Vol. VII 10/27/17 pp. 1346 – 1525

VII

East St. Louis Riot Investigation

Saturday Oct 27- 1917

Index

Howard A. Smith

Saturday, October 27, 1917.

The Committee met at 10.30 o'clock a.m. Hon. Ben Johnson (Chairman) presiding.

STATEMENT OF LYMAN B. BLUITT, (Colored), East St. Louis, Ill.

The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson. Give the stenographer your name and residence.

Mr. Bluitt. Lymen B. Bluitt; East St. Louis.

Mr. Johnson. How long have you lived here?

Mr. Bluitt. Seventeen years.

Mr. Johnson. What is your occupation?

Mr. Bluitt. I am a physician.

Mr. Johnson. If you know anything which concerns the origin of any labor troubles here, or any race riot, or any riot of any description, take it up at the very beginning, and tell what you may know about it.

Mr. Bluitt. It is rather hard to know just where to begin.

Mr. Johnson. Use your own judgment about that.

Mr. Bluitt. The races here seem to have gotten along here as well as in most communities up to about the beginning of this year. At that time it came to my knowledge that there was a little trouble, a little friction between the races.

Mr. Johnson. You mean between the whites and blacks?

Mr. Bluitt. Between the whites and blacks. That went on perhaps until April, I think it was -- I know it was in the spring-- and there seems to have been a strike at the Aluminum Ore Plant.

Mr. Johnson. There seems to have been, or there was?

Mr. Bluitt. The reports in the paper. Taking that as true, there was a strike there. The paper also reported that the

company had gotten out a restraining order -- a temporary injunction, in other words -- restraining a certain labor element from interfering with the operation of the plant. This injunction, I understand later from the papers, was made permanent. After that friction grew more frequent.

Mr. Johnson. About what time was this injunction made permanent?

Mr. Bluitt. Well, it was a few weeks after the temporary injunction. It all occurred, as I understand it, in the early spring.

After this, as I said before, fights became more frequent between the blacks and whites, and this condition continued with more or less severity until May the 28th, when the first little skirmish took place.

Mr. Johnson. You mean the first riots, the first riot took place?

Mr. Bluitt. The first riot took place. Now, I take it you want to know what was my position during that time. At that time I was assistant county physician, and as such it was my duty to attend emergency cases. So during that evening --

Mr. Johnson (Interposing). What evening?

Mr. Bluitt. The 28th of May. I was called from the Police station to go there and attend some people who had gotten hurt. I started. When I had reached, I think it was 10th Street, I met a number of people coming, walking very rapidly, and they hollered to me, "Don't go that way; there is trouble down there."

Mr. Johnson. Down where?

Mr. Bluitt. Down in town.

267-3

Mr. Johnson. Not at the police station?

Mr. Bluitt. Not ~~entirely~~ necessarily at the police station, but down town, in the direction from which they were coming.

Mr. Foss. This was on the night of the 28th?

Mr. Bluitt. The night of the 28th.

Mr. Foss. What time in the night?

Mr. Bluitt. Oh; I should say it was around eight or nine o'clock, as I remember now.

Mr. Foss. Was it after the meeting?

Mr. Bluitt. I don't know -- no, I only heard about the meeting. I don't know where the meeting was.

So I continued on my trip -- avoiding -- the only thought I had in mind was the rendering of service to the injured. When I got down about 7th Street, perhaps a dozen men jumped up in the street before me and said, "Don't go that way; they are pulling men off the street car and they will tear you to pieces.

Mr. Johnson. Were those white men or colored men?

Mr. Bluitt. I really don't know; I know some of them were colored. Perhaps most of them were colored. I didn't pay any special attention to who they were. I then decided it might be the best thing to do to return to my office, so I turned my car around in the street, went back to the office, called up the police station, and told the Sergeant that I understood there was trouble between me and the police Department, and I thought it best for them to send the ambulance after me. He said, "Very well." I drove my car into my garage and went into the office to await the arrival of the patrol. In a few minutes the Sergeant telephoned to go to Blessing Hospital and remain there. I went there, arriving there, I should say, about -- perhaps nine.

Mr. Johnson. Did you go in the ambulance or in your car?

Mr. Bluitt. I went in my own car, because the hospital was in the opposite direction. I arrived there perhaps after nine, or thereabouts, and I think I found one or two men already at the hospital wounded.

Mr. Johnson. Were they white or colored, or both?

Mr. Bluitt. I believe I only saw colored men there. I don't remember seeing any white men. There might have been one there. But at any rate we proceeded to give them the proper treatment and remained there until about two o'clock that morning. During that time I should judge 15 or 16 wounded were brought to the hospital and given proper treatment by us.

Mr. Foss. You mean that night?

Mr. Bluitt. That night, and afterwards, of course, the next day.

Mr. Johnson. Was any one of them mortally wounded?

Mr. Bluitt. No, I think not. As I recall it now, I don't remember anybody having died as a result of that first riot. And that was the remarkable thing about it.

Mr. Foss. How did they seem to be beaten up?

Mr. Bluitt. They were beaten about the head. It seems to me there were one or two pistol shots, but none of them died.

After that a day or two following -- the day after that I believe it was -- I was in St. Louis, and on my return -- now, let me see if I am correct -- yes, I think it was a day or two after that --

Mr. Johnson. (Interposing) A day or two after May 28th?

Mr. Bluitt. After May 28th. I noticed a number of men

before me standing on the free bridge, this side of the free bridge. It struck me as being rather odd, but I drove up and I was commanded to halt. I did so, and was told by the police officers, whose names I don't know, to dismount; that they wanted to search my car. I did that.

Mr. Johnson. You got out of the car?

Mr Bluitt. I did, and assisted them really in searching the car.

Mr. Johnson. What did they say they were searching for?

Mr. Bluitt. Well, they didn't say. They said they had orders. I asked them why they were doing it, and they said they had orders to search. I told them I was an American citizen, and law abiding, and I had no objection to that -- thought everybody ought to be searched. In the meantime a colored man drove up behind me. They stopped him and searched him.

Mr. Johnson. What was he riding in?

Mr. Bluitt. In a car, an automobile. But to my surprise and dismay a white man went by unsearched and unnoticed. I protested against that treatment; told him I thought I had a right to the same treatment that other Americans had a right to, and that if he searched me he most assuredly ought to search every man regardless of his color. My protests were not heeded. They proceeded, and nothing was found in my car, and I proceeded on my way.

Mr. Johnson. You were not harmed in any way?

Mr. Bluitt. Oh, no.

Mr. Foss. What time was this? What time of day? Was that on the next day after the riot?

Mr. Bluitt. I think it was on the day following the riot.

Mr. Foss. Do you remember the hour of the day?

Mr. Bluitt. I am trying to recall that now. It seems to me it was in the afternoon. It appears to me now it was in the afternoon.

So a day or two after that -- well, the meetings continued; the friction between the whites and blacks continued, and I became somewhat alarmed over it. I thought I knew what that kind of thing would eventually lead to, so I went to the chief of police and told him that my position as assistant county physician took me all over the town at all hours of the day and night, and I wanted something to show to the people just who I was, so that I wouldn't be interfered with. The Chief of police gave me a star.

Mr. Johnson. A badge?

Mr. Bluitt. A star. I ask for a badge, but he gave me a star.

Mr. Johnson. A metal star?

Mr. Bluitt. A metal star, the same as is worn by special policeman.

Mr. Johnson. Did it have any words on it, any writing on it?

Mr. Bluitt. Yes, "East St. Louis Police," I believe it was, No. 51, as I remember. I think that was the number, with the instructions to wear it on the outside of my coat. He also said to me, "You have got a gun?" I said, "No, but I can get one." "All right, get yourself a gun," he says, "I haven't a good one here to give you." I did so.

Mr. Johnson. You got a gun?

Mr. Bluitt. Yes, I got a gun after that. I usually keep a gun around the house. I never carry one, however.

Mr. Johnson. You mean by that a pistol?

Mr. Bluitt. Pistol, yes. So I went about the city attending to my duty as usual.

Mr. Johnson. Armed?

Mr. Bluitt. Armed always, with my star outside and my pistol on the inside. It was very necessary, I thought, during those stirring times.

Well, conditions continued to be bad. I was in consultation a few days afterwards with Mr. Lillie and Dr. Bundy, a friend of mine, and we began --

Mr. Johnson. (Interposing) They are both colored?

Mr. Bluitt. They are both colored, yes, sir. So we fell to discussing conditions in general in East St. Louis. We thought and talked among ourselves that these various -- if this restriction continued; if the whites continued to pounce upon and beat the blacks, that we were afraid that sometime they might attack some black man who might have a pistol, and he might shoot into and kill or mortally wound some white man. So we decided that the Chief of Police ought to be informed of the conditions. I not having time, Mr. Lillie and Dr. Bundy informed the Chief of police, so they informed me. I didn't go.

The conditions continued bad, so we finally decided --

Mr. Johnson. (Interposing) By that you mean the violence continued?

Mr. Bluitt. The violence continued. There seemed to have been no abatement whatever. So, not knowing what else to do, we decided -- Mr. Lillie and I -- this time that we would go to the Mayor. So We went to the Mayor and told him our ~~affairs~~ fears. We said to him that the friction between the races was already too great.

8

Mr. Johnson. It was quite acute then, was it?

Mr. Bluitt. It was very acute; it was noticeably so. So we told the Mayor just what I have outlined to you, about our fears about some colored man having a pistol, and might shoot and kill or wound a white man, and that we would be in the midst perhaps of the greatest race riot the country had ever seen. That was our fear.

Mr. Foss. You remember what time you told the Mayor this?

Mr. Bluitt. That was about Thursday before the riots, the July riots. I think it was Thursday before the July riot. The Mayor said that it was all news to him; that he had just told a friend that morning that we were getting along nicely, and that he thought things were adjusting themselves in a proper way. We said, "Mr. Mayor, they are not all right, and we have the greatest fears." So the Mayor said to his secretary, "Maurice, call the Chief." The Chief was called, and in a few minutes came to his office. The Mayor said to him, "Chief, these men tell me that we are not getting on well here." He said, "Yes, that is true." "What are you doing about it?"

Mr. Johnson. Just a minute. What are your initials?

Mr. Bluitt. Lyman Beecher Bluitt.

Mr. Johnson. Before you proceed further, permit me to admonish you that you be careful to make no statement that would implicate you in any part of any rioting or disorder, and that if any member of the Committee asks you a question which you don't -- which you prefer not to answer because it might implicate or involve you, that you should not answer unless you do so as a matter of your own choice. You entirely understand me now, do you?

Mr. Bluitt. I do.

Mr. Johnson. Let me repeat in further admonition that you make no statement before this committee whatever, except one that is entirely voluntary upon your own part.

Mr. Bluitt. That is correct.

Mr. Johnson. And that you answer no question except what you do voluntarily. The Committee will in no wise undertake to compel you to answer any questions.

Mr. Bluitt. I understand, sir.

The Mayor said, "What are you doing to adjust this matter?" or words to that effect. He said, "We are doing what we can. We can't get these colored fellows that get beat up to point out the men who attack them. Just last Sunday, as the doctor knows here" -- referring to me -- "we had a man that was beaten up by the free bridge, and I told him to come back at two o'clock, after he had been dressed, and we would go down and see could we identify the man who attacked him. He didn't come. I don't know what else I can do." Mr. Millie then said, "Chief, perhaps the men on the beat down in the region of the free bridge are really indifferent; perhaps a change of police officers along that line would bring better results." The Chief said, "No, I don't think so. My men, I am sure are doing their full duty." At that juncture of course the conference was a little embarrassing, and we got up to leave. The Mayor thanked us for the information we had given him and we retired.

Now there are so many things that occurred until we hardly know how to put them. What I am trying to do is to relate to the Committee my experience in this trouble.

Mr. Johnson. Repeating the admonition that you refrain from making any statement that might lead to your own incrimination, I

wish to ask whether or not you had any conference with any labor leaders, the leaders of organized labor.

Mr. Bluitt. I did.

Mr. Johnson. And if you do so voluntarily now, you may go ahead and state all about that.

Mr. Bluitt. I will. I think it was about the middle of January that I got a message over the telephone --

Mr. Johnson. (Interposing) Can you recall the exact date?

Mr. Bluitt. I cannot.

Mr. Johnson. Was it the 14th day of June?

Mr. Bluitt. It was about the middle of June I am sure.

Mr. Johnson. Go ahead.

Mr. Bluitt. I got a message over the telephone, as I recall now, that there would be a message -- that the labor leaders wanted a conference with some of the more prominent colored men on that date at the labor temple.

Mr. Johnson. If you don't object to stating, please state from whom this telephone message came?

Mr. Bluitt. I don't know. I really don't know. I don't recall who the party was, but I know the labor leaders that I met there.

In company with Mr. Lillie I went to the labor temple on Collinsville Avenue, north of Illinois. I found out there that the meeting was to be at that place, but further down the street, at their meeting place over the House Hardware Company on the corner or about the corner of Missouri and Collinsville Avenue. We were accompanied there --

Mr. Johnson. Do you know what street number that would be?

271

Mr. Bluitt. I do not. It seems to me it is in the 200 block. It is just before you get to Missouri Avenue and

Collinsville on the lefthand side of the street, on the west side of the street.

Mr. Cooper. This block straight down here is 200, is it?

Mr. Bluitt. No, we call beginning from Broadway, running north -- it begins at Broadway and then to Division is one street, and Missouri Avenue is the second street.

Mr. Cooper. Well then, this is the 200 block here?

Mr. Bluitt. This is the third block, as I understand it now, that we are in. This is the third block north from Broadway.

We were accompanied to this place of meeting, as I recall it, by Mr. Walsh.

Mr. Johnson. Who is he?

Mr. Bluitt. Mr. Walsh -- all I know is that he is prominently identified with the labor organizations in this city. At that meeting I think Dr. Bundy came. Speeches were made by Mr. Lillie, Dr. Bundy, Mr. Whalen, the city clerk; by a gentleman by the name of Smith, I think a state officer of the labor organization. His initials I don't know -- nd perhaps by one or two others.

A committee was appointed at that meeting for the purpose of taking up the proposition of interesting colored men in labor organizations. I think Dr. Bundy nd Mr. Woods were among the colored men appointed on that committee. The committee was to report a few days afterwards. What they did I don't know. I heard no more of it.

Mr. Foss. What was the date of this meeting, did you say?

Mr. Bluitt. It was about the middle of June.

Mr. Cooper. Go ahead, doctor.

Mr. Bluitt. Well, I am in the same dilemma. Perhaps a few questions might lead me out.

Mr. Johnson. You have the general question of going ahead in your own way and detailing what you may know of the conditions which are under investigation, bearing in mind the admonition that your statement must be entirely a voluntary one upon your part; that the committee will not undertake in any way to coerce you to make a statement that in the remotest way may tend to your own incrimination. So you have now the widest latitude for a voluntary statement.

Mr. Bluitt. All right, sir. That brings us down to about the first of July. Things drifted along now from May the 28th to July the 1st, practically in the same way -- no attempt so far as I could see to remedy them.

On Sunday July 1, I went about town as usual attending to my business as usual. In the morning, Sunday morning, July the 1st, I recall that I was out on Bond ~~Stewart~~ Avenue at the gasoline garage where I usually get my oils and gasoline. I filled my tank with gasoline and went about the city, returning to my office perhaps about noon, where I had lunch, and ~~then~~ as I remember remained until about one -- half past one or two. I was then called to see a patient up -- and this was a county patient -- to 6th and Pickett Avenue, the southern part of town. It was a case of confinement. I went down and after seeing that my services were not necessary immediately, I returned, I think, home. I remained for an hour or two and was called back again. I got through with
272 that case, I dare say, about six o'clock in the afternoon and returned to my office, where I remained up until in the neighborhood of eight o'clock. I took my wife and my brother-in-law and went across the Free bridge, down Broadway to 10th and down 10th to the Free bridge. I noticed in passing from -- well, from Bond Avenue to the Free bridge, that on both sides ~~they~~ there was quite a

crowd of people -- unusual. I didn't pay much attention to it, because we have crowds more or less on Sunday during the summer time, people coming to and fro across the bridge, so I passed through it and nobody said a word to me, and I said nothing to anybody. We went to a theater in St. Louis on Market Street between 14th and 15th, a moving picture show, where we remained until -- well on into the second part of the show, because the first had been over before we arrived, leaving there evidently about 10.30. From there we went to the Market Inn, further up on Market Street in St. Louis, and had lunch. While we were dining a friend came in and said, "Do you know they are having trouble in East St. Louis?" I said, "Why, no. What is it?" He says, "They have beat up a colored fellow down there at the pumping station near the Free bridge." "Is that so? Well," I said, "this is news to me, but I presume there is nothing to it." So we got through our meal and he said, "I am going to have something myself, and we will go back together." He lives on this side of the river. I said, "Very well." So we sat and waited until he had ordered and finished his meal. It must have been half past 11 when we left that Inn and started on our return. We came back across the Free bridge just as I had gone, over 10th Street to Broadway and Broadway home. It was very quiet at that hour along that road. We came home and went to bed, where I remained. In the near morning, perhaps five or half past five o'clock, my phone rang. I went to the phone and some one whose voice I recognized as being Rev. Shields, asked me did I know there was trouble last night. I said, "No, I haven't heard of it." I went on to ask him about it and he says, "Well, there were two officers shot last night, I understand." I says, "Well, that is

too bad; I am afraid we are going to have some trouble." I hung up the phone after a few words and got up, dressed, got breakfast and went up to get a paper, as is my usual custom in the morning.

In that paper I saw what occurred; saw that two police officers had been shot, one of them had died and the other was dangerously wounded.

About ten o'clock -- my hours at the dispensary was from ten to eleven in the morning -- about ten o'clock as usual I went to the city dispensary at the City Hall, ready to begin my usual duties. In passing, however, there seemed to be a little excitement. People were looking rather wild eyed. The car in which these officers were said to have been shot was standing in front of the police station, and I thought how foolish that is. I said, "How foolish that is. You may as well," I said to myself, "put a red blanket before a bull as to leave this car in which the officers were killed here where the public can see it." I thought it very unwise and very imprudent to say the least.

I passed on into my office, and Mr. Ross and I began to talk of conditions -- Mr. Ross is supervisor of the Board. So he had fears himself that we were on the verge of ~~kax~~ something desperate.

Mr. Johnson. Is Ross a white or a black man?

Mr. Bluitt. He is a white man. And while we were discussing the matter we heard some loud talking upon the street. I don't recall what the words were, but I know it was unusual at that time to hear loud talking in that peculiar tone of voice. So finally Mr. Ross said, "I will tell you I am going to take my wife and get my buggy and go out in the country." He said, "I

believe that will be a good thing for you to do." I said, "Mr. Ross, I have come to that conclusion myself, that I won't have very much work to do in this office this morning, and I believe I will take my wife and go out in the country too." So I got up, got my hat and went out and got into my car and drove directly home.

I had been home perhaps ten minutes when I received a call from St. Mary's Hospital, as I remember now it came, to come to the hospital; there was an emergency. I went, having arrived there, I think, about half past ten. I found one or two wounded men there. I proceeded to give them proper attention, but before I got through with them others came, and then still others, and then others, until they were laying all around in the hall, all over the operating room, and I said to myself, "My God, what has happened?" Pretty soon help came; other physicians came. Dr. Parker, the other county assistant physician, came, and Dr. -- it seems to me it was Dr. DeHaan. I think it was he that came.

Mr. Cooper. Is he white or black?

Mr. Bluitt. All white except me. I was the only black man in the hospital. I remained in that hospital from the time I went there in the morning about half past ten until about six o'clock, or about six o'clock the next morning. During the night and during the lull in the rush of work we, the physicians, were busy themselves looking out of the windows.

In the early part of the night I noticed those flats on 7th Street between Division and Missouri Avenue were on fire. They began to burn and pretty soon the tops of the roofs began to fall in, and pretty soon men, women and children began to come out, and as they came outI saw men, women and children throw into the

278

crowd with sticks or stones, and even fire into that crowd. I remained there until they were, of course, consumed -- the houses were burned.

Mr. Foster. How far were you from there?

Mr. Bluitt. I was about a block away. The hospital, St. Mary's Hospital is on 8th and Missouri. This occurred on 7th between Division and Missouri, about a block right across the street.

During the night I think the hospital records show -- will show that upwards of 70 men and women were treated.

Mr. Johnson. As a result of the riot?

Mr. Bluitt. As the result of the riot.

Mr. Foss. These were colored?

Mr. Bluitt. Most of them were colored, but there were quite a few whites wounded also.

I don't know now, gentlemen, whether there is anything else I know or not. I have been in town all the time. I didn't leave. I haven't left yet. I have moved my business out of town. I ran a drugstore at that time upon Broadway, and by reason of all of the neighbors having left, the drugstore was unprofitable in that location. I therefore moved it to St. Louis where it is now operating. But I keep my residence in East St. Lousi. I have slept here every night but one since July ~~1st,~~ riot, and perhaps I shall remain to sleep here.

Mr. Cooper. Just where is St. Mary's Hospital located?

Mr. Bluitt? St. Mary's Hospital is on the corner of 8th and Missouri Avenue, just three blocks southeast of here.

Mr. Cooper. On this street, in front of this building?

Mr. Bluitt. On this very street further east three blocks.

Mr. Cooper. Just above the Federal Building?

Mr. Bluitt. Yes, sir; just across the street. I heard the question the other day asked what was the cause of this trouble and what was the solution. By information I have an opinion that I would like to express with your permission.

Mr. Johnson. You have our permission to tell us anything you wish.

Mr. Bluitt. It seems to me that this trouble is very largely industrial. I don't believe that it is due wholly to race prejudice, because the colored people have been coming in here for a number of years.

When I came here 17 years ago we had perhaps not over a thousand. They have been coming in gradually up to within, say, two years, and then they became more numerous. We never had any unusual friction as the result of them coming here. All those who wanted to work got employment. But after the European War a number of foreigners went home to participate in that war.

Mr. Johnson. Of what nationality were they?

Mr. Bluitt. Well, of all nationalities, the Turks, the Armenians, Greeks -- there were quite a number of them in this community.

Mr. Johnson. They left of their own accord, didn't they?

Mr. Bluitt. So far as I know. That left vacancies of course in these mills. Our people began to hear of this through friends who would write to them. Some one said to me that in writing to his friend he had said, "There is a money tree in East St. Louis, and all you have to do is to go up there and shake it and get the money." The black man, my experience is, about the same as the white man.

Mr. Johnson. Was that money tree an industrial one or a

1363

political one?

Mr. Bluitt. I think an industrial one.

Now, coming back to politics, I think the conditions obtained in East St. Louis that doesn't obtain in most cities of its size in the country, because here you will find black men supporting ~~republicans~~ democrats, the same as they support republicans. I have done it myself. So the lines are not so closely drawn when it comes to politics. I believe that is fair. I believe a man should vote for a man, it matters not what he calls himself, rather than for the party. That has been my policy all of my life, and I think that will be my policy as long as I am here.

274-5

The negro came here to better their condition. They could make more money. They could have more fun -- just like other men Other men come to cities because they can make more money, have more pleasure. They could give their children better educations. They tell me that in many places of the south the length of the school was only a few months, entirely insufficient to give a boy or girl an ordinary normal training. So they found that on arriving at East St. Louis our schools were ten months duration; that we had a better course of study; our curriculum was better, and that their children had better advantages for education, and they had better advantages to earn money; and just like any other people in the world it is most natural that they would do it.

I came in contact with many of those people, and I really encouraged them to come here. It might have been a little selfish on my part, but I could see that if we could have a large number of colored people here working in these industries and making money and I encouraged them to buy homes and become good citizens -- I could see from a personal, perhaps from a selfish standpoint,

that it would be a splendid thing for me as a physician. And I therefore encouraged the better class of our people to not only come here, but to come here and buy homes and become good citizens; and politically, if they asked my advice I would say, "Don't pay no attention to parties, but if you know that John Smith is a good man, that he is a fair man, that he is an impartial man, that he considers men for what they are and does not consider them at all from the viewpoint of color, John Smith is the man to support." And in that way we got them to see from our point of view that it was not always best to vote the Republican ticket. I don't think so. I didn't think so then and I don't think so now. So we all voted for the best man, and we were getting along splendidly. I was making money; the people seemed to be happy up to this little disturbance here, and we were all getting along, white or black, just like big brothers.

Now something has caused all this trouble, this radical change in this feeling. Something has caused it. Now, in my opinion -- and it is only my opinion -- I don't know that it is-- it might be perhaps not well founded even, but it is my opinion just the same -- my opinion is that the labor element wanted to control the big interests of the city, and they know that they can't do it so long as there is a large black element here. For

dp-1
cyl.276

that reason it would be to their interest, reasoning from that point of view-- it would be to their interest to discourage, to get out of town any elements that contributed in any way towards that feeling. I think, gentlemen, that that is the cause.

Mr. Foss: Did they want to unionize the colored labor?

Mr.

