

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Sheet & Tube Shutdown Project

Sheet & Tube Shutdown

O. H. 139

JACK C. HUNTER

Interviewed

by

Philip Bracy

on

April 24, 1981

JACK C. HUNTER

Jack Hunter was born in Youngstown, Ohio on March 13th, 1930. He attended South High School, went on to the University of Denver where he graduated with an A.B. in 1957 and finally to Kent State where he graduated in 1960 with his M.A. He is married to Pauline, his wife, and they have five children. He was awarded the Iron Mike Award (M.P.M.C.A), and he is a member of the Pleasant Grove U.P. Church. He also holds the distinction of being the only mayor of Youngstown to be elected for four terms (1970-78).

Most of his listed employment is with the Mahoning National Bank (1960-69) and 1978 until the present time. He is a member of the American Institute of Banking, Builders Association of Eastern Ohio and Western Pennsylvania. He serves on the Republican State Central and Executive Committees.

Mr. Hunter enjoys gardening, fishing and reading.

Philip Bracy

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INTERVIEWEE: JACK C. HUNTER
INTERVIEWER: Philip Bracy
SUBJECT: Sheet & Tube Shutdown
DATE: April 24, 1981

B: This is an interview with Jack Hunter for the Youngstown State University's Oral History Program concerning the Shutdown of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube and his role as Mayor by Philip Bracy at the Mahoning National Bank Building on Friday, April 24, 1981 at 10:00 a.m.

Could you tell us a little bit about Jack Hunter and where he grew up and where he went to school and so forth?

H: Yes, I was born on March 13, 1930 in Youngstown, Ohio at St. Elizabeth Hospital. My education was primarily in the public schools of Youngstown, Sheridan, Princeton, and Youngstown South High School although I did attend St. Dominic's Elementary School for awhile, enrolled at Youngstown University upon graduation from high school and left there to spend four years in the United States Marine Corps with two tours of duty in Korea. I came back, re-enrolled at Youngstown State University, completed approximately a total of two and a half years there, then transferred out to the University of Denver and completed my undergraduate degree out there with a major in Economics, a minor in International Relations. And I came back to Youngstown for about a year and continued some employment with the, then Erie Railroad. Then when I got enough money saved I went back to college and got my Master's degree at Kent State University with a major in Political Science and a minor in Geography and got a kind of an overall emphasis on political and economic development. At the completion of my graduate

degree, I became employed by the Mahoning National Bank of Youngstown in 1960.

I worked my way up to an assistant trust officer and was elected ward councilman in Youngstown. I was elected Fifth Ward Councilman in November of 1965 as a Republican and served two terms in Council, my first term being the only elected Republican official in the City of Youngstown. And in 1969 I ran for and was elected Mayor of the City of Youngstown and served four terms, two year terms, through December 31, 1977. Which time I came back to the bank here as a Vice-President in charge of Personnel and Public Affairs.

B: How did you first get involved in public affairs? Was your father active in politics?

H: Yes, my father was paymaster at Republic Steel until his death on V-J Day in 1945, August 14. In fact, he had been approached to run for sheriff of Mahoning County back in the 1930's as, of course a Democrat. He was a big supporter of Congressman Mike Kirwin and then Governor, Frank Lauche, also, as strange as it seems, a big supporter of U.S. Senator Bob Taft. That would be Bob Taft Sr.

B: Do you recall the incidents surrounding where you were and how you found out about the shutdown of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube?

H: I had been in the hospital the week before at St. E's for an operation, a hernia as a matter of fact, and my staff had been advised by my surgeon to put me on a reduced schedule for the first week or so back. My first day back was to be that Monday and my administrative assistant, after the operation, told me that there was a meeting scheduled for Youngstown Sheet and Tube. That following Monday morning, my first day back. And I said I'd make it and I asked what it was about. My staff couldn't really find out. They were keeping a very big secret on it. So, we had concluded it was either going to be announcing a major expansion in the Youngstown area by Sheet and Tube or they were going to close down. So it was basically an either/or proposition. So we went out and all the local political dignitaries were there when Jennings Lambreth, the president then, made the announcement of the closing.

B: There was like what--county commissioners?

H: County commissioners, the mayor of Campbell, the mayor

of Struthers, the state representatives, just all the political infrastructure.

B: According to the Vindicator, on Wednesday, September 21, you had called a meeting of all your department heads. Can you kind of give us an overview of what took place at that time?

