

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Youngstown, (Campbell) 1916 Fire and Riot

Eyewitness to Events of January 7, 1916

O.H. 1052

JOHN B. ROSS

Interviewed

by

Philip J. Bracy

on

April 20, 1981

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INTERVIEWEE: JOHN B. ROSS

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SUBJECT: Eyewitness to events of January 7, 1916

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B: This is an interview with John Ross for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the Youngstown, (Campbell) 1916 Fire and Riot project, by Phillip Bracy, on April 20, 1981, Campbell, OH, at 3:00 p.m.

R: I started working for the Sheet & Tube in 1902. I was fourteen years old.

B: That was before child labor, right.

R: I got paid well for my work. I made a dollar a day, ten cents an hour. This is the high school.

B: Yes, I'm just slowing down in front of the school here.

R: . . . boys raised in this house, this young house, right here. My brother and I, from this very spot, saw the city, the village of Youngstown it was at that time. It was the village of East Youngstown. I saw the flames as I came up this hill. I saw the flames burning. I went in the house and told my sister-in-law. I said, ". . ." I said, "Looks like the people there at the . . . must have set fire to the community." That was Saturday at four-thirty, the first week in January, 1916. Then the next morning, the sun had come out. It was cold. I came down, and I went. . . .

B: You were saying that in 1904 that you were--you first went to work for the mill. What did you do at that time?

R: I was a waterboy. I started out as a waterboy, and after four, five, six weeks I was put to work in the welding furnace and reweld pipes. That was a pipe furnace, and I cleaned . . . I cleaned the cinders. I was advanced to a dollar and a half a day, or fifteen cents an hour. This use to be an eight foot . . . bridge built out of lumber, out of wood.

B: You use to run from here into the mill?

R: We use to come down and walk across the B & O tracks, then we would get on the foot bridge. When we got on the other side, we would get into Sheet & Tube. That's before they built that steel bridge.

B: The wooden one ran down by this--what's this street?

R: This is Tenth Street here.

B: Okay. So, it was just about on Tenth Street that the wooden bridge ran into the mill. Did they add anything in here since that time, you know, like now?

R: There was no mills here. The mill was close to the river. These were all built later. This was built in 1932, 1931.

B: Where the bridge ran is where they threw the rocks on top of the bridge?

R: We will come to the spot now. This is a bank. It use to be the bank here.

B: Yes it's still marked.

R: Built in the Greek . . . style, beautiful front.

B: Yes, it's still marked City Trust & Savings--is that--it's still marked.

R: That's on the same block, used a beautiful place. The owner was Mr. Amery, a millionaire banker. Okay. This is . . . , the main street and the center of the village. This use to be wide here because there were two tracks going here. There were two street car tracks.

B: Yes, they tarred over them.

R: A gentleman by the name of Johnny Nester, an Irish--here was about thirty-five years old, and I was twenty-eight at the time--he and I were talking. We

were old friends.

That's the bridge. You see right now, they have a piece of sheet iron, and at that time, it was open on both sides. Okay. Jerry and I were company men, and I'm a company man today. We didn't approve of the strike, but I was not working at Sheet & Tube at the time. I left Sheet & Tube two years before. We were standing here. There use to be a platform here for people getting off the street car. We used to wait here to get on to the street car. Under the bridge, there was no wall. See that brick? None of that was there at the time. Under the bridge, there must have been 250 or 200 men. Sheet & Tube had to ask for some protection so they got the sheriff . . . deputized maybe 25, 30, or 40 Sheet & Tube workers, people that they trusted.

Well, they were given blood hounds, so they would stretch along the bridge. Four, five, or six you'd see along in there. These people under the bridge, when they saw these deputy sheriffs on the bridge, they came right over the road. There were a few stones and rocks and bricks right under the bridge, and these workers picked up these rocks and would throw them at the deputy sheriffs. Instead of getting back, so they [the deputies] would get out of the way of the stones, they [the workers] threw, and they [the deputies] began to shoot [the workers] down. At that time, the people don't want to get shot, so they [the workers] got away from the range of the guns. Some ran this way, and some ran that way.

Johnny Nester said, "Johnny, I don't like this." I said, "Johnny, I don't like it either." I said, "I don't like fire arms. Is there something going to happen here?" He said, "I think I'm going home." I said, "Johnny, I'm going to do the same thing." I went back exactly as we came down, and he disappeared. I don't know if he went this way or that way, but I kept going forward. It took me fifteen minutes maybe to get home, and the fire already had started.