1365

Mr. Blackitt: At the last moment it seemed they were willing to do most anything to accomplish their results, their ends. But heretofore, so far as I know, there has been no organized effort on the part of the labor unions in this town to get black men into them. There is only one union here, so far as I know, among black laborers, and that is the hod carriers' union. Now I have a solution for this problem. I have told you what I believe is the cause, and now I will tell you what I believe is the solution. Before labor will get what it justly deserves, and I certainly believe it deserves better treatment than it is getting- labor unions must make an effort in good faith to unionize every laboring man in this country, black and white. If they will do that and then be impartial in the distribution of jobs, the distribution of work; if they will see to it that men are employed or given positions or places to work who are competent to do those things, and let competency alone be the object and not color in filling these places, you will find that there will be no trouble along that line, and you have solved the problem. But you can never solve it as long as the big interests are able to pit black labor against white labor. You can never do it in the world. The black labor is too great a factor in this part of the country now for the white labor to win anything without them. So my suggestion would be that the unions organize all black laborers. I don't say the same unions, because there might be some friction, but organize them into unions, and let that union, their unions, be affiliated with the other unions. Have one head to all these

unions, and treat every man, it matters not about his color, just alike. If a fellow is fit to be a bricklayer and build a brick house, give him a job; if he is only fit for a hod carrier, give him that, but look at his fitness only in making the selection and not his color. If you do that, the question is solved. That is the only way.

Mr. Cooper: What did you mean a moment ago when you said you think labor is entitled to better treatment here?

Mr. Blewitt: Well, I believe that labor ought to be payed a living wage.

Mr. Cooper: You think some of the wages paid here, in view of the high cost of living, have not been a fair living wage?

Mr. Blewitt: Most assuredly I think so. And another thing I believe. I believe that the real estate interests in this town-- somebody ought to get hold of the throat of people. If you could go through the various districts here where the laboring men live, and that applies very largely to whites as well as blacks, you would be appalled. The houses have no semblance of sanitation; they don't know what paint is-- absolutely nothing. They are not fit really for a horse to have a stable in.

Mr. Cooper: That is where some of the white labor lives in this town?

Mr. Blewitt: Some of the white labor in the squalid condition too, but most all the blacks. You can't hardly rent a decent house here. And the peculiar thing about the whole situation is that the man who is less able to pay rent is made to pay more rent. I can't understand that. For example, as a white man lives in a house-- a white family lives in a house he moves out, and he has paid perhaps ten dollars a month, the

rule is here that if you rent that to a black man he must pay $12. I can't understand that. I never have been able to understand why that was, because as a rule the black laborer earns less money than the white laborer; and I have always thought that those who are able-- the rich, in other words-- should bear the infirmities of the poor.

Mr. Cooper:

Now, right there-- you say the white earns a little more, but they make the black pay a little more rent?

Mr. Blewitt: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: The black not only earns less money, but he is a little less liable to assert his rights, isn't he, than the white man? A little more easily imposed on?

Mr. Blewitt: Well, I take it that he has been imposed upon so much until he passes up certain insults that other men perhaps would take offense at.

Mr. Cooper: Now coming back to your statements, let's put them all together, and see what the situation is in East St. Louis then-- has been.

Labor here, you say, in view of the high cost of living, has not been receiving the wages that it ought to receiver, either white or black; the houses which some white laborers, and practically the majority of the black laborers, are compelled to occupy, were miserable affairs, without-- in many cases without ~~paint~~ paint at all, unclean. That is one side.

On the other side are these great industrial plants, the largest of them over in National City; others here in this city, doing a great business.

Mr. Blewitt: So I understand.

Mr. Cooper: The stockho

Mr.Cooper: The stockholders of that plant make millions of money and are utterly indifferent to the quarters in which their employes were compelled to live. Isn't that so?

Mr. Blewitt: It seems that way.

Mr. Cooper: Now just give us your opinion. Is that a very high order of industrial system where labor is deliberately exploited in that way?

Mr. Blewitt: I don't think much of that system. I think it is a poor one.

Mr. Cooper: A very poor one.

Prior to this war in Europe there was in Europe, as those who had traveled through Europe knew from personal observation-- and as others who had been informed who read the newspapers and periodicals of what was transpiring there-- a very serious situation developing in the industries. There was rioting; there was a demand for better treatment; protest against conditions under which labor was obliged to exist; there had been the calling out of the military abroad; there had been shooting of protesting laboring men; there had been distressful conditions. In some of those communities there was great density of population. For instance, Germany has 68-odd millions of people and isn't as large as Texas. France has 30-odd millions of peoples. Texas, almost twice as large, I believe, had three or four millions-- or possibly five millions. Do you know of any reason why if these conditions are allowed to go on as they have been going on in this country, and the density of population increases-- our population increases in density-- exactly the same awful troubles will not

come in this republic that the world has witnessed in Europe?

Mr. Blewitt: In my opinion, if the conditions are allowed to go on as they are now, not being controlled in any way, without being supervised by the National Government, that we will have here just the same conditions as we have in Europe.

Mr. Cooper: Now do you think that we will ever reach a solution if men of independent wealth, making great amounts of money, say that the man who lives from hand to mouth, by his daily labor, must take care of himself; "I am indifferent to what becomes of him; if he don't like this he can get out"? Do you think that we can go on always that way?

Mr. Blewitt: I do not.

Mr. Cooper: In other words, sometimes the welfare of the great mass of individuals becomes a matter in which the state as a community is directly interested. Isn't that so?

Mr. Blewitt: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: So this problem, while industrial as between employer and employe, is nevertheless a national problem, a state problem?

Mr. Blewitt: Yes, sir, I think so.

Mr. Cooper: Now Congress passed a law in which it declared in so many words, "Labor is not a commodity nor an article of commerce." Congress passed that with practical unanimity. In other words, the labor of laboring men is different somewhat from a ton of coal, isn't it?

Mr. Blewitt: Certainly, yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: The labor of a white man or the labor of a

1370

black man is something performed by a human creature, a human being, that appreciates-- or would appreciate if he had the opportunity to enjoy them-- the delightful things which the Lord has placed on this earth. It differs entirely from a million feet of lumber, don't it?

Mr. Blewitt: I think so.

Mr. Cooper: And the world, you think, don't you, has got to get down to understand that all of this dates right back and goes right back to the labor problem, doesn't it?

Mr. Blewitt: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: That's all.

Mr. Foster: Let me ask you this question, Doctor: These industrial plants in East St. Louis and National City are managed by men who are not usually residents of East St. Louis?

Mr. Blewitt: I have heard that.

Mr. Foster: Well, we know that they are, most of them, foreign corporations, and that their managers live some other place.

Mr. Blewitt: I think so. I think the manager of the Malleable Iron Works, which are very close to me, lives in St. Louis.

Mr. Foster: I think he testified the other day that he lived in East St. Louis. He lived here at the hotel. Now have you in your experience in East St. Louis among these people who are working here-- and many no doubt working in these plants-- have you heard or seen any activity upon the part of these managers to inquire into or ascertain the conditions of their workingmen, and their living conditions?

1371

Mr. Blewitt: No, I have not.

Mr. Foster: None at all. They haven't looked into the kind of houses that they are living in, or what the surroundings are?

Mr. Blewitt: So far as I know they have not.

Mr. Foster: That's all.

Mr. Raker: Do these men that own the real estate and deal in putting up this sort of a shack that you spoke about live in East St. Louis?

Mr. Blewitt: Most of them live here.

Mr. Raker: Have you heard of any effort ontheir part being made to better the conditions of the occupants by fixing up the buildings and making the yards clean, and painting the buildings, reducing the rents so that the men, or the families, could enjoy the blessings of human life better?

Mr. Blewitt: Civic pride seems to be unheard of in East St. Louis. That is rather a broad statement, but I have reference to tenement houses. I have in mind now-- I lived on St. Louis Avenue up here, just about two blocks from here, for a number of years. I had an acquaintance in that neighborhood for 17 years. Right by the side of me are two houses, two frame houses. To my knowledge neither one of those houses has been painted for fifteen years. I don't think there has been ten dollars' worth of repair work done on them during that time. What is true of these houses is true of most of the tenement houses in which our people live.

Mr. Raker: And of course, on the other hand, an effort is made to have the taxes on the real estate and these houses

down to the lowest possible point?

Mr. Blewitt: I don't know as to their taxes, but I only know as to my own. My taxes on a piece of property here at one time-- I relate this to show you the peculiar conditions in East St. Louis-- a half a block from this building I bought a piece of property one time--

Mr. Raker (interposing:) The building we are in now, you mean?

Mr. Blewitt: The building we are in now, just half a block from here. When I bought it the taxes were three dollars and a half, a 25-foot lot with a two room shack on it. The very next year, before any improvements-- any other improvements-- had been made, I went down to pay the taxes. It had then gone to $11.50. I said to the man "Why is it that this tax now is $11.50, and no further improvements than when I first bought it, and the house certainly is not as good as it was then, by reason of natural wear?" He said "Well, Doctor, you are not on the inside." "Well", I said "I wish I could get on the inside if it would reduce these taxes." That is just one of the instances. Taxes in East St. Louis as a rule go steadily up. I found it so personally that my taxes each year will be from five dollars to ten dollars higher than they were the year be-
280 fore, without any additional street improvements whatever. I don't know why that is exactly. I don't know really why that is, except that the State is prepared to build roads; we have to build levies to protect ourselves from the water, and things of that kind: I daresay that has something to do with it.

Mr. Johnson: That's all. Call Minneola. Magee.

- - - - - - -

STATEMENT OF MINEOLA MAGEE (colored),

East St. Louis, Illinois.

(The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.)

Mr. Johnson: Give the stenographer your name and residence.

Miss Magee: Mineola Magee.

Mr. Johnson: Where do you live?

Miss Magee: In East St. Louis.

Mr. Johnson: Do you live in East St. Louis?

Miss Magee: I stay over here.

Mr. Johnson: What is the difference between staying over here and living over here?

Miss Magee: I was living on this side, in East St. Louis, until after the riot. After I come out of the hospital my auntie taken me over in St. Louis.

Mr. Johnson: You were one of those who was injured in the riot of July 2nd?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: You were hurt on the morning of the 3rd, were you not?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Down at the place they call the "Island"?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Now without going into a long story, but at such length as will enable you to state all the facts, tell where

you were when you got hurt; under what circumstances you got hurt, and who hurt you. Go ahead now and do it in a short way.

Miss Magee: I had been out to the toilet and was coming back.

Mr. Johnson: In what building were you?

Miss Magee: At Mrs. Graves?

Mr. Johnson: A saloon?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Is she a white or black woman?

Miss Magee: She is white. I heard them shooting and I ran out, and after I run out I saw a soldier and a policeman was together, and just as I went to run into the house the soldier histed his gun and commenced shooting at me, and shot my arm.

Mr. Johnson: Did he shoot at you, or shoot at somebody else and strike you?

Miss Magee: There wasn't anyone around at that time.

Mr. Johnson: Did you have your back to this soldier or your face when he shot you?

Miss Magee: I was running and looking back too.

Mr. Johnson: You had your back towards him?

Miss Magee: Yes; I was running and looking back.

Mr. Johnson: And he shot your right arm off?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Above or below the elbow?

Miss Magee: Right in the bend of the elbow.

Mr. Johnson: was it amputed in the joint or above the joint?

1375

Miss Magee: Above the joint."

281 Mr. Johnson: Did you testify before the military board that was here taking testimony-- men in soldiers' uniforms?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir; he was dressed in uniform.

Mr. Johnson: No, did you testify? Did you appear as a witness before the Military Board that was here, before the soldiers who care here inquiring ~~xxxxxxx~~into this riot?

Miss Magee: After I got shot, you mean?

Mr. Johnson: Yes.

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Did you tell them this soldier shot you?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Did they try to find out from you the name of the soldier who shot you?

Miss Magee: I don't know his name.

Mr. Johnson: But did they try to find out from you, try to get such description of the soldier who shot you as would enable his identification?

Miss Magee: No, sir.

Mr. Foss: Did you ever see the soldier after that?

Miss Magee: After I got shot?

Mr. Foss: Yes.

Miss Magee: No, sir, I never did see him after I got shot.

Mr. Johnson: Do you think you would know him if you were to see him?

Miss Magee: I got speechless all at once.

Mr. Johnson: But do you think you would know him if you would see him?

Miss Magee: I don't think I would.

Mr. Foss: How long were you in the house?

Miss Magee: I was in there three weeks and two days, I think.

Mr. Foss: That inquiry was about a week afterwards, I think.

Mr. Johnson: I suspect that you have misunderstood the questions, and that you were not present at the investigation to which we referred. I think you must have been in the hospital at that time.

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: Did you ever testify in relation to this matter before this? Were you ever ~~the~~ a witnes the same as you are now before a board or court, or were you before the Coroner?

Miss Magee: I was brought one Saturday to-- I forget the man's name.

Mr. Foss: Where were you taken to? What place?

Miss Magee: I was taken down--

Mr. Foss: Brought to the undertakers' establishment?

Miss Magee: No, sir.

Mr. Foss: To the City Hall?

Miss Magee: The police, I think.

Mr. Foss: The police court?

Mr. Johnson: Well, to make a long story short, on the 3rd day of July, the next day after the riot here, your arm was shot off by a soldier?

1877

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And for the purposes of the record I wish you would state whether or not you were armed with a pistol or any other offensive weapon?

Miss Magee: With a pistol, you mean?

Mr. Johnson: Yes. You didn't have any pistol?

Miss Magee: No, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And you weren't undertaking to do injury to anybody when you were shot?

Miss Magee: No; I was working down there. I had been in the house.

Mr. Johnson: You ~~had been~~ were at the place where you were regularly at work, and when you went out to the door to see where the shooting was, a soldier shot you as you were running away from him?

Miss Magee: No; I had been in the house and put my things down and had been out to the toilet, and I heard some shooting, and I run out of the toilet and was coming to the house?

Mr. Johnson: Well, the toilet was outdoors?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And as you passed from the toilet to the house you were shot?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir; just as I was fixing to go into the door.

282 Mr. Johnson: You had on a woman's garb, the dress of a woman, so that the soldier might see that you were a woman?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And when he shot you, he knew he was shooting a woman?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And it is your opinion that you immediately became so faint that you wouldn't now recognize the soldier if you were to see him?

Miss Magee: No, sir.

Mr. Cooper: When you came from the toilet, where was this soldier standing? Do you remember where you first saw him?

Miss Magee: I seen the soldier and the policeman coming running, and I heard the shooting, and after I run out of the toilet I run to the house, and just as I was going to the door he hoisted his gun and commenced to shoot.

Mr. Cooper: As you were running, you said you looked back?

Miss Magee: Yes, I was running and looking back.

Mr. Cooper: And you saw the soldier?

Miss Magee: He hoisted his gun and commenced to shoot.

Mr. Cooper: When he hoisted the gun and began to shoot at you--

Miss Magee (interposing) Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper (continuing:) -- was there any other colored person there, or any white persons that he was shooting at besides you?

Miss Magee: No, sir.

Mr. Cooper: You were the only one?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Well, when this ball struck your arm, what

did you do then?

Miss Magee: I run into the house before I fell.

Mr. Cooper: And you fell down?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir; I fell inside the house.

Mr. Cooper: That is all you remember about it?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir; and they rung up the ambulance and took me to St. Mary's Hospital.

Mr. Cooper: And cut your arm off at the hospital?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: What there was of it that hadn't been shot off?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: What hour of the day was this?

Miss Magee: This was on July 3rd.

Mr. Foss: What hour of the day?

Miss Magee: Between seven and eight o'clock in the morning.

Mr. Cooper: Did this man have a uniform on, this soldier?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: You may stand aside.

- - - - - - -

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM ROACH, 1919 Villet Street, East St. Louis, Ill.

(The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.)

Mr. Foster: Mr. Roach, will you state your name and your residence?

Mr. Roach: William Roach, 1919 Villet.

Mr. Foster: What is your business?

Mr. Roach: I am now sewer commissioner for the City of

1380

East St. Louis.

Mr. Foster: What were you doing in 1916?

Mr. Roach: Why, I was-- in 1916 I was with the city then.

Mr. Foster: Have you been in an employment agency?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: When was that?

Mr. Roach: From 1911 to 1913.

Mr. Foster: You haven't been since 1913?

283 Mr. Roach: No, sir. There was a man by my name that succeeded me.

Mr. Foster: Who was he?

Mr. Roach: Another William Roach.

Mr. Johnson: Will the Magee girl please stand up? (Mineola Magee rose in the audience.) Just for the purposes of the record you can answer there, what the Committee well knows, but for the purposes of the record only, that you are a colored woman?

Miss Magee: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Well, this is not the Mr. Roach who was acting as employment agent in 1916?

Mr. Roach: Why, no, sir.

Mr. Foster: There was a Roach?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir; William Roach.

Mr. Foster: What is he doing now?

Mr. Roach: He is with the terminal association as a yardmaster or roadbuilder for them.

Mr. Johnson: And I wish to ask of the Magee girl your age. How old are you?

Mineola Magee: 20.

Mr. Foster: What we are looking at and trying to find-- we have been unable to do it-- is the Mr. Roach who was the employment agent here, and you have not acted since 1913?

Mr. Roach: No, sir. You can find Mr. Roach. He lives on Eighth street, I believe.

Mr. Foster: Were there many colored people coming into the city when you were employment agent here?

Mr. Roach: Not so very many then.

Mr. Foster: Do you know anything about them coming in in the last year?

Mr. Roach: No; I haven't paid any attention.

Mr. Foster: That's all. This isn't the man we are trying to find. We have made three or four efforts here to find the Mr. Roach.

Mr. Roker: Where were you on the 2nd of July last?

Mr. Roach: I was at 18th and Illinois.

Mr. Raker: Do you know anything about the rioting on the 2nd of July?

Mr. Roach: Nothing more than I seen when I came home that night on the car at 5 o'clock.

Mr. Johnson: You may stand aside, Mr. Roach.

Call William Mayfield.

- - - - - - - - - -

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM MAYFIELD (colored),

East St. Louis, Illinois.

(The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.)

Mr. Johnson: Give the stenographer your name.

1382

Mr. Mayfield: William Mayfield. They all call me "Wiggins".

Mr. Johnson: Where do you live?

Mr. Mayfield: Down by the glass factory.

Mr. Johnson: You live in East St. Louis?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: How long have you lived here?

Mr. Mayfield: I have lived here a little over a year.

Mr. Johnson: Tell the Committee in your own way all that you know about the riot of July 2nd.

Mr. Mayfield: Well, I was at the glass factory at work that morning. My wife come out there and told me my brother had got killed. I worked on till about 9 o'clock and started home, and couldn't hardly get there. Fellows tell me not to come, but I got there anyhow, and stayed there until about four or five o'clock that afternoon. Three or four other undressed fellows got after us and we ran up street--

264

Mr. Johnson: (interposing) You mean ununiformed men by "undressed fellows"?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: In ordinary civilian clothes?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir. So she broke and run, and I started out behind her, and he shot me.

Mr. Johnson: Where did the bullet hit you?

Mr. Mayfield: It went into the calf of the leg and come out here (indicating the knee). One of the soldiers shot me-- by the knee. I run then to 13th ~~22nd~~ Street after I was shot, and a switch engine picked me up and carried me to the gas

factory: I got weak then. I lost my wife then, never seen anything of her since; don't know whether she got killed or not.

Mr. Johnson: Where did you last see her?

Mr. Mayfield: I last seen her crossing at Eleventh Street going towards Denver Side.

Mr. Johnson: Were you with her?

Mr. Mayfield: No, sir; I had done got shot and couldn't catch up with her.

Mr. Johnson: When you got shot she went on faster than you did?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir; and she just kept a-running.

Mr. Johnson: What efforts have you mad to find her since that date?

Mr. Mayfield: Well, Mr. Nelson has written letters for me and put inquiries out for her, and I give him the address where all we had been to her people. None of them have never heard nothing from her then yet.

Mr. Johnson: How long have you been in East St. Louis?

Mr. Mayfield: A little over a year.

Mr. Johnson: Where did you come from?

Mr. Mayfield: Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Mr. Johnson: Have you inquired back there for her?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And you got no news from her?

Mr. Mayfield: No, the letters was returned.

Mr. Johnson: Did you make any inquiries to ascertain

1384

whether or not she was among the dead that were in the undertaking establishments here?

Mr. Mayfield: I didn't, but the lady-- I went to the lady at the Red Cross, and she did-- a white lady.

Mr. Johnson: What was her name?

Mr. Mayfield: I don't know what her name was. She went over there with me and asked this fellow there. He said there was no womenkind like that brought to the place.

Mr. Johnson: Do you know whether a man in soldier's uniform shot you?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: It was a man in soldier's uniform?

Mr. Mayfield: A man in soldier's uniform.

Mr. Johnson: Do you think you could identify him if you would see him?

Mr. Mayfield: No, sir.

Mr. Johnson: How far away from him were you when he shot you?

Mr. Mayfield: I was between 7th and 8th, and he was right on the knoll, right on the crossing at 6th Street. He shot with one of them long guns right at me and shot me.

285 Mr. Foss: What were you doing at that time?

Mr. Mayfield: I was trotting along looking back, and my wife was right ahead of me.

Mr. Johnson: You weren't trying to do anybody any harm?

Mr. Mayfield: No, sir. I was trying to get out of the way. That was all. I had been working that morning, and she

1385

came out there and told me about my brother being dead, and I come out to see about him. I never dreamed about the riot.

Mr. Johnson: Where was your brother killed?

Mr. Mayfield: They said it was somewhere around town. He worked at a saloon down here on Third Street.

Mr. Johnson: Did you ever find his remains?

Mr. Mayfield: Never found or heard any more tell of him yet. He was home every night with us.

Mr. Johnson: Well, after you were wounded did you go to the hospital?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir; they came to the hospital at night, and they wouldn't do nothing for me out there, and I got them to bring me away that morning, and they carried me back to the glass factory.

Mr. Johnson: Was your wound treated at the glass factory?

Mr. Mayfield: It was treated at the house right back of the glass factory.

Mr. Johnson: Your wound was not treated at all at the hospital?

Mr. Mayfield: No, sir; they didn't do a thing for me.

Mr. Johnson: Was it just a flesh wound, or did the bullet strike the bone?

Mr. Mayfield: I don't know, sir. The doctor said it didn't strike the bone. Dr. Boyd said it didn't strike no bone.

Mr. Johnson: It was just a flesh wound?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir; kept straight through.

1386

Mr. Johnson: You didn't go down to the place where the dead bodies were, for the purpose of identifying your brother?

Mr. Mayfield: Well, no more than what this white lady said after I went over there with my wife. I asked about it and she said no.

Mr. Johnson: You went over there with your wife, or looking for your wife?

Mr. Mayfield: Looking for my wife. I went over there with this white lady what was inquiring for me. I asked about her, and they said no such name as that in there, and no such body as that I described had come there.

Mr. Johnson: ~~And~~ Your brother?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: How do you know he was killed?

Mr. Mayfield: I don't know, any more than she told me. She come out and told me.

Mr. Johnson: Your wife simply heard your brother was killed?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir; I come on out to see about it.

Mr. Johnson: But you have no knowledge of that fact yourself?

Mr. Mayfield: No, sir.

Mr. Johnson: But you do know that when you were not engaged in anything that was unlawful, that a soldier shot you?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir. I was trying to get out of the way.

Mr. Johnson: But you do know that a soldier shot you?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And he shot you when you weren't undertaking to do any harm to anybody?

Mr. Mayfield: No, sir; I was entirely unarmed.

Mr. Foster: You said you were shot in the calf of the leg?

Mr Mayfield: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: And it came out above your knee?

Mr. Mayfield: Below the knee. Right there (indicating). It went in there and came out there.

Mr. Foster: That's all.

Mr. Cooper: You looked back and saw the man with a gun up, did you?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: Could this soldier have been shooting at anybody else, do you think?

Mr. Mayfield: I don,t know, sir, whether he was or not. There were three of them together. There was only one that did the shooting at me that ~~xxgxx~~ time.

Mr. Foss: Whom were you with, do you say, then?

Mr. Mayfield: With four or five of those other undressed fellows from them. I don't know who they were.

Mr. Foss: I mean who was with you?

Mr. Mayfield: My wife was right ahead of me. That was all.

Mr. Foss: Did you testify before the military inquiry?

Mr. Mayfield: Only down there at the Red Cross. That

lady asked me some questions about this.

Mr. Foss: There was an inquiry by the military authorities here. Did you appear before that-- before the soldiers?

Mr. Mayfield: Well, they were at that Red Cross place that day.

Mr. Foss: Did you testify that day?

Mr. Mayfield: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: Do you think you could identify these soldiers that shot you?

Mr. Mayfield: No, sir.

Mr. Johnson: How long had you lived in Iowa before you came here?

Mr. Mayfield: I was there about two years.

Mr. Johnson: Where did you live just before you went to Iowa?

Mr. Mayfield: At Memphis, Tennessee.

Mr. Johnson: That's all.

Mr. Thomas, will you come to the stand?

- - - - - - - - -

STATEMENT OF ROBERT R. THOMAS, East St. Louis, Ill.

(The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.)

Mr. Foster: Give us your name in full.

Mr. Thomas: Robert R. Thomas.

Mr. Foster: Where do you live?

Mr. Thomas: I live here in East St. Louis.

Mr. Foster: What business are you in?

Mr. Thomas: I am in the lime and cement business. I am secretary of the Hill-Thomas Lime & Cement Company.

1389

Mr. Foster: What business were you engaged in on the 2nd day of July?

Mr. Thomas: The same business.

Mr. Foster: Where was your plant located?

Mr. Thomas: Our plant was located at the corner of Sixth and Southern Railway.

Mr. Foster: Did you have any difficulty at your plant at that time?

Mr. Thomas: Well, our plant happened to be right in the midst of the hotbed of the rioting, and was destroyed by fire that same night.

Mr. Foster: Burned when?

Mr. Thomas: Burned that night.

Mr. Foster: Did you feel afraid that it would burn that day?