H: Well, we knew that there would be an impact because they indicated they were really going to start the phasing out immediately and hopefully have it all phased out by the end of 1977. So, we wanted some projections as to the types of revenues that were generated by the presence of the Sheet and Tube Corporation in the community. Now, it was a little deceptive there because the two plants they were closing then, well, the one plant would be the Campbell Works was not located in the corporate limits of the City of Youngstown. It would be in part in Campbell and in part in Struthers. So, we didn't lose the primary income tax from the closing, but Campbell and Struthers at the time had a one percent city income tax when we had one and a half so, anybody from Youngstown that worked in that facility would pay a half of a percent to the City of Youngstown. So, we knew our losses would not be as bad as it would be for Campbell and Struthers, but we also knew that there would be a multiplier affect on the closing of a principal industry and we wanted to determine how broad that would be.

Then of course, the unfortunate thing was, I think almost to the day of the announcement, I had one hundred days left in office having chose not to run. So, I was caught in a unique situation where all I could do would be perhaps do a little spade work for whoever would be elected mayor that following November.

Aside from preparing some economic impact studies, we also did order all our department heads to cut their expenditures as much as possible in that we were late in a calendar financial fiscal year. We put a freeze on filling all vacancies within the city. We didn't know whether the decision could be reversible, but we did urge the citizens of our own community and the greater Youngstown community to write letters to President Carter in the White House urging a national steel policy. In fact, the August before that, the month before, myself and Commissioner Tom Barrett had been instrumental in forming the Steel City's Coalition to attempt to national steel policy. It's interesting to note that about two

weeks after the announced closing, the Congress decided to form a steel coalition and followed by the U.S. Senate. So, local government, again, led the nation. And then we also instructed our Law Director Bill Higgins to work with other political subdivisions and the steel companies to see if the Russell Train decision on the cleanup of the water and air could be reversed.

We had, of course, been through the Eastgate Development and Transportation Agency and moreover the Western Reserve Economic Development Agency and Bill Sullivan had been fighting these. In fact, we, for a long while were the only city on a major river in the United States not to have an environmental quality for the Mahoning River.

B: The next event that was, at least, noted was Wednesday, September 28, at which there was a late night meeting and this is where the paper was confusing, whether it was at the White House or whether it was held in Youngstown. The article stated the fact that while you had announced that there was a task force that had come to Youngstown from Washington to deal with the shutdown of Sheet and Tube, an intergovernmental task force. This created confusion on the part of the paper because they weren't sure if there was one committee being formed or there was two because at the same time there was the discussion of a task force investigating Trumbull County as far as diversification and Mahoning County was kind of a subgroup. Could you kind of shed some light on those particular events.

H: Well, I think that was when we were trying to marshal whatever political muscle one might have at this local level. And whether there was a little competition between myself and Congressman Carney at the time, because of course, I had run against him for Congressman the prior year and there was a suspicion I might run again in 1978. We knew that there had to be more than just a Youngstown effort, but Youngstown did have to kind of be out in the lead because they had closed a plant earlier in 1977 in Pennsylvania and there would be really, in retrospect, no waves made on that one and we didn't want that same thing to happen with the closing of the Youngstown plant. So, we were kind of like Chaucer's Canterbury character that was mounting his horse riding off in four directions simultaneously. It took a little while to get a coordinated effort, which really came a little bit later when we formed the nucleus with Congressman Carney as the M.V.E.D.C., which would be the group that looked at the experience

Southbend had when Studebaker closed and some of these ESOP where the employees would buy out. We were just groping for alternatives.

B: It's kind of a highlight that Carter, from the White House on September 30, announced there would be two task forces. The only reason I brought it up with you was to see kind of what your perspective was in terms of what was going on at the time because the paper wasn't very clear on the point. That Anthony Solomon would study the steel industry problems combining the Congress, Labor, State Department, EPA, OMB, and Bob Strauss' Special Trade Group. While the second group would be Economic Development Agency to study economic diversity as far as cities like Youngstown and their impact, which would include Commerce, Labor, Housing, Health, Education and Welfare, at the time, and EPA.

Moving on from that, it was announced that a Mahoning Valley Delegation would leave for Tokyo and try to sell them the plant. What were your feelings about. . . primarily it was supposed to have evolved from a discussion between yourself, Bill Brown and Frank Coglein of BOSHI USA. According to the paper, Lesaganich and Bob Machuga plus Bill Sullivan would go to Tokyo on October 4th. Can you kind of tell me how that evolved and what's your perception of that?

