

**Interviewer:** There was a few more questions on health care. Were there any like common diseases that everybody had? Or, was it every day things, like, well let's see....

**Interviewer 2:** malaria?

**Interviewer:** Malaria. Yeah. Were there any diseases that like your parents and grandparents, that were more common to them?

**Narrator:** Common to them. Think, I think that the only sickness that they suffered common was fever. Fever was all what they, was common to them, because, like how I tell you, pain like stones and what not they didn't suffer. Until they got really sick, but common to them was fever.

**Interviewer:** How about dental care? What was there..., did they make their own toothpaste? What kind of dental care were there?

**Narrator:** Dental care? Well in..., let's say, my grandfather didn't get to know what was a toothpaste. A brush neither, never a toothpaste. My father, yes, they use brush and toothpaste from then.

**Interviewer:** From then on. But, not your grandfather?

**Narrator:** But no, grandfather, no never.

**Interviewer:** Was there any, like if he would get a tooth ache, was there any particular herb or anything that you know of that they would use?

**Narrator:** Yes, Yes. There's a little stick that they used to, to cut in the bush. I don't know the name of this in Spanish, but it taste like mint, but strong, strong. What they do is, they cut a little piece and they put it on top of the teeth that is hurting them and they press it to the next one. And they keep that at least 15, 20 minutes and it start to ease up. That's, that's how they used to. And they used to take off that if, if that doesn't work, well they start to make it get soft. And you know with what? With a nail. And, finally, they would take it out. With that nail and their finger. Yes. (laughs) Well, I saw that with my mother, that is how she takes out her teeth too.

**Interviewer:** With her nail and her finger.

**Narrator:** Yes, it start to scratching, you know, the sides? Yeah, tearing up with the sides. And they say when it's hurting, say you won't feel it. (laughs) They start to scrape it, scrape it and, finally, when they finish taking all the root, they start to shake it. It will get soft and then, they will take it out. Yes.

**Interviewer:** Ouch. How about eye care? Do you know, like how their vision, I guess, it's hard to know if you have bad vision, if you've always had bad vision. You don't know that that is not what it is supposed to look like. But do you know if they had eye problems or...?

**Narrator:** Well, not too much. Not too much, because those people only some of them used glasses so. My father, I think up to now, he can read without eyeglasses. [4:04]

**Interviewer:** How about the sun? Was the sun hard on their eyes?

**Narrator:** The what?

**Interviewer:** Working in the sun all the time. Was that hard on their eyes?

**Narrator:** The sun? Oh, yeah. It hurt? No, no. That doesn't hurt. They work whole..., my father, my grandfather, used to work whole day, he doesn't rest or never rest, just go drink water. Then go right back right in the sun or you could see him sweating, he clean his face and continue working. Never, never stop

**Narrator 2:** Jackie, we have a virus. This happens almost every year during the summer, when the sun is very hot, because we have a very warm weather here and then, this virus affects the eye, no? They call it pink eye.

**Narrator:** She was here last year.

**Narrator 2:** I think you had that experience.

**Interviewer:** Um-hum. Um-hum. Yeah, we brought medicine, yeah.

**Narrator 2:** You saw that. Well, it happens almost every year. And they say that you can catch that virus, catch that virus probably twice, no?

**Interviewer:** Oh, I did not know that.

**Narrator 2:** Then, it will not come back again. And it is a contagious, it's contagious.

**Narrator:** Oh, yeah, very. But, we only start to see that in these days. Before that, let's say our grandfather, they didn't know about pink eye, no nothing.

**Interviewer:** Community leadership and justice system. What forms of local government exists in this region? Of local government?

**Narrator 2:** What we have here is a village councils. That's our local government here. The village council, it consists of a chairperson and five counselors. They are the people responsible for each village. Then, we have the town boards, which they are in charge for the, for the, I mean, the towns or the cities. But, for San Narciso, San Victor and all the other villages in the district, we only have village councils.

**Interviewer:** So it goes from a village and town, and then to the district?

**Narrator 2:** Towns. Yes. To the district.

**Interviewer 2:** Are they, counselors, are they elected by the people? Or are they appointed?

**Narrator 2:** No, they are elected, elected by the people.

**Interviewer:** Council members. Do they have certain duties? Are they responsible for certain areas of the village or is that..., the decisions made by a board as a whole?

