

AL COMMONS

RF: You were saying that the church you are a member of now is an intergrated church.

AC: Oh yea, um hum.

RF: But your living in Dearborn and you choose to move out there because...

AC: the neighborhood! What's- scary is when you move into a neighborhood and you get to know a few of the people over a couple of years, 2 or 3 years time. What <sup>is</sup> scary is when a neighborhood just falls apart so quickly. Ah, it's very unnatural, not normal, it's giving away to some sort of outside stresses and influences and you just feel like your neighborhood <sup>is</sup> being destroyed, it's almost like loosing members of your family. And if that happens in a closly <sup>e</sup> knit family you know what happens to your feelings, you begin to feel a little unsettled and uneasy - there's so many strangers all of a sudden almost like overnight. And it's unsettling to alot of people, it was unsettling to us, so we moved.

RF: I know.

(long space in the tape)

AC: ... to what my administration does, but yet I've got a lot of feeling for <sup>what</sup> people in my walk of life, especially what ordinary <sup>a</sup> peasant people are undergoing. I know how "little people" get crushed by opposing forces that tend to use them and ah this business of supplying arms is really ah um it puts you into alot of anxiety and question a lot of things that your country is doing.

RF: Especially in these times, there's a lot of votes coming up on ah on

AC: Tuesday

RF: Yea, Tuesday.

(some b) background talk, Janice goes to bed)

RF: Why don't we start with where you were raised.

AC: Born in Ham<sup>a</sup>tr<sup>a</sup>ck, 1924.

RF: What did your folks do?

AC: Dad was an autoworker, mother stayed at home and raised children for a few years and then during the war she went into the automobile factories when they converted to war production.

RF: Rosie the Riveter.

AC: She was a Rosie the Riveter of her day. Dad stayed in the factories, and in those days<sup>of course</sup> the benefits weren't as liberal of they are today so he worked up until he was 68 years of age. And he collected on his benefits for a couple of years and he passed away at the age of 70. And he was in the supplier plant, he built frames for automobiles and trucks. He rose to the rank of general foreman then when his health broke down on him a little bit in his middle 60's, he took a janitors job just to build up his time towards retirement. And he retired as a janitor, a happy janitor. laugh

RF: Ah hung, ah hung. How old were you when he passed away?

AC: Ah, lets see, ~~I'll have to do~~<sup>That will take</sup> some calculations, 1960, 26 years ago, so I would have been 37 or 36.

RF: So he was in the auto industry during the, all through the war.

AC: Yup, my dad was in the auto industry through the war.

RF: What are some of the memories you have about him coming home from work. That stuff with you?

AC: He was a welder. Ah, prior to the days before he went on salary as a foreman he was a welder, and I can recall him spending some times weekends at home with cold applications over his eyes because he'd catch welding flashes... and, ah, coming home always tired, always dirty. Very loyal to his union though. He felt in those days that the union was really the backbone of his sense of freedom at work. It's the only way they could get anything accomplished for themselves.

RF: What kind of things did they accomplish? That your father helped...

AC: He was in one of the very first plants that experienced sitdown strikes in the city of Detroit. His plant was called Midland Steel and it was located on Mt. Elliot and ah, Harper. Right in that vicinity. And, ah, I believe that the sitdown strikes in his plant took place in 1937. And I think they stayed inside the plant for 2 or 3 weeks. <sup>can</sup> I remember mother going down there taking him sandwiches, something to read, hot bottles of coffee, they had women organizing brigades in those days servicing the men inside the plants. And, ah, they came up with their first contract with the United Automobile Workers at that day and age and since that time he was a very loyal union supporter. I can recall that they used to be fined if they didn't attend a meeting they were fined a half a dollar which was a considerable amount in those days. Despite the fine, I don't ~~think~~ <sup>believe</sup> he ever paid any because he was always there for his meetings.

RF: Every Sunday? I mean every once a month?

AC: I think at those days it was once a month. And he was always very loyal to the support that the union would give to politicians in those days. If they recommended a vote for a certain man, he would vote for him, he'd say "that's my man". And I'm only mentioning this because today we don't follow that cradle very carefully we like to choose our own people and independently select who we think is best man for a job. But in those days there was a lot of union cohesion politically, people, whoever the union hierarchy would recommend the men would stick together and vote for those people.

RF: So you were raised with a , you were the son of a union man.

AC: Oh yea. Mother went to work during the war in the same factory my dad was at. And my mother was even a union steward for about 3 or 4 years. The factory went out of business, it didn't really go out

of business as much as it was merged with some other company. So a transformation took place. So she excepted her severance pay, however she had worked there for about, <sup>I think 11 or</sup> ~~would better than~~ 12 years and then she went into retirement with my dad.

RF: Do you remember those few years <sup>that your dad was alive</sup> after your dad had retired? Did they enjoy those few years?

AC: I'm not so sure <sup>that</sup> he did! They didn't, retirement for people in those days was still a new way of life for them. They hadn't prepared, very few of the people <sup>who</sup> had prepared for retirement in those days. It just suddenly fell on them and he was already 68 years old. With the regiment of many, many years of work in his system and it was hard for him to except. <sup>And</sup> As I say he only lived a couple of years after he retired but his retirement <sup>was</sup> not made up of lazy days; fishing, or going to the library, or enjoying a play, or things of that nature. It was, the adjustment was difficult for him. And I can frankly say <sup>that</sup> he did not get much out of his retirement. I heard him make a remark before he passed away that he felt better when he was working. But I think todays people, in contrast when I look back at the way he excepted retirement, and the way we are approaching it, we are a little <sup>bit</sup> more intelligent about it, I think many of us are planning our retirement.

RF: In what way, how many years do you have in the plant now, at Fords?

AC: Well I'll have, at the end of the year when I retire I'll have 23 years.

RF: Oh your getting ready to retire now?

AC: I'm going to retire.

RF: Congra<sup>+</sup>ulations, I didn't know that. 23 years.

AC: November the 1st I'll be 62 years of age and I'm turning my papers in. I'll be out Jan. 1st of 1987.

RF: All right and what do you plan on doing?

AC: Oh, I've got a lot of things to do.

RF: Share them with us.

AC: Sure. Well, I'll have the time to do the reading that I want to do. I'll have the time to fulfill certain obligations to church, ah, take the trips and visit the people that I haven't seen for a number of years. But mostly to plan and do the things I want to do. Rather than being a prisoner of the assembly line, which is what we are. We are actually (even though it gives us a certain amount of financial freedom but still we have chains in another way) we are completely chained physically, to a work regiment that I think it should have been different. I think the automobile industry could have been molded a little different had our union approached the negotiating strategy with management a little differently. I think that really the demise of the automobile industry as we have known it, the seeds for this death <sup>or</sup> demise, were sown perhaps 75 years ago when the assembly lines were born. I think that this is a very unnatural system for subjecting people to work and I think that it is a waste of human talent the way we work today. But the profit system is very profitable but it is very demeaning to human nature and the work ethic.