Mr. Thomas: Well, we were very much afraid something was going to happen. The air was full of lightning that day, you know, and I stayed down there until 6 o'clock, and it was in summer, and it doesn't get dark until late. I went home then and intended to come back right after supper. Some of our men were there. We employ colored teamsters.

Mr. Foster: Now let me ask you this: Do you know Colonel Tripp?

Mr. Thomas: I had occasion to meet Colonel Tripp that night.

Mr. Foster: What was the occasion?

Mr. Thomas: Well, I went home to get my supper, and I was home some little time and hadn't had my supper though,

when our stable foreman called up and told me that the other place at the other end of the block was on fire, and I had better come down right away; that he was going to get the horses and mules out. I live about four miles out in Lansdowne, and as soon as I could get hold of my machine and get down there I did so. When I got down there our place was in flames.

287 Mr. Foster: Your place burned; that is what I am after.

Mr. Thomas: I am telling you now how this happened. And there was a crowd of men around there, shooting right into our property, in our building, and I stood there for just a few minutes and looked on. I finally decided I had better go and get help, because I remembered some of our men were down there, and I thought probably they would need assistance. I went up to the City Hall to see who was in charge there, to get some troops, and on the way to the City Hall I found-- I came up Sixth Street to Missouri Avenue-- this street right here. Our plant is just two blocks from here. I went up Sixth Street to Missouri Avenue and then drove on over to the City Hall. Before I got to the City Hall I saw at least two dozen soldiers-- I would estimate that-- of course I was a little excited and might exaggerate a little, but it seems to me there were at least two dozen soldiers standing on the corner of Collinsville and Missouri Avenues, close in, like they were waiting there for orders, talking and smoking, talking together. I got over to the City Hall and tried to find the officer in charge of the men, and I was looking for a man

1391

in uniform, and I tackled several of them that looked like they might be the one I was looking for, and finally they pointed him out to me. I asked him who was in charge and who I could see, and this man was in a gray suit with a straw hat on and was talking to several soldiers. I don't remember whether they were officers or not.

Mr: Foster: You were looking for a commander in uniform, were you?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir. I found him talking there and he wasn't very much concerned, not at all excited, and seemed to be very cool and collected, and it took me some little time to get his attention. I butted in once and he told me that if I could just wait until he got through with what he was doing, we could probably get along a little faster. Finally after I waited awhile he asked me what my trouble was and I told him, and he finally-- I made it so insistent that he finally took notice of what I wanted. I told him some of our men were down there and they probably would be burned up if he didn't get some help. He finally called, may be eight soldiers, and it is my recollection that he called them by their first names-- didn,t give an order to anybody, but called them over to him and told them to go down there and see what they could do. It was no more than eight men, and one of them said "I haven't had my supper yet, Major", and another said, "I just got off duty." They seemed to know him very well, and he finally persuaded them to go down there. He persuaded them finally to get in a truck. I don't think he put an officer in charge of them-- to get in a truck that

1392

was standing there, and they started down there but they never
228 got there. At that time that whole two blocks probably was
in flames, and there must have been at least a hundred men
there armed, shooting at anybody that would show their head,
and shooting at random when there wasn't anybody to shoot at;
and there wasn't a soldier on duty in that whole district,
and that was the only district then that was really in trouble.
The whole trouble was right there.

Mr. Foss: Do you say these soldiers never got there to your place?

Mr. Thomas: They never got there; no, sir. I saw it was useless to try and do anything with just a few men, and we went back.

Mr. Foster: So that they didn't get there at all?

Mr. Thomas: No, they did not. In my opinion there were several hundred soldiers right around the City Hall, coming from upstairs and different rooms around there, and I am satisfied there were enough soldiers there to at least have made a showing if they had had somebody to show them what to do.

Mr. Foss: I believe that is all.

Mr. Cooper: You ~~were~~ are secretary, Mr. Thomas-- I didn't get the name of the company?

Mr. Thomas: The Hill-Thomas Lime & Cement Company.

Mr. Cooper: Now hearing that your property, your plant, would be burned-- what was the plant worth?

Mr. Thomas: Well, our loss was about $40,000.

Mr. Cooper: You came down, fearing danger or trouble,

1393

the burning of your property. You came down here to Missouri and Collinsville Avenue, and you saw what you at that time thought were 25 soldiers in a group there?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Some of them smoking?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: They were in uniform?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Did you see anybody in command of them, apparently?

Mr. Thomas: Nobody seemed to me to be in command.

Mr. Cooper: You inquired who was in command and were referred to a man with a straw hat and a gray suit?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Did you know that his name was Tripp?

Mr. Thomas: I didn't know it until afterwards; no, sir.

Mr. Cooper: But you learned afterwards that his name was Tripp, Colonel Tripp?

Mr. Thomas: They told me, "Right there; that's Major Tripp."

Mr. Cooper: Major Tripp?

Mr. Thomas: Or Colonel. I don't remember his title.

Mr. Cooper: And you told him, you say, that you feared danger-- or feared the burning of your property?

Mr. Thomas: Well, I told him it wasn't the property I was so fraid of, so much as it was the lives of the men that I was satisfied were around there and probably next in

1394

our office for protection.

Mr. Cooper: What did he say?

Mr. Thomas: Well, it took him a little time to make up his mind to say anything: He didn't seem to take very kindly to my suggestion. I had interrupted him, and I incurred his displeasure, I guess, at first. Finally after I impressed it on him how important it was, and the condition of the men down there, he finally called a few soldiers together, and didn't order them, he coaxed them, you might say, to go down there and see what they could do.

Mr. Cooper: You say he called them by their first names?

Mr. Thomas: That is my recollection; yes, sir. I know there wasn't a military order given.

Mr. Cooper: It was a suggestion more than an order?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

289 Mr. Cooper: And they never got there?

Mr. Thomas: No, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Do you remember whether he deputized any officer to command the squad he sent? Or did he just request the soldiers to go down there?

Mr. Thomas: My recollection is that he did not; that he did not detail officers to go with them.

Mr. Cooper: And when he requested these soldiers to go down there to your plant, what did the soldiers say?

Mr. Thomas: Well, they began to make excuses. They didn't want to go and they gave excuses that I have indicated.

1395

One hadn't had his supper and the other one just got off duty. They were all muttering more or less about it.

Mr. Cooper: The soldiers didn't want to go and began to make excuses. One of them hadn't had his supper. Was he in uniform?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir; they were all in uniform.

Mr. Cooper: This other one was just off duty. What had he been doing, standing out on duty there on the corner of Collinsville and Missouri Avenue?

Mr. Thomas: No, I will stat that after I left there-- I was there probably fifteen minutes, and I went back, and that same crowd was still standing there. They were there at least that long. Colonel Tripp wasn't down there at the corner, you know. They were down there at the corner as I went by to see Tripp, and they were still there when I got back to the fire.

Mr. Cooper: These same soldiers that hadn't had their supper, and one had been on duty, were still back there, were they?

Mr. Thomas: No; I guess you didn't understand me. I said that on my way to the City Hall that night, as I passed the corner of Collinsville and Missouri, I found this bunch of soldiers standing there, apparently with nothing to do and waiting for orders, and after I got through with my business there, ten or fifteen minutes, I went back and they were still standing there. I didn't see any more of those soldiers that started down the line.

Mr. Copper: Well, when these soldiers stated, one of

them, that he hadn't had his supper, and the other one that he had just come off duty, what did the commanding officer, Colonel Tripp, say?

Mr. Thomas: Well, he didn't say anything in the nature of a reprimand. He talked to them like a father would talk to his boy, you know-- very fatherly.

Mr. Cooper: Your property was all burned up?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir; our plant was completely destroyed.

Mr. Cooper: That's all.

Mr. Raker: You have been living here a number of years?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir; I have lived here for 24 years.

Mr. Raker: Was there any insurance on your property?

Mr. Thomas: We had insurance on our property. It wasn't adequate, but such as it was, the insurance companies have refused to pay on account of the riot clause in the policy.

Mr. Raker: How much was the insurance?

Mr. Thomas: Well, our insurance was about, between $12,000 and $15,000, I think, on the buildings, you know.

Mr. Raker: And you lost about $40,000?

Mr. Thomas: About $40,000.

Mr. Raker: Did you employ all negro help?

Mr. Thomas: Our drivers were negroes.

Mr. Raker: About how many drivers did you have?

Mr. Thomas: We had about a dozen-- well, about 15, counting the brick helpers at that time.

Mr. Raker: How many white men?

Mr. Thomas: We have no white drivers.

1397

Mr.Baker: How many white men are employed in your business generally?

Mr. Thomas: Well, in our business we have office men and outside men. They are all white men, and stable men.

290 Mr. Baker: About how many?

Mr. Thomas: About eight or ten.

Mr. Baker: Did the colored help leave that night or the next day?

Mr. Thomas: Yes; the colored-- our drivers-- it happened that several of our men were in the building, as I had feared, and after it got too hot for them they got out, and they all left-- practically all of them left East St. Louis and went to St. Louis. There was one of them that never was accounted for. He was killed.

Mr. Baker: Do you know where he was killed?

Mr. Thomas: No. The very next day we tried to locate all of them, and he was accounted for along with another one out in Denver Side cut here.

Mr. Baker: You found the body out there?

Mr. Thomas: No. The following day, when he was supposed-- the man he was supposed to be with-- showed up, but he hadn't seen him at all. I at once took it up with the undertakers, to see whether he was with the unidentified dead, and they showed me photographs of all that hadn't been identified, and there was one that resembled him very much.

Mr. Johnson: It was your opinion that was the one?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, but it transpired later that he had

1398

been identified as another one, and his body dug up and taken to St. Louis as another man, and buried.

Mr. Raker: So one of your men never was accounted for?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: What was his name?

Mr. Thomas: Moses Feefe.

Mr. Raker: Was he a married man?

Mr. Thomas: No, single man.

Mr. Raker: How long had he been in East St. Louis?

Mr. Thomas: He had been in our employ 12 years.

Mr. Raker: And you found no account of him-- no record of him?

Mr. Thomas: No. The life insurance company paid the death loss. His brother had a policy on his life?

Mr. Johnson: How much, do you know?

Mr. Thomas: $350.

Mr. Johnson: And the only evidence of his death is that he disappeared?

Mr. Thomas: That's all.

Mr. Raker: And he was one of your drivers?

Mr. Thomas: One of our drivers, yes sir. We had two other drivers shot, but they both recovered. They have both been with us for a great many years.

Mr. Johnson: And were they shot as they went out of your burning establishment?

Mr. Thomas: No, they weren't molested. When they got out of there they got away without any trouble at all, but --

well, one of them was shot-- he had been helping get out horses, and he jumped over the back fence. He was shot as he went over the fence, and the other one was shot down here in the south end of town about three blocks from the warehouse.

Mr. Raker: As he was getting away?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: Is that towards the Free Bridge?

Mr. Thomas: Towards the Free Bridge; yes, sir. His body lay in the ditch there from Monday night until about 4 o'clock Tuesday afternoon, and he was supposed to be dead, but they finally discovered, some people-- they were passing all the time going to St. Louis-- saw his body laying there in the ditch-- especially colored ones, and thought he was dead, but finally discovered he was alive, and about four o'clock his body was picked up and taken to St. Louis City Hospital.

Mr. Raker: Four o'clock Tuesday afternoon?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And he recovered?

Mr. Thomas: He recovered.

231 Mr. Raker: was there any examination made as to the kind or character of this wound, do you know?

Mr. Thomas: Well, I couldn't say as to that. He got good attention over there in the hospital.

Mr. Raker: what I was getting at, was an examination made so as to determine whether or not it was an ordinary pistol ball, or whether it was a ball from a high-powered gun.

Mr. Thomas: I couldn't say as to that. I hardly think

1400

so.

Mr. Raker: What became of the other man who was shot jumping over the fence?

Mr. Thomas: Well, he just had a flesh wound, and he got well in a few days.

Mr. Raker: Where is he now?

Mr. Thomas: In our employ.

Mr. Raker: Here in East St. Louis?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: And the one that lay down in the ditch, where is he?

Mr. Thomas: Well, he is not working now. He has been away. He just got back the other day. I heard of him but have not seen him. He is not able to work yet.

Mr. Raker: Did you learn how or by whom either one of those men were shot?

Mr. Thomas: No.

Mr. Raker: whether it was by civilians or the soldiers?

Mr. Thomas: Well, it was civilians, I think. The second men was shot that night in the south end of town there with a crowd of boys, young fellows, standing on the corner and taking a shot at these negroes as they went towards St. Louis, and he was shot down there by one of these young fellows.

Mr. Raker: That was long in the evening about what time, six or eight or nine o'clock?

Mr. Thomas: It must have been about 7:30, I guess.

Mr. Raker: Now did you make any inquiry of the fire

1401

department for assistance that evening?

Mr. Thomas: No, sir.

Mr. Raker: Why didn't you?

Mr. Thomas: Well, it seemed to be out of the question to get help anywhere that night. I went to the soldiers first.

Mr. Raker: I know, but you knew the fire chief and the firemen, and I just wanted to know if you did go, and what result you obtained.

Mr. Thomas: No, I didn't go at all.

Mr. Raker: If you didn't go what was the reason you didn't go?

Mr. Thomas: Well, I could see that the fire was beyond control, and nobody seemed to venture beyond a certain line down there where these men were congregated.

Mr. Raker: Well now, if the fire, now, as beyond control, the soldiers would not have been able to have stopped it?

Mr. Thomas: Well, when I first went up there I wasn't concerned about any property loss at all. I was figuring the safety of these men, and when I came back everything was in flames.

Mr. Raker: You didn't go, as I understand it, on account of the fire? It was on account of the men?

Mr. Thomas: Yes; that was all.

Mr. Raker: The question of protection from fire had passed?

Mr. Thomas: That was out of my mind at that time.

1402

Mr. Raker: Well now, you know the Police Department, the men, fairly well, on the beat in or about your district?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: You knew the chief of police?

Mr. Thomas: I did.

Mr. Raker: Did you make any inquiry of the police department ~~of~~ that evening or afternoon for assistance?

Mr. Thomas: No, sir.

Mr. Raker: Why didn't you?

Mr. Thomas: Well, the reason I didn't was because I knew that Mayor Mollman had asked the Governor to proclaim martial law here, and that soldiers were coming in on every train, and I was satisfied that we would get protection. I thought the soldiers would be on the job.

Mr. Raker: Well, I know, but you went down to the City Hall?

292 Mr. Thomas: I knew from reports that day that the police were very inactive; that they were in a state of mutiny, and it was the soldiers that I was looking to for protection.

Mr. Raker: I know, but you went down to the City Hall where the police had their headquarters, but made no effort to get the police?

Mr. Thomas: I didn't see any use of asking the police. We had a limited police force at the best, and we had soldiers, as I understood, who came here for that specific purpose, to protect lives and property that day, and I thought they were the people to appeal to.

Mr. Raker: I know, but you started to state the reason why you didn't go to the police, but you didn't finish.

Mr. Thomas: What was it I said?

Mr. Raker: You said you had heard the police were in a state of mutiny?

Mr. Thomas: I heard that all day, and I was in such a state of mind that night that I was trying to get protection where I thought I was most likely to get it.

Mr. Raker: From what source had you derived this information that the police were in a state of mutiny?

Mr. Thomas: Well, it was talked all over town that day.

Mr. Raker: That the police had thrown up their hands?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir; that they had thrown up their hands?

Mr. Raker: And were giving assistance to the protection of lives, or to ~~the eventual~~ prevent the destruction of property? Is that about right?

Mr. Thomas: That is my understanding of it that day. I will say this: I understand that night there was a policeman on duty at our place that helped to rescue our horses.

Mr. Johnson: What was his name?

Mr. Thomas: His name was Otto. That was his last name.

Mr. Raker: You were in and about the plant during practically all of the day of July 2nd?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir. You see, when the trouble came it was unsafe for negroes to be on the streets, and we called our teams in at noon on Monday.

1404

Mr. Raker: And you were in a very close proximity to the general disturbance, rioting?

Mr. Thomas: Well, not the general disturbance. That was mostly on Collinsville Avenue during the day.

Mr. Raker: Well, that is pretty close.

Mr. Thomas: We were down here about Sixth. We were close enough to hear the shooting at intervals all day long, just a few minutes apart.

Mr. Raker: What did you do before six o'clock to stop the rioting?

Mr. Thomas: Well, I didn't do anything specially, I guess.

Mr. Raker: Why didn't you?

Mr. Johnson: What was the first name of the policeman who helped you to rescue your horses?

Mr. Thomas: I think it is Fred Otto.

Mr. Raker: Why didn't you?

Mr. Thomas: Well, because we were lulled into a sense of security by the presence of the troops in town that day.

Mr. Raker: Oh, I know, but did you see the troops on the streets down about your place of business?

Mr. Thomas: Well, there were none down there, and there was no trouble down there.

Mr. Raker: Well, did you make any examination to see where the troops were?

Mr. Thomas: No, I didn't.

Mr. Raker: You heard shooting all day; you found that the riots were going on, and understood that they were going on, and felt a security simply because the soldiers were

here? Is that right?

Mr. Thomas: I guess that's right.

Mr. Baker: And therefore you made no effort to do anything yourself-- with your associates or your neighbors?

293

Mr. Thomas: No, sir, I didn't.

Mr. Baker: That's all.

Mr. Cooper: You say this photograph of the colored body-- the body of the colored man-- very much resembled your employe?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir; I was positive that it was him. I identified him without a bit of hesitancy. In fact, everybody else that knew him did the same thing.

Mr. Cooper: But subsequently you learned that--

Mr. Thomas (interposing:) Somebody else had identified him as another party, and his body was taken out and buried over in St. Louis.

Mr. Cooper: Are you satisfied from your twelve years' acquaintance with him that that photograph was a photograph of his body?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir, I am.

Mr. Cooper: And the insurance company paid the insurance?

Mr. Thomas: They paid the insurance, yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: How old a man was he?

Mr. Thomas: Well, he must have been about 35, I guess.

Mr. Cooper: And he came to work for you when he was

1406

23 years old?

Mr. Thomas: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson. Did the insurance company make this adjustment, or pay the policy on his life before or after he had been claimed-- the body had been claimed by other persons?

Mr. Thomas: They paid it afterwards. They paid it very promptly, but I know it was after the body had been taken ~~out~~ up, because it was taken up the same week and buried in St. Louis.

Mr. Johnson: The Committee will take a recess until 1:30 this afternoon.

(Whereupon, at 12:30 o'clock p.m., the Committee recessed.)

- - - - - - - - -

A F T E R R E C E S S .

The Committee reassembled at 1:30 o'clock p.m., pursuant to recess.

Mr. Johnson: The Committee will please come to order. A paper has been handed to the Committee purporting to be some resolutions passed by the Federation of Catholic societies. In those resolutions there are some charges, specific charges, made relative to this situation. As I am the only catholic on the Committee I assume the responsibility for declining to insert the resolutions in the record, and I call upon those who signed that resolution to come before the Committee and tell what they know about the charges which have been preferred in the resolutions, rather than to let the charges go attributable to a society or church, or semi-church organization.

I have a telegram bearing date October 20, signed by

1407

C. A. Olander, Secretary of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, expressing his desire to appear before the Committee and testify, and asking how long the Committee would remain in session. To that telegram I replied that the Committee would be in session at least until the middle of this week. We have now come to the end of the week, and neither Mr. Olander nor anybody else representing organized labor has testified. I deem it well to serve notice now that the Committee has been endeavoring to hasten to a completion of its work here, and we would be glad to have Mr. Olander or anyone
294 else representing the State interests that he does, not to defer later than Monday morning before coming with such statements as they may desire to make to the Committee relative to the situation which is being investigated.

Mr. Canavan, will you please come to the stand?

- - - - - - - - - -

STATEMENT OF THOMAS J. CANAVAN, East St. Louis, Ill's.

(The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.)

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Canavan, please give the stenographer your name, your place of residence and occupation.

Mr. Canavan: Thomas J. Canavan, real estate, loans and insurance.

Mr. Johnson: You have been in the room here, I believe, for several days, have you not, while this hearing was going on, this investigation?

Mr. Canavan: Once as a spectator, and I was told to be here on two other occasions.

Mr. Johnson: What I meant to say by that was that you

1408

have ascertained the line of inquiry upon which the Committee is acting.

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And the Committee would be glad now to have you in your own way tell what you may know of the ~~causes~~ origin or cause, as well as the acts of violence, connected with the recent riots.

Mr. Canavan: I think it would be well, in order to try to get a correct way of putting it, to begin as far back as the beginning.

I will say, to begin with, I have lived here all my life and remember distinctly since about 1870. During the first years of our town-- we were organized in 1886-- we had a very ~~xx~~ turbulent administration, from what I am told and what I knew, till 1886. Previous to that time life and property werenot considered safe here. At that period there was elected a reform administration, a man named Stevens was elected Mayor. He continued Mayor for many years, and life and property became secure. Population began to increase, values accordingly. He continued for quite a number of years, and was out one year, when Mr. Beatty occupied the office of Mayor for one term. He made a first class Mayor. Mr. Stevens was reelected and continued on for quite a number of years until Mayor Cook was elected. Things went along very nicely under him, particularly in the first years of his administration. I think he served about five years.

Things ran on very nicely until about 1911. We then had a change of administration.

1409

Mr. Johnson: In your city affairs?

Mr. Canavan: In our city affairs. Mr. Lafbert, Charles Lambert, was elected Mayor, and it appeared from the time he was elected that law and order began to be forgotten. The lid was taken off, as it was said. Saloons were allowed to run as they saw fit; wine rooms and cabarets of all kinds-- whites and negroes--

Mr. Johnson (interposing:) On Sundays?

Mr. Canavan: Sundays and every other day, all the time. The negroes got to be quite a political factor about that time.

Mr. Lambert served two years and was served by Mayor Chamberlain. I might say that during Lambert's administra-
295 tion, and once preceding him, the vice districts were formed in East St. Louis. When Mayor Chamberlain was elected he attempted to reform-- make conditions better, and did succeed in a degree in bringing about better conditions. He was defeated in 1913 by the present Mayor Mollman, who went on and not only continued to do the sort of work that Chamberlain did, but did all in his power to make it better. His election was contested. He didn't have entire charge of the city government for the first years of his administration, and no one knew definitely who was mayor until about 1916. The contest was settled then. The election was very close, the election, I believe, seven or eight votes. The contest was on all during the first year.

Mr. Mollman on taking office-- and more particularly the beginning of 1916-- when he realized that he was Mayor-- began to make an effort to reform things, and he caused the

1410

winerooms and cabarets, to be all abolished; commercialized gambling was tabooed, prohibited, and the city was getting along very nicely. He was elected, as I have told you, by a very small majority, some six or seven votes. His administration was so good that when he ran for office again in 1917 he had the support of all of the church organizations here, ministers, Ministerial Alliance, the Catholic as well the Protestant preachers told of his praises from their churches, and he was elected by the greatest majority that a man has ever gotten in the entire history of the city, some 3,000 majority.

The newspapers all supported him, nearly, particularly the Post-Despatch, of which Mr. Anderson is the reporter here, and they left nothing undone to prove what a good man he was, and the Post-Despatch wrote editorial after editorial. He hadn't been in office very long until he fell out with Anderson: They had trouble along there, but things went on nicely. The people were satisfied and delighted with his administration, and in the first month of this present year everybody was proud and praising the good administration xx we had. There was no gambling going on, no wine rooms.

Mr. Wollman started out the year by eliminating some hundred saloons that were recognized as vicious ones. Nearly all the places known as "barrel houses" were eliminated. I think there were possibly 20 of them before that time.

Mr. Johnson: Was the "barrel-house" a worse place than the average saloon?

Mr. Canavan: It was, yes, sir.

1411

Mr. Johnson: I don't know just what a barrel house is.

Mr. Canavan: A barrel house as meant in East St. Louis is a place where they don't have a bar, but they have a number of barrels in there, and the persons go in there and buy their whiskey and get a greater amount than they would get in an ordinary saloon. They usually ask for a nickel's worth of the most. That is the expression most familiar to us where they go in those places.

Mr. Johnson: Do they get it in a bottle or a glass?

Mr. Canavan: Both ways, either in a bottle or in a
296 glass. They were breeding places for crime; they were a disgrace to the locations where they were located, and that was along Broadway. And they were numerous from the time you crossed the viaduct until you reached Collinsville Avenue. There were several of them. Standing in front of them were numbers of people, white and black, in various stages and degrees of intoxication.

These things were eliminated, closed up. The saloons outside the city of East St. Louis and adjacent thereto when Mr. Mollman closed the saloons on Sunday, opened their doors wide and published posters around announcing that they were still open, and the persons went from East St. Louis outside the limits and got their drinks just the same. Mr. Mollman got in touch with the Attorney General's office, told him he wanted to cooperate with him to prevent that state of affairs-- remedy it. He has a letter down there that I read a day or two ago where the Attorney General commended him most highly--

1412

and that was in May of this year, the same month that the riot-- the first riot-- occurred in-- commending him for the good work he had done.

I have gotten up to about the point of the riot, unless you gentlemen want to ask me something. I will state that on the night-- in order to get it right, we had better begin a little further back. Labor troubles began to appear--

Mr. Foss (interposing:) About what time?

Mr. Canavan: About 1915, in the fall of 1915 there was a strike at the Aluminum Ore Company. The men went out on strike and were out only a day or two when the company met all of their demands and they went back to work. They organized some sort of a union, and that is given as the reason why the second strike occurred. Their contention was that the company recognized this union they formed, but immediately began to dismiss the men who were prominent in organizing it.

