nineteen seventy-six. I work with that brother of mine. (F: Ohh) In that partnership who was a, a, a furniture store. Wyman's, (F: ohh) used to be, Middlesex Street. (F: mm-hm) We were where DeSousa Furniture. Up through the business were no good, my brothers, we split from my brother, and I got involved looking around and say "Hey, what can I do? What can I do for the Portuguese community? What they don't have? So, they didn't have really, then they didn't have ahhh a real estate person talking fluent Portuguese. There was a couple gentlemen over there, but talking really broken Portuguese. (F: Mm-hm) They did. So I became a, ahhhh, real estate broker. I looked around and I say "Hey, they need ah insurance broker." I became an insurance broker because they didn't have one. And after there was not really, it was not really a Portuguese travel agency here. It was a man, was a, like a, a, was outside salesman. Sort of it. (F: Umhm) So, I put a, a travel agency also. (F: Um-hm) And now as you can see I've been a little successful in life. (F: yes) And eh, I did it. I made what I have in eight years. When I split from my brother eight years ago I had no time to be sitting over here with you, [both laugh] because you know my mind would be, my, all my debts and my

second mortgage. [Unclear] (F: Uh-huh) In eight years I was lucky enough I bought this building already together with this, the man that's got the, the, Smith, ehh, jewel Smith, uh, (F: uh-huh) uh Goldsmith, (F: uh-huh) a Goldsmith on the other side. He has the jewelry store. And actually I have, I brought kids. I brought two kids from Portugal. My daughter Suzanna, she's twenty-four. My son is twenty-one, Noonoo. And thirteen years after I have two americans, two yankees. [Both laughs] [Unclear] Kevin, he's eight, and Lolita is six. Yeah. And uh, that's it. I'm a grandfather already. I'm very happy as you can see.

F: Yes, it's a wonderful place.

D: I'm so proud of my family! (F: Yes) I've got to include my future daughter-in-law that's here. (F: Uh hah) I've got to, I got to, as a matter of fact, I [few words unclear]. She was, she was the one who put that thing and gave it to me for Christmas. Callie, my future (--) See [few words unclear]. When I say realizing in myself, I'm realized dear. I don't know if you know what I mean by realize myself. I realize is a word I like to use it very much. It's I realize myself, because I'm making money and the same time I'm helping this people. Like this man right now, he asked me for uh, for uh, if he could do something. Of course with the Portuguese law you have to wait another two months to do that. I know a little bit of the Portuguese law with this uh, whatever is involved. [Unclear] whatever is involved with papers and immigration and so forth. And the Portuguese law according with immigrant. So I know that, I have to know in this type of business. (F: Uh huh) I just, I help the people as much as I know. Because people sometimes they want to send, like this man, he was asking me for a paper to sent to Portugal. And I told him, hey, that paper is going to cost you twenty-five dollars and is no good. You got to wait two months in order (--) Because the rights you are looking for, you are just entitled for after six months in this country. Just arrived four months ago, because I know him, you know, it's another thing. If I didn't know him I was going to make him spend twenty-five dollars for nothing. And I know he was my client. I knew he came four months ago. I knew everybody. The people came to me here just [unclear]. They just [unclear] for trips or insurance sometimes. They came [unclear]. They came for us to use the phone and dispute the bill on the electric company, or gas company. And we do that free for them of course. We don't charge a dime for that. I'm a notary public. Uh, I never charge a dime for it. If I execute the paper, yes. If I just use my seal for, to notarize anything I don't charge a dime. It's a free service. And that's why I call it seeding. I put the seeds in the field, and after, when the right time comes I get the crop. (F: Uh huh, uh huh) After that. That's, and that's my type. I don't want to be rich, I want to be comfortable. Rich, [laughs] richness is going to bring me problems. I don't want [few words unclear]. And besides [few words unclear]. I love Lowell. I love the Portuguese community here, because they are really a plus. There are some exceptions of course, (F: sure, like anybody) like I don't say that everybody is going on the right way. There is some, some people that (--) But it happens with any community. But in a big percentage we are very quiet. It's too bad. It's, we don't have, we don't make noise, because we, nobody knows us on the city hall, you know?