RF: What do you mean it's demeaning to the work ethic?

AC: Well, the managements approach to it is that...

RF: But I see you walking around and you seem like your standing up straight, you seem to have a pretty nice job now, your inspector now.

AC: Yup, yup. The managements approach to it is that the simpler that you can make work, the easier it is to train the person and also it's easier to replace them that way. It's extremely, you can't keep that feeling from sinking into a persons self-esteem. He begins to realize that this is managements feeling towards him and he begins to react in the same coin. He feels that "they don't think that I'm very important, they keep things as simple as they possibly can so as I don't get to be too much of an important intergral part of the whole operation because then I become a little to difficult to replace." Soon that scheme<sup>me</sup>, that company strategy seeps into your

thinking and you begin to feel that way about yourself. You get to be uncooperative and you feel that you are only in the system for what you can get out of it and in time that is what you become, a self seeker. You loose interest in your product, you become alienated from your laborers for that matter.

RF: Em hum. Now did you have these views when you went in 23 years ago?

AC: When I went in 23 years ago I needed a job.

RF: What were you doing before that?

AC: I was working for Burroughs Corporation. We manufactured the very first computer that sent John Glen aloft on his flee hop. Yup. You know he didn't circumnavigate the globe, he didn't make an orbit.

RF: What did he do? Sheap<sup>e</sup>ard went up and came down.

AC: Sheap<sup>e</sup>ard was excuse me, who made the first?

RF: Sheap<sup>e</sup>srd ...

AC: \_\_\_\_\_ Sheap<sup>e</sup>ard, he made the flee hop and John Glen was the first one to make the orbit. Ok, we manufactured the first computer that controlled Sheap<sup>e</sup>ard's flee hop. Incidentally, I just read in this last weekends paper where it just happened 3 weeks after this Yrie Gagar made the orbit around the earth.

RF: 1961 or 1962?

AC: Yea, probably 1961. Because I remember that Kenedy was the one who put the spur to the space race. Ah I lost my train of thought, where were we?

RF: I'd asked if you'd had the thoughts you have about how the work had become demeaning and people become self-seekers when you entered the plant. And then I was saying what did you do before you came into the plant. What kind of work you did? And what you were thinking when you first came into the plant 23 years ago.

AC: Well the work I was doing a Burroughs was alot more refined then

what I found I eventually wound up doing there with Ford Motor Car Company. It was quality control work, most of it was bench work and when I say refined what I mean was it was probably a little more involved with testing electric circuits, subjecting electrical componets to stress, distruct forces, testing computers, running problems through them, simulating problems that they would experience with these computers out in field. Our major contractor was the Air Force at that time. So, it is easier to understand how that work would be a little bit more involved and more refined, a little more sophisticated then the kind of quality control work we do on a civilian product like a truch. When I came to Fords I was quite a little bit surprised at the kind of quality control work I was doing there.

RF: You hired right in as an inspector?

AC: I hired right in as an inspector. I think probably because of my background at Burroughs. And I had a recommendation from a quality control manager with Fords at that time. Otherwise <sup>perhaps</sup> I may ~~not~~ have been able to have been hired in right as an inspector, I might have gone on the assembly line. I'm not sure I would have accepted that. So, I was a little bit dissapointed.

so t and got my first job probably in 1947. And it was a small supplier, <sup>plant.</sup> We manufactured steering gears for the automobile big 3. And I think my first hourly rate of pay was probably about \$.95 an hour. I can remember taking home a little over \$50. Well what benefits did we have in those days? Well I think we had about a weeks vacation, paid for, there was no hospitalization in those days. If you wanted hospital insurance you had to buy your own. There was no pension plan that didn't come along till 1949 or 1950. There were no, with an exception of one weeks vacation, there were no paid holidays, we did have seniority, for shift preference.

RF: Seniority for layoff?

AC: Seniority for layoff and recall. But the benefit packages were verturely non-existent in those days because all the contracts with the automobile industry were in their infancy yet. There was no pie-in-the-sky as we got to call some of Walter Ruether's benefits after a number of years. So if you <sup>became</sup> ~~got~~ a little <sup>bit</sup> disenchan ted with the job in the factory it was very easy for you to leave then you weren't leaving very much. Jobs seemed to be plentiful in those days because the company was just opening up to consumer production converting from war production to consumer production and there was a lot of overtime. And youth of course was still on my side I was only in my very early 20's and jobs were very easy to get.

RF: You weren't married then?

AC: No I wasn't married yet. I would say that between the ages of 21 and 30 I must have had at least a dozen jobs. I got married when I was 26 years old in 1950 and then I was working for Champion Spark Plugs at the time. Maybe it's a job I should have kept, I don't know now looking back.

RF: Why do you say that?

AC: I would have moved right along, and probably it would be retired now, I would have had thiry years in. But we married in 1950 and I was working a Champion Spark Plugs at the time and my wife she encouraged me to go to school, she said, "your eligible for the GI benefit, the GI Bill of Rights," schooling was in that bill, she said "why don't you go to school?" Well I thought it over and thought maybe it would be good so I enrolled in Wayne State University which was not WSU then in those days. It was the City University. I think it was called the University at that time. And I stayed there for about nine months. And marriage and going to school just did not seem to work out to well. So I quit and I went to work for Burrough's Corp.

RF: I see. Where did you meet your wife?

AC: We met on New Years Eve blind date.

RF: Did she live in Hamtramk?

AC: No she lived on McDougal right near the Blvd.

RF: Ah hungh.



AC: The east side of Detroit. And we waited about 9 or 10 months and we married. And we've been together ever since. We celebrated our 37th wedding anniversary.

RF: That's good. That's great. You've been together a long time. Both have your health.

AC: Oh yea. We don't fight anymore. All our battles have been fought.

RF: What are the biggest fights you used to have? What would you have then over?

AC: Welllll, ohhh, some of them involved a little of my union activitys and <sup>maybe</sup> my staying out at meetings a little too late and others of course about how money was supposed to be divided, that was always a very big stumbling block in every marriage.

RF: Just learning that now that we have a child.

AC: But you have to approach marriage with a little bit of stick-to-it-ness. You have to try to work things out you just can't run away from the first problem that comes up. And after a number of years the problems get to be smaller and smaller.

RF: How many children do you have?

AC: One, one child.

RF: And what is she doing?

AC: She's 23 years old now and she's finishing up a business administration degree at the University of Michigan. Charming, wonderful young lady. We're very happy with her and she adores both her mother and father. Although she doesn't think she'd like to do things the way we do which is normal for a young person.