There use to be a building here built by the Renner Brewing Company. It was a brick building, and it had a saloon. It use to be from one corner to the other. Named after . . . about sixty, seventy acres up the hill here, Robson, Robson family. This is Shore Street. This was built up here. Everything was built up here. Both sides, hardware stores, saloons, clothing stores, grocery stores were all built up here.

B: Okay. Now, when you say, "Built up here," you mean along this way or up that way or up the hill, or how were they?

R: Now, that building was not here. That Sheet & Tube was not here at the time. This was not here. Okay. Right at this spot right here, this was private property.

B: Okay, . . . in the mills too.

R: . . . owned that spot where the loft is, now. Right there use to be a small two room frame building. They use to call it the employment office when they kept the records there. But, it was frame building, two rooms.

B: It was bigger than it is today though?

R: It was maybe 10 by 20, something like that, 20 or 25. Okay, right here was a store. There was a dried goods and shoes and so on. Over here was a saloon. There was a saloon here. Next to the saloon, was an expensive, very rich hardware store with all kinds of. . . . Over here, there must have been three or four hundred strikers and sympathizers. This was not here. It was just a field here, all field here. There was a few That's Washington Street.

B: Where that parking lot is back there?

R: Yes. So, to these three, four hundred people, the gate was closed, but it was a wooden gate. When the firing started, these people tried to force the gate. They had pistols. They began to shoot and take the sheriff. The sheriff didn't want to get hurt, so they went back from the big . . . bridge. When they went back far enough, these people came to the officer, and they busted the doors and set fire to the employment office. At the same time, somebody called the fire department. They came down, and the strikers said, "Let that place burn down. You don't want to get hurt do you? Let it burn down."

At the same time, these people here all congregated here, and they busted into the clothing store. It was all encased in fire. It was a wooden building. From the employment office to this building here, this wooden building next to the fire and the next store was a hardware store. The people busted into the hardware store and got more guns; and of course the saloon was busted open to get in to get bottles off the counters, whiskey bottles. They began to drink whiskey, and it began to do more damage.

The result was that these people that had been drinking whiskey were across the street, too. Then, other people must have joined them. Well, from that fire to this clothing store was Mr. Kauffman's clothing store. Then, next to the clothing store was the hardware

store, and then of course, there was the saloon. There were two saloons in this short block here. The result was that the strikers were not satisfied with this spot here, so they went to Washington Street.

B: That's the next street over?

R: That's Washington Street going up. They set fire to the Commercial buildings, two commercial buildings because they were saloons. That's why this was all built up here. They were all . . . buildings. There were stores, five and ten cent stores, the shoe stores, and the grocery stores, the post office up above there.

B: Is that the same post office up there, now?

R: That's a new post office.

B: Same place? I mean the same place, though?

R: Yes that's a new post office. The post office was a commercial building. I believe Mr. Garletti, an Italian fellow, owned the building, and the United States Postal Department rented a storeroom and had the post office in there. That building was not there. They were all frame buildings.

B: They were all wooden buildings basically? Were they all basically made out of wood?

R: Yes, all of them. There was no bricks except the buildings over here the rented building, that was a brick one, that was the only one that burned down.

B: Okay now, this field up here between Short Street and up to the new post office, were there any building in there?

R: There were commercial buildings mostly on that side and on this side, too. They went as far as Twelfth Street; and then, they went over to Washington Street, then up Wilson Avenue. The fire went about, past Tenth Street, maybe 200, 300 feet from Robinson Road. That's as far as it went. By that time, they had all got drunk, most of them anyway. Then, they began to go into the clothing stores, and they would take ties, coats, and shoes. Whatever was good they would take them home. Those were the ones that got drunk bad enough. That's the spot now. That was the only spot that I was standing, and I did see the fire. I saw the fire after I got home. I didn't see the fire from there because I left right after the shooting started.

B: Okay, did the guards shoot over their heads?

R: They tried to shoot over the heads of the people under the bridge.

B: No, I mean when they charged the gate. Did they shoot directly at the people? Did anybody get hurt?

R: Well, as soon as the shooting started, the men got away from the range. [It] got so the deputy sheriffs would hit anybody.

B: Yes, but I mean did the guards actually shoot anybody or did they just shoot over their heads?

R: No, not the guards, the deputy sheriffs.

B: Okay.

R: Somebody tried to bust through his door, and he shot somebody from the second floor window.

B: Okay, what street is that?

R: Over there in that building. . . . All these were frame buildings, and they all got burned out.

