

Tape 1 (38) - Side 1

Q: Maybe we could begin by you telling me where and when you were born, and how you came to Seattle.

A: () were born in Ohio. () January the 30th, 1899. I was () and moved to Seattle. And have lived here practically ever since. We moved into this house in 1930. Prior to that we lived in the University district.

Q: So you came to Seattle with your folks.

A: Yes, that's correct.

Q: What did your folks do for a living?

A: Dad was a farmer. (). For () years he worked for the gas company, the Seattle Lighting Company, (). We kind of considered Demoines our home.

Q: When was that, that you were living in Demoines? Is that when you were growing up, or...

A: Well, we moved to Demoines in about 1920. (). My whole career ^{has had no sense at all. I've} (continually done the most ^{nonsensical things imaginable}). Dad had been with the gas company for quite a spell, and wanted to get back into the farming business, so we ^(come to build up a) poultry business. () depression was too rough.

Q: Was this in Demoine, or Seattle? In Demoine.

A: Actually the town where we lived, ().

Q: But when you were here in Seattle, your father was working mostly for the gas company?

A: Yes.

Q: And did your mother work also, outside the house?

A: No.

Q: Where you going to school then, here?

A: I graduated from high school in 1919.

Q: In 1919. Do you remember when you were growing up, did your family discuss politics very much?

A: We talked nothing else but politics.

Q: Nothing else.

A: () all rock-rim republicans from here to hell.

Q: And when you discussed politics, did you discuss questions of labor, or...

A: We didn't think so much of the questions of labor, I remember that several years in a row, election years, my dad (^{some of} the) neighbors () and go down to Times Square, (^{near the election returns} come in), and he'd either go home all excited, ().

Q: Would you say that your family were liberal or conservative or middle of the road?

A: Definitely not liberal.

Q: Were they very conservative, would you say?

A: They were very conservative. Although I imagine you could swing the pendulum. ().

Q: What papers did they read here, in Seattle? Do you remember what newspaper they took?

A: We read the Seattle Times, and the Seattle (), and the Seattle Star. My brother, kid brother, and I carried the PI and the Star.

Q: Was the Union Record ever read?

A: We used that for a dirty word.

Q: So, after you graduated in 1919, you say, from high school...

A: 18 or 19.

Q: And then, what did you do then?

A: Oh, in between there someplace I finished up an apprenticeship (), nothing makes any sense. Why was I involved in () ship during...

Q: Ship joiner?

A: Yes. That's a (^{ships carpenter}), no not exactly the same, but they're similar. A ship joiner is actually the highest type of cabinet making.

Q: So by the time the general strike started, were you working in the ship yards then?

A: Let's see, yes.

Q: And do you remember why it was called?

A: I think you'll get that in there. I think, (). Nobody wanted it, and nobody got it.

Q: Why did you get it if nobody wanted it?

A: Well, I probably should back up on that, nobody seemed to want it.

Q: Nobody seemed to want it, uh-huh. Do you remember the, do you remember who called it?
Who was in favor of it?

A: ()?

Q: Do you remember who called the general strike?

A: Oh, I don't know that I would.

Q: Do you remember the ship yard strike that started before the general strike?

A: Yes, I remember that. () pretty close before.

Q: Were you already out on that? Were you, yourself, striking?

A: No.

Q: Do you remember before the general strike started, do you remember people talking about it and thinking about it?

A: Yes. All of us.

Q: What did people expect it was going to be like? Did they think it was going to be a revolution, or a big strike, or...

A: (). Riot. Get a comfortable chair to sit on. I didn't give a damn about that stuff.

Q: I'm much more interested in what, since you were there, and how you remember it, than I am in what the book says about it.

A: (). Mostly the Seattle business people ().

Q: Do you remember what the strike was like when it started?

A: Oh, definitely. Every morning you'd get up and read the paper, and another bunch of guys were out. () anyway (). You wonder how anybody went to work. You didn't drive your own car, like you do now.

Q: Were you going to work during the general strike?

A: No, I was in a very () position. I was almost alone (). Bunch of old country Scotchmen carpinters (). They were conservative in their outlook on life. Next to the Welshmen, they're the damnedest stubborn loveable type of people you ever asked to see. (). The old gentleman and I practically shared a bench with Uncle (). I called him uncle.

Q: Were they all in favor of the general strike?

A: Pardon?

Q: Were they all in favor of the general strike?

A: They weren't, no. They weren't sure, and this, like I say, () 60 years after, and they weren't sure how they were going to come out. () the people that I dealt with, well, they hoped they could win, but they had a feeling that, well, they might not. (). Then we moved across the shop. That's the building that annexed right () boiler maker or something like that. And they (). A boiler maker, all () boys bash your bloody heads in.

