YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Depression

Personal Experience

O. H. 962

PAUL H. LUCE

Interviewed

by

Dolores Z. Margiotta

on

June 2, 1976

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INTERVIEWEE: PAUL H. LUCE

INTERVIEWER: Dolores Z. Margiotta

SUBJECT: unemployment, college, cost of living

DATE: June 2, 1976

M: This is an interview with Mr. Paul Luce for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the Depression, by Dolores Margiotta, at 521 Mehlo Lane, Youngstown, Ohio, on June 2, 1976, at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Luce, what do you remember about the Depression?

L: Well, the first thing I remember about it was we were in Columbus, Ohio, where I was working on my master's degree. Before we went down there we had purchased the furniture for our house. We wanted to go, we were going to set up housekeeping. When we got back in the fall we couldn't get our money out of the Home Savings because everything was impounded. It was frozen, you know? Naturally we were somewhat chagrin and upset because here we had bought our furniture and we didn't know what we were going to do about it. But we did go to the stores. What they did, they took a transfer. In other words they just took the account and transferred that account from the account we had at the Home Savings to their account and so forth. So we got our furniture and got started. I remember when the banks closed. I remember we had $31 in hand. I guess at this time $31 would be not very much, in those days it was enough. Of course, everybody, I can remember the day that that closed because at that time I was principal of Section, no of Elm Street School. The women were all coming in. They did several things. They got together, brought their sewing machines. We went around the school room by room and found out which children's clothes needed repairing and they would go up, and these women if they

had something would maybe fix them something new. Or if the clothing would just need repair they would turn it over to the right women and she would repair the clothing, and fix up the clothing. We also had on hand shoe repair man. This man looked at all the children's shoes and if possible he repaired the shoes. Then they also had a soup kitchen. I don't remember whether this was the same day or another day. But I do remember that they had one day in which the women got together, people that had something to go on. They got together and made soup. Of course on this day we fed all the chidren in the school.

M: Now when you talk about these women and the men was the shoe repair man, were these teachers?

L: No, these were citizens of the community who were interested in helping out. Because I think one thing the Depression did and that is everybody was in it together. Because naturally if the banks close everybody's money was tied up. Everybody I think felt very close to everybody else because everybody was a handicap. As a consequent, it seemed to me that they did a lot more for each other than we ordinarily do because the way things were. Then, of course, I think another thing I lived through the terrible times with my folks. My dad was a farmer in western Ohio. Really the Depression as I remember it, of course I was not so much involved because I'd gone off to school, but I was back here in the summertime. It seems about 1921 the Depression on the farm started, and from 1921 on down the people in that community and many places in the country as I remember lost their farms just one after the other because they could no longer get any financing. They couldn't get any help because the banks were in bad shape too. I remember in the township where my folks lived.

M: Where is that?

L: That was in western Ohio in Paulding County. When I was in high school everybody in that township which was Cream Township, part of Paulding County, everybody had their own farm. They all were in process of purchasing their own farm. By the time the Depression was over there wasn't a single farm left in that township in the hands of the private owners. Every farm was in the hand of one of the stock banks or something like that which had loaned the money to buy the farm and of course were taking them back over. Of course it was a very starved

time because I helped my dad for instance cut down trees when I was a kid. We sort of dug this farm out of the trees, out of the woods, you know? Then you lose it, it's gone. It's not real. All that work. It's a real heartbreaking experience. As I say I wasn't there all that time but I was there enough to savor the fact that this was a very saddened time. Then my folks both died in 1934. My mother died in January and my dad died in February. Because the bank which had taken over had put down some new regulations about what they were going to have to do if they were going to stay on the farm. This is the farm my dad had built for nothing. He didn't feel he could do them, his son, my brother, who was staying on the farm with him they said, "Well they'd have to move." He said he would go out in his casket first, which he did. There was nothing to live for. So they both died seven weeks apart. Of course at that time there was nothing, I mean when they died there was nothing left of anything. Now we talk about hard times and so forth, yet when I think about the income and what most of us have to live with we're wealthy people compared to what they were at that time.