**Narrator 2:** Well, the decision is made by the whole group of counselors plus the chairperson.

**Interviewer:** What is the form of leadership in the village. You don't have like a mayor?

**Narrator 2:** That's the chairperson.

**Interviewer:** The chairperson is considered the mayor, okay. (pause) Who administers the justice in the village?

**Narrator 2:** Well, we only have a police station, which is centralized. These police stations that is here in San Narciso is responsible for a certain area, like in San Victor, Ceramon (sp?), Santa Clara, Louisville. So he is responsible for all these area, for all these villages. And, then, well, I think that is divided by zones. Each zone has a police station. [8:18]

**Interviewer:** And do they handle, like if it's a minor things, they handle themselves and then it goes on to [what]?

**Narrator 2:** Minor Cases. To the police station in Corozal, to the court.

**Interviewer:** So, then it goes up to the district?

**Narrator 2:** Yes, that's the court.

**Interviewer:** How has that changed? Like how did it used to be for your parents and grandparents, did they still have village councils?

**Narrator:** No, they did not know about village councils at that times. What they did, was they, they elect one person, at that time it was only one person, who was in charge of the village. And his duty was all the same as the counselors now, but it used to be done by one person. Used to see about the farms, the... everything. And this one they call him, alcalde, he was the alcalde of the village. And anything happens to him, it is him you have to see. If he can't handle the situation, well, he goes to Corozal.

**Interviewer:** How did they decide who got that job?

**Narrator:** The people.

**Interviewer:** So, he was voted.

**Narrator:** He was elected by the people, but it was only one, one person.

**Narrator 2:** In Maya we call it the \_\_\_\_\_ (word spelled in English phonetics: ka-sí-kei). The (ka-si-kei) for the village.

**Interviewer:** Moving to community buildings, were there community buildings where, like was there a rice drying shed or corn mill, where people could pool their things together? Say, if I had a little bit and you had a little bit, we could take it to one place and do it all together, instead of me building a shed and you building a shed? Or did everyone pretty much do their own?

**Narrator:** Everybody do their own.

**Interviewer:** So, there wasn't any community.

**Narrator:** No matter how much, how many amount you have, everybody make their own little shed.

**Interviewer 2:** What about when the alcalde was the system in existence. If he, he needed to have a meeting of the village. Did they have a village meeting house or any kind...?

**Narrator:** No, they use the football field. That is what they use, sometimes, when he needs help to, let's say for example, clean the grave yard or, that is what they clean the graveyard mostly or around the church or what, he calls a meeting. I remember he, there was a bell there right in front of the plaza and then rings the bell and means to, to meeting.

**Interviewer:** And that was sort of a meeting?

**Narrator:** Yeah, a meeting. [11:05]

**Interviewer:** So, everybody was, if you heard the bell, you knew that you were supposed to come to the field.

**Narrator:** Yeah. Or if they want to fix the street. That is what they used. At that time, public works doesn't use to come and fix the streets. The people used to fix.... (interrupted)

**Interviewer:** So, the community maintained the community.

**Narrator:** The community, yes.

**Interviewer:** Were there any small merchants or in the stores in the village then?

**Narrator:** Yes. There was, I think at that time, we had two shops where you could buy almost everything.

**Interviewer:** And what kind of things did they have?

**Narrator:** Groceries. Gray groceries, that's most of the any \_\_\_ you get here.

**Interviewer:** And that was when you were growing up. How about when your grandfather was....?

**Narrator:** When my grandfather, no. They did not have no shop here. They used to go to Corozal, because they scarcely need something. Like what I tell you, they scarcely buy anything, probably only sugar, salt and something like that, because they had everything here.

**Narrator 2:** And, probably Jackie, we can add this. During those days, trading was very common. Say if you have rice, we can exchange. I give you beans, you give me rice. If you have flour, I give you corn. So they trade this way, no.

**Interviewer:** So they didn't need a lot of currency because they would just trade back and forth?

**Narrator 2:** Yes.

**Narrator:** Um-hum. My father says that my grandfather used to have money and put up for about..., money that he puts up where for five, six years. Sometimes he sells a cow and he wrap it up, tie it up good, and throw it in the ceiling of the house. Next year, he sells another two, three cows he'd wrap it up again, tie it and throw it up there. The first time he checked his money was when they bought this first truck here. He told my father, climb up there and see how much money we have there. And when they saw they have enough, they went and buy the first truck. Didn't use money then, they don't spend money. They have everything, they have food. And they don't have time to go and spend money, because they're working, they're working whole day. (laughs) Yes. They had no vehicles, they didn't have to buy gas nor nothing. Mule and cart.

**Interviewer:** It was simple, but it was complicated.

**Narrator:** Oh yes. They got used to that way of living.

**Interviewer:** Were there any guest houses in the villages, like if somebody came from out of town, was there any place for them to stay?

**Narrator:** No. No. No special place. Only with your friend, if you know somebody. Well he would give ya.... Yes, un-huh. No special house though. [14:02]

**Interviewer:** What other community buildings might there be? There was probably a church, but was there any other community building?

**Narrator:** No. At that time, no. Only the church. Right now what we have, the clinic, we have the community center and when people from outside come and they need to stay, they can get the community center, churches and what not. But, at that time, no, only the church. And if I tell you, it a small little church made out of plimentas and thatch.