B: Okay, this street here, the one that got burned down, would you tell the man's name?

R: That was Robinson Road. This is Tenth Street.

B: Okay, the man who owned the building, who lived in the back, what was his name?

R: Yes, the bank was in that lot right there.

B: Yes, but I mean the man who owned the shoe store over on. . . .

R: No, he didn't own the building. The building was owned by Mr. Gordon.

B: Yes, but he owned the shoe store in the front right?

R: Yes, he owned the shoe store.

B: His name was what, now?

R: His name was Mike Mulner. He was a friend of mine.

B: And so, when he heard people trying to break into his store. . . .

R: Yes, when they tried to break into his store from the second window, he shot them down; and for some reason or another, left them alone.

B: Did he actually shoot anybody? Was there anybody hurt?

R: Whether he hit anybody or not I don't know. I was told that the next day.

B: How did you get down to this area before this started? About what time did you come down with Jerry Nester?

R: I came down around four o'clock?

B: Did you come down on the trolley, on a street car?

R: Yes I came down, and I met Jerry up around that corner there. He and I were very friendly. We worked together at the Sheet & Tube before. I was very friendly with Jerry. We stood there for maybe fifteen minutes. When the firing started, he said, "Johnny, I don't like this," and I said, "Jerry, I don't like it either." We separated. He had to go down and then up the hill. I had to go this way and up the hill.

B: Yes, because you lived up on, what was the name of that street up here?

R: I went up the way that we came down.

B: Yes. But, the block house that you lived in then, did you live there?

R: Yes.

B: You lived in that house, the block house?

R: Yes.

B: Okay, what was the address there? It's eighty something.

R: The address is 80.

B: What's the street, though?

R: My brother and I owned the house. We put in half of our money together. In fact, my brother was married and raised a family there. The son of my brother, Tony, operates that BBW radio station. That's his station. He was born in this house in 1910.

B: Yes, but I meant what street is that on?

R: That's Sixth Street.

B: Sixth Street. So, you didn't take the trolley. You just walked down the street?

R: Yes, yes, I walked down.

B: Where did you meet Jerry? Did you meet him at the stop here? How did he get there? Did he live up through here?

R: Who was that?

B: Johnny Nester?

R: Jerry Nester, he lived two blocks. Go down that way and up the hill.

B: Oh. So, both of you just walked?

R: Two blocks up, two blocks going east and two blocks up on the corner of Jefferson and . . . Avenue. Jerry--yes, he lived there with his family, his father and mother.

B: At the time that the fire took place, how old were you then?

R: What did you say?

B: How old were you at the time?

R: Well, I was born in 1897, so that was 1916. I was twenty-eight years old. This is suppose to be one of the main streets. The farmers who owned the land didn't want to give much land for the street use, so they made the street 45 feet. It was supposed to be at least 50 [feet]. All the side streets are 50 [feet], but this street is 45 [feet].

B: You mean wide, 45 feet wide?

R: Yes, 45 feet. It's supposed to be the main street.

B: At the time of the fire and riot, how much of the land was still owned by the farmers?

R: See, I don't get you. I didn't get that question clear. I was born in Italy, and I came to the United States in September 1902.

B: How old were you, then?

R: I was around fourteen, fourteen or fifteen. With two older brothers, we were borders with an aunt of ours--her name was Mary Sandy--at 1844 Cherry Street in Hazelton. Next to our house, there was a school house, known as the Center Street School. My brother once sent me to school. I said, "I didn't come to the

United States to go to school. I came to get work." He said alright. So, they got me the job at Sheet & Tube as a waterboy. A few weeks later, I was promoted to work at the butwell furnace--I think it was number two, number two butwell furnace--cleaning bells.

B: Okay now, a bell was what? What was a bell?

R: Bells were the small piece of cast which were used to make the form of the pipe. A 3 inch bell, we used to make a 3 inch pipe; a half inch bell was used to make 1/2 inch pipe, a 3/4 [inch] bell to make a 3/4 [inch] pipe, and so on. I started to make \$1.50 a day, good money. Work was more heat than manual, lots of heat, because I had to work close to the furnace.

I moved on from the furnace department to the cupelling department where they made cupellings to join the pipes. I learned how to operate the machines. After a couple of years, I was interested in all kinds of machines in the cupelling department or . . . shop, one of the two. It meant the same thing. So, I became a handyman. I would teach other people how to operate the machines and repair. I kept the machines in order. My general foreman was Mr. Lee.

