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IX

East St. Louis Riot Investigation

Tuesday Oct 30 - 1917

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Tuesday, October 30, 1917.

The Committee met at 10:30 o'clock, Hon. Ben Johnson (Chairman) presiding.

STATEMENT OF JOHN H. RICHARDS,

Deputy State Fire Marshal, East St.Louis, Ill.

(The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.)

Mr. Johnson: Give your name to the stenographer, please.

Mr. Richards: John H. Richards.

Mr. Johnson: And your place of residence and your occupation or official position.

Mr. Richards: 451 Columbia Place; deputy state fire marshal.

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Richards, the Committee will be glad to have you tell how many houses were burned in East St. Louis during the July riot, and so far as you can tell it, the cause of the fire, whether it was incendiary or whatever the cause may have been. If you have an itemized list of the houses that were destroyed, give it to us in that shape.

Mr. Richards: I haven't the detailed list of the number.

Mr. Johnson: Just adopt your own way of telling us how many houses there were and what character of houses they were, and by whom they were occupied.

Mr. Richards: The report I have of it, Mr. Johnson, is shown - there were 244 buildings totally or partly destroyed; 44 railroad cars, of which 42 were totally destroyed and 2

partly destroyed. The approximate loss on buildings and railroad cars was $288,025. The approximate loss on contents of buildings, $85,580. Making a total of $373,605. That is all I have.

Mr. Johnson:: Haveyou got the details

Mr. Richards: The detail part will be found in the office of the chief of the fire department.

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Richards, if you have ascertained the origin of these fires, let us know it.

Mr. Richards: Mr. Chairman, I may, in conjunction with the attorney general and the State's attorney in the prosecution of these arson cases against whom indictments have been returned and the evidence gotten by me is at the office of the states Attorney and the Attorney General in Belleville. These cases have not as yet been tried.

Mr. Johnson: Well, that doesn't make any difference. What did you say the total loss was?

Mr. Richards: The total loss was $373,605.

Mr. Baker: That is exclusive of the cars?

Mr. Richards: No; that includes the cars.

174 The approximate loss on buildings and cars was $288,025. The approximate loss on contents of buildings, $85,580; total, $373,605.

Mr. Foss: That is the total loss of everything?

Mr. Richards: Yes, approximate.

Mr. Foss: Resulting from these fires?

Mr. Richards: Yes.

Mr. Baker: How did you segregate the cars, the rail-

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road cars-- and their contents? How much were those?

Mr. Richards: Well, I would have to look the record up in the office of the chief fire deputy with reference to that. I think the chief fire deputy is better able to tell you with reference to that than I am.

Mr. Johnson: Is it true that there was no accidental fire except fires in such houses which had caught fire from other houses which had been fired by incendiaries?

Mr. Richards: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Have you ascertained the names of any who set fire to any of those houses?

Mr. Richards: Yes, sir; I have conducted an investigation under the authority of the State Fire Marshal, and there are 26 men indicted for arson as a result of the race riots.

Mr. Foss: How many colored and how many white, do you know?

Mr. Johnson: Please give us the names of those who have been indicted for arson on account of the East St. Louis fires.

Mr. Richards: I haven't got that.

Mr. Johnson: Could you take this list of those who have been indicted for various offenses and pick them out (handing list to witness)? As you come to the name of a person who has been indicted for arson on account of the East St. Louis fires, just call out the name, and the stenographer will take it down.

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Mr. Richards: Well, it would be hard for me to remember all the names.

Mr. Johnson: Well, go as far as you can towards doing so.

Mr. Richards: Sam Fauchens.

Mr. Baker: And whether colored or white.

Mr. Richards: White.

Mr. Johnson: Are any of these soldiers?

Mr. Richards: No, sir. Frank Chapman (?), first name not known, white.

Mr. Foss: Do you know how many were white and how many were colored?

Mr. Richards: Yes, two black men. That includes the first riot also.

Mr. Johnson: The May riot?

Mr. Richards: Yes, sir. I arrested a man by the name of Mose Lockett on the first riot. Mike Evanoff, Paul Gassaway, Charles Gasser, J. T. Gasser, Christ Kourulak, Albert McCare, Jess Meeker, Chester Ortgrer, George R. Prince, H. Steiger, William Thompson. There are names of men indicted that are not on this list, Mr. Johnson, and I perhaps, on account of so many of them, might not recall all the names. Mose Lockett, C. C. Beaner-- he is the man that was convicted last Friday, found guilty of the charge of arson; the first case set and tried.

Mr. Johnson: Is there any other statement you wish to make, Mr. Richards, in connection with the matter?

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Mr. Richards: No.

Mr. Johnson: Did you see any of the rioting?

Mr. Richards: No, sir; I was in Springfield the day when the rioting occurred.

Mr. Cooper: How did you conduct the investigation as to ascertaining these losses?

Mr. Richards: I went around with the chief of the fire department and his secretary. According to the State Fire Marshal Act, in the event of a fire, he is supposed to make a report, ascertain and show the loss on the buildings and contents, also his own opinion of what caused the fire. And it is the duty of the chief of the fire department to do that.

Mr. Cooper: Well, when you came to the contents of any of these houses, what did you examine, or did you make an estimate of what they contained?

Mr. Richards: The chief of the fire department's secretary did that.

Mr. Cooper: What are their names?

Mr. Richards: M. J. Tobin and Charles Welig. I helped them on different occasions.

Mr. Cooper: Did you have any formal examination of witnesses under oath, or otherwise? Did you get them in any place and ask them questions as to the contents of the buildings?

Mr. Richards: No, I didn't. Amsterdam

Mr. Cooper: Do you know whether the others did?

Mr. Richards: I don't know.

Mr. Cooper: Well, was that a part of your duty to do that?

Mr. Richards: No, my duties are confined in this way, that in the event of a fire and a report is made by the chief of the fire department that in his opinion the condition was such that it would warrant an investigation, I am notified by the State Fire Marshal in Springfield to investigate the cause of the fire. I have nothing to whatever to do with reference to the loss on the contents or the loss on the building, because the chief of the fire department-- those are his duties.

Mr. Cooper: Exactly. That is what I was getting at. It is not part of your duty as assistant fire marshal to ascertain the value of the contents of residences burned? You simply ascertain or learn, if you can, the cause of the fire?

Mr. Richards: Well, if the value of the contents
176 would be of benefit to me in investigating a fire, I make inquiries. For instance, if a man would have a loss, and I would try to find out the motive-- there must be a motive somewhere-- if I am satisfied in my own mind that the fire is of incendiary nature I want to try and find out the motive.

Mr. Cooper: Yes, that is essential often in learning the motive.

Mr. Richards: Yes, sir. And I inquire what insurance he has, and I also try to find out what the actual value of the contents were.

Mr. Cooper: But, as in this case, where a building was utterly consumed and all of the contents, and the owners driven out of the city and have never returned-- or the occupants, if not the owners-- of the building-- the owners of the contents have been driven out of the city and haven't returned, what way have you of ascertaining the value of the property in those buildings?

Mr. Richards: I have no way, if the property was totally destroyed. But in those houses partly destroyed, I made an investigation, and I found very little furniture-- practically hardly anything in those vacant houses. The people had moved the furniture away.

Mr. Cooper: Moved it away?

Mr. Richards: Yes. Well, one idea was that probably the contents was stolen. That is possible.

Mr. Cooper: They might have moved them away, but some other people moved them away?

Mr. Richards: Well, somebody moved it away.

Mr. Cooper: Well, what you meant was the contents had been moved away without saying who moved them?

Mr. Richards: Yes, sir.

Mr Cooper: Well now, take the home of officer Mr. Green up there-- officer Watson, I mean, in that brick row, a member of the plain clothes squad here. That house was all burned up, and the contents, absolutely everything in it, the whole row there, and he didn't save one single thing, that officer nor his wife, except the clothes they had on them. Is there any way that you could tell what he lost there?

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Or did you try to learn in that particular case?

Mr. Richards: Well, there would be only one way for me to ascertain-- question him.

Mr. Cooper: You didn't do it?

Mr. Richards: No, I did not.

Mr. Cooper: So then, this statement of loss here, so far as it includes the contents of these places, is rather indefinite, is it?

Mr. Richards: Well, as I said before, it is not my duty to find out.

Mr. Cooper: But that is the question. It is a fact that that aggregate is indefinite, in so far as you are concerned?

Mr. Richards: Yes, as far as I am concerned.

Mr. Cooper: Well now, in presenting it to the Committee you present it, then, as the work of somebody else?

Mr. Richards: And partly my work.

Mr. Cooper: But as any part-- for instance, take that row of tenement houses up there-- was any part of the estimate of that loss your work?

Mr. Richards: Where was that at?

Mr. Cooper: Up near that theatre, the theatre burned, and a row of brick tenements.

Mr. Richards: No, I didn't do that. I offered my assistance to the chief of the fire department to do what I could, but at the same time my work was to find out who set fire to these places. ~~I guess that's all.~~

Mr. Cooper - I guess that's all.

Mr. Baker: What is the business of these men that were arrested and indicted for arson?

Mr. Richards: I regret that I didn't bring the papers with me. I could have answered that question. They are mostly railroad men and men whom I consider, from what evidence I have gotten, rounders about the town.

Mr. Baker: What's that?

Mr. Richards: What I would consider men who don't stick to any job any time.

Mr. Baker: All of them?

Mr. Richards: Not all of them, no. There were some of them that held steady jobs.

Mr. Baker: Charles Morris, what was his business?

Mr. Richards: I don't know.

Mr. Baker: Albert McCabe, what was his business?

Mr. Richards: I think he is a railroad man; I am not sure.

Mr. Baker: Jess Meeker.

Mr. Richards: He is a saloon keeper-- at least, he was.

Mr. Baker: Well, this railroad man is on the street car or the through railroad?

Mr. Richards: Yankee. The through railroads, the steam railroads.

Mr. Baker: Meeker was a saloon man?

Mr. Richards: Yes, sir. At least, he used to be.

Mr. Baker: Running a saloon here?

Mr. Richards: Yes, he used to.

Mr. Baker: At that time? I am talking about at that time.

Mr. Richards: Yes, sir; I think he used to be in the saloon business, but I had him as a witness on a case previous to the riot.

Mr. Baker: What is Ortgers' business?

Mr. Richards: He is a carpenter.

Mr. Baker: Here in West St. Louis?

Mr. Richards: He is a contractor-- kind of a contractor; yes, sir.

Mr. Baker: And Prince?

Mr. Richards: I understand he works for the Aluminum Ore Company. At least he did.

Mr. Baker: Stiegler, what was his business?

Mr. Richards: I don't know.

Mr. Baker: What was Thompson's business?

Mr. Richards: I think he was a railroad man.

Mr. Baker: What was Lockett's business?

Mr. Richards: He is a colored man, a barber.

Mr. Baker: And Bonner?

Mr. Richards: He is a colored man, a vault cleaner.

Mr. Baker: You investigated the cause of the fire?

Mr. Richards: Yes, sir, I did.

Mr. Baker: And the motive?

Mr. Richards: Yes, sir.

Mr. Baker: You what was the motive?

Mr. Richards: Now you mean the motive of setting fire to the places?

Mr. Baker: Yes.

Mr. Richards: The fact that I prosecuted the cases, I respectfully submit to you that an expression of opinion from me at this time perhaps might hurt the cases in prosecution. I am merely asking you to consider that expression of mine. I will do it if you insist upon it, but it might prejudice the cases if I take the witness stand against these men in Belleville. I am not through with the investigation yet. I have still others that as soon as they come to town I will have them arrested.

478 Mr. Foss: You haven't gotten them all yet?

Mr. Richards: No, sir.

Mr. Baker: You are after them?

Mr. Richards: Yes, sir, St. Louis people as well as East St. Louis people who set fire to those places, and I have the evidence.

Mr. Baker: Any outside of the two towns named?

Mr. Richards: Just St. Louis and East St. Louis.

Mr. Baker: I guess under the statement of the witness I don't want to force his answer.

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

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STATEMENT OF W. M. ROACH, 561 Alexander Ave.,

East Saint Louis, Illinois.

(The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.)

Mr. Johnson: Please give the stenographer your name and place of residence.

Mr. Roach: W. M. Roach, 561 Alexander Avenue, East St. Louis.

Mr. Johnson: What is your occupation?

Mr. Roach: Supervisor of construction for the National Stockyards Company.

Mr. Johnson: What was your occupation-- how long have you held that position?

Mr. Roach: About four months, I guess-- four or five months.

Mr. Johnson: What is your employment before that?

Mr. Roach: Superintendent of the Illinois Tree Employment Bureau.

Mr. Johnson: How long had you held that position?

Mr. Roach: Four years.

Mr. Johnson: Doctor Foster, will you please examine the witness?

Mr. Foster: Mr. Roach, you were Superintendent of the Tree Employment Agency of the State of Illinois in East St. Louis in 1916?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Up to what time in 1917?

Mr. Roach: Up to June 23rd.

Mr. Foster: Of this year?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Then you were previous to 1916, beginning at that time, what year?

Mr. Roach: Well, I got hold of the office June 23, 1913.

Mr. Foster: 1913, and you acted until June 23, 1917, when you left it?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: During your term, and especially in 1916, did you notice any large number of negroes coming to East St. Louis?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: When did you first notice that?

Mr. Roach: They started about 1914, the fall of 1914, and they kept getting heavier all the time up until--well, I would say up to the time I left the office they kept coming in all the time.

Mr. Foster: How was it in 1916?

Mr. Roach: Well, they were here in 1915.

Mr. Foster: How was it in 1917?

Mr. Roach: In 1917, of course I didn't handle so much of them then, because the work was plentiful. They could get their jobs themselves.

Mr. Foster: But in 1914, 1915 and 1916 you handled a good many of them?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir; a good deal of them.

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Mr. Foster: Do you know whether these colored people came in trainloads?

Mr. Roach: In trainloads, usually, excursions.

Mr. Foster: Excursions?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Do you know what kind of tickets they had when they came here?

Mr. Roach: Well, I never noticed, but they told me they got cheap rates, and that they were told by the white
479 folks in the South, or some white man told them-- sometimes the railroad agents would say it-- that there was plenty of work in East St. Louis, good wages, and when they got to East St. Louis we didn't have anything for them at the time.

Mr. Foster: A great many of them came here and didn't have any jobs, and applied to you for places?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Did you supply jobs for any of them?

Mr. Roach: Yes, the first thing I done when a great many of them came in, I notified all the railroad superintendents that we had a great many laborers on hand, colored track laborers, and that, and I got jobs for pretty near all of them out of town. That was in 1915 and part of 1914, and I shipped a great many of them off.

Mr. Foster: Where?

Mr. Roach: To jobs.

Mr. Foster: Did you ever ship any out to other cities?

Mr. Roach: I shiped some of them to East Chicago, to Ohio, Indiana, Baltimore, Buffalo, and over the Chicago & Alton all the way to Kansas City.

Mr. Foster: Was it a fact that so many of them came here that you couldn't-- that they couldn't be taken care of?

Mr. Roach: Well, there was a great many of them here. I done all I could to take care of them. I notified the police department to send in every idle man they could get hold of, and that helped out too.

Mr. Foster: You did everything you could?

Mr. Roach: Yes, to get employment for all of them.

Mr. Foster: When they came here, were they penniless or did they have money?

Mr. Roach: They didn't have any money.

Mr. Foster: They came without money?

Mr. Roach: Without money-- just merely paid their fare: They only had enough money to bring them to St.Louis.

Mr. Foster: Did you know of any effort upon the part of anyone in East St. Louis, or any industrial concern, to bring these colored people to East St. Louis?

Mr. Roach: No, sir.

Mr. Foster: Did you have any application from any of these industrial plants here to supply them with negro labor?

Mr. Roach: I did, sir.

Mr. Foster: They applied to you?

Mr. Roach: Yes, for negro labor and white too. They

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generally stated in the order whether they wanted colored or white. They would say which they wanted, whether colored or white.

Mr. Foster: were more colored people called for in the last year than had been previously?

Mr. Roach: Well, they generally-- sometimes the orders were mixed. Now the ordersfor the colored persons, especially the jobs that they claimed the white fellows wouldn't do, and they were mixed pretty well.

Mr. Foster: Did you observe, during your term of office, especially in the last eighteen months, that many of these negroes came to East St. Louis in the spring of the year and went back to the South in the fall of the year?

Mr. Roach: There was a few went back.

Mr. Foster: A few?

Mr. Roach: Yes, very few.

Mr. Foster: So this statement that they came up here in the spring and went back in the fall was not correct?

Mr. Roach: No; they generally stayed here: Not many of them go back.

Mr. Foster: Do you know whether they told you, these
480 people said to you, that they came up here because some friend or some relative had written to them to come. That was the reason they came?

Mr. Roach: They never told me that.

Mr. Foster: You never heard that?

Mr. Roach: No; they ~~only~~ always said it was somebody down

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there, some white fellow told them there was good wages in East St. Louis, in the north, and that they headed this way.

Mr. Foster: So they got them to come up that way?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Did you ever see any of these advertisements that were sent out?

Mr. Roach: No, I didn't see any. They never brought any along.

Mr. Foster: They were a poor class of colored people, were they?

Mr. Roach: No.

Mr. Foster: I mean financially poor.

Mr. Roach: Yes, they had no money, and I know a great many of them who left their families in the South. In taking an application we generally found out whether they were married or single, how many children, and all that, you know, and a great many of them were married.

Mr. Foster: And you tried to find places for them when you couldn't do it here?

Mr. Roach: We had to ~~send~~ slip them out of town, most of them. We didn't have jobs enough here. We had men out of employment at the time they came here.

Mr. Foster: Do you know of any effort being made on the part of anyone in East St. Louis to bring them up here?

Mr. Roach: No, sir.

Mr. Foster: You never found that out?

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Mr. Roach: No, sir.

Mr. Foster: Did you ever get any knowledge that any of these men's pay was paid to East St. Louis?

Mr. Roach: No, sir.

Mr. Foster: By anyone?

Mr. Roach: No, sir. We generally asked them that question. We always wanted to find out if they had to pay anything for a job, or if they paid for a job they didn't get. We always wanted that information, but they would always generally tell you they got a cheap rate on the railroad.

Mr. Foster: They came up here in carloads?

Mr. Roach: In trainloads.

Mr. Foster: Many of them in 1916?

Mr. Roach: In 1916, yes. I noticed one bunch that came here about, I think it was, September-- I wouldn't be sure-- and they got a rate from Jackson, Tennessee, I believe, of $6, when it ought to be $12, or something like that. They got a very cheap rate, I know.

Mr. Cooper: Jackson, Mississippi?

Mr. Roach: Yes. They got a very cheap rate at that time, and I called in the United States Attorney to examine and find out why they got such a cheap rate. I thought there might be something wrong, you know.

Mr. Cooper: And they got a rate of about $6 from Jackson, Mississippi?

Mr. Roach: I believe xhxxx that is about what it was.

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I know it was below the regular fare, even of an excursion rate. It was low.

Mr. Cooper: You don't know whether the railroads were—

Mr. Roach (interposing:) I don't know anything about that.

Mr. Cooper (continuing:) -- getting up that business of bringing them up for the purpose of selling them tickets?

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Mr. Roach: I didn't know anything about that.

Mr. Cooper: It was testified here that they sold tickets-- sort of week-end excursions to East St. Louis-- by one man. Did you ever hear anything about that?

Mr. Roach: No, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Do you know whether many of them, in your experience-- whether you found out that many of them came here and had positions before they got here, and went right to them? I mean by that, did many of these colored people who came to East St. Louis already have a position before they got here and went right to it?