F: [Comment unclear]

D: They recognize, yeah, they recognize us as nice people, but you know, let them make noise about the vote. You know, they should go to city hall and vote. And you know, we don't do

that. It is too bad we don't have a representative in city hall.

F: Yes I think it is too bad.

D: In city hall, or in a high job on the city that we could, we need a voice. Let's put it this way. (F: Uh huh) We need a voice and we don't have that. We should have that voice. I try to, three, four years ago I try to get people to vote. I used to call them on the phone together with Bob Kennedy. When Bob, the first time forty years ago he applied for, after so many years he came back to city hall, and we worked together. I worked together with him and I got on the phone. I got to the house of the people. Got into city hall and find the name. And I have to bring them to the right place for them to vote and so forth, and so forth. We did that. And we are, there is people that think as well as I of course here. (F: Uh huh) A lot of people that think as well as I. You have any more questions?

F: Why don't people want to vote?

D: Well people do whatever they are use to do.

F: Oh! [Unclear]

D: In Portugal the immigrants over here, they are here, they are after 1974. In 1974 [few words unclear] and Portugal became different. We have a dictatorship before (F: Uh huh), up to 1974 and a vote, nobody would care to vote. Vote for what? They have the same people there. (F: Yes) Right?

F: Yes, I see.

D: And they were, they grew up in this idea. (F: Uh huh) I don't have to vote, because you don't know, I'm losing my time. I'm going to have the same guy, or whatever they want. It's like a dynasty over there. (F: Uh huh) So it's hard now to teach the people they are wrong, that's not the way it's suppose to be. It's very hard to tell a man, listen, that's it's more than that. The vote is very important. We are (--) We, if we had (--) What I'm saying we, I'm saying about me and some leaders of the community, let's put it that way. I don't be, I don't want to be called a leader. But because of my position here (F: yes), and the people came to me, I feel that I am somebody in the community and wherever I can help I [unclear]. And there's more people like I, and we think the same way. As a matter of fact we were together with our, with the priest Father Eusebio, we were together in a meeting the other day and this was the main point. A group of Portuguese were getting together and this was (--) We're trying to create an organization, or a person that will be the voice of the Portuguese community. As a matter of fact it's a little bit premature. But we have, we are working that, we are working that. To have somebody that, be our voice. (F: Umhm) Organization, anybody that tells you that's what we want and we are entitled to it. But the people, they don't know what they are entitled to. (F: Uh) They came with the taxes and they pay the taxes. They tell they don't fix the sidewalks, hey, they are careful when they walk out on the street. [Laughs] And they don't know what they are entitled too. And sometimes they are asking more with, for more than what they are entitled too, because they don't know their rights, you know? There is a scale for everything, and they don't know the

scale. (F: Yes) It's very hard. It's very hard. And some people over here they are even illiterate. Nice people [unclear]. The best people in the world. People that they don't have to sign the paper in order to pay their bills. People that don't have to sign the paper in order to accomplish a contract. A shake hands is enough. I know a lot of people over here that don't make any contract, with them just shake your hands. With them see, this is a deal, the deal is done. Shake hands, that's it. I know [unclear].

F: And this is among the Portuguese people [both speaking at same time, rest of comment unclear].

D: Yes, yes. I'm talking about the Portuguese people around here. The people that I know. Those so called 16,000 Portuguese people they claim that's here. Here in suburbs. (F: Yes) I'm talking about, Dracut, Chelmsford, it's all greater Lowell. (F: Umhm) They are really something, but that's, as I said they are very quiet. They should make some noise, but they don't do it. That's what I said for noise. I'm talking about (F: yes) this don't squeak. You know? (F: Uh huh) An the wheel that doesn't squeak gets no grease. [Unclear] (F: Yes, yes, yes) That's, that's what I'm trying to say.

F: I'm, I guess the last, the last question I'm interested in is, is people I've interviewed who are old timers, who have been here since the twenties or thirties tell me that this isn't a very Portuguese neighborhood. And yet for me as an outsider it appears to be.

