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Cape Verdean Oral History Project: Interview with Tony Santos by Alberto Torres Pereira

Tony Santos

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CAPE VERDEAN ORAL HISTORY

FIRST CAPE VERDEAN AMERICAN
CONFERENCE

Saturday, March 3, 1973

First Unitarian Church,
Benevolent Street, Providence, R.I.

Interviews by Alberto Torres Pereira

(On side 1 of tape) "First interview with Tony Santos, church sexton,
member of convention's arrangement committee.
Begins at..."

702- Pereira: "Tony Santos, sexton here at the First Unitarian Church in Providence; there are the last few minutes for the resolutions on the floor in the first Cape Verdean Federation...Cape Verdean American Federation Convention, the first conference that I know of. About how many people do you think came?"

Santos: "I'd say we had close to 600."

Pereira: "Close to 600 people? And you had to feed them all?" (laughter.)

Santos: "We fed them all, yes."

Pereira: "You certainly did."

Santos: "And we had a lot of food left over."

Pereira: "Tony, what's your general feeling about this kind of conference?"

Santos: "My general feeling is that we should have more, and more, and I think that the people that work at it work at it with their heart, looking for no glory, and wanting to see the Cape Verdean people together."

725- Pereira: "Tony, I know for a fact that you're very, very involved in things...anything to do with Cape Verdean...and I thought you did a tremendous job with feeding this mass of people. Now have covered things upstairs. And they were really kind of emotional things. It had to do with race; it had to do with the culture; it had to do with perpetuating the language - the creole - the Lingua di Crioulo, and should we teach it to the ...our children as an oral history ...oral language. How do you feel about that?"

732- Santos: "I feel that we should speak creole. I, as a youngster...my parents spoke creole to me."

And I learned how to speak creole. From creole I picked up Portuguese. I think that I can make myself understood. And I can understand very well."

Pereira- "So you think it's worth teaching it?"

Santos- "Definitely."

continues discussion on desirability of Lingua di Crioulo taught as major language.

737- Pereira- "There was talk of one of the Cape Verdean professors at Harvard (Norman Araujo) who is supposedly doing a grammar on Lingua di Crioulo. Do you think it's worth creating a grammar, or should it be taught as an oral language?"

Santos- "I feel it should have a grammar."

Pereira- "It should have a grammar? In other words, the Cape Verdean has his own language, as far as you're concerned?"

Santos- "Definitely."

Pereira- "Tony, do you think they'll have another convention? Do you think other, small, workshops will come from this one?"

743- Santos- "Our plan, when we had this convention, was to see if we could get other people in other states to run a convention, at least once a year. That way, it would not be only in Rhode Island, it would be throughout New England."

Pereira- "I see. The next convention would be in another New England city."

Santos- "We'd like to have it in another city."

Pereira- "Fine. Thanks very much, Tony."

Santos- "Okay. Thank you, Al."