H: Yes, I had gone, in late September, to New York City to see Ernie Shavers fight Muhammed Ali for the heavyweight championship of the United States. I had flown up the day of the fight and stayed there overnight. In fact, I think Ernie Shavers beat him. But, I flew back the next day to Youngstown and I think the fight was on a Thursday so I got into Youngstown late Friday afternoon, after, say, two o'clock. My acting administrative assistant had a rambling memorandum that ran to about four pages from a guy from California by the name of Frank Coglein, who said he was the American representative of BOSHI USA, which was a wholly owned subsidiary of BOSHI of Tokyo, Japan. It was part of a university group out there, which would be like a holding company. And immediately I'm on the phone to my broker and to my bankers to see if we can get a line on these people because we're rapidly approaching late Friday afternoon and the markets close and the banks close not to resurface till the following Monday. He indicated they wanted us to fly to Tokyo, Japan to meet with some of these holding companies and the Japanese MITI [Ministry of International Trade and Industry] as quickly as possible.

So, I then got Bill Brown on the phone and gave him a very quick rundown on it and he had just gotten back in his office and he found it interesting. And twenty minutes later he called back and he had also, while he was out of the office, had a call from this Frank Coglin. And also communications from Coglin were supposed to follow so, we're sitting on a bomb here. Ostentiously we were invited to Japan, but we were having a hell of a time getting a hand on them. We did find out there was this university group in Tokyo, that there was a BOSHI, USA, but how big they were, how powerful, how many dollars they were sitting on? And he was talking about sitting on literally hundreds of millions of dollars of potential investment for our valley. Then representing himself as inviting us over to Japan on their behalf the quicker you can get there. So, man, we put a mad scramble in to get passports issued. I had my own and some of our people didn't.

I met late Friday with Bill Brown from the Vindicator then I met again early Saturday morning. And ~~the kind~~ of semi-confirmation that Coglin had promised had come through, although it was kind of an indictment against American steel and that. But we, nonetheless, made our reservations and I briefed some of council late, late Saturday night. I tried to brief them all on the phone because I think we called a 7:00 a.m. meeting the next morning because the Vindicator was going with the story and we wanted council in City Hall before they saw the paper at home. Of course, all the news media were invited and present. And then of course, to make a long story short, Mr. Coglin was, perhaps, not as he represented himself. Then he backed out and said, "Well, he wasn't really inviting us, that we were just being suggested we should go," which was not what he originally said and, "that we weren't going to be the guests of BOSHI, that he would suggest we contact Ambassador Mansfield and be sponsored through the good offices of the American Embassy."

Then here's where it gets a little controversial and value judgements and hearsay. My understanding is, immediately, Washington responded very negatively to this whole thing because Jack Hunter might be a candidate for Congress the following year. I was told of telephone conversations between Washington and Tokyo that said, "Under no circumstances do you let Jack Hunter come to Japan and work out any type of a deal with the Japanese because it would cost the Democrat Party a sure seat in Congress in 1978." Now, I cannot prove that, but I have been told by third persons that

this is in fact exactly what did occur, that in fact Tip O'Neill was supposed to have called Mike Mansfield, who, of course, had been Senate Majority Leader for a number of years and told him, under no circumstances was this trip to go down.

And I later coresponded with Coglin after I got out of office when the heat and the dust had subsided, and well, I don't know whether the man is believable or not. He did tell me there was unreal pressure out of Washington to kill any trip on my behalf, that he, in a sense, implied he walked into a hornet's nest when he talked to Jack Hunter.

B: Did anybody ever eventually go check that possibility out?

H: No. This thing quickly fell apart, needless to say. We didn't know, at that time, late September, early October, whether it was political. So, I did write a letter to Dr. Matsuma, who was president of Tokai University in Tokyo, Japan. I don't know whether it would be worthwhile to read the letter or not. Maybe give a few statements from it.

B: Read the highlights of it.