Mr. Roach: Well, I wouldn't find that out, because they wouldn't come to the employment office. They would go right to the position if they had one. We wouldn't find out anything about that.

Mr. Cooper: But there were a great many that applied to the employment office?

Mr. Roach: Oh yes, we got a majority of them.

Mr. Cooper: And they were poorly clad?

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Mr. Roach: Yes, they didn't have a cent. They were all broke.

Mr. Cooper: All broke?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: They would come here in the fall of the year in that condition?

Mr. Roach: Yes, we didn't have employment enough. A lot of them got sick: It was right cold weather, and they didn't have any clothes on-- just overalls and a light shirt, and just as cold as it is now.

Mr. Cooper: Did some of them bring their children?

Mr. Roach: Some, but not many.

Mr. Cooper: These colored people did not seem to know the climate they were coming into?

Mr. Roach: They didn't know the climate, no.

Mr. Cooper: They didn't know the climate?

Mr. Roach: No.

Mr. Cooper: For that season of the year?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: They came up here in working clothes; thin? summer clothes?

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: Into this climate?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Do you know for what work, what character of work, you sent those to Baltimore?

Mr. Roach: Well, it was railroad work, working on railroad gangs.

Mr. Foster: What time in 1916 was that?

Mr. Roach: Well now, that was along in the fall. I wouldn't be exactly sure, because there were so many shipped in different ways that I wouldn't be sure what date or what month. Of course I would have to look at the records at the office to find that out.

Mr. Foster: Do you know the character of the work those would do who went to Kansas City?

Mr. Roach: It was all railroad work. Of course some of them were put in freight-houses, some in round-houses, and there was some placed in the docks in Philadelphia and Baltimore-- some work like that. They placed them in the different departments. I had orders from the superintendent for so many.

Mr. Johnson: Some went to Ohio?

Mr. Roach: Some to Ohio, some to Indiana. I sent

483 some to Chicago. I got orders through the labor agents in Chicago, and the free labor agencies in Chicago.

Mr. Baker: How many do you think you dealt with in 1915?

Mr. Roach: Oh, some thousands. It run away up there, but of course I wouldn't be sure. We would sometimes ship three coaches twice a week, and we had about 60 in a coach, in a car, and we shipped twice a week sometimes.

Mr. Johnson: What do you mean by saying you "shipped them a week"? They brought them in twice a week, or shipped them out twice a week?

Mr. Roach: Shipped them out. We had no jobs here

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and had to do something with them. The streets were pretty well crowded with poor fellows, and they couldn't get anything to do.

Mr. Johnson: And you had three coaches of eighty in a coach-- that would be 240?

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Baker: In 1916 how many did you deal with?

Mr. Roach: We dealt with an awful lot of them.

Mr. Baker: Give us an approximate idea.

Mr. Roach: In 1916 probably about 3,000. Of course at certain times of the year we had to ship them out.

Mr. Baker: In 1917, up until when you left office, about how many?

Mr. Roach: We didn't ship very many then, because there was plenty of work here then, around this territory here. They had all the work they could do here then.

Mr. Baker: Now how many in 1917 do you think you got jobs for here in East St. Louis?

Mr. Roach: Well, here in East St. Louis I can only just guess.

Mr. Baker: That is what I want, an estimate.

Mr. Roach: Oh, about 3500, along there.

Mr. Baker: And in 1916 about how many do you think?

Mr. Roach: The total number of jobs that we got during 1915 run about 13,000, I believe. I am not sure, but altogether, women and men. But for the colored I believe it would run about 3500.

Mr. Baker: In 1916 how many do you imagine that you got jobs for here in East St. Louis and surrounding territory?

Mr. Roach: It was a little better in 1916. Times had picked up and we got a little more.

Mr. Baker: 4,000 colored people, do you think?

Mr. Roach: Right along that, yes. That would be men and women.

Mr. Baker: In 1917, up until you quit, how many, about?

Mr. Roach: Well, not very many. It was very small because they got their own jobs. They didn't have to go to the free employment office. The factories had their own men on the street. At every street corner there was a representative of a factory picking up the fellow that he found idle during 1917. We didn't have to look for jobs for them.

Mr. Baker: I don't quite get that. These businesses that are here, large establishments, had their men down right

183 on the streets?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir; right on the streets. They picked up the fellows themselves. They wouldn't come to the free employment office.

Mr. Baker: How would they do, though, meet the men on the streets and send them out to the plants?

Mr. Roach: Yes, to the plants.

Mr. Baker: Did the various companies here do that?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Baker: You think practically all of them?

Mr. Roach: Well, all of them-- any of them that hired any labor, any quantity of labor, had their men on the streets.

Mr. Baker: Well, where were you on the 2nd of July?

Mr. Roach: I was at the National Stockyards.

Mr. Baker: You didn't get downtown?

Mr. Roach: No; it was late when I got down and I had a coach they had pushed back over the bumping post and turned over, and I was putting that back in place, and I didn't get downtown till about 9 o'clock, and then I went right home.

Mr. Foss: You say you keep records, do you, in your office?

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Foss: Have you got records showing how many applications there were for labor in 1915 and 1916 and 1917?

Mr. Roach: We have got the records; yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: Have you also the records showing how many persons you got jobs for during those years?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: Have you the records showing how many you shipped away during those years?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: I wish you would make out a statement here and present it to the Committee for us.

Mr. Roach: I am not in the office any more.

Mr. Foss: But you may be able to make up a statement.

Mr. Roach: We generally mailed all of our supply to the Secretary of Labor at Springfield.

Mr. Foss: But haven't you got a printed report, or something of that sort?

Mr. Roach: No, I didn't take a thing out of there. I left everything behind me. And even that wouldn't give us a correct account, because when a fellow came to the office and applied for a job and I would give him a ticket and show him the train time, the time of leaving that night, and the job he was going to, he would, in bringing five or six men along with him, and I wouldn't register them at all.

Mr. Johnson: Who paid for the tickets?

Mr. Roach: The State paid all the expense of running the office, but the railroad companies furnished the cars to take the colored people to their jobs.

Mr. Johnson: Did they take them away free?

Mr. Roach: Free; yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: The railroad companies charged nothing for transportation?

Mr. Roach: No, sir. They fed them too. We always fed them before they left, and they gave them plenty to eat in the coaches.

Mr. Johnson: How is it the railroads charge for bringing them from the South to East St. Louis and then take them from East St. Louis to Baltimore, Chicago and various other places, and charged nothing for it? I don't understand that.

Mr. Roach: I don't understand it either. They didn't charge that a thing, though.

Mr. Johnson: Somebody was paying for it, wasn't there?

Mr. Roach: I wouldn't say. But about registering the

1769

fellows, I wanted to say that he would register one fellow, and he would tell him "Now if you have got any more friends out of employment, send them in," and nine times out of ten he wouldn't send them in but he would take them right on along without registering them.

Mr. Johnson: Then was it these people were being taken from here by the railroad companies free of railroad charge?

Mr. Roach: To the jobs?

Mr. Johnson: When was that?

Mr. Roach: That was along in 1916 and 1915.

Mr. Johnson: What time of the year?

Mr. Roach: Well, it was in the spring and along through the summer too-- any time they could get them. There was always a demand for truck laborers and railroad laborers, roundhouse work, and everything like that.

Mr. Foss: What railroad men did you confer with in relation to this matter?

Mr. Roach: The superintendents.

Mr. Foss: The superintendents of the roads?

Mr. Roach: Of any of them that answered my letters and ordered men.

Mr. Foss: The local superintendents here at East St. Louis?

Mr. Roach: Well, I'm - could handle that, without writing to the superintendents here. I generally furnished

that to the foremen here-- furnished men to the foremen on the job.

Mr. Foss: But when you went down and put them on the train, on the car, did you talk with any railroad men here?

Mr. Roach: No; they had a representative on the ground. Generally he was a laboring man they picked up, and paid him two or three dollars a day to take charge of the shipments. He was their own man.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Roach, when did you begin work here in this city as an employment agent?

Mr. Roach: June 23, 1913.

Mr. Cooper: Where was your office?

Mr. Roach: It was at 26 North Main, right in front of the City Hall.

Mr. Cooper: You say you have been in the employment of the National Packing Company-- the National Stockyards Company?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: About four months?

Mr. Roach: Well, since-- now I got thirty days' leave of absence from the Governor, and I wanted to resign the 1st of April, you see, and he didn't accept my resignation, and I dragged along-- I had charge of the office, but still I had this supervision over both places, because I didn't want to lose the place at the stockyards. They only wanted two hours of my time a day, and I didn't want to lose this job, but Mr. Mason gave me thirty days' leave of absence, and then I notified him to put a man in

my place, but they didn't do it.

Mr. Cooper: Who is Mr. Mason?

Mr. Roach: Institution auditor of the state of Illinois.

Mr. Cooper: The auditor of institutions?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

185 Mr. Cooper: And you then were in the employ of the State for two hours a day?

Mr. Roach: No; I looked after the office and put a man in my place there and looked after the office too.

Mr. Cooper: The employment agency?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir. I still had supervision of the work up there, but I had four men, and I just had to tell them what to do in the morning, and then I would attend to the other place.

Mr. Cooper: Now, I don't know which "the other place" was. Now just wait until I ask a question and then we will get it more clearly before us. Did you begin organizing the employment agency here in 1913, was it?

Mr. Roach: The employment agency was organized in 1907.

Mr. Cooper: A state institution?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: And you were put in that State employ when?

Mr. Roach: June 23, 1913.

Mr. Cooper: How long did that continue to be your only business?

Mr. Roach: Up to about the 15th day of March, this year.

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Mr. Cooper: Then what other employment, in whole or in part, occupied your time?

Mr. Roach: The supervision of the work at the yards.

Mr. Cooper: So you then were in the employ of the National Stockyards Company last spring?

Mr. Roach: Yes, up to the time that they relieved me of the office.

Mr. Cooper: You were in the employ of the National Stockyards Company last spring?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: At what time did you get employment with the National Stockyards?

Mr. Roach: Between the 5th and 15th of May.

Mr. Cooper: And while you were in the employ of the National Stockyards Company you still continued in the employ of the State?

Mr. Roach: Yes, managing the employment bureau.

Mr. Cooper: Managing a State institution?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: How long did you continue to manage the State employment agency in this city, and at the same time continue in the employ of the National Stockyards Company?

Mr. Roach: That would be April, May, June-- about three months and a half, I guess.

Mr. Cooper: You served in those two capacities until after the riot?

Mr. Roach: No, before the riot.

Mr. Cooper: What time-- how long before the riot?

Mr. Roach: Well, the 23rd of June they relieved me.

Mr. Cooper: Who relieved you?

Mr. Roach: The present superintendent, Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Cooper: Then you were asking to be relieved?

Mr. Roach: I was, sir.

Mr. Cooper:? Well, do you know of any reason why they couldn't within four months have appointed somebody?

Mr. Roach: I don't know why.

Mr. Cooper: Isn't it rather an unusual thing, or is it a common thing in the State of Illinois, for an employe of the State, in so important a position as the manager of an employment agency, to be at the same time an employe of a great private corporation that looks for labor?

Mr. Roach: Well, no, not exactly. I didn't get any labor through the employment bureau at all, not any.

Mr. Cooper: I know, but is it a common thing in this

486 State for men--

Mr. Roach (interposing:) I never heard of it before, no.

Mr. Cooper: Well, do you think it ought to ever be?

Mr. Roach: Not-- well, but then I couldn't help it, you know.

Mr. Cooper: I know you couldn't help it. The other people could, though.

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: If they tried hard?

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: Now you say-- and I quote your words, "Poor fellows" you had to ship out?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: By the "poor fellows" you mean these half-clad, hungry, cold negroes?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: From the south?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: You say they got here, many of them, with no clothes on except overalls and shirts?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: And the weather was as cold as it is today?

Mr. Roach: Yes; it was sometimes cold, yes.

Mr. Cooper: You know, that "these poor fellows" reached East St. Louis here, without a cent of money, nothing to eat and with no clothes except sometimes a pair of overalls and a shirt on?

Mr. Roach: That was all.

Mr. Cooper: And in as cold weather as it is today-- and this is a cold day?

Mr. Roach: It is cold, yes.

Mr. Cooper: And you shipped them further north?

Mr. Roach: Well, no, we shipped them east, mostly.

Mr. Cooper: Where did they go?

Mr. Roach: Well, some went to Baltimore and different places. I couldn't say for sure now.

1775

Mr. Cooper: That is about the same latitude as this? What other places in Ohio did you ship them to?

Mr. Roach: Well, we generally shipped them to, in Ohio, some junction, and there they separated them into gangs. I can't think of the places now.

Mr. Cooper: Did they send ~~any~~ any to Kansas City?

Mr. Roach: Well, we sent them on the Chicago & Alton in that direction, yes.

Mr. Cooper: Now you say the regular rate from Jackson, Mississippi -- railroad rate -- for passengers to East St.Louis is about $12?

Mr. Roach: Well, I wouldn't be sure, but I think now-- Mr. Warth called up at that time, and I don't know what exactly he found out the rate was, but it was higher than what they paid.

Mr. Cooper: Well, I ~~see~~ think Mr. Cunningham, in response to a question asked him in this hearing, said that it was about $12; and someone-- I think it was Mr. Conway, or some other witness-- testified that some of these colored people didn't pay but six dollars. Well, that was just half the rate?

Mr. Roach: Six dollars is what the fellows paid that I was speaking of.

Mr. Cooper: And six dollars was half rate?

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: That they paid just half the regular rate?

Mr. Roach: They paid just half the regular rate, yes sir.

Mr. Cooper: And they got here without a cent, and dressed the way they were addressed?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Don't you think that somebody paid their way up here?

Mr. Roach: I wouldn't say for sure.

Mr. Cooper: You wouldn't say for sure, but what is your best judgment as an intelligent man?

Mr. Roach: I didn't know anything about it, and I didn't ask them any questions along that line. The only thing I asked them was if a labor agent sent them or if they had to pay anything for telling them they would secure employment. That is the only thing I asked.

Mr. Cooper: You said there were men all through the South asking them to come up here?

Mr. Roach: Well, that is all I wanted to find out.

Mr. Cooper: Well, you got the information that there were agents down there that did tell them?

Mr. Roach: Well, they said the white fellows told them there was plenty of work up here.

Mr. Cooper: Who were the white fellows?

Mr. Roach: I couldn't give you the name of anybody that told them, except "white folks" down there. It was somebody that passed through there.

Mr. Cooper: It wasn't the native whites, it was some fellows that passed through there. Where were these white men from that passed through there?

1777

Mr. Roach: They didn't know.

Mr. Cooper: Just sort of scouts were they?

Mr. Roach: Yes, labor scouts, I guess.

Mr. Cooper: Out looking around?

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: Looking for workmen?

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: And these scouts down there looking for labor and passing through that country got the negroes to come up here by thousands?

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: Well, don't you think it is rather strange that these negroes that came here in such great numbers included a large proportion that only had exactly enough money to get them here, and not a cent more?

Mr. Roach: That is only half.

Mr. Cooper: Why, most of those people down there had just six dollars, did they?

Mr. Roach: Some of them had just the train fare.

Mr. Cooper: And not a cent over?

Mr. Roach: No, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Don't you think somebody else paid their train fare?

Mr. Roach: Well, they wouldn't tell us that.

Mr. Cooper: They wouldn't tell you that, but that is your opinion?

Mr. Roach: I couldn't say that.

Mr. Cooper: You can say what your opinion is, but you prefer not to?

Mr. Roach: No, I couldn't say. I wouldn't know. There is no use of my saying something that I couldn't substantiate.

Mr. Cooper: Well, the only reason I asked for your opinion is because we are authorized to receive information of that kind.

Mr. Roach: Well, anything I know I am willing to tell you.

Mr. Cooper: Didn't you think it looked rather suspicious to see a lot of half-clad negroes, shivering with cold, hungry, without a cent, land in East St. Louis in as cold a day as this?

Mr. Roach: Yes; it wasn't nice.

Mr. Cooper: It wasn't nice, and it struck you as rather suspicious, didn't it, that they should be here?

Mr. Roach: Yes, I thought somebody was fooling the niggers, you know.

Mr. Cooper: Since the 23rd of June you have been employed exclusively by the National Packing Company?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir; the National Stockyards Company.

Mr. Cooper: And what do you do at the National Stockyards Company?

Mr. Roach: Well, they are building a lot of extra cattle pens up there, and in that way they had to change the yards, and I have got charge of all those changes that are being made out there.

1779

Mr. Cooper: What were you doing during the two hours a day that you worked at the National Stockyards' Company, at the same time you were serving the state as an employee in the State employment agency in this city?

Mr. Roach: I will tell you the whole thing. I told Mr. Jones, the manager up there, that I was still holding this
488 place and couldn't get away from it, and Mr. Jones said "You can hold onto it, but we only want you to start in in the morning, and then you can go down there." So I would start the men in the cut, and then I could do what I wanted to, and I would stay at the labor office.

Mr. Cooper: Did you ever hear it said that the National Stockyards Company had something to do with getting those men up here?

Mr. Roach: No, they have only got very few colored men working at the National Stockyards?

Mr. Cooper: Who are the National Stockyards Company?

Mr. Roach: I don't know who they are.

Mr. Cooper: Are they the big men in the National Packers' Association?

Mr. Roach: Not exactly. Mr. Jones, the manager, is not connected with-- of course he may be, but I don't know, you know.

Mr. Cooper: Well, but the National Stockyards Company is very closely related to the big packing plants here, isn't it?

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: Is it located right close to the plants?

Mr. Roach: Right close to them.

Mr. Cooper: You haven't any idea that the National Stockyards Company is not closely related to these big packing companies?

Mr. Roach: I couldn't say. I don't know anything about that.

Mr. Cooper: Is the National Stockyards Company located at the plant outside of this city?

Mr. Roach: Outside of the city, yes.

Mr. Cooper: In National City?

Mr. Roach: In National City, yes.

Mr. Cooper: And the Morris and the Armour and the Swift Packing Company plants are located in National City?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Do you know who the Mayor of National City is?

Mr. Roach: Yes, I think it is Mr. Shephard.

Mr. Cooper: Is he an employe of Morris & Company?

Mr. Roach: Of Morris & Company, yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: The Mayor of that city is an employe of one of the big packing companies. Have you seen some of the big men of the Packing Companies, the leaders over there with the National Stockyards Company plant?

Mr. Roach: No, sir; only Mr. Jones, the manager, and the superintendents of the National Stockyards Company.

1781

Mr. Foss: I want to ask you-- you say these negroes came here in large numbers. Were you ever down at the station when they came in?

Mr. Roach: No, sir.

Mr. Foss: You also stated that agents of some of these large companies employing labor were on the streets?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: And was there anything to indicate that they were agents of the companies?

Mr. Roach: Yes; they would tell these fellows they were working for the American Steel or the Aluminum, and wanted to know whether he wanted a job or not.

Mr. Foss: You don't know whether any of their agents were down at the station when they came in or not?

Mr. Roach: No, sir; I wasn't down there and couldn't say.

Mr. Foss: You don't know whether any of this labor that came here from the South came with the object of going directly to any particular plant here, do you?

Mr. Roach: No, sir, I don't know about that.

Mr. Foss: You say you have a great many applications for labor?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: For positions?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: Now your office must have been a very important office here in Illinois, wasn't it, one of the most important?

1782

Mr. Roach: We done lots of work here.

Mr. Foss: There are other offices over the State like yours?

Mr. Roach: There was eight, I believe, altogether.

Mr. Foss: But yours was the important office here?

Mr. Roach: Yes, we run next to Chicago in getting jobs. We are only second to Chicago.

