

dollar you can double your profit than at forty even figuring in the freezer cost.

JM: Do you have it all processed in New Bedford?

GM: No, it's not processed. The scup and butterfish and mackerel are not processed. The whole fish is frozen, so it's not processed.

JM: Oh, I see.

[End of side one, tape 5].

[Today is] February 11, 1987. This is my fourth interview with Mr. George Mendonsa.

GM: The other day I made a statement that there were fishing boats -- I want to make this clear that they were not Rhode Island boats. From a period of over twenty years, from 1950 to maybe 1970 or a little beyond, that were catching lobsters. At least twenty-five, thirty percent of their catch were egg-bearing lobsters. They brushed a lot of those eggs. I saw the lobsters come in. I even helped unload them. I had nothing to do with the buying of them. I [was] just giving the people a hand unloading these lobsters. Most commercial fishermen, through their experience, can look at a lobster and they won't be right a hundred percent of the time, but the real experienced fishermen can tell if a lobster was brushed. Of course, he can't positively prove it.

JM: How can you tell?

GM: You can look at the back of a lobster. A real experienced fishermen won't be right all the time, but he can say, "I bet she's got eggs." Then he'd roll her over and he'd be right more than fifty percent of the time. We could tell a lot of these lobsters were brushed. Of course, it wouldn't stand up in court. Finally, they come up with a dye that they could put on lobsters that was positive proof that the lobsters were brushed. That stopped the bad fishermen from brushing any lobsters from that year on. This dye will stand up in court as evidence that the lobsters were brushed.

JM: Do people take the time to check that out very much?

GM: Oh, yes. They don't have to check it out anymore. The penalties are so severe that if you're caught with a lobster that was proven to be brushed -- the fishermen are afraid of those regulations. They honor it today. All of them.

JM: What are the penalties?

GM: I think it's something like \$500 for each lobster.

JM: That's a lot.

GM: These fishermen with roughly twenty boats for a

period of over twenty years brushed billions and billions of eggs. Now they're saying that the lobster catch is down. It might be down a little bit, but there's more effort being put into catching lobsters than there was years ago. The lobstermen are setting more traps per fisherman, they're going further and further, and there's more boats. I think the catch of the lobster isn't very far off. To prove the point, I think you can go anywhere up and down this Atlantic Coast and buy lobsters. You'll never find a place where they'll say, "There's a shortage, we don't have them." There's plenty of lobsters. One of the problems with the lobster industry is that the lobster market keeps expanding. This species of lobsters are only caught up here from Nova Scotia maybe to Jersey. Naturally, this part of the world can't supply the world with lobsters. That's what's making the high price. They fly lobsters almost around the world. That is a problem. Another thing, a few years ago when I was on the [Rhode Island] Fisheries Council, the State of Rhode Island met with the Internal Revenue people, or the Internal Revenue people met with them. When they issued the Lobster License -- for identification -- every Lobster

License has a number assigned to an individual. They put your Social Security number on your Lobster License. All the statistics sent in on the fisheries to the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Department of Fish and Wildlife are supposed to be confidential. This would encourage the fishermen to make accurate reports. When the fishermen got their new licenses with their Social Security number on them, they battled this. The Social Security numbers had to be taken off. It's illegal to use a Social Security number for identification purposes -- for something like a license. What's happened now is that the lobstermen don't respect or have any confidence in the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the National Marine Fisheries Service because stuff that they preached all these years that was confidential -- the fishermen found out that it wasn't. Of course, the Internal Revenue has investigated the lobstermen. It was all through the cooperation of the state with the IRS. Now what's happened -- naturally the lobster catch is down. The reporting is down [reporting of lobster catch size]. But it's not accurate reporting. The lobstermen are now selling lots of lobsters -- cash -- because

they don't have confidence in the state and also to beat the IRS. Maybe this is a bad thing for me to say, but it's the truth. It's one of the problems. Now the Federal Government is thinking about setting regulations because they're basing it on inaccurate figures.

JM: And they know that.

GM: I don't think they think about this because no one's going to come up and tell them what I just said.

JM: Of course not.

GM: If I was trying to beat the IRS and if I was a lobsterman, I wouldn't be talking the way I'm talking. Another thing is, I get the impression that you're kind of concerned about the environment --

JM: Well those are just questions that I want to ask.

GM: Yes. All the bathroom facilities along lower Thames Street -- on the west side of Thames Street -- are all down hill from the main sewage line. In other words, down our dock, in order to get our sewage up to the main sewage line, they'd have to put in pumping stations because there's no gravity flow to the main sewer line. So naturally, the whole waterfront

was dumping into the harbor. A few years ago, the Board of Health come around to all the waterfront property owners -- like the Pier Restaurant, Christie's, the shipyards, us -- and they told us that we'd have to install pumping stations to pump the sewage up to Thames Street.

JM: At your own expense?

GM: Oh yes. At that time, it cost most of these people ten to fifteen thousand dollars each to do this. Of course, they could do it to the Pier and the rest of them, because if you didn't do it they'd hold your license back. That's how they forced all the waterfront property into doing this. Finally they came to us one day. We're unloading fish and the Board of Health guy said to me, "Is it all right if I dump some dye into your bathroom there." I said, "Oh, certainly." [Chuckles.] He dumps the dye in and he comes running back and he says, "Mr. Mendonsa, come here, I want to show you. There's a big spot of dye in the harbor." I said, "There is?" He says, "Yes, didn't you . . ." I said, "No, I didn't know that. There was an old sewer pipe there and we tapped into it and we thought it went up the street." I was lying like hell to him. So he

insisted that I go see it, and of course, I went and looked at it. I said, "Oh." So he said, "You're going to have to do something about this." I said, "It's going to cost us about fifteen thousand dollars to pump this up the street." He said, "Well, you got to do it." So I said, "What about all those houses that are coming down the side of the wharf?" He said, "That's the responsibility of the city." I said, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. When I get through unloading the fish, I'm going to go into the bathroom and I'm going to tear that toilet out and throw it in the dump." He said, "You've got to have some kind of facilities here for the people that work." I said, "What I'll do then, I'll install toilets in my boats and that would eliminate this problem." He wasn't too happy. He must've figured I was a wise guy. "Well, you can't do that." I says, "There's a thousand yachts out here all on anchor. I'm just rigging up the way they're rigged up -- no different." So anyway, he left the wharf and he never bothered us for years. Finally one year, the city was putting a sewer line down West Extension Street and it came up against our property. There was a gravity flow then

from our buildings to the sewage lines so then we did tap into it. [Laughs].