H: I just started off by introducing myself as Mayor of the City of Youngstown, related that I had had a phone call on Friday September 30th from Frank Coglin who said he was the sales manager, Fastener Division, BOSHI USA, a wholly owned subsidiary of BOSHI Enterprises, Tokyo, Japan. And that it was stated that the parent corporation was communicating through its U.S. subsidiary. So, he identified Tokyo as using him as a media to communicate with us here in Youngstown extending an invitation to me as the Mayor of the City of Youngstown and the Youngstown Vindicator to come to Tokyo, Japan to participate in press conferences with the parent company, the BOSHI of Tokyo Institute and that they would have the possibility of bringing Japanese trading companies into Youngstown because they sat on tons of money. And then I pointed out that Mr. Coglin's story kept changing and it was creating quite a bit of political controversy both here and in Japan. Mr. Coglin did say that it was creating a row in Japan and would preempt the Japanese government's roles. However, the idea still looks good. And then I suggested I go through Mansfield and Mansfield suggested there would be a ton of preliminary work to do before such a meeting could be called. Very, very frustrating.

- B: At the 7:00 a.m. meeting on Sunday, October 2nd was just that particular item gone into? Was there any other issues? And were all of the councilmen present?
- H: As I recall, six of them were present and one came in a little later and representatives of steel were there, representatives of the Vindicator were there, representatives of some of the unions were there. This hit like a lightning bolt on a clear blue, sunny day. And of course, the Vindicator gave a major front page spread. Of course, if you would have read the Vindicator a week later, you would have wondered whatever happened to the trip to Tokyo.
- B: On October 4th, that Tuesday, Bill Sullivan had announced that there were delays because Mike Mansfield said there was a lot of prep work and that the steel dumping cases, which were, I guess, in the courts had some impact. But, from what you're saying, it doesn't seem like that really was the case.
- H: No, I think we were, in a sense, garbaging it up because we just didn't know what happened. We had this communication through their U.S. subsidiary and then suddenly it wasn't an invitation, it was a suggestion, and maybe it wasn't really just a suggestion, but it was maybe an idea. They did a 180 degree turn. They wanted us in Tokyo immediately and then suddenly they didn't want us in Toyko and that's where we believe that there were phone calls made because I had some sources and information in Washington and they as much as told me that there was no way that Jack Hunter was going to get to go to Japan and save the area's steel industry. And I'm not saying it was saveable. I don't want to imply that. But, if it was to be saved, it was going to be done by a different political party and a different politician than myself.
- B: Wednesday, October 5th, there was a meeting with yourself, Giles I believe, the top developer for Governor Rhodes, and four EDA officials, Phil Level from the Akron EDA, John Gibson, Paul Little, and Mary Nafer from Chicago, the last three. If you recall what took place in that meeting, could you kind of fill me in on it?
- H: I think they were just to offer all their good offices. They would do whatever they could. Giles said they would help facilitate the benefits that the State of Ohio would have coming here and the Federalies, the Trade Adjustment Act would be applicable in this for the laid off workers because they started laying off workers

immediately. Suddenly one day you had a job and the next day you didn't have a job. That was an economic shock wave.

B: Do you recall if there was any of the councilmen or did anybody else attend?

H: No, I think I probably had Bob Machuga there and Attorney Higgins and maybe John Benning as a finance rep. I'm not sure whether John was at that meeting or not.

B: Just for the record, Bob Machuga was your CDA director?

H: Yes.

B: Okay. Moving to Moday, October 10th, there was a meeting just in your office with Bill Bats and Howard Shepard, who were involved with the Studebaker in that Southbend situation. It was a closed meeting. Could you kind of tell me how many people attended and if it wasn't a large number, who attended?

H: I don't recall who had been in attendance at that meeting, but they did relate how the community of Southbend had marshalled their forces when the Studebaker announced their closing some years before. Now there had been the discussion of the ESOP which is Employee Stock Ownership Plan and how there had been legislation to give some incentive to that type of thing at the federal level, the help that had been administered by the Economic Development Agency, which was, at that time, in its infancy.

B: Do you remember the specifics of the plan that they kind of outlined for you?

H: I think, really, they didn't outline any specifics of any plan except they had talked about Southbend Forge and some of the attractions that were there. Except, at that time, the economy was kind of on an upturn in Southbend and nationwide and, of course, we were still in the throws of a recession then.

B: What years were they talking about as far as when they went through their renaissance?

H: I want to say 1972, 1973. I'd have to go back and check those dates.

B: The following day, from that meeting evidently, it was decided, I guess, that seven people would be the guiding

group or adhoc committee; yourself as Chairman, Jim Griffith from United Steelworkers, Clarence Barnes from the Urban League, I guess Mrs. Renzy from the League of Women Voters and there were three other positions I guess, that weren't filled in. How were you chosen Chairman? Was there a vote?

H: No, I think Congressman Carney picked me.

B: Oh, okay.