Mr. Foss: Now you made a report every year to somebody, didn't you?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: Who did you report to?

Mr. Roach: The Secretary of the Bureau of Labor.

Mr. Foss: You made a written report, didn't you?

Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: Was it printed?

Mr. Roach: It was.

Mr. Foss: Now can't you furnish it to the Committee?

Mr. Roach: Well, you can get an annual report. I haven't got any, but it is out, probably, now-- last year's report. Of course that don't state-- it says so many laborers secured employment, but I don't think it states where they went to. We just showed so many laborers got jobs, but didn't tell where, or anything like that, but just laborers.

Mr. Foss: Well, I wish you would make up a statement from those reports, the last two or three years, taken from those reports. You must have the reports, haven't you?

Mr. Roach: No, I haven't got a thing.

1783

Mr. Foss: Didn't you keep a report of the work you did each year? You had a copy for yourself, didn't you?

Mr. Roach: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: From the copy you can make out a statement, can't you?

Mr. Roach: I may be able to get it from the people in the office now.

Mr. Foss: For 1915, 1916 and 1917.

Mr. Roach: You just want the number of people that got employment through the office?

Mr. Foss: Just the totals for each year, 1915, 1916, 1917, up to the time you were there. I mean at the end of your year.

Mr. Roach: I think it was October 30, the year ended.

Mr. Baker: Did the number of colored men increase in the various establishments here during 1915 and 1916 and 1917?

Mr. Roach: They increased; yes, sir.

Mr. Baker: How many men does the National Stockyards' Company employ?

Mr. Roach: Well, I wouldn't be sure now-- not so many-- quite a good deal out in the yard there. I have got about 110. I could hire more, but I can't get them all the time. I have got at out 100 now in my department.

Mr. Baker: How many are there altogether in this association?

Mr. Roach: The National Stockyards? Well, I wouldn't be sure. You could call up the office and they would probably

give you the information. They have got a time-keeper there. I don't handle that.

Mr. Cooper: A good many of those are colored?

Mr. Roach: There are colored there too, and round the cattle they are all colored-- about half colored around the cattle-- the cattle departments.

Mr. Reber: That's all.

Mr. Foss: How many residents are there in National City up here?

Mr. Roach: I don't know.

Mr. Foss: You don't know how many there are?

Mr. Roach: No, I am not sure.

Mr. Foss: Do you know how many there are that don't work for the packing companies?

Mr. Roach: I don't know for sure.

Mr. Foss: Well, they are practically all working for the packing company?

Mr. Roach: So I guess, but I don't know the number.

Mr. Cooper: The Mayor, you say, is an employe of Morris & Company, of National City?

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Mr. Roach: Yes, sir.

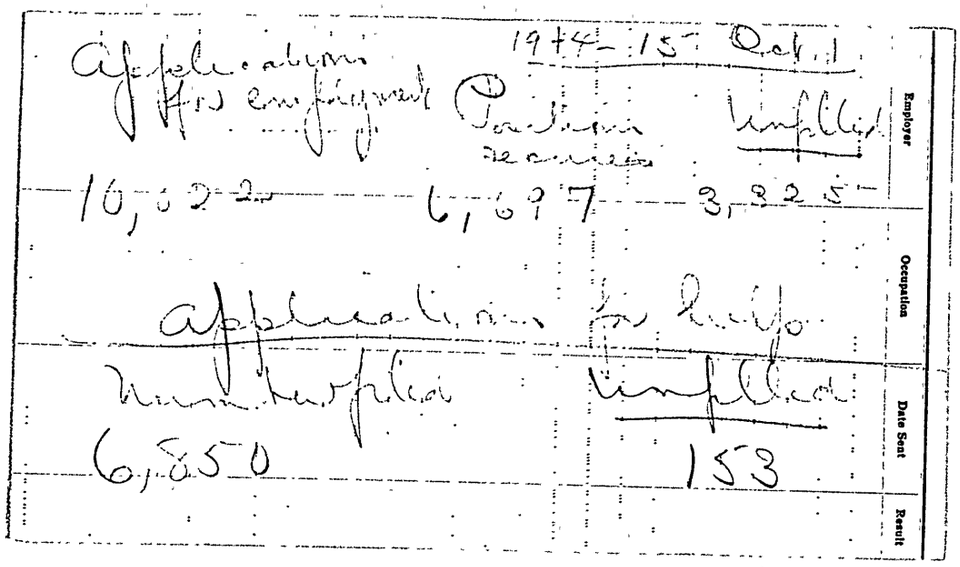
Mr. Foss: Well, are many of the other city officials but there are employes of those companies?

Mr. Roach: I couldn't say. I don't pay much attention to National City. It is a little out of the way for my work, and I don't pay any attention to it.

Mr. Johnson: You may stand aside.

1784a

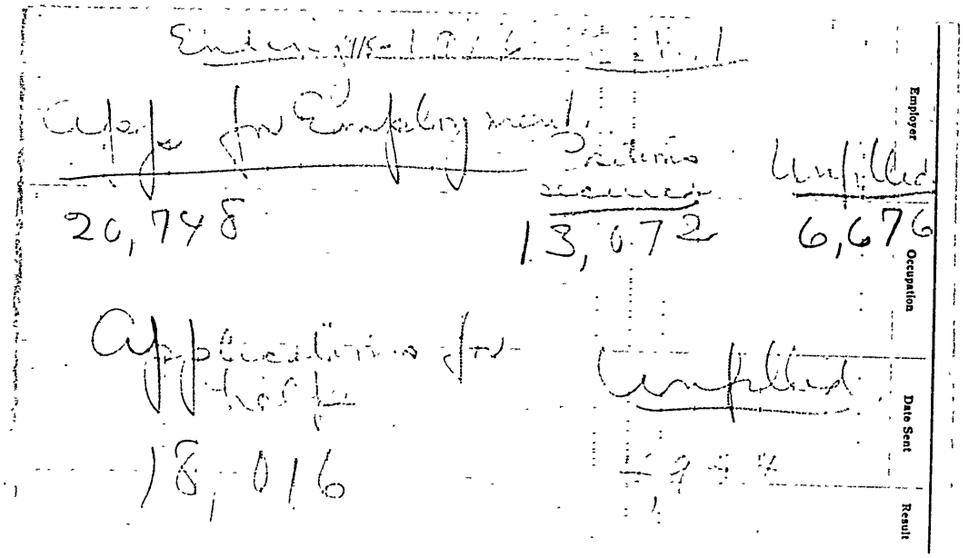
Mr. Roach: Submitted the following data:



Applications for employment	Positions received	Unfilled	Employer
10,022	6,697	3,225	

1974 - 15th Oct. 1

Applications for help	Unfilled	Occupation
Numberplied		
6,850	153	Date Sent
		Result



Applications for employment	Positions received	Unfilled	Employer
20,748	13,072	6,676	

Applications for help	Unfilled	Occupation
18,016		Date Sent
		Result

1785

STATEMENT OF FRANK BECKERMEYER,

3643 Bond Avenue, East St. Louis, Illinois.

(The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.)

Mr. Johnson: Please give the stenographer your name and residence?

Mr. Beckermeyer: Frank Beckermeyer.

Mr. Johnson: Where do you live?

Mr. Beckermeyer: 3643 Bond.

Mr. Johnson: What is your occupation?

Mr. Beckermeyer: Electrical contractor.

Mr. Johnson: If you saw or experienced any trouble with the mob or any part of it on July 2nd of this year, please relate it.

Mr. Beckermeyer: I did, in the evening.

Mr. Johnson: Tell about it.

Mr. Beckermeyer: Well, as I was driving down 13th and Bond--

Mr. Johnson (interposing:) In an automobile?

Mr. Beckermeyer: An automobile, yes, sir-- I was attacked by a group of negroes who fired on me.

Mr. Johnson: How many shots did you think they fired at you?

Mr. Beckermeyer: Well, I wouldn't say: Quite a number of them.

Mr. Johnson: Did you endeavor to see how many there were.

Mr. Beckermeyer: I should judge at least 25-- 30 or 35. Shots were fired.

Mr. Johnson: Did any of them strike you?

Mr. Weckermeyer: One of them took effect, and three others took effect in my clothing-- went through different parts of my clothes.

Mr. Johnson: Where did the one strike you?

Mr. Weckermeyer: In the wrist.

Mr. Johnson: You were driving along the street in the automobile?

Mr. Weckermeyer: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And as you passed them, they opened fire on you?

Mr. Weckermeyer: They opened fire on me.

Mr. Johnson: Where were they when they fired? Were they concealed in any way or out in the open?

Mr. Weckermeyer: The first group were.

Mr. Johnson: The first group was where?

Mr. Weckermeyer: They were out in the corner of the street: They were firing on white fellows as I was passing by between, and as I seen them they was on the west side, and as I seen them shoot this white fellow I turned the corner to go north on 15th.

Mr. Johnson: To avoid going up to where they were?

Mr. Weckermeyer: I went in the opposite direction to where they were.

Mr. Johnson: You turned north to avoid going where they were?

Mr. Weckermeyer: I turned north to avoid going where they

were, and as I went up the block further I hit the second group. They came out of some houses and weeds there, and stood out in the street within 200 feet from me, and they started firing on me before I got to them.

Mr. Johnson: Had you been doing anything to interfere with them or molest them in any way?

Mr. Weckermeyer: No, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Did you see them shooting at other white people?

Mr. Weckermeyer: Just this one, as I was passing by them and turned the corner.

Mr. Johnson: Well, tell about that.

Mr. Weckermeyer: Well, I just related it, that they were shooting him down as he turned the corner to go north on Fifteenth.

Mr. Johnson: The blacks were shooting down another white man as you turned that corner?

Mr. Weckermeyer: Yes, they turned from him onto me.

Mr. Johnson: Did they kill or wound him?

Mr. Weckermeyer: He died later at the hospital.

Mr. Johnson: What was his name?

Mr. Weckermeyer: Murray.

Mr. Johnson: Did you see any rioting during that day prior to this?

Mr. Weckermeyer: I did, very little.

Mr. Johnson: Tell what little you may have seen.

1788

Mr. Heckermeyer: I was working at the east end of town, and towards evening I usually go to St. Louis to get material, and on the way coming home, over the Rads bridge, as I was driving on out through the colored district I seen the mob. I didn't pay no attention to them-- got out of the way.

Mr. Johnson: Was it a white mob or colored mob?

Mr. Heckermeyer: A white mob. I avoided it within two or three blocks and seen very little. I seen them going down the street. They kept going my way.

Mr. Johnson: What were they doing?

Mr. Heckermeyer: Just hollering, going down the street. I didn't see them attack anybody.

Mr. Johnson: Was there anybody there for them to attack?

Mr. Heckermeyer: No, sir.

Mr. Johnson: What street were they on?

Mr. Heckermeyer: On Fourth Street.

Mr. Johnson: Near what cross street?

Mr. Heckermeyer: Broadway.

Mr. Johnson: Fourth and Broadway?

Mr. Heckermeyer: Fourth and Broadway.

Mr. Johnson: You say that was a colored mob?

Mr. Heckermeyer: No, white mob.

Mr. Johnson: That is all of the mob that you saw?

Mr. Heckermeyer: That is the only group of men I seen, was that one there.

Mr. Faber: You didn't hear any of those men shooting at

1789

you?

Mr. Weckermeyer: No, sir; I didn't.

Mr. Baker: You recognized none of them, then?

Mr. Weckermeyer: No, sir.

Mr. Baker: Have you been able to do so since?

Mr. Weckermeyer: No, sir.

Mr. Baker: As to why they shot at you you don't know?

Mr. Weckermeyer: I couldn't say. They just fired on me. I don't know what reason.

Mr. Baker: Who was the white man at the corner that they had been shooting at, did you learn?

Mr. Weckermeyer: Murray, I learned later.

Mr. Baker: Who was the other one?

Mr. Weckermeyer: I don't know who the other one was.

Mr. Baker. Did you see the Doctor and his wife, along in his automobile?

Mr. Weckermeyer: He got shot after I did.

Mr. Baker: Did you see them in the automobile?

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

Mr. Baker: You don't remember of the doctor and his wife being in the machine and passing you, meeting you, rather?

Mr. Weckermeyer: No, sir. The first time I met him was about three ~~xxxxxxx~~ blocks away, where I made the first stop, and I seen them drive up then, and I first found out he was shot at.

Mr. Baker: You didn't see the doctor?

Mr. Weckermeyer: About four blocks away from where I

stopped. I went to the nearest drugstore and stopped.

Mr. Foss: What time of day was it that you were shot?

Mr. Weckermeyer: About a quarter to seven in the evening.

Mr. Foss: How far away from this crowd of colored people were you?

Mr. Weckermeyer: Well, the first was about, I should judge, 150 feet, 100 feet away from them.

Mr. Foss: Did you go past them?

Mr. Weckermeyer: No, sir, I turned the corner to avoid them.

Mr. Foss: And you were hit once, were you, in the wrist?

Mr. Weckermeyer: In the wrist; yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: Now, about this white mob, in what direction do you say they were going?

Mr. Weckermeyer: They were going south.

Mr. Foss: About what time?

Mr. Weckermeyer: About six o'clock, something like that.

Mr. Foss: Were they going towards the negroes?

Mr. Weckermeyer: Well, it is both down there. They are generally mixed in the South End.

Mr. Foss: How near were you to them, do you say?

493 Mr. Weckermeyer: Well, I seen them as they passed over the railroad tracks, two blocks away, and I kept on driving straight. I heard them hollering, going on down the street.

Mr. Foss: Were you near enough so you could make an estimate as to the numbers?

Mr. Weckermeyer: Well, I should judge about fifty, any-

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way.

Mr. Foss: Were they armed, or did they seem to be?

Mr. Wechermeyer: They had their backs to me and were going in the other direction. I never heard any shots fired.

Mr. Johnson: Were there any soldiers among them?

Mr. Wechermeyer: No, sir.

Mr. Foss: Was anybody with you in the automobile?

Mr. Wechermeyer: No, sir.

Mr. Foss: At any time?

Mr. Wechermeyer: There was when I got shot.

Mr. Foss: Who was with you when you got shot?

Mr. Wechermeyer: A grocery clerk by the name of George, is his first name-- Lippman.

Mr. Foss: Was he shot?

Mr. Wechermeyer: No, sir.

Mr. Foss: Was anyone with you at the time you saw the white mob?

Mr. Wechermeyer: No, not exactly. The officer just left me-- a soldier. He asked had me take him over the bridge. He said he wanted to protect the bridge: He said that his men would protect the bridge, and I took him right over, but he left me within half a block of where I seen the mob.

Mr. Foss: You don't know what the soldier's name was?

Mr. Wechermeyer: No, he was an officer.

Mr. Foss: A militiaman?

Mr. Wechermeyer: Why, I couldn't say. He got on the west side of the bridge.

1792

Mr. Foss: That's all.

Mr. Johnson: You may stand aside. Mr. Rucker, will you take the stand?

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STATEMENT OF R. F. RUCKER,

3126 Virginia Place East St. Louis, Ill.

(The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.)

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Rucker, please give to the stenographer your name and the place of your residence.

Mr. Rucker: R. F. Rucker, 3126 Virginia Place.

Mr. Johnson: And your occupation?

Mr. Rucker: Assistant to the superintendent of the Aluminum Ore Company.

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Cooper, will you please interrogate the witness?

Mr. Cooper: You are the assistant superintendent to the witness that was on the stand here yesterday?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; Mr. Fox.

Mr. Cooper: How long have you been employed there, Mr. Rucker, in this capacity?

Mr. Rucker: Something over two years and a half.

Mr. Cooper: How long have you been in the employ of the Aluminum Company?

Mr. Rucker: About the same time.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Rucker, Mr. Fox on the stand here yesterday testified as to a conversation that he had with you

1793

in which you narrated to him your conversation with a Mr. Wolf, an employe of your company, in which Mr. Wolf made to you a proposition about your paying him-- or asking you, rather-- in which he asked you to pay him $10,000 in consideration of something. Now will you please narrate that conversation that you had with Mr. Wolf?

Mr. Rucker: In substance, yes.

Mr. Cooper: When did it take place, and where?

Mr. Rucker: It took place on the forenoon of April the ~~4th~~ 5th, Sunday morning. He called me at my house on the telephone and asked me to come by his working place in the plant when I came to the plant. I did so, and he said he had been thinking over a proposition, but he didn't want to discuss it right there. I asked him to make some engagement where he could discuss it. He seemed to be somewhat nervous, and there
493 seemed to be a necessity in his mind to discuss it at once, yet he couldn't figure out how he could do it, so he suggested that we go out to a certain part of the plant where his duties called him occasionally. It happened to be the enclosure around a deep well where no one goes but the man on his particular duty. There he recited the situation, as he put it, that he thought was objectionable if the things turned out as he thought they would turn out, to us, and also to him and a certain organization of employes that was in existence at the time, involving the American Federation of Labor's attempts to take over this employees' association that he belonged to, and of which he was the head.

1794

Mr. Cooper: That were employes of your plant?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; there was an employes' association, known as the Aluminum Ore Protective Employes' Association-- something similar to that-- that isn't the exact name.

Mr. Cooper: And he, Wolf, was at the head of it?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I don't know whether he was the official head or not, but he was practically the leader of it, and in some official capacity.

Mr. Cooper: He acted as spokesman?

Mr. Rucker: He acted as spokesman for them, and he seemed-- and on several previous occasions in his talks to me-- to be very much impressed in the maintenance of the organization; in fact, to be trying to impress us with the importance of dealing with them as an organization through a committee. In fact, he proposed that he be appointed and placed upon our payroll as an agent of that organization with an office in our plant to deal between those members and us as a salaried official. He would be an official of the organization, but would be the go-between between them and us; all of which we opposed and refused to do. On numerous occasions he had suggested and intimated that he was doing a lot of work for that organization for which he was not being paid, and that it required his time and attention, and he thought there ought to be some way for him to get some money out of it, and that was the reason of his proposition of being placed upon our payroll, to represent them in dealing with the company.

1795

The morning that he met me he indicated that this organization was liable to be taken over by the American Federation unless we didn't do something to bolster it up, and that was the beginning of his conversation.

Mr. Cooper: This was the morning when you went out to the well?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir, a repetition of previous conversations, however, that far, that the American Federation had approached him with a proposition to enter their employ in a salaried position, with the ulterior motive of organizing this association into an American Federation unit, which he opposed very bitterly, because he said he had had his stomach full of the American Federation in previous experience, and he didn't want any more of it. He knew that it meant trouble, and assuming from previous conversations with me and with Mr. Fox, and probably others, he knew it would be objectionable to the Aluminum Ore Company; that ours was an open shop institution, and that it would simply mean trouble for us and for the men. He had gone through some elaborate figures in estimating what the damage would be to the company of a strike, which he assumed would happen if they forced an organization among our employees, and how much in dollars and cents the loss would be to employees; and the final proposition came out that he, in estimating the damage to the company, he could get us fifty-fifty and keep it out. Those were his remarks. I asked him what he meant by "fifty-fifty". Well, he had estimated it would cost us about $20,000 for any sort

1796

of a shut-out, and that he was willing to stop it for $10,000, by preventing the-- he elaborated very largely upon his position of prominence and importance in the community as a citizen and leader among our particular employes, and as related to a family which had influence among organizations in the
496 American Federation, and his standing with the leaders of that organization, to impress me with his importance and that he could do what he said, that he could do this for ten thousand dollars. That is about the history of the conversation.

Mr. Cooper: Well, when he made that proposition to you, what did you say?

Mr. Rucker: I told him that I personally was not in the sandbagging or bribing business, and neither was our company, and bade him good morning.