Another problem with pollution is once in a while you read articles about the large flocks of geese and the swans. The swans are not that bad of a problem because there's not that many. These big flocks of geese, they're capable of landing in saltmarshes consistently. If they keep landing in the saltmarshes where the water is shoal --

JM: What does that term mean, where it's shoal?

GM: Shoal means it's not very deep. These saltmarshes over around Green Bridge and over Pt. Jude-- they have what they call the salt ponds over there -- these saltmarshes are great areas for spawning of seafood and also for marine life. These large flocks of geese are capable of loading the bottom with body waste. They can snuff out a lot of marine life. This is a bad thing about these large flocks of geese.

JM: What do you think should be done about that?

GM: If you ever try to shoot one, they'd probably put you in jail.

JM: I know it's pretty poisonous.

GM: Even the reservoirs. These large flocks of geese in reservoirs is going to become a very

serious problem.

JM: What things spawn in our salt ponds?

GM: Little necks, scallops, eels -- there's a lot of marine life that spawns in these [salt ponds]. The blue shelled crab are in those saltmarshes, even the regular small fishing crabs. There's a lot of marine life, especially at Pt. Judith. A man is capable of making a very good living with a very small operation in those salt ponds.

JM: Did anyone here do that during your lifetime?

GM: Oh yes. Years ago, we used to go shell fishing up the River.

JM: The Sakonnet River?

GM: Yes, the Sakonnet River and all the way up here through to Quonset catching littlenecks. In those years, we used to go illegally at night with a power dredge. [Chuckle.] Today they'd put you in jail for life [for] what we did then. Even right here in the harbor. This harbor has millions and millions of dollars worth of shellfish -- littlenecks and quahogs on the bottom. The price of that stuff today -- if you went out here and worked one night a week, you'd make a fortune. Of course, it's pollution now. There's pollution in there. If you ever got caught, you'd be in trouble.

JM: What about oysters? They had quite an oyster industry here, didn't they?

GM: Yes. Most of the oyster beds were up near Barrington Beach. I didn't know too much about the oysters, but I remember seeing the boats that used to come in here and go up the River and get the shells after the oysters were harvested. They used to take the shells down to Long Island and scatter them. These boats used to have big sideboards on [them], probably about the height of that wall there (10'). They used to load those decks right up with shells. The reason for the shells is, when it came to the spawning season of the oyster, they spread these shells all along the bottom. I think that there was a period of time that they could spread these shells. In other words the shells couldn't be laying on the bottom for months -- the sea oyster has to find something to cling to. They used to spread all these shells on the bottom where they wanted to build up an oyster bed and then the egg oysters would cling to these dry shells that they spread. I can remember as a young kid I used to see these oyster boats carrying all these shells down to Long Island where they used to plant the bottoms with the dead shells. The same thing

has to happen here. When the egg lobster is floating around in the water, that larvae has to find something to cling to. That's what they usually cling to. What they find to cling to can't be in the water more than three or four days those men used to figure -- before any slime got on those old shells. I don't think there's any oysters harvested in this state now. There's a few oysters spread around. Luther Blount went on his own up there. He started setting up oyster beds, and he was kind of successful. I don't know how far he's got along with it now. I used to know Luther from the Fisheries Council -- he was also a member. Up there around Prudence Island (the last time I talked to him was probably three years ago) where he started to plant the oyster shells in the sea, outside these little inlets there in Prudence, he began to find oysters beginning to spread out around the side of the island. So maybe they did start to spread.

Another thing, too, this striped bass regulation went into effect last year -- one bass per man at 33 inches. At Block Island in November, they catch a lot of big striped bass. I mentioned that the other day. These big

striped bass, if they're thirty pounds and over, they're all females. What the sports fishermen have done on Block Island is they go fishing there and they're only allowed one fish. Every day the Block Island boat comes from the Island to Point Judith and they have striped bass on pallets. The law reads only one fish per man. The Block Island boat comes in. There's only two people on the Block Island boat, yet they could have four, five dozen of these big stripers. This was brought up at the last Marine Fisheries Council [meeting] that I went to. Everyone was bellyaching to the Department that the fishermen of Block Island are not honoring the law. What they're doing over there [is] they're fishing, and when they catch striped bass, they put it on the boat from Block Island to Point Judith, and they put a tag on it with a phony name. So the Department says they can't do anything about it because you cannot sell striped bass in the State of Rhode Island. The Department's attitude is that it's a Board of Health regulation because [of] the PCBs in the stripers -- that the Department cannot enforce that law of selling striped bass. They realize that these fellows that are sending

over bass on the boat with all these phoney names on it are also able to bring one fish in their car which is legal. So they got a problem over there. When I go to the next Council meeting, I'm going to ask them how come they can't enforce the striped bass law because it's a Board of Health regulation? They enforce laws in the State of Rhode Island that are Board of Health laws when it comes to pollution. If you go into pollution and catch shellfish, the Department of Fish and Wildlife enforces those laws, but they don't want to go after the sportsmen. I'm going to throw that at them, and I'm going to ask them how many bass can I carry in my boat if I put tags on them with phony names? [Chuckle.] That's a problem that the state's got.

JM: Not only Rhode Island.

GM: No, Massachusetts doesn't have that problem because the striped bass in Massachusetts, they say are healthy. [Laughs.] They don't have PCBs.

JM: Sounds reasonable [laughs].

GM: In other words, go to Fall River and catch bass. You'd catch healthy fish, but if you go to Tiverton [Rhode Island] . . .

JM: That's the answer. . . That's a big problem on

Long Island too, isn't it? With the beach seining of the striped bass?

GM: I guess the law there is something similar to ours -- probably one fish and 33 inches. They tried to make that uniform up and down the coast. I know most states have not adopted those regulations, but that's what the National Marine Fisheries Service has been recommending to the states. They try to get that up and down the states -- all the states -- but I don't think it's been that way or is that way.

JM: Is that true in the Chesapeake?

GM: No. Inside the Chesapeake, the last regulation I heard was 18 inches -- inside the Bay. They say in Maryland that they have a 33 inch law on the ocean side of Maryland. Their argument down [there is], "We have the same laws -- we have a 33 inch law." But where they have the 33 inch law on the ocean side of the state, it's only a couple of miles long -- a very short distance. They use that for their argument to make them look as though they're taking the same steps in conservation that the rest of the states are. But inside the Bay, where the big body of fish is, the last I knew it was 18 inches. In the Chesapeake in Maryland, I know that in most of the Bays --

especially the spawning areas of the striper -- they have a total ban on taking fish. They also have bans during spawning seasons in certain areas. They've set some regulations down there that the rest of the states thought they'd never do. They've got some pretty good regulations set down there. I don't know what they've done in Virginia. Virginia and Maryland both border the Chesapeake. I guess their problems down there are similar -- their spawning areas. I think Virginia has not set as stiff regulations as Maryland has.