H: Which then caused absolute, utter chagrin because the closing of the mill was not in Youngstown. It was in Campbell and Struthers and the mayors of Campbell and Struthers were not represented. They were about ready to go into orbit. They're Democrats and I'm a Republican. I'm fighting for their inclusion in it because, basically, if it was going to hurt Youngstown so much it was going to hurt them ten times as much because they were losing, not only prime industrial land, which would be reappraised as it was, both for the school revenues and for the general government operations, but also have a devastating impact on their city income taxes.

B: Do you know if these was some rationale behind Congressman Carney having Youngstown as the lead. The impact, from all we'd seen, really wasn't going to hit Youngstown like Campbell and Struthers were hit.

H: I don't know. Some people say it was political. Here's the Congressman, who had defeated me the year before, magnanimously putting me in charge of this committee. Then on the other side of the coin you could say, the stories weren't by-lined "Campbell of Struthers," they were all coming out internationally because I was being interviewed by the European radio and TV and newspapers and Asian newspapers and TV were coming in and out of the office almost on an hourly basis. In fact, as a sidelight, some of my friends had youngsters attending universities in Japan and they were seeing the Mayor of Youngstown on the six o'clock news in Japan translated into Japanese. (Laughter)

B: Some people even said there was more press overseas than there was in the United States.

I guess the first meeting was Tuesday, October 18. There seemed to be some problem about the agenda. It seemed like Attorney Stevens I guess, who was Congressman Carney's aide. . .?

- H: Yes, he as Administrative Assistant in Youngstown.
- B: Seemed to be stressing findings himself and I guess there were two major items that were discussed. a CDA grant and possibly a \$100,000--I'm not sure if it was a private line grant or what it was at that point. It wasn't clear in the article. What are your recollections of that?
- H: I had come in with an agenda, which I don't think they anticipated I would. And, of course, mine was kind of a very action oriented agenda and theirs was a kind of planning agenda. And of course, Griffith was strongly allied with the Steelworkers being former District 26 Director and a very big supporter of Congressman Carney. Again, to put it in the proper prospectives, I'm a lame duck mayor. I did not seek re-election. As soon as the November election was over, there would be a new mayor elected in the City of Youngstown. And I even, I think, that day indicated that whoever was elected mayor of Youngstown that I would resign and suggest that he be selected to take my place on that committee. Congressman Carney, through his intermediaries, kept indicating he didn't want that to happen.
- B: When you say you came in with an active agenda, what kind of things were you looking at?
- H: Economic development is really twofold. The major economic development is going to, of course, come from local plants expanding, growing withing the corporate limits and then the second one would be attracting new industry into the community. Well, most of your economic development is going to be the first type, local plants expanding and growing. So then, I felt that we should put an emphasis in facilitating growth of local industry, but, because we had this large work force, approximately, they were kicking around the figure 5,000. Then there's the Brier Hill Works up the river and the McDonald Works a little further up the river that could be next on the hit list by Sheet and Tube and US Steel respectively. I felt that we had to do something rather dramatic and fast and they seemed to want to sit back and study the thing.
- I see the need for study and that, but I also see the need for action, because our thinking in the House was that we were the hot item at the time. Youngstown then might be replaced in the minds of people if there was another plant closing someplace else. So, we wanted to operate as quickly as we could to get whatever we could. And we kind of felt there were those who just wanted to have kind of a holding action until I was

until I was out of office so I wouldn't get credit for anything.

B: As I mentioned, there were three people who still weren't named to the committee. At that particular meeting, had the other three people. . .I believe Commissioner George Bindas came on board at some time.

H: Yes, Bindas came on board and I had proposed that. I felt that we had to have the mayor of Campbell and the mayor of Struthers incorporated in it.

B: Did they attend this particular meeting?

H: Yes, if I recall correctly, I unilaterally invited them. See, you had a committee that I was Chairman of and Congressman Carney, through Paul Stevens, was calling all the shots on it. It was kind of a neither fish nor fowl.

B: The next thing that was noted in the process was that there was to be, on October 20 and 21, I guess, conference--for lack of a better word--in Washington sponsored by Mrs. Kreps.

H: Secretary of Commerce.

B: Yes, Secretary of Commerce. Could you kind of tell me what was dealt with there and what your participation was?