D: It is. It is. It is. Maybe there is not what they used to have as a Portuguese neighborhood. And they have the right to thing that. Those people, they did beautifully. They came over here in bad times. Oh, they came over here thirty, forty years ago when it was tough, the living was tough here. You know that. There is no conditions in work. There is not protection, there was nothing for this people. So they had to work very hard. And now when they see those new immigrants, Portuguese immigrants coming over, using a tie, that's a new generation. People, they are, they have some school, they have some high school like me, and a lot of them. (F: Uh huh) And they come over here and they seeing you, us making [unclear] seven years here. You know somehow, I'm not criticizing them. It's a very natural feeling. They feel this is simply different, because they tell us, Uh, my time was not like (--). So whatever. Even they criticize the new, but they criticize in a way of uh, I don't know what to tell you, because everything was harder for them then. Now, so they think in a different way. But my feeling, and this is a very Portuguese neighborhood, yes. There is some integration here, different ethnic groups, like the Asians they are having here. But these people, they are nice people also. Very nice people. And uh, I think the Portuguese, they did fantastically. When I came over to Lowell about uh, it was ten, ten, twelve years ago, I can recall Concord Street was a dump over there. And the Portuguese, they start buying the houses one by one over there. And they can see Concord Street now, nice and clean. (F: Pleasant Street) Pleasant Street as well. And a lot of neighborhoods [unclear] not for the Portuguese Community, because they start to compete with each other. Which one will put the best color on the house and the best paint, and uh, we'd show off the house.

SIDE ONE ENDS, SIDE TWO BEGINS.

D: Are to drive from work, house, or home I mean. Homework, or work at home. As an insurance broker I have about five hundred clients over there. And very seldom I have very low ratio of accidents, because they take good care of their property. I have the homeowners. As a matter of fact I've been involved with, for seven, seven years with the insurance, homeowners for the Portuguese community, just Portuguese I have there. Not because I don't sell to the other people, but that's, that's a business I do. It's my clients. And uh, I never had a house was burned down. And the companies they respect me for that, you know. (F: unclear) They respect me for that. But then [unclear] I can squeeze houses like nothing over there, because (--) They can't do that, but I know this because they are Portuguese. They say no way, those guys are Portuguese, they'll take care of the houses. You know, even if a guy doesn't do it, we point them by fingers. He has to do it, otherwise he's going to be different. He's going to be point out. (F: Uh huh, uh huh) You know, those people, they don't, we got to be honest one to another. If there is a crook in the Portuguese community everybody knows them. We have some, but we know them. We went to the Portuguese Club, we, we, the Portuguese Club, and we asked around there. You know Joe Silva, I'm making (--) Henry Sousa, why not. [Laughs] You know him? He's [unclear]. [Unclear] You know, they know everybody. We know each other. (F: Uh huh) We live very much in community [unclear].

F: It sounds like it.

D: It is. It is very much community. Very much together. And uh, I think it's too bad we don't squeak. But being together we are, I feel that we are together. We are together.

F: What is the relationship of this community to the one, to what I gather is a Portuguese community of a sorts in Tewksbury, in Chelmsford, and so forth?

D: Well the people who live now in Tewksbury and Dracut, they, they are the Portuguese that used to live here. (F: Uh huh) They came here, that's what they do.

F: Do they come back here to do their shopping?

D: They came here, they buy houses here. They buy houses here. (F: uh huh) And after [unclear], or they sell them, or rent them out and they go out to the suburbs. This is, I can tell you that's exactly what happened with almost every, everybody here in the Portuguese community. So they are from here. And they come back to shop because they have to look for the Portuguese products. Linguisa and the corn bread, and the [unclear], which is the Portuguese roll, very small Portuguese roll that we have. That we are used to with [unclear]. Uh, and they have to come here because they need the products. They have to come for the sardines and all the products. They are sold here in this community on those, about five fish, fish, yes, for the fish (F: Fish, yes) as you can see we got here. That makes part of our living, of our community. It's our heritage. People still living here the way they used to live there. That's why they are (--) Sometimes they ask me how the heck the Portuguese can do that? I've been living here all my life. I was born here and I could never buy a house. They come over here and in six years they buy a house. It's very simple. (F: Uh huh) Like I said, they buy a car, they go work. Work hard. They take all the overtime they can. So they have, after six years they make money enough to put down and buy a house. And see about six, ten years ago it would be easier than

now. You know, when we needed just two or three thousand dollars to put down and buy a house. So everybody bought houses. That's the way it was!

