



The FBI Oral History Project

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INTERVIEW OF

Former Special Agent of the FBI

THOMAS E. BURG

Years of FBI Service 1967 – 1999

Interviewed on September 13, 2006

By Brian R. Hollstein

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**Interview with Former Special Agent
Thomas E. Burg (1967 – 1999)
on September 13, 2006
By Brian Hollstein**

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Brian R. Hollstein/

H: My name is Brian Hollstein. Today's date is the 13th of September, 2006. I'm talking to Mr. Tom Burg, that's Thomas E. Burg. He is in Merrill, Wisconsin, and we're talking on the telephone. I'm recording this conversation for the use of the Society of Former Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Tom, I have here that you were born in Cincinnati?

Thomas E. Burg/

B: Yeah, that's right.

H: And 1944, during the war.

B: Right. Grew up near there.

H: Uh, huh. And you grew up in the Cincinnati area too?

B: Yeah, it was --. Yes, now part of the suburbs of Cincinnati. It was a little town outside of Cincinnati when I was growing up there. So I call myself a small town boy.

H: Okay, good. You signed a Copyright Release on this, on the fifth of September.

B: Right.

H: And the only thing that I wanted to mention on that was that the copyright extends only to this interview and the things that we say. If you want to write a book or be interviewed by someone else, there's no problem with that, but this strictly works with the, this particular interview.

H: After we complete the interview, we will send the tape to one of our former retired, retired Bureau stenographers who will do a transcription of the tape. We'll send you a copy of that draft transcription, ask you to look it over, and, you know, look for errors in spelling and, you know, a variety of things as we're talking.

B: No Bureau stenographer would miss any of that.

H: (chuckle) We've had good luck actually.

B: I married one.

H: Oh, is that right? Okay. And then after that, after you've approved of it, we will send it to the Bureau. They will look at it for classified information only.

B: Uh, huh.

H: And so your opinions or anything else you say, they don't do any, any editing on that at all. And then when that comes back, we'll send you a completed copy for your archives and to keep for the future. And the originals will go to a major university library and hopefully it will be made available in the very near future on line to researchers and, scholars who are interested in the people of the FBI. So that's the drill for things.

B: A lot of work for what --. I'm not sure what I'm going to be giving you for all that work, but we can get going.

H: (chuckle) Well let's see and we'll start in on it.

So you were born in Cincinnati. Raised in --?

B: The town's name was Greenhills, one word.

H: Okay. And you went to school there in the area I gather. Where did you go to college?

B: I went to undergraduate school at Wilmington College in Wilmington, Ohio. Graduated in 1966 with a BS in Chemistry and Mathematics and went to graduate school at the University of Idaho where I received a MS in Organic Chemistry. And the original purpose, at least I think in the Bureau's mind, of my coming into the Bureau was, with that chemistry degree, that I would end up in the lab.

H: Uh, huh. But you fooled them.

B: Well, yeah. You know, I didn't know that I was really much more of a people person than, you know, the Bureau's policy then was send us out to the field for a while and draw us back when the time is right for them.

H: Uh, huh.

B: And I was having so much fun out in the field enjoying what I was doing that a couple of times they solicited me to come back on transfer. I said, well, the first one I said, "I'm not ready" and they bought it. The second one I said, "Boy, I really am not interested" and they said, "Well, we'll try to honor your request." And they obviously found somebody else.

H: Uh, huh. Well, that's an interesting one because usually they're bound and determined to use the skills that you have. So you entered the Bureau straight out of school then?

B: Actually I came from the University of Idaho in 1967. I had actually finished all my master's degree work, but I hadn't actually been granted the degree until the next graduation rolled around. So I came directly --. I mean directly by a matter of a couple of weeks into New Agents' Training.

H: Why? Why did you join the Bureau? What, what drove you in that direction?

B: I don't know. I just always found it interesting. You know, we always, we had to write that essay or whatever we had to write in that original Agent's test.

H: (chuckle) That's right.