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Canavan, before you proceed further, I wish to invite your attention to the fact that so far you have been making a voluntary statement, and I wish to admonish you that you are asked to make nothing except a voluntary statement, and if any member of the Committee should ask you a question which you prefer not to answer-- which you may prefer not to answer-- you will not answer it. In other words, you will use your own discretion as to what statement you will make or what questions you will answer. The Committee will not undertake to compel you to answer any questions, and if you make any statement or answer any question, it is entirely

voluntary upon your part.

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir; I think I understand.

Mr. Johnson: Go ahead.

Mr. Canavan: Let's see if I can catch where I was. I was speaking about the strike at the Aluminum Ore Company. I have related about that.

In the spring of 1916 the city was improving Broadway-- that is our principal street-- one of our principal streets-- by resurfacing it. The street car company has a double track on that street, and they held our work up-- the city was unable to complete the street for the reason that the car company didn't do their portion of their work, which required a resurfacing of their track. The reason they gave for it was that the men were on strike. They were paying those men 17-1/2 cents an hour. The men were demanding 20 cents. They wouldn't give it to them. Finally-- I am connected with the street department-- myself and the Mayor and others, got in touch with the street car company and got them finally to agree to raise the men's wages to that amount. In the meantime they hired quite a number of negroes.

Now it was noticeable in the fall of 1916, a short time before election, that negroes were coming in here in greater numbers. The streets were filled with them. It was generally believed that the manufacturers were bringing them here for the purpose of taking the place of the white men who had already struck or were about to strike. It was believed by the people here that the manufacturers wanted to get plenty of laborers

1414

on hand, so in case strikes occurred they would be ready to handle the situation. And the political organizations here seemed to believe they were being brought here for political purposes. Their attention was called to it from the large number of negroes who had registered in East St. Louis, and the story had gotten abroad that the republican party were bringing negroes into East St. Louis for the purpose of beating the democrats at the election. That feeling became dissipated later on, and most everybody became of the opinion that they were brought here to work in the factories and foundries here.

Mr. Foss: Was there a republican ticket in that election?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, at the national election.

Mr. Foss: On national election, not city election?

Mr. Canavan: No, national election. They came here, anyhow, in great numbers. The democrats sought to keep them from being registered-- illegal ones-- and the republicans, it looked like, tried to vote them whether they were legal or not-- at least they put impediments in the way of the democrats. They sought to have men stationed at various polling places and ask the negroes if they came in, or listened to the questions asked by the judge as to where they came from and how long they had been in the city. They had pieces of paper to write down the answers given by the board. They were ordered out of the polls by the parties in charge, and that ended it.

That started some ill feeling, however, because the

1415

persons got it in their minds that the negroes were being brought here to use for political purposes.

My story is rather disconnected on account of going back, and I think perhaps now I had better speak of the riot in May, on May 28th.

It was the regular meeting night of the City Council. I happened to be downtown, and I think went to the picture show.

Mr. Cooper: Just one question there. After the election, did they come in the spring, this last spring-- negroes?

Mr. Canavan: More of them than before. They continued coming in.

Well, on the evening of May 28th I went down to the City Hall. I had heard that there was to be a committee of some of the working people-- I believe the labor organizations were going to wait on the Council and ask the Mayor and Council to take some steps to prevent this large influx of negroes, if it was within their power to do so.

Mr. Johnson: What day of the month was that?

Mr. Canavan: May 28th of this year. I went to the City Hall, and instead of being a committee come down there, would judge
298 I xmxmgmxm between 700 and a thousand persons came there. The Council was unable to receive them in the Council Chamber, and the meeting was started up in the auditorium of the City Hall, which is the third floor. The Council went up there in a body, as I understand, to listen to them. I saw them go

1416

up but I didn,t go into the room, in the auditorium. I stayed downstairs in the building.

They were up there for some little time. The meeting apparently was over. They came down, and I sat on the steps in front of the City Hall. Everything was very quiet. There had been rumors that there was liable to be trouble, race trouble.

About that time a newspaper reporter came up to me and said that--

Mr. Johnson (interposing:) Do you know his name?

Mr. Canavan: Roy Albertson. He came up to me and said "They have just killed-- the niggers have just killed a white man over on Gaty Avenue." I said "For the Lord's sake, don,t say that any more. Don't say it ~~around~~ aloud." These men were just coming down the steps, going away, and the less said of that the better. He saw the wisdom of my remark and he said no more about it. I continued to sit on the front steps of the City Hall.

The persons who had ~~come~~ been in the meeting had gotten about a block and a half or two blocks away when I heard a commotion, and in a short time a great croad came surging around the corner of Missouri Avenue and down ~~in~~ on to main Street in the direction of the City Hall and the police station, which are adjoining-- nearly so. I saw what was up. I ran upstairs intending to notify the Mayor and the City Council, who were in session, and I ran clear to the auditorium, believing they were holding their session in the auditorium, having gone up to the labor meeting. After I got on the third floor I found I was mistaken, and I hurried down to the Council Chamber,

1417

which is on the second floor. I was nearly out of breath by this time, on account of running up and running down there. I ran up to the Mayor's desk-- the Council was in session-- and I said to him, "There is a riot on downstairs." And he stood up and said to the Council: "I am sorry; I am informed there is a riot in progress downstairs." I started for the door and so did the Council, ran down the steps and out into the street. I think I was the first one that got down. Some of the councilmen right at my heels, Mayor Mollman following. By the time we had gotten down, the crowd had gotten in front of the police station. It transpired that they had a negro. Some white men, civilians and soldiers-- ~~xxxx~~ not soldiers-- some civilians and some police officers, were taking a negro to the police station for protection. The mob was howling "Lynch him." Mayor Mollman worked his way through the crowd, got up on the steps of the city police station at the highest step and asked the men in the name of honor and decency and all that was right to go home, telling them that if any crime had been committed to let the law take its course; telling them the law would take its course, and he would see that justice would be had. Some of the crowd, particularly on the outside, begun to melt away. Others said-- if I can use vulgarity-- "To Hell with Mollman; hang him", and some remarks like that.

Mr. Johnson: Hang who?

Mr. Canavan: The ~~man~~ Mayor. He continued to talk, and the crowd began to disappear. The police officers began to arrive,

1418

and as they began to arrive the mob run in different directions. The large part of them run south on Main Street. They went from there, I am told, over to Collinsville Avenue. How soon they went there I don't know. I was there about three-quarters of an hour after that time, and the mob had about subsided. I was told that they pulled people off the street cars-- negroes off the street cars-- and beat them. I didn't see anybody pulled off the cars, but I saw a gang of fellows there who looked like they might be willing to pull most anybody off. The police came along and chased them away-- when the police appeared they ran away.

Things quieted down and I went home. Before going hom , however, I talked to Mayor Hollman and I asked him what he expected to do about the matter. It looked bad. He said "Well, I am going to do all I can to ~~quell~~ quell it. I have talked to Colonel Kavanaugh"-- who was stationed here with a number of troops. He had some 200 soldiers here-- "and he told me he didn't have any orders that would justify ~~me~~ him in helping us just now. He would have to receive orders from Washington." I might say that these soldiers had been stationed here for several months before. Nobody knew for what cause; the city authorities or county authorities knew nothing of their coming; didn't know why they were here. The working men thought they were here to protect the street car companies' non-unionists, and the non-unionists at the Aluminum Ore Company. Other persons thought they were here to protect those plants from alien enemies. However, he didn't do any-

1419

thing that night.

Mr. Johnson: How many of those soldiers were here?

Mr. Canavan: I think 200.

Mr. Cooper: This was in May?

Mr. Canavan: They were there from April, some date in April. I don't remember just the date, but some time previous to the riot.

Mr. Johnson: When did they go away from here?

Mr. Canavan: They remained here until a month or two ago. They afterwards refused to help the Mayor, however.

The Mayor got in touch with the state authorities, and the state militia came here the next day under the command of Colonel Clayton, who seemed very efficient, and law and order was speedily restored and things became normal.

Things run on all right until July 2nd. I came down the morning of July 2nd--

Mr. Johnson (interposing:) Were there ominous mutterings between the May riot and the July riot?

Mr. Canavan: I heard some people occasionally say--

Mr. Johnson (interposing:) Rumors that were alarming?

Mr. Canavan: Most of the talk I heard was "The niggers won't be as smart in the future as they have been in the past." That was about the extent. I used to hear people talking on the street cars that way. I used to hear them say "The niggers ain't going to be as smart, and these plants ain't going to supplant the white people at all." But I didn't hear anything serious or dangerous, as though there was going to be a clash. I thought the fact that the soldiers had been here had had a

wholesome effect, and the fact that in the meantime Mayor Mollman had gotten in touch with the superiors of Colonel Kavanaugh, who told him that if there was a recurrence of the riots they would act with him, help him out, if the thing occurred again. We felt secure, having all the soldiers here. We thought there was no question-- no man could make me believe there was any possibility of anything like a riot. You always hear fellows blow this and that and the other thing, but you don't have very much confidence in them.

I came down on the morning of July 2nd to my office-- got there about 8 o'clock.

Mr. Johnson: Where is your office located?

Mr. Canavan: At 114 North Main Street, directly across the street from the City Hall. I live in Bond Avenue, the eastern end of the city, on East Bond Avenue.

When I came down in the morning I went out on the sidewalk in front of the place, and I met some men talking, and they said "Have you heard of the killing?" I told them I hadn't, and I was told that two officers had been killed. I learned afterwards one wasn't killed outright, but lived some days afterwards. I inquired who did it, and was told that it was an armed band of negroes on Bond Avenue that had done the work. Being interested generally in the city, I went directly over to Mayor Vollmer and asked him what he had done in regard to the matter. I said "Have you tried to get any soldiers here? We are liable to have trouble." He told me that he had. He said that he had been informed of it somewhere in the

1421

middle of the night, I think he said, and that he remained up until about morning-- remained up all night and was in communication with the Governor and the Adjutant General, and that troops were on their way, and that he felt that by as early as 9 o'clock some of the troops might be in.

About 9 o'clock or thereabouts the troops began to arrive. Most of ~~their~~ my time in the early morning was consumed making arrangements for some place where the troops were to be stationed: I am custodian of the city buildings, and I took up with the first soldiers that arrived-- asked them where they wanted to be located. At first the Mayor thought it might be well to distribute them around in the vicinity of our parks; that that would be a good place for them to camp. Things weren't very alarming in the early morning about 9 o'clock-- pretty fair-- but it started to look worse. We heard about some rioting up at the northern part of the city, but at the same time the troops come around, and it was the general opinion that it was best for the troops to remain right here in a central place at the City Hall, and we could transport them rapidly ~~around~~ from there to any point where they might be needed.

The day wore on. I went home that evening between five and six o'clock: During that day I had heard a good deal-- I get ahead of my story, unfortunately.

About mid-day of that day I was standing looking out of one of the windows in the city hall.

Mr. Cooper (interposing:) That was on Monday?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir-- looking over towards Missouri

1422

301

Avenue. There was a crowd of rioters-- or persons-- idlers of some kind-- congregated at that corner, quite a large crowd, I would think so two or three hundred people had congregated there. What they were doing I don't know. I came down on the street and I met Chief of Police Payne, and I said to him-- he was accompanied by a soldier-- I said "Ransome, we had better get that crowd away from over there at the corner. Trouble is liable to start here with such a big crowd." He says "I ~~have done~~ will do so, and I am going with this soldier--" some officer-- he had some kind of a different color on his hat-- braid-- "We are going down here to take up a lot of arms from some rioters that are down here some place. I am going with him and will be back in a few minutes." He went away, and when he came back I didn't see him. I don't remember whether I saw him any more that day at all, but about mid-day I was looking out of the City Hall window, looking over in the direction of where this crowd stood that I just spoke of, and I saw some men leave that crowd, possibly four or five, and walk eastwardly on Missouri Avenue. They had gone possibly 150 feet from the place where the crowd was, and they halted in front of a door where a negro was standing, the doorway of a saloon. It wasn't the doorway leading into the saloon, however; it was the door leading to the apartments above the saloon, and sat in some ten feet back from the street. A tall negro was standing there, saying or doing nothing to anyone, apparently in fear, and these men came up to him, and one of them pulled a revolver of some kind out of his pocket and shot him, as close as I am to the stenographer here--

Mr. Johnson (interposing:) Six feet away?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir; right up to him-- shot him, and right directly across the street from where this happened were a body of soldiers.

Mr. Johnson: Did that shot kill him?

Mr. Canavan: No, sir, he didn't die.

Mr. Johnson: Where did the bullet hit him?

Mr. Canavan: I think in one of the limbs. I intended to relate that in the story as I am telling it.

Mr. Johnson: Go ahead.

Mr. Canavan: The soldiers made no attempt whatever to arrest the men. There were between 25 and 40 soldiers standing directly across the street witnessing it, much closer than I was. I was 300 feet away; they were about 60 feet away, the width of the street.

After the man had gone by he didn't drop. We expected him to drop. Dr. Twitchell was standing with me looking out of the window, and the negro wasn't shot apparently seriously enough to drop. I expected hi every moment to see him drop. After the men had gone away, one of the soldiers went over and took him by the arm and led him to the police station. I heard afterwards that he was shot in the thigh, but how badly I don't know.

That was, I believe, all the deeds of violence that I saw at that time. I went home that evening about half past five o'clock, as near as I can remember. I took my supper.

302 After supper was over, our neighbors congregated around. We talked about the trouble that might ensue, and I concluded to

1424

go downtown to see what was happening; to see how things were going on. I could see from where I lived in Alta Sita, which is just about three miles from here, fires, the reflection of fires spreading around downtown.

Coming down in the automobile with me were my son and his child, my grandson, and a younger son of mine thirteen years of age. We got down-- came eastwardly on Pond Avenue until we reached 14th Street. I saw an automobile headed to me going as fast as they could go, waving at me to stop. I heard a lot of firing going on. The automobile stopped and they says "Turn around quick; you will be killed; they are shooting at me." I told my son to turn around. I looked down the street and I saw a great number of negro men and women shooting revolvers, shooting, it looked like, at everything.

Mr. Johnson: Where were they?

Mr. Canavan: On Pond Avenue, between 13th and 11th Streets.

Mr. Johnson: And this was on Monday evening, July 2nd?

Mr. Canavan: July 2nd, yes sir.

Mr. Johnson: About what time?

Mr. Canavan: It was then, I think, nearly six o'clock-- about half past seven, I think.

Mr. Johnson: Go ahead.

Mr. Canavan: About the same time a man came through there in a Ford machine. Everybody fired at him, but it looked

1425

like he escaped injury.

Mr. Johnson: When you say "everybody fired at him", whom do you mean?

Mr. Canavan: All those colored people. The man in the automobile turned out to be Dr. Mc Quillan, and his wife. They told me to stop, which I did. They lived near me out home. We turned our machine, with the intention of following him out home. When we got to within about 150 feet from 15th Street, then going westwardly on Pond, as we were, we saw two white men come down the street, coming home from work, with their working clothes on. A number of negroes jumped out of the weeds and came in front of them and shot both of them. One man fell just where he was shot. The other man reeled and fell over at the curb.

Mr. Johnson: What time was that?

Mr. Canavan: Between half past 7 and 8 o'clock.

Mr. Johnson: That was about the same time as this other?

Mr. Canavan: Just now. It all happened within five or ten minutes, the whole thing. I saw-- Mc Quillan and myself- saw we couldn't get home by that route, nor could we go back, because there was a mob of negroes at the other end firing at everything they saw, every white person they saw they were shooting at. We were between two mobs. Dr. McQuillan turned his automobile down through sort of a prairie down towards what we call Market Avenue South. //

1426

Mr. Johnson: Let me interrupt you a minute. Do you know the names of the two men you saw shot down by the negroes?

Mr. Canavan: I learned their names afterwards.

Mr. Johnson: What were the names, did you hear?

303 Mr. Canavan: One was George Hare, and the other man's name was Murray. He died. I don't remember what his first name was.

In our endeavor to get home Dr. McQuillar and myself didn't know what was best to do. He started down through a weedgrown block of ground over towards Market Avenue, believing he could get below this mob at 15th Street who had shot the two white men. As he attempted to go there, the men who did the shooting at 13th Street and Bond, ran south to intercept him. He was going as fast as he could with his machine, and as I saw him run out among the weeds, negroes arose who had been laying on the ground in among the weeds. They arose, and they were very numerous. They were armed with revolvers and with guns, with rifles or shot guns. They were shooting at me and my children, and my little grandchild, two years old. Not a bullet struck us, however, fortunately: Dr. McQuillar wasn't so fortunate. One bullet struck him in the head and glanced along--

Mr. Johnson (interposing:) Dr. McQuillar, then, is a third man who was shot?

Mr. Canavan: He was shot but not killed.

Mr. Johnson: Hare wasn't killed, either?

Mr. Canavan: No, he lived, yes sir.

Mr. Johnson: What is Dr. McQuillan 's name?

Mr. Canavan: Dr. A. B. McQuillan. As McQuillan ran south to evade the mob at 15th Street he was headed off. They ran over and headed him off. I heard his machine stop. I learned afterwards that he struck a telegraph pole trying to get away. There was an awful lot of firing, and I concluded of course that he was killed. The last I saw of Mrs.McQuillan She was begging them not to kill him, pulling the guns away from the negroes. I heard them curse her, and then all got quiet. I concluded that Dr. McQuillan was dead and his wife too, and it gave me an opportunity to escape.

I couldn't go back home on Bond Avenue, because the negroes along that street were all shooting. I could look in many directions, and everywhere where I saw a colored house they were shooting out of it. I got to 15th Street and headed north on Broadway, but as I came to the place where the two men were laying--

Mr. Johnson (interposing:) What two men?

Mr. Canavan: The two men shot, Hare and Murray.

Mr. Johnson: How close together were they?

Mr. Canavan: About 17 or 18 feet.

Mr. Johnson: And at exactly what point were they?

Mr. Canavan: Right at the intersection of 15th Street and Bond Avenue.

Mr. Johnson: I thought you said 17th Street before.

Mr. Canavan: No, 15th Street. My son said to me, "One of the men is alive, and I am going to pick him up."

We stopped the car, or nearly so. My older son was driving, and my grandson and the other little boy were in the back seat. We started to pull the men in--

Mr. Johnson (interposing:) Which one was that?

Mr. Canavan: I think nearly 8 o'clock.

Mr. Johnson: Which one was it?

Mr. Canavan: Hare, or Herr, I believe is the name. I didn,t know who he was until we pulled him in . We pulled
304 him in there and my son said "Pop, put my baby down." The shooting was so violent that he wanted to get the baby out of reach of the shooting. I threw the baby down on the wounded man, and my other son, the little boy 17 years old, laid on top of him, and the negroes came running, it looked like from all directions, all shooting. They were shooting guns, and shooting revolvers. I headed north to Broadway.

Mr. Johnson: Shooting at what?

Mr. Canavan: At me while I was picking this man up. And about that time an ambulance came along. They were going on some other mission, going some other place, but they stopped, hesitated for a moment, but the negroes fired at them so strongly that he turned rapidly and nearly took a wheel off of my car getting away. As I started north to Broadway on 15th Street there was a street intervening known as McCasland Avenue. There is a row of some 12 or 15 houses occupied exclusively by negroes there. I noticed the firing was much heavier then than at any other time. I looked around and it looked to me that from every door they were shooting at me. Another man came along, by the name of Weckermeyer, about this time-- Frank Weckermeyer. He came

1429

by, and I had just gotten out of reach of the firing, but one of their bullets struck him in the wrist. He continued to run his car with his other hand. He got to Broadway: I got as far as the Protestant Hospital-- or they call it the Deaconess Hospital now, with the wounded man, and left him there. I went around by the Louisiana Boulevard and got back home. I couldn't go home-- I was afraid to go home back by the way of Bond Avenue.

Mr. Johnson: What time did you get home?

Mr. Canavan: About 9 o'clock I got back home. A little later we were afraid to go out of the house. There were rumors that the negroes were coming from a colored section south of Alta Sita, which is one of the residence districts of East St. Louis, and the negroes who live in a settlement just south of that were coming up there to shoot down the white people. We didn't think there was much to it, but after what had happened just a few minutes before that I couldn't tell what might happen. Every time the shooting would get busier we would run in the house and get behind the portions of the house where there were no windows-- get behind the brick columns of the building, and if they did come, the bullets couldn't reach us so readily. Fires appeared then all down through the city.

Later on-- before I got home I went direct to the Aluminum Ore Company's office and I notified the Aluminum Ore people that Dr. McQuillan and his wife had been shot and killed, as I supposed, by negroes.

Mr. Johnson: Had she been shot?

Mr. Canavan: No, she wasn't shot, but I notified
305 them of their predicament. I also called the police station and got someone there who ~~xxx~~ said he was a soldier, and I told him all about leaving this dead man there-- I supposed he was dead -- and that the other man had been shot, and I had picked him up. I believed then that Murray was dead, but I heard him say afterwards that the negroes got there immediately after I got away, and they came up and kicked him in the breast and took his watch away, and one of them said, "Well, we got this son of a bitch anyway." He told me that before he died.

I went and saw McQuillan and his wife the first thing the next morning and congratulated them on being alive, and I ~~said~~ asked them how they came to escape, and the Doctor and his wife told me that the reason he escaped was that he was the Aluminum Ore Company's doctor. He said that after the machine had stopped a negro came up and struck him with a gun, the stock of a gun, alongside of the head, and rendered him semi-unconscious for a moment or two, and some negro in the crowd said "Don't kill him; don't kill him; that's McQuillan's. He's our company's doctor, the Aluminum Ore Company's doctor." He said that they argued for some time as to whether they would kill him or not, but finally let him go, and he said the negroes said "Well, let's take the bitch anyhow; let's get her." That was McQuillan's wife. That's the story that came to me.

Mr. Johnson: Was Dr. McQuillan wounded?

Mr. Canavan: He was wounded; yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Where was he shot?

Mr. Canavan: He was struck here in the side of the head. The bullet passed around and came out of the top and made just a scalp wound. He is the doctor of the Aluminum Ore Company.

I believe that concludes the narrative.

Mr. Johnson: Where is George Herr?

Mr. Canavan: I don't know his address. You can readily find him, though. His father is a blacksmith and he is an engineer here in East St. Louis for the Southern Railway Company.

Mr. Johnson: Murray is dead?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Where is Dr. McQuillan?

Mr. Canavan: He is my neighbor. He lives on Virginia Place, directly back of where I live.

Mr. Johnson: Where is Frank Weckermeyer?

Mr. Canavan: He lives on Bond Avenue too, about 3600. He is an electrician: He was on his way down to a church meeting, the Federation of the Catholic societies at St. Henry's Church, when he was shot.

Mr. Cooper: You came down what time on the morning of Monday, July 2nd?

Mr. Canavan: Around 8 o'clock.

Mr. Cooper: Where did you go when you first came down?

Mr. Canavan: To my office.

1432

Mr. Cooper: Had you heard about an automobile filled with white men riding through Market Street at that time-- or some time the night before, and firing indiscriminately into the negro houses?

Mr. Canavan: At that time I was told, that morning.

Mr. Cooper: You were told that morning about 8 o'clock?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Where were you when that was told you?

Mr. Canavan: On Main Street in front of my office.

Mr. Cooper: Do you remember who told you?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, it was a colored man, Doctor-- a lawyer, Pardon, Mr. Pardon. And I think, if I remember rightly, there were some other men, colored men, with him. Pardon was there, I know.

Mr. Cooper: Where is your office?

Mr. Canavan: At 114 North Main Street, directly across from the City Hall, in the Arcade Building.

Mr. Cooper: Have you heard it said that that joy rider's automobile started on its errand from about that locality?

Mr. Canavan: I heard that recently.

Mr. Cooper: Well, how close to the location, to the front of the building in which your office was located there, did that automobile start?

Mr. Canavan: I haven't any idea where it started from.

Mr. Cooper: Where did you hear it started from?

Mr. Canavan: I heard the Rev. Allison say that it started from a hotel at the corner of Third and Missouri Avenue. I heard him say so in his speech at the meeting that night.

Mr. Cooper: How far is that from your place?

Mr. Canavan: I guess a little over a block-- well, it is two blocks, one block north and a block east.

Mr. Cooper: Are you interested in that hotel?

Mr: Canavan: No, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Not in any way at all?

Mr. Canavan. No, sir; other than our office collects rents for it.

Mr. Cooper: Your office collects rents for that hotel?

Mr. Canavan: That is, we get a check and forward it to the owner.

Mr. Cooper: The owner of the property, and you get the money from the lessee?

Mr. Canavan: We get a check, not from the man, as I understand it, who runs the hotel, but from the man who leased it some eleven years ago, the party who leased it eleven years ago.

Mr. Cooper: Well, is that man-- is the one who is now the lessee the tenant, the occupant, as landlord or otherwise?

Mr. Canavan: I guess the best way I can explain that is to tell you who is the lessee. The building is owned by a man named Hollingsworth in New York City. He

1434

built the building eleven years ago and he leased it to the Western Brewery Company of Belleville. It appears made-- for hotel and saloon, a workingman's hotel and saloon. It appears that he-- that brewery-- went out of business in East St. Louis, and they sublet it to another brewing company, I think the Central Brewing Company. When the ten years' lease was made there was a provision in there for a five year additional term, which had been taken advantage of by the persons who have the lease. Now I know nothing further than that. I never was in the building but once since the time it was built, and I don't know in what manner-- I know the check comes by mail from some brewing company and is forwarded to the owner of that building. He has a good deal of other property in East St. Louis. That is one of the pieces of property he owns.