**Interviewer:** Well, I imagine...did a lot of people travel to where they would be passing through the villages? I mean, did you see a lot of people that didn't live here?

**Narrator:** No. The only time you will see other people here in San Narciso in those days, when you are going to have a match, like a cricket match. That is the day you are going to see people from other

villages the whole day. They are going to play a friendly game and after that, they are gone. Don't see nobody.

**Interviewer:** Let's go to education. Would you describe the education system by level and how it has changed. Like when you went to school as opposed to what they have in school now. How many grades did they have when you went to school?

**Narrator:** Six.

**Interviewer:** Six grades?

**Narrator:** Six standard, yeah.

**Interviewer:** And, how many do they have now?

**Narrator:** Six, the same, I think. Six.

**Narrator 2:** Which is equivalent for eighth graders for you.

**Interviewer:** And then when their school goes on, how many years does it go? Like your junior college?

**Narrator 2:** Junior college, which is high school for us, is four years. And then there's the prep which is six form and that's two years. And then we further studies the university. Right now.

**Interviewer:** When and where were the classes held for each level? Like were all the classes..., did you have a school building or were they...?

**Narrator:** One school building for all the class.

**Interviewer:** About how many kids were in your school.

**Narrator:** Well, right now in, right now it is divided, because, you see they have about two, three buildings but when I grew, when I went to school, we only use one building which was the church, too. There wasn't a special school. We went to school in the church.

**Interviewer:** How many.... About how many kids were...?

**Narrator:** We were about, let's say, about 100 maybe, 150.

**Interviewer:** And, would you just break up in the church into different age groups?

**Narrator:** Um-hum. Um-hum. Yeah. [16:54]

**Interviewer:** And then you would each have teachers?

**Narrator:** Teachers, yes.

**Interviewer:** About how many kids would the teachers have?

**Narrator:** Probably 10, 15 each teacher. We had three, four teachers.

**Interviewer:** That is a lot of teachers. 10, 15 kids for one teacher that's, that's nice. That would be nice to have that now.

**Narrator 2:** That's nice, yes, compared to right now.

**Narrator:** Compared to right now, some teacher have 50, right now. And they have about 18 or 20 teachers here.

**Interviewer:** I know, not enough teachers.

**Narrator:** But, when my father went, say they only had two, everybody only, so you have two grades, second. Only two years. They wouldn't study nowheres because they had to go out and work. They come out, they used to come out from school 10 to 11 years. From then no more school, they have to work. My father says that he used to go to work because they didn't go to far because their work was close here. And my grandfather wouldn't send them until he hears the bell rings. He say, "Okay, put your machete down, then go." Not even wash his hands or nothing, he said, "Straight to school." He said he have no book, I don't have pencil or nothing, he say "straight to school." And when they send him back again, 3 o'clock, straight to the farm again. That's how they were grown.

**Interviewer:** How old are they when they started school?

**Narrator:** Nine.

**Interviewer:** How old were you when you started?

**Narrator:** Five. Yeah, we had to go to....

**Interviewer:** They start at five now.

**Narrator 2:** Yeah, that is the school age here.

**Interviewer:** That would be like what we would call kindergarten. Is that like a half a day.

**Narrator 2:** Right here, no. They, they the whole day.

**Narrator:** Whole day. Um-hum. The whole day.

**Interviewer:** I bet that is hard to keep five year olds attention for a whole day.

**Narrator 2:** Our preschool goes half a day and that's three, four years old.

**Interviewer:** What kind of curriculum did you have? Like what did they teach you in school?

**Narrator:** In my days? Well, we had English, math, social studies and science. A little of about five....

**Interviewer:** What about your dad and your grandpa, your father?

**Narrator:** In their days, I think arithmetic was the only thing and reading. Only those things because some of them learned to write their names and most of them, not even their names. Add, a little. Because my father learned to write his name. After we were big and we taught, we teach him to learn, to write his name when he used to sell his cane and go to the bank and collect. So we started teach him to write his name, at least sign his name. [19:50]

**Interviewer:** Do boys and girls have equal opportunity for education?

**Narrator 2:** I think those days, it was the boy who had the most privilege. And I think parents had a negative attitude if they were sending their girls, their daughters, to school. They say that women, they don't need education. 'Cause they will do mostly, they were, they had that in mind that women will do housework.

**Narrator:** They be housewives.

**Interviewer:** Did you go to school with girls?

**Narrator:** Oh, yes. In my days, yes.

**Interviewer:** So, it would have been your father and your grandfather, that there was no girls.

**Narrator:** In their days, no. They wouldn't, you wouldn't see a girl in school.

**Interviewer:** Everybody walked to school?

**Narrator:** Yes, everybody.

**Interviewer:** I would think so. Financial support for the school system. Did you have to, like part of ours is through our taxes goes to the school. So, did you have to pay to go to school or...?