JM: There have been a lot of changes along the waterfront during the years you've been involved in your work. It isn't any longer the kind of place where you'd go into a bar and people would know what you had done that day -- your successes. What are your thoughts on that, on the changes on the waterfront -- with the tourism and the fishing industry?

GM: As far as Tallman and Mack goes, we haven't been bothered yet.

JM: You haven't? I wondered about that.

GM: We find our nets out there are cut a little more often than they used to be cut because there's more yachts running around. In the city itself here, we're just about outside of

the line where most of the tourists march up and down Thames Street. When I come in in the morning, I come down by the beach and I come down Bowery Street and right down to the Wharf, so I miss them. Of course, I go out that same way. I wouldn't dare come up this way, up America's Cup Avenue. You spend a day. I think one of the biggest problems is the trucking -- trucking that delivers to all these hotels and nightclubs and stuff. They've got a serious problem -- even where we're at. These trailers come in from out of town and we give them directions to get to our wharf. The streets are getting narrower and they're building. Down on the corner where we're at now, we've got a pretty good space as far as entrance goes. To get to our place the trucks turn over at Newport Electric Corporation property -- they've left us a little more space. Someday when they sell that property -- the new owners that own that property will be building right out to the edges of it. Then there's going to be a problem even getting to our wharf with these trucks. Another thing is up at the corner of the street there's restaurants and cars and they park all over the street. The tourists that want to come up this

end of the city, they'll park down our wharf or they'll park on the streets that enter to our wharf and they lock their cars. This is a problem. You can't get the trucks in. As far as getting around with a car or walking around down our end of town, there's no problem yet. There's lots of times there will be cars up there that will be parked. We see them parked there all day long and call the police department. We're trying to get trucks out. The truck drivers in the truck are blowing the air horns after about a half hour waiting for the police to show up -- which they never show up. They're hoping that sooner or later the problem will correct itself and they don't get involved. You don't get much help from the police down there. The truck driver keeps edging up the street. He knows he can't make the turn because he's been knocking the corner off the building on his right where he swings. Those people [the building owners] come down there yelling at us about the corner of their building that's always knocked off. Eventually the truck driver, after he gets hot under the collar, he'll pull the truck up into Thames Street and bend it around as far as he can bend it. Then he just stops and sits there. Then

the traffic is lined up all the way up to the Post Office.

JM: What about your ice and all that? How close by are all of those services?

GM: There's only one ice plant in the whole lower end of the state. That's Eastern Ice which is down Peckham Coal Company. We don't have any problem. We just pick up the telephone and they're usually there in fifteen minutes, a half hour. We always try to have ice ahead, so when we come in and start unloading fish, we don't have to wait for them. We can start unloading, then we try to estimate how much ice we're going to use for the day, then we'll give them a call and have that delivered. We always try to keep ahead with it. We've been talking to him [Eastern Ice owner] recently and they've been offered a price for their property. They own property right on our wharf, too, which was the old American Ice Company. They own that piece of land too. I know one of them said that if the fishing industry keeps getting pushed out of Newport, they would leave. That would [be] very serious if that ice company left because there wouldn't be ice anywhere on this island. They deliver a lot of ice up to places like Brockton. You'd have to get ice

probably out of New Bedford if those people ever left here. That would be serious not just to the fish industry, I mean to the whole city.

JM: What did you do for ice in the old days?

GM: We always got supplied from them. Years ago, there used to be two ice companies here. There was the American Ice Company and then there was E. S. Peckham Coal Company. They had an ice plant. Then there was some fellows came here from New Bedford when they bought out American Ice on Spring Wharf. After they operated that for a couple of years, they closed that up and then they bought Peckham's Ice plant. So Peckham's Ice Plant is the one now that's supplying the whole area.

JM: Have people approached you to buy your area? Developers?

GM: Yes. Just recently a fellow came to us and he says, "You got to use this land for its best purpose or where it has the most value to the community." I says, "Well, the best purpose for this piece of land is fishing. The hell with the community." He come back the next day and he said to me, "We'll give you a million dollars for the wharf. I know you got to continue fishing." I said, "That's right." So he says, "We'll give you a million dollars for

the wharf. We'll give you the right to fish off this wharf for a dollar a year for ninety-nine years with the option of renewing." I says, "How can you give me a million dollars for this wharf and give me the right to operate the fish business? What are you going to develop here? We need the whole wharf. We couldn't let you have one-third of it to develop anything you wanted to put on it." He said, "We'll be able to work something out." I says, "No, I don't think we're interested."

JM: Was it a local person?

GM: It's the same person that bought out the S. S. Newport -- the wharf next door to us. I think that those guys (the developers) have a problem down there. They're trying to remodel the S. S. Newport, and they're doing a lot of work down there. They look like they're kind of confused to me. They've got that boat all torn apart [S. S. Newport]. They're going to spend a lot of money on that boat. I think if it was me, I would have got that restaurant operating. The plans that he's got there, he expects to build a big skywalk coming off the back of the S. S. Newport and going out to where the Anthony's Fish Market was, and build a big cocktail lounge up over the roof of the fish

building with tents and awnings and the whole bit. He said, "That's what we'd do over here. We want to keep your fish business here. We'd build a big skywalk up over the top of your building, too." He seemed to be a pretty good guy. I don't know, that kind of stuff you've only got about a three month year. The way he talks, I could see fifteen, twenty million dollars.

JM: Do you think people realize how valuable to Newport, in every way, your operation is?

GM: Oh, yes. We don't realize what it means to the people who are not familiar with the fishing industry. We have lots of people come down while we're unloading fish. They see a few thousand pounds of fish and they think it's unbelievable. They hang around there and they watch. It really fascinates them. There's lots of people that come down and start talking to us. They're staying here overnight and we invite them to go out with us fishing the following day. A lot of them go out with us. They get up early in the morning and they go out there fishing.

JM: Do they get seasick, any of them?

GM: No. In the morning when we get down there, if the weather looks real bad, I advise them to go

back to bed. Usually during the summer months, we're only away from the dock maybe three hours, four hours. In a short time like that you can get them back in the harbor before they get sick.

[End of side one, tape 6].

GM: They get a big bang out of it. People -- especially from the center of the country -- they've never seen anything like that. Even a handful of fish which probably wouldn't be enough to pay our expenses for the day -- they think it's something great.

JM: Because it is. What do you think the future of the whole fishing industry is in Newport?

GM: I think the shell fish industry is getting some competition from Florida. They're catching littlenecks down there and they're selling them cheap. But the quality is not as good. As far as the fish industry goes, I think it'll stay here. They got problems with insurance rates. And if the city doesn't overtax them along the waterfront where they can operate, I think the fish industry will stay here.