M: Ok. Getting back when you talked about teaching at Elm Street school. Do you recall your salary at the time?

L: Elm? Not exactly. I haven't thought about it, but it was somewhere about $1,500 or $1,600. I started out at $1,350 in 1926. We had very few increases. I remember we used to think if we got a $50 a year increase that was right good. I don't remember exactly but I would think it probably be in that neighborhood of $1,500 or $1,600. I do know we were able. . . At one time we saw a sale on sheets. I remember we were able to buy sheets for $.27, a bed sheet. Can you imagine?

M: Not for that amount.

L: Of course the tales that you heard as a teacher from the children you were aware of the ones that were really hard up. You can tell by the fact that they would come, the lassitude of the child, you were aware of the fact they weren't getting enough to eat. We noticed things like this. If we did we got in touch with some of these women who were taking care of these needs. If possible somebody would scrounge around and see if they could find somewhere, something somewhere to help these people, so they would at least maybe have a good meal. I remember at that time also, I didn't see this, but my brother told me about it. He lived on the farm at the

time this was going on. We had many riders who lived, still do live in Detroit and this area Detroit and Toledo and so forth, during those years they were always dropping around past the farm home, because the farm people were hard up. They generally had food. Their own food, bedrooms. They had sauerkraut that they kept through the whole winter, apples and potatoes that they had buried, this sort of thing. So that maybe they would stay for a day or two and at least get their stomach full for a few days. That's simply all it was because my brother said he saw many of our cousins and relatives at that time that he hadn't seen for years. Simply because they were plain hungry.

M: At least they knew where the food was.

L: Then I remember we didn't get a pay. I mean when the banks were closed, they had a bank holiday and we had to go to through the Mahoning Bank and they paid us in something like script. Which we could get in that amount of money when the banks were again open.

M: Did you ever get your money back then?

L: Oh yes.

M: How long do you recall that that particular bank stayed closed?

L: I don't remember. The bank holidays were a matter of record, but I don't remember how long they did stay closed.

M: Did you ever have to go without receiving your salary at that time?

L: No. I think we were very fortunate, because many people, I remember one of our neighbors at the school, down at Elm Street School. He often came along over the fence when I would be supervising the playground. He said, "You lucky teachers. At least you have an income coming in." That was the truth. Although it wasn't much it was a steady income. I suppose it sort of evens up, sometimes teachers don't have as high as others, but at least there was. . .

M: A time when they had work.

L: When they had work. Of course, I had two mothers telling me, I remember that specifically, they were so glad their children had the school to come to during the

day. When the children come to school during the day they let the temperature of their homes go down during the day while the children weren't home. They'd wear coats and sweaters and so forth while their children were at school where it was comfortable. When they came home in the evening later they would try to make the house comfortable again, but they saved the fuel during the time their children were in school.

M: That's right.

L: Of course everybody had all sorts of events to raise money to put in the fund to help. I remember one year, maybe more than one year, Campbell Memorial High School and Struthers High School had a football game, which was a benefit football game, of course the money went into the fund to help needy children.

M: That was good. Do you remember for instance during the Depression when you as a teacher, where were you living at the time?

L: At that time we were living on Creed Street in Struthers.

M: Was it difficult then for you to manage on the money that you were getting?

L: No. No. We didn't live in luxurious style on that amount of money. But there was never any problem, I mean you could buy. Everything was relative, in other words the prices were low so was the salary at that time. Compared to a lot of others at least we had money to spend, which many didn't have. I suppose. I don't know about economics, but I suppose many people, since they didn't have anything I suppose this depressed the price of things naturally even more. We probably got the benefits, so we did have some money to buy things at that time.

M: That's great.

L: Our family, I don't think, at that time ever really felt the real pinch.

M: Now you were living in Struthers and teaching in Struthers at the same time, how did you get back and forth to work?

L: Walked. Mostly walked.

M: You walked. You didn't have a car at that time?

L: Yes we had a car. We had bought a car.

M: Do you recall what that cost?

L: $500.

M: $500. What kind of car was it?