Q: So they were for the strike?

A: They were all for the strike. Hooray for the strike.

Q: What did you think of the strike when it started? Were you in favor of it?

A: No, I wasn't in favor of it. () I was 19 years old. I didn't have no wife and family to support. It made a hell of a big difference.

Q: But you say you were not for the strike, then, or you were...

A: I was not for the strike. I was definitely not.

Q: How about your friends and family? How did they feel about it?

A: Well, they were wondering where this was all going to happen. (*near in mind*). The war was just over, and all of them had been worrying, and wondering what's going to happen. () set all wages and everything. And that was () more money in (). Next question.

Q: Why did the other workers besides the ship yard workers go out in sympathy and make it into a general strike?

A: They () quite rapidly. () finally realized there's nothing they could do right now about (). But () lasting very few days. And it was over as quick as it started.

Q: Do you remember if there was any violence?

A: Pardon?

Q: Did you see any violence? Was there any violence during the strike?

A: That's a funny thing. They sent in the National Guard. And they were all lined up in formation, and they were putting on a show for the (). And they, the longshoremen, the rest of them were jeering the soldiers, gave them hell. And in those days, () and that was fine and dandy, except (). Take the shell out, and all this jeering and cheering, I went home. (). This rifle went off, and this gentleman, () and the crowd that had been doing the shouting and yelling, they just ran away. It's the funniest thing I ever saw.

Q: So you were down at the water front, during the strike?

A: Pardon?

Q: You were down at the water front during the strike?

A: Yes. The shop I worked in was one of the ().

Q: But the shop wasn't working during the strike, was it?

A: No, it got shut down a little later. But we weren't out long.

Q: Why were you down at the water front when the shop was closed, is that...

A: Why is every 18 year old kid, I wanted to know what the hell was going on. Father had told me what was going to happen, and all that, but ().

Q: What did he say was going to happen?

A: That you'd lose your shirt. () the ship building would be tied up, and it was. And when the, () ready to come back to work, the owner were all under pressure, they (). Just tell them to go to hell. And they did, and they did.

Q: Did you eat in any of the striker's dining halls during the strike?

A: Pardon?

Q: Did you eat in any of the striker's dining halls?

A: Well we had a, oh you mean soup kitchens.

Q: I guess during the general strike.

A: No.

Q: How did you get your information about what was going on with the strike?

A: Oh, () every third day, maybe longer. And everybody was talking (), you get alot of it by word of mouth. And a couple older Scotthmen in the shop where I worked were, oh, they were castrating me right there.

Q: Why was that?

A: Because this particular bunch of them were, they were all for the strike. They didn't stop, (), the rest of them.

Q: So they were for the strike and you were against it?

A: Roughly speaking, yes.

Q: Why did the general strike end?

A: That's a good question. There was a judge here, Judge Roger Meecham, I got acquainted with him years afterwards, we were talking about that same thing. I asked him why (), and he says we damn well had to, (). Personally I had a pick handle, and put it behind the door at home. (). That was an ultra-conservative. There were alot of conservative ().

Q: I'm not sure I understood, the businessmen ended the strike?

A: Pardon?

Q: Did the businessmen end the general strike? I'm not sure I understand why the general strike ended.

A: It ran out of steam.

Q: Was it, was the general strike worth it for labor?

A: Was the general strike what?

Q: Worth it for labor.

A: Worth it for labor? Is any strike worth it for labor? You lose more than you probably ever get back. And the (), they can't see that, and they never could and they never will. And I told you we were talking to one of those conservatives, I think it was seven generations, all republicans, (). I'm broad-minded.

Q: Did the general strike affect your life, or affect the life of the city in any way?

A: No, it didn't. Damn little. I had, I was living at home and I didn't have any responsi-

bilities, either. Although I walked all the way across town to the university ().

And that was downtown, oh, a manner of 20 or 30 miles. Just to see a young lady at night of my choice. ().

Q: But it didn't affect the way you thought about labor, or about any of those questions?

A: Beg your pardon?

Q: Did it affect the way that you thought about labor or strikes or anything like that?

A: Well, see the sad thing about all this, as long as our side is winning, hooray for our side. And if not, of course, () losing our shirts and losing our job, to hell with that. Everybody likes to ride on the band wagon. Next question.

Q: When you think about the strike, what's your biggest impression of it? What's the picture that you have in your mind about it?

A: Well, ().

Q: Well, if someone just said, "I heard you were in Seattle during the general strike." What was it like?" What would you say about it?