Mr. Cooper: How long have you been collecting rent for the building?

Mr. Canavan: Ever since the building was built?

Mr. Cooper: You have never been in it but once?

Mr. Canavan: Not since it was built. When it
307 was being built I was there several times-- at least, now I might qualify that. I within the past five or six years haven't been in there but once. About the time it was finished painting, and things like that, I guess I was there then.

Mr. Cooper: Well, within the last five or six years when were you in it?

1435

Mr. Canavan: I guess it must have been about--to the best of my recollection about three years ago.

Mr. Cooper: The last time you have been in the building?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: How do you know what the condition of the building is?

Mr. Canavan: I am not interested in that.

Mr. Cooper: You collect the rents for somebody interested in it?

Mr. Canavan: No; the lease that he has provides that the lessee takes care of all improvements there. He, however, has the roof to take care of, and I had reports once or twice, I think it was, the roof was leaking, and I referred it to a roofing man here, who went on the roof and made some repairs. But I didn't find it necessary to go there because there was no need for me.

Mr. Cooper: Well, it is customary, isn't it, for a non-resident owner of a building, where he appoints a man to collect the rent, to authorize that man to enter the premises and see that they are not injured, and to report on it?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, if there seems to be need for that.

Mr. Cooper: There seems to be need. You can't tell unless you enter it, whether there is need or not.

Mr. Canavan: Well, it happens that I am not the party connected with that office that collects the rent and looks after that sort of work. In this particular instance, however, no one goes to collect the rent, for the reason that

we receive a check by mail.

Mr. Cooper: Well, I know, but a building might be practically ruined in eleven years unless somebody in the interest of the landlord kept close watch on the premises to see how the tenant was treating them.

Mr. Canavan: That is proper.

Mr. Cooper: It seems to me remarkable that a man--where did you say the man who owns the building lived?

Mr. Canavan: He lives in New York City.

Mr. Cooper: You have been collecting the rent for 11 years?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: And you don't remember to have been in the building for the last three years, and not more than twice, according to your story, in eleven years?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: A building for which you are collecting rent for a man 1200 miles away, by railroad. That is so, is it?

Mr. Canavan: Yes; that's all true.

Mr. Cooper: What time in the night did you understand that that automobile left the front of this hotel?

Mr. Canavan: I never heard that it left the front at any time of night.

Mr. Cooper: Well, left from near the hotel?

Mr. Canavan: I never heard the time mentioned at all--what time it was.

Mr. Cooper: When you were told the next morning

that an automobile had-- with those men who went out on that errand-- shooting up the negro quarters-- had gone away from near that place-- started from there-- didn't you inquire what time it went?

Mr. Canavan: I think he said last night some time. I think that is the way he covered it.

Mr. Cooper: You didn't ask him what time it was?

Mr. Canavan: No, I didn't, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Were you ever informed, directly or indirectly, who were in that car?

Mr. Canavan: No; I read in the newspapers-- you are talking of the white men in the white car?

Mr. Cooper: Yes.

Mr. Canavan: No, I never heard a word.

Mr. Cooper: You never have heard any intimation as to any one of the men that was in that car?

Mr. Canavan: Never in my life, not once.

Mr. Cooper: Well, you reached your office about 8 o'clock in the morning and were informed about this automobile having gone out the night before. You were informed also of the killing of the policemen-- I mean the automobile which went out with the white men in it and shot up the colored quarters on Bond Avenue-- was it Bond Avenue?

Mr. Canavan: No, I heard the statement here the other day that it was Market and Bond.

Mr. Cooper: Yes, Market is where they did the shooting, principally. Then you heard that shortly after the shooting up of those negro quarters, the killing of one policeman and the mortal wounding of another?

Mr. Canavan: I heard what the colored lawyer told me that morning, yes sir.

Mr. Cooper: Then did you go right into your office and stay there, or what did you do? What did you do that morning?

Mr. Canavan: I just related to you that I went over to the Mayor and asked him if he knew about it. He told me he had, that he had been downtown all night and was arranging to get the Militia here, lest we might have a race riot here.

Mr. Cooper: And did you-- were you out on the streets that day?

Mr. Canavan: More or less; yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: What streets were you on?

Mr. Canavan: Main Street principally, the street my office is on; and over on Collinsville Avenue for a short time.

Mr. Cooper: What time of the day were you on Collinsville Avenue?

Mr. Canavan: Well, I imagine I was there two or three times. The building I am in runs from one street to the other: It runs from Collinsville Avenue to Main Street.

Mr. Cooper: You were on Collinsville Avenue two or three times. About what time of the day?

Mr. Canavan: Well, I think both morning and afternoon, I would think.

Mr. Cooper: Both morning and afternoon. Did you see any soldiers there?

Mr. Canavan: I did.

Mr. Cooper: What were they doing?

Mr. Canavan: Nothing very much.

Mr. Cooper: Did there seem to be any officer or officers in command of them?

Mr. Canavan: Well, there were men who wore a different sort of a braid around their hats. Some of them had different colored braids on. That is the only way I might have told they were officers.

Mr. Cooper: Couldn't you see any desire on the part of the soldiers to protect negroes?

Mr. Canavan: No, I didn't.

Mr. Cooper: What did you see them trying to do?

Mr. Canavan: Why, it looked to me they weren't doing anything. It looked like they weren't trying to put down the mob and save negroes. I might say to you that I came from Collinsville Avenue over after seeing some persons stopping the cars and searching, looking for negroes, and I went to the City Hall and I asked a man, I suppose an officer,
309 why he didn't go over to Collinsville Avenue and try to stop that condition. I appealed to him to go over there, and he took his time about it and didn't seem anxious or willing to do it, but after while he went over with half a dozen fellows. They didn't do anything, and by the time they got over the men had run away and the cars were running again.

1440

They seemed to be all right.

Mr. Cooper: Where were you at the time these three people were killed, two colored and one white?

Mr. Canavan: I don't know what three you refer to.

Mr. Cooper: It was about one o'clock that day. I mean the man Cook, the boy Beard and Keyser, the proprietor of that hardware store.

Mr. Canavan: I was around at my office, or between there and the City Hall. Somebody told me in the afternoon that Keyser-- since you mention that name-- that Keyser was shot, and he was up on Collinsville Avenue. I guess his place is four or five blocks from where my office is.

Mr. Cooper: Did they tell you any negroes had been killed at the same time?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, I heard a negro had been killed in the afternoon.

Mr. Cooper: And a woman assaulted?

Mr. Canavan: I hadn't heard about the woman then, if I remember.

Mr. Cooper: And did they tell you that the soldiers-- had you learned during the day that the soldiers had shot a colored girl's arm off?

Mr. Canavan: Well, I read that in the paper.

Mr. Cooper: That occurred the next day.

Mr. Canavan: I think that was the next day.

Mr. Cooper: Did anyone tell you that there had been shooting before the killing of these three persons right in that vicinity, Market Street?

1441

Mr. Canavan: I heard in the early morning, I think about ten o'clock, that there had been shooting in the vicinity of the stock yards, and I know soldiers and other persons were constantly coming and going from the City Hall. Persons would come in with some report that there was a mob at some place or other. I tendered my automobile, and other persons there, that they would get in the automobile and run to whatever place there was a report that there was trouble. They were coming and going all the time.

Mr. Cooper: How many did you see on the street stationed?

Mr. Canavan: Soldiers?

Mr. Cooper: Yes.

Mr. Canavan: I wasn't far away from my place of business, and I would say may b- three or four, something like that.

Mr. Cooper: Did you see them doing anything, those that were stationed in these squads?

Mr. Canavan: No, sir, I didn't.

Mr. Cooper: Trying to disperse the mob?

Mr. Canavan: No; I didn't see they made any attempt, any serious attempt, to disperse the mob.

Mr. Cooper: Now then, sometime during that day there must have been killed in this city twenty or more negroes, and no protection from the soldiers; according to the testimony before the Committee I think the soldiers killed several of them, and they had practically no protection from the police because the testimony is, as one of the witnesses said today,

,442

the police had their hands full. They were in mutiny. They quit, and the negroes had no protection, did they, really?

310 Mr. Canavan: I don't think so, no.

Mr. Cooper: Not at all. Along that night-- about what time was it that you saw these negroes shoot these white men?

Mr. Canavan: About eight o'clock in the evening.

Mr. Cooper: So, to get right down to the facts of the case, all days the negroes had been hunted in this town; men sent here to protect them, men in military uniform-- some of them-- some rioters; they had been shot here and there; no protection from the law whatever, and along about what time in the evening you say they were out shooting?

Mr. Canavan: About eight o'clock.

Mr. Cooper: About eight o'clock?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, I had heard that they had been shooting a little earlier than that. It was just getting dark then.

Mr. Cooper: And now if you were living in a community where negroes were in the majority, and you had known that you and all other people of white complexion had been shot throughout the day by men wearing the uniform of the United States soldiers, and by negroes, what do you think you, as a white man, would begin to do along about eight o'clock, you and your friends?

Mr. Canavan: There is no question about what I would do. I would just do what the negroes did, of course. I

have always thought that.

Mr. Cooper: So as a matter of fact this town on that day was just turned loose-- crime was-- or criminals, rather-- and the criminally disposed, to do exactly as they pleased, without any pretence of enforcement of law. Isn't that so?

Mr. Canavan: The police were unable to enforce, and the soldiers didn't want to, was the way it looked to me. That was all I could see to it.

Mr. Cooper: Now I understood you to say, Mr. Canavan, this was organized as a city in 1866?

Mr. Canavan: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: And previous to 1886, that is about 20 years, life and property were not secure here?

Mr. Canavan: We had turbulence, dual governments, and that sort of thing.

Mr. Cooper: And it was a very unsafe place for law abiding citizens to try to live?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: The reform administration came in in 1886-- was elected that year?

Mr. Canavan: Elected in 1886-- I want to be sure about that-- possibly 1887, but I think it is 1886.

Mr. Cooper: About that time?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Then after the election of this reform administration, were conditions improved here?

Mr. Canavan: Wonderfully?

Mr. Cooper: For how long a time did that improvement

1444

continue?

Mr. Canavan: It continued really until about-- I would judge about eight years ago-- six years ago. We were priding ourselves everywhere on the kind of a city government we had.

Mr. Cooper: That was 1909?

Mr. Canavan: Yes; about 1909 things weren't what they ought to be. The saloon element seemed to get control about that time. The Monkey Cage was in full blast, and that sort of thing.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Canavan when you were making your statement there was a slight discrepancy in the dates there. It is not material, but you said everything was all right until 1911.

Mr. Canavan: Well, that ended the administration of
311 Mayor Cook.

Mr. Cooper: 1911?

Mr. Canavan: Yes. The reason I took any specific time was that I was trying to figure out about the administrations, about how I thought about different administrations, without attempting to cast any reflection on any particular one.

Mr. Cooper: I understand. But you think that the good conditions obtained here until 1911?

Mr. Canavan: They were getting bad before that.

Mr. Cooper: Before 1911?

Mr. Canavan: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: Before 1909?

1445

Mr. Canavan: No, they were going back slightly. They were departing from the high standard the city had gotten to, going back from there.

Mr. Cooper: Then has there been a deterioration, a gradual growing worse, from about 1909?

Mr. Canavan: Oh yes, there has.

Mr. Cooper: And that gradual deterioration-- by that you mean of course a disregard of law and a failure to strictly enforce it? It has gone steadily on?

Mr. Canavan: Until recently, yes.

Mr. Cooper: It went on through 1912, 1913, 1914 and 1915?

Mr. Canavan: I think the worst was about 1911 and 1912. At that time the districts were formed. People, it was said, immoral women, were not only permitted, but invited to come from other cities and take up their abode here.

Mr. Cooper: Immoral women?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: You mean prostitutes?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir. That has been charged. That they term the "Valleys" were formed. The Valleys are the segregated districts of this town. They are termed the Valleys.

Mr. Cooper: There was a lot of gambling here too, wasn't there?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir; there was considerable gambling.

Mr. Cooper: Gambling continued up until 1913?

Mr. Canavan: There was gambling in the old days,

1446

what is termed "commercialized gambling", where fellows run games with a rake-off. I am not a gambler, and wouldn't know a gambling game if I saw it. They have played poker, I believe, but I wouldn't know whether they were playing poker or something else, but they played games of some kind, and commercialized gambling houses were run for that purpose.

Mr. Johnson: Where there was a take-out for the benefit of the house?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: And you mean the authorities got some of the profits?

Mr. Canavan: I don't know that they did.

Mr. Cooper: But it is your understanding that they did?

Mr. Canavan: I understand they got paid in another way.

Mr. Cooper: How is that?

Mr. Canavan: That they got the influence of those fellows for election purposes; that they helped them around in the elections. I know I ran for Mayor in 1903 and every gambler in town fought me and raised a great campaign fund to defeat me. I know that much.

Mr. Cooper: Where were these barrel houses located, and how many of them were there?

Mr. Canavan: They were located on Broadway, and there was one, I learned about the time it was suppressed, on South Sixth Street. And they were up in the foreign settlements, where the newly made American citizens were living. There

1487

were several of them, however, down in the downtown districts. I think the most vicious ones were right down town on Broadway.

Mr. Cooper: How many of them do you think, Mr. Canavan, there were here altogether?

Mr. Canavan: I don't believe at any time there were more than, I would judge, about ten. That is all-- and I know the town very well-- that is all I remember of.

Mr. Cooper: And the "Monkey Cage", when was that inaugurated?

Mr. Canavan: The Monkey Cage, I think, was in vogue at the time I ran for Mayor, in 1903.

Mr. Cooper: For how long did that Monkey Cage continue?

Mr. Canavan: It continued all along until, I think, the latter part of 1912, if I remember right.

Mr. Cooper: Who was Mayor at that time?

Mr. Canavan: Part of the time it was Mayor Cook, and then he was succeeded by Chamberlain. But Charberlain, I think, stopped it about the time he went in.

Mr. Cooper: Well, other witnesses have testified here, a number of them, that these barrel houses--

Mr. Canavan: (interposing:) Well, you were speaking of the Monkey Cage, I understood you.

Mr. Cooper: Yes, but there are a number of witnesses who have testified here that these barrel houses and the Monkey Cage were the rendesvouz for thieves, pickpockets, sluggers, yeggmen-- and yeggmen are bank robbers.

Mr. Canavan: There is no question about it in my mind.

Mr. Cooper: Safe blowers?

Mr. Canavan: There is no doubt of it.

Mr. Cooper: You don't doubt that at all?

Mr. Canavan: Not a bit.

Mr. Cooper: About how many years did those sort of things exist here?

Mr. Canavan: I would think may be about ten years. That is only a guess, I can't tell exactly, but I think about that long.

Mr. Cooper: Well, the reform movement was partially paralyzed, wasn't it, during those ten years?

Mr. Canavan: It sure was.

Mr. Cooper: Wasn't it completely paralyzed?

Mr. Canavan: The latter end of-- just previous to Chamberlain's administration it was not only paralyzed, it was dead. There wasn't anything to it.

Mr. Cooper: Exactly. Well then, ten years-- you had ten consecutive years here of administrations where there was either partial or complete paralysis of the reform movement, and an open-- or an allowance by the authorities of open rendesvouz for thieves, safe blowers, pickpockets, prostitutes and every other kind of degraded human beings; and that was right in the heart of the city-- some of them?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, directly in the heart. This so-called "Monkey Cage" was right down in the heart of the city here.

1449

Mr. Cooper: How close to the City Hall?

Mr. Canavan: Well, there is a long block between Broadway and the City Hall. They call it two blocks, and just half a block of that brings you to Broadway. In feet, may be, I would think may be some thousand feet-- may be a little more-- a thousand or twelve hundred feet.

Mr. Cooper: About 300 yards?

Mr. Canavan: Well, I don't want to make a statement that isn't right, but not far off from there.

Mr. Cooper: So a man could walk it within a reasonable time?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir, without getting a sweat up at all.

Mr. Cooper: And when did the troops come here, which you spoke of, 200?

Mr. Canavan: That must have been early in 1916, I guess about April.

Mr. Cooper: In the spring of 1916 200 troops, soldiers, came here?

Mr. Canavan: I was told that many.

Mr. Cooper: Well, you saw some of them, did you?

Mr. Canavan: Well, I saw a lot of them, I think fully 200.

Mr. Cooper: Where did you understand those troops were from?

Mr. Canavan: I made inquiry. The Mayor was away. I would have inquired from him, but he wasn't here, and they

1450

come in some day in the latter part of the week, and Sunday morning I drove down by the camp. I had heard there were a lot of soldiers in town.

Mr. Cooper: Where was the camp?

Mr. Canavan: On 19th and Illinois Avenue. That is out in this direction, out in the vicinity of the car barn, and the Aluminum Ore Company plant. My coriosity was aroused and I wondered why soldiers had come here. I first conceived the idea of some bodies of troops moving across the country and stopped here to camp. While there I inquired from one of the soldiers, and he told me he didn't know anything about it. I later on talked to another man, and he was kind of an officer, sergeant or something, and he said they had come from Chicago here; had been State troops and were then Federalized or would be Federalized in the next day or two. I asked him why they came here and he said "Search me; I don't know why we came." Nobody else knew. When the Mayor came back I asked him if he knew anything about it, and he said no. Nobody ever knew anything about the troops coming here.

Mr. Cooper: You said in your direct statement you thought the number was about 200.

Mr. Canavan: It looked to me about that way.

Mr. Cooper: 250 or something of that kind?

Mr. Canavan: I don't think I said 250. I aimed to say 200. I am only guessing at that number. I judged by the number of camps I saw and the number of men standing

1451

around there.

Mr. Cooper: The number of tents?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, the number of tents. There were a number of tents.

Mr. Cooper: And they were out near the car barn and out near the Aluminum Ore?

Mr. Canavan: yes. I was told Mr. Parsons of the street car company procured the location for them, and it
314 was generally believed that they came here to protect his barns out there. How much truth there was in it I don't know, but he is the man, I understand, that secured the location, or located them on the ground there.

Mr. Cooper: He is the secretary of the car company?

Mr. Canavan: The general manager of the street car company.

Mr. Cooper: Do you know from what city these troops-- from what locality these troops came from?

Mr. Canavan: They told me they came from some place near Chicago.

Mr. Cooper: Fort Sheridan?

Mr. Canavan: Why, some little town, I think near Chicago. They told me-- not Wankakee-- I think they said they had been stationed in Chicago. They weren't all from one place. He said, I think, ten smaller towns they rendezvoused or und Chicago, and then came here.

Mr. Cooper: Now then, after they had put up these tents out near the street car barns and the Aluminum Ore

works, how long did those soldiers remain here?

Mr. Canavan: They remained here nearly all summer, nearly all the year-- several months anyhow.

Mr. Cooper: Last year or this year?

Mr. Canavan: They were there-- it was this year, 1917.

Mr. Cooper: They came here in April?

Mr. Canavan: About April, I think it was.

Mr. Cooper: You meant 1917 instead of 1916? You said a year ago. That would be nearly two years.

Mr. Canavan: I made a mistake.

Mr. Cooper: So you think they came here along about April, 1917? That is what I put down first.

Mr. Canavan: Yes, that is what I aimed to say.

Mr. Cooper: Now they stayed here until what time?

Mr. Canavan: I think they stayed here until about a month or so ago.

Mr. Cooper: About a month or so ago?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, they were making arrangements to transfer to some other part of the town, and the Mayor had me look up the sanitary conditions and see about moving them. That was about a month ago, and after they got ready to move them, they decided they were about to leave.

Mr. Cooper: This is a new situation. I don't think the Committee has heard of this before, of troops to the number of about 200, who put up tents out near these barns and out near the Aluminum Ore works, and remained her steadily until about a month ago.

Mr. Canavan: It might be six weeks ago-- at least a

long time after the riot, anyhow.

Mr. Cooper: So that, as a matter of fact, these 200 soldiers, or whatever they were, were here during the May riot?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: And during the July riot?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Now then, were they troops that Colonel Tripp could have commanded?

Mr. Canavan: No, he didn't.

Mr. Cooper: Well, could he have commanded them, or don't you know?

Mr. Canavan: Well, I understand not, they being Federalized, as I understood it, right after they had come here.

Mr. Cooper: So there were in this city then, besides the troops that have been enumerated to us, 200 more all the time, on the 2nd?

Mr. Canavan: They were on duty on the 2nd ~~riot~~ riot here, on July 2nd. They were the first troops, I think, on duty on the Chute.

Mr. Cooper: But they were here before those other soldiers came on the morning of the 2nd?

Mr. Canavan: Long before. They were here all the time before the first riot.

Mr. Cooper: I am trying to get at, Mr. Canavan, what the reason is for what you and all other witnesses say, absolute failure of anybody, soldiers or police, even to

attempt to control the situation. Now Colonel Tripp went on the stand here and told this Committee that during the whole forenoon of that day he had but 53 soldiers and six or seven officers--

Mr. Foss (interposing:) 59 men and 8 officers.

Mr. Cooper (continuing:)-- up to 1:30.

Mr. Canavan: He forgot a lot of them.

Mr. Cooper: One other witness did intimate that there were other troops here, but we didn't get this as clearly as you have stated, and it is a most interesting, a most important fact. And these troops were located in that place, it is your understanding, because you, I take it, are one of the oldest and possibly one of the leading citizens of the town.

Mr. Canavan: I have got the age; I don't know about the rest of it.

Mr. Cooper: And you inquired for the specific purpose of knowing the fact; you inquired who located those troops out there and you were told the superintendent of the street car company?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir, he was riding with the army officers here some days before they came.

Mr. Cooper: He was riding with them hunting for a location?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir; that is what I was told.

Mr. Cooper: You understood he was the man who was instrumental in getting troops to come here?

1455

Mr. Canavan: I did, yes.

Mr. Cooper: Was there a strike on at that time, or one threatened?

Mr. Canavan: One threatened.

Mr. Cooper: And he was anticipating trouble, a street car strike?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir. I don't know that he was anticipating the strike now, but I know he was around with the men in an automobile, with the soldiers before they came, with the officers, and locating them.

Mr. Cooper: So for some reason he got a couple of hundred soldiers here and located them up close to his plant, or his office or barn-- car-barns?

Mr. Canavan: Yes. He took some of them inside ~~his~~ the place. Quite a number of them went inside of their shops there.

Mr. Cooper: Soldiers in the uniform of the United States?

Mr. Canavan: Oh yes, camped there, camped inside.

Mr. Cooper: Camped inside on their premises?

Mr. Canavan: Yes; they may have come at night and went to the ~~Emmx~~ general camp, but they were on duty all the time. You couldn't go in or out without passing soldiers.

Mr. Cooper: You couldn't go into the car barn or the street car company?

Mr. Canavan: No, they had a guard out there. They served as a guard.

Mr. Cooper: A guard of these soldiers in the uniform of the United States Government?

Mr. Canavan: The State of Illinois or the United States.

Mr. Cooper: Regular military uniforms, khaki?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir-- well, you know, the State and Federal troops use the same uniform.

Mr. Cooper: Yes, they use the same since they have become Federalized. Now were these soldiers around there armed?

Mr. Canavan: They certainly were.

Mr. Cooper: You saw them with rifles?

Mr. Canavan: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: Some of them with bayonets in place while they were walking around?

Mr. Canavan: Most of them when on guard duty, I think, carried a gun and a bayonet on it. I know they carried a gun, but I don't know whether the bayonet was on it all the time or not.

Mr. Cooper: Do you know under what law soldiers wearing the uniform of the United States Government or the State Government of Illinois, with rifles on their shoulders and bayonets in place, were quartered on the private premises of the street car company in this city?

Mr. Canavan: No, I can't understand how it could be, but it existed. Nobody here knew why they came here. It is a mystery.

Mr. Cooper: They were here at the time of the May

riot?

Mr. Canavan: Oh yes, sir; they were here at the May riot and took possession of the streets.

Mr. Cooper: Now then, were they requested by the authorities to come out and help at all, or did they seem to be up there simply to protect the street car company and the Aluminum Company?

Mr. Canavan: At the May riot I heard the Mayor beg them to come out. He coaxed them, but they wouldn't come, and the next I heard Colonel Mavanaugh say-- he came down and said if he had a recurrence he would aid the next time.

Mr. Cooper: You mean that the Mayor asked that these soldiers come down on a visit?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, I heard the Mayor ask him.

Mr. Cooper: You heard the Mayor ask who?

Mr. Canavan: At the time of the May riots, Colonel Mavanaugh.

Mr. Cooper: Colonel Mavanaugh was in charge of them?

Mr. Canavan: I think it was Major Mavanaugh, the man in charge, yes. He said they were here for a specific reason, but didn't say what that reason was. I heard him say later that since the general riot he was here to protect the plant of the Aluminum Ore Company, but he didn't confine himself to that, because I know he protected the plant of the street car company, the barns.

Mr. Cooper: Well, that is what we want to learn.

Mr. Canavan: And they not only did that but they took

a detachment of them to the packing houses, up to the stockyards.

Mr. Cooper: There was no strike on up there?

Mr. Canavan: There had been.

Mr. Cooper: But there was none at that time?

Mr. Canavan: I don't think there was.

Mr. Cooper: Do you know who ordered them here?

Mr. Canavan: No; I have never been able to find out how they were brought here.

Mr. Cooper: But when the Mayor of this city asked that the troops come out on the 28th of May to help him stop the riot-- and we have been informed today that there were about 16 wounded in that riot-- the commanding officer
317 said if there was a repetition he would assist?