B: I guess I thought it would be, you know, an interesting job, valuable to the country and, you know, if you're going to be on a team, you might as well be on the best team.

H: Uh, huh.

B: And that's kind of the way I put it then and I still feel that way.

H: Good. So there was no active recruitment then on the part of the Bureau?

B: No. I found one of the applicant sheets on the table in the girls' dorm when I was waiting for my girlfriend to change clothes in college and stopped in the Cincinnati Office and asked them about it. And they said, well, you had to be twenty-three and you had to have certain, you know, they went through all the criteria. And I had a chance to go to graduate school and knew that if I didn't do that I might always regret it. And so I went off to graduate school with this in the back of my mind and found that I was really much better off in the practical world than the theoretical world.

H: Well, that's interesting. So you and I came in at the same time.

B: That's okay. When was your --?

H: In '67. And so we went through the Old Post Office --. I probably saw you at one point or another I suppose.

B: Sure. On 9-18-67 was NAC #6 was my class.

H: Okay. I think we were #3. So I was out midyear.

B: Yeah. I'm, I'm sure there were guys in your class that I worked with in places like Jackson and Chicago.

H: (chuckle) I imagine so. I started off down in, in Tampa and then headed over to Miami, then San Juan and New York, and then I left in '77. So I just had ten years of service.

Okay, you went through training and came out the other side, and what was your first assignment then?

B: Jackson.

H: Jackson, Mississippi. And that was in?

B: It was right at the very end of 1967. We left Washington just before Christmas. Spent Christmas at home and within that week after Christmas, still in 1967, I reported to Jackson.

H: Uh, huh. Were you married at the time?

B: No. In fact I was the only single Agent in the division which played a role in some of my assignments down there.

H: (chuckle) I'll bet. What was going on when you got down there?

B: Well, of course you know, when you're brand new you're not really sure what's going on to a great degree, but the office had its regular squads and then we had, they had the special squad that was run by Joe Sullivan. Ask me about Joe much later in this if I don't bring him up.

H: Sure.

B: But, the Klan work was mainly being done by Joe's squad, how should I put this, the heavy duty reactive stuff, but the general everyday Klan work, everybody worked. And I mentioned my being single played a role. Whenever somebody in an RA needed somebody for a couple of weeks or whatever, they sent the single guy.

H: Uh, huh.

B: I got to go to Greenville on this special and Hattiesburg on that special which was Klan related.

H: Uh, huh.

B: And eventually it led to my being transferred to the Laurel RA which was headquarters of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Mississippi. So I was kind of there really only, I guess, about six to eight months, but in Laurel itself. So I was around that kind of work all the time.

H: Huh. Yeah, I guess it was pretty tough to, to escape it when you're down there. Now Roy K. Moore was the SAC at the time, right?

B: That's right.

H: Had you run into a fellow by the name of Joe Rucci while you were there? He was a first office Agent.

B: That doesn't ring a bell.

H: In that general time frame. It might have been a little bit early. He was up in Tupelo later on.

B: I --. That doesn't ring a bell, no.

H: Uh, huh. And he was telling me that it was quite a zoo down there. A real circus in terms of, of the amount of work and the demands that were being placed.

B: Well, I think that never stopped in my almost thirty-two years in the Bureau. People going under --. I was almost always in an RA. I think people even in the Bureau don't understand some of the demands when you're out there on your own in an RA a lot. And, of course, Jackson was primarily a Resident Agency division.

H: Uh, huh.

B: Yeah, Roy Moore was SAC and I just saw an obituary for Elmer Lindberg, the ASAC, who just died.

H: Oh.

B: Paul Alker, Jim Ingram, and Jim Abbott were the, the squad supervisors.

H: Uh, huh. Yeah, it's, you know, when you start looking back all of a sudden, that's forty years ago.

B: Yeah, I know.

H: (chuckle) And the ranks are starting to thin. I've spent a lot of time getting interviews of early people who came in during the '30s, and people who were in during the Second World War, and, I've kind of run out of those people now.