L: It was a Ford, a little Ford Runabout. It was quite classy looking. The Walter Brothers car salesman in Struthers and we got this second-hand car. It had red wheels, red and black and it had a rumble seat in it. Of course we were quite the darlings of our nieces and nephews because when we went anyplace or were nearby they always had to have a ride in the rumble seat. But that was $500, and we did have the car but I was ambitious enough to walk back and forth, which wasn't too far. I guess it was a distance of nearly a mile from the school. Exercise was good and you saved a little bit of money that way.

M: During that time a lot of people did walk because they had no transportation. The people that lived in Struthers, for instance, how would they get say for instance to downtown Youngstown? Did they have trolley cars?

L: Trolley cars were still running I believe. When they went out of existence I cannot remember.

M: Or did they have a street car?

L: Street car, yes.

M: Street cars going down the highway.

L: Came down Poland Avenue right into Struthers.

M: Yes.

L: When we first lived here that's what we had for transportation.

M: Has Struthers changed any compared to then as to now? Is it a bigger town, say larger?

L: Oh, it's larger.

M: Is it larger?

L: Of course the housing area has grown way out. At that time, of course, it was down along the river mostly in that area. Then had built up as far, well Overlook was the park they built at that time. Now of course it's way on clear out to Hamilton Lake. That whole area is full of houses in there now which at that time was fields. I know when we used to go on hikes with our classes and so forth it was all farm land, I don't know.

M: Now did you during the Depression take any of the students on hikes or any kind of field trips, or did they do anything like that or did the cost of money prohibit that?

L: We didn't dare take any trips, if we did anything we did a hike. But Yellow Creek Park you know is right handy there. It's right near the school. We had special picnics. At the end of the year we had a big picnic, the school picnic. We had all kinds of races and prizes. I think all the teachers took their children on hikes down through the park whenever they could.

M: It was in a good locality because it was so handy and close to the park.

L: Yes. Right. It was only about two blocks from the park.

M: Do you remember what a typical school day was like for you then?

L: It was for me because at that time I was a principal, and in those days since there wasn't much money, the principal taught class full time, and had no secretary.

M: Really.

L: Which is the way it is different from now. Because when you teach a class full time then try to take care of your principal duties and also take care of correspondence and so forth something has to give somewhere. That's the way it was. I remember during the Depression our classes at Elm Street ran from 45 to 55. I remember the largest class I had was 54 and I had to get the custodian to get extra benches from somewhere, desks. We filled them clear to the wall.

M: Now is this the elementary school?

L: Elementary, yes.

M: Now when did they start dropping out? Did you have any dropouts then during the Depression?

L: Well, I wasn't working in the high school, you see nor junior high. I worked at the elementary so I really can't answer. I don't know whether the dropout rate was higher or less in those days. I have no idea.

M: Well, at that time being principal, you of course had to sometimes punish the children. How would you do that? Today there's no corporal punishment. You don't paddle a child.

L: Sometimes the boys got a paddling. Of course, when we did the paddling we never did it without saying to the child. First get them and have a conference with them. Talk with them, ask them if they didn't understand what they did wrong and then they should have a penalty. I always said, "What would you rather do, would you rather get paddled or would you rather have me call up your mother and ask her to come to school to talk this over with me? Quite a lot of the boys would choose the paddling rather than have mom come to school. Of course, we kept a record of it so if we had to call home we would tell her what had happened. Every once in awhile I'll meet boys now and they'll say, "Remember the time you paddled me?" I'll say, "No. I don't remember you specific." We never did it, I think the difference has to be that you can't do it in malice. The child has to have a part in it and if can accept it as a part of his penalty, he accepts it. It worked out pretty well. Withholding privileges, one of the worst things you could do in those days would be to have a child stay in at recess time. To go out and play at recess time was a big thing. This may not have been a good thing healthwise. I don't know. At that time it didn't strike us so once in awhile if the child had done something that he shouldn't he would stay inside during the recess period.

M: Did they have playground Equipment?