JM: What about this whole business that happened with the State Pier? Were you involved in that at all?

GM: No. When I was young, there used to be out of

state boats come here to unload fish and unload lobsters. They were strangers in the port here. They'd come in to a wholesaler and they'd sell their catch. The wholesaler would give them dock space. It was something you got for coming here and unloading. The owner of the dock that took your fish would let you tie up there for as long as you were in port. You'd get your fuel and get your ice and water. Then you'd go out and make another trip. For years that was the policy. The guy that bought your stuff would supply you with conveniences. Then the guys in the lobster industry started coming here from Marblehead, Mass. and up around the Cape way. They started fishing offshore for lobsters. Those guys come in here and they started selling to the lobster wholesalers here -- and they got a price. . . Then buyers from Boston and out of state would come down here and approach these lobstermen and say, "Look, sell it to me, I'll give you a nickel more a pound" -- that kind of stuff. The lobstermen would sell to these guys who'd come down with a truck and they'd try to bypass the local buyers. Well, if you're going to bypass the local buyers, then you can't get the conveniences that these guys used to give.

That's one of the problems. If these guys hadn't tried to go around the local buyers, there wouldn't be a need for the State Pier. I can see a State Pier where you got to help the industry and keep the industry here. Like a person like myself . . . We own our own property and we have to pay expenses to be here in Newport -- insurance, taxes, the whole bit. And here's guys coming in and getting free space at a State Pier that are competing against me in the same industry. Sometimes that's not right. But then again, I wouldn't fight this. The way things have gotten, it's important to keep the industry here. In a way, it's not right that these guys get free facilities where people that have been here for years are paying for it.

JM: Have your taxes gone way up considering your location?

GM: Oh yes, we got burnt by the city of Newport. Years ago, when they had the Jazz Festival . . . Were you around here then?

JM: Yes.

GM: When they had the Jazz Festival at Freebody Park, the people in the neighborhood up there had a bad time. We was approached by the City of Newport because we had the land where we

spread our nets. The City of Newport mentioned to us that it would be great if the Festival could continue here in Newport and that we was the only people in Newport that had a piece of land that could handle the Festival. They hoped that we'd get together with Wein and see if we could solve this problem. We met with Wein and Wein talked about putting the stage up out there -- the whole bit. . . We made an agreement with him. We'd use the field to spread our nets also. Of course, our attitude was how can we work this thing so we can get something out of this deal? Wein was only going to be here for ten or twelve days a year. That was the way he was operating at that time. We told him that we'd want fifteen hundred dollars a day for every day of scheduled performance. We figured fifteen hundred dollars, maybe ten days, would give us fifteen thousand dollars. He went for it and that was the agreement we signed with him. Then, after a couple of years, they had a big riot over there. There was a bunch of kids there. They stormed the fences, broke everything down. At that time, our tax bill was \$4,800 a year we was paying the city of Newport. That included all our property, our wharf and that land.

Then the City of Newport refused to issue Wein a license to continue the performances. We signed a ten year deal with Wein and when there was no more scheduled performances, Wein didn't have to pay us a dime. We couldn't kick him off because we had a ten year lease with him. Shortly afterwards, we had a guy come up to us and he said, "I'll give you a million dollars for that piece of land." At that time, that was a lot of money. We was trying to grab it. In the meantime, the point is -- the minute we got involved with Wein, then the land got a lot of publicity. It was known then as Festival Field. Our tax bill went within three years from \$4,800 a year to \$20,000. This is Newport. Here we got Wein there. We can't sell the land. We had a terrific offer. He's paying us nothing because of the way the thing was written up. And the City of Newport socked it right to us. So we go to Wein and we tell him we had a buyer. When he got wind of this he said, "Well, you can buy me off."

[Laughter.] We didn't go for that deal. So we were stuck with that piece of land.

JM: How much money did he want?

GM: I don't even remember. It didn't get to that. We said, "The hell with him, we ain't going to

give him part of this." We couldn't sell the land. We were stuck with it and we had about another six or seven years to go with Wein's problem. Then the state built the bridge [Newport Bridge]. The state built the roads, everything, the approaches to the bridge, right up to our property and stopped. The bridge highway came right to our property and stopped. We got rid of Wein after ten years, but in the meantime, we've been paying \$20,000 a year. We had a guy come along [who] wanted to buy it. Another million dollar deal. Of course, these guys are all developers coming from Washington with federal money to build low-rent housing. The way it was set up, the federal money that was put out to developers had low interest rates. At that time, it was 1%. I guess they contacted the states before they put the money out. Of course, the state of Rhode Island told the federal people that that land could not be sold because eventually, it was going to be a highway off the bridge. Then we had a buyer for a million dollars again, and the state was refusing to let us sell it. We had to get lawyers again -- Pat Hayes. After a few years, we went up [to] the State House -- up to the Department of Transportation. We told them

what the problem was -- here we are paying \$20,000 a year, we got all kinds of buyers for the land and we can't sell it. The state finally agreed to buy the land. That's how we finally got rid of it.

JM: Did they give you a fair price on it?

GM: Yes, they gave us a fair price. People are not aware of this yet. A lot of people are wondering where the highway is eventually going to go. The state has owned this piece of land now for probably five years. It goes right through -- you know where the Festival Field Apartments are? On the west side of the Festival Field apartments, right behind where the storage [company is] -- right in between the two, is the land the state owns that comes out onto Connell Highway. So that's another problem we had with Newport and taxes and the state too.

JM: It must have been tough getting all your equipment off that field.

GM: We didn't have anything on there. We used to spread the nets there to dry.

JM: Where do you do that now?

GM: In Portsmouth. The way it's all developed around here now, it wouldn't be safe to put nets there anymore anyway.

- JM: They'd be all vandalized.
- GM: [Laughter] May I shouldn't . . . There used to be a group in town that . . . At the land out there, I guess when it was vacant lots, it was a regular parking lot nights.
- JM: Out at Festival Field?
- GM: Yes. I don't know how to put this. There was -- maybe you could call it an organization or something or other that got out there one night. They got tangled up in our fish nets with city cars. It wrapped all around the wheels and up around underneath in the drive shafts. Anyway, the cars were stuck there. They couldn't get them out of there. And the cars are well marked. Finally, an official came to me and he says, "Jesus, we're in a mess. Some of our cars are out there. Let us know what the damages are and somehow or other we'll pay all the damages to the net. We hope you'd please keep it quiet." Anyway, we did get a lot of damage out there to the nets.
- JM: Did you go out and see it with the cars all tangled up?
- GM: Oh no. They went underneath there. They cut the nets all to ribbons to cut the cars loose, and they got the cars out. The cars were well marked.