Mr. Canavan: That was some days later, however, that I heard that.

Mr. Cooper: But he refused that day, and you heard him say that he was sent here on a special mission, and that was to protect the Aluminum Ore Company's property?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir. In fact, he told me that, I think, the last time, when they were about to quarter them out near the Aluminum Ore Company. The persons living in the vicinity where the troops were located were anxious to have them away. The papers here, one of the local papers, published articles about the immorality of the troops out there and a lot of stuff of that kind. The people were anxious to have them leave there.

Mr. Cooper: But they stayed?

1459

Mr. Canavan: Oh yes, they didn't pay any attention to that. I have my own private opinion. I thought they came here part of the time to protect those plants on account of the war conditions; I thought they might have used that subterfuge, perhaps, to get them here. That is what I thought about it, but I didn't think they were intended for that purpose. I thought they were to look after the labor business.

Mr. Cooper: The Chairman suggests, did these troops have anything to do with the July riot?

Mr. Canavan: The last riot?

Mr. Cooper: The last riot, yes.

Mr. Canavan: Yes, I didn't see them on that day, because I was around the City Hall. The Mayor told me they responded early in the morning, and he sent out there, and Colonel Kavanaugh was away, but he got in contact with some officer, Shea, and he sent his troops to the northern end of the city. I think they were on duty before the militia arrived, I have only heard that part of it.

Mr. Cooper: That is very important testimony, and one of the most important things about it is that there were 200, approximately 200 more soldiers here than Colonel Tripp knew anything about. That's all.

Mr. Johnson: Now limit your answers to my specific questions. You say that George Herr, who was shot in the afternoon of July 2nd--

Mr. Canavan: (interposing) In the evening.

Mr. Johnson: In the evening, along about 7:30 or 8 o'clock?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

1460

Mr. Johnson: Did you see him when he was shot?

Mr. Canavan: I did.

Mr. Johnson: Was he doing any shooting?

Mr. Canavan: He was not.

Mr. Johnson: Did Dr. McQuillan do any shooting?

Mr. Canavan: He did not.

Mr. Johnson: Did Murray do any shooting?

Mr. Canavan: He did not.

Mr. Johnson: I will not ask you about yourself. If you have any voluntary statement to make--

Mr. Canavan (interposing:) Ask me.

Mr. Johnson: No, I don't want to ask you. If you have any voluntary statement to make concerning yourself in that respect, you may do so.

Mr. Canavan: I didn't do any shooting, if that is what you mean. I had no shooting iron with me, nor anybody else in my car.

Mr. Johnson: I have given you an opportunity to make a voluntary statement.

Mr. Canavan: I didn't know what you meant, if that is what you meant.

Mr. Johnson: The Committee doesn't desire to ask you--

Mr. Canavan: I am glad to make that statement.

J18 Mr. Johnson: The Committee does not desire to ask you any questions the answers to which might incriminate you.

Mr. Canavan: Well, I didn't do any shooting, neither myself, my grandson two years old, nor my thirteen year old boy

nor my elder son.

Mr. Johnson: Did any soldiers or police appear there for the purpose of giving you protection?

Mr. Canavan: No, sir; they did not.

Mr. Johnson: You or any of these men who were shot upon that occasion?

Mr. Canavan: No. It was a very secluded place, you know.

Mr. Johnson: were there any soldiers about there?

Mr. Canavan: No; no one near there, I don't think.

Mr. Raker: You say you are engaged in the real estate business?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: Who is with you?

Mr. Canavan: Mr. Tarlton.

Mr. Raker: What is his first name?

Mr. Canavan: George L.

Mr. Raker: How long have you and Mr. Tarlton been engaged in the rear estate business?

Mr. Canavan: About 15 years.

Mr. Raker: And where is your place of business?

Mr. Canavan: At 115 North Main Street.

Mr. Raker: Is anyone else in that firm?

Mr. Canavan: No, sir, except the employes.

Mr. Raker: No other partners?

Mr. Canavan: No, sir.

Mr. Raker: You are a man of family, as I understand from your testimony?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: And have your home in East St. Louis?

Mr. Canavan: I have.

Mr. Raker: About what is your tax assessment-- was your tax assessment in 1916?

Mr. Cooper: What is the rate?

Mr. Canavan: How much money I pay?

Mr. Raker: Yes, on taxes.

Mr. Canavan: I think somewhere around three or four thousand dollars. I am including in that my own taxes and the firm's taxes. Myself and my partner own considerable property jointly.

Mr. Raker: Well, could you segregate it in your mind now and tell us about how much you paid individually for taxes in 1916, to the city of East St. Louis?

Mr. Canavan: On property that I own myself?

Mr. Raker: Yes.

Mr. Canavan: Well, I would have to guess at that.

Mr. Raker: Give us approximately the amount.

Mr. Canavan: I would think something around $250 or $300.

Mr. Raker: The balance of the amount you have stated was paid upon property held by you and Mr. Tarlton?

Mr. Canavan: Tarlton has some property of his own too, you know. I think we pay each year, for ourselves and allied to us, several thousand dollars. I understand what you mean, and that is what makes it hard for me to just tell

how much we have, but that is as near as I can come.

Mr. Baker: Can you tell the rate per hundred?

Mr. Canavan: The rate was between 8 and 9 per cent.

Mr. Baker: Do you pay any additional tax in the city of East St. Louis upon property that you own for any other purpose, save and except municipal purposes?

Mr. Canavan: Oh, we do.

Mr. Baker: What is it for?

319 Mr. Canavan: Well, under that term "municipal" I would understand you to mean what goes direct to the city treasurer and is disbursed by him. The school tax, of course, goes to him first, and then it passes on to the school board.

Mr. Baker: Well, this is included in the tax you said you had paid awhile ago?

Mr. Canavan: Yes.

Mr. Baker: Well, is there any other tax?

Mr. Canavan: Oh, I pay special taxes, like street improvement taxes. I don't consider that in there. I have always got some property where the streets are being reconstructed, and I have some street improvement tax most all the time.

Mr. Baker: Don't that go into the city government and is that paid out through the city government?

Mr. Canavan: Not in general taxes, you know. It is paid to anticipate the payment of bonds that have been issued against the property for that specific purpose.

Mr. Baker: Is there any drainage district within the

1464

city?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, there is a drinage district, some wholly within and some partly within and partly without.

Mr. Foss: Those are special assessments, aren't they?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: And you pay taxes on that? You are interested in land in the drainage district?

Mr. Canavan: In lands, did you say?

Mr. Raker: Yes.

Mr. Canavan: You mean outside of East St. Louis?

Mr. Raker: No, within. The drainage district within the confines or the city limits of East St. Louis.

Mr. Canavan. Both inside and out.

Mr. Raker: Are you and the Mayor interested in any real estate together?

Mr. Canavan: No, sir.

Mr. Raker: In any other business?

Mr. Canavan: No, sir.

Mr. Raker: Of any kind?

Mr. Canavan: Of any character or description, I will add.

Mr. Raker: Have you had within the last five years?

Mr. Canavan: Never in my life.

Mr. Raker: Do you do the Mayor's business for him?

Mr. Canavan: I don't know what you call his business.

Mr. Raker: Well, his real estate business.

Mr. Canavan: I don't think he has any real estate business. He bought a house here, I think may be a year

1465

or two ago, down on Broadway, and I could have possibly effected a sale and made a commission had I been diligent enough. He told me he was going to buy it, but I laid down on it and he bought it himself.

Mr. Raker: Well, we will pass on to another matter. The hotel that you collect the rents upon, and from which you heard this automobile that shot up the negro quarters on the night of July 1st started, is that a regular hotel?

Mr. Canavan: So far as I know it is-- just like the rest of the hotels in East St. Louis.

Mr. Raker: Well, what do you mean by "so far as you know"?

Mr. Canavan: Well, it originally was built for a workingman's hotel. I had better give you the history of that.

320 Mr. Raker: No, no, I don't want to take so much time. I just wanted to know now if that was, during the months of May, June and July run as a regular hotel?

Mr. Canavan: Saloon and hotel, it was.

Mr. Raker: Well, a saloon on the first floor?

Mr. Canavan: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: And a hotel-- rooms for the rest of the hotel?

Mr. Canavan: Well, I believe there is some other business too, on the first floor. I think there is a restaurant and either a barber shop or shoe repair shop. The upper rooms are supposed to be a hotel, so far as I know.

Mr. Raker: A transient hotel, or week and month boarders?

Mr. Canavan: I couldn't say. I don't know-- possibly both.

Mr. Raker: Both for men and women?

Mr. Canavan: I didn't see much of it. I thought it wasn't much of a hotel.

Mr. Raker: For both men and women?

Mr. Canavan: I couldn't tell you. I don't know.

Mr. Raker: Well, that hotel is right on your beat. You have to pass it every day, don't you?

Mr. Canavan: No, I never go that way.

Mr. Raker: It is right within a block of where you pass?

Mr. Canavan: No, you see it is this way (indicating). It is towards the Relay station, the hotel is, while I of course go the other way.

Mr. Raker: How far is it from your place of business?

Mr. Canavan: I can see it every time I look out of the door if I look over that way.

Mr. Raker: That is the point I am getting at exactly. Now isn't it considered, and hasn't it been, what you call a real tough place?

Mr. Canavan: I heard it was. It was some time back, I know.

Mr. Raker: During the months of April, May and June?

Mr. Canavan: No, I don't know about that. It was previous to that time.

Mr. Raker: Well, during these months that I have named.

Mr. Canavan: I didn't hear anything about it. It

never was brought to my attention, but I did hear this much: I think it was just before the riots, or a little after the riots-- I am inclined to think it was since the riot-- I think I am correct-- I think it was since the riot-- I received a letter one day signed by Mr. Allison, a Baptist minister, notifying me as agent of that hotel that it wasn't being conducted properly, or words to that effect. I couldn't say what it is, and if the nuisance, as he termed it, wasn't abated within a certain number of days, he would ask that some law be applied there-- I think the Jane Addams law, if I remember rightly. It is the first time I ever heard tell of the law, anyhow. I made inquiries. I haven't seen Mr. Allison since. He used to come and see me once in a while, but I have never run across him since.

Mr. Raker: Well, did you abate the nuisance then existing at this hotel?

Mr. Canevan: I went over there-- or sent word to those fellows running the hotel that if it wasn't a respectable hotel it ought to be closed up. But I didn't get a chance to do that. About the same time that happened, or the day before, I got this notice, I think it was, ~~[illegible]~~

end of
320
Lill.fs.

1

321

the mayor took the license away from all those places and closed them all up. A dozen of them, I guess, were closed.

Mr. Raker. Then you,as one of the citizens of East St. Louis, were acting as agent and collecting the rent of a hotel that was within a block of your place of business, that was so bad, infested by toughs, rounders, and so forth that you had been notified by Mr. Allison that it must be closed up or legal proceedings would be taken?

Mr. C anavan Yes.

Mr. Raker. And then it was so bad that the mayor took the license away from the hotel.

Mr. Canavan. Before that, I think the day before that--something like that.

Mr. Raker. He took the license away from it.

Mr. Canavan. From it, and a number of other ones there.

Mr. Raker. Well, this one in particular.

Mr. C anavan. That one there, I don't know that you could particularize on it.

Mr. Raker. Well , now, how many hotels were there running in East St. Louis during the months of April, May, and June and July of this year of the character of the hotel you have named?

Mr. Canavan. Well, I really don't know. There are several hotels there, and I heard that they weren't respectable. I heard so just recently, however. Some years before--I think it was during the term that Mr. Chamberlain was mayor--I will have to go back in order to explain.

Mr. Raker (interposing). I would rather not take the time or the committee or your time. I would like

to be as expeditious as I can in getting the attitude and real condition of the administration during the latter part of 1916 and the early part of 1917, of the city of East St. Louis. That is what I am trying to get, to see whether or not all these past conditions have been eliminated.

Now you understood that these rounders, loafers, and floaters were stopping at these hotels?

Mr. Canavan I didn't until recently, until Mr. Allison told me that. I didn't know ~~xxxxxx~~ anything about that. What I thought they, I thought were a sort of a place where the lower class of white people largely working fellows, and fellows like that--I knew it had been bad before, and I knew the nuisance had been abated. I knew the thing had been changed. You didn't give me a chance to tell that, but I knew it was, and then someone else got in there and presumed to run what they call a respectable hotel there, and I had no knowledge to the contrary. I knew that across the street from there there was a place that wasn't right, and I know that ~~the~~ mayor closed it up.

Mr. Raker. When?

Mr. Canavan. Some time early this year.

Mr. Raker. About what time?

Mr. Canavan. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Previous to the riots. It was called the "European Hotel."

Mr. Raker. Where was the segregated district for white women, relative to the city hall, before 1916?

Mr. Canavan. Before 1916? Well, it was known

as Second street and Third street. They begin, I believe- the segregated district begun at Missouri and runs North.

Mr. Raker.. Was that just across the street from the city hall?

Mr. Canavan. Well, it isn't exactly across from the city hall, but a block between.

Mr. Raker. Diagonally?

Mr. Canavan. The city hall is between Missouri Avenue and Division Avenue; and Division Avenue began on Missouri. It is only about--not a block away.

Mr. Raker. That was the segregated district for white women?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. Before 1916?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. They were gradually driven away--they were gradually moved out of that quarter?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. Then Mayor Mollman came in?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. Then after some months of his administration, and after this change, why they then made this district a segregated district for colored women of the same class and character?

Mr. Canavan. No, there was a colored district, down on Walnut street.

Mr. Raker. But I want to hang right onto this one.

Mr. Canavan. Not that I know anything about.

Mr. Raker. Just before the riot, was not this occupied as a segregated district by colored women?

Mr. Canavan. No, it was not, to the best of my knowledge.

and belief. It was occupied by colored people but not by disreputable colored people. That is my understanding.

Mr. Raker. Well, someone told me that.

Mr. Canavan. It may be, but so far as I know it was not. It was occupied by colored people, poor people, and persons who come into our office looking for houses sometimes and say, "You all got that house on Fourth Street in such and such a place."--mantioning one of those in that district. I would tell him that we didn't, and never did have one of those houses down there.

Mr. Raker. Were you one of those agents for those buildings?

Mr. Canavan. No, sir.

Mr. Raker. Did you have any buildings rented, that colored people were renting, before the fire?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir; but not that class of colored people you refer to.

Mr. Raker. No, I didn't say any class.

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir. I had five or six of them burned down on the day of the riot.

Mr. Raker. Where were those buildings?

Mr. Canavan. At the south end of town. I had good colored people, just as good as any people could be, first-class respectable colored people.

Mr. Raker. Did you charge the colored people more for rent than you did others?

Mr. Canavan. No, sir; I didn't. I am glad you touched on that subject because I know a lot of real estate men did.

Mr. Raker. Here in East St. Louis?
Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.
Mr. Raker. Just explain that.

Mr. Canavan. I have been informed, reliably informed, that ~~XxxxRxkxx~~. in the northern part of the city, where there are houses renting for ten dollars amonth, four rooms, and certain real estate men that had charge of those-- and possibly owned them--put white people out and put colored people in and rented them for five dollars a room, twenty dollars a month, for what the ~~pxxpxx~~ white men paid ten dollars. ~~xxxx~~. The negroes were coming in so fast that they would live in sheds. They had asked me to let them live in sheds; and they were just treated inhuman, that is all there is to it.

Mr. Raker. Well, the conditions began to get worse in that regard, so far as housing conditions were concerned, instead of better?

Mr. Canavan. They came in so numerous that it couldnt be otherwise than bad. You would feel sorry for them. They would come in here in the fall, nearly naked, lots of them--very few clothes on them. I took houses that I didn't want to rent at all, and fixed them up purposely so that they could get a place in out of the cold. I roofed a couple of old houses that he was about to tear down. They didn't belong to me at all. They belonged to another man, and he said he didn't want to do anything with them, but these poor colored people came in and had to have a place, and I fixed them up. They happened to be among those destroyed.

Mr. Raker. How much did you charge them a month?

Mr. Canavan. Six dollars and seven dollars a month.

Mr. Raker. No water there?

Mr. Canavan. Water in the yard.

Mr. Raker. But no water furnished?

Mr. Canavan. No. Very few of the house of white people, working people, have water in them. They are all about

alike. I did have two houses occupied by colored people that did have water in them.

Mr. Raker. This congestion, commencing as you have stated, and continuing, and at its height during the months of April, May and June, would eventually breed discontent trouble, wouldn't it?

Mr. Canavan. Oh, it sure did, certainly. You mean the negroes coming in so fast?

Mr. Raker. Yes.

Mr. Canavan. Why, that was the trouble, of course. There was enmity here against the negroes.

Mr. Raker. Enmity--just to what extent and through what sources would this enmity be evident, if at all?

Mr. Canavan. Well now--and the reasons for it?

Mr. Raker. Yes.

Mr. Canavan. The reasons were this, the negroes came in here in great numbers, and came in her awful fast, and the white working men and white citizens generally believed the negroes were being brought here by men who wanted to use his labor--wanted to flood the labor market. The negroes necessarily were looking for houses. They moved around anywhere they could get, and what you would term the better class of negroes weren't content to live in many negro neighborhoods. They wanted to get into a white neighborhood. The white neighborhoods were usually invaded by school teachers, and negro doctors, and just as soon as they moved in the white people would move out, the next day, and over night the value of that house would be cut in two. If you owned a house worth $5,000, and a negro moved next to you, the next morning your house would be worth $2500. That was one of the things that made people sore.

White workingmen had these little homes down on Market Avenue, where the negroes are now occupying; they would buy them after a life of toil and struggling hard to get a home, and then some real estate man or some owner that didn't have regard for anything, would sell a negro a house in there, and just as soon as that was done, the fellow next door said, "I can't live here. I've got to get out."

Mr. Raker. Originally these houses were built by the working people of East St. Louis and owned by them?

Mr. Canavan. Yes. There isn't half a dozen houses in town built by negroes, that I know of, in the whole history of the town.

Mr. Raker. Or by the real estate men?

Mr. Canavan. I never never knew of a real estate man to build a house for a negro in my life. Most of these little houses in the south end, where the negroes are now living, on Market Avenue, the real estate men were not ~~were not~~ connected with them in any particular whatever.

Mr. Raker. The men bought the lots and built their own homes?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. And then the colored man would come in and the real estate man would sell one of these places and immediately the homes would begin to go down?

Mr. Canavan. Yes. More often the owners sold. I am not defending the real estate men.

Mr. Raker. I am not criticising anyone, but just getting the facts. And it finally continued until the whole block would be disposed of and the white people would be moved out and the negores in.

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir, and became a negro neighborhood.

That is a negro neighborhood now on Market Avenue, and ten years ago there wasn't a negro in there at all on that street, and I remember the first man, the first negro who bought a house there, and next day the neighbor next door wanted to sell his house, and they gave their homes away that it had taken them a lifetime to accumulate. They just gave them away as soon as the negroes came in.

Mr. Raker. Did these white ~~white~~ people remain in East St. Louis?

Mr. Canavan. They moved to other favored sections of the city.

Mr. Raker. The same city.

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir. The negroes drove them out. You can't blame the negro. He has got to have a place to live.

Mr. Raker. What effect now did that have upon the gvxexvxvxtx temperament of the people?

Mr. Canavan. It made them sore as they could be against the negroes, That is the real prime cause of the hatred of the negroes here, the fact that the negro had to invade a white neighborhood in order to get a place to live. That incurred the enmity, the displeasure of the white people.

Mr. Raker. What else contributed to this bitter feeling?

Mr. Canavan. Well, xxxxxx the negro taking the white man's job.

Mr. Raker. It has been stated here, and I have watched it fairly closely, I thought, that there has been practically no addition, so far as percentage is concerned, by these

large institutions, in the employment of colored people and white people; that they try to keep just about the same at least, that is as I gather from their testimony. What have you to say to that?

Mr. Canavan. I have heard that stated, but I can't understand it. I don't know where these people could have gone if they didn't go into the plants, and they must have gone into the plants to work. When I worked in one of the factories myself there weren't any negroes at all worked in any of those plants, and in every one of them now there are negroes now taking the places. It is a question of wages, and the avarice of the manufacturer, to be plain about it. He wants to get plenty of labor here so that he can do as he pleases with them.

Mr. Raker. He is able to handle the negro differently than he is a white man?

Mr. Canavan. Certainly he is. The negro won't unionize as a rule, and the negro comes here--and the negroes that we had in this town everybody thought the world of them; but they were good people, law abiding citizens, and they deplored the fact that these new negroes came up here in great numbers. They were just as sore about it as the white people were. And unfortunately, with this new element came a tougher element of negroes, and the first thing they did was to buy a gun, not a fifty-cent gun like the coroner testified yesterday, but they bought a fifteen dollar or twenty dollar gun, and our own colored people here--and there are no better people in the world than the average East St. Louis colored man-- they deplored that just as greatly as the white people did. They we

were very sore about it, and did all they could to try to prevent that sort of thing. The old negroes would write home and tell these negroes to stay where they belonged, but they kept coming. That is the trouble, and the negroes that came here, it was pretty hard to get along with them. They would get on the street cars and they were aggressive; they would sit down on white women's laps, and just previous to the riot here, for a month previous to the riot, there was a white man robbed or shot nearly every night by a negro--nearly every night. It was a rare thing to pick up a paper in the morning without finding that a white man had been shot by a negro. And in no instance did we find any old time colored people connected with it. We have always had a nice class of colored people here in the past.

Mr. Raker. Now is there any real foundation in this statement that you have made, or from your your personal statement, as to the negroes sitting down in white women's laps on the street cars?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, I have known that to happen. White women have told me that repeatedly. That has happened on our own car line especially. I live at Alta Sita. It xxxxx is what is called the "rubber tire" district. There is not much of a rubber tire district to it. It is a little residence section on the southern end of the city, and the territory that has been invaded by the negro people is between that and East St. Louis proper, and they use the same cars as we do going out there, and there is resentment on the part of the white people who live there to riding

in a car that is crowded with negroes. Many negroes will come from gatherings down town, and oftentimes when they are drunk will make a great deal of noise--well they will make a lot of noise, and they get on the cars -when they go to get on the cars down there at Broadway, there is a grand rush to get on, and thex negro I guess isn't any worse than the average white man down there; he will jump in and get a seat beside a white woman always if he can. It looks like they stand that from a white man, but when the negroes do that it makes them sore. Then again the negroes will take, for instance, a seat intended to be occupied by two person, and the negro man or woman will get in the car first and sit on the edge of the seat and won't move in until some other negro comes to get the seat, and they will hold it there and keep the white people out. That sort of thing has made the white people sore. Then another thing, the negroes won't sit together. They take all the seats next to the window, and as a general thing if there are two or three seats in the car unoccupied, or one person in each seat, the negroes will go and sit with a white person instead of sitting with another person of his own color, more particularly if it is a white woman. That is the way they have been doing. I don't think there is a bit of that true of our old colored people. They don't seem to be that way. They are just the finest kind of people, the old time colored people. I have had one old colored man for fourteen years, and I never knew a better man. I know all the old time colored people, and they know me. There are some bad ones

among them. For instance, I know a negro preacher that runs a saloon in connection with his church, and it was alleged that he ran a disreputable saloon--at least he ran a saloon until Mayor Mollman took his license away from him.

Mr. Johnson. What was his name?

Mr. Canavan. Pope, Baptist preacher.

Mr. Raker. Now has there been any other act that created a division between the colored and the white people.

Mr. Canavan. Yes, I think that one thing that brought about the culmination of this was when a real estate firm in town here sold a house to a negro in an exclusively white neighborhood in the northern part of the city.

Mr. Raker. What is the name of the firm?

Mr. Canavan. McLean & Galvin. They sold a house there and the white people I believe wouldn't let the colored people move in. There was a good deal of trouble about that.

Mr. Raker. How long ago was that?

Mr. Canavan. Just shortly before the July riots.

Mr. Raker. That was in the residence part of town?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir, where there were no colored people at all, in the northern end of the city.

Mr. Johnson. Most of the colored people live in the southern end of the city?

Mr. Raker. Well, what else now is there that you think of?

Mr. Canavan. Well, I don't know. I want to tell you the whole truth, so far as I know it.

Mr. Raker. I appreciate that, Mr. Canavan, and I have

been trying to ask you accordingly, assuming that you are going to try and give us all you know about the situation. and things that led to the riots.

Mr. Cooper. Just one question there. What do you know about agents or advertisements to bring negroes here?

Mr. Canavan. I have heard it denied by the manufacturers but I have had colored people that came in the office and my interest was aroused as there were so many coming here, and I would ask them "Why did you come here?" "Well, spects to get a job and do better here." "Well, did somebody send for you to come here?" In most instances they said "Yes," but it was relatives. I would ask, "Did you get any letter from anybody?" "Yes, there was bills passed around that says you get four dollars a day in East St. Louis." That was the kind of talk they would tell me.

Mr. Raker. Now did you notice any feeling between the colored people, the laboring colored people, and the white laboring people, in their methods in traveling on the streets or on the street cars as to jostling each other, or anything like that, that might bring about trouble? Had you seen or heard anything of that kind?

Mr. Canavan. Well, just like what I told you there, that the colored people seemed to want to take all the privileges.

Mr. Raker. I am talking about on the streets now, as you pass along on the streets.

Mr. Canavan. Yes, there is an awful feeling of unrest here, and the white people seem to have it in for the colored man. There don't seem to be any doubt about it.

Mr. Raker. You think that is quite evident, and quite deep seated.

Mr. Canavan. I do, yes. I fear it in fact.

