

Tape 1 (36) - Side 1

A: My four brother, they were still on the island, the older brothers were still on the island.

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

A: () going back 72 years, nearly 73 years. Well, I was born in 1904, October 1st. And came to Spokane when I was about four years old, so I can't remember too much there. And we stopped at Spokane for about two years. Spokane was () Tacoma. Came to Tacoma about 1910, I think. I was six years old when I hit Spokane, 8 years old when I came to, no, I must have been younger than that, because I started in St. Rio school here, and you had to be six years old to start school. So I was six years old.

Q: But you were living in Tacoma, then?

A: Yeah. And I lived in Tacoma then and stayed here until about 1914 I guess it was, and then we went to Seattle.

Q: Did you move all those places with your folks?

A: What?

Q: Did you move all those places with your parents?

A: Yeah.

Q: And what did they do?

A: Well, my father was a machinist, he was everything. Jobs were tough, he took any kind of a job. And as I said, both the older brothers, they were in the army (), as soon as the U.S. went to war, the first world war. The oldest brother () draft him right off. (). New York, and got his training there for two months and then over the pond.

Q: So your father was mostly a machinist, but did alot of different things.

A: Yeah.

Q: Did your mother work outside of the family?

A: No. She never did work outside. She had enough to take care of the kids. My God, there

was two sisters, altogether, well one brother died before I was even, well, there was two, three, four boys and two girls. I was the youngest of the whole family.

Q: Did you go to school in Seattle?

A: Yup. I went to Immaculate.

Q: Up until you started working?

A: What?

Q: Until you started working?

A: Yeah. Well, I was working in the ship yard, passing rivets. During the summer vacation, and after that, why, after I got out of the 8th grade I went in, started the Seattle (), used to call it the Seattle Poly, it was out there in (). Quit, and I was out for about two or three months, so I just, and things were getting tougher and tougher, so I just went and got myself a job. I went down to Todd's, (^{Todd's was still running}) and you had to have a permit to work, you know, I went in to the service for a while, and then a job opened up in the Washington Electric, so then I earned \$10 a week or something. Anything to get, you know, starving, or, so that's about all I can tell you about the earliest days.

Q: Do you remember whether politics was discussed in your family much?

A: Well my dad was a big politician, that's why I didn't care too much for politicians. He was always yapping about, you know, politics and everything.

Q: What was, what kind of politics was he interested in?

A: Well, any kind.

Q: Was he, did he talk about labor questions, or...

A: Yeah. Labor, any kind of questions that come up in politics.

Q: Would you say that he was a middle of the road, or conservative or liberal or radical?

A: No, he was about the middle of the road, I would say. (^{Democrat,} For the Irish Free State) of course my mother was born in (), his folks were born in Ireland. There's one thing there, the ~~people~~ ^{people} there, () Ireland () under English rule. Part of them () is still there.

Q: Do you remember what papers they read? What newspapers? Did they read the newspaper?

A: Where?

Q: In Seattle, your parents?

A: Oh yeah. The Star, the Union Record, PI, the Times, ().

Q: Do you remember which ones they read, or which ones you read?

A: We read them all. You know, after I got out of the electrical business, I started working in 1923 in PI. Then I went over to the Star and finished up my apprenticeship. So from there, I went down to San Francisco, and worked there for about four years.

Q: How about when you were just passing rivets in the ship yards and right after that. Do you remember reading just one paper, or...

A: (*would to read them all*).
().

Q: Read them all.

A: M-hmm.

Q: Do you remember what you were doing at the time of the general strike?

A: God, I couldn't tell you.

Q: Do you remember what job you had then?

A: I think I was working in the Washington Electric. I was an errand boy.

Q: What does Washington Electric do?

A: Oh, they had lighting fixtures and (), you know, taking orders and running around, well, I was up in the spray room finishing these chandeliers and all that stuff. Lighting fixtures.

Q: Uh-huh. Do you remember why the general strike was called?

A: No...

Q: Or who called it?

A: No:

Q: Do you remember before the strike actually happened, do you remember people talking about it?

A: They were talking about it, yeah.

Q: What did they expect, was it going to be a big strike, or a revolution, or...

A: They figured it was going to be a big strike. No, they didn't, I didn't hear, there was no revolution never mentioned. Now those God darned fools are started revolutions, just starting to talk revolution, I guess you've heard of that. You know. But it was nothing like it is today. They had respect for each other. Now I don't know what's got into one another. Organized labor start with, you know all these, all big business, big business is doing this, big business is calling these strikes. Well, what the devil, they're big business now. So, what the heck. They're just as bad as they were then. So that's what burns me up, (). They're out for the working man, well, it should stay that way. That's another thing that makes me mad at Meany. He said that he would retire and, oh what's his name who got killed, ...

Q: Ruther?