RF: That's good. Will she be working in the auto industry?

AC: No, she tried sending out some resumes to the auto <sup>mobile</sup> industry but they didn't offer her employment on the level she feels that she can gain employment with other... like in banks for instance or loan corporations, she's been doing credit work with the J.L. Hudson Co. now for the last four years on a part time basis while going to school with J.L. Hudsons phasing out all of it's operations in Detroit. So, she'll be loosing her job. And the automobile industry of course is downsizing, that's what she discovered when she was looking for a job. Ford especially. Ford has already reduced it's employees, it's salaried employees <sup>rank</sup> by about 5,000 people in the last couple of years. And they plan to reduce it by about 5,000 more by 1989. So the only kind of work she could get at Fords right now, if there were openings would be typist. So she's looking at something with a little more deapth then that.

RF: What did she think of the union work while she was coming up?

AC: Of my union work? Of my union involvement? She thought it was quite exciting, in fact she thought that her dad was quite the big operator as I was involved in things. And there were some benefits that we received through the union that were beneficial to my family. We got to go to Black Lake a couple of times, 3 times as a matter of fact. And, of course, the family enjoyed that very much because Black Lake offers a very plush kind of a resort regiment for a family. She went to camp and we were

separated from her for a couple of weeks. She enjoyed youthful activities with people her own age. We went to school during the day for about 5 to 6 hours and after that we were at liberty to go ahead and enjoy all the conveniences that they had. Like a nice, great big swimming pool and the other games that they had arranged for the students.

Q Let's take a step back. So you hired in at Ford's in 1964, did you immediately get involved in union activity?

A When I noticed the managements attitude and the submissiveness that the employees had to demonstrate in order to keep their jobs I realized then the importance of unionism, especially in that level of industrial activity which is in an assembly plant. I was a little bit shocked to the way that the employees were treated.

Q Do you have any pictures of that in your head?

A I had a different understanding of what union militarism meant and what I witnessed at Ford Motor Car Company. When I hired in it was the first employment I had had in an assembly plant, in a heavy assembly line. I came in to work for the Ford Motor Car Company with the same concept that most of the general public has about unionism. Thinking that the unions really controlled all the activities in an industrial plant. Like a lot of people do.

Q Is that what people thought then?

A Oh yes. The people thought then that the unions had entirely too much power in them. I speaking of 1964. The thought was prevalent then that the unions had too much muscle and too much power because it was in the days of the fiery red head who was Walter Reuther. Walter Reuther had a way of captivating

the headlines. Of course, every three years people would becoming aware of management always reacted with raises in automobile prices right after a three year contract.

Walter Reuther always tried to impress the world at large with the pie in the sky package benefits that he was reaping for his auto workers. So the feeling then and the reaction from the public in those days was that unionism was growing a little bit too powerful. The automobile being the necessity that it was then and even more so today and I think the first reaction is sticker shock today is that the auto workers are responsible for it all because of the money they are taking in. Which perhaps there is of course a connection between the price of an automobile and the pay we received, but no one can honestly say that we don't earn every penny we make.

Q Guys make \$50,000 do you think they earn it?

A With the overtime that they put in I think it is earned. Yes. Because I am certainly sure that there are people who wouldn't do that kind of work even at that price. This was proven to us during the hot late 60's and the early 70's when we couldn't find enough people to man our automobile plants. They'd come in and work a week or two and quit. Do you remember that? We couldn't keep people despite the fact that we had the best benefits packages and the best industrial wage in the world. We couldn't keep people. I sometimes think looking back that maybe these were the smart ones. I don't think today that you could keep a person in an automobile plant unless you paid him the wage that he is getting and the benefits that he is receiving. People will not do that kind of work if there is other kind of work that they could get for a couple of dollars

an hour less. They won't do it.

Q What is so hard about the work?

A Well it's probably a lot psychological. The fact that you are tied to a machine and you are just another con. You're a prisoner of that assembly line and you're repeatedly doing the same thing over and over and over again, all day long. After a while you begin to think of yourself in just terms of a pay check on Friday which money in itself has no value unless you feel a little self esteem over having earned it. You don't build self esteem in an automobile plant.

Q When I came into the plant your name was always side by side talking about the union, when I hired in 1971. You said the guys were submissive and management had a certain view, can you go into that a little? Because that has changed now. You have E.I. program and the company pays folks to come in on Saturdays now. You have foreman helpers and you have good communications. That is all the stuff going on right now. Share some of those changes with me what it was like when you hired in.

A Well we're fortunate, both you and I, that we're in the transition period now. We can see what is happening today as compared to what was the mood at the time we hired in. In 1964 my interest was spurred in unionism because of the attitude management had. Let me give you a brief idea of the kind of management I'm talking about. We know at those days that ex-athletes especially prize fighters were highly prized as foreman in automobile plants in those days. Especially Ford's I think.

Q I didn't know that.

A Oh yes. If you read a little bit on the history of Goonism in the automobile industry especially following the ruckus that they had on the Miller overpass you learned that Ford prides their security men what was known as, well, we call them plant protection people today. I don't remember what they called them in those days. Bar room brawlers, bar room bouncers, good scrappers and fighters, big men, especially men who made their name in sports and they were retiring from their sport activities they were always considered prime packages for foreman jobs at Ford's. People that could bully people, and command respect. Not so much earn it, but command respect because of their size. We know that for a fact. I recognized this immediately on hiring in. Another thing that disappointed me a great deal was in the way the foreman talked to people and the way they addressed them. You soon realize that you were a serf and he was your master. If you wanted to keep your pay check. The union at that time, sure, they could help you in the event that you got into trouble, but the thing is the union couldn't defend you all the way if that foreman wanted to become punitive, and react against you for getting the union on him. Your days in hell were numbered if he wanted to take it out on you. In time he could probably convince you that you should get employment someplace else.

Q There was a lot of pressure?

A Yes, very much so. He could exercise his authority and wipe you out completely if he wanted to.

Q How would he do it? What would he do?

A There are certain jobs, for instance, that were always con-

sidered very objectionable jobs because of the overload work on them and unless you were one of the best assemblers in the place you couldn't maintain the pace. He would have people that were purposely picked to be able to demonstrate to you that the job could be done, but these people didn't have to face doing the job day after day after day for a number of years. They would just get on knowing all they would have to do was demonstrate the job was within the human capabilities of being done. Once they demonstrated that they expected you to do it, but when you had to face perhaps a number of years of doing the same work over and over again you became despaired, dejected and you just didn't want to face the future working like that day in and day out regardless of what the monetary rewards were. So there were jobs over there that I remember people were on medical all the time just because they wouldn't come in and face them.

Q Does that go on now?