Mr. Raker. Well , then, from what you have told us--now in addition to that as the city is located many toughs and hard characters and criminals come to this town?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. Is that true.

Mr. Canavan. Oh, there is no question about it.

Mr. Raker. And they are harbored in and about the saloons and hotels, like the one that you have described?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, I think there are a good many of them that way. I didn't think that it--if you are speaking about a particular hotel, I don't know even who is the proprietor of that place.

Mr. Raker. Well, I didn't assume you did.

Mr. Canavan. You see the rent that comes to me comes from a man in Bellville. I suppose he has a hundred tenants.

Mr. Raker. Well, the hotel, that is of the kind and character stated--loafers and ~~toughs~~ thugs and yeggmen would stop there, and it would give others a chance to come?

Mr. Canavan. Sure it would.

Mr. Raker. And create a breeding place for crime that might come even to your door?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, indeed.

Mr. Raker. In the way of burning your property or taking your life or your property. That is the real condition?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. Now do you think that that element, by virtue of the general feeling that the man that patronized them led them on to a hatred towards the negro because of his being here, the saloon men?

Mr. Canavan. Did the saloonmen hate the negroes?

Mr. Raker. Yes.

Mr. Canavan. Well, I don't see what object they would have. I don't know where their reason would be. It looked to me differently. It looked to me like the working people in East St. Louis--like the respectable white working man didn't want to live as he put it "like a nigger," as I have had hundreds of them tell me. They say, "Its all right for a nigger. Of course he has got this privilege under the law, but a nigger can go out here and work three or four days a week and live in a shack and let his wife, if he has got any, run around and help him to make a living, but I've got my wife and children to raise; I've got to raise them like an American, and I can't raise them like that, and I can't stand for this nigger business." I feel sorry for the negro on that account, for that unfortunately seems to be the condition. It don't require as much for a negro to exist as it does for the white man. He will live in one room, and doesn't care just how he lives; but the white fellow has got a family to raise; kids to send to school; he has got to put a decent dress on his little boy or girl when they go there. The colored fellow don't care. When winter time comes he goes down to the city hall and gets clothes and rations, but the white fellow don't want to do that. And I can't help but feel in my own mind that the great trouble here is that the working man in East St.

Louis believes that his status is going to be lowered if the negro is going to be allowed to come here in great numbers We can assimilate, as we did in the past, a number of negro people and help them become citizens, but when a great mass of them comes in here, such as they have done here, it is impossible to handle them. I don't believe any government can handle these conditions as they come in. It is a question of a man's Americanism, his patriotism. He wants to raise his kids right and decent, and he can't do it if he has got to put them down like the negro lives. He would most rather see his children die than grow up that way. That is the feeling that is expressed to me. That is the feeling that I had when I worked at my trade, and I think that sort of feeling exists here. I may be wrong: I may be selfish. I feel sorry for the colored people, awfully sorry, but at the same time I wouldn't like to see the standard of the American white man go down, the American white working man, as I believe that is what this country is founded on, on the working man. He is the fellow that fights our battles.

Mr. Baker. And the more negroes that come in the lower the wage they get?

Mr. Canavan. Yes.

Mr. Baker. And then the white man too.

Mr. Canavan. Yes.

Mr. Baker. And the intense feeling will be augmented instead of decreased?

Mr. Canavan. No question about it. There was no rage

trouble here until the negroes got here in great numbers All these years in East St. Louis there never was a race riot. Everybody liked the negro, and when he was hard up or his children died, or something, he got help.

Mr. Raker. Now you know the police officers, and the polcemen?

Mr. Canavan. Some of them I did.

Mr. Raker. Do you think that they have exhibited this feeling that you have described that exists among the laboring men here in East St. Louis by virtue of conditions that exist?

Mr. Canavan. They couldn't do otherwise. They have all been working men themselves, you know. They have all worked at some foundry or factory or some place previous to being on the police force.

Mr. Raker. Now on the day of the riot you didn't see any of the policemen busy doing anything at all, did you?

Mr. Canavan. No, I didn't. I saw them bring in occasionally somebody, but it was usually a negro taken away from the mob, bringing him in for protection.

Mr. Raker. Your theory is that the police force practically broke down and quit?

Mr. Canavan. My theory and belief is that the police force felt like I did and like everybody else did, that the military had charge of the city, and that we were subordinate to their authority. None of us believed that we had much to say. None of us, I know, around the City Hall felt that we had anything to do; that the military were in charge. That was the impression we all had. I know

that the policemen felt that they were secondary to the militia; that the militia were in charge. When I asked policemen why they didn't go to this place or that place, they said, "Well, the Colonel didn't say so," or somebody didn't say so. It seemed that the head must have broken in some manner. But the military were in charge.

Mr. Foster. It was off, wasn't it? The head was off?

Mr. Canavan. There wasn't much organization.

Mr. Raker. Did you understand during the day of the second that the mayor had surrendered his functions as mayor of the city for that day?

Mr. Canavan. The day of the second?

Mr. Raker. The day of the riot, that the mayor had surrendered his function as acting mayor and had turned it over to a young lawyer as acting mayor for that day?

Mr. Canavan. No it is not true. I am positive it is not true.

Mr. Raker. You think it is not?

Mr. Canavan. It couldn't be.

Mr. Raker. What is the young fellow--Fekete? Do you know Fekete?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, he was one of the soldiers.

Mr. Raker. Well, there are two Feketes, aren't there?

Mr. Canavan. No, the one you refer to is Thomas L. Fekete. They are both Thomas L., one senior and the other junior. Rufe, they call him.

Mr. Raker. Rufe is the one.

Mr. Canavan. He was city attorney, and as well as being city attorney he is a member of the third artillery.

That is Rufe Fekete--Thomas L. Fekete is the right name, but that is the young man.

Mr. Raker. They called him here Rufe? That is his common name so as to distinguish him?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. Didn't you learn that day that the mayor had said to Mr. Fekete, "I am not feeling well; I have been advised not to go out, that it is best for not to go out, and I'll turn over the city government and appoint you as acting mayor of the city of East St. Louis today?"

Mr. Canavan. I never heard of such a thing, and I am positive it couldn't have happened, sir. I know Rufe Fekete and I know how the mayor would feel about him. The mayor is a much older man than he and looks upon him as just a young fellow, and he wouldn't take him to be the serious-minded man that he would want to turn over the affairs of the city to. I can conceive of that for a moment.

Mr. Raker. Was Fekete in uniform that day, as a soldier?

Mr. Canavan. I couldn't say for sure whether he was. I don't know whether the uniforms had come.

Mr. Raker. Did you see him at any time during the day?

Mr. Canavan. I saw him a dozen times during the day.

Mr. Raker. What was he doing?

Mr. Canavan. He was talking to Colonel Clayton. It appears that when Colonel Clayton was here before, at the first riot, Clayton and Fekete got to be great friends, and I think when Clayton came the last time he and Tom continued, and I

think the mayor did tell Fekete to show Colonel Tripp the city and acquaint him with the different places around town where trouble had been and might occurr again.

Mr. Raker, You made some remark when you started in about the idea of appointing Fekete acting mayor would be preposterous, or some thing like that. Is that your view of the matter?

Mr. Canavan. May be that is a little too strong. He has ability, I would think, and all that, but I think he would select possibly some other man, some older man than Fekete. Besides, Fekete was engaged in a military way here. I hardly think he would select him. It wouldn't occur to him that he would be the man he would select, and I woulan't see any reason why the mayor should appoint anybody, as the mayor wasn't sick.

Mr. Johnson. Could he do it?

Mr. Canavan. Of course not. I don't think he ever dreamed of such a thing. The mayor was on the job all day, and I never saw any illness on his part. If he was ill, I didn't understand it. He didn't look it to me when I saw him raising cain with the soldier s all the time for not doing this or that or the other thing. I heard him saying what we ought to do and the preparations that ought to be made before night, and he didn't look like a sick man to me. He looked like a very healthy man to me. If he was sick I didn't understand it.

Mr. Raker. Well, is Fekete a man of strong character, that would handle the situation like the kind that occurred on the second of July?"

Mr. Canava. Well, I don't think he is the kind of a man that would be selected for that. He is a very inoffensive young lawyer, and a nice young gentleman, and I don't think his inclinations would run in such a way at all. I don't think they would. I can't see that they would.

Mr. Raker. Did you hear Colonel Tripp testify?

Mr. Canavan. I did not.

Mr. Raker. Well, supposing the Colonel should have said-to get it to your mind now--that the mayor called in young Fekete and in the presence of Colonel Tripp he, the Mayor Mr. Mollman, said to Mr. Fekete--in the presence of Colonel Tripp--"I am not feeling well today. I have been advised not to go out, and I will appoint you as acting mayor for the day, " and then turned to Colonel Tripp and said, "Mr. Fekete will direct the proceedings today; get your advice and directions from him." What would you think if that had been presented to the committee in substance and effect as I have stated?

Mr. Canavan. I would have to have that evidence verified before I would pay any attention to it at all. I couldn't believe it. I don't believe it. It isn't in line with the way Mollman acts. It don't look like him to me. I think he might have told Fekete, "Now, Tom, you understand the city here," and he may have recognized him as a sort of a military fellow, and he may have believed he might be able to perhaps entertain those fellows, or direct them rather, and show them the town and places where he thought there might be trouble. That might be. I haven't talked to the mayor about it, and don't know how he feels about it, and I have no right to attempt to say what he ought to do.

Mr. Raker. What struck me is--and I am coming to that now---you stood right close, or was in the city building, when you saw a negro shot down?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir, I was there then.

Mr. Raker. You were in the building looking out of the window.

Mr. Canavan. Doctor Twitchell and myself.

Mr. Raker. Right across the street, within the shadow of the building a negro was shot down?

Mr. Canavan. Yes , sir.

Mr. Raker. By people that you knew.

Mr. Canavan. No, you see they were about 300 feet from where I was, and I couldn't distinguish them; and even if I was right close I might not. There were officers standing across the street, quite a number of them, many soldiers between me and the shooting.

Mr. Raker. Between you and the shooting?

Mr. Canavan. Yes .

Mr. Raker. And you were looking over the soldiers' heads to the colored man that was shot?

Mr. Canavan. Yes .

Mr. Raker. The mayor now was in the city building at this time?

Mr. Canavan. Yes , sir.--well, I don't know. I don't know where he was. I seen him just a few minutes before that though--may be half an hour before that.

Mr. Raker. Now why didn't you go to the mayor's office and go to the chief of police and have these murderers surrounded and driven into the City Hall when they were within a block? You could ~~have thrown~~ have thrown a rope out and

lassoed them and brought them in.

Mr. Canavan. If you remember, I have related to you---

Mr. Raker (interposing). But I am asking you now why you didn't do it.

Mr. Canavan. There was no policeman there, nobody but soldiers, and they were in command. The chief of police and one of the officers had gone to hunt up some place where they said they had found a lot of munitions among the negroes, arms and stuff of that kind. The thing was going on all over town, by what I heard. I had heard people say there was trouble everywhere. Why would I do what these men were there to do, I, single and alone, without anybody except Doctor Twitchell to help me? What could I do if some fifty soldiers made no attempt to do anything?

Mr. Raker. But you were part of the city government, weren't you?

Mr. Canavan. Yes.

Mr. Raker. You held a city position?

Mr. Canavan. Yes . If I was a brave man--

Mr. Raker (interposing). No, no, let's not get to that. You were a city official.

Mr. Canavan. Not a police official, of course.

Mr. Raker. But you were a city official, being paid a salary by the city.

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. How much were you getting?

Mr. Canavan. One hundred dollars a month.

Mr. Raker. You were standing then in the city building?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. And within a few hundred feet, or a hundred feet--

Mr. Canavan. About 300 feet.

Mr. Raker. About 300 feet from the city hall a man was shot down-- or shot, rather--and you made no attempt to call on the police to arrest and apprehend these people?

Mr. Canavan. There were no police there then.

Mr. Raker. But that isn't the question. You made no attempt.

Mr. Canavan. No.

Mr. Raker. You didn't search for any police?

Mr. Canavan. I just came from there and knew they weren't there. I just came from the police station.

Mr. Raker. Did you go to the mayor's office and tell him about this?

Mr. Canavan. I walked through the mayor's office and didn't see him then.

Mr. Raker. Did you see Rufe Fekete there?

Mr. Canavan. No, Fekete wasn't there either. I didn't see anything but soldiers,

Mr. Raker. And this was about what time of the day?

Mr. Canavan. About noontime. I couldn't tell you positively whether it was just before or just after 12 o'clock, but somewhere around there.

Mr. Raker. Well, did you say anything to these soldiers as a city official now, "Gentlemen, you are here to protect this city; why don't you arrest those men?"

Mr. Canavan. No, I didn't.

Mr. Raker. Why didn't you?

Mr. Canavan. I guess I didn't have courage enough to.

Mr. Raker. You were upstairs in the window?

Mr. Canavan. No, I wasn't upstairs, but the soldiers, you understand, were over here between me two or three hundred feet away from where I was. They were right close to the killing.

Mr. Raker. With guns?

Mr. Canavan. Sure, they said they weren't loaded, I believe, the next day. That is the report somebody said. How much truth there is in that I do not know. The general report was they had ~~had~~ no ammunition with them. I was afraid to go over there, to tell you the truth about it.

Mr. Raker. I know, but I cannot understand yet a man of your age and experience, both as a citizen and as an officer, with forty or fifty soldiers standing within thirty feet of you--

Mr. Canavan (interposing). No, not that far away. You don't get it just right. If you locate the city hall--you know where it is?

Mr. Raker. Yes.

Mr. Canavan. There is a park right in front of the City Hall, and that park separates the City Hall from Missouri Avenue. These soldiers were over on the sidewalk on the south side of Missouri Avenue. This shooting of this colored man was ~~was~~ directly across from them on the north side of Missouri Avenue. I was may be 250 or 300 feet from them. They weren't within reach of my voice, that's sure. If I had been in the crowd and had some soldiers around me, I guess I surely would have had sense enough--I don't think I have lost my wits enough not to have asked

them to do something, But I was in the city hall and they were 300 feet away, and these men, after doing the shooting, continued to walk in the crowd. There were hundreds of people in the crowd. I couldn't go and pick them out after they got as far as those young men at the table there (about 10 feet), and I perhaps wasn't brave enough to have gone out in the crowd like I perhaps ought to have done and like some other citizens ought to have done. In fact, I had some little regard for my own life just at that time, and I don't think it was just cowardice either. I don't believe I am any more cowardly than anybody else.

Mr. Raker. No from what you have testified in the afternoon, that don't seem to be in evidence.

Mr. Canavan. I don't think I am.

Mr. Raker. But I was trying to get at why you didn't call on those soldiers to assist in maintaining order.

Mr. Canavan. It had been going on all day, I was told by everybody, and the soldiers not only witnessed it but took part in the riots. That was the general belief. I dion't hear anythin g else said all day from persons I talked with. If you knew you weren't going to get any relief from those fellows, it would be foolish to go to them. I had heard people on the streets saying that the soldiers weren't doing anythin g and some people went far enough to say they believed they took part in the riots, and did some of the shooting.

Mr. Raker. You had understood this at the time you saw the shooting?

Mr. Canavan. I heard that in the morning. Now I went myself, as I related to you, and asked the soldiers

to go over on Collinsville Avenue and take some action when negroes were being pulled out of the cars, and they finally, after a long time, went over there, and when they did go over--I went over with them--the cars were running again then and the fellows had gone away. Now if they wanted to do their duty, they could have run over there as soon as they were told. They didn't want to go over.

Mr. Raker. That is all.

Mr. Cooper. Did you hear of agents being in the southern states to get--

Mr. Canavan (interposing). I heard a lot of that kind of talk.

Mr. Cooper (continuing)--to get negro laborers to come to East St. Louis?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. When did you hear that?

Mr. Canavan. I heard that previous to the May riot. In fact, this meeting that was called, that took place the night before the May riot, was called largely for that purpose. It was charged that there were agents throughout the South, beating the bushes as they said, bringing niggers up here to take the jobs of white men. The general impression prevailed in the city that that was true.

Mr. Raker. Well do you know what evidence, if any, there was to substantiate the truth of those reports? What evidence ~~did~~ they ~~have~~ had?

Mr. Canavan. No, I listened to a hearing at the Federal--some defense board, now I can't think of the name of it. Perhaps you gentlemen know--some national defense commission or something like that, and I heard

the manufacturers, some of them testify there that they didn't send agents down South, nor did they advertise in the papers. They denied that. Some of the big manufacturers denied that. I do know, though, that at a meeting that was held out at the Aluminum Ore Company to prepare for the negroes that were going to come, to take care of them--I knew a certain real estate man that attended that meeting, and I understood was invited there to affect an arrangement to build houses to receive the niggers when they came--to make preparations for them.

Mr. Cooper. Right on that point, one manufacturer has been upon the stand and testified that his company did advertise in Vicksburg, Nashville, Memphis, and Cairo for negro labor, promising them employment--unskilled laborers, from $2. to $2.60 a day, and for doing piecework $3. and up, and closing--, and he read the advertisement verbatim here--closing with this statement, "Steady jobs for steady men." Do you know what was said and by whom, if anything was said, at the meeting which you have just mentioned of manufacturers here preferring to receive negro labor?

Mr. Canavan. No, I didn't hear what was said. I heard in a general way that the meeting was held there.

Mr. Cooper. Where did you hear that the meeting was held?

Mr. Canavan. At the Aluminum Ore Company's office. I heard Mr. Fox admit on the stand over there before that commission that such a meeting was held at the Aluminum Ore Company.

Mr. Cooper. How recently did you hear Mr. Fox of the

Aluminum Ore Company admit that?

Mr. Canavan. About the time of the riots, I believe.

Mr. Cooper. After the riots?

Mr. Canavan. Yes. I think it was since the riots. He is my neighbor, I live next door to him, but I never heard him say anything about it himself, until recently he has moved to St. Louis. There is our real trouble. All the men that have any money move to St. Louis. The leave us here without any way of taking care of the people.

Mr. Cooper. Do you think that there is any evidence here of a feeling of indifference on the part of the great employers, highly successful and very able business men, towards their employes in so far as concerns their housing and general welfare? Has there been?

Mr. Canavan. The only thing I ever heard of the empoyers doing for their men was to put them on the block and measure them up and see if they are physically fit for the work. That is all I ever heard tell of them doing. If they had any little defect, they turned them down and they got no job. If they had a little age, they would be like a man buying a horse, they didn't want them. That is all there to it in East St. Louis.

Mr. Cooper. Now then, within a year prior to the July riots there had been a very large influx of negroes to this city?

Mr. Canavan. During what month?

Mr. Cooper. Well, for a year prior to the July riots.

Mr. Canavan. Oh, a wonderful increase of negroes.

Mr. Cooper. How many thousand do you think came in here within a year or a year and a half before the July

riots?

Mr. Canavan. I thought 10,000. I understood 15,000 were coming. That is what I heard early in the game, and I think about 10,000 came.

Mr. Cooper. The grand jury reported about 8,000 approximately.

Mr. Canavan. I have no way defintely of know, but the streets were full of them, and when you would go down on Collinsville Avenue, in the evening, you wouldn't think you were in the home town, you would meet so many people, colored people, and white people, and new people coming in to town, with their bags and belongings with them.

Mr. Cooper. These colored people who came here looking for work, many of them were unable to find it, you think?

Mr. Canavan. I know they didn't find it, because many of them came to me wanting to know if I knew some place where they could get employment- a good many of them.

Mr. Cooper. Some of them then had been fooled into coming here. Now, Mr. Canavan, it amounts to this doesn't it: Where labor comes into a community in such great numbers as East St. Louis witnessed within a year, or a year and a half prior to the July riots, and that labor is looking for jobs, there amounts to what might be called--and sometimes is called-- in other lines of business or among merchants, "cut throat competition" for positions. They will work for anything they can get, won't they?

Mr. Canavan. Working men?

Mr. Cooper. Yes.

Mr. Canavan. They will when it is hard to get a job pay men to get a job for them; pay the bosses to hire them.

They do it here.

Mr. Cooper. Pay the bosses to hire them?

Mr. Canavan. Oh, there has been lots of that thing here.

Mr. Cooper. Laborers come here in such numbers and are so anxious for work, that rather than starve or go to the poor house, they will even pay men to hire them? That is give them some of their pay?

Mr. Canavan. I didn't mean that was done just recently within the last year.

Mr. Cooper. You have known that thing to be done?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, these foreigners all do that. They have been arrested frequently for doing that. A poor fellow gives up 25 cents a day for his job, and they think it is legitimate. They are not intelligent enough to know that it is wrong. They think they owe it to the fellow that they got their job from, to the boss, and they pay him ten cents a day or a quarter a day.

Mr. Cooper. That is, white labor comes in here and is so anxious to get a job that the men think they have to give up 25 cents a day to the boss?

Mr. Canavan. They often do it. I don't think they have done it just lately, because there has been plenty of work lately, at [illegible]

Mr. Cooper. And some of those people are getting approximately what wages?

Mr. Canavan. Well, they were getting here a year ago--getting about 17 cents to 20 cents an hour. It has been increased now, and labor, I think, common labor, gets

about 25 cents an hour. The street car company, I understand, is paying 25 cents an hour, more than they ever paid before, and I understand they are paying that much now. I pay men occasionally 30 cents an hour, but it isn't steady employment--may be 35 cents an hour, but not steady.

Mr. Cooper. Now when those men were getting 17 cent an hour, they were getting $1.70 a day?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. And out of that they were paying a boss 25 cents. That gave them $ 1.45?

Mr. Canavan. I hardly think that is true within the last two years.

Mr. Cooper. Well, previous to that time?

Mr. Canavan. Yes, lots of it.

Mr. Cooper. That gave them $1.45 a day to clothe themselves and their wives and children if they had any?

Mr. Canavan. They always did have them.

Mr. Cooper. And pay for their clothes, house rent, doctor's bills, and so forth.

Mr. Canavan. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. Well, that very much in life for a man so situated, was there, white or black?

Mr. Canavan. It was awful, that's what it was.

Mr. Cooper. It must have been awful.

Mr. Canavan. Why, they didn't live, they just existed. They have got to pay as much for a pound of butter as the man that gets five or six dollars a day, and you know

1500

he can't hardly buy it. Imagine what a fellow getting two dollars a day or less and working Sundays and paying rent and doctor bills , books for his children--why, they don't live, they only exist. That's all there is to it.

Mr. Cooper. Well, I will give an instance I knew of a clerk last winter, last February, in Washington getting a salary, and he didn't have any potatoes, he said--or his wife said--for three months when potatoes got up to $1.40 a bushel. Now could any man in this town, getting such wages as these people got, buy potatoes or anything of that sort here?

Mr. Canavan. I don't think they could. I sold potatoes for $2.75 a bushel, I believe it was, last year.

Mr. Cooper. Now what is your remedy for a condition of that kind?

Mr. Canavan. Well, I wish I could give a remedy. I would be the happiest man in this work if I could tell you what the remedy was for that thing. Of course I think workingmen should, by all means, get greater wages and shorter hours. That is one thing they must get, that they ought to get. I believe that the black man ought to have some consideration too just as well as the white man. He has got to live. If he goes into these neighborhoods like East St. Louis--and it isn't a bit different in your town. I understand you come from the West. They don't want the negroes there in the cities either. What are to do? That is the big question. I tell you I am not big enough to answer it. I wish I were. I wish I could settle it. I would like to deal fairly with them all. I do know that much from actual experience, that the working man isn't fairly dealt with. I have worked at my trade --I

worked for 20 years, and I know what it is. I know there is just a living in it then when times were a whole lot better than they are now.

Mr. Cooper. What is your remedy for a situation where the strikers are white and the men brought in to break the strike are not black but white, white strike breakers?

Mr. Canavan. White strike breakers? Why arbitration is the only thing I can see. The strikers aren't always right either. They sometimes are wrong. Sometimes a manufacturer cannot afford to grant the things they ask, and there seems to be no way to settle it, and there ought to be some compulsory board. This nation ought to be big enough; you men that are in Congress who know more than we do, and ought to devise some means, some compulsory way of settling differences between the working men and the employer. That is my notion of it.

Mr. Cooper. But there is very great objection on the part of many laboring man to have compulsory arbitration.

Mr. Canavan. Well, I think they are mistaken. I can't see anything else for them to do. If it isn't compulsory, it isn't any arbitration at all. One or the other side may decide not to arbitrate, and that settles the arbitration. Then you are without anything. There ought to be some board; there ought to be some establishment; there ought to be somebody big enough among our law makers to devise some means whereby these things can be settled. It is an awful question. This trouble here isn't over. You know it isn't over. Anybody knows that it can't be over. Anybody knows that the next strike that takes place, and

the colored man goes in to take the white man's job, there is liable to be another massacre. I don't believe you can stop it. I don't think you can get soldiers enough. The soldiers necessarily have got to be recruited from the workmingmen. Who else wants to go into the army but working men? Their sympathies are with their fellow men. They can't be otherwise. It is the large families of working men that make it possible to have an American army here, and these men must come from the working men for the army. I don't see how in the world you can settle it, but there has got to be some way found I am not big enough for it; I wish I were. I would feel that I was as great a man as Lincoln or Washington or our great Wilson if I could tell you how to settle that kind of a proposition. It has got to be settled. It has got to be settled some way sooner or later or it won't be East St. Louis alone; it will be all over the land. Now some people say, "Damn the niggers." Why, God made him as he did us. He has got the same right to live that we have, but he hasn't been educated and he hasn't lived up to the standard of the American working man, the northern working man, and the northern working man don't want to come down to his standard, and he has got to do it if the negro works with him and gets the same wages that he does.