A: Yeah, Walter Ruther. He told Walter Ruther that he would retire when he was 70 years old. He didn't do it. I think that organized labor would have a good man if they got Walter Ruther in there. Because he went around and he studied all the different labor situations the world over. He went to Russia, he went to Germany, he went to France, he went to (). He studied them all, so he knew what to do. Meany, well he was the plumber, sits there with a big cigar in his mouth. You know, that hurts alot of our guys here are getting a little older and you know, he throws his weight around. Organized labor shouldn't be throwing their weight around, they should try to explain. As far as that strike is concerned, I can't tell you much about it.

Q: What was it like in the city when the strike happened?

A: Well it was pretty good. () talking this over oh, like (), you know when the war quit in 1918, of course () and then they, no, they didn't even talk strike right then. Of course everybody was out of work then. The ship yard closed down and that threw everybody out of work. Labor had to do something. they had the, you know, they weren't dividing these jobs up between them. So that, that's what ().

Q: What did you think of the strike at that time?

A: I couldn't care less, I had no...

A: Can't tell you that, either. I was just a little kid then. About 14 years old, I think.
13, 14 years old.

Q: Was it worth it for labor?

A: I don't think so.

Q: Why not?

A: Well, I don't know, I, they just split everything in half and gave you what they wanted.
No, as I say, you know, that's so long ago, it's really hard to remember.

Q: Did you feel that the strike affected your life, or the life of the city?

A: It never affected my life. I don't think it affected too much of the city.

Q: Do you remember Olie Hansen?

A: You bet your life I remember Olie Hansen.

Q: What do you remember about Olie Hansen?

A: He was always raving around. That's about the only thing, I can't say nothing about the
man. That I can remember, he was always getting out and hollering at everybody else.
You know, we never had no radio, never had no T.V. Well, ...

Q: Do you remember Anna Luise Strong?

A: I remember the name, I don't remember anything about her.

Q: How about Jimmy Duncan?

A: Jimmy Duncan was a labor leader, and he was a good man. () in Seattle. ()
secretary. Yeah, Jimmy Duncan was all right, you know, he was fair. Alot of people
called him an agitator, and I guess the IWW, he was no IWW, he didn't have nothing to
do with the IWW.

Q: Did you know any IWW's then?

A: No, I didn't want to have no part of them, either. I wanted to stay clear of them, be-
cause they were always getting out and (*holding*) their heads up and down the street and
everything else, which made the () of organized labor.

Q: What's the biggest impression that you have of the general strike? What do you remember
most about it?

A: Just what I got through saying. The only thing I remember about it, () street

car and the cops had to get in, you know, and separate them. So that's about the only thing I remember. And it was tough times. Like today, you get at least about \$30-\$40 a week. At that time you were getting about \$10 a week, you know, I had to do alot of work for it. They taught me how to use the spray gun and that, and then I was doing spraying and everything else. So I finally quit there and went up to PI, then I quit and went over to start working ().

Q: So you worked the presses ever since there?

A: Yes.

Q: What sorts of organizations did you belong to in your life?

A: I belonged to the Knights of Columbus a long time ago, and the International ().

Q: No political or religious organizations?

A: No. No.

Q: Did you, do you have children?

A: What?

Q: Did you have children?

A: Oh, no. I have no children.

Q: Do you consider yourself a politically active person?

A: No, I, I like to talk about politics, if I know what I want to vote or what, you know, different things like that. As far as getting mixed up in that, no.

Q: Do you usually vote?

A: I vote every time. Outside the school election, () that burned me up, so I just had nothing to do with anything. Because it's just hurting the kids, is what they're doing. Well, you can see they're telling you over television, now. Half, nearly all the kids coming on to high school can't even read or write. So that's bad. The only thing on that is () the 3 R's. Instead of all these athletic stuff, and everything else. Kids should have a little bit of bulk, too.

Q: Back when the strike happened, were you politically active person then, or were you too young?

A: No, as I say, I was just a little kid. Getting, oh, a dime or two to give to my mother

so she could take care of the house. My dad, you know, as a machinist he was only getting \$4.50 a day, or something like that. (), not so good.

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

A: Oh, I don't know. ().

Q: What do you think have been the most important events in the country or in the world in the last 60 years or so, since you've been an adult?

A: It's hard to say, there've been so many of them.

Q: Could you pick out two or three of them.

A: No, ().

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

A: The start of World War III. I can see that (), or whatever his name is, over there in France, well he says the U.S. is a bunch of trash and that they can't, (), he didn't say nothing, that's where the French people are taught, you know, along with Russia. () riots, and everything else over there (). That's when he made that statement about the U.S., which he should never have, he went and apologized in the end, well, what good does that do us? It was said, it was over, that (). And I think this president we've got now, Carter, I think he's going to be all right. Of course, you got to have time to tell a man like that () to see what he is going to do, but he's trying to do everything he said in his campaign. Whether he's right or wrong, I couldn't say.

Q: What do you like most about this country?

A: Everything. Everything about it.

Q: Well, that makes my next question harder, I was going to ask you what you like least about the country?