JM: I can just imagine what they were [laughs].

GM: [Laughs]. It wasn't too far from here.

JM: Were they all drunk -- to do that?

GM: Oh no. They wouldn't be drunk. These people wouldn't be drunk driving those cars. [Laughs]

JM: [Laughs] Right, not over fish nets, they wouldn't be.

Your work is certainly a lot more than a job to you. You had said in the beginning that once you get into fishing, you're hooked and there's nothing else you can do. What is it about it that's so special for you?

GM: I don't know how to explain it. Before I went into the Navy, when the war started -- I guess the winter of '41 to '42 -- over at the Torpedo Station there was a lot of construction work. They were building over there. It was unbelievable. During the off season from fishing, I went over there working construction. As a matter of fact, I worked over there on the Torpedo School. At that time, I was making something like a \$150 a week which was unbelievable. Of course, we were putting in some hours over there. When it come April, I start seeing the fishing boats begin to move around the harbor here -- going out. I'm looking from the station. I had to leave

there. In those years, I left \$150 a week to go fishing for \$45 a month. That tells you something -- and probably going into a hell of a lot of more work and harder work.

JM: Sure. As hard as the Torpedo Station was.

GM: Oh yes. That didn't compare. Of course, today, fishing is not as tough as it was then. If you're young -- like I was raised as an infant around the water and fishing -- there's no way you're going to leave it. Even when I was in the Navy out there in the Pacific -- the war was on and I used to be up on that bridge daydreaming lots of times thinking of fishing. Then when I did come home and the war was still on in '45, I had thirty days leave plus eight days travel time. I flew back and forth so I was here maybe thirty-five days. Well, the whole thirty-five days, I was fishing. Not even getting paid for it, just helping out. Just going for a boat ride everyday and fishing. I could never quit.

JM: You're lucky. Not that many people find something like that.

GM: Yes, it turned out. When I started it as a kid, there was nothing in it -- actually nothing. The pay scale in those years was probably the lowest in the whole city here.

JM: What did people do then during the winters when there was nothing coming in? How did people make ends meet?

GM: I was always lucky. My father was a captain and in those years there was a lot of work in the winter months making nets. We used to have cotton in those years. Cotton was always wearing out and you had to order new nets every winter. It was a big expense. These nets -- you have to make them. You just get material. It used to take the whole winter putting the nets together.

JM: Where did you do that?

GM: My father -- when I was real small -- his rigging loft was over E. S. Peckham's Coal Company. They had a garage. I think it's Taylor's Wharf. Down at the lower level is where Peckham kept all the trucks. On the upper level, the old man had a long stretch of building where he rigged all the nets. I can remember -- I couldn't have been more than a dozen years old I guess -- when the weight of the nets up on the second floor -- the floor collapsed through. The whole floor come down on top of all of Peckham's trucks with nets . . . and what a tangled up mess that was getting all those nets out of that floor, the trucks

and the whole bit. From there they moved to the Perry Mill Building where the condos are now. The old man rigged in there on the first floor for a few years. Then from there he went up on Spring Street. Near Pope, there's a building that sits in a little court where he rigged nets. Tallman and Mack had two floors in the Newport Electric Corporation building. When we bought Tallman and Mack, for a couple of years we was there. Then finally Newport Electric had need for that space, so they asked us to get out of there. That's when Glen Brothers over on Waite's Wharf went bankrupt. They used to make radio cabinets. We bought that building somewhere around 1948 or '49. That's where we do all our rigging today.

JM: How many people would be working on the nets?

GM: Well, years ago it was about four men.

JM: Does anyone know how to do that now?

GM: Yes, not like then though. In those years, those guys were all terrific. They [were] real fast with their hands and they got more work at it. Today with the nylon . . . My son, he's beginning to pick it up, but he's never made a net complete -- all the material, start from scratch, and make a whole net complete. He's never done it because the nylon lasts so long

that we haven't made a net down there in a good fifteen years. Whereas with the cotton, we wore out so many nets -- they didn't last -- that every year we was making say two, three brand new nets. There was more work at it, so naturally the better the experience. In the last few years, since the old guys are all gone. . . I'm pretty good at the nets. But to take a piece of net and to figure angles and tapers, there's not too many guys that can sit down and figure it. My son is beginning to pick it up. You know -- mending. Actually, if he had to take and make a net himself -- he's about 34 -- he'd have a problem. Whereas when I was sixteen years of age, I could make a net. He'd have a problem, but I guess he'd put it together.

JM: When you're involved in the kind of work you're in, does your whole family get pretty much involved in it?

GM: No. My wife and my brother's wives never come around the dock. They might stop down for something if they're in town. The wives stay out of it and the daughters stay out of it. Once in a while, they'll show up down there -- mostly to put the touch to me for something. [Laughs]. They stay out of it.

JM: How about danger? You mentioned that your brother was killed.

GM: We was heisting the net one day. It was down [at] Narragansett Pier. The mast never should have broke. It was a defective mast. It was a brand new mast, too. It was only a couple of years old. We started heisting the net and the wind started picking up. We was on the light part of the net. It wasn't that much weight we was heisting, but it just happened right at the stress point in the mast. You couldn't see it from the outside of the mast. It looked good, but in the middle of it, after it broke, there was three or four knots right there at that one spot where the stress was on that mast. The mast snapped in two pieces. He was running the winch. I was up on the bow of the boat, and we had about a dozen men on deck working. The mast buckled forward and it hit on top of the pilot house and then it bounced off the pilot house and hit him on the left side of the head. It knocked him out cold. We ran right into Narragansett Pier and the emergency wagon took him from there to the hospital. He wasn't really out in a coma, but he was knocked out for about a month. If it were anybody else, [they] would've got killed right then and

there. He was a big guy, very strong man. Probably the strongest man ever lived in Newport. He was a horse.

JM: How old was he?

GM: If he was alive, he would be would 76. He was born in 1910.

JM: What happened to the others in your family?