Mr. Cooper: You understood that proposition with Mr. Wolf, who claimed at that time to represent an association of employes-- an association of your employes-- to amount to a sandbagging or a bribing proposition?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: And you peremptorily declined it?

Mr. Rucker: I did.

Mr. Cooper: What, thereafter, did Mr. Wolf do or say? What did he say when you declined it? Do you remember?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I didn't give him much opportunity to say anything further at all. I just bade him good

1797

morning and told him we were not in that kind of business and left him.

Mr. Cooper: Now this, have you had any conversations with Mr. Wolf since, or do you know of his doing anything since as a result of that?

Mr. Bubber: I only know the newspaper reports of his recital of that conversation, which I openly charged him with to newspaper correspondents and others when they came to inquire, and he reversed the story on me, that I had offered to give him ten thousand dollars to sell out his organization to our company. That is all I know, and that's newspaper reports. I don't know that he said it. However, I immediately went to Mr. Fox, our superintendent, and told him the situation; that the leading representative of the Aluminum Ore Company's Protective Association had made such a proposition as that, and he was the man with whom we had most frequently met in conventions and committee meetings, and so forth, and I thought it was very well that our employees should know that kind of a man misleading them. Of course it was my word against Wolf's, but since that time I think Mr. Fox has secured some more information that will demonstrate my story, of which I have no details. I don't know, but I am satisfied that Mr. Fox can enlighten you further upon that subject.

Mr. Cooper: You talked with Mr. Wolf--

Mr. Bubber (interposing) In other words, there is other evidence, in my opinion, on that besides my story, that's

1798

purely a matter of my personal word against Wolf.

Mr. Cooper: Now yesterday I observed three names as being those of persons prominently connected with this proposition, or with Mr. Wolf's proposition. One of them was Wolf's; the other was Lehman, I believe, and the other was Simons-- Wolf, Lehman and Simon. Who is Lehman?

Mr. Rucker: Lehman was an officer of that organization, I think possibly, at that particular time their president or presiding officer. Simon I think was treasurer of the organization.

Mr. Cooper: So they had Wolf, Lehman and Simon-- they had the president, the treasurer and the spokesman of the organization?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I think officially Wolf was one of the trustees. I think they had a committee or trustee membership there of two or three or more, and he was the trustee. However, he'd developed into the real leader.

Mr. Cooper: Did you ever have any conversation with Mr. Lehman or Mr. Simon?

Mr. Rucker: None on that matter; no, sir; none in relation whatever to the labor unions or strikes, or anything of that kind.

Mr. Cooper: Have any relatives had Mr. Wolf in your employ?

Mr. Rucker: Yes. One brother, and I think he had a cousin-- possibly two brothers. But there were two relatives, one a brother and the other either a brother or a cousin.

Mr. Cooper: Had the others any relatives, do you know, Lehman and Simon?

Mr. Rucker: Not that I know of.

Mr. Cooper: How long had Wolf, Lehman and Simon been at the head of that organization of employes? About how long?

Mr. Rucker: The organization was organized some time in October, 1916. Wolf at that time was not a member of it, but became a member soon after, but not a very important influence until-- oh, in the spring, some time, of this year. But I think Simon and Lehman were both members of it in its origin, and rather enthusiastic, influential members all the time

Mr. Cooper: What makes you think that Mr. Fox now has evidence which will corroborate your statement?

Mr. Rucker: Well, there were some rumors, some gossip on the subject that Wolf had discussed this question with others, but pure gossip, which wouldn't be of any value to this Committee. But since then I have understood that the gossip has turned into evidence. I have no direct information to give you except that if you are interested at all I might tell the story and not tell it right, and I prefer that Mr. Fox, who if he tells anything, will tell it with evidence to support it, should give it.

Mr. Cooper: Of course there is no object of use in the United States, so interested in ferreting out, the utter extirpation of crooked leadership, as are the laboring men themselves,

1800

and we want to get at the facts, if possible.

Mr. Rucker: Well, when I express my opinion, I think you need have no fear but what that is thoroughly known about Mr. Wolf, both among the laboring men and everybody else in East St.Louis.

Mr. Cooper: Because laboring men are in large measure helpless-- that is, they depend upon their daily employment.

Mr. Rucker: Mr. Wolf has lost his entire standing, so far as that is concerned, with all forms of labor and employers. He has sold his friends and sold his enemies, and would be willing to sell his own family.

Mr. Cooper: Does he live here now?

Mr. Rucker: I don't know now. I am inclined to think he does.

Mr. Cooper: You say he has already lost all the standing he had, even among the laboring men?

486

Mr. Rucker: Well, I speak that as a personal opinion. I don't know that, but I should think, with the evidence that has been given by his own associates and his own friends and the American Federation of Labor organizers, and the union officials who know these things. Then he was never able to present a legitimate expense account involving the funds he had in his possession, he and his associates, and I think in general he is discountenanced throughout the entire country, so far as anyone knows or is interested in him.

Mr. Cooper: Was the funds which he was supposed to keep were the funds of this association of employes?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

1801

Mr. Cooper: He never could keep those straight so as to satisfy the employes?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I don't mean to make that as a definite statement. That is simply an understanding that I get from men who worked associated with him and who have since come to us and told me why they were bamfuzzled into the thing and how he befogged the atmosphere of the finances and everything else, and they make that complaint, that they have no definite record of the funds expended, or so. They were expended, or anything about it. The fact is, the bonding company voided the bond of the treasurer as soon as it became known what the conditions were.

Mr. Cooper: What bonding company was that, do you remember?

Mr. Rucker: I don't recall the name, but it was a St. Louis representative concern.

Mr. Cooper: One of the St. Louis bonding companies, and they, you think, upon investigation, found that Mr. Wolf was crooked and gave up the bond?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I really can't tell you why they did. I simply know that the bond was cancelled. I don't know whether Wolf was bonded, of course. That was Simon, the treasurer.

Mr. Cooper: It was Simon's bond?

Mr. Rucker: Yes.

Mr. Cooper: Where is Simon now?

Mr. Rucker: I don't know. I haven't heard of him for some time.

Mr. Cooper: Well, if [illegible] was crooked and is so generally acknowledged to be now, and Dixon's bond was cancelled by a bonding company that investigated his actions and accounts, the facts are that a couple of crooked men had worked themselves to the head of that organization?

Mr. Rucker: That is the way it appeared to us; yes, sir, and a great many employes who have frankly discussed it.

Mr. Cooper: How many employes have you there?

Mr. Rucker: Right now I suppose we have 2200 or 2300.

Mr. Cooper: How many did you have last spring when he made that sandbagging proposition?

Mr. Rucker: About 1700 to 1800-- 1700, probably.

Mr. Cooper: How many of the additional 500 are colored, about?

Mr. Rucker: We have about 500 colored employes now.

Mr. Cooper: Altogether?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir. At that time, in April, we had probably-- between 400 and 500. There has not been very much of an increase, but we have increased 400 or 500 in total since that time.

Mr. Cooper: You have about 25 per cent, or a little less, of your employes, colored?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Three-quarters white?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Your plant over there is capitalized for about a million dollars-- this local plant?

1803

Mr. Rucker: You mean capital invested?

Mr. Cooper: Well, the capital stock is about a million dollars.

Mr. Rucker: I really couldn't tell you that, sir. I

497 don't know.

Mr. Cooper: You are not an owner of any of the stock?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir; none at all.

Mr. Cooper: Did you see any of the rioting on that day?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir; I was out of the city that day.

Mr. Cooper: Where were you?

Mr. Rucker: In Danville.

Mr. Cooper: When did you return?

Mr. Rucker: At about eight on the evening of July 2nd.

Mr. Cooper: What did you see when you arrived here?

Mr. Rucker: Nothing but a fire from across the river. I couldn't get over here. I landed in St. Louis. The street cars wouldn't stop and there was no available way for me to get here--

Mr. Cooper: When did you go to Danville?

Mr. Rucker: On the night previous.

Mr. Cooper: You went to Danville on the night before, and you returned to St. Louis on the night of the 2nd about 8 o'clock?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: And you couldn't get across the river. How long did you stay in St. Louis?

1804

Mr. Rucker: Just during the night, and I came over the next morning.

Mr. Cooper: What did you see when you got over in the morning? What time did you get here?

Mr. Rucker: I saw nothing-- I saw no actual violence. I passed along the streets and saw smouldering fires and congregations of people and soldiers, the evidence of catastrophe that had happened the day and evening before, but no violence.

Mr. Cooper: Did you see any bodies?

Mr. Rucker: No; I passed along in an automobile straight to the plant.

Mr. Cooper: What time did the troops come to this city, the Federalized militia, in the spring of this year, and were encamped out near the street car offices or barns?

Mr Rucker: I think they arrived here about April 23, 24, 25 or 26-- somewhere along there.

Mr. Cooper: How near to your plant were they camped?

Mr. Rucker: Oh, it must be a mile or a mile and a quarter-- something like that.

Mr. Cooper: Did you visit their camp?

Mr. Rucker: I have visited there; yes, sir,-- that is, during the time.

Mr. Cooper: How many times?

Mr. Rucker: I don't suppose I was there more than three or four times during the entire day.

Mr. Cooper: Did you meet the officers?

1805

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Who was the officer in command?

Mr. Rucker: Major Kavanaugh.

Mr. Cooper: What other officer did you meet?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I met his other officers. I don't recall their names. I had no occasion to visit with them.

Mr. Cooper: You had about the same number of conversations with them?

Mr. Rucker: Why, I guess not; no, sir.

Mr. Cooper: What troops were they?

Mr. Rucker: I don't recall the name, the number of their company. It was the Illinois nationalized guard.

Mr. Cooper: How many were they, the guard regiment? How many were there?

Mr. Rucker: About 200 when they first came here.

Mr. Cooper: Was that number increased any?

Mr. Rucker: During and after the riots it was increased; yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: To what number?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I am not quite sure just what number that particular number was increased to, but finally I think Major Kavanaugh had charge of all that remained here, which was about 600, you know.

Mr. Cooper: Well, Dr. McQuillan testified here yesterday that the commanding officer told him x on the 1st of September he had 960 men here.

Mr. Rucker: I don,t think Major Kavanaugh was in

1806

charge of that many men. I think there were 900 men here at one time, but they were in charge of Colonel Clayton.

Mr. Cooper: Well now, Dr. McQuillan says-- and he is the physician of your company-- that there were asmany as 400 came here at first.

Mr. Rucker: He is mistaken. I think it was only 200.

Mr. Cooper: Now how close to the plant of the street car company were they located?

Mr. Rucker: They were within two or three blocks of a power station of that company.

Mr. Cooper: Do you know how they happened to come here?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I think it was the general consensus of opinion that under the conditions that existed here in the spring immediately after the declaration of war that, there being a number of bridges here connecting the two States, and an important railroad and industrial center, that we felt a desire for that sort of protection, and in general we, from time to time, discussed it among ourselves-- the manufacturers and people in the town-- the community.

Mr. Cooper: Who asked for them?

Mr. Rucker: Our company asked for Federal protection, and I know that the Suburban did-- or I think they did.

Mr. Cooper: The Suburban and what?

Mr. Rucker: The Suburban Railway Company.

Mr. Cooper: The street railway company?

1807

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Well, were any of those guards stationed on the bridge?

Mr. Rucker: I think some of Major Kavanaugh's guard were stationed at this end of the Eads Bridge, and also probably at the intake of the water company-- those stations.

Mr. Cooper: They were here, then, during the May riot; they were here also during the July 2nd riot?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; they were here during both riots, but they didn't participate in the May riots at all in any way.

Mr. Cooper: Did they in the July riot?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; they were called upon, and I think that instructions from their department commander at Chicago to render any assistance here.

Mr. Cooper: What did they do?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I can't say what they did.

Mr. Cooper: Where were they stationed?

Mr. Rucker: Well, they continued to maintain their camp at the Suburban power-house.

Mr. Cooper: But on July 2nd where were these men put -- stationed?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I couldn't tell you that. All I know is that Major Kavanaugh had told me in reciting the history of the riots that he had been called upon but that he had no authority, and that finally he got authority to render any assistance to the Mayor, or whoever had charge here in the

city, to render any assistance to the Mayor, or whoever had charge here in the city, in the matter of protection of property?

Mr. Cooper: When did he tell you he got that, on the 2nd?

Mr. Rucker: No; I think it couldn't have been on the 2nd. It must have been the 3rd, or later than the 2nd.

Mr. Cooper: Did he tell you with what authority he communicated in order to obtain that permission?

Mr. Rucker: He might have done so; I don't recall.

Mr. Cooper: What would be the authority-- the Governor?

Mr. Rucker: No; it would be his commanding general in Chicago.

Mr. Cooper: General Bell?

Mr. Rucker: General Barry.

Mr. Cooper: General Barry. Well, he could have telegraphed on the morning of the 2nd and received permission by telegraph, or he could have telephoned and received permission in a very few minutes. Do you know whether he did it?

Mr. Rucker: No, I don't. I don't know whether it was through his own solicitation or through the solicitation of the Mayor here, or of Colonel Clayton, after Colonel Clayton arrived. I don't know the history, exactly of that. I wasn't in intimate touch with it at all.

Mr. Cooper: Well, Colonel Tripp testified that he had only 63 men up to some time in the afternoon to do anything

1809

with--soldiers. As a matter of fact, there were over 200 right here who could easily have been authorized to assist in maintaining order?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Do you know any reason why that 200 weren't added to the other fourth?

Mr. Rucker: Excepting my understanding of the military situation was that they were national troops, entirely in the hands of the National Government, while the other troops were entirely in the hands of the State organization-- no relation whatever between them.

Mr. Cooper: Well, if the commanding officer said he could have obtained permission from this General Barry, what did he mean by that?

Mr. Rucker: If he could?

Mr. Cooper: He said he could. H- told you that he could.

Mr. Rucker: No; I didn't mean to convey that idea, that he told me that-- though I don't think there is any difference in the substance. He told me that he would have to have permission from his commanding officer before he could act in any capacity other than what he had instructions to do here. Now I think he was requested, possibly, by our administration here-- or possibly by Colonel Tripp-- may be other sources-- to act, when he replied that he couldn't act without direct authority from his commanding general. That is what I meant to convey. And he later did received that authority, but just how late I

1890

don't know.

Mr. Cooper: Do you know where Mr. Wolf is now?

Mr. Rucker: I understand he is working at the Valley Steel Company. It is an industry here.

Mr. Cooper: What is his first name?

Mr. Rucker: Phillip Wolf.

Mr. Cooper: That's all.

Mr. Raker: What is Simon's name?

Mr. Rucker: J. T.

Mr. Raker: And Lehman?

Mr. Rucker: I couldn't tell you his initials, sir.

Mr. Raker: were all three of these men working for you at this time that Wolf made this proposition?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir. Simon had been discharged two or three days previous to the date that he made that proposition.

Mr. Raker: And was not working for the company?

Mr. Rucker: Not at that moment.

Mr. Raker: Was Lehman working there at that time?

Mr. Rucker: Simon later, a few days later, was put back at work, because he had been discharged, and we thought legitimately so, but they said if we didn't put him back they would strike, so we didn't want to have a strike on one individual man, and so we put him back, but two days later they struck just the same.

Mr. Raker: And then Simon quit?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

1811

Mr. Raker: And didn,t come back any more?

Mr. Rucker: He never did come back.

Mr. Raker: Did Lehman continued after the 4th of April?

Mr. Rucker: Well, he continued up until the 17th of April. They all continued up until the 17th.

Mr. Raker: Wolf too?

Mr. Rucker: Wolf too. That was the date of the strike.

Mr. Raker: The 17th of April was the date of the strike, and Wolf and Lehman then working that day, continued on to the 17th?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

500 Mr. Raker: Simon had quit a couple of days?

Mr. Rucker: Simon had been discharged and was off duty for some days, possibly two or three days before the 8th of April, and was attempting to get back. In a few days after the 8th of April he did get back.

Mr. Raker: But only stayed until the 17th?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: You stated you have talked to a number of the men that were working at the plant, and who were members of this organization of employes, who have talked with you since in regard to Mr. Wolf's attitude and Mr. Simon's and Mr. Lehman's?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: Could you give the names of those men, any of them?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I have no particular ones in mind, because there have been hundreds in my office who have tried to explain their position in the strike, and with whom we have had conferences, nd there are no direct charges against Wolf by these men, just a general sentiment of dissatisfaction with the way he had handled it, and that he had gotten them into trouble, and were doubtful of his honesty; and the reports of the finance committee were unsatisfactory, and they were just washing their hands of it-- in that attitude. There were no particular charges, but I might give you the names of many men who will tell you those same things.

Mr. Raker: How large a number of these men followed Wolf?

Mr. Rucker: Well, that is difficult to say. On the day after the strike we had about 500 men-- 450 to 500. It is pretty hard to count them, because many of them stayed in the plant only 24 hours. Some worked two shifts, some three and some one. Many didn,t work any.

Mr. Raker: Let,s go on and take quite a little lapse of time.

Mr. Rucker: Then on the 24th, which was six days after the beginning of the strike, we had 800 to 900 men, which was practically a full operating complement. What I mean by "operaing complement" is we could operate to full production, not considering construction, repairs, and the accessory, auxiliary part of the work. Then by May 12th-- 10th or 12th-- we had a full complete operating and construction complement of men, equal

1813

to the number we had had on April 17th-- 1700 men. Of that total number I suppose there were a thousand at that time of our original men, of the 1700. Those are approximate figures. It is almost impossible to tell that. We are hiring men all the time. Many men are coming back from day to day, shift to shift, but those are approximate figures.

I suppose at this time-- or at least there have been between that time and this-- within 400 to 500 of all of the men who went out on strike, or who were in our employ at the time of the strike, back in our employ.

Mr. Foss: State that again, please.

Mr. Rucker: I presume that at some time or other between the time of the strike and this there have been as many as 1400, say, of the old men back in our employ.

Mr. Raker: Of the 1700?

Mr. Rucker: In other words, indicating that there are not more than 400 or 500 of the total in our employat
501 the time of the strike who have not rentered it at some time or other.

Mr. Cooper: When you say "old men" you mean former employes?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, at the time of the strike.

Mr. Foss: How many men were there in this association, do you know, how many of your employes?

Mr. Rucker: We have no knowledge of that.

Mr. Foss: Did Wolf ever tell you?

Mr. Rucker: Wolf in his frequent conferences said that 90 per cent of them were, but many others said there

1814

were not. I assumed at least half of our men were in the Association, to be frank and fair about it.

Mr. Foss: Do you remember what the name of the association was?

Mr. Rucker: The Aluminum Ore Employes Protective Association. I think that was it.

Mr. Foss: The Aluminum Ore Employes Protective Association? What was their purpose?

Mr. Rucker: The published purpose was to better their social-- well, it was an association of employes for the betterment of employes in a social and financial way, to better their working conditions.

Mr. Foss: How was it maintained?

Mr. Rucker: By assessment and dues-- certain dues.

Mr. Foss: From each member?

Mr. Rucker: Each member paid an assessment.

Mr. Foss: Did your company contribute in any way to it?

Mr. Rucker: None at all. It was the outcome of a strike that we had had in October of last year.

Mr. Foss: You state that you had a number of conversations with Wolf from time to time, in which he tried to impress upon you his importance as a member of the association?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: Was anybody present at any of these conversations at any time?

1815

Mr. Rucker: Well, some of those occasions were when committees would call upon us for redress or in explanation of complaints, or demands for more wages, or something or other of that kind, and he would expatiate considerably on those occasions when these fellow members were present. I doubt, however, that any of those men at that time would recall that as an attitude of his, because he didn't make direct statements of his importance. He just took the position that it was important for us to recognize the institution, and things like that.