Then, they transferred me from the handyman to the maintenance man. I worked on the mechanical department, and the chief master mechanic was Mr. Woodside. He had a bright assistant. He was the brightest man in the valley, mechanical engineer. His name was William Negerman, and he was a bright one. [He was of] German decent, a bright one.

In 1908, the Sheet & Tube hired a gentleman by the name of Mr. Robinson. He was a civil engineer from Chicago. He was hired here. He sold the Sheet & Tube the idea that they should make from--the largest part. We were making at the time were 8 inch--he sold the idea to the director that they should go into the larger pipe business.

So, from the 8 inch size pipe, we went to the 20 inch, and here I was trying to handle the machines, cupellings from 8 inch to 20 inch, big cupellings. I had to trend them and reset them. I had to keep those machines in shape, and as you noted, I am a small man. At that time, I weighed probably 115, 120 pounds. Well sometimes, I had to lift--most of the work at the time was muscle and brain, muscles--I had to lift up pieces of machine that weighed 60 pounds, 70 pounds, 80 pounds, and sometimes 100 pounds. That was almost my own weight. I loved the machines, not because they were paying me, but I just love to work with machines.

In the mean time, I had to have some knowledge of the English language. So, I went to night school, YMCA night school twice a week, two hours between seven and nine. Sometimes, it took two extra hours. The school at the YMCA donated their time. It was mostly businessman, young lawyers, and school teachers. One of my teachers name was A.L. Button. He was a high school teacher at Rayen. Rayen was the only high school at the time, on Wick Avenue, the only high school at the time; and he taught Latin.

I had a fairly good Italian education, so I picked up fast. He was surprised. Now, this YMCA school was only in the winter time. There was no summer school, only winter time, and I believe I went to school maybe two winters.

B: Do you remember what years those were? Do you remember the year you went?

R: What did you say?

B: Do you remember what years you went?

R: It was 1907, 1908, and 1909. It was three years. Yes, I went in 1907, 1908, and 1909.

My health began to fail. The work was too heavy; so by the fall of 1913, I left Sheet & Tube. I talked to several doctors in Youngstown. Then finally, my brothers told me to go back to Italy, "Maybe you'll get better there, no work. You take lots of rest." So, I went back to Italy. I was there six months. I came back in July, and I was a new man. I went back to Sheet & Tube for five, six weeks. I couldn't handle that work. It was still too heavy. So, I left Sheet & Tube, and I got a job with the street car company. So, when he fire took place, I was an employee of the street car company.

B: You operated the. . . .

R: No, I was a station master. The street car company had, at that time, a big freight business. They carried a lot of freight between Akron, Warren, Youngstown, Alliance, and Canton; and they had station masters. So, I was the freight station master for the street car company.

We ended the war on April 5, 1917. I was a republican, but I didn't vote for President Wilson. I voted for Charles E. Hughes. He had been Governor of New York at that time. It was a kind of thing by the Republican Party. Wilson was a bright man, but for some reason or another, I was a Teddy Roosevelt man. When the war

broke out, Teddy was going to send the United States Army into Germany; and for some reason or another, I agreed with Teddy.

Well, Charles E. Hughes never came out that he was in the Army if elected President. He never came out because it was risky. This was at that time, why the Germans had a big vote here. The Germans and the Irish had a big vote here; and they were all for Wilson, both groups, ethnic groups.

B: Because he was against going to war?

R: Well Wilson, what happened to Wilson, when he was elected President of the United States, he chose his Secretary of State, William James Bryan. Now, William James Bryan was an evangelist. He didn't believe in no war. So, he was powerful enough with the president and said, "We have to stay out of this war." Well, things got bad with the Kaiser. President Wilson one morning told Mr. Bryan, "I don't know. It looks like we're going to get in this war. I don't want to get in a war no more than you do, but it looks bad." Bryan said, "You're right Mr. President, but this hand of mine is not going to take a pen and write a declaration of war against Germany." He said, "I don't believe in the war." He [the president] said, "What are we going to do?" He [Bryan] said, "You know what I'll do? I'm going to resign, and you pick up a new secretary."

So, he resigned, and the new Secretary of State was Mr. Lansing. When the President told him, he said, "Mr. Lansing, you may have to sign the Declaration of War. We don't know things are getting bad." He [Lansing] said, "I'm going to do my job as the rules of the nation call for. So, if I have to sign, I'll sign it."