B: Yeah.

H: And we're working on up. And I just stopped and looked at myself in the mirror and I'm getting a little long, long of tooth myself. It's important that we get this, this information down from the people who were actually living it.

B: Your project is primarily on the civil rights movement or --?

H: No, no, no.

B: Anything on Bureau?

H: Anything having to do with the FBI and the Agents.

B: Oh!

H: Their experiences over the years.

B: Broadens my, you know --. Alters my statement about your not hearing anything interesting from me.

H: (chuckle) Okay. Good. Let's talk about Joe Sullivan for a minute.

B: Okay.

H: You knew him down there?

B: Well, I mean, everybody knew who Mr. Sullivan was. And he was the head of this squad. A big good-looking guy and a legendary Bureau character. And that was that.

And then I made my way through my time in Chicago and I came up here to Wisconsin and became SRA at the Wausau Resident Agency. Part of my territory included a little legendary town up in far northern Wisconsin named Hurley, Wisconsin which was really known primarily for corruption and vice; and it's only saving feature was the fact that it was the hometown of Joe Sullivan.

H: Ah. (chuckle)

B: Joe was in New York by then and then I reached, you know, had that long retirement in New York but he used to come home every summer to visit. He still had some property there and his sister still lived in Hurley and the police chief and I would always take Joe out to lunch and talk. Nice man.

H: Yeah. He was a prince. I knew him late in life also. In New York there. And he worked in a soup kitchen. And a bunch of other things that he did were very humble things in considering who he was and the effect that he had on the civil rights era.

B: Yeah.

H: It's quite an amazing guy. Do you think he looked anything like Gene Hackman -
-

B: No.

H: -- in *Mississippi Burning*?

B: No, I can't buy that one.

H: (chuckle) I don't think so either.

B: We actually had Joe come and speak on his career. We did a police school on civil rights at Hurley. Invited cops from both sides, the Michigan side and the Wisconsin side, northern Wisconsin. And, you know, he was able to show slides and tell the story of his career there and it was really fun.

H: Yeah. He's quite a guy.

How much time in headquarters city before you headed out to Laurel?

B: Well, probably, four months, but most of that four months I wasn't there anyway because I was on a couple of weeks in one RA, a couple of weeks in another RA, and actually it was a typical Bureau operation.

I was transferred to Laurel while I was on special assignment in Hattiesburg, but I kept saying, "Well, where's my letter?" And they said, "Well, we'll send it to you." Well, they couldn't ever find my letter. Turned out they had sent it to Laurel and I wasn't in Laurel.

H: Uh, huh.

B: One of these circular things. And eventually I said, "Okay, I'll figure out a way to get there without having the letter." When you're, I guess, that new in the Bureau you aren't real sure about those things. But after a while you learn that's just typical Bureau operation.

H: (chuckle) That's right.

B: But, but what did happen in that time and I guess to me was interesting, one of the state trials of the Vernon Dahmer murder case was going on at that time in Hattiesburg and so the two Agents in Hattiesburg were assigned to work on that trial. So they sent me down to do the regular day-to-day work in the RA.

I was down there around all this and back in those days whenever you did a civil rights investigation you had to tell the people "We're here at the specific direction of John Doar, the head of the Civil Rights Division of the US Department of Justice."

H: Uh, huh.

B: And, so here one day into the RA comes John Doar and the whole entourage from the Department of Justice. You know, when you're in the Bureau six or eight months, that's, okay, that's pretty interesting.

H: Sure is.

B: Assuming that that was the way things happened, well, I never saw the head of the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department again in the rest of my career.

H: (chuckle)

B: So, that, for me, that was kind of an interesting interlude.

H: Yeah.

B: And, of course, it was while down there in April that, of '68, that Martin Luther King was killed and so, I guess, one of my remembrances and arguing points was being tasked with go out and look anywhere there were records to see if we could find, identify Eric Starvo Galt, the alias that James Earl Ray had been using.