H: Well, I was working closely with Bill Sullivan and the Steel Coalition, which would be cities and counties with steel facilities in them that might be impacted by the failure to have a national steel policy. So, we were promoting that and also, perhaps, unfair dumping, which of course, later came out in the Solomon and Strauss recommendations that they have trigger-price mechanisms. And of course, the steelworkers used that opportunity to have a massive rally in Washington and a march on the White House, which was one of the most tragic things I ever saw.

They had circulated literally thousands of petitions through the Valley here to save the plants and the White House refused to take the petitions. I was standing at the White House gate and the things I heard. . .Steelworkers, who have a long, rich tradition of voting solid Democrat, I heard the President called things I had never heard a President called before or since. They would not even physically accept the petitions and take them into the White House. Howard Metzenbaum later got them

in later on that afternoon, but those steelworkers were just shocked and aghast. They were picketing and just no response. The only representative that would come out and talk to them was a uniformed White House security guard.

B: First of all, let me clear up something. The way I'm reading not only the articles, but some of the other material that was available at the time, the conference actually grew out of initiatives for you just to meet with others in Washington with some of the departments. Is that correct?

H: Yes.

B: Okay, so that two-day conference, as it were, could you give me a little background on that? Do you recall who you talked to or how did you kind of get the ball rolling as it were?

H: We used the good offices of, again, the Western Reserve Economic Development Agency with Bill Sullivan and also some of the other mayors and commissioners of all the cities and counties that had been down in Washington in August when we formed the Steel Community's Coalition. And again, we were looking at two things. We were looking at a national steel policy that would save steel and also a program that would address itself specifically to the Allenwood closing outside of Philadelphia and the Sheet and Tube closing of the Campbell Works.

B: Were there indications at that time that the Brier Hill shutdown and the others were coming, was there any indications that, at that particular time, following the shutdown, about October or so, was there any indication that they might shut down the others?

H: Sheet and Tube was not willing to make a long term commitment as to the maintenance of the Brier Hill Works. So, I think everybody felt like when you lived in the apartment, you heard the one shoe drop on the ceiling above you and it was just a matter of time before the other one dropped.

B: Okay, at the October 20 and 21 meeting, my understanding was there was a meeting with EDA, which lasted about an hour and a half I guess in which Harry Meshel implored George Tablack with questioning why the ad-hoc committee didn't include Lowellville? Do you recall that?

H: Yes. That was just the natural sequence to my questioning

early on, why it didn't include Campbell and Struthers. Lowellville had had, I think it was the Sharon Steel facility down there that was closed like fifteen, twenty years ago.

B: And, I guess somewhere during the discussions that Ed Stanton mentioned the fact that he had recognized the ad-hoc group as being the representative. Was there any kind of negative reaction about all this confusion among the Fed's? Did they seem to feel that there was a need for the group to get its own act together?

H: We had an uncomfortable feeling that maybe through the good offices of the Congressman they were having meetings prior to the meetings they had with us. So, it was being orchestrated in spite of us so to speak. That they were going through the proper motions of meeting with us, but that there were book and deals being cut at a different level than we were operating at.

B: At that particular meeting, the October, I believe it was the 21st of October meeting, you had a proposal for dealing with Milton Dam. Could you tell us about that particular proposal and others that you may have had with you?

H: I think basically everybody that went down there had the thought in mind, well here's the golden opportunity to shake loose federal dollars whether it be from the Economic Development Agency or whether it would be special enactments to meet some of the indigenous local needs, simply because we were on the front page of the paper and on the 6:00 local and world news day after day after day. The iron might be right to strike with. So, some of the county commissioners were talking water line extension and sewer lines for opening areas for economic development that might have, prior to that time, been a low priority that now maybe might be snuck in as a higher level priority. It was, again, Chaucer's Canterbury character mounting his horse riding off in four different directions.

B: October 26, Wednesday, 1977, you addressed the Steel Community's Coalition. You're quoted as saying that you were, although looking for a consultant, one of the things that might be advantageous might be the employee takeover, it might be the way to go as far as the re-opening of the mill. A) Is that accurate? and B) Could you recall what your thoughts were as far as. . .

H: Well again, it's the case of going off in all directions.

The Southbend Forge had been kicked around. There had been a couple articles in both the Youngstown and the Warren paper on their experience there. So, we felt that it was an alternative that we had to look at. We just felt we had to look at every possible alternative to save jobs in the Valley and that was one that we'd have to look at.

B: The following day, on Thursday, October 27, the paper quotes you as meeting with local presidents and you had identified the Southbend Development Bank and how that operated I guess, you had mentioned the possibility of the Title 9 EDA Grants?