**Narrator:** In my days, no.

**Narrator 2:** Up to now, primary education is free. There is a small contribution of, I would say, about five dollars per term. But that's if the parent wants to pay, it is not compulsory because education is free. What you need to buy is only your school materials.

**Interviewer 2:** So, who paid, where did the money come from?

**Narrator 2:** From government, from the taxes.

**Interviewer 2:** For the support of the schools?

**Narrator 2:** Yes. We have a church-state system here in Belize. And for me, it is working wonderful. We teach religion in our schools which is a very big advantage for children now because we even have the priests and the malecitas [sp?] coming to the school to give religious classes.

**Interviewer:** Is that started at a certain age or is it from little to big?

**Narrator 2:** From little to big. Only little to big.

**Interviewer:** Is there any financial assistance for students?

**Narrator 2:** No. In the primary level, you mean?

**Interviewer:** Well, probably more on up. Like is there any scholarship programs?

**Narrator 2:** Well, for high school students, yes. High school students and it is very rare. One or two...  
[22:41]

**Interviewer:** Cause high school is when that have to start to pay.

**Narrator 2:** Yeah, they have to pay, you have to pay. High school you have to pay, application and fees you have to cover. One or two probably might get a scholarship out of the entire school.

**Interviewer 2:** Who provides the money for the scholarship?

**Narrator 2:** Okay, there are some organizations and institutions, like for example, the social security, they provide for the entire district, Corozal District. We have the Sugar Board, the Cane Farmers Association and the DFC and other insurance companies that provide the scholarships for the students.

**Interviewer:** Is it expensive to go on? What is an average cost for a student?

**Narrator 2:** I think that it would be about \$2000.00 per year for high school students, about \$2000.00 Belize dollars, no. That would be for one year. And then for the entire high school, it would be about \$8000.00 dollars, Belize dollars. Now for university is expensive, that would be about \$20,000.00 Belize dollars per year.

**Interviewer:** Have you always gone to a Catholic church? You always been Catholic?

**Narrator:** Always, from small.

**Interviewer:** And Catholic was the primary religion, I'm sure for your...?

**Narrator:** Yes, for a long while, it was the only church here in San Narciso.

**Interviewer:** And, now there's...

**Narrator:** Right now, we have about seven or eight churches, different churches. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Would you describe the role of religion in your daily life?

**Narrator:** What?

**Interviewer:** How do I redo that. How does religion interact with your daily life?

**Interviewer 2:** Do you pray regularly everyday?

**Narrator:** Oh, yes. Well, I take it, let's say in the nights out before going to sleep. Yeah, usually make a prayer in the morning. Sometimes, I forget. Yes, but then that's everyday. And we have special occasions when we, everyone gathers together and we make a prayer.

**Interviewer:** What about for our missionaries, how have they influenced your life?

**Narrator:** The missionaries? Oh, well, that's something I really appreciated from the first time Howard was here, because, well, like I usually go to church every, almost every week. Because, my wife will, she's different, if she could go every night, she goes. (laughs) So, when Howard started to come here we like it, we appreciate it. Especially when they have their service or what not...

**Interviewer:** Well, we bring a lot of different denominations so it is just kind of like a cesspool of...

**Interviewer 2:** That is not a good term to use.

**Interviewer:** (laughs) Well, it's like we're, it shows that we're all different, but we're still all the same. Does the village have a patron saint?

**Narrator:** Yes, San Narciso. San Narciso. That's the.... San Narciso. [26:26]

**Interviewer:** What kind of craftsman were found in the village? There was a man that made carts, that made wagons, that made like goat wagons or mule wagons.

**Narrator:** Mule wagons. Mule wagons.

**Interviewer:** So, there was a man that made wagons for people. Was there any other sort-of craftsman that made different (interruption)

**Narrator 2:** There are furnitures now and people making furnitures. We have a factory, a furniture factory not far from here. I think it's the only one here in San Narciso. And then, well apart from that, some people do some paintings, some make carvings, but it's not that well developed, no. And probably they don't have this opportunity to develop that skill. And we are lacking, that is one of the things we are lacking here when it comes to the vocational aspect of what the children can do. We don't have those opportunities here.

**Interviewer 2:** The tools that you would have to use, like machetes, axes, who would make those or were they imported from another country?

**Narrator:** Um-hum.



**Interviewer 2:** Or were there craftsmen someplace else that would make them? A blacksmith?

**Narrator:** Imported. Imported from, almost everything comes from Salvador, the machetes, axes, [from] Salvador, Mexico.