F: And the Portuguese furniture stores that are here. I mean I'm assuming that people could buy that furniture in other parts of town, but they prefer to do business with the Portuguese?

D: Yes, because they are Portuguese, because they understand each other. (F: Yes) Yes, they understand each other. They could even complain about. [Laughs] Yes, yes. As it was put to me by a Portuguese guy, he says, yeah, I'm making business with you because when there is something wrong I want to tell you and I want to make sure that you understand me. He told me that. I never forgot that. It's very true. (F: Uh huh) People rather deal with me and with the, yeah, the Portuguese, because we understand each other. Don't forget there is people over here they don't know english at all. They are too old to learn. And uh, [unclear]. After they have kids the kids cannot translate for them, because the kids they forget, obviously they forget the Portuguese. So they don't translate [unclear]. So they have to look for more professional help like me and other people for that, which we have different organization for that. We have LUPA, we have the International Institute. We have a lady over there that's super fantastic, Maria Cunha in the International Institute of Lowell.

F: Yes, I've met her, yes.

D: She's super duby. She's really something. And that lady is really something over there. She, uh, they got me, they got several people around here that help them when they need professional help. We have a Portuguese lawyer also that's up to his ears with Portuguese business. (F: I'll bet, yeah) Is Herbert Peter. It's a man from [unclear]. He was born in this country, but he talks Portuguese very, very fluently. Uh, in fact we, it's too bad (--) We have a doctor, a Portuguese doctor. Doctor Blanco. Correa Blanco. (F: Uh huh) He's an old man.

F: The Drug Store.

D: [Unclear?]

F: The Drug Store too. The Portuguese [unclear].

D: Oh yes. We have a Pharmacy, Portuguese Pharmacist here.

F: Uh huh, is that on (--)

D: On uh, [unclear] Square Drugs. [Unclear] Square Drugs was bought by a Portuguese Pharmacist. [Evelina Manamou?] Uh, nice guy. Very helpful person. People go there and ask him for, sometimes for advice in this, on that, and he gives it to them. Even to prescribe, prescribe, I mean to inform about the prescription, you know. In Portuguese is better than telling english. You know that's hard.

F: Of course, of course. Yes.

D: It's very hard! (F: Uh huh) You know, it's very hard! Very hard.

F: You know the other thing I discovered is there's a Portuguese Seventh Day Adventist Church, is that (--)

D: Yes, they just put one on Charles Street.

F: Umhm. They're just building a new building.

D: Building one, yes. It means it's a gain. It's a gain. It's good for us. That means that we are open. (F: Uh huh) We are not [unclear] to the catholic church, because we are very known to be catholic, but there is another belief in Portugal of course. And everybody is entitled to, to that. (F: Yes) To that.

F: Uh huh. Is there (--)

D: As a matter of fact in Portugal the, the, was always opened for, for uh, religion. (F: Unclear) We never had restrictions on that. (F: Uh huh) Never as far as I remember. [Unclear comment] [Laughs] I don't go back as much as that. But uh, it was opened to, to you know, even the Azores we, I found Adventist Church and Protestants, and everybody. I could find the Jehovah Witnesses they have there, and everything. Yeah. It's open. We have The Jehovah Witnesses here (F: you do?) in the Portuguese community, yes.

F: Speaking Portuguese [unclear]?

D: Speaking Portuguese, yes. (F: Uh huh) Speaking Portuguese we got, I know them. I know a lot of them. As a matter of fact some of them, the most part of them they are my clients here. Good clients. Good people. Hey, so they believe whatever they believe. That's a gain now. We are open really. We are open. We try to be open. We try, we do. We have a super fantastic priest over here, very active, Father Eusebio. It's a young man.