L: Yes. Well, we had to buy that ourselves. When I was at Elm Street, and that was during the Depression years also, we had a very active PTA group. They were quite interested in the school. I remember during those years, every year that PTA group put on a spaghetti supper because many of the people were of Italian

parentage in that area. We would put on a spaghetti dinner for 25¢. We served spaghetti, rolls, and we also had a dessert because we went uptown and bought day-old rolls and cakes and we gave them a dinner for 25¢, which, of course, was very well received. That group of women knew that I liked pictures because one thing I tried to do every school I was in was to make sure that the school had pictures because I think they are so necessary in a school to make it home-like. That PTA group brought me one of the lovely pictures which I got when Elm Street School closed, which I now have in my home. That's nice. The PTA helped us. They raised some money and so forth. They helped buy balls and bats and kick balls and this sort of thing for the children because the Board of Education at that time couldn't afford to buy those things. They had all they could do to pay the teachers.

M: At that time, the Board of Education, were they elected like they are today?

L: Yes, the same procedure.

M: Getting back to the Depression again, as a young married man at that time and having an income what did you do for entertainment, do you remember?

L: We started playing bridge back in 1931. I think that was the year we started playing bridge. The first bridge group to which we belonged. We did a lot of reading. Of course, the radio was quite a gadget in those days. It was fun to listed to certain radio programs. We had church activities to which we belonged. We belonged to a different church at that time. I was involved in the Sunday school activities there, and we had a lot of family activities. We're all young, young families and so forth and there was just a lot of family get-togethers.

M: What did you do for instance on a typical family outing?

L: Get together and talk and eat, I guess that was the main thing.

M: Did everyone bring something?

L: Yes, most everybody would take a dish. Relatives in this area we knew, none of them were without work completely because a number of them were professional people that weren't without some employment. To say

that we were involved in the thing directly in the version would be not quite right because we were in it but yet not directly in it because we were not without a job. Somebody was telling me the other day that they didn't have a job and I said, "Well. . ." I tried to put myself in that position and think what it would be like and I do the best I can. I don't suppose one could ever really sense what it's like not to have a job until you don't have one. Of course, in the Depression many people would lose their job and then lose their home and then lose everything. No wonder there were lots of suicides.

M: You are talking about suicides, did they do this because of the hardships that they encountered and they couldn't face them?

L: I don't think so, I don't know because I never talked to any of them. At that time there were many. I guess more of them occurred among people that had more mean that lost it all. I especially remember reading so much about many of financiers and the bankers and so forth in the East, many of those people. As you look back they had, many of them, great means. Many of them lost everything they owned in the stock market crash. I remember that. Of course, I didn't have any stock at the time but I remember when the papers came on the street that night and they hushed terror there was throughout the town because many people lost all their savings and everything. They could buy a margin in those days and suddenly it's all gone.

M: Getting back to Youngstown, since you lived and worked in Struthers did you ever have occasion to come into Youngstown say for instance, see the soup lines or things like that?

L: Yes.

M: What impression did that leave on you?

L: It's kind of a mixed thing as I said before. You're glad that you're not on the soup line. I think this is human. You're glad that you don't have to get in that soup line. You have a feeling that certainly you ought to help because when you have something to eat and here's a man with an empty stomach, and you do. Everybody helped who, I believe, had any kind of a heart at all. They gave their canned goods, their money, and so forth to help keep the thing going. We supported it

as much as we could, many organizations in those days. I suppose it also strikes terror in your heart. Remember when President Roosevelt said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." This, I think, was the pervading feeling all the time, that fear that this thing was going to continue, and what would happen, would we lose everything, would we ever be able to restore it. If you think about it whenever we have a recession now this thing occurs to people again, they have this terrible fear.

M: Wouldn't you think it would be more predominant in the persons maybe did without or really experienced hardships during the Depression because they knew what it was like to be without?

L: Yes.

M: You mentioned a few things about President Roosevelt. Do you remember anything about him?