**Interviewer 2:** Has that always been the case?

**Narrator:** Yeah, always. From every since.... Some from the United States though.

**Interviewer:** Was there ever any like furriers? Did the horses were shoes? Was there any.... No blacksmith or anything?

**Narrator:** No.

**Interviewer:** Tinsmith?

**Narrator:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** All that was purchased?

**Narrator:** Um-hum.

**Interviewer:** How about like canoes? If you needed a canoe, did you just make your own or was there a certain...?

**Narrator:** Yes... No, I think each person, everybody made their own canoes.

**Interviewer:** How about pottery? Were there any potters?

**Narrator 2:** I doubt it. No, we don't have anybody making pots here. [29:10]

**Interviewer:** I know, like they'll use gourds to store the tortillas in, instead of pottery. So, I thought well maybe they're..., when your mother, when you were small, did your mother use gourds like they do now? What kind of like containers did she use?

**Narrator:** To? Containers to what? To put the tortillas?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, or for mixing, I mean did she, none of it was pottery?

**Narrator:** No, they use..., after they cook the corn, they used to wash the corn with their hand. Wash it in a bucket 'til it gets clean. Then they will grind it and after that, they call it masa, then they make the tortilla from there with your hand.

**Interviewer:** But when they took them off...? But when they were done cooking and they took them off...?

**Narrator:** Took them off? They have a pot but it's a.... We call it a lek, something ?wrong? like a calabash. What's a Calabash?

**Narrator 2:** Pumpkin?

**Interviewer:** Pumpkin, a gourd, yeah, yeah, a gourd.

**Narrator:** That is what they used to put their tortillas in there.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, cause I've seen those in houses in San Victor. They still use them and their put a tea towel on the top and it keeps them warm in there, a calabash.

**Narrator:** Um-hum. Yes. Some people.

**Interviewer:** How about like stone or jade or ivory carvers? Is there jade in this area?

**Narrator 2:** Well, we still have some. Yeah, we still have some, but we don't have any carvers, but I mean people working sometimes in their farms or when we have these bulldozers coming and pulling the bush and other things. There's some people who still find some pieces of jade and things like that, no.

**Narrator:** Those are just that the old Maya people buried there.

**Interviewer:** I know like when you plow your fields, you'll dig up pottery. Where's that pottery from?

**Narrator:** It is supposed to be from people, those are the first settlers of, Maya settlers. First ones. I think, before the War of Costas, that those are the old, old things of Maya and things. Very rare, 2000 years probably.

**Narrator 2:** And, Jackie, according to history, well this area used to be a Mayan site, no. So we tend to believe that, probably, this little small hills that you see around in the different yards. They used to be the tomb for the kings or Mayan people, no? So after a while, it was washed by the rain and things like that and then it became flat. So people started to build on those things because, sometimes people when they are digging for the foundation for their houses, they find things like this.

**Interviewer:** So, that they know that is where it was. How did people obtain their property? Like when your grandfather came, how did he obtain his piece of property? If they settled by the lagoon...

**Narrator:** Well, at that time, they take any amount they want by their selves. It was after it was getting populated that they elected this alcalde. He was in charge of giving everybody a piece of land. And that was it to my father. And now, well, we have this village council that we have to buy now, sell you a piece of land for a house. But before when my grandfather came, that's why they have big pieces of land, because they take as much as they want. They used to take any amount that they want. Just like in the bush, too. They take as much as they want, 50, 100 acres. [33:50]

**Interviewer 2:** The national government has no, they have no say in the land use?

**Narrator:** Un-un [No]. At that time, no. Didn't use to pay rent or nothing. Nothing.

**Interviewer 2:** Do they today? Does the federal, the national government get involved at all in land? Even today?

**Narrator:** No, today we have to apply for it. They come and measure your land now and we pay. But in my grandfather days, when they first come here, all this was bush from here to San Victor. Same side up to the river so they had enough, and a little people, few people only, so they take as much as they wanted. They take as much. And that is why up to now, those are the families that have more land right now.

**Interviewer:** What was the imp[act]... We're going to politics. What was the impact on your family from the 1954 Constitution that expanded the voting rights?

**Narrator:** Well, in my family.... Well, this..., that was the first time we heard about politics, because when we were small, everything was under the British. At that time, I had about 18 years, I think, that was the first time I went to vote. We had this George Price was the one who started with, to, with a party, with the PUP party [People's United Party]. Well, everybody didn't know about politics at that time nor nothing.

**Interviewer:** So that was basically like when the political parties started?

**Narrator:** Started, yes? He was the one who started it. Before that, no.

**Narrator 2:** I think that then around the 1950's is when the, the public meeting started. That's when they started to fight against colonization. Belize used to be called British Honduras before. And then there was a man by the name Phillip Goldson, George Price and Antonio Seberones (sp.) There are the three people, three persons who started to fought against colonization. So in the earliest 1950's, they started to campaign against this colonization. And around the 1970's is when the new capital Belmopan was settled, was established and in the year 1984, sorry 1981, we obtained our independence from Britain. And then, I think, from the year 1950 to the 1984, the PUP, which we started as public meetings were in power. That was their first defeat in 1984, they were defeated by the opposition, which is the UDP. But for me, I think that, that party under the leadership of George Cadle Price have done wonders for Belize. And, up to now, it is the same party who's in power, is in government right now. After it has been defeated two times by the opposition. So, in 1989, they won the elections again, up to now, they have won two consecutive elections, after the second defeat by the opposition.

**Interviewer:** How long are the terms for the...?

**Narrator:** Five years.

**Interviewer:** What about the labor unions? Are there labor unions?

**Narrator:** Um-hum. Yes, there is a labor union.

**Interviewer:** Do you like...? I mean, how do you feel about the labor unions?

**Narrator:** Well, I think that the labor union is doing their job. They're protect the laborers, the laborers from the factory, workers from the factory and the other workers that work for government. [38:47]

**Interviewer 2:** As a cane grower, are you..., do any of your people..., do you have to deal with the labor unions? Are the cane cutters..., do they have a labor union?

**Narrator:** The cane cutters? No.

**Interviewer 2:** No representation?

**Narrator:** No, no they don't one.

**Interviewer:** So, the labor unions are primarily in the factories?

**Narrator:** In factories, yes.

**Interviewer:** So, say the workers at the sugar cane factory. Is that a labor union?

**Narrator:** Yeah. Labor unions.

**Narrator 2:** And our labor unions here is our public service union, PSU. And, then recently, they were the ones who are on the strike, sell stocks. The government is trying to implement and then, there is another big union which is the Belizean National Teachers Union, and the NTUC, National Trade Unions, also. So I think these three unions were joined in this strike. And, after yesterday, we got to know that, it really had impact on what happen. So I thing the strike was over on yester[day].

**Interviewer:** Do men and women both have the right to vote?

**Narrator:** The right to vote? Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Are there a lot of women who hold office or not so many?

**Narrator:** Yes. Not. No. Yes. [???

**Interviewer:** How has that changed over the years?

**Narrator:** Well, if I tell you, coming from my grandfather days, that change a lot, because in those days my grandfather, well woman didn't participate in nothing. My father's days, a little, some woman. But now, I think we are 50-50, you are going to have as much woman, like men working in the offices and working government places.

**Interviewer:** What are the major ethnic groups in this region? In the Northern region of Belize?

**Narrator 2:** The major ethnic group here in the Northern is the Mestizo. Um-hum. The Mestizos. And further, we set out the Creole is the second one and then we have the other ethnic groups, like the East Indians, the Garifunas and then, now the Chinese and the Hindus. But the Northern, the Northern district is considered to be mostly Mestizo people (interruption)

**Narrator:** Maya, Maya Mestizo.

**Narrator 2:** Maya Mestizo. [41:41]

**Interviewer:** Mennonites began arriving in 1958, have they made an impact on your life?

**Narrator:** Yes. The Mennonites, well according to the government gave them a piece of land there. And they were accepted there to work in agriculture. Because that was what the country was lack of, agriculture, and they knew about agriculture. I like this and making cheese, butter and what not, which the people here doesn't do at all. They do it, they raise their cattle, they sell cheese, they sell butter, milk and they work hard with lumber, so they have their own place, which they..., it doesn't... Well, first they didn't used to come out to sell their products, you have to go there and buy. That was when they just reach. But now, they are..., they're even open business now here in town. They live among.... (interrupted)

**Interviewer:** Do they drive cars?

**Narrator:** They are driving some. First, they wasn't admitted to buy vehicle, but now, yes. Now. Yes.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. because Mennonites in the United States still use horse and buggy. They don't drive.

**Narrator:** They don't drive? That is how they were here, when they first came, but now, they have vehicles now. They buy their own vehicle, they drive and Blue Creek, I think they have new vehicles. Yeah, they have the same rights like the Belizean now. They can vote, at first they couldn't go to vote. Now, yes, they can go.

**Interviewer 2:** So, as an impact on your life, they've made more products available that you would not have otherwise had available to you. Is that correct?

**Narrator:** Um-hum. Yeah.

**Narrator 2:** We have, apparently, we have, I think, four Mennonite communities here in Belize. Little Belize is one, Shipyard, Blue Creek and Spanish Lookout. And they have contributed tremendously to the development of Belize when it comes to agriculture.

**Interviewer:** As far as living though, have they primarily stayed in their area?

**Narrator 2:** In their areas. Now they starting coming out. They're even getting married to people to Belize...

**Narrator:** Yes, to Maya, yes. Mixing the...

**Interviewer:** Wow!. That's just like big cultural mix there. What is the primary method of communicating news? Like how do you get your news first?

**Narrator:** First? I think, first, I think radio was the first method of listening to the news.

**Interviewer:** And how about now?

**Narrator:** Now, well, we have television, radio.

**Interviewer:** Is there a local newspaper? Or a daily newspaper?

**Narrator:** Yes, a newspaper.

**Narrator 2:** No, we are weekly, weekly news.

**Interviewer:** So the television would be if there's something happened, you would find out first from the TV.

**Narrator:** The television or the radio. [45:13]

**Interviewer:** When did the telephone system become available? And how did it change your life? How did that impact you?

**Narrator:** Telephone? It is about 10 years. too, when we started with the light, everything then (interruption)

**Interviewer:** Boy, 10 years ago (snaps finger), you had a lot going on. (laughs)

**Narrator:** Yes, telephone, about 10 years. All came the same time: electricity, telephone, we had the water. We had everything.

**Interviewer:** Now, when you were small, how did that work?

**Narrator:** Well, we're small, we had a..., there was a telephone [in] one house, I think that it was for the government. If you want to make call, well, you have to go there and.... I can remember the phone, you have to ring, ring, ring, until you get your number or something like that. I scarcely.... (interruption)

**Interviewer:** How about news? I mean, was there, or was there an interest for news in the village say for your father and grandfather. Was...? How did they get their information on what was going on outside their village? And was there a big interest to even know what was going on outside their village?

**Narrator:** Outside the village? Un-un. Un-un. Nobody. Maybe only by mouth, they heard it from somebody and ...

**Interviewer:** What could have happened that would've impacted them outside the village? I mean is there something that could have gone on that they would have needed to know about?

**Interviewer 2:** Weather related? Or hurricane?

**Interviewer:** Yeah. How would, if something important was going on, how would that information get passed?

**Narrator:** Well, if something, take for instance, when the hurricane, we had a hurricane, they had a hurricane here, I think in 1931, that was the first one that my father saw. Well, at that time it used to rain, rain a lot that when it stops raining, say the water gets up to their knees. Didn't hear that it's going to, like right now, listen to the weather channel and you know that it's going to rain tomorrow. They know that in June, July they will have a lot of rain. That's every year. So when that hurricane struck them in 1931, nobody knew. They all went to sleep, a lot of people were sleeping, when the breeze start to blow, blow harder and harder. When they saw that their homes were blowing out, because everything was little thatch house. So they start to come out and everyone was wondering what was happening. Yes, and they start to run around, around hiding their selves. But it didn't take..., last too long, say about two hours and it passed. In the morning, they get up and that is all...nobody knew nothing, that hurricane was coming or nothing.

**Interviewer:** So, there wasn't sort-of any warning system?

**Narrator:** No, no, nothing.

**Interviewer:** Something bad was going on where there would be like a (interruption)

**Narrator:** Nothing. I think, it's after that, plenty after that that there was radio station in Belize City, that was the only one, Belize City, and that's only if you have your radio. [48:32]

**Interviewer:** Or there wasn't any type of message system? Like a messenger that would go from one village to the other to deliver a message?

**Narrator:** Un-un. No.

**Interviewer:** In the late 1860's and early 1870's, way back, attacks by the.... Help me.

**Interviewer 2:** I'm going to guess Icaiche Maya (spelling)

**Narrator:** Q'eqchí Maya? Suppose to be Q'eqchí.

**Interviewer 2:** Maybe that's a different spelling of Q'eqchí. Attacked Corozal and Orange Walk. Did you ever hear anything about that?

**Narrator:** Q'eqchí Maya? Attacking Corozal and Orange Walk? No, I never heard about that.

**Interviewer 2:** That is apparently long before anybody, any of your people came to this area, so that is before your time. Okay.

**Interviewer:** Or even the arrival of the U.S. Confederate soldiers. Like are there any stories that are passed down of when the U.S. soldiers came or when...?

**Interviewer 2:** No. That's before their time.

**Interviewer:** How do you feel about the future of this village?

**Narrator:** About the future? Well, I think that San Narciso is developing fast, developing fast especially with everything, education, have good schools now, lot of childrens are multiplying fast. And I think that San Narciso is developing very fast now. Very fast, because we have about 4000 inhabitants right now here in San Narciso.

**Interviewer:** I got to go back cause I skipped. How about the great depression in 1930? What happened here in Belize during the depression?

**Narrator:** 1930, 31 (Spanish speaking). '31

**Interviewer 2:** All throughout the 1930's, in the United States it was a lot of unemployment, a lot of poverty, people that were rich, lost a lot of money and then had to suffer through. I have a feeling, let me, let me guess at what your answer might be. That because of the type of environment you lived in, everybody was self-sufficient, grew all of their own vegetables and food, so it probably didn't have that much of an impression.