A I think management's approach to it is a little bit different today. We know that since the invasion of foreign imports that management is getting very concerned about the automobile future in America. They realize that much of the problem since they are not a monopoly any more much of their problems stem from the adversity that they've engendered between themselves and the unions through the years. Now they are trying to reduce this adversary role between themselves and the unions. I think that our union hierarchy is cooperating with them. We're trying to develop the philosophy that we're both in this together rather than both opposed against each other.

Q Does that seem to be working? Do you think it will save the

the auto industry?

A I don't think it will save the automobile industry because there is still this one great big difference which is stressed by management every day and in all their activities. We are the workers and they are the managers and that will never change. I think the only thing that would probably change that attitude or that feeling between management and labor is if we changed positions every six months which of course, is not going to happen. We can't even get that done with our union representatives. Our union representatives, once they get elected to a job, don't want to face the assembly line.

Q What do you mean they do not want to face the assembly line?

A Well we have hundreds and hundreds of people that work a few jobs for the UAW today that don't want to come back to the factory. It has been mentioned at our convention probably mentioned at our conventions every two years, where the resolution is never passes, but the resolution is put on the floor that union representatives come back and work in the factories for three or four months out of the year. So they don't lose touch with the working people and they can never get that resolution to pass. Once the people leave the factory they don't want to come back.

Q They don't want to turn around and look back.

A No they don't want to come back. The effort is always get off the assembly line which as I say I think the assembly line work is eventually is going to be the movement now, of course, is to robotize as much as they possibly can be-

cause assembly line work is very stressful, demeaning of a person and a waste of human talent.

Q So when you look down the road you'll be out and it won't be effecting you directly, but when you look down the road 15 years from now what do you see? Paint a picture for me of what the auto plant will look like.

A I thought about that often and I still cannot believe that a robot can completely replace a human being. I feel that a human being is irreplaceable even in assembly line work. In that a human being has control over himself where as a robot does not. It does to a certain point, but a robot as we realize has to be programmed and runned by another human being. There are certain movements and activities that take place on the assembly line that a robot cannot possibly duplicate. However, as this change does take place which we realize to some degree, some depth, it will occur. Exent-ually what will happen is that we are going to be building automobiles that are particularly adapted towards being built by a robot and not a human being. There is limitations in this. Up until several years ago our engineers and designers were able to go ahead and let their imaginations run rapid knowing that a human being was going to be able to produce whatever they were going to design or wanted built. Robots will not do this. They are going to have to restrict themselves to an area that is, an area or they are going to have to compromise their imagination in design within an area that a robot can command and perform.

Q So that means that the product is going to be designed to fit the machine rather than machine designed to fit the product?



A That is a very good way of putting it.

Q I didn't realize it until you were talking. Why is that so bad?

A It's restrictive of certain, uh. The role of all human life, I suppose, is to be able to find themselves productive in our society. I've known this through the years as our benefit packages and wages have grown and our production output has grown with that trend. I've noticed that with the increased work load that people gradually they develop such an assembly line finesse and they keep improving themselves in managing their stock and their tools to such a fine, finished degree that we would probably have to go through a thousand people today out of the general run of society to find one person that can do that kind of work. Where as perhaps twenty to thrity years ago one out of twenty-five might have fit the bill. We are gradually developing such a fine, I can't really call them an artist, but we are developing that kind of person today.

Q I know it is very hard to come on to, I know I just transferred from the seal line to the trim, and when I see people come to the seal lines people just can't do the jobs. So the line is speeded up and people are doing more work. We definitely have these benefits people are talking about. The employee involvement and communications has changed. The union serves what purpose now? What is the purpose of the union?

A Guide a contract for you. That's all. The union is simply becoming a wage and benefit negotiator for you. The union has very little power over the factory floor, very little.

Q What do you think about that? What do you feel about that? Because unionism is in your blood as if you have dignity and now?

A I think it is a tremendous erosion on the union growth. I think it is tremendous erosion of the role that unionism should play in concert with management. This being a free society I see where the freedoms that have been won for workers through unionism through the years are being eroded and eventually I feel that the worker will be under complete control over management.

Q Freedom. What kind of freedoms? You got more freedoms now. You got more freedoms now you can go to Blue Cross/Blue Shield. You can go to HAP. You can go to Henry Ford Hospital. You got more money in your pocket. Guys have 50 grand.

A Work regimentation has become more severe, wouldn't you agree with that?

Q Yes. I'm playing a little devil's advocate too.

A Work regimentation has become entirely more severe.

Q So people are giving up their freedom at the work place. Are they getting more freedom outside? Is that the bargain that is going on right now? Freedom, dignity and respect.

A They are acquiring more financial uh...their area of consumerism, available consumerism is growing. They're capable of buying more things, the people that are employed. On the other hand, the pay off, on the other hand, what they're losing is the relaxed relationship that we used to have in the workshop years ago. There is no relaxation. There is high stress. There is high tension to produce the work. The tension is growing more important now as the automobile

becomes more complexed. The tendency should exist today for a worker to become more important to his management and the relationship between the worker and management. Whereas actually it is the other way around. The stress on management side is still to reduce work to a repetitive operation so there is as little as possible for a worker to learn. Otherwise he grows to important to the overall scheme.

Q Wouldn't you say that the company, I mean the E.I. where folks can sit around and talk about how to put up a mirror in the bathroom or put up the astroturf on the floor or rubber pads on the cement floor, is their way of becoming involved in the plant?

A It seems that way, but I think it is a little bit of an illusion.

Q Why do you think it is an illusion and why do so many folks buy the illusion?

A I think that it is an illusion in the fact that we keep, despite employee involvement, losing more people every year than all the management is streamlining the work force, reducing the work force and increasing production. Now we know when this happens the tooling does not replace all of the work that is added on to the remaining people when people are cut. Our work ranks are being reduced every year. We lose 25-30-40 people.

Q In our plant?

A In our plant. That work load has to be shared by the remaining people. So this naturally increases the regimentation. More time has to be spent on the assembly line with the people that are still left and I don't see any change in that

direction. I'm doing much, much more work today after 22 years in that plant than I did when I first hired in and I thought it was stressful then. I used to enjoy being able to change jobs because of the diversification and the wider range of application that it gave me an opportunity for. Now I resent changing jobs because there is entirely too much to learn in job change. Yet, my value to management hasn't grown despite the fact that I have to learn more with each different work station. My value to management hasn't changed. They still feel they can replace me any time they want too.

Q Let's move into a different area.

A Okay.

Q You were in the service in WWII?

A Four years, the United States Navy.

Q 1941-44?

A 1941 through 1945.

Q Where were you stationed?

A Newport, Rhode Island. I took my early training just about three weeks before Pearl Harbor.

Q So you enlisted?