H: Right.

B: And, so whenever anybody starts into this bit about how the Bureau didn't care about catching him or whatever, I know differently.

H: Yeah. It's almost like the Kennedy assassination. People remember where they were when that happened. And all hell broke loose, you know, in terms of investigation. It was something.

B: Roy K. Moore. Here was another of those Roy K. Mooreisms. Roy always told us to get an "am" radio and put it on the seat of the car. You know, we couldn't have a good time radio in a Bureau car at that time. But put it on the seat of the car and play it and listen to it when you're out in the Bureau car.

And as it happens, that's where I was when I heard that James Earl Ray had just been shot in Memphis. And I literally stopped at a little town in Mississippi and called into headquarters and was the first guy to tell the office that.

H: (chuckle) You mean MLK, right? Martin Luther King?

B: Yeah, isn't that what I said?

H: Yeah, no. No problem.

B: I'm sorry.

H: So, yeah, nowadays, of course, we've got CNN and nothing happens without them being on it first thing.

B: Yeah, I'm sorry. I guess I did say James Earl Ray.

H: (chuckle) You had Ray on your mind.

B: Well, I had some other dealings on his part too.

H: Uh, huh. Well, we'll get to that too.

B: Okay.

H: We'd like to cover as much as possible. So you showed up in Laurel from Hattiesburg there. And what were you doing in Laurel?

B: Pretty much just routine stuff. Everybody had Klan matters, doing backgrounds on people that were in the Klan. One of the, in my opinion, one of the greats of the Bureau, Bob Lee was the SRA and Bob Womack was the ASRA. Two real old-timers.

But there were five of us and everybody worked Klan cases. You know, you'd go out and interview them. And basically, you're doing two things. Maybe three things. Trying to determine their threat assessment, trying to dissuade them from doing anything they might later regret, and looking for informants.

H: Uh, huh. Did you have much luck on the informant side of things?

B: Oh, I think that by that time everybody wanted to be an informant.

H: (chuckle) They wanted to be on the winning side.

B: Yeah.

H: Yeah. One of the things that, a Bureau lore that comes up, was having a rattlesnake placed in a car or in their mailbox. And I've been trying to track down someone who actually had that happen. And I haven't had much luck so far. Do you have any personal knowledge?

B: No, I really don't. I mean, I'd heard that story, but I don't have any personal knowledge of it either. And I don't have any personal knowledge, but I was told this story while I was down there. And we were talking about informants in the Klan, and the story was that at one night some guys, some Agents down there, took a Bureau car out and parked it in a lane of one of the difficult Klansman, you know, at three in the morning.

H: Uh, huh.

B: Just pulled it far enough in that maybe you could barely see it there and then they left it there for about an hour and then came back and got it and left. And in that interim, some of his buddies must have seen it which was the intended purpose. So that he was beaten up and kicked out of the Klan and no longer welcomed by his buddies. And I believe that's probably true. There's like a good disinformation and stuff like that.

H: Uh, huh. Did you see the movie *Mississippi Burning*?

B: Yeah.

H: Did it bear any resemblance to what you knew?

B: Oh, gee, I'm not sure how I can relate it. You know, I watched it as fiction. I'm sure I enjoyed it. It wasn't too bad as those, those remakes go. But I guess I --. Nothing strikes me immediately.

H: Uh, huh.

B: The Agents in Laurel had a fun thing they used to do to the rookies. And that was if you got the opportunity, they would introduce us to Sam Bowers who was head of the WKKKLM and, you know, of course --

H: Tough guy.

B: Well, he was more talk than tough. We ran into him in a little country store out in one little town and the Agent I was with introduced me, you know, and I hold out my hand to shake Sam's hand, and Sam would never shake a hand that had shaken J. Edgar Hoover's hand. So there was this awkward silence and pause and I'm standing there putting my hand out and everybody's looking at Sam and Sam's feeling a little uncomfortable but holding. They went through this with every new Agent that showed up in Laurel.