Mr. Foss: But this last conversation you stated that you went out to a well.

Mr. Rucker: We went out to an out-house; yes, sir.

Mr. Foss: And was anyone around?

Mr. Rucker: No. A watchman, one of our plant watchmen, came into the well at the time we were there. I don't recall who he was, but he didn,t stay nor didn,t overhear any of the conversation.

Mr. Foss: You have had no conversation with Wolf since then?

Mr. Rucker: No conversation. During the strike he came into our gate-house one day and I had him putout.

Mr. Foss: You had him put out?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir. We had some words. I asked him what he was doing in there-- no conversation-- just asked him to get out.

Mr. Cooper: How long after that conversation with Wolf did the strike take place?

Mr. Rucker: That was on the 8th, and the strike was on the 17th.

Mr. Cooper: Nine days after?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: When was it you put him out of the plant?

Mr. Rucker: That was during the strike, when we were paying all striking employes. We had a system of the men--

Mr. Cooper (interposing:) What was the strike about? What demands did Wolf make, or complaints?

502 Mr. Rucker: I think, gentlemen, that question can be answered better by me furnishing you with a copy of their written demands.

Mr. Cooper: Have you it?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir, but I can get it for you. I am sure you will see when you read it why I don't like to answer, because it is very difficult to interpret.

Mr. Cooper: Can you procure a copy of that?

Mr. Rucker: I will.

Mr. Johnson: You will furnish that to the Committee?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; I will be very glad to.

Mr. Johnson: Right away?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

(The paper referred to is as follows):

1817

Aluminum Ore Company

East St. Louis, Ill.

October 31st, 1917.
WEDNESDAY.

Hon. Benj. Johnson, Chairman,
Congressional Investigating Committee,
Metropolitan Bldg., City.

Dear Sir:-

As per your request of yesterday during my examination before your Board, I am herewith enclosing a copy of the written demands made upon our Company by a committee of our employees.

Cordially yours,
ALUMINUM ORE COMPANY.

R. F. Becker
Assistant Superintendent.

AFR:GP.

1818

652-R

COPY

ALUMINUM ORE EMPLOYEES PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

W.A.Lehman, President.
George E. Morris, Secretary. East St.Louis, Ill.
H. C. Herrin, Treasurer
Philip Wolf, Chairman of Trustees. April 17th, 1917.

Mr. C. H. Fox,
General Manager of Aluminum Ore Co.,

Dear Sir:-

The Employes of the Aluminum Ore Co., have been discriminated against on numerous occasions with out cause or provocation. And we request of Aluminum Ore Co. to abide by veriable agreement of Oct. 13 - 1916. Which we have from you as a man of honor. And a true American, of true speech, which we all understand and respect, when the above mentioned is handled truthfully. While Old Glory dominates over the U.S.A. with her colors of red, white and blue, we as citizens of America, and employes of Aluminum Ore Co., of East St.Louis, Ill., claim justice. Which has been denied as we have data's as proof since Nov.1st, 1916. Request that all requests be granted. First to renstate all Employes who have been layed off since Nov. 1st, 1916, upon proper application, all Machanics Operators and Laborers, which has been fired or layed off with out reasonable cause, concrete finisher classed as Machanic and received $2.75 for 8 hrs. work. Bauxite unloaders $3.50 --8hrs. paid $2.75. Painter layed off discriminated. Dinkey engineers had no grievance. You said all departments or employes that had no grievance, would receive the same consideration in proportion as other Dept. in regard to increase in wages which was violated, also lime house no increase in wages. Three machinest layed off who were on Committee discrimination officers of A.O.E.P.A. Sheet Metal Dept. thirty layed off, and Mill -wrights and Iron workers have been doing Sheet Metal, work as where it comes straight and is not complicated, and if it is it is turned over to sheet Metal worker to build and then is erected by out side craft, such as Mill wright and Iron workers which is an injustice to the sheet metal trades Man. We ask of you to give the due consideration which is a benefit to Aluminum Ore Co., also to renstate Mr. H. C. Herin Ex-treasure of A.O.E.P.A. who was disabled while Employed at Aluminum Ore Co., East St. Louis Ill. Also one trustee from black-smith Dept. Mr. Scully the above mentioned be renstated upon application. And switch-men on discriminations not properly taken care of, in case of increase on wages. Also some janitors working more than Eight (8) hrs. A violation of your agreement of Oct. 13 -1916. And one Machanic Joseph Siski layed off for being active in up holding his obligation in this Association among the foreign Element which held meetings in his hall. He who worked for Aluminum Ore Co., three and one half years as a Mill wright and carpenter was requested to drop all business pertaining to A.O.E.P.A. if he would do so he would be put to work at once. By Aluminum Ore Co., you have also instructed Burns detective agents to get some thing on Chairman of trustees of this Association. Mr. Philip Wolf so he could be discharged, with out any usual grievance. Such tactics are termed as black hand by Aluminum Ore Co. employees and citizens of the U.S.A. also Machine Shop conditions are bad layed off Machinest put helper to apprentests to doing their work which must be corrected and will not prove a discapointment in results in future. Store room Men working for Monthly salaries and if off one day they are docked 1 day pay for some injustices to employes and injury to Co. Employes crippled or hurt while at work in Aluminum Ore Plant of East St. Louis when well or O.K. layed off or discharged unfair discrimination, also to consider Senoriety in case of a

general lay off in any department to avoid a grievance. One employe of Red Reed Dept. out from $3.50 to $2.75 and put on canvass washing machine discrimination, also 6 men from digestor floor cut from $3.50 to $2.75 and hours from 7.00 to 3; -- changed to 8.00 to 4.45 a plain case of discrimination. Laying off old men in old plant and putting new men of same craft to work in New Plant unfair, also men in operating department cautioned not to attend meetings of A.O.E.P.A. is so they would lose their job, cautioned by Mr. Talbott, undesirable remarks from foreman also Mr. Schrame be installed back in acid plant who was discriminated against. Also restaurant not satisfactory should be investigated by Mgr. of Aluminum Ore Co., Plant of East St.Louis also some undesirable or bad remarks made to men in Mechanical Dept. by Master Machanics. One man a saloon-Keeper at 2600 Missouri Ave. as foreman under Mr. Reed on days all together Mr. Scott the name of said saloon Keeper be removed from the Aluminum Ore Plant Same as Joseph Sisk Saloon keeper was of 2001 Kansas Ave., also cloth sowers on press Floor paid $3.00. Grievance called for $3.50, 8 hrs. violated. These requests were granted once Oct. 13 1916 but not full-filled. Though the violation of your own word and honor before a body of 57 men, General Grievance Committee of Strike of Oct. 9th. 1916 at Aluminum Ore Co., Plant East St.Louis Ill. These requests were voted on unamiously by employes interested and concerned at Aluminum Ore Plant. These requests and demands are subject to alteration or change from date issued April 18th. 1917 by Employes of Aluminum Ore Co., only.

"We the Employes of the Aluminum Ore Co., of East St.Louis, request or demand an answer by or before Wednesday April 18th. - 1917 which must be final and binding sentiments of all concerned as employes of Aluminum Ore Co., of East St.Louis, Ill.

Signed;

Committee.

I do hereby aprove and agree to live up to my settlement and acknowledge all just claims.

Mr. Cooper: Aside from the written demands, were there any oral demands made? Was the written communication supposed to embody all they wanted to ask for?

Mr. Rucker: Well, the written demands made no statement on financial matters or rates or wages, but later hand dodgers and persons who spoke to them, and charges that were passed among the people indicated that they were striking for better working conditions and higher wages. But they didn't make any demands in writing or in any other way of that kind.

Mr. Cooper: They made, in their written demands to the company, which you will present to the Committee-- they made no demands for wages?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir; increased wages.

Mr. Cooper: How long after the presentation of this written communication embodying-- or supposed to have embodied their demands-- did the strike breakout-- about how long?

Mr. Rucker: Well, less than a week.

Mr. Cooper: In the interim were any negotiations in progress between you and the employes?

Mr. Rucker: On the afternoon of the day of the strike-- I was out of the city that day.

Mr. Cooper: That was the 8th?

Mr. Rucker: No, that was the 17th.

Mr. Cooper: Yes, the 17th.

Mr. Rucker: A committee called upon Mr. Fox.

1821

Mr. Cooper: That is the 17th of April?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; and he told them that ~~they~~ he would sign and agree to their written demands, and handed it to them. Upon looking at it and seeing that there was no signature to it at all from any other source, he asked them to have some one from their organization who represented them sign it. They had "committee" written at the bottom of it in typewriting, but no signatures. So the Committee took the paper and they had a meeting that night, and instead of signing it they voted to strike. He had agreed to sign it if somebody representing them would sign it, so he would know who he was dealing with, whether it would be the committee that presented it or whether it would be the officers of the association or somebody who would sign it. That was late in the afternoon of the night on which they struck.

Mr. Cooper: The 17th?

Mr. Rucker: The 17th. They struck at 11 o'clock. In other words, they prevented our shifts from coming on at 11 o'clock.

Mr. Cooper: Now this written communication, supposed to have embodied their demands, was all in typewriting?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: And at the bottom was the word "committee", typewritten?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: And nothing else?

Mr. Rucker: That was all, with a blank space apparently for some signatures.

Mr. Cooper: And absolutely unsigned?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: You requested that that be taken back and signed by those authorized to sign it?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Your desire being to have something which
503 would enable you to identify those with whom you were dealing?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: whereupon this was taken back, never returned, and the strike immediately ensued?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: That's all.

Mr. Johnson: Both you and Mr. Fox have said that this written demand was of uncertain meaning.

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Mr. Fox's opinion was that its uncertainty in that respect appeared to him to grow out of a lack of knowledge of the English language?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; I guess that would be a fair explanation of it.

Mr. Johnson: Was that because it was written apparently by an uneducated person, or by some foreigner who didn't understand the English language?

Mr. Rucker: No, it was entirely English; not good

1823

English, but it had no foreign indications at all.

Mr. Johnson: What nationality was Mr. Wolf?

Mr. Rucker: Well, of course he was an American, a native of the United States, a citizen, probably originally German ancestry.

Mr. Johnson: And Mr. Simon?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I should say that Simon, of course, is the same-- probably Irish.

Mr. Johnson: And Mr. Lehman?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I don't know about Mr. Lehman. He is a young man: He is no doubt a native of the United States, but the name sounds German. I think he is probably of German ancestry too. But they are all young men who have been educated in this country, born and raised here.

Mr. Johnson: You use the expression "educated" advisedly, do you-- that they were educated men?

Mr. Rucker: Yes; if they dictated it, I used it advisedly. I don't know whether they did or not.

Mr. Johnson: Well, had either of those-- did you say they were educated here, and if they dictated it-- if either of them dictated it-- it would probably have been better written than you indicate that it was?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I must say that I have never seen any other communication from any of those three men.

Mr. Johnson: With which to compare it?

Mr. Rucker: No, but I am surprised that they couldn't have written a better one if they wrote that. There isn't any-

1824

thing essentially wrong with the spelling so much.

Mr. Johnson: But the writing is just ambiguous?

Mr. Rucker: The construction of it is very ambiguous.

Mr. Foster: Mr. Rucker, you know something about the assessed valuation of your property out there?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir; I don't know anything at all about the assessment.

Mr. Foster: Do you know whether your company has endeavored to get its assessment decreased in the last year or two or three years?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir, I don't.

Mr. Foster: Or five years?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir; I don't know anything about it.

Mr. Foster: Have you built any addition to your property in the last few years?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; we have built a considerable addition in the last few years.

Mr. Foster: You don't know whether there has been an attempt to reduce your assessment so that you would pay less taxes?

Mr. Rucker: No, I don't know.

Mr. Foster: That the value wasn't so high?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir.

Mr. Foster: You took out a permit in 1913 to build a $30,000 addition. Do you know whether that is so or not?

Mr. Rucker: No, I wasn't there.

Mr. Foster: Do you know whether you took out one in 1914, about March 25th, for $5,000?

1825

Mr. Rucker: No, sir; I don,t.

Mr.Foster: Do you know whether you took out one in 1914 for $3,000?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir.

Mr. Foster: Do you know whether you took out one in 1914 again for $25,000?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir.

Mr. Foster: And another for $18,000?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir.

Mr. Foster: Did you take one out in 1915 to build an addition, a branch factory there, for $40,000?

Mr. Rucker: I don,t know.

Mr. Foster: Another one in the same year for $40,000?

Mr. Rucker: I don't know.

Mr. Foster: And another one in 1915 for $6,000?

Mr. Rucker: I don't know.

Mr. Foster: And another one in the sameyear, November, for $15,000, making a total of $143,300 since September 19th, 1913?

Mr. Rucker: No; I have no knowledge whatever of the asessments or the permits.

Mr. Foster: But do you know whether you built these buildings there?

Mr. Rucker: I know that we have built buildings there since 1915. I have been there since 1915.

Mr. Foster: You know, then, that since 1915 permits were taken out for the building of $101,000 worth of buildings?

1826

Mr. Rucker: well, I don't know about the permits, sir. I just know that we have done considerable building there in the latter part of 1915, 1916, and this year.

Mr. Foster: well, you took some out this year too, building in 1917?

Mr. Rucker: We have done considerable building in this year, yes sir, a continuation of what was started last year.

Mr. Foster: You don,t know anything about this, then?

Mr. Rucker: No.

Mr. Foster: You think your plant is worth as much now as it was in 1915, when you went there?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: And it ought to pay as much taxes?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: It ought to be assessed just as high?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: That,s all.

Mr. Raker: Have you got a copy of that notice?

Mr. Rucker: I haven,t it with me. I have it in my office.

Mr. Johnson: He said he would furnish us with that.

Mr. Raker: Did you offer a reward for the man who wrote it?

Mr. Rucker: No.

Mr. Raker: Did you offer so much to find out?

Mr. Rucker: No, we didn't even inquire who wrote it.

1827

It was a delicate question.

Mr. Raker: Did you offer any reward-- was it published that you would pay a reward to anyone who would interpret what it meant?

Mr. Rucker: No.

Mr. Raker: Did anything of that kind occur at all?

Mr. Rucker: We discussed it with the Committee. I say "I". I didn't. Mr. Fox discussed it with the Committee, and I presume he got on to some sort of an understanding of what they meant by it. He must have arrived at something, because he discussed it paragraph by paragraph with them, and I guess he arrived at some conclusion, though I did not. I never could interpret it.

Mr. Foss: Do you know who were the committee? Do you know who waited on Mr. Fox at this time?

Mr. Rucker: Wolf was one of them.

Mr. Foss: How many were there, do you know?

Mr. Rucker: No, I don't know how many of them. A man by the name Boismeneau was one of them.

Mr. Foss: Was Simon there?

Mr. Rucker: I am inclined to think Simon was there too. I never met that committee at all.

Mr. Foss: Do you think Lehman was there?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I really couldn't tell you. I just know those three. I know Boismeneau was one of that committee. I know that by having heard it. Now the others I am not familiar with. I can get the names of the committee, though, I think.

Mr. Foss: Do you know how many there were in all?

1828

Mr. Rucker: No, I don,t.

Mr. Raker: Did you make any investigation as to the cause of the riot of July 2nd?

Mr. Rucker: No particular investigation, no, sir.

504-a Mr. Raker: You paid really no attention to it?

Mr. Rucker: Oh yes, I paid attention to it, very serious attention, in the way of protecting our homes and our plant property, and my family; as every other citizen did who had to be here.

Mr. Raker: Did you do the same for the riots of May 28th and 29th of this year?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, in a lesser degree.

Mr. Raker: Did you come to any conclusion as to the prime mover and cause of the two distinct riots?

Mr. Rucker: Well, in a personal way I have; yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: What is the one of May 28th and 29th?

Mr. Rucker: I think both were caused by a very loose law enforcement in this community.

Mr. Raker: And that is the same way with the one of July 2nd?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: You think that that is the prime cause and inducement of the riots?

Mr. Rucker: I don't mean that that is the entire inducement. It wouldn't have been possible to have had that riot if we had had a first class law enforcement in this community, and if due and proper respect had been had for that

1829

law enforcement.

Mr. Raker: But you do say from your investigation and inquiry and thought upon the whole subject, taking the entire range of it, that the want of enforcement of the law, is the prime cause of the riots-- both of them?

Mr. Rucker: Xmxmxmim Of the possibility of the riots. The origin of the riots I should say was possibly from that cause, and general industrial unrest in this country; the change of standards and the type of living; the wages that men received then and years previous; and labor agitators, men who possibly were so loaded and encouraged by alien influences to stir up trouble of any kind. And it seemed to be that the attitude in this section, being industrial, was possibly along lines of prejudice against negroes at this time, which in years previous had been against foreigners. And when you come to consider, gentlemen, that in 1914, there were over a million-- in the early part of 1914-- over a million foreigners, able-bodied laboring foreigners, came into this country, and in 1915 more than a million went out, you can realize the labor situation that existed in the industrial communities. There were no more foreigners to come into this territory, and there had to be some sort of labor.

Mr. Raker: And that was supplied by the colored people?

Mr. Rucker: That was supplied from the only source we had, by the colored people, which changed the standards of conditions in this community. Labor unrest, strikes in progress, the natural tendency to defend, both by the manufacturer and by the employe, the situation as he saw it, engendered

1830

bitterness against the negroes who came in here, and the natural antipathy of a white man to a colored man is inherent in each of us and all of us when it comes to social relationships. Our community is different from the South, in which a white man and negro often work side by side, which isn't true in the South, and the natural social revulsion that is there inherently, no matter what we say that it is not, was the natural prejudice existing which was accentuated and exaggerated by the conditions of more coming in here and the
505 lack of law enforcement, which involved the negroes as well as the whites, in some cases placing them upon an equal plane, socially, at least tentatively and ostensibly, would create a revulsion in the white man's mind. We had the same public facilities for each, and while I am giving a personal opinion, in the North an individual negro on a car caused no comment, while here some cars were largely in a majority colored-- some bad ones too; some who, under police and other protection, voiced their privileges and demonstrated their social equality as they saw it and as they were being allowed it, and exaggerated it-- made themselves nuisances. Those were individual cases, but nevertheless they unfortunately were taken to represent the class.

Mr. Baker: Now, the low wages added to it?

Mr. Rucker: Well, frankly, gentlemen, our company, the only one with whom I am familiar, has been severely criticised in this community among other manufacturers who employ labor for the high wages that ~~they~~ we paid. We pay the highest

1831

wages in this community for manufacturing labor. The union scale of certain classes of work is higher, but the union scale is not paid by manufacturers in general-- very rarely, in fact, because the manufacturer gives 365 days' work in the year where they run 24 hours a day, where the union scale refers only to construction work, and that is a class of work which may be done upon contract, in which there are intervals of time in which the man doesn,t work. So that the scale of wages among manufacturers is very much higher and in the Aluminum Ore Company than in any other industry in this community. We are now paying $2.75 for eight hours' work, while other manufacturers-- I suppose the highest price paid for that type of labor is $2.75, probably, for ten hours. So that you must judge by the community and the standards of the community, and we are paying a high price for labor as compared with St. Louis or any of the ~~xxxxx~~industrial district. They have been all along. I am not speaking for other manufacturers at all; I am speaking for ourselves. So that our attitude on that matter is that we were paying good wages. There has been no occasion whatever for complaint on the matter of wages. Not that I hold that we are paying all the wages that a man earns, but I hold that we are paying above the standard of wages in our community, which is the only thing that any manufacturer can base his judgment upon.