A I enlisted, yes, in the United States Navy. I was seventeen years old and a week after Pearl Harbor I was shipped out to the north of the Atlantic. I spent two years on convoy patrol work. Then I was transferred over to the Pacific and went through most of the island hopping campaigns out in the Pacific. Fortunately I found myself in San Francisco on VJ Day and about six weeks after that I was shipped out of the Navy. I straddled it from the Pearl Harbor to VJ Day.

Q What were some of the fun liberties you had at that time?

I saw you give a little smile.

A Well there was a lot of traveling involved. It was an eye opening experience for a young man to travel all over the world, but of course the conditions weren't always the best. You weren't always exposed to the things that you really would have done had you just been a tourist rather than a serviceman. It was an unfortunate event for many, many societies involved in that conflict, but in a very narrow way as a personal experience it was quite valueable. It was my first introduction to Jim Croism since I was raised in Detroit. I didn't realize the scope of racism as I know what it amounts to today.

Q You were raised in Hamtramck.

A I was raised in Hamtramck and black people were considered a part of white people and I accepted them that way. After I got into the service and I saw some of the racist attitudes that we had restricting black people only to certain minor roles I was very much surprised.

Q In the service?

A In the service, yes. In other ways too I was very much enamored of my own country when I saw some of the poverty that other areas of the world lived in. I was very much a champion for the United States, the free enterprise system and capitalism because I felt that these were the legs that our system stood on. In some respects though I was a little bit amazed in that I had been lead to believe that America, of course, was always the best in everything, however, I did see some manifestations of progress from other countries that surprised

me and they probably exceeded some of the things that we did in America.

Q When you say everything what are some of the things that come to your mind?

A Well I felt that America was always the best in everything. We produced the best automobiles. We produced the best airplanes. We produced the best ships. In other words, America was second to none. I was just a young man in those days, but then as I traveled around the world through my experiences with the Navy I saw contrast to this. I remember examining some equipment that the Germans had produced. This surprised me extremely that the Germans were as clever as they were especially in the fields of certain technological fields. They produced the best optics in the world at that time. Very fine guns. The Germans were very good scientists. I was a little bit surprised with some of the equipment that I saw the Japanese produce when I was out in the Pacific. I was amazed at some of the technology that I saw on their ships.

Q So you're not surprised that the rest of the world can produce cars now?

A Not in the least. One of the most advanced cities that I have ever seen for architecture which absolutely floored me was when I was in CasaBlanca in 1943. It was a marvelous looking city with modern architecture. Had I only from the information that I gleaned from books I would have thought that Casa Blanca was a very backward area of the world. It is not. It certainly is not. It was an eye opener for a young man to travel around the world in those days.

Q You shared with me one day while at work that one of your

commanding officers had served in Nicaragua as a military person when you were coming up.

A We did yes. When I was going through boot camp, I recall, my...I guess in the Army he would be equivalent to a drill instructor and he was an old petty officer. He'd probably been in the Navy for a number of years when I got to know him and he spoke of his Nicaragua campaigns in those days. This was in 1941 and he was talking about the early 1930's, when the Samosa family was running Nicaragua. I guess we had been showing off our military power down there even in those days.

Q The reason I raise it now is because I know that you're in a church where the minister is active in trying to end the war in Central America and keeping U.S. tax dollars and U.S. service people out. Share if you'd like some of your thoughts on how some of the ambivalence, some of the changes that have gone on as you came out of an important world war in WWII and what the service meant to you. I look at folks in the plant now who can't wait until another war to start in some real unhealthy way. You've been somebody who has been through it.

A I thought that after I got out of the service that America was truly the defender of peace and democracy being the political force that it was in the world I thought that probably our system should be the prevailing system all over the world. Now since then, I don't whether it is just age which kind of puts a little mist on things as I see them or whether it's added wisdom. I don't know which to attribute my ideas to the day, but it seems to me like we cannot go around the entire world and tell people how to live.

I have the feeling that sometimes we do try to push our ideas on other people and they are not acceptable. I think democracy as we know it today exists peculiarly for us because we had the beginnings back 200 years ago that we did. We had people that were oppressed in one area of the world came and populated this country which was virgin and there was no old political system to contend with and the political soil was just rich for our kind of an experience. I find that this is hard to impose on other people in other areas of the world where for instance illiteracy may be as high as 80-85%. I think this is very poor political soil to nurture a system like ours. I do believe that some of the systems which we do not call democracy are best in some of the areas which we think are oppressive, but these systems probably serve those people the best.

Q Which one do you think we are?

A Well for example, let's take the Arabic nations. They all believe in a theocracy. The Arabs that we have living in America today some of them that I do know they do not believe that democracy is the best way to run the country. They feel that the best way is to run it under a theocratic government and then they feel you have unity that way. Perhaps, and I think for them in their areas of the world that this is best. There are other areas, like for example, we know that in South Americas, as hard as we have tried through the years to bring about some form of democracy it appears that they just revert back to their old systems. Apparently this is what they want and even if it is not, even if we think that our system, if we think that their systems are not best



for them I still think it is up to them to go ahead and determine for themselves what they want. Rather than have us impose our systems on them.

Q Do you think there is some relation to the union person bred and born that kind of view of respecting other nations? Do you think that within there is a relationship to come to that kind of joint understanding because what I find this frequent in many folks in the plant who are anxious for President Reagan to bomb Libya or invade Nicaragua are also very anti union and have no sense of the union history.

A There are several people that I know that feel that way in the plant. In my own case I do not feel, I would not feel comfortable with the idea that I have to sit at a supper table and enjoy a banquet only if someone else would have to get killed over it. I think this maybe comes with growing older and perhaps a little bit wiser. I do not think that there is a solution, a military solution to every problem in the world that we have today. I'm not a hawk. I feel that time is on our side. I think that there are forces moving in the world today which if given time peace can evolve. We have developed in our nation today the very thing that probably President Eisenhower warned against and that is the military armament complex. I think that we have fallen into that trap today and that we are very much under control and in meshed. That is sort of a marriage. That is sort of a business relationship with the armament industry. Eventually, I'm not a very gun minded person, but I do know that people who are very gun minded eventually they get to use them.

Q Does that scare you?

A It certainly does. Especially with what we have done with technology today. We are on the brink of being able to eliminate everything that we probably evolved through the centuries. We can just eliminate it in just a half hours time. I think we have to be very careful. Our foreign policy today is I think very much in disarray. We don't have any consistency in it. It seems to me that we are a democracy and we should favor democracy. Yet we develop friendships with dictatorships all over the world as long as they play ball with our type of interests, foreign interests which is in developing resources in countries. Resources that we do not have in a bountiful supply and developing cheaper labor in other countries. We play ball. We like those kinds of dictatorships and get along with them.

Q What kind of effect and relationship do you think it has on the auto industry? Or does it?