Okay, the democrats were playing the Irish vote and the German vote to keep the United States out of the war. Well, you couldn't blame President Wilson. That was the fault of the campaign committee and so on and so forth. So on the strength of the Irish vote and the German vote, President Wilson was reelected. He was sworn in for the second term on March 4, 1917. On April 5, 1917, he declared war on Germany. So really, he didn't keep us out of war. You couldn't help it. We had to get into the war. You couldn't help it. Any other president would have done the same thing. He didn't want a war. President Wilson didn't want a war anymore than you and I want a war, but that's the way things go.

At that time when the war started, I was Street Commissioner for this village, the Village of East Youngstown. I was Street Commissioner.

B: That would be about what year? . . . when the war started? I'm sorry.

R: Yes, it was the war. I was Street Commissioner. I left the street car company and was appointed Street Commissioner by Mr. McVeil, the mayor.

B: Did you run for that office, or were you appointed to that office?

R: Yes.

B: I mean, did you have to go up for a vote or were you appointed by the mayor?

R: Yes, Mr. McVeil was a republican, and I was a republican. We had worked for . . . , and of course, he lost. The war started. I was single. I was not married, so I got a card. I reported for duty in Columbia, South Carolina. From there, we went to Augusta, Georgia where they play that great Masters Golf [Tournament]. From Augusta, Georgia, we went to Long Island; and from there, we got on a convoy and went over to England. From England, we went over to France, and I was lucky. I was very lucky.

While I was getting some training one morning, one of the sergeants said, "You report to the personal office." I said, "What'd I do? Something wrong?" He said, "I don't know." When I reported there, I said, "Sergeant, my name is Private Ross." I said, "I've been told to report here." He said, "Do you have knowledge of a foreign language?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, sit over--well, sit over in that chair. We'll call you when we need you." So, the Army was getting anybody they could into the services, and they were bringing a lot of Italian boys from the East, from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania. Some of these boys couldn't speak English, but they were inducted. Well, to make the record, they had to have an interpreter. So, I interpreted for the Army.

Then one day, the organization I was with was scheduled to go abroad, so Lieutenant said, "Ross, your organization is scheduled to go abroad, but you don't have to go if you don't want to. We need you here in the office." I said, "Lieutenant, I didn't come into the Army to work in the office. I came in the Army to do the shooting." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "I want to go across." He said, "Well, if you want to go across go ahead." So, I got across.

B: You went to France at that point?

R: Yes, I went to France from England.

B: Do you remember where you went?

R: We went to Liverpool, from Liverpool to South Hampton. At South Hampton, we crossed the channel, went to Habra, and from Habra into France. When I got there, luck struck again. Instead of going to the front with a gun, the United States Army had figured out that the war was going to last a lot longer than it did. They were building big repair shops, fire arm repair shop. Because I had knowledge of Sheet & Tube pipes, I was put in as one of the men, as a pipe fitter to work in the repair shop. I didn't go to the front. That's better luck than being an interpreter.

Of course, the war was over on November 11, at eleven o'clock in the morning, 1918. I have a paper I bought the next day, the French Parisen, published in Paris in French. I still have that newspaper. I have it in a vault in the bank. I bought the newspaper the next morning. While I was in France, I picked up that French fast. I wish I would have picked up English as fast as I picked up that French.

The officer called me to interpret. He said, "Did you know French before you came here?" I said, "No, I picked it up from these French people here." I had a high school teacher from Akron, Ohio. I forgot his name. He was a high school teacher, very bright man. He couldn't pick up one French word. He said, "Ross, how the hell do you pick up this French?" I said, "Listen to these French people here." Well, there's quite a bit of similarity between French and Italian, but some of the words are not so close. Now, for example, meat they call "viande." Water, they call it "eau"; and "chemin de fer," that's railroad. Well no, French is close to Italian, because in Italian we say "ferroviario." So, you see the similarity.

B: Could you tell me, then, how long did you stay in France after the war?

R: We got back in July the following year, in July I believe, in 1919.

B: Then, did you go back to work for Sheet & Tube, or what did you do then when you came back?

R: I came back and of course, I got back the next day. I arrived here in the fall, in the afternoon, and I went to work, back to my job the next morning as Street Commissioner. Then, we lost the election. . . .

B: Mayor [F. J.] Warnock.

R: Yes, we lost the election. [In] 1919, was the election. [We] lost the election, and I went to Sheet & Tube. I didn't go back to the cupelling department. I went to the store department.

B: What did you do there?

R: From the store department--I was there about three years--then, I was offered a job at the bank, the bank we saw there.