Mr. Raber: Now in this same investigation, as you told us about-- of yours-- have you ascertained or come to any conclusion as to the attitude of the police department of the city

1837

in the last, say, from January 1st of this year, to July 2nd?

Mr. Rucker: Well, my opinion is no better than public opinion in that matter, and public opinion in the matter of the police of this city during that period is that it was notoriously inefficient, uninterested in the maintenance of law and order, and practically nil when it comes to pressing anything that required effort.

Mr. Raker: How as to its standing as to honesty and uprightness-- the police force-- during the same time?

Mr. Rucker: Well, personally I know nothing about that.

Mr. Raker: What is the general discussion of it during that time, if anything?

506 Mr. Rucker: I can't say that I have heard any serious definite criticism of the honesty of the police department here. They were severely criticised for allowing conditions to exist. Whether it was through graft or otherwise we don't know, but we naturally assume that in an organization-- a political organization, where conditions exist against law and order-- that there is some money passing somewhere to allow those conditions to exist, because public sentiment demands an execution of the law. Those are usually elective officers, and public sentiment would demand that the law be enforced, and if the other fellows weren't getting something out of it, they would enforce the law properly.

Mr. Raker: But it wasn't being enforced?

Mr. Rucker: It wasn't being enforced, though it is

1833

well known in this community that so far as the administration is concerned as a whole, that the present administration has probably been the best we have had in many years, as a whole. But the police department in particular has been very inefficient. There isn't any question about that.

Mr. Raker: Now as to your local courts, police and justices, during January-- or, say, during 1916 and then up to the riots-- any comment on that?

Mr. Rucker: Very much; yes, sir; very much.

Mr. Raker: Adverse?

Mr. Rucker: Adverse criticism of our justices' courts and the inability to get convictions in the justices' courts and the police court was notorious. That is in a public way. I have no particular case in mind at all, but notoriously impossible to get convictions in ~~police~~ these court.

Mr. Raker: Of course that would lead right to unbridled lawlessness and crime of all descriptions, wouldn't it?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: Are you one of the members of the committee of 100?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: An active member?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; I guess I can say that I have been an active member.

Mr. Raker: Have you done anything to change the conditions in the police and justices' courts?

1834

Mr. Rucker: Well, I have been at the meetings at which resolutions were adopted condemning the conditions that existed. I have been at conferences in which suggested names were considered for proposal to the Mayor for appointment. I have agreed with the sentiments of the Committee of One Hundred that the conditions must be changed, and that a new board and new police organizations must be perfected, and used any influence that I had to accomplish that end.

Mr. Raker: Well, you have made a change as to the police chief and the police commission?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker: And some of the police?
Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.
Mr. Raker: But the majority of the police are the same now as they were before July 2nd?

Mr. Rucker: I didn't state that a majority ~~were~~ was. It might be.

Mr. Raker: You haven't personally investigated to see?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir. I thought the majority was new.

Mr. Raker: But you have done nothing, and the Committee of One Hundred has done nothing, so far as the members of the police and justices courts were concerned?

Mr. Rucker: No; that Committee of One Hundred has organized and raised among--

Mr. Raker (interposing:) But I would just like to not get too far off on the point I am trying to get at, which is that nothing has been done by this Committee of 100

1835

citizens of East St. Louis relative to the members of the
507 courts, the justice and police courts of East St. Louis, who are notoriously known to have failed to enforce the law?

Mr. Rucker: You mean instituted any action?

Mr. Raker: Yes.

Mr. Rucker: No, sir.

Mr. Raker: Well, you have taken action in your organization in regard to it?

Mr. Rucker: Well now, I can't speak for the organization, because many times I wasn't present. But so far as I know there hasn't, excepting--

Mr. Raker (interposing:) There has been no committee appointed to wait on them and go into it to see what is being done?

Mr. Rucker: The committee has been appointed and waited upon the new police board.

Mr. Raker: I know, but I want to hang right down to the justice courts.

Mr. Rucker: I was going to say further that a record is to be taken by the police commission of every case that goes into the justice's court, and to have some record kept of convictions, and what they thought should have been the conviction when they weren't convicted, so we can have some sort of a record to go to, as to what we consider legitimate criticism of the justice's courts. That has been done.

Mr. Raker: But I am getting now to the Committee of One Hundred itself. There has been no committee of that

1836

Committee of One Hundred appointed to wait upon and to attend and to observe the conduct of the justice and police courts?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir.

Mr. Raker: And no investigation made as to their prior conduct from January 1st this year to the 2nd of July?

Mr. Rucker: I speak opinion only. I think there has not been at all.

Mr. Raker: well, if the public opinion was so strong and so adverse as is presented by you, of the want of administration of justice at the time designated, the same men being on the Bench, you wouldn,t expect much of a change in the attitude of those particular judges individually-- or much change in their judgments, would you?

Mr. Rucker: well, I would; yes, sir. I would expect a difference in the atmosphere that exists in this city today to impress itself upon almost anybody, whether he be a justice or not.

Mr. Raker: Well, I have been trying to find out what has been done to impress upon these particular men now that ~~xxx~~ I am talking about-- to make them know that there has been a change in the community and a different atmosphere therefore existing.

Mr. Rucker: Well, I shouldn't be able to tell you of a single individual definite thing that has been done, directed toward the justices; no, sir.

Mr. Raker: I see. And of course that being the foundation of the business, unless you get at that you wouldn't

1837

get much result?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I wouldn't be surprised if you are not right. I think that is probably true.

Mr. Raker: That is all.

Mr. Foster: You said that one reason of the trouble here was labor agitators. What do you mean by "labor agitators"?

Mr. Rucker: Well, men like Moyer, for instance, and Mother Jones, and that class of people.

Mr. Foster: Mother Jones-- she was here, was she?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Did she make any incendiary speeches?

Mr. Rucker: As reported in the newspapers she did, yes sir.

Mr. Foster: Some of these manufacturing establishments sent a reporter there to take her speech down, didn't they?

Mr. Rucker: Down here?

Mr. Foster: Yes.

Mr. Rucker: I don't know.

Mr. Foster: I was inquiring for information. They usually do. Now Mother Jones, when she spoke here, did she advise riots and mob violence?

Mr. Rucker: The newspapers reported her as having advised riots if it were necessary to accomplish the purposes of labor: She advised strikes if it would accomplish the purposes of labor.

Mr. Foster: Yes, strikes.

1838

Mr. Rucker: And riots. She advised riots, so the newspapers said.

Mr. Foster: Do you say that Mother Jones advised riots?

Mr. Rucker: My remembrance is that the newspapers said-- I don't want to go on the stand here as saying definitely that she did, but the newspaper-- one said Mother Jones remarked that if riots were necessary to win the causes of labor, let's have a riot.

Mr. Foster: Well, as that officially takendown, that she made that statement?

Mr. Rucker: The newspapers reported it that way, as I recall it.

Mr. Foster: And you believe it?

Mr. Rucker: Believe that she said it?

Mr. Foster: Yes.

Mr. Rucker: My inclination was to believe it, yes sir. Not that I was particularly interested in what Mother Jones said, but knowing what Mother Jones has done in the past and what attitude she has taken on those questions, I was inclined to believe that she was so impressed and so obsessed with th desire and the demand for a change in labor conditions and betterment of them that she would say anything. So I just naturally believed what the newspapers said.

Mr. Foster: That she would say anything?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

1839

Mr. Foster: And that she--

Mr. Rucker (interposing:) I think the woman is unbalanced on the subject; that's all. I don't believe any balanced person would say a thing like that.

Mr. Foster: She is quite an old woman, isn't she?

Mr. Rucker: Yes.

Mr. Foster: About 87 years old?

Mr. Rucker: Yes.

Mr. Foster: And do you know that she advised riots and mob violence?

Mr. Rucker: Oh no; I don't mean to say that. That was reported in the newspaper, and I have no reason not to believe it.

Mr. Foster: Did you ever hear of a place where she ever did advise mob violence?

Mr. Rucker: Oh no, only that.

Mr. Foster: Did you ever hear of a place where she went and where she spoke that they ever had a mob and a riot?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I think she was in the West Virginia coal strikes, and they did have riots and mobs there.

Mr. Foster: Do you think she was the cause of it?

Mr. Rucker: No, I don't think so.

Mr. Foster: You don't know that they ran a car around there, do you, with that detective agency, with machine guns on it, and shot into these houses of miners?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I am not discussing that situation.

Mr. Foster: Well, I know, but you brought it up, and do you know that that existed?

Mr. Rucker: No, I don't.

Mr. Foster: You know that they shot down the miners there?

Mr. Rucker: No, I don't know that.

Mr. Foster: This detective agency that was employed in west Virginia to break the strike? You knew that?

Mr. Rucker: No, I don't.

Mr. Foster: I thought may be you knew something about it.

Mr. Rucker: No.

Mr. Foster: Do you know that Mother Jones advised riot and mob violence in the State of West Virginia during the coal strike?

Mr. Rucker: No.

509 Mr. Foster: What would you say if a woman like Mother Jones would come into a community and see these children of a dead miner who was killed in the mine-- see them ragged, not sufficient clothing, and she would upraid the miners for not taking better care of orphans of dead miners, and when she would go into the store and buy out of her own money $25 or $50 worth of goods and clothe those children? What would you think of that?

Mr. Rucker: I would think she was impressed with the necessity of doing those things, and was the true friend of the cause which she represents; and that is the statement

1841

I make now, that I believe the woman must be unbalanced or she wouldn't advise such things as that.

Mr. Foster: Yes. Well, she was in Colorado.

Mr. Rucker: Yes, I believe I read that.

Mr. Foster: An old woman, put in jail-- that is, in a hospital, and confined there for a long time-- and where she made speeches, and the speeches were presented as evidence, and where she didn't advise riots, mobs; where she advised the miners to quit spending their money in saloons; to buy books and read and inform themselves, so that they would be intelligent and all that. What would you think of that. Would you think that that was the voice of a person who was bent on inciting riots and mob violence?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I think-- I expressed myself awhile ago as saying that I believed the woman was so obsessed with the necessity of a change in the labor conditions and the better treatment or better conditions of labor that she was willing to do anything to gain it.

Mr. Foster: When a woman 87 years old-- she wasn't that, but when she was then 84 years old-- would go to the richest man in the United States, Mr. John D. Rockefeller, and would talk to him, and induce him, after a ten years absence from the coal fields, of which he was the largest stockholder, and where he had been a director for ten years and hadn't visited, hadn't attended a meeting of the directors, and she would induce him to go to Colorado for the betterment of the conditions in those coal mines where more than ten

1842

thousand men worked, would you think that that was the action of a crazy person and one who was obsessed with the idea of creating riots and mob violence?

Mr. Rucker: You misquote me, sir. I didn't say that.

Mr. Foster: I am asking you if you would think so, if she would do that.

Mr. Rucker: No, sir.

Mr. Foster: I don't either. So that when a labor condition comes up; when labor conditions get bad, some laboring person usually has to take the lead in bettering conditions, don't they?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: You can't always depend on the corporations?

Mr. Rucker: No.

Mr. Foster: To do that. They are in it for what money they can get, and oftentimes they forget the conditions under which their employes work?

Mr. Rucker: It isn't very wise to do that.

Mr. Foster: No, you are right about that; and that is one of the great problems to be settled in this country.

Mr. Rucker: It isn't very wise, not only from the standpoint of humanity, but it isn't wise from a business standpoint?

Mr. Foster: No, sir; you are exactly right.

Mr. Rucker: Our company has always taken that attitude.

Mr. Foster: And the companies ought to realize that we must make conditions for men who work better than they otherwise might be.

Now then, in order to bring about those conditions with an organized capital, with the great wealth of the country organized-- for instance, in Illinois you have the great manufacturing association, of which your concern may be a member-- I expect they are?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Now they are organized in the state of Illinois to accomplish those things that are best for manufacturing and best for creating greater dividends for the companies?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: And if you don't help to create dividends for your company out here, they won't keep you very long, I judge?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir.

Mr. Foster: Now there must be a leadership among laboring men, don't you think, and an organization of some sort through which they might go to the manufacturing industries and ask them for better working conditions and possibly better wages?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: And do you think there is anything wrong in that?

Mr. Rucker: Why, no, the Manufacturers' Association--

1844

however, I don't want this to develop into a labor union proposition. I am not discussing that question at all.

Mr. Foster: Now, you made that statement, Was the reason I asked you.

Mr. Rucker: You know there are lots of things that the Manufacturers' Association is organized for besides fighting labor unions.

Mr. Foster: No, I didn't mean that.

Mr. Rucker: There are a lot of things that labor unions might be organized for instead of fighting for wages. There are higher ideals than wages.

Mr. Foster: But you were putting that in there. I never made that statement.

Mr. Rucker: I just want to make it plain. I am not going to discuss that question.

Mr. Foster: Certainly, and I haven't discussed it with you and I hadn't asked you.

Mr. Rucker: I just misunderstood you.

Mr. Foster: But you must acknowledge that they were organized for their mutual benefit?

Mr. Rucker: Who?

Mr. Foster: The manufacturers.

Mr. Rucker: Oh, sure, yes.

Mr. Foster: Yes, that is true, and so that laboring men ought to have the same right to have some sort of an organization?

Mr. Rucker: Perfectly right.

1845

Mr. Foster: You appear to me to be a very sensible man, and I am--

Mr. Rucker (interposing:) I just want to keep off of that subject, because I am in the manufacturing business.

Mr. Foster: I am not asking you that at all.

Mr. Rucker: If you want my personal opinion, I very much approve of labor unions if the essential basic principle of it was the essential ruling principle of it, but it isn't true. That is the reason that there is an objection to labor unions.

Mr. Foster: In manufacturing, it might be the same thing, I suppose.

Mr. Rucker: You know Wolf represented himself as an American Federation organizer, and no doubt drew money from them.

Mr. Foster: But I take it that all the men who are in the manufacturing business aren't straight, by any means?

Mr. Rucker: No indeed.

Mr. Foster: So you could make the same charge against certain manufacturers that you make against certain labor leaders?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: And I am not here to discuss the labor
511 proposition except as you stated, that Mother Jones had incited riots, and it had been reported?

Mr. Rucker: No, I didn't say that.

Mr. Foster: Then what did you say?

1846

Mr. Rucker: I said that was one of the contributory causes, labor agitators, among other things; and you asked me who the labor agitators were, and I said Mother Jones for one.

Mr. Foster: But you did state that Mother Jones did say that, didn,t you?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, exactly.

Mr. Foster: Well then, there is no difference in that.

Mr. Rucker: Well, you put the words in my mouth, that I had stated Mother Jones had agitated this strike.

Mr. Foster: I meant from the knowledge you had from the newspapers.

Mr. Rucker: I didn,t make the statement. I said that was the report.

Mr. Foster: That she advised riot?

Mr. Rucker: That the newspaper reported it.

Mr. Foster: That she advised riot?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, the newspapers reported that.

Mr. Cooper: The witness said "It is my inclidation to believe that to be true"?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; that she had said that.

Mr. Foster: You said that you believed that Mother Jones advised riots, which meant bloodshed, and I asked you those other things about the character of Mother Jones that we had spoken about.

Mr. Rucker: My statement that labor agitators like her had been one of the contributory causes would naturally lead you to believe that I had believed the newspaper state-

1847

ments, because that is where I got my information.

Mr. Foster: Yes; you got the information from the newspapers, and that Mother Jones was guilty of advising riots here. Then I asked you-- I stated these other proposition to you about Mother Jones. Do you know Mother Jones personally?

Mr. Rucker: No; I never saw her.

Mr. Foster: Of course you know that the newspapers throughout the United States-- certain ones of them-- have been filled with all sorts of attacks upon her and upon her character, and everything else. I don't know whether it is true or not. We can only judge of what they do at this time; but we do know some of these things, that riots have not usually taken place where Mother Jones has been.

Mr. Rucker: Yes, I expect that is true. There were many contributory causes other than Mother Jones.

Mr. Foster: So that you wouldn't want to put the blame for this riot on an old woman 87 years old?

Mr. Rucker: I want to put just as much of it where it belongs, and I think Mother Jones did serve a great part of it.

Mr. Foster: You get that all from the newspapers, though?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; I am speaking now if that is true, and I believe it is true.

Mr. Foster: Your company, or your members-- the members of your company-- do they ever go out here and clothe any poor, ragged children?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; we contributed $500 last year

1848

to that very purpose, and we contributed $500 last year to a certain fund.

Mr. Foster: That came out of the company's?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Foster: Not out of your own pocket?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir; I have made some contributions, but I don't care to discuss that.

512 Mr. Foster: I am not asking for that.

Mr. Rucker: But our company is doing that all the time.

Mr. Foster: But it came out of the company?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: You made reference to what I believe you called a "natural antipathy" of the white man towards the negro?

Mr. Rucker: From a social standpoint; yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: And I infer from what you said concerning the subject, that the whites and blacks being crowded into street cars together added to that already existing antipathy?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Were there any other places here, such as picture shows or restaurants or hotels or saloons where they met in the same way as they do upon the street cars? Or, in other words, places of that sort are frequented by both races?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I think the saloons, the picture shows and all public places, are free and open to both kinds,

1849

and there being a great many blacks in the community, it impressed itself immediately, almost, on any one, because you are liable to come in contact with them at any time or at any place.

Mr. Johnson: And it is your opinion that the blacks have been over assertive as to their rights?

Mr. Rucker: Not as an entire class.

Mr. Johnson: As individuals?

Mr. Rucker: Individuals have; yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: You put that very well in your statement. If you don't object to stating, I would not mind having your opinion as to what you think the effect would be, for the better or for the worse, if they had separate street cars and separate picture shows and places of that sort?

Mr. Rucker: Well, Mr. Chairman, you of course appreciate when you ask that question that it is one of the biggest questions of our country. I think if we could eliminate the term "segregation" from the discussion of the question, and get down to brass tacks with both races, and could come to a peaceable and natural, normal solution of that question, that there would be a preponderance of opinion on both sides that it is the proper thing to do.

Mr. Johnson: When you say "preponderance of opinion on both sides", do you mean preponderance of opinion of both races?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: Do you believe the time is near at hand when the white man will unhesitatingly accept the negro as his

1850

next-door neighbor?

Mr. Rucker: Never.

Mr. Johnson: You don't think that it will ever come?

Mr. Rucker: It will never come.

Mr. Johnson: And how do you reconcile that with the statement just made by you as to the preponderance of opinion of both races?

Mr. Rucker: That the separation is the proper move.

Mr. Johnson: Oh, I think I misunderstood you.

Mr. Rucker: Yes, you misunderstood me.

Mr. Johnson: And carrying the thing out still further, is it your opinion that in this part of the United States it would be safer for all concerned, and better for all concerned, if there were separate street cars for the whites and blacks?

Mr. Rucker: Absolutely.

Mr. Johnson: And have you found anybody who holdsotherwise, who believes that interfering between the two races will ever be accepted by the whites?

Mr. Rucker: I never have heard a man or a white person or a colored person make such a statement as his opinion.

Mr. Johnson: I was simply endeavoring to get from you, an intelligent,and an educated man, living in the North, the thought upon that subject in the north-- treating this section of the country as being in the north?

Mr. Rucker: I don't think I represent the northern sentiment here, because our situation here is relatively com-

1851

parable with the situation in the South, I think, because the number is sufficient here to impress itself upon us that we have a native colored population, one which is a problem to deal with. The individual in the North isn't a problem, because he is just an extra.

Mr. Johnson: And the more negroes that come, the greater becomes the problem?

Mr. Rucker: The greater becomes the problem.

Mr. Johnson: Where were you born?

Mr. Rucker: In Missouri.