H: Yes.

B: Do you recall who attended that meeting? Was it, basically, the local union presidents of the Sheet and Tube?

H: I think it was the local union presidents. I'll tell you that was probably one of the wildest five or six weeks until after the election, visiting Congressmen and visiting Senators coming in and delegation after delegation of Federal administrators from both Columbus and Chicago, the State people coming in from Columbus interspersed with all the national and international news media coming in and wanting to do specials on the plight of Youngstown, Ohio. Oh, I'll tell you, for a guy that the doctor said, "Once you get out of the hospital, take it easy for two weeks," I'm surprised that I didn't burst the stitches on that hernia operation.

B: On Sunday, November 6, Youngstown City Council passed a resolution, which you sponsored, I believe, to be forwarded to Governor Rhodes about Youngstown's involvement and several counties to be involved in the Appalachian Commission for two major reasons. One was to diversify industry through upgrading the highway systems, water, and so on and so forth for industrial parks and the second one was to fill in mine shafts, which I guess were just starting to open up.

H: Yes, we had had our first mine shaft open up here, oh, it must have been June of 1977 when I was in Tucson, Arizona for the U.S. Conference of Mayors Meeting. In fact, I got a call from the fire chief and he said, "You'll never believe what's happening here." And they could hardly believe it. In fact, the first one was about a block and a half from my home.

B: Really?

- H: Yes, If you're familiar with the Appalachian Commission, that was something, through political clout, that was created. It was kind of a pork barrel thing for areas that were identified in Appalachia with high levels of unemployment, special fundings and special considerations for programs and projects for there. Now, it's a project that if I were in Congress I'd probably vote against, but, I felt it was a tool we had to explore. And again, I hate to keep repeating myself. It was just that we were looking for anything, going through the book page after page seeing if there was anything that might help Youngstown.
- B: Was the idea behind the, let's say, water and sewer lines for industrial parks, was there any talk then? In your own mind, was it to possibly, the development of the industrial park that took place later on and I guess it's part of . . .
- H: CASTLO?
- B: Yes.
- H: Yes, basically to be able to offer the amenities to possible developers to facilitate their coming in whether it would be water lines, sewer lines, rail spurs, roads in and out.
- B: Okay, and as far as the mine shafts, did you have to qualify for the Appalachian Commission to get the funding for that?
- H: No. There was no funding for that at either federal or state level since there has been some funding that Youngstown has participated in it.
- B: November 15, the ad-hoc group, I guess, by then had been incorporated as the Mahoning Valley Economic Development Committee?
- H: Yes. M.V.E.D.C., as they call it.
- B: And the group interviewed three potential consultants, Charles Berden from Louisville, Kentucky; Charles Minchall from Batelle Institute; and Howard Rice, former assistant to former Cleveland Mayor Ralph Perk. Who was responsible for selecting a consultant and how did Mr. Minchall end up being the consultant?
- H: Again I think we, in the ad-hoc committee, had established a subcommittee to look at some of the people that would

have the credentials. We were attracting both the charlatans and the good guys at that time because they saw the possibility of massive doses of possible federal dollars coming into the area because this Congressional district had given President Carter one of his largest majorities in the United States. He had won our Congressional district by 39,000 or 40,000 votes, which was an impressive margin of victory where the Congressman had won it by 4,224 votes. And it was one of the few Congressional districts in the United States where the Democrat candidates for President ran ahead of a Congressman, who was an incumbent Democrat. So, we felt that we were right for. . . Jimmy Carter owed us one. He had been in here the Sunday before the primary and he had been in right before the general election and et cetera. So, everybody was seeing the possibility of big federal bucks being laid on Youngstown. Of course, they never were. They got to the end of the story while we're still narrating the story.

B: Was the Batelle Institute selected because it had more expertise than the other? I'm not clear whether these individuals represented organizations or just themselves.

H: They were basically people who had felt they had had experience in federal grantsmanship et cetera and preparing federal plans and paper. I think we felt that the Batelle Institute had a world reknowned reputation and had a lot of private corporate clients that they might help steer towards us, plus they were Ohio oriented.

B: Okay, I have to back up one step. I said that, at that time, M.V.E.D.C. had been incorporated and I guess evidently the corporation papers had been filed, but it wasn't till that Friday, which would have been the 18th that your actually--according to the paper, I don't know if they're correct.