A: The first thing, well, with the longshoremen mixed in, it got pretty exciting.

Q: Do you remember Olie Hansen?

A: Yes, indeed.

Q: What do you remember about him?

A: That would be one of the most interesting dissertations you could imagine. I remember the little poem, "Ten thousand Swedes came out of the weeds to vote for Olie Hansen." He was an opportunist, first (^{order}). Everyone pulled together (). He got out, in San Clemente. (^{where another fellow went} _{reality}). The racial element was important in his career. () thought about. I'm sure ().

Q: Do you remember him in connection with the general strike?

A: Oh, I've heard he made many speeches. ().

Q: About the general strike?

A: Oh, yes. () shop for (). What alot of hoopla.

Q: How about Anna Luise Strong, do you remember her?

A: ().

Q: I saw you had her name written down.

A: Oh. Do you have her name on the list?

Q: Yes, I do.

A: Anna Luise Strong was a, the most radical, probably, (). Two years in high school, () near Anna Luise Strong, (). (). Anna Luise Strong was just a frustrated old maid. Teresa Strong, another member of the same family, (). He was a celebrated (). Is that what you call it? No. Next question.

Q: How about Jimmy Duncan?

A: (That SOB).

Q: You didn't like him?

A: () church (). He, (). Jimmy Duncan rode on his high horse for a long time. On the school board. (). Next question.

Q: Do you remember either Anna Luise Strong or Jimmy Duncan in connection with the general strike? Did they play any roles...

A: They were all, all of them, (), they damned well better be.

Q: But you said...

A: (). Do you have any reference to (^{Verona}), yet?

Q: No.

A: ()?

Q: No, but I was just going to ask you any Wobblies in those days.

A: Did I know any Wobblies?

Q: Yeah, in the ship yards, or around town.

A: Oh, yes, and no. That's a bad question. The Wobblies chartered a little boat, right on the harbor, (). They () a rally and (). Big lumber camp (), I'm trying to think, the sheriff, () found the party, I have to admit, (). And I knew the skipper of the boat very well, ().

The skipper came up, you know, () said, no, () helped build the fires, () version of the story, who fired the first shot. I have no idea. ().

Q: What did you do after the general strike?

A: After the general strike? Oh, I took several months (), and I ().

Q: So they layed you all off?

A: Layed us off. I was ().

Q: M-hmm. That wasn't due to the strike, then.

A: Pardon?

Q: Was that due to the general strike, that they layed you all off?

A: Sure. () layed off anyway. There was no work for them.

Q: What jobs have you done since then?

WIFE WALKS IN.

Q: Do you remember the strike, also?

A: Yes, after he reminded me of it. He and my girlfriends, they both walked out, and they had the Foster Building, then, which is a beautiful piece of forest.

Q: Besides the university?

A: No, it was on the university grounds. Across from where...

A: Why do you say that?

A: What?

A: It was the university.

A: It was part of it. I was there in 1909.

Q: I was asking about what jobs you've had since ...

Tape 1 - Side 2

A: I went to sea, couple (). Right on the East coast, the reason I did that, I wanted to get back and see the house where I was born. (). () way to get my fare paid for. So I did that. From the time I got back, my dad had () chicken () up. I brought back a camera, this film (). Oh, yes. I took (), all the time I was off. 300 page bible. My grandfather started

his (), 18 years, and (). And I have it. My dad turned () in 1900. Oh, yeah. I was walking along the water front, one afternoon, I was working, by the way, (), and so I tipped, break out her candles and say (). I always carried a candle. My God, it was worse than () wars () our times, well, when you get alot of experience and everything, you move right on.

Q: You're talking about the Seattle Times, did they print that picture?

A: Yeah. I told what I had, and they said, well, they'd () picture. It turned out that the neighborhood thought (), called the Marine Digest, they offered me a job (). So that's how I got into writing.

Q: So most of your life you've been a writer, then?

A: I was one of the poorest hacks in the business. Honest to goodness, I couldn't write. () did it anyway.

Q: So you've been writing and you also continued to work on the water front?

A: Well, there's a break in there. I was offered a job in 1940, the war was just over. () Seattle staff. I was there for about two years. (). Would you consider moving, no I wouldn't. () closed the damned office, so I took this job, of course I may never had a chance () I spent two years down there in that () it just kind of rounded out a career. I stayed there for a year and a half.

Q: What did you do after that?

A: Pardon?

Q: What jobs did you do after that?

A: How old do you think I am?

Q: You said that was sometime in the 40's.

A: Yeah.

Q: That leaves about 30 years.

A: Oh, I see. You're right, you're right. You win. In the meantime, we bought this house.