B: Yes, the City Savings & Trust.

R: That bank there, that's City Savings & Trust. I was offered a job at the bank. I was the bank teller for a number of years before I went to the city office as treasurer and auditor.

B: Okay then, how long did you stay with the bank?

R: I was at the bank eight years.

B: Okay, and you left there about, let's see it would be. . . .

R: I left the bank when the bank crashed. When it closed, I left the bank and became City Auditor. I had it [the City Auditor job] as a full job. [At first], I was City Treasurer [as] a part-time job, and I had the teller job at the bank and City Treasurer job at the same time. But, when I became Auditor, I had it as a full time job, so I had to leave the bank.

B: So, you worked in the bank for eight years, starting in 1923. That would make it 1931, right?

R: Yes.

B: Then, you worked as Auditor from 1931?

R: Until 1946.

B: [Until] 1946.

R: Then, I retired.

B: Okay, do you remember the 1937 little steel strike at all?

R: [In] 1937?

B: Yes.

R: The strike in 1937 or 1936? I forgot which year.

B: I think it was in 1937, but I won't swear to it.

R: Yes, 1937 or 1936. Well, I was a politician. I had to play both sides. I had to play the workers or the voters, and I had to play the company. I was a company man. I use to say, "How the hell? That's a delicate position." It was true. It was a delicate . . . , but I was able to work it. I was elected on three different tickets. I was elected as a republican. I was elected as an independent, and I was elected as a democrat. On three parties, I was elected. You say, "How the hell can you be a company? Well, when I say "company man," I don't mean that I own a company, but I was raised under conditions of free choice.

B: In Italy?

R: Now, I never wanted to depend on another person to provide my living. I was going to provide a living myself. So that, during all of my work in the steel mills, there were no unions. In 1937, they organized the unions. I was not against, but I was not for it. I was neutral. I had to be neutral.

B: You didn't go on to the Employees Association, did you?

R: Yes, because not everyone was for unions at the time. Now these strikers--go back to the strikers--these strikers. . . .

B: Okay, the 1916 strikers, now?

R: Yes, the 1916 strikers, they were the ones under the bridge, and they were above the bridge on Church Street. There was not one American mixed in that crowd. Now, who I mean by Americans are those born and raised here, attended schools here, from parents of English stalk, German, Irish, and Swedish and so on and so forth. Now, we were considered the late immigrants. We were considered good workers and not yet . . . , as we are today . . . than it is now. Now, in this group of strikers, these agitators were very few Italians that crowded on to the bridge. There was not one Italian. It consisted of Croatians . . . , some Hungarians and some Polish. Very few Italians took a share in that strike, very few. Very few Italians took a share in the 1919 strike.

There was another strike in 1919 that lasted about three weeks; and then, of course, it busted up too. It didn't work out, but there was no destruction in 1919. The 1916 strike, it didn't look like a strike on American soil. It looked like a strike on European

soil because all Europeans took charge and took part in the strike, no American born. Of course, you say, "Well, some of the boys are American born." Yes. There were two American born Italian boys born in Brier Hill. Their name was Lerocco. They were born here, but they went out on that strike. Well, one of them was a Sheet & Tube man. His name was Joe Larocco. He had a good job at the Sheet & Tube. He was not in that bunch. And, of course, one was a police officer. Nick was a police officer.

Well, one thing I forgot to tell you is the police officer never went down there and tried to put that riot under order. There were too many people to handle. There was about fifteen, sixteen police officers. The Chief of Police was Mr. Murray. He was Village Marshall. Well, he and the Mayor talked the matter over, and they said the police officers are going to get killed. These police officers, most of them were foreign born. There were three or four born in the United States, but most of them were foreign born. So, they went down half way, and when they saw that things were getting out of hand, they said were just getting killed. We have to kill them, and they kill us. There will be more killings, so they just stayed away from it.

By eleven o'clock, the County Sheriff had called the Governor's Office, and they organized the National Guard here. The National Guard came about twelve o'clock or one o'clock in the morning. By that time, they didn't need the National Guard. These people had settled down from being drunk or being tired. Some had gone home. So really, the National Guard didn't have much work to do. It was the people themselves. It was us that have control over their own lives.

B: Is it true. According to some people, the mayor just ran out of town. He left town in a hurry when he heard about what was going on. Do you know if that's true? You know Mayor Cunningham?

R: Yes, his name was William Cunningham.

B: Well is there anything else you would like to say?

R: No.

B: Okay. Thank you.

R: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW