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Cape Verdean Oral History Project: Interview with Charles Fortes by Alberto Torres Pereira

Charles Fortes

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CAPE VERDEAN ORAL HISTORY

Tape #4

Saturday April 1, 1972

Mr. Charles Fortes

Executive Director,

Providence Corporation

Dodge Street, Providence, R.I.

Interviewer-Alberto Torres Pereira

(000-Tape running...Mr. Fortes discusses, "Lingua Crioula" dialect spoken by Cape Verdeans.

006-Open with comments and introduce Mr. Fortes.

025-Cape Verdeans working in Lisbon in construction work.

(039-Visit to Cabo Verde a visit to "mecca" for Mr. Fortes.

045-His marriage, his parents, "lingua crioula" poverty.; need to return to Cape Verde Islands.

056-Parents migrated to America; father and other young men in 1917;

mother in 1920. In late 1920's Cape Verdeans owned shipping co. Did trade between Cape Verdes and West Africa-(Cape Verde-W.Africa Packet Trade). Passengers, tropical food, (manioc)cargo, etc. Ships named; "Corrolias" Bradford D.Jones" "Berkin"--all docked at New Bedford and Providence. Did inter-island trade(Cape Verdes) plus Dakar and coastal Africa. Mentions "Ernestina" also inter island trade vessel. (sailed to Providence years ago).

(090-Mr. Fortes first reaction on viewing Cape Verde Islands from air was, "incredible how people survived."

105-Frustration due to no timetable; slow pace of islands. People fighting elements to survive. "Land that God has forgotten" student quoted by Mr. Fortes.

(122-Islanders travel extensively by plane(between islands).

135-Mindelo, a cosmopolitan city has 25,000 inhabitants.

(145-Education prized by Cape Verdeans; children of Mindel walk miles to classrooms.

165-Twelfth grade highest level on Cape Verde Islands; to Portugal for university or college work.

208-Discusses "operation bootstrap" idea for Cape Verde Islands.

(258-Young Cape Verdeans are more apt to stay put-less migration.

(305-Comments on multi-racial makeup of Cape Verde Islands. Discusses Japanese settling; comments on Cape Verde Airline.

(384-200,000 people on Cape Verde Islands; about 300,000 of Cape Verde ancestry in U.S.

CAPE VERDEAN ORAL HISTORY

Tape #3

Saturday, April 1, 1972

Mr. Charles Fortes

Executive Director

Providence Corporation

Dodge Street, Providence, R.I.

Interviewer-Alberto Torres Pereira

495-Artists in Cape Verdes.

(510-Writing in Creole dialect (writers, poets, etc.). Sees eventual
nationalization of the language.

552-Art--mostly from West Africa.

600-political climate.

Summary

close.