Mr. Johnson: Were you reared over in Missouri?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson: That's all.

Mr. Cooper: I want to ask a question right there. You never saw Mother Jones?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir.

Mr. Cooper: You have said, in reply to Dr. Foster, that you thought her speech-- and you judged from newspaper reports-- her speech was in part responsible for the riot?

Mr. Rucker: One of the contributory causes, in general.

Mr. Cooper: Are you aware of the fact that she didn't speak here until ten days after the riot?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I spoke of labor agitators here. Then I mentioned people like Mother Jones.

Mr. Cooper: No, you mentioned Mother Jones, and you said that her speech as reported in the newspapers here, was in part responsible for the riot.

1852

Mr. Rucker: Well, I might have said that.

Mr. Cooper: Are you aware of the fact that she didn't speak here till ten days after the riot?

Mr. Rucker: Since you called my attention to it, it is true.

Mr. Cooper: Then Mother Jones didn't have anything to do with it?

Mr. Rucker: No; I think we can eliminate Mother Jones from the riot.

Mr. Cooper: Now is your testimony upon this other proposition as accurate as that?

Mr. Rucker: Well, you know, Judge, Doctor Foster put a lot of things in.

Mr. Cooper: Well, he didn't put Mother Jones in. You put that in.

Mr. Rucker: No; but I had to call attention to a number of things he put in my mouth.

Mr. Cooper: He asked you, Doctor Foster did, what the contributing causes were that brought on the riot, and you yourself mentioned Mother Jones.

Mr. Rucker: No, sir; I beg your pardon, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Why, you mentioned the fact that you read the newspaper report.

Mr. Rucker: If you will just read the stenographer's report I think that will clear it up. Somebody asked me what was the cause of the riot was, and I among them said labor agitators. Then he asked me who these labor agitators were. I

1853

said people like Moyer and Mother Jones, and that class. Then he went on into the further discussion of it, and I suppose my answers would lead one to believe that I thought that Mother Jones had contributed to this particular riot, and I supposed I got mixed up on that.

Mr. Cooper: You knew that she had been here and made a speech?

Mr. Rucker: I knew that she had been here and made a speech.

Mr. Cooper: And you had read the newspaper report of it?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Now then, you say you think this woman was
516 obsessed. That means over-anxious?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Are you aware of the fact that when they had the awful strike at the mines out in Colorado, that it was charged that the soldiers who guarded that camp out there, some of them, were employes of the mine owners?

Mr. Rucker: I have read that; yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: And that those soldiers fired the tents that burned up some of the women and children?

Mr. Rucker: I have heard that.

Mr. Cooper: Witnesses testified that they saw it. Are you aware of the fact that we have had before us witness after witness who saw soldiers, brought here to guard this community from violence, protect the lives of helpless people, white and black, deliberately murder black men?

1854

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; I am very sorry to confess that I not only have heard that, but I believe it, just like I believe Mother Jones.

Mr. Cooper: Are you aware of the fact that some of the reports published in the newspapers, and particularly in the Eastern newspapers, about the Colorado riots, were traced to a man who lived in Pennsylvania orig'nally-- I think he lives there now-- and that he had to confess, and did confess afterwards, that some of his statements were falsehoods?

Mr. Rucker: No, I didn't know that.

Mr. Cooper: Now about picture shows. Do you think it was wise in this community, where there are so many negroes, and where tension was so high, to have the pictures of a picture called "The Birth of a Nation", exhibited, and revive the passions and animosities of a half century ago?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir; I feel towards that just like I felt towards "Uncle Tom's Cabin". It should never have been published. Neither should have been shown.

Mr. Cooper: This was fifty years after the reconstruction period, and they brought those pictures into this community where the tension was high.

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; it was very unwise.

Mr. Cooper: It showed only one side of the problem?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; it is not only unwise, but it is unpatriotic and it is bad judgment, not only here where the tension was like it was, but anywhere.

1855

Mr. Cooper: No greater curse has been inflicted upon us within the last half century since the reconstruction period than the exhibiting of those pictures all over the United States, arousing the terrific passions which were in existence.

Mr. Rucker: I think you are quite right, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Which were in existence half a century ago and which were gradually subsiding, South as well as North?

Mr. Rucker: I think you are quite right.

Mr. Cooper: For example, I saw ~~xx~~ about men mobbed here by a mob clad in such uniformsas were shown to have been used by the Ku Klux Clan in that Birth of a Nation picture.

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Mobbed here right before last.

515

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; that is bad judgment.

Mr. Cooper: That was very bad judgment, and it has worked a terrible hardship to the country. Have you a chief of detectives whose duty it is to report the name and number of your employes who are dissatisfied or suggest the organization of your employes?

Mr. Rucker: I didn't quite get that question clearly.

Mr. Cooper: Have you a chief of detectives whose duty it is to report the name and number of an employe who is dissatisfied or makes known his dissatisfaction at your plant?

Mr. Rucker: No.

Mr. Cooper: Have you any man who is authorized to do that?

1856

Mr. Rucker: No.

Mr. Cooper: Do you do that?

Mr. Rucker: Well, what I mean to say, if we know an employe in our plant who hears or knows of any dissatisfied employe in the plant, we expect him, not only as a duty to the company, but to himself and his fellow-employes, to report it. We have a chief of police who is as supposed to do that just the same as I am, or any other employe. But that is not any particular duty.

Mr. Cooper: But you have reported to your office the name and the number of any employe who expresses dissatisfaction, either with wages or conditions or anything else?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; he is supposed to. There is no regular system at all, but they usually speak to me about it, or speak to somebody else about it-- Mr. Fox or somebody.

Mr. Cooper: Did you discharge, or did your company discharge, some five or six engineers because they asked for higher wages?

Mr. Rucker: We discharged two engineers, yes, sir; because they got together collectively and prepared a demand upon us-- or request-- for higher wages, and the circumstances in general surrounding it indicated that they were going to try to get the entire class of men to quit if they didn't get it. We discharged them as agitators.

Mr. Cooper: How many of them waited upon you at one time, of those engineers?

Mr. Rucker: I don't think any of them waited upon me

1857

personally.

Mr. Cooper: Well, upon whom did they wait, do you know?

Mr. Rucker: Our superintendent, I think, Mr. Fox.

Mr: Cooper: Do you know what demands they presented?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I didn,t at the time. Essentially it was an increase in wages.

Mr. Cooper: How long ago was that?

Mr. Rucker: Well, some sixty days, I should say, approximately.

Mr. Cooper: Since the riot?

Mr. Rucker: Yes-- well, let's see. I am not sure of that. It was since our strike in April, I know.

Mr. Cooper: You don,t recall the exact time. You think it was before or after the riot?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I have nothing in my mind which would indicate to me whether it was before or after.

Mr. Cooper: What incident was it that led you to suggest-- or fact that led you to suggest-- that it was about sixty days ago, which would make it some time in August?

Mr. Rucker: Well, I can't tell you why I said sixty days. I just don,t know.

Mr. Cooper: You discharged two-- didn't you discharge five or six?

Mr. Rucker: No; I think there were only two discharged on account of that. Another one of them was discharged the following day, or two or three days afterwards, for possibly

1858

causes leading from that, but not identically that. He was discharged by his own foreman for some reason or other, who had been one of the men who had signed the demand. But there were only two discharged for that particular reason at that particular time.

516 Mr. Cooper: And another was discharged the next day, or very soon after?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: By one of the very men who had signed this request for this increase in wages, the foreman?

Mr. Rucker: You mean discharged by one of the very men?

Mr. Cooper: Yes.

Mr. Rucker: Oh no, he was discharged by the foreman.

Mr. Cooper: I misunderstood you.

Mr. Rucker: No.

Mr. Cooper: Who was the foreman?

Mr. Rucker: A foreman named Holmes.

Mr. Cooper: Now didn't you discharge five or six altogether?

Mr. Rucker: No, sir.

Mr. Cooper: Only three engineers were discharged?

Mr. Rucker: The fact is, I think there were two-- the two that were discharged first were engineers, and one discharged a day or so later was a brakeman-- a switchman.

Mr. Cooper: So it is your best recollection now that that was the way of it?

1859

Mr. Rucker: Well, I know I did it.

Mr. Cooper: You did it?

Mr. Rucker: I did the discharging of the two, and I know that the other man was discharged.

Mr. Cooper: Had those two waited upon you?

Mr. Rucker: No, I don't think they waited upon me at all.

Mr. Cooper: Who did they wait upon?

Mr. Rucker: I think they waited upon Mr. Fox the day previous.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Fox told you that they had waited upon him?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper: The day before, and the very next day you discharged them?

Mr. Rucker: Well, possibly two days-- within two days.

Mr. Cooper: That's all.

Mr. Johnson: I suppose you are equally certain in your own mind that this show called "Uncle Tom's Cabin", that goes around over the country, does as much to inflame the negro against the whites as this other picture to which reference is made, inflames the whites?

Mr. Rucker: I wouldn't say it does as much, because fewer people see it, but to those who do see it, it is equally or greater in its bad effects.

Mr. Johnson: In Kentucky we have a law excluding-- prohibiting all shows which have a tendency to inflame either race.

1860

Mr. Rucker: I think it should be. There was a book called "The Leopard's Spot", that has come out since the war, and this picture and Uncle Tom's Cabin are three contributory causes to the maintenance of race prejudice, none of which should be legal.

Mr. Johnson: You put it, "to the maintenance of race prejudice"?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; none of which should be legally allowed.

Mr. Baker: Your statement is that now, under oath, and after thorough deliberation, that Uncle Tom's Cabin never should have been written?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir. Let me say this, not that it should never have been written, but now that it has been written and that the issue has been settled, it should not be allowed to circulate. There may have been some reason or some cause for its having been written, but that cause has long since past, and applies just the same to these pictures and to any other race prejudice influence. There may have been originally a cause for it, but I don't think there is any now.

Mr. Baker: And you still think now that it should not be presented to the American people, or anywhere else?

Mr. Rucker: Yes, sir; now.

517 Mr. Johnson: You may be excused, sir. The Committee is in recess until 2:30 this afternoon, and at which time we hope that somebody representing union labor will appear before the Committee.

(At 1:20 o'clock p.m. the Committee recessed.)

wlm
11/30

518
10/30

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

The committee reassembled at 2.30 o'clock p. m., pursuant to recess.

STATEMENT OF JOE D. WILLIAMSON (Colored)
3407 Lawton Avenue, St. Louis, Mo.

The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.

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

Mr. Williamson. Joe D. Williamson, 3407 Lawton Avenue, St. Louis.

Mr. Johnson. What is your occupation?

Mr. Williamson. Janitor in this building.

Mr. Johnson. You have a brother, have you not?

Mr. Williamson. Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson. Joe, if your brother became mixed up in the riot on the day of the 2nd of July last, tell about it.

Mr. Williamson. Well, on the morning of July 2nd about --- well, it was about 10.30 or a quarter to eleven when he was coming from the Jewlery store up Collinsville Avenue, and he came home and he was living in Fifth Street, near Division Avenue, and there was a mob after some colored people there, running them, shotting them, beating them up. They throwed one fellow off in the ditch there. So they saw him---

Mr. Johnson (Interposing). That is your brother?

Mr. Williamson. Yes, and so they started at him too, and there were some of the fellows in the mob thought he was me, so they told them, "No, don't bother that fellow. That's Joe. Don't bother him. He's a good nigger". And they ran

1862

by him.

Mr. Johnson. They didn't kill him then or injure him?

Mr. Williamson. No, sir; they didn't molest him at all, but they shot a fellow that run by my brother and throwed him off into the ditch there.

Mr. Johnson. He is the one that laid there all day?

Mr. Williamson. I didn't go out to see. I stayed in all day.

Mr. Johnson. You may stand aside.

Now then, is there somebody here representing organized labor?

STATEMENT OF HARRY WERR, 1111 ST. LOUIS AVE., EAST ST. LOUIS, ILL.

The witness was sworn by Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson. Please give the stenographer your name and the place of your residence.

Mr. Werr. Harry Werr, 1111 St. Louis Avenue, East St. Louis.

Mr. Johnson. What is your occupation?

Mr. Werr. District Organizer for the American Federation of Labor.

Mr. Johnson. You have been present, Mr. Werr, during much of this hearing, have you not?

Mr. Werr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Johnson. And from that you know the trend of matters here. The committee would be glad to have you, in your own way, go ahead and make such statement as you may wish to make concerning the connection, if any, which organized labor may have had with anything pertaining to the riots of either

1863

May or July, or that may possibly have led up to it. By asking you that question neither I nor any other member of the committee has the disposition or intention of saying that such conditions exist, but because charges to that effect have been made, which is our reason for asking you to appear.

Now please, in your own way, go ahead and make such statement as you wish to make.

Mr. Kerr. My own impression is that this whole trouble started a year ago last July.

Mr. Johnson. July, 1916?

Mr. Kerr. July, 1916. At that time there was a strike called in the packing plants. I attended two or three of those meetings up in the north end of the town and it was charged there that there were ~~thirteen~~ fifteen hundred negroes to be shipped into that plant in order to break the strike.

Mr. Johnson. Into which plant?

Mr. Kerr. The packing house plants. All four plants were out, you know, Morris, Armour, Swift and the East Side Packing Company--- that there were going to be fifteen hundred colored people brought in there to break that strike of the men at that time. It was charged there that some of those men had arrived and had been delivered into the stock yards in coaches, three I believe in number, at one time.

Mr. Johnson. Three coaches?

Mr. Kerr. Three coaches at one time, and it had been charged again that others were brought in in box cars. Now of course I didn't see any of those negroes--- just simply what was emerged around these strikers' places of meeting.

Mr. Johnson. Did you make investigation or inquiry

1864

for the purpose of determining whether such deliveries of negroes had been made?

Mr. Kerr. No, sir.

Mr. Johnson. Very well, go ahead with your statement.

Mr. Kerr. Well, it drifted along from that time until a short time before the election.

Mr. Johnson. In November,-- the November election in 1916?

Mr. Kerr. The November election, 1916; and it was quite noticeable, the number of negroes that had come in from along in those months, August, July, September, October and November, and it appeared that there were coming in just every day a few and every Sunday many.

We didn't have any strikes that had anything to do with common labor during that year, other than the packing house strike.

Mr. Johnson. During the year 1916?

Mr. Kerr. 1916. That is where the colored man would be brought into the question at all. We had a strike out here at the Chemical Company, but there were no colored men involved in that strike. Neither were there any employed there that I know of. I had heard tell of a few little bits of strikes, flare-ups, out here at the Cotton Seed Oil Company. The common labor at that plant is colored labor altogether--- almost altogether. Of course we in East St. Louis don't pay much attention to the cotton seed oil plant, because it is really out of our district entirely. It is away out here between here and Madison.

Up until the time of the political situation, along in

1865

the 14th of October I had a letter from Mr. Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, asking for information as

520 to the immigration or migration of negroes to the North; and of ocurse, being directly here, I took it that it was specially meant for me here; although he named some other places.

That was on the 14th of October. I endeavored to make some investigations around here to find out how those people came here, and for what purpose they were brought here, and in doing so I called upon the Superintendent of the Illinois Laboring District.

Mr. Johnson. What was his name?

Mr. Kerr. Mr. Roach, William Roach; and I believe I talked to his clerk about it. I am not just sure about that but I think I did, and they couldn't give me any other information than they were coming in here very rapidly, and that he couldn't get any proof as to who brought them here, or the reasons why they came here. He just appeared to be at sea as much as Mr. Gompers was in making the inquiry, and I was too.

Now the Secretary of Central Trades had such a letter as well as myself, and he made some investigations through a man who is employed by the Levee Board, by the name of Ralph Cook, and he gave him some information on it. Now I can't say as to that that was exactly, any further than the general impression here that the colored men had been coming here for the purpose of taking-- voting rather-- either voting or being used in the political issue at that time.

Mr. Johnson. That was in the November election?

Mr. Kerr. 1916, the November election. Those that came in here from July were apparently held here for that same purpose

1866

and it looked like that was the reasonable solution of the influx of the colored people here at that time.

After the election was over--- or at least during that time--- I believe there was a committee here made some kind of a protest here at the election board of some 800 names of colored people who weren't legally entitled to vote. That is, they brought in names of those fellows to the election board, in order to have them stricken from the roll, from the voter's list. It was claimed at that time that there were three hundred or four hundred of those fellows who had never showed up to vote at all.

Mr. Johnson. Out of the 800?

Mr. Kerr. Out of the 800. Now, that is no knowledge of my own; it is just hearsay I have,--- general talk around the corners of the streets.

Mr. Foss. You have no personal knowledge that these men were brought in here for political purposes whatever?

Mr. Kerr. None at all. I am trying to lead up ~~to~~ from the strike, up to the situation, to show that those colored people have been brought in here.

Then up until the Aluminum Ore strike there wasn't any situation arose here where the colored men would have any active part in it--- no strike.

Mr. Johnson. When was the Aluminum Ore strike?

Mr. Kerr. The 16th or 17th day of April, 1917.

Mr. Cooper. April 17, I think.

Mr. Kerr. Yes, April 17, 1917.

Mr. Cooper. This man this morning testified the 17th of April.

1867

Mr. Kerr. My recollection is it was the 16th or 19th of April. All of this time the citizens of East St. Louis ~~felt~~ knew there was a large influx of negroes coming in here, and along with it a large amount of crime, hold-ups, and I have been told-- in fact, a newspaper man told me some two months ago that there were 876 hold-ups here from the 1st day of September to the 1st day of June of this year.

Mr. Johnson. The 1st day of September, 1916?

Mr. Kerr. September, 1915, until the 1st day of June of this year.

Mr. Johnson. Who was the newspaper man that told you that?

Mr. Kerr. John Altrocher.

Mr. Johnson. What newspaper is he correspondent for?

Mr. Kerr. The East St. Louis Mail. He is editor of the East St. Louis Mail. And the number of murders--- I have forgotten that. I have lost the notation he gave me at that time. He gave it to me in the way of bringing it up to the Central Trades, to use there by way of argument to bring about some solution of this question. I don't remember the number of murders, but it was something awful, and 7 rapes where white women had been ravished by colored men.

Now this wave of crime coming on, gathering on the people, up to the time of the Aluminum Ore strike, of course naturally created some kind of a feeling. The Aluminum Ore strike was raised, as I said before, on the 18th or 19th of April, my recollection is, and the negro became a factor in breaking that strike. I say the negro became a factor in the breaking of that strike for the reason that that was the report brought to my

1868

attention. I acted in the capacity of an adviser to that committee which was handling that strike and those reports would come in. And afterwards I was appointed on a committee to go down here to the police station and ask the Chief of Police to send a detail of police to 27th and Pond Avenue, that there were six negroes who passed over that crossing going over toward Market Street daily at 3 o'clock who were armed with revolvers, guns and revolvers.

We had a man down there who offered to be there at 3 o'clock to point out to the officers, who might be detailed there, the men who they were able to point out as carrying this ammunition--- guns and revolvers. The Chief of Police refused to send a detail out there, and said that he had no right to search citizens for arms.

Mr. Baker. This is what he told you?

Mr. Kerr. He told it in the presence of the committee and myself. I was one of them.

Mr. Johnson. What was the name of that officer?

Mr. Kerr. Payne, Ransome Payne.

After the Aluminum Ore strike was over and the strike was declared off---

Mr. Johnson (Interposing). How long did that last?

Mr. Kerr. Well now, I haven't just the date of when it did.

Mr. Johnson. About?

Mr. Kerr. Well, it lasted about two months, I think. Did you say were just told when the strike was declared off, about?

A Voice. The 26th or 27th of June.