L: Yes. I remember what, this is from my viewpoint, how it appeared to me as far as I was concerned when he started out, and I remember his fireside chats. What it did was it began to give people the feeling that there was something that they could do about it. As you look back and study history you'll see that things began to turn around. Of course, the government stepped in and did as many things as they could. The camps for young people, the CCC camps, and the work programs, and the projects that they arranged for them, the government stepped in and helped by, I suppose, loaning money to businesses and so forth. They got businesses started on a gradual basis a little bit. Before we knew it we were out of it. It's a hope that people have that it maybe can be done. The fear that it might not, he helped very much to dispel that fear.

M: Do you think that Roosevelt did that for the people at that time?

L: He did it, of course, because he was a great leader. A leader has all sorts of motives, I suppose. I'm sure that he does it because he wanted to be remembered, because all of us want to be remembered. He certainly, I'm sure, did it because as you look back and see both he and Eleanor had great understanding of people in poor positions. They did many things for people who didn't have money, although they were money people themselves.

M: Do you remember any of his programs? You did mention the CCC Camp and there was the WPA.

L: I think the WPA, Works Project Administration, and the work that they did for men, I remember that more because this is more near to what you're doing. They did things around the school, they repaired material around the school and they prepared booklets and put up fences and this sort of thing, things that needed to be done but which we hadn't been able to afford.

M: I've heard of the projects that they WPA were working on. Most of the people that I've talked to have said that they built roads and things, but you're saying now that they did help around the school too?

L: Yes. Textbooks, we had to make textbooks last a long time in those days.

M: How did you do that?

L: We just taught the children to be awfully careful with them and kept them on the desks instead of letting them take them home and this sort of thing. We used every means we possibly could and of course repaired them as much as we could and this sort of thing. Sometimes you passed them around and one page would be out and you would substitute another book for this page and so forth. You did as much as you could to make them go as far as possible.

M: Did the students at that time have to buy any books or pencils or paper?

L: The textbooks were all furnished. The other supplies, pencil and paper and so forth they had to buy. I do believe, this I wouldn't want to be quoted on exactly because it's not fair, but I think that they were given one tablet and one pencil every six weeks it seems to me. Maybe not. Sometime along there that happened, maybe it was at that time.

M: Did you notice when the Depression started to get a little bit better, when men started to go back to work?

L: Yes. I can remember the time somebody said, "Well look, there's some smoke coming out of the smokestacks down along the river. Things are getting better." I remember people had complained about the smoke and so forth and the dirt and they said, "We'll never complain

about it again." Of course, we had because it is destructive. People finally got so that they were glad to see the smokestacks smoking because they knew that men were working. I don't know what must have happened to some of those people that hadn't had a paycheck for a long time. I suppose it would be a terrible temptation to go in and blow it all on a lot of food. I suppose it must have happened. Of course the supermarkets in those days weren't in existence so it wouldn't be quite the same.

M: You had corner grocery stores right?

L: Yes.

M: Do you remember anything about those?

L: They just had everything in them, I know that. Of course, from the time I was a kid you would go in the corner grocery store and you would get everything you want. I guess the thing I remember the most about the corner grocery store when I was a kid was the licorice sticks, the long licorice ropes. Whether you like it or not, that was one of the things that we always thought was great because they lasted a long time.

M: How much were they?

L: A penny.

M: Everything was a penny. Penny candy they talked about.

L: I would go into Mrs. Murphy's store when I was a kid. I would get some licorice from Mrs. Murphy and of course, during the Depression I know that candy was one thing that you just didn't have.

M: Mr. Luce you did say prior to the Depression or at the beginning of it that you were a student at the University. How did this affect you at the beginning of the Depression as a student?

L: When I first went to school the Depression hadn't really struck because I started in the fall of 1921 and I think during that year my dad lost a feeding of hogs. I don't know whether you know what that means or not.

M: What is it so we can clarify it?