Before I went to New Orleans. () when I got through in New Orleans, actually I came to New Orleans (). Three years back on the West coast. A house further down on this side. () been alot of places, I've never been ().
Next question.

Q: What sorts of organizations did you belong to?

A: Pardon?

Q: What sorts of organizations did you belong to?

A: Well, gee, I am the Senior Trustee () was created, that is a nice conservative one, the old people of this area, safety (). A great organization. I am honorary life member, (). I am an honorary lifetime member of the Seattle ().
Why? Nobody knows.

Q: You never were a hotel clerk?

A: Pardon?

Q: You never were a hotel clerk, were you?

A: I worked very closely with them. Several of them. Actually, that was my ().

Q: Is that after you came back, in the 40's?

A: Beg your pardon?

Q: Did you do that after you came back in the 40's?

A: Yup. (). That's a good question. That period there when I was kind of helping out, (). All right, next question.

Q: Was that all the organizations, you never were in a political or religious organization?

A: Never political. Be a damned fool not to (). We'd get ().

Q: In an election?

A: Yeah. An election. And the next time, I wanted to do it again.

Q: Have you been a politically active person, most of your life?

A: Politically active? Yes, I think so.

Q: Do you usually vote in elections?

A: Do I usually? (). to vote. I could tell you ().

Q: Have you done more than vote? Have you been a member of the republican party, for instance?

A: A little more, yeah. ().

Q: How about in the days of the strike, were you politically active then?

A: Yeah. ().

Q: Has there been a political leader in the last couple of years, who you felt spoke for you?

A: A political leader that I what?

Q: That you felt represented your point of view.

A: I don't know. No, I don't think so. Next question.

Q: What do you think have been the major events in the world, or in a country, during your life time?

A: Major events?

Q: What do you think have been the major events in the country or in the world since the time you've been an adult?

A: You can't go all that time and see (). Well, (). I firmly believe ().

Q: What do you think is the most important issue facing the country today?

A: I don't know.

Q: What do you like most about this country?

A: (), I guess. It's different than all the other places I've been.

Q: In what way?

A: Oh, I think the people are more (). Like I say () small town, ().

All your neighbors are very hospitable. You don't have any trouble, then God will make some up for us.

Q: What do you like least about this country?

A: ().

Q: Is there anything in the news lately that made you feel especially happy?

A: Anything what?

Q: Anything in the news lately that made you feel especially happy, especially good?

A: Next question, I can't think.

Q: Take your time.

A: I, I'm a little dismayed to see that () down upon our old friends. I'm talking about...

Q: John Mitchell, and...

A: (), I guess. A couple of days ago.

Q: John Mitchell and...

A: Yeah. Yeah.

Q: Erlichman and Haldeman.

A: Yeah. Incidentally, () stopped () by Haldeman. Which was a (). To bad, too. The sad thing about Haldeman is () those oaths.

Q: Has there been anything in the news lately that made you feel especially angry?

A: What?

Q: Has there been anything in the news lately that made you feel angry?

A: Well, I feel very strongly on this, capital punishment. ().

Q: I don't know.

A: H-mm?

Q: I don't know.

A: Next question.

Q: What great people, living or dead, do you admire the most?

A: What great people, living or dead, no, I, next question.

Q: No heroes?

A: I'm sorry...

Q: I asked, don't you have any heroes?

A: Oh. Theories?

Q: Heroes.

A: I'm sorry.

Q: It's O.K.

A: Do I have any heroes. Did you say living or dead? I can't remember.

Q: Do you think that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful with people.

A: My idea on that ().

Q: Do you think that most of the time people try to be helpful, or are they just looking out for themselves?

A: Oh, I think ().

Q: Would most people try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair?

A: () tired I am.

Q: What did you think of the civil rights movement?

A: The what?

Q: The civil rights movement.

A: Civil rights movement? You mean how do I feel about, ().

Q: You'd like to cut their throats, is that...

A: ()...

Q: Excuse me?

A: I ().

Q: How did you feel about...

A: Let's get back to the question ().

Q: What did you think of the student anti-war movement?

A: What?

Q: The student anti-war movemnt in the late 60's. The students where against the war in Viet Nam.

A: Oh. That's, yeah (). That's a bad () when (). People there ().

Q: What do you think about the labor movement today?

A: Labor?

Q: The labor movement.

A: Well, I'm not in favor of it.

Q: But you're not in on it, is that what you said?

A: That's right. ().

Q: What do you think about the women's movement?

A: (). I was a, you know, (). () long time. And then I don't know what () they're doing. Next question.

Q: What do you think of the women's movement?

