

Interview with a Owner of Bar in Little Bay

M. indicates the interviewee

A. indicates the Dickinson College interviewer

A: OK. Umm, what part of the island did you live prior to the volcanic eruption?

M: King's Hill.

A: King's Hill. And was that part of the, is that now part of the exclusion zone?

M: Definitely.

A: OK. Did you have a business in King's Hill as well?

M: One of the biggest businesses that Montserrat ever saw.

A: (laughs)

M: I had a restaurant on the water, and the pictures inside there (motions to the kitchen) are of that. Definitely.

A: So I suppose your house and your business were both destroyed?

M: Well I had a guest house, five bars, a supermarket, and a house differently. And all was destroyed. But I never get a single cent from a soul because what happened (slight pause) I wasn't insured. And that lady there (points to patron) knew the same place where I am speaking about. So don't, I can't tell a lie. Right? So hope, in this interview (belches) when you all go back, the students (pause) will put a little dollar in a little kitty and send it back to me (laughter in background) to help me. And I had one of the biggest (belches) body-building gyms on the island. And like I said, whenever you go in a store, in America, you pick up a Huffman magazine, you see my picture in the second page. A body-building magazine. Huffman magazine. You have Joe Weider and you have Huffman magazine. You will see my picture in it.

A: Where do you live now?

M: Me?

A: Yes where is your home.

M: Well, I used to live upstairs of course. And then a guy credit me up a piece of lot that I take my time up with him. And then I build a house on the lawn. The place when you going up Davy hill

A: OK

M: Go see a side-board mark "Lot for Sale." In between there, and, if you go in between there, you see some strewn work toward there, that's my house.

A: OK

M: Next to none. I build it myself.

A: You built it yourself?

M: Myself.

A: How did you get the credit to build?

M: Uh...

A: The land, how did you get the credit for the land?

M: From out of the shop.

A: OK.

A: Why didn't you leave when your wife and children left?

M: No. Because I love Montserrat. I don't want to make some and have a go with it. I have a foundation in Montserrat. This is my country, and I want my daughters to have a foundation here. Definitely. And that's it. And God bless the day that I stay here. Because I have nice house next to none. And you all go and see the house too. Take a picture of the house. Right? It not too far from here though, it's walking distance or driving distance, ok? Follow the supermarket here, Victor's?

A: Uh huh

M: Go the road, a little wood building there, that sell groceries and well, you pass that certain place and then you go inside there. One, two, three house down. Like a yellow house, a brick house. And then you meet another house, the circle. With a lot of red stone to the wall. And I built it myself.

M: Well, trust me, and, to me, that is uh, like uh, pressure question on me seeing that my wife is in government. But any Montserratian that want a house to live they can get a house to live. But if you lazy, right? Because another they give the keys, and lock them in the houses that were built. And when they found out that they have to pay for their own water and the gas and the current, they carry the key back to the government office and they just leave here, not in charge of it. Right? Because in the shelter, they don't have to buy nothing. Down to the toilet paper, get it for free. So that the people don't want to move out of the shelter. But I don't, you know, some question feel like, look like I might be biased. Because of my wife is in government. Right? But it's a fair, fair, ok you work for it. A lot of them just want to come into the shelters and stay on. They get everything for free. You know what I mean? And that is a near problem. But everybody in Montserrat that need a house can get a house. They building 61 more houses this year. You know? And you can get a house if you want a house. But some of them, they is strong men, working for more money than me, make more money than me, but because of the free, they still taking from the government. They still don't want to come out of the shelter. Trust me.