The next thing I wanted to ask you about was December 1st, there was kind of an interesting article on that all groups are invited by yourself and Congressman Carney to join in M.V.E.D.C. effort. I kind of get a sense that since you had mentioned Struthers and Campbell and trying to get other groups involved, that you had already been pushing for that, but there had been a reluctance by the Congressman's office or his agents as far as bringing in more people. Is that an accurate analysis of what. . .?

- H: What I think happened there, everything was going just lickety-split, hell bent for leather. I think I got one up on Congressman Carney when I suggested he had ignored the two communities that were most impacted by the plant closing. Well, I don't think he wanted to respond immediately to me as though he were responding to Jack Hunter. So, I think they set that on the back burner, my concern there, till December because my original thing had been in October, so that then it could look like it was a new idea by the Congressman, a new initiative.
- B: I guess what I'm still kind of confused, because I guess it was the October 10th meeting at Higbees, if I'm not mistaken, and it was the November meeting where the mayors were, I guess, invited by you? I don't know.
- H: Yes, they were invited by me.
- B: So, that's where it was kind of confusing, I think, for some people to say they were there and yet, there was criticism within the formation of council itself because they seemed to be left out. So, I just wanted to clarify that point, that you had invited them rather than them having been formally invited I guess.
- H: Yes, because I invited them when they brought in all the honchos from Washington and Chicago on, well, it was Veteran's Day, November 11, 1977. I had invited these other mayors and people there and there was a question for a while whether they were going to let the press into the meeting, whether they were going to let these other mayors into the meeting and that. It's a very strange feeling to be chairing a meeting and not be the Chairman.
- B: Was there any point where the Ecumenical Coalition was in contact with you or you were in touch with them before they even had the worker buy-out scheme when they were trying to get their act together?
- H: I think they were kind of in their semi-formative stages in 1977. I don't really think they got their act together until early 1978 when Stanton Lynd and those people, which would not have been my choice.
- B: What do you think of community owned, worker buy-out? What is your own personal opinion of that?
- H: I think it's an option you have to look at. I'm a

rather conservative individual and this can give one corporation an unfair advantage as it relates to other corporations. So, from that context, I maybe don't like it, but I think when you have a major problem you have to look at all the options and alternatives.

- B: Okay, we've discussed up to about December 1, 1977. Were there a lot of meetings or was there kind of a slack-off because of Christmas? I mean, I know that that can set in.
- H: Well, there were meetings going on, but then I was being more and more excluded from them. And they were being set up by Congressman Carney for, then Mayor-elect J. Philip Richley.
- B: December 16th, the Beetle Report came out and there was the announcement of the formation of the Mahoning Steel Corporation by Bill Sullivan.
- H: Yes.
- B: I'd like to get your reaction to the Beetle Report. Did you actually read it or were you briefed on it?
- H: I was more briefed on it than read it because it came out, I think, at that meeting that it had been prepared. I don't think everybody had seen it at the time. I think they gave, like little abstracts on it.
- B: Did you, like say for instance, take that to somebody, let's say an industry, and say, "What do you think of this?" I mean, was there a kind of a feedback? I realize you were in the process of going out of office.
- H: Yes, well Bill Sullivan and I have always been extremely close. In fact, Youngstown had established the Western Reserve Economic Development Agency and then had incorporated Mahoning County into it and the, ultimately, incorporated Trumbull County into it. So, I had a great deal of faith in Bill and there was a mutual credibility back and forth.
- B: Finally, what was your impression--I realize this was after you left office--but the National Steel Research Center? Did you think it really had a chance to form?
- H: No. I never really did, the same way with the Steel Museum and all those other kind of flaky little things.
- B: Is there any event or any incident that you'd like to

relate that I haven't asked you about that probably should be recorded and I have overlooked?

- H: Well, I think the tragedy, the thread that ran through the whole thing was the lateness of the Federal Government in recognizing the problem. You look for leadership from the federal level and from the state level and really, the initial leadership, by default, fell to the local level. And I think, if anything, the interesting fact was that the local communities, the counties and the cities formed the Steel Community's Coalition in August of 1977, and were the, asking and petitioning the Federal Government for a national steel policy, which we never really did get. Because, we saw the prospect, as you get into the 1980's the short-fall in the ability to improve steel in the United States. This is a basic industry that has national defense overtones and there was just nothing there.
- B: Okay, I'd like to thank you for taking the time this morning for the interview.
- H: Oh, my pleasure.

END OF INTERVIEW