A: I like everything about her, there's nothing that I don't like about her.

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

A: Yes. Carter telling these Russians off. That makes me feel good, because they're telling us off, so we've got a man up there that will tell them off, too. That's what I feel this country's built on.

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

A: No.

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

A: I can't say.

Q: No heroes?

A: What?

Q: I said you have no heroes?

A: No.

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

A: Well, that's a () question, I really think most people can be trusted. I'll trust anybody, and I hope that they'll trust me. I still think that people, given a fair chance, also, as we got through saying a while back, these radicals and that stuff, well, they won't trust anybody. That's their main point, is to get everybody disgusted with everybody else.

Q: Do you think most people try to be helpful, or are they just...

A: Oh yes.

Q: Out for themselves?

A: Yes. I think most people try to be helpful.

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

A: I think they'd try to be fair.

Q: What do you think of the civil rights movement in the 50's and 60's?

A: I have no thought on that at all.

Q: How about the student anti-war movement?

A: I didn't like it too much, because () had to put up with it.

Q: Is there...

A: Nobody likes wars, as far as that's concerned.

Q: Is there anything more that you want to say about the labor movement? You were telling me a little bit about what () labor movement today.

A: No.

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

A: Well, that's, I think the woman's place is in the home, if they've got children. I still think that they should be in their home. I think that's what's wrong with them. Is these women are going out and working. The kids are running around till they get home from work, you have to stay home and make them up a sandwich or something at night, and you don't even see it around here. If they're going to have children and have a home, that's their place in there, and let the man take care of them, or else, visa versa. If she wants to go out and work and support the family, let the man stay home and take care of the house. Be a housewife, or whatever you want to call it. My main thing is the kids. I got through saying here a while ago, on the television earlier investigating these high school kids graduating from high school and they can't even write their own name. And that's bad. I'm not very well educated, as I told you, (), that's for sure, but I can write my name.

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

A: I think so. And another thing, too, I think these kids going around breaking these windows and everything else like that, they should be caught, taken in, San Francisco had a law when I was working down there, that they'd take the parents to night court. Put the parents and kids up and whatever damage it was, they'd () the parents for it. Like one case, the judge gave this fellow you know, a fine, or I don't know how much, \$200.00 or something, () the damage he did to this place. So he told his parents that they would have to make amends for their kid. So he says I just can't do it, I'm working, I've got to support my family, I've got, well the judge says, just a minute, you only work five days a week, you can come down here and sweep out the jail, or clean up () janitor's work, we'll pay you for that until you pay up the damage. That

cleared them kids up for a long time. It did, no kidding. The parents took care of their kids, then. But like here, now, they threw that law out down there, it's no more. If your older people would listen to kids, the kids are all good kids, and () like my parents, boy, if I did anything, you know, tore up somebody else's property, (). You see, dad used to have this razor strap. I don't know if you know what they were. And I'll tell you, pull your pants down and wack you over the butt with that, boy, you know. It would put a little sense in your head.

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

A: Well, yes and no. They've got the will power if they want to use it. That's the way I feel. It's just some of them don't care.

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

A: Oh, yeah, yeah. That would, you know, () we've got one now, but I don't know how long he's going to last, you know Carter, he tells you. () over television and the newspapers. But I really think that if you get some good leaders, you know, to run the country, of course he's got to have the congress and the senate and everything else behind him. Is that what you mean, strong men in the senate, congress, and...

Q: Well, is it more important to have strong leaders or to have lots of laws and talking, things like that?

A: No, I think that the strong leaders are the best.

Q: There's a saying, an insult to your honor should not be forgotten. Do you agree with that?

A: Yes.

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

A: Well, I'll tell you, that I don't, you know these parents and that, they're paying taxes on where they live. And they're paying taxes on that school in their district, and why should they ship their ...

they say they're not getting the best schooling and that. I don't believe in that segregation issue. If people want to live in that district and they're paying taxes on that for their children, they shouldn't () where the school wants them to. () running to the far end of the city, and that. That's foolish.

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

A: A general can happen anytime. The way some of these talkers get out...

Q: What could cause one today?

A: Oh I couldn't say that.

Q: Is there any reason where you would support a general strike?

A: No.

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

A: No.

Q: What do you think of these cooperative industries, you know, where the workers are all, they split the profits themselves?

A: Well, you're talking about the telephone companies in Seattle, you know, they () a little older than I am. (). See, the telephone company used to do that, I don't think they do it anymore. But that was a good idea. You know, a kid like him, (), but then he didn't stay here long enough, you know.

Q: How about these industries though, that have just workers. There are no employers at all. And the workers put up the money themselves, and then they split the profits themselves, cooperatives, sometimes they have food cooperatives...

A: Well, I don't know too much about that. I don't really, I couldn't tell you. I don't know. It sounds like a good thing. That's all I can say.

Q: Have you read anything about the general strike since those days?

A: No.

END OF INTERVIEW.