GM: He was the oldest brother. I had a sister older than him. The oldest in the family was a sister. She lives in New Bedford. She's 78 I guess now, 79. She's a widow. My brother died a couple of years afterwards. After that, he got some brain damage. I had some problems with him. If we talk about this, it would take three more days. . . Anyway, I was one of the youngest brothers in the family. I got most of the credit for the success of Tallman and Mack which I didn't deserve because he was a horse and so was my other brother. Between the guy that died and myself, there was twelve, thirteen years. At Tallman and Mack, I got all the credit and he didn't get any credit. At the time, I was in my early twenties (when we started there) and he was thirty-five. He resented the fact that he was the oldest brother and he wasn't the boss. We had some battles over there. Him and I could never get

along. When he did get hurt, then it was even worse. He'd come down the dock and we'd be unloading fish -- at that point, his equilibrium was off. For the first year after he got hurt, he did go with us out on the boat. Then afterwards, the second year when we saw how he was, we didn't allow him to go fishing anymore. He'd come down the dock and he'd give me hell about anything and everything. As a matter of fact, when he got hurt that year, there was \$10,000 -- his -- in the company. So the bookkeeper says to me, "George, your brother's got \$10,000 here. Why don't you give it to his wife?" I says, "No, we ain't going to give it to her because she plays the horses. She'll blow the whole works and then he'll give us hell when he comes to -- [Chuckles] when he comes back to his senses." At that time, we said maybe six months, a year he'll bounce back alright. Then one day she [said], "George, why don't you take that money. You don't want to give it to your sister-in-law because she'll blow it --"

JM: Was that Miss Curran who was saying that?

GM: Yes. I said, "No we can't give to her." Then finally she said, "Put it in one of your accounts where it can be drawing interest." I

said, "Oh no, not that, Miss Curran. Jesus, I have enough trouble getting along with him now." So finally she suggested [one day], "I'm going to the bank. I'll take that check and I'll open up a bank account in his name." I said, "Yes, that sounds alright." Anyway, she did that. A year or two later, when he starts coming back -- he was improving all the time -- I said to him, "You know, you got a bank book in the office in there. Why don't you take it home." He looked at me and he was confused. He didn't say nothing. So a few weeks later, I said, "You know, you got that bank book in there." I could see an improvement in him, and once in a while I'd mention it to him to try to get it to sink in. Finally one day he says to me, "What the hell is this bank book you're always talking about. I don't know nothing about that." I said, "Well it's in there. Go see Miss Curran." So he starts walking in the office and I said, "I'd better follow him in there." So when he goes, Miss Curran says, "Oh yes, Arsen." So she goes out and she gets the bank book out. He's looking at it and he's looking at it, and he says, "This was deposited when I was still in the hospital. Wasn't I still in the hospital at that date?" And I

says, "Oh Jesus, here he goes." Miss Curran was looking at me and says, "Yes, Arsen, but remember you told me to do this." (I almost laughed.) "I never authorized anything like this." (He was a beaut for coming out with some big words.) He says, "I never authorized anything like this." I said, "What the hell difference does it make. Your bank book is in your name. Take it home." So then he goes down the house and tells the old man that I was trying to steal his money. So I'm at the house and out comes the old man and I said, "Something's wrong here -- this hour of the day, him coming here." The old man says, "What the hell are you doing." I said, "What do you mean what am I doing." He said, "You're trying to steal your brother's money." I said, "I didn't steal his money. Go down the wharf. You go see Miss Curran and Miss Curran will explain to you what happened." So down he goes, down to the wharf. The old man, he's ready to clobber me. Miss Curran told him the whole story, the whole bit. So then the old man takes off after my brother, and I'm telling you if that wasn't a mess.

JM: Did he die of injuries --

GM: No, he lived a couple of years or more after

that accident. He started hanging in the bars and he started drinking. Of course, that's what killed him. My youngest brother was born in this country and he was fifteen pounds when he was born [laughs].

JM: [Laughs] I never heard of that.

GM: Yes, he was fifteen pounds. My mother said with this guy Arsen -- he was born Madeira. He was the one who was ten years old when they come across. My mother said over there they didn't weigh babies. They lived way out in the country. They didn't realize that you had to weigh babies. My mother said that this guy was twice as big as the guy that was fifteen pounds. Of course, I think she was exaggerating [laughs].

JM: Have you ever felt in danger out there?

GM: No.

JM: Has anything ever come up in the nets that you didn't expect to see?

GM: Oh yes. Once in a while you'll catch a species that you've never seen before. Like species from the warmer climates. Once in a while we'll catch a fish that normally lives in Florida. And you catch quite a few turtles.

JM: Sea turtles?

GM: Yes, the big leatherbacks. They go maybe a

thousand pounds a piece.

JM: Oh you're kidding.

GM: Yes, they're big.

JM: Is it hard to get them out?

GM: They're an endangered species, so you got to release them alive. You wouldn't drive any hooks into them. The only thing you can do is tie under their shoulder -- put a rope under their shoulder, on their flipper.

JM: Do they let you do that?

GM: Oh no. They fight you and they're splashing water on you and kicking. They're very powerful. When they come like that with a flipper, they brush you right aside. Enormous. Unbelievable the strength they've got. We put a rope on their shoulder and we heist them up that way and drop them out of the net. A few years ago, this young guy come down the dock one day and he asked me if I had ever seen a leatherback. I said, "Yes, I've seen some leatherbacks." He showed me a picture when he was a little kid about four years old standing alongside a leatherback that his father had caught. He must have looked at this picture all his life since he was a four year old kid dying to see a real leatherback. When I told him that I had seen a leatherback, he was all

interested in wanting to see one. Of course, he wanted to know if I had any photos and we never take photos of that stuff. He lived in Connecticut and he said if we ever caught a leatherback to get in touch with him -- that he'd love to see a leatherback. I told him, "Look, in the past thirty years or more, I've probably seen ten leatherbacks at the most." Which means it averages out to once every three years we see a leatherback. I said, "Your chance of seeing a leatherback are very slim." Anyway, he gave me his phone number. I was going to throw it away because I figured it was going to be worthless. You know, the next day, we hauled a trap and there's a leatherback. I called him up and he was all excited about it. Of course, by right, I shouldn't have brought it in. I could have got in trouble. We have to release them. When he saw the leatherback, he got ahold of Dr. Shoop at URI, a marine biologist. Dr. Shoop, I think, is the only man in the United States allowed to hold a turtle in his possession.

[End of side two, tape six]

GM: They breathe air. They get oxygen from the air.

JM: Do they do that when they're in the sea?

GM: Oh yes. You could drown the turtles by holding them underwater.

JM: Really?

GM: Yes, that's why they keep sticking their nose up to breathe. They're a mammal. They originally come off the land. They adapted to the ocean so they could have mobility. On land they were so big and awkward that they couldn't move. Anyway, he called Dr. Shoop and when Dr. Shoop found out we had a turtle, he says, "That turtle is mine." In other words, that would protect us. He says, "That is my turtle. I'll be right over." So he come over and he was all excited about the leatherback. Ever since then, we've been catching leatherbacks and bringing them into Dr. Shoop. He measures them, weighs them, tags them and keeps records of them. The funny thing about it was here I'd gone over thirty years and seen no more than ten -- and that one summer that this fellow come up here, we caught, I think, thirty-three. The following year, we caught twenty-some, and then the last four, five years, we've been seeing at least ten a year.