L: Each year you had to start out with baby pigs and then

of course you start feeding them and you feed them up until they become animals for slaughter. When they're 150-165 pounds then you sell them to a meat packing firm and ship them away. This would be the year's cash income. Farmers had the food in their gardens and of course they made their own flour and their own wheat, and they had corn meal, and made molasses and all this sort of thing. They had to have cash crops to buy machinery with and this sort of thing. This particular year they had an epidemic of hog cholera, which was a devastating disease because it killed animals just as cholera does people in the Orient and other places in the world. Of course, it killed the whole herd. The worst thing about it is after you have it on your farm you have to kill all the animals. You cannot sell any of them. You're not allowed to have any animals on that farm again, at that time I think it was for two years, which would mean that you lose your cash crop then for three years, which would be a devastating thing for most people. He lost that, and then of course I was in school and pretty soon my folks, on account of things being bad, couldn't help anymore.

During the college years I had to figure out I wanted to go to college very badly and they wanted me to too, so they would scrounge out what they could occasionally and send me a little check. I remember my mother in the laundry bag always had a tin full of something good, such as cakes, or cookies, or donuts, which I didn't need, but which were there. I started trying to find out what I could do to get myself through college so I got a job washing dishes in the girls' dormitory. I washed dished three times a day and that paid for my board. I went and made a contract with one of the laundry agencies downtown in Wooster, and it was a mile downtown and I had no car and there were no streetcars. That meant every time I went down to the laundry I had to walk down and back, but I did. I would collect the laundry from the students in the dormitory. Those who've had it at church wanted it done lesser I think. I would take them down to the laundry and come back and deliver them to the boys and of course I got a commission on everything that I did and that helped out. I met a fellow that I liked quite well and he was a contractor. I could go out and work on Saturdays and I could make up to $5 on a Saturday, which was a lot of money. I made $5 almost every Saturday that I was able to work in the time and get the $5.

M: What did you do for him?

L: Shoveled stones, help set the forms where they put the road in. They weren't putting in cement at that time, they made stone roads or gravel roads. It took a lot of shovelling just to get everything in place. That was a shovel job. Then I also swept the chapel. One thing we had to do at Wooster, everybody had to go to chapel everyday, five days a week. Everybody had to go. The chapel had to be swept every day so I got that job and swept the chapel. By doing this I was able to keep myself going. I needed a little extra money and the college had some loan funds and you could borrow what you needed in addition to that. I was able to get through by these various devious methods.

M: That's fantastic.

L: Sometimes it seemed pretty hard to put in as many hours and labor and then have to do your studies too. I don't think it hurt me, I think it was good for me.

M: I see that you also went to Ohio State after that to get your Master's and that again was during the Depression. How did you manage?

L: At that time I was working. I had a job. It wasn't quite the problem. I made up my mind I wanted to get my Master's degree so what you do is save enough money and go and get it. As I say, we had some income coming in which made it possible to do that. The first two or three years we went down to Ohio State I think all but one year Mrs. Luce and I both worked. We got married in 1928. We started working. All but one summer, I think, both of us worked in a boarding house. We walked over to the boarding house in the morning and served breakfast and then walked home and went back at noon and back in the evening. One time we worked in a restaurant near the campus. I remember that summer Mrs. Luce made enough in tips from waiting tables to pay for our train fare home to Youngstown that fall. That wasn't so bad if you don't have to pay out anything for food. Of course, the fee is about all we had to pay for and of course, transportation. In those days we went back and forth on the train because we didn't have the car then.

M: Where did you work when you were going to Ohio State?

L: We worked at really three boarding houses at different times. I don't even remember the names.

M: Were these for college students?

L: No. The one boarding house we worked at was for . . . This woman took in boarders. We worked for her. The one was near the University and it served more students, although it wasn't just for students. They were both for the public. The boarding house is a little different because you have your regular boarders. You had a regular boarder. The other one was for the public. She served anyone that happened to come through. It wasn't big, it was just like a little tea room. It was a house that had been fixed up. She took out all the furniture that had been put in and put chairs in and tables. We had a tea room.

M: Do you recall what these boarding houses charged?

L: Oh heavens no. I haven't any idea.

M: At that time they didn't have the hotels and motels that they do today. Anybody traveling usually stopped at a boarding house.

L: I couldn't begin to tell you what the cost was.

M: What they charged for meals and anything like that?

L: No. I can't begin to tell you.