H: (chuckle) Uh, huh.

B: And, of course, Sam would never shake their hand. I don't know who was more embarrassed, Sam or me, but I guess ultimately Sam.

H: (chuckle) Must of gotten sick and tired of having people come over to shake hands with him.

B: Yeah.

H: (chuckle) Especially the firm hands of young FBI Agents.

B: Yeah, yeah.

H: Did you have any other dealings with him other than shaking hands with him, or trying to?

B: Yeah, he was still head of the White Knights of Mississippi and, there was still informant information coming in and he ran a, I guess you would call it a vending company, a jukebox company, and that sort of thing --

H: Uh, huh.

B: -- which was down by the Masonite Corporation, the big industry in town, and, you know, you'd see him every now and then. But I didn't have any real serious interaction with him the rest of my time down there.

H: Uh, huh. Okay. Then, you finished out your Mississippi days in Laurel then.

B: Yes.

H: And you were transferred --?

B: Yeah, to Chicago.

H: Uh, huh.

B: Some of the others that had been in Laurel previously had gone to Chicago. That seemed to be the career path. Bob Connors and, can't think of the other guys. A couple of other guys anyway that had been in Laurel had been transferred there. And so I was expecting it and it was about, I guess, probably October of '68 I went to Chicago and was put on the Fugitive Squad which was a fabulous place to go when you're young and single.

H: Yeah, oh sure. And any interesting fugitives while you were there?

B: Well, I was on leave the day my squad caught Harold James Evans, the Top Ten. But, I mean they're all interesting, you know, to one extent or another. By that time there is, the Vietnam War is cranked up and so we're not just working unlawful flight fugitives but we're working military deserters which can be as erratic as anything.

H: Sure, sure.

B: But it was really fun work. One had crossed my mind and now it escapes me, but I'll think of it. If there was one time in the Bureau that I think was more fun than any other it was working that squad in Chicago.

H: Oh, yeah. Well it's a minimum paper and lots of action.

B: Yeah.

H: And you get to meet some pretty interesting people.

B: You mentioned minimum paper and that's typically considered to be the heavy squad and, you just write a minimal report and close the case. But when we'd arrest somebody, all the heavies would be out there putting cuffs on people and sticking shotguns under their nose and I'd be patting them down and searching them. I'd be the one finding the evidence and getting the trip to testify.

H: (chuckle)

B: You got to figure out what you're, what it's all about.

H: (chuckle) Yeah, yeah, that, it's a type of work that some guys just really loved and stayed with it their whole career practically.

B: Well, I still always thought of myself as a fugitive hunter because of the way you developed leads and, you know, any little scrap of paper might lead you to the next thing. And, that kind of researching whether it be in other investigations or historical research like you're doing, you know, it works well for you.

H: Oh, sure, sure. How long were you in Chicago then?

B: A year and a couple of months. Right at the end, December of 1969, I was transferred to the Waukegan RA out of Chicago.

H: Uh, huh.

B: Not in headquarters any longer there.

H: And how big an RA is that?

B: I think when I got there, Waukegan is the northernmost county seat on Lake Michigan, north of Chicago. I think when I got there, it was five. Ultimately I think it got up to about eight before I left there.

H: Uh, huh. And what were you doing up there?

B: Well, of course, the first year anybody's in Waukegan, they get assigned the Great Lakes Naval Base. And that might last until the next guy comes in. In my instance, it was just a year and, it was an exclusive jurisdiction. Federal reservation. And so we had all the federal crimes. All the crimes that occurred on the Great Lakes Naval Base were federal crimes. So we were really kind of more cops than Agents because we were getting called out, in the middle of the night, for all kind of burglaries, we had a few homicides and, you know, sexual assaults and a variety of things like that.

H: Yeah, you get some real police work usually when you have them. And the poor guys who would get the Indian reservations out west, you know, they would have all of those, all of the murders and what have you that, all went federal because of the jurisdiction.