Mr. Cooper. Now the Turks you spoke of--

Mr. Cannavan (interposing). I didn't talk to Turks.

Mr. Cooper. I know you didn't. I didn't mean that in that way. Other witnesses have spoken of Turks and

Armenians being employed here, people of different nationalities, were many of those white laborers--or any particular proportion of them--a number of them, willing to accept wages and conditions of labor which other white laborers were not willing to accept?

Mr. Canavan. Oh, yes; they aren't looked upon as white people by the other white people here. They wouldn't hardly refer to them as white people at all. In fact they are looked down on by the negroes. The negroes usually look down on Turks and Armenians.

Mr. Cooper. Then in your judgment, in one sense of the word, this is a world problem?

Mr. Canavan. I see nothing else to it. It is a problem that ought to be solved. It is a hard world for a negro to live in, I'll tell you that much for my part.

Mr. Johnson. You may be excused.

Fox
fols

dp-1
fols Lil.
cyl 334
10/27/17

STATEMENT OF C. B. FOX, 6351 Berlin Avenue,

St. Louis, Missouri.

(The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.)

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Foster, will you interrogate the witness?

Mr. Foster: Will you state your name and residence?

Mr. Fox: C. B. Fox, 6351 Berlin Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

Mr. Foster: Will you state your business?

Mr. Fox: General superintendent of the Aluminum Ore Company.

Mr. Foster: Where is that located? The plant?

Mr. Fox: It is partly in the city of East St. Louis and partly out in the county.

Mr. Foster: How long have you been superintendent? First, how much is in the city?

Mr. Fox: Well, I judge there is about a third of the plant in the city and about two thirds outside.

Mr. Foster: You mean by that that the buildings, the main buildings, are in the city or outside of it?

Mr. Fox: Well, the city cuts right through the buildings, and there is no particular distribution to them. I venture to say that a third of the built up, occupied territory, is in the city, and two-thirds are outside.

Mr. Foster: How long have you been superintendent of that company?

Mr. Fox: Since 1909.

Mr. Foster: What is your business out there? I mean, what do you do?

Mr. Fox: We refine ore, aluminum ore.

Mr. Foster: Ore that is shipped in here?

Mr. Fox: Yes, shipped in from Arkansas.

Mr. Foster: How many employes do you have?

Mr. Fox: From 2,000 to 2300.

Mr. Foster: Have you increased your force very lately?

Mr. Fox: No. I judge our force is about the same. It has been since the first of the year.

Mr. Foster: About the same since the first of the year?

Mr. Fox: Practically since last September.

Mr. Foster: Do you mean to say that it has been about the same since the first of the year?

Mr. Fox: About the same since the first of the year.

Mr. Foster: And it is about 2300 now?

Mr. Fox: About 2200 or 2300.

Mr. Foster: You testified before the Industrial Commission, or Council of Defense?

Mr. Fox: Yes.

Mr. Foster: You stated then that you had about 1800 or 2000, didn't you?

Mr. Fox: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Well, you have 2300 now-- that was on June 7.

Mr. Fox: Well, our force will vary from 1800 to 2300 in the past year. We have been doing building sometimes, and the building has been completed. It takes just about 1100 men to operate our plant. The balance of them are men engaged in construction work largely. Sometimes the reconstruction work is heavy.

Mr. Foster: I happened to notice that you stated you had 1800 or 2000 men at that time.

Mr. Fox: At that time, yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: And how many of your employes are colored?

Mr. Fox: On the first of August we had 435, I think.

Mr. Foster: And how many did you have before the riot?

Mr. Fox: Well, we had-- I think we had somewhat less than that, about 375.

Mr. Foster: And you have got about 400 now?

Mr. Fox: Yes, sir; it runs from 350 to 400.

Mr. Foster: Did you lose some of those employes?

Mr. Fox: Yes; we did lose some, but we have got others back.

Mr. Foster: Are these other employes-- are they foreigners or natives?

Mr. Fox: There are usually, I should say, about a thousand Amer'cans. The balance are made up of foreigners and negroes.

Mr. Foster: What constitutes the foreign element?

Mr. Fox: Mostly Austrians and Germans-- some Russians.

Mr. Foster: Do you ever employ any Mexicans?

Mr. Fox: No, sir, we never have.

Mr. Foster: Two years ago how many colored people did you have in your employ?

Mr. Fox: I couldn't say. I should say that about four years ago we didn't have but about ten or twelve.

Mr. Foster: You have gradually increased the number of colored people?

Mr. Fox: I should say since the war the number of colored men has materially increased. We didn't have a colored man of any kind, practically, before the war, except as porters.

Mr. Foster: Why was that?

Mr.Fox: Well, the foreigners were more ambitious, better workers.

Mr. Foster: You had a larger percentage of foreigners then?

Mr. Fox: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Before the war about what was your percentage of foreign help?

Mr. Fox: Well, of course in speaking of those dates, we didn't classify our men like we have been doing since the war began, and it became a question of getting labor, and of course with the increased demand for labor, the Americans who did the rough work before gradually slipped into higher positions, and foreigners came into their positions. Then when the war broke out and a good many foreigners went away, and no foreigners more coming in, the negroes came in and displaced the foreigners.

1508

Mr. Foster: What class of work do the negroes and foreigners do?

Mr. Fox: Mostly heavy, rough work.

Mr. Foster: What is the rate of pay?

Mr. Fox: The lowest wage we pay is $2.75 for eight hours.

Mr. Foster: Are you on an eight hour basis?

Mr. Fox: We are on an eight hour basis.

Mr. Foster: Three shifts a day?

Mr. Fox: Three shifts a day; yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Is your plant a part of the American Aluminum Company?

Mr. Fox: It is part of the Aluminum Company of America.

Mr. Foster: That is commonly spoken of as "the Aluminum Trust"?

Mr. Fox: Well, it has been called the Aluminum Trust.

Mr. Foster: That company has control of the aluminum business?

Mr. Fox: I would say so, yes.

Mr. Foster: In the United States?

Mr. Fox: In the United States.

Mr. Foster: What do you know about the coming of negroes into East St. Louis in the last year and a half?

Mr. Fox: Well, I should say that there has been a considerable increase in the number of negroes.

Mr. Foster: Your help is employed through an employment agency?

1509

Mr. Fox: Yes, sir; it is an employment bureau at our own Plant.

Mr. Foster: That is what I mean, your own plant.

Mr. Fox: We have none outside.

Mr. Foster: Well, what do you know about these negroes? were there large numbers of them came last year?

Mr. Fox: Well, I didn't particularly pay much attention to the negro influx until this meeting out at our restaurant that we have heard about.

536 Mr. Foster: Is that the dinner they have talked about?

Mr. Fox: As I testified before the State Council of Defense, I didn't know anything about that meeting until I walked into our dining room and saw a number of men collected to discuss the question of housing negroes. One gentleman was rather eloquent about the necessity of manufacturers doing something to take care of the niggers, because nobody else was. Otherwise he said half of them will be headed for the penitentiary and the other half for the smallpox hospital. And that impressed me that there was a good deal of truth in it.

Mr. Foster: You seemed to realize that this large influx of negroes was menacing the sanitary and moral conditions?

Mr. Fox: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: That there were so many of them?

Mr. Fox: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Now did you talk at that meeting about

better housing conditions?

Mr. Fox: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: And you talked about-- was a representative of the Y. M. C. A. there?

Mr. Fox: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: And did they take up any contributions?

Mr. Fox: No. There were some contributions hinted at.

Mr. Foster: But they all fought shy of that?

Mr. Fox: Well, it was rather shifted on over pretty soon to a committee--

Mr. Foster: Has anything ever done by the company to contribute anything for the welfare?

Mr. Fox: Not that I know of. A good many of the companies had been contributing to the Y.M.C.A., that was rather in the nature of welfare work for foreigners; and it came natural for the Y.M.C.A. to take up the welfare work for the colored men.

Mr. Foster: Did you-- probably not yourself, but if you did you can say-- or any men in authority at your plant-- take the trouble to look around for themselves to see what the living conditions of the negroes who live here were?

Mr. Fox: I don't think so. I didn't myself.

Mr. Foster: They just got together and talked this over?

Mr. Fox: Well, the negroes had never been enough of a factor in our plant to cause us any concern, and neither had the question of labor supply. We had always paid

higher wages and given better conditions, working conditions and shorter hours, than practically any other plant in this town, this district.

Mr. Foster: Well, you had a strike at your plant?

Mr. Fox: We had a strike at our plant. We had two of them.

Mr. Foster: When was that?

Mr. Fox: We had one last fall and one this spring.

Mr. Foster: When last fall?

Mr. Fox: We had a strike last October.

Mr. Foster: This spring?

Mr. Fox: This spring, in April.

Mr. Foster: What was the cause of that strike?

Mr. Fox: Well, I xx gave the whole story under oath right in this room before the Federal Court.

Mr. Foster: Well, we haven't got that, and if you can tell us we would like to have it for the record.

Mr. Fox: Well, the strike last fall--

Mr. Foss (interposing:) Was that the first strike?

Mr. Fox: That was the first strike we have had for about ten years. The strike last fall came about in this way: We had been paying men on the 8th and 23rd of the month, every two weeks, and in some way the turn in the calendar came so that the 8th and 23rd came on Saturday for four or five consecutive pages, and there had been such

337 a scarcity of men on the Sundays following xkm pay day, that we had alittle consultation among our heads of departments as to how we remedy that, and we decided to either make

the pay-- set it back one day to Friday or else set it ahead one day to Monday. The assistant superintendent-- that was then turned over to the assistant superintendent, and on the next pay day, in place of putting the entire pay back one day or setting it ahead one day, he decided to pay one part of the force on Saturday and the other part on Monday, and the part who weren't paid until Monday demanded their pay on that Saturday: So when I got in touch with the situation and found that really they hadn't had sufficient notice of it in any case, I said "You had better pay them right away; pay them this afternoon." So they were told they would be paid at 5 o'clock that afternoon. We had their money all ready for them on Saturday afternoon, and the whistle blew at five o'clock, and about 150 of them let out a yell and ran downtown and never came near the pay office. So following that they called a strike. On Monday morning they surrounded the few men that were coming to work; they got out in front of the plant and threatened all the men that went in; stopped every automobile that went along the street, searched it, collected all the flotsam and jetsam there was around the town and finally had the plant ~~shut~~ sewed up. We couldn't get into the plant-- a man couldn't get into the plant with an automobile, he couldn't drive past in the street in an automobile unless he was stopped and searched and everything taken out of the automobile. There was absolutely no police protection either in the city or county.

Well, it was a pretty good lesson to us as to what

we might expect in the way of defending our property in case anything should happen to us. However, I thought the men were probably entitled to a little more money. There was no question of wages involved at the time, but after they got out the question of wages came up as a natural proposition. There must be something to strike for, so the question of wages was raised, and I met these men-- I was out of town at the time. When I came back on Wednesday I saw there was no-- the men were out in the fields outside the plant. There had been no violence done; they hadn't presented any demands, there had been nothing said by either our representatives or the men. So I sent one of our men out to the group who were across the street in the field and asked them to come into the machine shop, that I would like to talk to them. I brought them in and talked to them and explained to them that I realized there was a different condition now from what there had been previously; that although they had presented no demand for more money, and although we were paying more wages than any other shop in town, we were willing to give them an increase because we wanted better men, and living conditions were different since the last adjustment in wages had been made, and we agreed to give them more money. The Chairman of the committee said: "Mr. Fox, we will go right out and go into the matter and come back and let you have an answer right away." So I found out there were about fifty of them in the committee, and I waited around the office for-- that was about half

1514

eight in the morning. I waited around until-- well, until noon. I went home to lunch-- I live just about two blocks away from the plant-- and I heard no more from them. In the afternoon I came back and asked if there had been any word from these men. I was told there hadn't been any word, so I told my master mechanic, who knew some of them-- of course all that were out were mechanics, the operating men had no grievance-- in fact they worked several days after this matter occurred. So I told my master mechanic that if they wanted me at any time to go to their meetings, to let me know and I would be glad to go to their meetings. I waited until about 3 o'clock and then went over to St. Louis with my wife, and came back home about six o'clock and inquired if there had been any word for me. They said there had been no word, but there had been some word that they were holding a meeting. So I went home and went to bed, I think about half past nine or ten o'clock. I was waiting for word, and finally decided that if they didn't send any word by two o'clock there was no use of my staying up any longer.

I had been asleep some little time when the telephone rang and a man said "Mr. Fox, the men are meeting down here at the Empress Theatre, and they would like to have you come down." "Well", I said, "of course I have been in bed now two or three hours. If I can do any good by going down, I would be glad to come, but if it is simply a case of going down there and telling me nothing doing, the proposition is turned down, you might as well tell me over the telephone and save me the trip." I said "Who is this speaking?" He said "This is one of the

1515

committee." I never did find out who he was. "Well", I said, "if I can do any good I will come down." "Well", he said, "We would like to have you come down. The committee would like to have you come down." I said "All right." I went out and got my little Ford automobile and drove down there. It was just about one o'clock when I got into the hall. There were about fifty men there, I think, and they asked me to come up to the platform. I went up to the platform and they gave me a chair. There was some man acting as secretary, and the other man president-- the man who had told me the committee would go out and have a meeting and come back. They gave me a chair on the other side of the table from him, and the man acting as secretary sat down at the table. I sat down, and I guess I waited five or ten minutes before anybody said anything. Finally the chairman of the meeting got up and said that the men had given the matter careful consideration, that there had been some 150 or 200 of them there, and they had considered my proposition and decided they couldn't accept it. He stood there a minute or two and then sat down, and I waited five minutes more, I guess. I finally said "Well, it looks to me like a good proposition. I would like to know what's wrong with it. I have made a proposition, now you make one." Well then, he drew out a paper and said they had gone over a number of demands, and we

339 finally went over these demands and conditions, one by one, until about half past three. The meeting had dwindled down in the meantime from about 70, I guess, to about 25, and we finally settled all these things to the satisfaction of everybody-- shook hands, and they all decided they would go right to work,

so they all started out to the plant about three or four o'clock-- started to work and told everybody to go to work, and they went to work and worked very well indeed until the strike of April 17th.

Mr. Foster: What was the cause of that strike, Mr. Fox?

Mr. Fox: Well, I will tell you about that strike. Of course in the hurried meeting at night there were a number of things that we expected to get that we didn't get; and there were a number of things, I suppose, that the men expected to get that they didn't get. However, as wages kept on getting higher and men getting scarcer, we finally solved the situation by giving them everything that they asked for.

Mr. Foster: How much increase of wages did you give them?

Mr. Fox: Well, it was a noticeable increase. I should say it would average 33-1/3 per cent.

Mr. Foster: More than they were getting before?

Mr. Fox: Oh, yes, more than they were getting. And the day men who were working nine and a half hours-- their time was shortened from 9-1/2 hours to 8 hours.

Mr. Foster: With the same pay?

Mr. Fox: Yes.

Mr. Foster: They got 9-1/2 hours' pay for eight hours' work?

Mr. Fox: They did eight hours' work for 9-1/2 hours' pay. And a great number of them, in addition to getting that, got an increase or two of it.

Well, it seemed to me that they had been so successful in closing down the plant in the fall that a number of them got

imbued with the idea that they could shut the plant down whenever they wanted to, and after the settlement was all made an association called the "Employees' Benefit Association" was formed, and certain trustees were elected and a State charter wastaken out. They had no affiliation with the American Federation of Labor or any other federated labor body, so far as I know. The original president, with whom I had made the settlement, left our employ.

Mr. Foster: Voluntarily?

Mr. Fox: Well, he quit.

Mr. Foster: By request?

Mr. Fox: No. He was a good man, a good, strong man, and I thought a good deal of him, but every once in a while he could go and hit John Barleycorn, and then he was gone, and while he was pretty straight for quite a while after this first strike, he could just go so long and then he was gone for a week or ten days, and of course his card was taken up and we didn't have him any more on the payroll. But he had resigned the presidency.

Mr. Foster: You mean by that card-- what is that card?

Mr. Fox: The clock card by which he rings in. Which practically means that he is laid off or discharged. But he had resigned the presidency of this Association some little time before, and he had been, as he claimed-- he didn't have time to look after all these affairs that he was looking after and take care of his family.

Mr. Foster: Did they submit to you the grievance at that time, the second strike?

Mr. Fox: Yes; but I haven't got to that yet. I say, in the development of this organization, it finally got into the hands principally of a man by the name of Welf, a man who worked in our power-house, and he gradually got in-- between his brothers-in-law and brothers he got in six or eight fellows without my knowing anything about it, until just a few days before the strike he told me that he had several brothers in there, but one brother whom he had been trying to get in they turned down, and I said "Well, how many brothers have you got here?" Then he told me, and he told me how many brothers in law he had, and I found he had quite a family of them. So I said "Well no, if we had as many foxes here as we have got Wolves, I think the head office probably would begin to look around a little; so I don't believe we had better employ any more of your brothers."

Well, this was the man that got in control of the organization, and while he had stayed in through the previous strike and marched through the crowd and stayed in the power-house, after this society was formed he became quite a speech-maker, and there never was a meeting of these men but what he was the principal speaker. He was the head and front of the whole organization.

About a month or two before the strike, while this man and some of his--

Mr. Foster (interposing:) This was the spring strike?

Mr. Fox: In April, yes. While this man and some of his associates had become active in the organization, he frequently came to the office with complaints about various work about the plant, how it should be handled, and how it was not

handled, including the restaurant, the toilets, and almost everything came under his purview. But after all these calls from him and his committee I finally got a letter from the Association that everything was all right and everybody was satisfied. I think that was around about February. That was in connection with the items that we had agreed to do the previous fall, that we had been discussing pro and con for some little time.

Finally we got a letter from the organization, under their seal, that everything was satisfactory.

Well, I think about this time-- probably a little earlier-- there were evidences of a propaganda throughout the city to organize ~~other~~ the plants in this district-- I am just giving this as my opinion-- that the American Federation of Labor thought that this organization that was among the employes of the Aluminum Ore Company could be used as a tool with which to organize the Aluminum Ore Company's plant, and I think they made advances to the officers of this association. At all events, about that time the officers, particularly Wolfe, became very active and brought out a number of complaints about trivial things-- no question of wages at all-- and it finally culminated in a paper which they presented to me-- a committee of three or four-- typewritten demands. There wasn't any question of wages in the demand at all. It was a question about whether sheet metal workers should do-- whether a millwright should do certain work, or whether a pipefitter should do it, or whether a steamfitter should do it; and various questions involving whether a man of one trade

1520

should do the work, or a man of another trade should do the work.
341 It really didn't make any difference to us, because ~~our~~ all mechanics, whether machinists, pipefitters, carpenters, sheet metal workers, are all paid exactly the same, $4.25 for eight hours.

They presented this paper to me and I read it over. Of course it was rather badly arranged, as is uneducated men had written it.

Mr. Foster: Working men who are not used to such things?

Mr. Fox: Not even a workingman used to the English language. It was more like as if it was written by a workman whose original education had been in a foreign language.

Mr. Foster: Not like a lawyer or corporation manager like you would?

Mr. Fox: Not like a man educated in an American school. I said to the committee "Well now, of course some of these things are a little bit mixed up. I don't understand them. I am used to reading these kind of things, but I don't understand this, and if such and such a sentence means such and such a thing, I don't see anything wrong about it, but if it means something else, I don't think we can agree to it." So they said, "Well, we can leave it with you and you can give us your answer by Wednesday." I think that was on Monday. So I said "All right; just leave it with me and I will go over it with my assistants and we will let you know. Come back Wednesday." So I turned it over to my assistants, and as I recall it, amongst all the mess of stuff there was one real point from the point of

view of those who really studied the labor conditions and labor situations, and that was whether or not we should agree to discharge men in the order of their seniority, or whether we were free to discharge any man on account of his work or on account of his character, regardless of his seniority. That was something we had never-- I don't know if many industrial plants recognize that, although railroads do. But while my assistants were against doing anything like that, I rather felt that we could stand by that; that we would be willing to establish such a rule, provided we could once and for all settle the question as to whether we were right in discharging the man; consequently if we laid a man off who was inferior in point of time to another man, we were absolutely doing as we agreed to do, and in a way that would be satisfactory to the men. In other words it would stabilize conditions.

Well, I had practically made up my mind that we would agree to that, and so there was only one of these men that came back to get the paper. He came back on Wednesday, and he wanted to know whether I would agree to sign the paper. So I said "Yes, I believe we will just take a chance and sign the paper as it is, because nobody seems to understand what it is, and I can't get anything out of you fellows as to an interpretation, so I will just sign it and take my chances." So I turned it over and I saw that it was not signed by any other committee, and I said to him "Well now, it seems to me the committee ought to sign this if I am going to sign it. The committee took my word last fall." Some one at the time of

343

the strike said "Well, we ought to get this written up and signed", and the majority of the men said "Well, we have never found him to break his word yet, and we don't want him to sign anything." So I didn't sign any agreement in the fall of 1916, but since they were insisting on my signing this, I thought it was only right that I have some signatures representing the committee. So I told him to take that back and get the committee to sign it. "Or", I said, "I'll sign one copy and put it in my desk, and you take the other copy and get the committee to sign it, and we will trade copies." So he said "Well, he didn't know anything about that; he had been sent up to get it signed." "Well", I said, "I think that is a fair proposition. I don't see how anybody can object to that. You take it back and get it signed, and I will keep one copy here and I will sign it when you have signed the copy." So he went away.

Well, I went home, and I thought the thing was all settled up, that it was just a question of signing the signatures. About half past ten, I think it was-- about ten o'clock, someone called me up on the telephone and said the men had gone on strike and there were 200 of them on the way out to the plant at that time. I think a minute or two afterwards the night chief of police called me up and said there was a gang of a couple hundred men on their way out to the plant, and he was sending out a policeman on a motorcycle-- a couple of motorcycle cops, I think, he said he was sending out.

Mr. Cooper: This was at night?

Mr. Fox: About half past ten at night. So Dr. McQuillan, the man that Mr. Canavan spoke about as having been fired upon by the negroes, was at my house at the time. We were having a game of bridge, and I hung up the telephone and turned to him and said "The men have gone on strike, and I will have to leave the game and go over to the plant." So I left the game and got in my machine and rode over to the plant.

They hadn't gotten out there yet. I immediately went to the telephone switchboard and told them to cut off all the outside calls, because our experience in the previous strike had been that a telephone exchange was a regular sieve for information going in and out. So the man on the switchboard says "Have you heard the news?" I said "No, how is it?" He says "They have gone on strike." I said "How do you know?" He said "I heard them telephoning into the power-house." I said "You cut off all the trunk lines and leave one trunk line in my office, and anyone that wants to talk from the outside will have to call me on the telephone."

Then I went down in the plant, and I went around through every department in the plant. They were all working, of course, one shift, and I couldn't find a man in any one of those departments that knew there was a strike coming, except in the power-house, where this telephone message had gone. I think we had between 500 and 600 menat work there that night. I went around from one department to another. I told them what I had offered to do, and I says, "In

1524

face of all that these men have gone on strike, and these men that want to stay in here and stay loyal to the company are privileged to stay here. If you stay inside we will feed you and take care of you. If you go outside you may be beaten up. There is no question about it; it is a dangerous thing to do. You will just have to take your own chances. If you want to stay with us and have got any grievances, we are willing to meet them."

In the power-house there was an Englishman there, and when I went to the power-house men and told them what we were going to do; that we proposed to run the plant this time-- no question of wages-- we had agreed to ~~anything~~ everything and couldn't agree to anything more-- we wouldn't agree to give up the plant. That was one thing we were going to stand by. This little Englishman said "Will you sign that agreement now if I take it out there and get it signed?" That was about two minutes to eleven. We changed shifts at 11 o'clock. He says "If I go out there and get that signed now, will you sign it?" I said "Yes; I will give you ten minutes to go out there and get that agreement signed and bring it in." He put on his coat and went out, and I have never seen him since.

So I went all through the departments. We had a commissary in connection with the plant, and had provisions for eatables which we didn't have the previous fall. I think we had some 700 men who stayed in the plant. Practically every foreman stayed in the plant.

The following day the leader of the strikers, Wolf, and

1525

a crowd came out in front of the plant and made speeches, and the strike took the usual course of such strikes. When there were some men that wanted to get in, they were intimidated right in front of the plant, or persons would go to their homes and tell their wives that if they worked out there they would be beaten up and their homes burned. One of our foremen had stones thrown in his front window while his wife and baby were sleeping, in the middle of the night; and some of the men were beaten up.

About three days afterwards-- about three or four days after the strike was called-- we got a Federal injunction, and the United States Marshal came down and went out and spoke to these men and told them just what the injunction meant, and they dispersed, a large crowd. A great many of them went downtown. Some of them remained around the plant, small groups walking back and forth, but they didn't have any rallying cry. There wasn't any question of wages. There wasn't any question of conditions; there wasn't anything upon which they could rally the insiders to their support, and from the time of the strike, the Saturday after the strike, until we practically got our full force--

345 Mr. Johnson (interposing: Mr. Fox, the Committee desires to adjourn now until Monday morning. Will you be good enough to come back Monday morning at 10 o'clock?

Mr. Fox: Yes, sir; I will do so.

Mr. Foster: And you may start in right where you quit.

(Thereupon, at 5:05 o'clock p.m., the Committee adjourned until Monday, October 29, 1917, at 10 o'clock a.m.)

- - - - - -