F: Yes, yes, he's wonderful.

D: He's very active. (F: Yeah) He's uh, a very wise person. I don't say wiseguy, (F: no) wise person. (F: Yes) Wise person. He's a man with a lot of knowledge and education, because he used to be a teacher of high school, of college in Portugal (F: Oh!) after he became a priest. Because in Portugal they use a lot of priests to have outside jobs in as teachers in Geology and things like that. They use priest for that, and he used to be one. He's a man who uses words like nothing. He's really, really very very good person. (F: Yes) As well as in English as in Portuguese, very fluent [phone rings] in both languages. So we are lucky enough to have him here. Lucky enough.

F: Now is there anything else that I have not asked you that you would like to tell me about yourself, or the community?

D: Well not really. That's a gain. I just hope that one day we have a voice. (F: Yes) And that

people respect us for (--) What I'm saying the people, I'm saying about City Hall and all the, the (--) Respect us for what we are, and don't respect us what we are worth, I put it that way, and not for what we are. Because uh, Portuguese they are nice people, a little tap on the back, see, that's not enough. (F: Uh huh) And I have the feeling that's what they do. They tap us on the back, they say uh, you are Portuguese? Oh, nice people, good people. Gee, we want to be more than good people. We want to be acting. We want to make part of Lowell. All this, this thing that's going on in Lowell, we want to make part of that. We want to, and we want to make, make is [unclear], getting together with those movements, or belonging to the different associations, having people in city hall in jobs, and things like that. I know some Portuguese people working already in Lowell, in city hall, but I think we should have a councilman there and things like that. We need that. With our voices to be heard that we are more than [unclear]. We are not more than (--) I have [unclear]. Like the (--) I have some complaints, and we have some complaints about the police action in this area for instance. They came over here and they arrest people like nothing, you know, stupid. One day where I can recall we were here on the deck of the church and just this two police, just because there was a, a, a complaint about a Portuguese guy, it was a family thing. [Unclear] as a family thing. And the two, well we were partying over there. We were about two thousand people over there. Those two police officers in Lowell, get inside and handcuff a man, a wife faints, the children cry, and the guy they arrest they handle like he was the worst guy of the world, the worst criminal. I had to go together with the guy's daughter and buy the man out. And it was a lot for nothing. If it was another community, I don't want to mention names, but if it was a tough community they would never, they wouldn't dare to go there. (F: Uh huh) I don't want to mention names, but there was a tough, one of those tough communities they would never go there to arrest a person. They [unclear]. They were like the sheriffs in town, all the sheriffs in town. [Unclear], because they knew we are a very peaceful people. Nobody would react against that. I know that. I told them that. If it was from another community you would never do that. I know they won't and that bothers me. They don't respect us, because we are worth something. They respect us because we are which we are, very nice and calm people. Sometimes to be too much nice, is too good now adays. (F: Yes) We got to be a little more than the nice person. (F: Yes, uh huh) We got to react, we got to scream and we got to tell what you are worth to. Sometimes a good scream, because my kids when they are not, I had to scream to them. [Unclear] hey, my father is mad. So that's another story. And that's what I have to say. And I hope that we go for that. I hope that we go for sometimes that city hall respects us for what we are worth, not for what we are. Because we are worth, we had been sleeping, but there is a lot of action going on here and we have to, we are putting groups together. We are trying right now as I told you, we worked together put all the Portuguese, different Portuguese associations together and have one, one group from those [unclear] associations that is going to represent all of them. Say, we are the Portuguese community. Because right now it's impossible to go to city hall and say who are you? I am the Reds, the club, the soccer team, I represent the Portuguese community. No, you can't, because there is the Blues. [Laughs] I'm from Holy Ghost, I represent the Portuguese. No, you can't say that. There is the Holy ghost, there is the Trinity Society, there is different things that's going on over here. And we are trying to get it together, and we have to do that. And tell them that we are here, and we are worth something, and we want our share, our piece of the cake like the others.

F: Uh huh

D: That's it!

F: I wish you luck.

D: Thank you very much.

F: Okay, thank you.