JM: They all big like that?

GM: Oh yes, they're very big.

JM: What other big things come in? You mentioned

once in a while you get a big tuna.

GM: We love to see the tunas now. There's a big price for them. But they've dropped off. I mentioned yesterday that a lot of the guys catching tunas seem to think they won't come through that dirty water that dumps out from the Hudson. You can catch them south of that dirty water. The only place they seem to catch a few north of the Hudson River is at Cape Cod. Which made me think, and also these tuna fishermen, that those big tunas might go out around that dirty water. By the time they swim back into shore again, they're off the Cape. We don't see them that often. Once in a while we see some basking sharks -- usually in May and June -- that'll be like from here to that door long and weigh three or four thousand pounds.

JM: How many feet would you say that is?

GM: They probably go twenty, twenty-five feet long. They're big.

JM: Do you have to kill them to get them out?

GM: No. We can't heist them, they're so heavy. But we tie into them and we get the boat to pull them out of the net, then we let them go. They have a big mouth that you could crawl right into, but they don't have any teeth. I guess

they survive on plankton. That's about the biggest fish that we see. I've only seen one whale and it was only a little one. It was no more than maybe a couple of hundred pounds.

JM: When was that?

GM: Maybe about six, seven years ago. Small whale. That's the only one.

JM: Do you think people like your father had seen a lot more whales?

GM: No.

JM: Was that just a freak thing?

GM: Yes, that was freak. My father, where he fished and how he fished, I think that I've probably seen more of everything than what he saw even though probably during the years he fished, there was probably more of everything. The equipment and the design of stuff, I know that there's no comparison to what I've seen to what he saw. The way he operated most his life down there was with four men and then after the later years that he was fishing, he worked with six men. Most of the time we operate with twenty-five men. There's no way that six men could handle what -- and we have the equipment, conveyors, and better boats so there's no comparison [of] what we're doing to what he did.

did.

JM: You had mentioned that your father was a very religious man. Were there any prayers or anything like that that people would say going out on the boat to give them luck?

GM: Yes. We'd go out to the nets. My father had a cap . . . He'd take his cap off and stick it under his arm. His bald head would shine out there and he said something . . . Then he put his cap back on. He did that all the time. He was an altar boy over in Portugal. The schools over there were in the church. There was no public schools. He got something like four years of education over there. He come to this country and he picked up the English. He could read and write in English on his own. He was pretty sharp. Of course, my mother never even learned to speak English. The women didn't get the education. The big thing for the girls over there was to go to some kind of sewing school -- do all that fancy embroidery work and stuff. That was their education.

JM: What would you say you like the best about your work?

GM: When you pull the net and you see a nice bunch of fish -- real good fish -- I guess there's a lot of satisfaction in catching the fish. I

get a lot of satisfaction, too, when we go out there and set a net. I get them guys all moving -- in an hour and a half, two hours time flat, the nets set and we're coming home. All of a sudden you look out across the harbor late in the afternoon and there's your competitor coming in at five, six o'clock in the afternoon that did the same thing you did. It took them ten, twelve hours. The crew will say, "Geez, here they come now. What have they been doing all day?" I say to myself, "If it wasn't for me driving you guys, you guys would be still out there too." You get a lot of satisfaction outshining your competitors and catching the fish. I guess that's what probably makes you feel pretty good.

JM: I want to thank you. It's been a wonderful experience talking with you.

[End of interview.]



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DATED: February 11, 1987

George Mendonca
Narrator
9 North Drive Middletown, R.
Address

Jeanette Murray
Interviewer
Newport, R. I.
Address

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Marina may replace 80-year-old business

Tallman & Mack to sell site to developer

By Phil Sweeney
Daily News staff

3/25/97

NEWPORT — Tallman & Mack Fish and Trap Co., whose crews have fished area waters for the past 80 years, is being sold to a local businessman who plans to develop a marina on the site.

Bill Casey, who operates Casey Boat Hauling and Casey's Oil Co. of Newport, intends to buy the company's Spring Wharf property and convert it into a 33-slip marina.

The state Coastal Resources Management Council is scheduled to meet tonight in Providence to review the marina development. The state council's staff has studied the plans and the site and are recommending that the full council approve the proposal.

"That's the last hurdle we have," Casey said.

The City Council recently endorsed Casey's proposal after the Planning Board and Waterfront Commission reviewed it. The citizens' group, Friends of the Waterfront, also is happy with the marina plan because it allows public access along the water.

If all goes well with the CRMC, Casey said the sale will likely close in April or May. He declined to say how much he'll pay for the site.

Under Casey's plan, an existing fishing pier and loading platform will be removed and replaced by two new piers, 194-feet and 187-feet long. The existing building

will be converted into an office and bathroom and shower facilities. A total of 47 parking spaces will be designated on the wharf.

Construction, which will take only a few days, will be completed in time for the summer boating season, Casey said. He expects to have no trouble filling the marina.

"If I had it today, I could sell it today," he said.

The transformation means the end of an era for Tallman & Mack and its owner George Mendonsa. At 74, Mendonsa said it's time to give up the business he founded with his late brothers in 1946.

"I've got 51 years in fishing," Mendonsa said. "I guess it's time to quit."

Two fishing boats, equipment and licenses to fish in 27 nearby areas are being sold to fishing companies in Little Compton and Point Judith. Mendonsa said his 15 employees have been hired by the companies who purchased his equipment.

"I was out of the Navy five days when we bought this place," said Mendonsa, who has gained considerable attention over the years by claiming to be the kissing sailor in Life magazine's famous 1945 cover photo.

Though he will give up control of his business, Mendonsa said he probably will continue to work the seas from time to time.

Mendonsa said he believes Tallman & Mack was founded about 1917 by J.T. O'Connell, Cliff Tallman and John Mack.