B: Right.

H: Waukegan for how long?

B: Till September of 1977. And, you know, I mentioned James Earl Ray. Let me throw that in.

H: Yeah, sure.

B: James' brother, Jerry Ray, worked as the caretaker of a golf course in Lake Zurich, Illinois, in our territory. And once, one evening, I can remember we were sitting watching the evening news and the news flash came on that James Earl Ray had just escaped from Brushy Mountain Prison in Tennessee. And I said, "Oh, boy, we're going to be working."

Sure enough, you know, the teletype came in from the Bureau sending all of us out with all of its Bureau leads on what we were to do, and interview, let's see, "discreetly surveil Jerry Ray." And then the next day I guess they wanted us to interview him. Well, you know, what they didn't understand was Jerry was living in a little cottage in the center of the golf course, you know, surrounded by golf links.

H: Uh, huh.

B: You can't discreetly surveil much out there. And so we got together and said, "Well, we're just going to have to do it our way." And so we went out to Jerry's and knocked at the door and he said, "I've been expecting you guys." He says, "I don't know any more than you do, but come on in."

B: So he understood that that he was going to be under pressure for a while and that we were going to be, have to surveil him. He said, "No problem. Hang around wherever you need to be." Well, as luck had it, we're sitting out there and about three in the morning is this tornado and huge storm and deluge and after it passed, there's a knock at the window and Jerry's come out with a thermos of coffee to see if we're all right. He was really an all right guy.

And we took him to breakfast that morning to meet our surveillance squad from Chicago that was coming out to pick up the surveillance. And, you know, the handshakes go around the table. Some of the guys knew the surveillance guys. Some didn't. And the last guy to introduce himself was Jerry Ray. And everybody's kind of looking like: "What, is he the guy we're supposed to be surveilling?"

H: (chuckle)

B: "Oh, yeah, we do it differently out here, you know."

H: (chuckle)

B: So we had a very nice time. Jerry was very cordial to everybody. When he was going somewhere he'd tell us where he was going. And, a train of cars would follow him.

And then he got a call from Mark Lane, James Earl Ray's attorney in Boston, and Lane had arranged a plane ticket for Jerry to fly to Boston. So, Jerry told us all this. He said, "You know, I'm going to O'Hare Airport." So he headed out to O'Hare Airport and on the way his car broke down. And they pulled it over to the side of the road and Agents gave him a ride to the airport. And he flew to Boston whereupon the surveillance squad promptly lost him. And the next day on TV, Lane had put Ray up to telling the world how horrible we, the FBI, were surveilling him all over Chicago.

H: Huh!

B: So, you know, when you're there, it looks a little differently than it does in the, the media.

H: Oh, sure, sure. And they're only too happy to cause problems, I guess, for whatever their reasons are.

B: That's another of those stories I like to tell that, maybe to counterbalance that a little bit.

H: Yeah, yeah. So Jerry, himself, had not shared, not shared the actions certainly of James Earl Ray.

B: Well, you know, I only met him in this one case.

H: Uh, huh.

B: And I don't know --. Although James had been through Waukegan on his flight after killing King --

H: Uh, huh.

B: -- and, cause, the Agents at Waukegan talked about having had leads on that. So I don't know whether he was there to see Jerry or not. Jerry was basically --. You know, wasn't anything he could do about the fact that his brother was this famous villain. And I mean, he was decent with us.

H: Uh, huh. Uh, huh.

B: So I don't really know what Jerry's political --

H: So, he hadn't been active in anything like Klan or anything like that?

B: I don't think James Earl Ray had been a Klansman.

H: Uh, huh. Yeah, I don't know that much about him.

B: No. He never played into anything that I knew about.

H: Okay. So out of Waukegan, you headed to where?

B: Well, I was ticketed to the Milwaukee division and I was ticketed in the course of working, you know, we were the northernmost Resident Agency, so we worked back and forth across the state line with Milwaukee headquarters, and Kenosha which was their southernmost RA. So the SAC in Milwaukee, Jay Hogan, knew me and knew that I wanted to be in a small RA somewhere.