A I'm sure that the automobile industry benefits by the fortune 500 countries that can go out and develop cheap labor and resources in some of the backward areas in the third world countries. I'm sure that the automobile industry is beneficiary of this and I think if not directly than indirectly because the automobile industry is beginning to look towards those foreign, virgin fields of labor itself. It undermines our unionism in our country today because there is always a spectrum of moving a factory or eliminating it completely because you can get cheaper labor some place else.

Q Do you think guys in our plant are concerned about that?

A I don't think so. I think that the average assembly line

worker after his ten hour day is just a little bit too tired and maybe just a little bit too confused to look into in that depth.

Q Your not?

A Well I think that we are probably in the minority, people like you and myself. Very much so in the minority.

Q One of the questions I have been asking and people have been asking me is do I think that folks in the plant are scared for their futures in terms of economic security, mostly in terms of their jobs? Are they scared, is that why they are working so much overtime? And they volunteer for more. They work for ten and then they volunteer for another half hour or hour. They want to come in on Saturdays. They may once a month for some kind of program. Is it the fear of the depression that is coming or is it the love of buying a new boat?

A I think that's what it is. We are a very money minded society. We live in a highly developed materialistic world in America. Naturally this has a very heavy bearing on the amount of overtime that people enjoy working and the premium rate of pay has got to do a lot with it too. We have people in our factory today that if left to themselves would be hard put to make a living.

Q What do you mean?

A Well, for instance, if they had to scratch and ink out some kind of a living out of this planet, left to themselves they wouldn't be able to do it would they? They would have to have someone provide them with a job.

Q Sure. Most of the people in the plant don't have the skills.

A They don't no. They realize that if it wasn't for this oppor-

tunity at the truck plant today that they would probably... if this opportunity disappears there will never be another one like this. So I think that is one of the reasons some of them take as much advantage of it as they possibly can. An income such as we are enjoying over there today is a very unusual blip on the whole economic screen.

Q What do you mean?

A Well we are the best paid industrial workers in the world, undoubtedly, and yet we have an opportunity to augment that income with a lot of overtime, with the premium time pay.

Q So what is the average pay?

A I would probably think that the average pay in our plant is \$40,000 plus. We have skilled tradesman that are making \$50-55,000 and those opportunities are not...certainly our management is looking, taking a very hard look at people that are making that kind of income with an eye in the future of reducing that income potential. They haven't been able to do it by the individuals, but they are doing it over the mass overall employment numbers.

Q What do you mean?

A Well, we reduced uh, we were producing at one time I think 36 units an hour with about 1,100 people. Today we are producing 46 units an hour with the same number of people. So even though we haven't reduced the individual share of income but the overall cost of management of labor is been reduced. This has been offset by the increase in production. Management has got complete control of the equation. The cost-profit equation and they can maneuver those factors around any which way they please which the union cannot do. The

union, every three years, they can go and bargain for an increase in wages for us, but then management has always got final control over how many people are going to be earning that money.

Q What I see the union doing is protecting the higher seniority workers and bringing a tear to your system. They have their pet program rather than cutting back to eight hours a day and hiring people on equal wages. They allow some to work the overtime and the pep program has different regulations and classifications. So they are not cutting in terms of the money yet, but they are cutting in terms of job classification. But I was just talking to my father-in-law and how do you rationalize? You're a union person from a long time back and how would you rationalize skilled trades or even assemblies having different classifications when something breaks down in my job and I have to wait an hour and a half for a pipefitter to come by and then a toolmaker to come by, you know. How do you justify that? Why was that important before?

A I can't justify the kind of money that the skilled trades make. I can't. I don't justify the kind of the money that we make in our industry as compared to the man who hasn't got a job. I don't. I think it is unfair. I think that a factory system in a society like ours should be a little more closely bound to the citizenry to where there is a balance between people who need jobs and management who needs labor. What has happened through the years is the concentration has gotten so heavy in the hands of just a few people. We should be sharing the work with people who do not have jobs. That's

my humanitarian point of view, but yet deep down in my human failings, of course, I am enjoying the incomes we are making even though that I know that it is not over the overall social scheme it is not fair to the people who are unemployed.

Q How did that develop where the union has so little concern for the folks that have been out on the street or laid off?

A I don't think that the union is unconcerned. I think the union is concerned, but it's...they have lost control over the equation. They have lost control over it and they are... I don't think that they know how to exercise influence to bring a change about.

Q Why do you think it is?

A Because I think that the unions have lost sight of one fact and that is when they negotiate they are a politically oriented movement and their biggest concern and interest isn't only satisfying the people that are paying dues at that time. They are very interested in repeating success winners when they run for an election and they lose sight of the fact that they should be looking forward to the future. Had they been doing this years ago perhaps the union ranks wouldn't have been depleted as much as they are today. The UAW has lost hundreds of thousands of members.

Q Where do you see the turning point? When you look back?

A When did this happen? When did the change start happening? I would say probably some time in the late 70's. Perhaps around 1977-78 in looking back I think that is when the change started to come about. Some of it is due to the fact that the union is a little bit too unconcerned about work

standards. They have backed off of work standards completely, abandoned. However, they have given us the illusion that they are concerned because we have work standards representatives in our plants, but they are powerless. They might be able to go ahead and get a few eliminates of the workers back if he is overloaded. Management doesn't hire anybody off the street to take care of that overload. They simply divy it up amongst all the rest of the people.

Q That is one of the benefits that we have had and that is what the union has fought for since I've been there is a standard person, health and safety person, a benefit representative person and now they have E.I. people and more and more people have gotten on to salary of working off the line it seems and someone else is doing their work.

A Correct. Now you see the management is building up this alliance with the union that way and you'll notice that most of these jobs are appointed jobs too. They are not elected jobs. In time I wouldn't be too surprised if we start appointing our committee men. It would really play into the hands of the union hierarchy today because as you ascend into the union hierarchy there is a resentment in the hierarchy between the militarism in the plants. They do not want...our hierarchy does not want militarism in the plants because then it imposes itself on the hierarchy and they lose control.

Q What do you think your dad would be saying to you?

A I think that if he had to step into the plants today he would be a little disappointed in the way his union has evolved. They are a guardian of our benefits. There is no doubt about that. We still have the power that our seniority earned for

us. Management never, never will breach the contract when it comes to benefits in terms of wages, Blue Cross, Blue Shield and all the other benefits. Never. However, management breaches the contract every day when it comes to work standards, in some areas of health and safety.

Q Do you think that folks in the plant get along better now than they did? What kind of relationships do people have? What kind of relationship do you have? Did you used to spend time with other folks in the plants and their families or has that changed?

A There was never inter family socializing with myself and my coworkers. The only socializing that I have ever done with my coworkers was strictly on a man to man basis, but never inter family where our wives would get together and our children. There some instances where this does go on, but it never occurred with me and I don't think generally speaking that it occurs with too many people.