M: Do you recall then maybe what you made as far as wages go at that time?

L: Yes. I think I said before, my salary as a teacher was about $1500 or $1600 a year at that time.

M: No. I was talking about as when you were working at the. . .

L: The summers I worked I just made my board. The one summer that we worked in this restaurant Mrs. Luce made her board and then she also got tips because she waited tables and I washed dishes that summer. I didn't get any tips.

M: Not for that.

L: No. I did break a lot of dishes. The woman probably should have charged me.

M: We were talking about a period where the Depression was the greatest, I think. Actually in 1933 and 1934 it started to get somewhat better and you did mention that people did notice the smoke coming back out of the mills again. Do you recall what the attitude of some of the people was at that time?

L: No.

M: How did they feel? Did they blame the government or the mills for it or did they just sort of accept it and roll with the punches?

L: From my own observation it seems that union grew stronger after that. I don't think I'm qualified to say as to whether or not they developed because there was more feeling that by organizing they could keep this thing from happening again. I don't know, but it did seem as if they became much stronger than they had been before, or else I was more observant of it, I don't know which. I think they actually did. I think there was more emphasis on the part of the government in people organizing for themselves too, which there hadn't been before. Something had to be done because people were trying to figure out how they could prevent this thing from happening. Henry Ford came along and he was the first one, I think, to come out with the $5 day wage. That was a tremendous leap forward when they got that done. Everybody thought that this could never be carried on but it was of course, and then developed in to what we have today.

M: The Depression was said to be a great American tragedy and supposing if this happened again, do you think our young people could survive such, or would this ever happen again?

L: There are a lot of things built in how that would make it quite different than they were then. There was no Social Security then. The Social Security came in as a result of the Depression. For instance when we had a slump here a year or so ago, at least the people who had something to go on. Before, when the thing stopped there was just nothing. Now, the older people have Social Security and of course, the people who are employed now have unemployment compensation, which was unthought of back in those days. How in the world would

you even get paid for not working. You hear comments that this is both good and bad because it makes people feel that they can get something for nothing by not having to work and getting paid. What effect the terrible Depression would have I don't know. We had a partial depression here a year or so ago. I think there was the same sort of panicky feeling again. It affected people maybe a little differently than it did back at that time because that came sort of without warning. When the panicky feeling occured again I think people pretty much did the same thing. They horded food. They heard it was coming. If you remember here a few months ago people were hording sugar and various things because they thought they were going to be short. I think this is pretty natural. Of course, the retirement systems that people have now, which are all in existence in addition to Social Security, and insurance that they have of all kinds, Medicare and Medicaid, and the insurance people have to cover all their problems, I think it's grown tremendously. Many of these things weren't in existence in the time of the first Depression in 1931. People, I think, could go into it a little differently now than they could at that time because at that time it was a pretty much end-of-the road sort of thing.

M: With your parents losing their farm and you having a hard time struggling through high school and college, was it difficult for you, for instance, to spend money freely or did you watch your pennies?

L: Sort of a combination. In my earlier childhood we were doing quite well on the farm and it wasn't so much of a problem. Really, I never lived through this exactly because I was in college at the time the real Depression started. I had to do it myself. It's strange when I think back about it. You asked me a question I hadn't thought about ever in my life. As I look back at it I just took it for granted it had to be done, there was nothing else to do. In other words, I wanted the education and if you want something you just have to go ahead and do it. If I wanted something extra I would go and see this friend of mine and ask him if he could work me on Saturday and I worked on Saturday and I got an extra $5 to spend. When I came to work in Struthers there wasn't a single summer ever that I didn't work at something during the summer because in those days we weren't on eleven month contracts. I worked on Saturday in the meat market and worked in the mills at odd jobs and so forth all the time to supplement what I was making.

M: Very good. Do you have any last minute comments?

L: I think the Depression is good because it makes people think of each other. I think it's bad because it makes people fearful of what's going to happen. I would hate to see another serious Depression like that come because I think it would be very destructive to the morale of the country myself.

M: Thank you very much Mr. Luce.

END OF INTERVIEW