H: Uh, huh.

B: So, when my transfer came in he said, "Well, if you can be patient, I'm going to try to arrange a transfer for you to Wausau as Senior Resident Agent." So I was able to do temporary assignment in Milwaukee and Kenosha for about four months. And right about the end of 1977, reported to the Wausau RA in Wausau, Wisconsin.

H: Uh, huh.

B: I overlapped a little bit with the then SRA Jack Page, but Jack was already ticketed out on transfer and I became SRA when he left. And was there the rest of my career.

H: You mentioned in your note that you had Aryans and North American natives. Victims? Is that, what is a Chippewa spear-fishing?

B: Oh, yeah, okay.

H: (chuckle)

B: Yeah, you know, we have, I guess in the civil rights field, it seems like - from my first experience in Jackson until the very end of my career here - I was involved with Klansmen. We had Klansmen up here in the '80s. An interlude that probably nobody else will tell you about is the Indian spear-fishing in northern Wisconsin. The courts had ordered that the treaty rights that allowed Native Americans to fish and hunt off reservation in their original territories were still valid.

H: Uh, huh.

B: So, I think out on the West Coast they caught salmon. And, anyway, northern Wisconsin, the Chippewa Tribe decided that they would exercise those rights. And the way they did it is, using a light, they would spear fish in the shallows in early spring when the fish were in shallows spawning.

H: Uh, huh.

B: Spearing fish with a light out of a rowboat sounds like it might be difficult, but you could literally shovel the fish into the boat. And so there was, of course, a huge objection by the sport fishing industry in northern Wisconsin which is --

H: Sure.

B: -- a vacation or resort area. And, at first there was quite a, a rivalry there that the Indians wouldn't tell where they were going and so all of, you know, law enforcement had to keep playing catch up. Somehow the anti-spear-fishing people knew more than law enforcement did about where they were going usually and later they realized the smart thing to do would be to work with law enforcement who was there to protect them. Then the sheriff's department and various --. It was a big deal in northern Wisconsin. They had cops from all over the state by then and go to these sites to keep protestors away from spear-fishers.

H: It's a little bit different take on Native American relations then.

B: Yeah, well, I, I --. You were mentioning crime on Indian reservations and all the time I was here I was assigned to Lac Du Flambeau Indian Reservation which is one of the bands of Chippewas. Very, very nice group of people. And I worked a number of cases there obviously. But they have a little different perspective about the Bureau and about law enforcement I think. I lot of their youngsters just out of high school came to work for us in Milwaukee. So we were good guys and we had a very good relationship through this spear-fishing period that maybe a lot of others didn't.

H: That's a bit different from Wounded Knee and various other problems that we lived through.

B: Yeah, one time the tribal chairman and I, we were having lunch and it was a beautiful summer day and out on a patio overlooking the lake, and he says, "Isn't what most Agents think about working a reservation, is it?"

H: (chuckle)

B: Oh, it sure isn't.

H: Yes, all these reservations vary wildly also just in terms of what they, what they look like and what goes on. I had experience in upstate New York here, up on the Canadian border, and it's pretty sad. And other places it looks like they're doing pretty well.

B: Well, in Wisconsin at least the Indian gaming has met that need.

H: Uh, huh.

B: It changed Lac Du Flambeau. This was a little town in the woods when I came here and now it's a big resort town with a huge casino and hotel and, they're doing very well now.

H: Yeah, I can brag about the Machentucket Pequod Indians here in Connecticut.

B: Yeah.

H: It's better than being on an oil well or a gold mine. It's amazing. I know there's like a hundred and some odd members of the tribe. They have barely enough people to cover the parking lot. And the operations are just enormous really. The biggest in the world now. Quite something for our little state here too.

B: Good for them, yeah.