**Narrator:** No, no much, not much.

**Interviewer 2:** Not much impact?

**Narrator:** Even that, that hurricane that struck in 1931, my father said didn't feel it too much because they had food stored for one year. So they plant again and they have everything. Everything again. They had enough corn, the storage about..., everybody used to store about 1000 pounds of corn that for the whole year. And they didn't used to sell it, until they see that their next crop is coming, coming up, they sell that.

**Interviewer:** And they would always know how much they would need to keep to get through the year.

**Narrator:** For the whole year. Um-hum..

**Narrator 2:** Well, in the Great Depression in around the 1930's, didn't affect much. We had still, probably similar to what happened in the United States, no? Unemployment, poverty, but because it is how you said, you guess right, just the people had these things to sustain their lives. Well, people didn't feel it that much. (laughs) [52:48]

**Interviewer 2:** They probably felt it more in Belize City and places where there is factory workers and stuff like that.

**Narrator 2:** Oh, yes. Definitely.

**Narrator:** Un-hum..

**Interviewer:** How about the..., your independence that was granted in '81 in September? How did that change the country once you got your independence?

**Narrator 2:** Well, I think that there is a big change, when it comes to our economic, to our imports and exports, because we tend to be like slaves before. So I think that the independence has given us now opportunity to be recognized worldwide now. And Belize is now a member of the Commonwealth. Belize a member now of the UNO and all these things which is really, really helping us a lot. We're getting a lot of assistance now, getting a lot of help. I mean, it has developed Belize a lot, since independence.

**Interviewer:** Are there any.... Let me go back up. As far as your village, how would you like..., would you like to see the village change and how would you like to see it change?

**Narrator:** Well, right now, like how we have electricity, I think the only thing that we need to make San Narciso look better and prettier is the streets. At least if we could pave one or two streets here that would make San Narciso look perfect, because we have electric, we have the phone, we have water and some houses, good houses, and the streets is the only thing I think making the village look a little way back. If we would have one or two streets paved, especially the main one, want to keep a good side. You have a big football field there and...(interruption)

**Interviewer:** Is that hard to do because of the cane trucks? Do the cane trucks..., do they rut your streets?

**Narrator:** Yeah.

**Interviewer 2:** Cause a lot of damage?

**Narrator:** Yes. Oh Yes.

**Interviewer:** Damage to the streets, because of the way going, going over them so often.

**Narrator:** Especially when it is raining.

**Interviewer:** 'Cause it gets very slippery. (laughs)

**Narrator:** Yes. Heavy trucks pass on it. [55:35]

**Interviewer:** How about he district, is there improvements that you wish the Corozal District would do? Or is there..., I mean what would..., is there something that you think, "This is what I'd like to see Northern Belize do or..."

**Interviewer 2:** Besides fix the roads.

**Narrator:** Besides. Yeah. Well, talking about Corozal district, it has improved a lot, especially with the young people. Because I think everybody has the facilities to get a job. We have the Fruta Bomba here which employs at lot of people. That's the papaya. About another 40% of the young boys are working at the border, this free zone. And that helps a lot, we have to develop Corozal a lot and the rest work in the factory, the sugar cane factory. But before the free zone and the papaya came here, it was really hard, it was only 6 months of job. When that finishes, everybody's just walking around the place without a job. We want, need a job have to go out, maybe Belize City, but no, no, everybody works here. And everything stays here and Corozal is developing fast.

**Interviewer:** Is the papaya factory open year round? Can papaya grow year round?

**Narrator:** Oh yes, whole year.

**Interviewer:** So, they never have a down time like the cane factory?

**Narrator:** Never, never.

**Interviewer:** There all the time?

**Narrator:** Yes, whole year.

**Narrator 2:** Jackie, probably when one of the things that we really would like to see for our district, when it comes to education, I think that we need a university around this area, no? So that children, because lot of people, lot of students coming from high school, coming from out of six form, they don't have this opportunity to go university, because it's in Belize City and Belmopan and around that area. But I think it would be of great help if we have a university here in the district. Or centralized probably in Orange Walk, between Orange Walk and Corozal. And probably another thing that I would like to see that would be of great, it is our health system. Our health system is really terrible here in Belize.

**Narrator:** Um-hum.

**Interviewer:** As far as getting a university closer, how would that work? What would have to happen to make that possible?

**Narrator 2:** Well, one of the main problems here is that I think the money, the budget (laughs) since the government, well, they try to, try to see if they can put a distance education system. So, some of this in high students and six form students, they are doing their university but it is a distance program. And



instead of taking them two years that they are five or six years, so which is, I think, we are really now disadvantaged. So, but, the major, the major problem here is the infrastructure. [59:03]

(Discussion that we are out of tape time.)