Q Does that differ from your dad?

A I think so. I can remember families getting together with people that he worked with. There was a body, a group, of them that we used to get together on weekends in the summer time. They'd get a barrel of beer and go out to the parks. Somebody would have a car, two cars and three or four families would pile into them and we'd have a picnic together. I think there was more inter family socializing in those days than there is today.

Q What do you think caused it?

A I think that, well, in the materialistic way in which we live. We are all competing with one another.



Q How would that effect people hanging out together?

A I think that probably people get a little bit more withdrawn. They are a little more conscious of their homes compared to your home. Their car compared to your car. I think this has a tendency to destroy the free, easy exchange of relationships between people.

Q You said before that your family is still going to the same church that your family has been going to for the past 25-30 years. What kind of activities do you share with your church as part of your church?

A There is a great deal of fellowship and the worship unless someone tends to believe in a deity or a higher power. Worship is a little hard to understand, but when I speak of worship it means the sharing with other people, the common body of God that exists in each of our hearts and as we become one with that God that we all believe in then we become one between ourselves. I feel this inspiration of spirit when I worship with people every Sunday. People that I have known for a while. I can feel this to some extent even in a strange church as long as the worshiping ritual is the same. The psalms and the songs are the same. I can experience this, but I experience it to a greater degree with people that I have known for a long time. Is it something positive? Yes it is very positive. I become more and more aware of it I guess as I grow older.

Q Why are you chuckling? Did you get away from it a while?

A No. There is such a competitive zeal between Americans today that I think we are losing some of this feeling of fellowship between ourselves. Yes.

Q There is a lot more commitment to religion, Christianity and God at the plant now than when we hired in.

A Do you think there is?

Q I think there are a lot of folks that have seen themselves as Christians. There are more people walking around with bibles.

A Do you feel there is an awakening?

Q Yes most of them, like Ronald Reagan and Jerry Farewell. I'm not sure. Your particular religious expression is through a Catholic church?

A Through a Catholic church.

Q Most of the folks in the plants seem to be Baptists and Fundamentalists coming from the south. Do you have any views on that? Do you notice that?

A I've become aware of it, but I don't know if this really indicates that there is a growing number of people moving into religious circles or whether it's because of my involvement and my awareness I'm noticing more of them.

Q I see.

A I don't know which really holds true in my case except that yeah I am aware of it. There is quite a little bit of spirituality going on in terms of bible reading.

Q One of the union elections I remember folks were talking about they went to the bible room, study room, prayer room.

A Yes. A prayer room or a devotion room where they would be able to each to his own. If somebody wanted to bring the  
in that would be alright.

Q Do you think that is a good idea?

A I think so, yeah. I think that unionism traditionally has

always brought out the commonality between working people and the bond that should exist between working people. Spiritualism or the belief in a deity, a Supreme deity also does the same thing. It is suppose to bring out that feeling of a common bond between people as opposed to... our free enterprise system seems to work against us to a certain degree because the free enterprise system sharpens our appetites for competition and the feeling that we want to be first in every race and some of us can't be. I do think that we have a responsibility to people that aren't as fortunate as we are.

Q When you look back do you consider yourself rather fortunate to be able to provide for your family, security and get through World War II?

A Extremely.

Q What are you going to do the first day after retire?

A I think I'm just going to sit down and enjoy it for a while. I'm not going to jump into anything immediately, even though I have some plans. I'm going to keep busy, but as I say I think it's not going to be a....I'll be able to have a little more time for avocations now rather than just vocations and I think what I'm really going to enjoy...the biggest benefit for me is going to be able to plan my day my way. Rather than punch a clock.

Q You won't be making \$40,000 a year will you?

A No I won't.

Q What will retirement look like in terms of you don't seem to be concerned too much that you'll be able to take care of your desires and your needs. What do you get from the union

in terms of benefits after twenety-two years? And your not waiting until thirty?

A No I won't wait until thirty because I feel this way that if you're qualified for retirement you are only shortening it by working longer in the factory. I feel that I have earned retirement after all the years that I have been in the work force and I deserve a few years of quiet, solitude if I want it, contemplation if I want it which I think is important to all of us and the time. The time to do the things that I want to do and do them right because there is not any of us can deny it that we are on a treadmill. We have to squeeze every activity into the remaining time that we have left after we've spent ten hours in the factory and possibly an hour to an hour and a half on the road. That doesn't leave us much time for our own personal enjoyment, relationships with family. Very, very little and we are neglecting a large area of our lives that is essential for a well rounded human being. We can provide for our financial needs adequately, but we are doing is denying another area of that all around human being that should be nourished.

Q For the entire hour and a half you consistantly a dream and a strong value that you have...what do you think life should be for yourself, particularly for others in general? Where was that birth? I don't think most folks would say that that's what life should be. Maybe they would say it, but they've given up. I don't know. We've been beaten so much and we do neglect our families to make the dollar. Then maybe the shop people would agree with what you are saying. I don't know. What do you think? Where is that inner core that is

so clear? I'm not talking about the language that you use which is clear, but I'm talking about it is clear from the heart and that's what is important. Where did it come from?

A My philosophy towards life, where does it come from? I think my philosophy has developed from the feeling or the realization that even though I know I need bread on my table I know that I have to some decent shelter, I know that I have to have an automobile in this day and age, but the feeling is still there that there must be more to life than just that. Must be more to life than just that. Because if that's all there is it is not worth it. If I could have gone on salary some years ago I would have gone on salary because I'm built up with the same kind of impetuous and mechanism that all Americans are, get a head if you can. I was denied that opportunity and as I look back today I think that I am much better off because it. I think that working people can understand managements problems more than management can understand ours.

Q What do you mean? What do you think their problems are?

A I think management cannot understand why under the system that we work in in an assembly plants where actually if you go ahead and you show aggressiveness and you show initiative, you show cooperation, you realize that your working against yourself because you are putting a tax on yourself in the future.

Q And they will take more advantage of you?

A They'll take more advantage of you. It is that what's the assembly line system for profit is designed for. It is built right into the system and there is no way were avoiding it.

Q The better you work, the faster they work, the more material they put on your job and then you do it better and better and better.

A Exactly. Then if you become too good at your job you're actually stabilizing yourself because then they don't want to move you. They know they cannot get anybody to replace you. So in affect you have become your own enemy.

Q That's right. I used to not learn a job for that reason.

A Well, I'm doing the same thing today. They will not try and understand this because I think it would be defeating to their purposes, so they don't want to understand it. No I understand their position. Their position is they have to try to get as much production out of us in as little time as possible. That is their objective and it is all part of the profit scheme. I understand that.

Q What about quality?