Tape I Side I

Biographical Interview
Portuguese roots
Family life in Newport
Childhood
Education
Religion
Family Fish Trap Company/ Way of life
Hurricane of 1938

Tape I Side II

Cotton fish nets used by fish trap companies
Synthetics and their impact on the fishing industry
Fish trap wars
Volume of fish caught during the war years (World War II)
Species and abundance
Spawning areas
Migration
Work of fishing-- Fish trap industry
 Locations of fish traps
 Setting the nets
 Boats and equipment
 Crew
 Volume

Tape II Side I

Biographical interview, contd.
Mendonso's love of working on the water
Portuguese and Canadian fish trap crews
1930's menhaden fishery in R.I. waters
Menhaden fishery now-- mostly in Gulf of Mexico
Purse seining of menhaden in Narragansett Bay
Swordfish harpooning in inshore waters during 1930's
Depletion of swordfish
1980's swordfish grounds
Shore seining striped bass in Narragansett Bay
Commercial vs. sportfishermen over striped bass
Mendonso's troubles with sportfishermen
 R.I. Marine Fisheries Council
 Conservation issues
 Regulations
 Difficulty of commercial fishermen on a government fisheries
 council

Tape II Side II

Problems of a commercial fisherman on a government council
Mendonsa's feeling that the commercial fishing industry is doomed
Federal government's ineptness in dealing with fishing industry
 issues
Impact of foreign fishing in U.S. waters before 200 Mile Limit
Impact of 200 Mile Limit regulations on domestic fishermen
Impact of government regulations on striped bass
Why Mendonsa feels the National Marine Fisheries Council members
 don't know what they're doing regarding striped bass
Tagging striped bass for the government
Problems with striped bass spawning areas
 Chesapeake Bay stripers
 Hudson River stripers
Striped bass size regulations/Problems and inconsistencies
What striped bass tagging will prove about striped bass spawning areas
How striped bass tagging program could promote wiser regulations
Striped bass and P.C.B.'s
Striped bass size and P.C.B.'s
Large egg-bearing female striped bass slaughtered by sportfishermen
Large female striped bass capable of spawning 5 million eggs at
 a time
Commercial net fishermen vs. sportfishermen
Depletion/abundance of striped bass
R.I. Board of Health and striped bass
Problems with the Food and Drug Administration
 Mercury and bonita
 Mercury and swordfish
 Testing bluefish
How sportfishermen sidestep striped bass regulations
Commercial sportfishermen and the government
Reasons for abundance of fish during and 4-5 years after WWII
Jan. 10, 1946, Mendonsa and Bucolo families buy Tallman and Mack
 Fish Trap Company
How Bucolo and Mendonsa families got into business together
Why Clifton Tallman sold his company
J.T. O'Connell

Tape III Side I

What was included in 1946 sale of Tallman Mack Company
 Boats, land, wharf, nets, and fishing locations
Clifton Tallman the rascal
Captain Joe Costa
Fishing after World War II-- abundance, low prices, marketing,
 expenses, fish consumption
Southern consumption of scup
Problems with Fulton Fish Market-- "probably the crookedest
 operation in the country"
 New York city racketeers and the Fulton Fish Market
Codfish
 Abundance after World War II
 Codfish migration pattern
 Foreign fishing and codfish depletion

Fish caught by fish traps

Spawning and migration patterns of fish caught by fish traps

Pollution and the fishing industry

Pollution in Narragansett Bay

Lobster regulations

Lobster abundance years ago

Beginning of the offshore lobster industry

The catching of egg-bearing female lobsters and its affect on
the lobster industry

Lobster size regulations-- benefits of increase measure

Tape IV Side I

Foreign fishing trawlers in the Northwest Atlantic before the
200 Mile Limit was established

Devastating affect of foreign fishing on fish stocks
Impediments to political involvement of fishermen in fishing industry
issues

High insurance costs a big problem in the fishing industry

Russian trawlers and depletion of many fish species

Foreign and domestic mentality about fishing very different

U.S. Government's experimentation with building factory ships

1970's dumping of dredge material from Providence River off

Brenton Point

Effect of filthy water on migrating fish

How dumping hurt commercial fishermen

Dredge boats that dump in the wrong place

Argo Merchant oil spill, 1976

Foreign fishing vessels in U.S. waters after 200 Mile Limit was
established

Quotas

Conservation

Relationship between fishing industry, government and biologists

Specific fish trap locations south of Newport

Learning where to set a fish trap through experience

Tape IV Side II

Learning where to set traps through experience, contd.

Way of life in being part of the fishing industry

Mendonso's father's pride in his son's fishing ability

Floating Fish Trap Industry

Crews

Unloading fish at the dock

Marketing the fish

Mechanization of the industry

Migratory timetable of fish caught

Conservation-- protecting small fish

Advantages and disadvantages of sifting small fish out

Market for scup
Fish prices for whole Atlantic Coast controlled by New York
Marketing sea bass
Prices in New York based on supply and demand
Fulton Fish Market a tough place
Deals made at Fulton Fish Market
 New York racket's control of Fulton Market
Quality of fish caught in traps superior to trawled
Fish peddlers
Kinds of fish consumed by Portuguese in Southern New England
Local peddlers fight over bonita catch
Sundays at the dock-- Portuguese people fight over bonitas
Mackeral-- changes in demand for

Tape V Side I

Squid

Abundance
Difficult to haul nets filled with squid
Affect of foreign and domestic fishing pressure on
 squid stocks
Joint ventures involving squid

Herring

Migratory pattern
What herring are used for
 Sardine factories in Maine

Explanation of flounder species

Fluke caught in fish traps

Butterfish

Freezing fish caught in fish traps-- advantages and disadvantages

Tape V Side II Blank

Tape VI Side I

Lobstermen brushing egg-bearing female lobsters during 1950's
 were not from Rhode Island

How to find out if a female lobster has been brushed

Stiff penalties for brushing females

Changes in the lobster industry

Lobster licenses and lobster statistics

Pollution in Newport Harbor

Mendonsa's confrontation with the Board of Health

Geese and pollution of salt marshes

Marine life in saltmarshes in Point Judith

Making a living off salt ponds

Shellfishing in the Sakonnet River

Memories of oyster industry in Narragansett Bay

Striped bass regulations-- how sportsfishermen get around them

 Problems with striped bass regulations

Conservation of striped bass

Changes along the waterfront in Newport, R.I.

 Tourism and the fishing industry

 Effect of tourism on Tallman and Mack Company

Support services

Developers who have wanted to buy Mendonsa's property

 Conflict between fishing industry and developers in Newport

Problems of developers

Tourists who are fascinated by seeing how the fishing industry operates

Tape VI Side II

Future of Newport's fishing industry

Newport State Pier

Docking in Newport Harbor past and present

Rising taxes on waterfront property

The Newport Jazz Festival use of Mendonsa property

Perceptions of being part of the fishing industry

Mendonsa's perceptions of his occupation

Significance of being raised on the water

Doing something you love is more important than money

Mendonsa's father

Making nets

Strange things that come up in the nets

Leatherback turtles caught in nets

Tape VII Side I

Tagging leatherback turtles in cooperation with the University
of Rhode Island

Depletion of large tuna

Basking sharks

Mendonsa's comparison of his fishing methods with his father's

Mendonsa's father and the prayer he said going out to the nets

Portuguese religious influence on Mendonsa's father

Portuguese women and education

What Mendonsa likes best about his work