H: Yeah, how about the Aryans? I noticed you had some Aryans you dealt with too.

B: Well, yeah, we did. In fact, he's just not Aryan, but he's one of the Grand Dragons of one the national Klan organization. Lived up in Mercer, Wisconsin, which is as lily-white as it could be anywhere else except for, you know, a few Native Americans in the area. And he was kind of under constant scrutiny for having Klan rallies in little towns like Ironwood, Michigan, which doesn't have any Native, or any blacks. They'd have a rally at the state capital in Madison. So, we had a lot of this. So I had a lot of investigation on this guy because he would always go out to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, to the World Congress of Aryan Nations every July 4th.

H: Huh.

B: And so I'd manage to wrangle a trip out there to do some investigation out there during that time. They were always looking for extra bodies.

H: Sure.

B: And I had this case on this guy. He became fairly prominent while Richard Butler was still alive. I don't know what --. Of course, I retired then and I don't know what else has happened there.

H: Uh, huh. I haven't had any interviews on, on Aryan Nation or, you know, that, that whole crowd yet. Can you suggest some people that might have some background on that?

B: Oh sure. Well, anybody at Coeur d'Alene in the Coeur d'Alene RA, or was in there.

H: Uh, huh.

B: Tommy Norris who's a famous Bureau Agent in other respects and a Medal of Honor winner. Tommy worked the Aryans for years and Wayne Manis before him. Both of them are still in Coeur d'Alene.

He has an investigative agency in Coeur d'Alene.

H: Uh, huh.

B: Tommy Norris, I think, is fully retired. I'd be real surprised if those guys aren't both in the Society.

H: Yeah, I'll look them up in the Directory. Yeah, it's another interesting area of our activities, you know, this Aryan Nation crowd.

B: Well, and there's so many of these regional things, like we talked about spear-fishing, that your job will never end.

H: (chuckle) Well, that's good. Keep me busy. They don't pay me anything for it, but, so that I don't have to worry about getting fired.

B: Uh, huh.

H: And there's just a lot of history, a lot of interesting stuff going on and you never know what will be of interest, you know, to researchers.

B: Uh, huh.

H: Well, I think just the eclectic crowd that I've talked to now, not me alone, I have a bunch of fellows who do interviews as volunteers and former Agents. We're well over a hundred interviews now. We're probably about a hundred and ten, a hundred and fifteen interviews. And it's all over the place.

B: Well, I hope that in that, you know, chronologically at least, -- I'm very proud of my career, but it was pretty routine in most respects and, you know, I had some good cases and I had a lot of fun. But, I never wanted to be an administrator or head of an office or anything like that. I just liked working cases and solving crimes.

H: Uh, huh. Uh, huh.

B: You've got a lot more to go if I'm in the first hundred.

H: (chuckle) Well, you know, some of it's planned but a lot of it is just leads.

B: Uh, huh.

H: You know, and I sent out that note on "xgboys" and a bunch of people gave me calls. I just ran into a guy who --. In fact, I interviewed him this morning whose father was an informant, a Ku Klux Klan informant for the Bureau. And then later on he became an Agent.

B: Really?

H: Yeah, the son became an Agent. So it's always kind of an interesting set of interviews. And, so on and on it goes, and you never know who you're going to run into.

Well, good, have I gotten most of things from you here?

B: Well, I guess so. On a national level, you're always going to have regional good cases and career cases that you work, you know, but I don't know that you need to hear all those kind of things.

H: Well, I'll tell you what. I'm just about down on the tape here and what we'll do is that we'll get this thing transcribed and then when we send it out to you there's no reason why you can't pencil in a few things. You know, when you have a chance to think about it.

B: Sure, okay. That works for me.

H: Yeah, and, and if you have some paper or memoirs of something you wrote that to bring some color to the history, keep a hold of it and if you would let me have it, we'll have it copied and then like photos and things like that, have them copied, put on a disk, and you can have that for the future too.

B: Okay. Well, great. You know, I appreciate your calling.

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