A Well, I think quality suffers under that sort of a system and the quality that we do achieve is an accident in hap hazard. The quality that management tries to achieve is done through the system of running those units around as often or as little as possible in order to achieve the greatest amount of quality which is still far short of the quality we could obtain under different systems.

Q How would you reorganize it? Give me your vision of an auto plant in 1999, Mantramck, to start some new jobs. Pole Town Plant is totally collapsed, let's say, because it's been totally robots is now producing quality. It is time for to come in and say okay give me a plant. What would it look like?

A The division and demarcation between management and labor

would have to be reduced. A great deal more than what it was today. The type of a plant that I would envision or an industry, my industry would not have a president of the corporation making over a million dollars a year. Perhaps, my type of industry would not have a \$40,000 a year assembler either. I think there would be a general flattening out of these peaks and valleys in income between people. The responsibility would be on a greater share basis. The importance between the president of the corporation and the lowest man in his system that gap would be narrowed. They would all have a greater feeling of contributing and have a greater share of importance to the system. How this would come about under our profit system I'm not sure. I don't know how it can be brought about. Perhaps, competition and invasion from foreign countries into our economy might have, might achieve or might be an impetus towards achieving this flattening out that I'm talking about. The differences between the skilled trades and assembly line workers wouldn't be as great either. I think there should be more interchangeability between people. More interchangeability of functions rather than this streamlining and putting accent on specializations.

Q Would there be a union anymore?

A Well, the need for unionism would be lessened because what really is engendered the need for unionism is the hard nosed attitude that management had let say 40-45 years ago. I think our American management system is beginning to understand this today and that's why they are creating the E.I. system, but there has got to be an awful lot of changes

in management between that relationship that they feel towards labor.

Q Could they make that change without eliminating the capitalist system?

A That has to be left for evolution. Today it seems to be that the gap between the poor and the people that have adequate resources to exist in a free society the gap is entirely too big. Opportunities are not as widespread as they should be.

Q What are young people going to do? When you were coming up you had the auto industry in front of you. What are young people going to do?

A For good paying jobs?

Q Yes.

A That's a fearsome future to face for a lot of them. I don't feel that there is going to be jobs like ours in the future where we if we are fortunate to have a job or get a job we have been able to provide adequately for our families. I do not believe that they are going to have that opportunity in the future. I can remember coming out of the service where if you had a couple of hundred dollars down all you needed was \$200-\$300 down and you could buy a three bedroom home with \$85.00 a month payments. Today that is such a frightening prospect for young people who want to get married because, perhaps, it is a little our fault we built up such a high level of expectation for our children.

Q \$80,000 houses.

A Yes and when they want to go out on their own it is such a big step they cannot raise themselves up that high. A lot of them are foregoing marriage and perhaps taking steps into



relationships that maybe are not healthy and good for them in the future. They don't want to face responsibility. I worry about that. I think we should be building a world that should be easier and better for our kids, but we are making it more difficult.

Q Wouldn't you say that we are the first generation that has to say that?

A I think so.

Q Your father would never have said that we are making the world more difficult for them.

A No I think that he felt he was making a better world for me. I don't feel that I am making a better world for my daughter. I really don't. I don't know what to do about it because I'm caught in the stream like everybody else. I'm being swept along with the tide.

Q Share a little bit about what you were just talking about in terms of some of the attitudes of folks in the plant. In terms of people who are poor and on welfare.

A I think that....

Q It gets me very angry. I get very angry at folks about that.

A I can to, very easily I get angry at people that cannot understand the plight of the poor. They think that the only reason why life isn't better for them is because they are lazy and won't get off their butts. I think that this is extremely wrong for us to feel this way because in some instances people cannot just jobs. In some instances, some people do not have the brains and some people are handicapped to exist adequately in a society like ours. It is so highly competitive. There are a lot of people who would cut each others throats for

opportunities today. I know in my own case there is a lot of nepotism goes on even in our level. Such as situations as friends taking care of friends and if you're not in that kind of a stream of self help by golly you're in trouble.

Q You are talking about at work?

A At work, yes. Holding a family together a job is very important especially for men. I can understand how a man feels today. There is two or three children around and he doesn't have an income. He has got to feel terrible. The kids are always seeing other kids...this kid has got a new bike, that family got a new automobile and here is a guy without a job. I think that contributes an awful lot to men just floating off and leaving their families. They cannot take it anymore. They develop that feeling that maybe the family would be better off without me.

Q You are rather unique to have been married and stayed married for so long. I think there are very few folks...I would say 20% of guys who are still with their first spouse. Maybe 30% I'll be generous.

A Yes.

Q So do you think work has contributed to it? When you look at it what do you...?

A Oh yes. I think that work contributes to family stress and marital relationships.

Q Is it particular to auto workers? Do you think it is any more particular?

A I think that the fracture point is when he spent 10-11 hours on that job and he comes home there is very little understanding between him and his wife. They live in completely

different worlds. They cannot share each others worlds with them and he is tired and she may be all revved up to maybe go out for the evening and enjoy a little companionship with friends or socialize with friends and he is certainly not in the mood after he has spent so many hours on the assembly line.

Q Do you think an assembly line job is different from other kinds of work like driving a bus, or working in a sanitation department?

A Maybe not so much today because the stopwatch is creeping up all over. What do you call that now? Where ever we see stopwatches it's compressing the work force. Putting more work load on people. We see this happening in hospitals today. Stopwatches coming out. We didn't see it in our industry until 1949 if my memory in history serves me right. It was 1949 when Walter Reuther first broached his idea about a pension plan with Ford Motor Car Company and I think that his contract was due in 1949 with Ford Motor Car Company. It was going to be put on negotiating table and what happened is there was a wild cat strike at the Rouge Plant. The workers struck over assembly line speed ups and they walked out. I think it happened in April, 1949. In that June they were suppose to sit down and start discussing the contract and that's when Walter Reuther laid his pension idea on the contract table. The strike held everything up because management wouldn't sit down and negotiate until the strike was over with. They finally settled the strike three weeks later and then Reuther couldn't get them to negotiate his pension plan. So they extended the contract until I think the following

year. They worked without a contract for about two or three months. That's when Henry Ford really spanked Reuther and convinced him that you lay off of work standards. Work standards and contract negotiations are not going to be compromised. We take care of work standards. You can have what you want at the negotiating table within reason.

Q That's when they wiped out the wild cat strike in 1950.

A The union backed off on work standards completely. They didn't want anymore wild cat strikes. They didn't want anymore problems with work standards because that's when management got tough at the negotiating table. You wouldn't get your pie in the sky if you messed around with work standards too much. That's also when the stopwatches started coming up like dandelions all over the place. That's when regimentation increased. That's when militant unionism started to increase too, and very little to say about what the hell goes on in that factory now. I think that all the E.I. program is just a little bit of sugar to help the medicine go down.