A: I better () broad-minded then.

Q: Do you think what most young people need most of all is strict discipline from their parents?

A: Not most of all, but it's important.

Q: Do you think most people who don't get ahead, just don't have enough will power?

A: (). All men are created equal. That's the biggest damned lie I ever heard. () trouble () to her. In other words, () I had this coming to me, () she said forget it. All men weren't. (). Next question.

Q: Do you think a few strong leaders could make a country better than all the laws and talking?

A: H-mm?

Q: Do you think a few strong leaders could make a country better than all the laws and talking?

A: Well, I don't know about that, I know alot of () and talking, (). I think the important part of me, this whole set-up of leadership, (). Next.

Q: People sometimes say an insult to your honor should not be forgotton.

A: Pardon?

Q: People sometimes say an insult to your honor should not be forgotton. Do you agree with that?

A: Again, please.

Q: People sometimes say an insult to your honor should not be forgotton. I asked you if you agree with that.

A: Oh, boy, do I believe that. Right up to here. () this paper I wrote in the Marine Digest. () Never let it pass, how do you say it? Never let an insult go by (). I'm not quite as (). My wife says () I never want to have a quarrel with you. ().

Q: How do you feel about the school desegregation issue in Seattle now?

A: ().

Q: Why is that?

A: Well, why give them all this money, to shovel () around. ().

Q: Why are you doing that?

A: Huh?

Q: Why are you doing that? Leaving out the nasty words, I mean.

A: Never put on paper what you really () to see, (). I've broken that rule, and I feel sorry about a couple of them.

Q: Well, this couldn't be... Right. You say how you want it, but this wouldn't appear with your name on it. Nothing you say would appear with your name on it.

A: I'm glad you damned cowards ()...

Tape 2 (39) - Side 1

A: () goes a long way out. Hookup on the (). () old timer on his last legs. I was () and I was that age.

Q: PGA work, did you say?

A: Huh?

Q: PTA work?

A: PTA. () on past (). I'm just thinking sitting here, of all the things that are important to me, (). They're all gone. (). Do I give a damn? No ().

Q: You have done alot of things.

A: Pardon?

Q: I said you have done alot of things. You didn't mention before when I asked you organizations, you didn't mention the PTA.

A: Well, I guess I forgot.

Q: Do you think a general strike could happen today?

A: Pardon?

Q: Do you think a general strike could happen today?

A: No. Want to know why?

Q: Why?

A: Because.

Q: You want to tell me a little bit more about that?

A: Well, () patience, you always heard a (). We know when we () something, just a little flash () hell to (). And now () off the air.

Q: How would that stop a general strike?

A: () everybody knows what goes on. A lot of these () general strike a lot of that stuff, ().

Q: Are there any conditions under which you would support a general strike?

A: () when you strike, you're striking against the (). When you strike, you come down for elections. And of course, () drops off, () producing income. Next question.

Q: How necessary are employers for running businesses? Could workers run businesses without employers?

A: What's this?

Q: I say, how necessary are employers for running businesses? Could workers run businesses without employers?

A: How important are the ... ().

Q: Excuse me?

A: About 10 times as important (). You don't know what a () is?

Q: No, I hear you now.

A: H-mm?

Q: Yes, I understand what you're saying. How about these cooperative industries, where workers just run it themselves without any employers. Do you think those can work?

A: Well, all through the Ohio and Pennsylvania, somewhere, you'll find the remains of a (), near the mountains, and so forth, (). Somebody has to say, all right, lift that. Or ... I know many, many a time when () the horn and everybody would go streaming out, but I don't know.

Q: Have you read anything about the general strike since those days? I know you're used to reading the newspaper..

A: I just read () That's the best whole damned ().

Q: This is... McCurdy's Marine () Pacific Northwest. That's () McCurdy right here?

A: Pardon?

Q: That's Harris McCurdy from right here?

A: Yeah. Have you met him?

Q: No, I have to talk to him. I talked to him on the phone.

A: Oh. ().

Q: One thing I forgot to ask you earlier, what did your children do? I noticed there's a lot of pictures around.

A: Pardon?

Q: You have several children?

A: Sure, several children. I've got one, two children. and ...

Q: What did your children do?

A: Huh?

Q: What do your children do? What do they do for a living?

A: ()?

Q: What do they do?

A: I'm sorry, I didn't get ().

Q: Your children, what do your children do?

A: Oh, well, my only daughter married very very young. (). Lives () and those things. My son married a widow with three kids. And I have a grandson (). Almost 20 years old. No. He's 21 years old. But he's a pride and joy. ().

END OF INTERVIEW.