1869

Mr. Kerr. About two months. And that proposition being over with, the hold-ups hadn't stopped, you know. They hadn't decreased or anything.

Mr. Johnson. You mean by "hold-ups" highway robberies?

Mr. Kerr. Highway robberies; yes, sir. There was just a reign of terror in the city of East St. Louis for eleven or twelve months. Our women couldn't go out on the streets, sisters, sweethearts, mothers or children wouldn't be seen on the streets after dark at night-time, after it become dark. The women refused to go out on the streets. They wouldn't go. They were afraid of being held up or abused in some other manner. There was just a reign of terror existed here in East St. Louis during all this time, leading up to the riots.

We had an investigation by the State Council of Defense afterwards in March, going back again--- I am getting a little away from the story.

Going back to the interest taking by the Central Trades and Labor Union, or the labor movement of East St. Louis, they had singly approached different aldermen of the town and the Mayor repeatedly. Finally it came to so much objections that the meeting of the Central Trades as to this condition being here in East St. Louis--- the terror of the citizens and what it might come to--- that there was a committee appointed to meet with the Mayor, and that committee when it met with the Mayor the 10th day of May, on that committee were five men, there it was represented to Mayor Mollman that there was a dangerous condition existing here, owing to the amount of crime that had been committed and the daily and weekly influx of more negroes into our town. We realized that there was a dangerous condition here

1870

and so stated. We represented to Mr. Wollman at that time---which I did myself as one of the committee-- that if this thing was allowed to continue as it were, this state of lawlessness in East St. Louis, that the Springfield riots of some three or four years ago would be a tame affair to what would happen here. It was also represented to him the unsanitary conditions under which the colored man was living south of Broadway. It was represented to him also that the number of Springfield rifles that were down in that district, bought around here in those dry goods store at $1.69 some two or three years ago--- that were stuck up in the windows of those dry goods stores and furniture stores and other stores---

Mr. Johnson (Interposing). The United States Government sold those rifles didn't it?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir; or the State, I am not sure which. They were the Springfield rifles that was discarded, I believe.

Mr. Johnson. And you haven't intimated who it was that owned those rifles down there in that section.

Mr. Kerr. Why, the colored people we intimated to the Mayor.

Mr. Johnson. But you didn't say so in your testimony now as to which owned them, the whites or the blacks.

Mr. Kerr. No, I was going to get to that in this manner: Realizing those conditions, --- and almost everybody knew it---, it appeared to me that there was no reason why they shouldn't know it. Knowing that that number of rifles were down there, the whites themselves became an armed band of negroes might start out here some day or night to do some damage, clean up or murder or riot or anything else. The fact of the

1871

matter is, our papers were bringing to the attention here at times about things that would be happening down here, crap games and slashings and killing each other, and all of this stuff was coming out in the daily press at the time.

So the Mayor asked for a suggestion as to what could be done. He said he was helpless to do anything under the law. It was suggested to him that he call a meeting of representative citizens of the town, business men, but to be sure for this one time not to leave out the representative labor men. The representative labor men of this town have been ignored by this administration and all other administrations. They have never been taken into the confidence of the people who are representing the city and we feel that that is wrong for this reason: This is a laboring man's town. While sitting here some few days ago it was brought to my attention more so than anything else by the number of men representing the interests around this town coming in here from St. Louis and giving evidence here, one two three, everybody that started out in this investigation here I noticed were people coming from St. Louis as representing the big interests, with one exception, Mr. Paton, and Mr. Paton has been trying his best to sell his property and get out of this town. So that those fellows who are able to get out of town and live out of here have brought this condition upon us here and left it for us to fight it out. We can't get away. We have got to stay here. There is no question about it. We have got to stay here. This is where our work is; this is where we are forced to stay. We can't get away from this condition that has been created, not of our making but of the other fellow's.

There has been some reference made as to a meeting held here

1872

on the 28th of May. That meeting was held along the lines of better government, or to bring to the attention of the Mayor and aldermen and others the conditions as they were. I don't know how the citizens got word of it, but we had a letter sent out to the delegates--- it is often that we don't have a large attendance at our meetings. Each organization is entitled to three delegates, and sometimes we have one from each trade or craft, and we thought it best to get out a letter advising all of the delegates to come here at the City Hall on the evening of the 28th, to bring to the attention of the Mayor and Council the horrible conditions under which we were living, and also protest about any more of this immigration coming in here to make it worse. That was done, and afterwards, that same evening I believe, there was some little rioting. I didn't see anything of that but one. Down here on Collinsville Avenue, out of the alley coming from the City Hall, there is a three-ball man down there, or pawnbroker shop, who had a sign in his window, printed on a card in big letters, hanging down on a string, and this is what it said. This will illustrate about the feeling of the business men who are going to make some money out of the conditions under which we were living. It said on that sign: "Buy a gun for protection". It was just swinging in the dining there, a piece of cardboard, you know, about that wide (indicating) and printed on there in lead pencil: "Buy a gun for protection". I don't know that there were any other signs of that kind, but that one I did see.

And after that meeting had adjourned over at the City Hall that story was told in the City Hall, in the auditorium

1873

of the City Hall. After that story was told a crowd came through that alley and walked over there, and I don't know what would have happened to that store or what was the intention, but they went over there to see the sign or do something else, I don't know what, but they were standing around there when a negro came running down the street. There were some soldiers standing just above Uncle Charley's Place.

Mr. Johnson. Who is "Uncle Charley", the pawnbroker?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir. And this colored fellow came running across the street here this way--- that is, catercornered of Collinsville and Missouri Avenue--- and he didn't have any hat on. There were three or four of us standing talking in front of the Bartender's Headquarters, and police officer Brockman and Steve Tassel got hold of that colored fellow and they took him over to the station--- protected him over at the station. I don't know whether anybody got to hit him or not. I don't know whether he was hit or not, but I saw those two men have hold of that colored fellow, leading him over to the station and getting him away from the crowd.

Quite a large crowd gathered. I didn't stay there but a few minutes afterwards, and went on home. From that time on--- well, everybody you would meet, if they didn't have anything to say there was a kind of feeling expressed, or unexpressed, all the time, just bubbling over.

After the first riot and the way the thing showed up, it came to the 1st of June. I went down and met the president of the Central Trades, Michael J. Whalen, and we talked this situation over and decided we had better try and do some-

1874

thing to get the Governor interested, or whatever other official might be able to give us some help. We decided to send a wire to Gover or Louden and the Chairman of the State Council of Defense, Mr. Samuel Insull We wired him a message that night.

Mr. Johnson. Wired who?

Mr. Kerr. Both the Governor and Mr. Insull, that night of the 1st of June, between 11 and 12 o'clock. Now that was my delay in not getting up here; I was trying to get a copy of that message. I expect to have it here in a few minutes, asking that there be an investigation made down here, as things were in terrible shape and that the militia was here and rioting was still going on.

After sending that message, which we did that night or --- I am getting a little ahead of the story. We waited for Mayor Hollman, who was at a meeting of the Chamber of
525 Commerce. After the closing of the meeting of the Chamber of Commerce we met the Mayor and went into his office and showed him this message and asked him if he would send a message like it to the Governor and Mr. Insull and he said he would. Now he made a little change. He changed one word at the bottom of the message, and I now just forget what it was, but it wasn't grammatically expressed, that he made the change. He said he would send it that night before he would go to bed. He would send a message to the Governor and the Chairman of the State Council of Defense. I found next day that he hadn't sent that message until sometime be-

1875

tween 9 and 10 o'clock, or possibly a few minutes afterwards. He hadn't sent the message as he promised he would until the next morning, Saturday morning. Saturday morning I came from my residence, came down here and met Mr. Johns, and I told him what we had done the night before, and thought, as the State Council of Defense were meeting Saturday morning at 9 o'clock, that would impress the Council with the importance of sending an investigating committee down here, it would be well to gather up individual citizens of the town and have them send personal messages.

Mr. Johnson. Who is Mr. Johns?

Mr. Kerr. He is business agents of the Carpenters. I went around here and gathered up a number of messages. Mr. Crow sent one, of Fehner & Crow, asking that there be an investigation made, to Mr. Insull. Mr. Ashland sent one. He is a tailor over here on Collinsville Avenue.

Mr. Johnson. To whom was the message sent?

Mr. Kerr. To Mr. Insull. All the messages were sent to Mr. Insull.

Mr. Cooper. About the 1st of June?

Mr. Kerr. The 2d day of June. That was Saturday, during their meeting. Mr. Seymour, an attorney, sent one. In fact, I think Mr. Seymour gave me the money and had me send the message for him. Mr. O'Connor, another attorney, sent such a message. I asked others to do the same, and some of them promised to do that. Mr. King, an alderman here, and I think Mr. Kelly here, the Comptroller--- I think I asked him to send a message and he said he would. I

1876

wouldn't be so sure, but I think I did. I asked almost everybody I met who I felt would have influence enough to bring about an investigation here of some kind, and stop these damnable conditions under which we were living here.

The result was that we got an investigation. We got a committee from the State Council of Defense to come down here and make an investigation. They came down here, I think, about the 7th of the month,--- some where in there; on Thursday, anyway. Our wire said that they would be down here the following Thursday. They held an investigation here and they brought in what they could get, but apparently they were unable to get very much.

We had a lot of colored people here who stated they were induced to come here and swore that they were induced to come here, but appeared not to be able to substantiate it someway or other. I can't just remember when it was, though.

I had another experience here just during those troublous times. I couldn't tell whether it was after the first riot or the second riot or between the two, but I think it was between the two. There was a white man came through here and he had 60 or 70 or possibly 100 negroes come from the South. They got off at the Relay Station and he brought them down here to the corner of Missouri and Collinsville Avenue and stood there about an hour. The men, women and children--- some--- with grips, boxes, and what they could carry away--- some of them had coats, some of them no coats, some of them were fairly well supplied with goods--- that is, with clothes,

1877

and it being the most prominent corner in the city and a great deal of the rioting had happened around that section of town, just about 8 o'clock in the evening, I figured that it was a bad thing, a bad proposition to have a bunch of colored people standing around there like that, so I went over and attempted to get into the Mayor's office. The Mayor had a council meeting that night, and I couldn't get in there. They were having what they call a caucus. They have several of those things around here, caucuses; which there is only a few taken into.

However, his clerk told me that the Mayor couldn't see me and I went out and called him upon the telephone, and I told him about those negroes being over there and I cited to him that it was dangerous. He agreed that it was, and I think he gave instructions to the police department. I went back to see how things were moving, as to whether or not they were getting away from there, and the night chief, Con Hickey, was over there talking to this white agent who had those men in tow.

My understanding was that those negroes had been shipped from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and they were going to Gary--- before I going over there--- Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and were going to Gary, Indiana. One negro told me he was going to Erie, Pennsylvania, but others of them told me they were going to Gary.

The white agent that had those negroes in tow went into the United Cigar store and telephoned somebody, and Hickey followed him in there and I followed Hickey in, and I

1878

asked the chief, I said, "Chief, find out where those fellows come from and where they are going". And he says, "Oh, hell, they are just from around here, just right from around here".

Mr. Cooper. Who said that?

Mr. Kerr. The night chief.

Mr. Johnson. What was his name?

Mr. Kerr. Con Hickey. I said, "There is no use telling me a lie about it, I know where they come from; they didn't come from around here." With that I left him, but the Agent was taking those men on the street cars to Granite City,

527 I think for the purpose of evading the interstate excess fare. They would save nearly a dollar apiece coming up from the South on this side and getting off here. They would save that excess fare over the river, you know, and then back again over the river through Granite City. It would run something like eighty or ninety cents. I think this was the purpose in bringing them this way.

But those men were in charge of a white agent, and that is something that we were unable to prove--- that is, bring out who those white agents were at the time of the State Council of Defense. We couldn't bring that out.

Mr. Johnson. How many did you say this man had in charge on this particular occasion?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I would say between 50 and 100--- maybe 75, men and women.

Mr. Cooper. Why couldn't you bring this out at the examination? Why couldn't you bring out who this white

1879

agent was?

Mr. Kerr. I don't know. The negroes told down here that the white agent would go South and either take them away by themselves, and if they came with them would step off the train and they would never see them again. And one negro I believe you will find in the evidence of the State Council of Defense, said there was one fellow came as far as Cairo and got off at Cairo.

Mr. Johnson. One of the white agents?

Mr. Kerr. One of the white agents.

Mr. Cooper. You were just describing the telephone conversation and what you said to Hickey and what Hickey said.

Mr. Kerr. That wasn't a telephone conversation, sir. The chief followed the agent, this employment agent, into the United Cigar store, where the agent was telephoning and Hickey followed him in there and I suppose he said to him--- I don't know--- but my supposition is that he tried to get him to get those people away from the corner. That is what I suppose he had said to him. But of course the cars come along there, and they went away.

Well, things went along that way, and under that condition. I don't know but what the State Council of Defense helped smooth things over a little bit, and helped settle the minds of the people around here that there might be something done for us or something of that kind, until the unfortunate affair of Coleman and Hadley being killed.

Mr. Johnson. That was the night of July 1st?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, and I feel that that is where the pot

1880

boiled over. They had just been standing these things so long that they felt-- well, I don't know-- it would be hard to tell.

I think that is about the story right up to the time of the riot.

Mr. Johnson. Did you see any part of the riot on July 2nd?

Mr. Kerr. Well, you could see crowds running here, crowds running there, and crowds running the other place.

Mr. Johnson. Tell what you saw.

Mr. Kerr. Only one thing I saw. I think along between 9 and 10 o'clock in the morning I was at the City Hall, and there was a call came in the police station that there was a man shot or a shot was heard, and everybody that was around there looking at that automobile there, you know, started to run that way. Well, I went over there with them, and there had been a colored man shot there some place, I don't where, but when I got over there he was in Kansas Avenue, 50 or 60 feet east of Collinsville Avenue, setting down. I could just get to see him. I got up on a truck and looked over
728 the crowd around him.

Mr. Johnson. Who owned the automobile in which these officers were killed on the night of the 1st of July?

Mr. Kerr. I could say the City owns it; I don't know.

Mr. Johnson. Where had this automobile been standing when it was not in use, before the killing?

1881

Mr. Kerr. Well, I would look for it around the police station.

Mr. Johnson. And you think then it was in its accustomed place?

Mr. Kerr. Well, yes. If I went to look for it that is about where I would go.

Mr. Johnson. Do you know anything further now about the riot of July 2nd?

Mr. Kerr. Well, nothing further that I know of. I went over there and tried to see that fellow and of course there was a big crowd around there, the alley become full and finally they got him away to the hospital. I didn't stay? I couldn't get to see him and I just walked away out of there.

Mr. Johnson. Did you see any soldiers that day?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I saw soldiers, of course, here and there on the streets.

Mr. ~~Coles~~ Cooper. There was this assault you said you saw at 10 o'clock in the morning on July 2nd--- between 9 and 10?

Mr. Kerr. I didn't see the assault at all. I just saw the victim after the assault.

Mr. Cooper. You saw the negro after he had been assaulted. Where was he, on the ground?

Mr. Kerr. He was in the alley, in Division Alley, half a block this side of Broadway, about 60 or 70 feet east of Carondelet Avenue.

Mr. Cooper. Lying on the ground?

Mr. Kerr. No, it looked to me like he was sitting on kind of a foundation or sidewalk or something in there. I

1882

couldn't get close to him. He was sitting down.

Mr. Cooper. Is that the one that has been described here by witnesses who saw him clubbed, assaulted, and who afterwards died?

Mr. Kerr. Now I couldn't say, but this was my impression, that he was the first man that was assaulted, and I believe this man was shot. Now that is just an impression that has gotten on me some how or other.

Mr. Cooper. Now we have testimony of witnesses who saw that man sitting there and he seemed to be suffering great pain and they learned that he afterwards died. You don't know whether that is the same one?

Mr. Kerr. No, I don't know that it was. My understanding was that he was shot.

Mr. Cooper. Yes, he was shot.

Mr. Kerr. I didn't know that he had been beaten up. I didn't hear anything about that.

Mr. Cooper. Did you observe whether or not he was suffering great pain?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I couldn't get close to him. A crowd was around him and he was sitting down. They were right around, and I couldn't get as close as from me to you from him. I got up on a truck standing in there, backed up to the furniture house-- the Standard Furniture Company there,--- and I could just see his head.

Mr. Cooper. After you saw that, where did you go?

Mr. Kerr. I walked back from there--- walked back over towards the City Hall.

Mr. Cooper. You went into the City Hall?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I believe I did, yes. I think I did.

Mr. Cooper. To what office did you go in the City Hall?

Mr. Kerr. To the City Clerk's office.

Mr. Cooper. How long did you remain there?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I don't know there. I visit the City Hall a good deal.

Mr. Cooper. With whom did you converse in the City Clerk's office?

Mr. Kerr. I expect I conversed with the City Clerk, if he was there. I couldn't just remember.

Mr. Cooper. Do you recall how long you remained there?

- 539 Mr. Kerr. Well, in and around there, I guess I spent the forenoon.

Mr. Cooper. Do you remember the subject of your conversation?

Mr. Kerr. I don't remember, but I have the idea that it was relative to the situation. There is no question about that.

Mr. Cooper. You think, do you not, that you spoke of this man who had been assaulted, whom you saw sitting down with the mob around him?

Mr. Kerr. Very likely, yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. Do you know whether anybody went from the City Hall after you had conveyed that information, to see about this wounded man?

Mr. Kerr. No, I don't.

Mr. Cooper. And after you left the City Hall, where did you go?

1884

Mr. Kerr. Well, it would be kind of hard for me to line up any one day of the week and say where I went or where I came from, as I am always on the street in daylight, when I am not at home. The chances are I went home, maybe, about 11 or 11.30. I usually go home for lunch.

Mr. Cooper. That is true, Mr. Kerr, about an ordinary day. For instance, look back last week, the situation was normal and it would be difficult for a man to say where he was any hour on any of the days last week; but this was such an unusual day, a day of terrorism, open violence and murder on the public streets of this city; law and order broken down; white men and black men going to their death, some of them without any reason whatever except the desire of others to kill. That was an unusual day. Do you not remember what you did that day?

Mr. Kerr. I think, Mr. Cooper, that would rather be an incentive to cloud the clear recollection. There was so much of it. There was a crowd running here and there, a was a nigger going there, and another crowd running over here, chasing here and chasing there. If you wasn't in the game some place you was kind of lost. There was not much about it that you knew, that you could tell.

Mr. Cooper. There was so much of confusion?

Mr. Kerr. Unless you were stationed at some one place and there take observations.

Mr. Cooper. There was so much confusion, hubbub, noise and terrorism that you don't recall distinctly?

Mr. Kerr. That is just about the situation.

1885

Mr. Cooper. You said that there was nobody on the streets before that at night, women and children were accustomed to stay indoors for fear of assaults?

Mr. Kerr. That has been for months?

Mr. Cooper. Before the riot?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, before the riot.

Mr. Cooper. Have you a curfew law here?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, 9 o'clock.

Mr. Cooper. How long have you had that?

Mr. Kerr. I couldn't say two or three or four years.

Mr. Cooper. That takes children off the streets at 9 o'clock?

Mr. Kerr. Maybe.

Mr. Cooper. Don't they obey it? Don't they go in when the bell rings?

Mr. Kerr. Well, some of them do; yes.

Mr. Cooper. Good children?

Mr. Kerr. I have seen some out after the bell rang.

Mr. Cooper. Well, weren't they afraid of assaults?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I don't know.

Mr. Cooper. They either weren't afraid of assaults or afraid of the law when they went out?

Mr. Kerr. They didn't care very much.

Mr. Cooper. Is that curfew law enforced now, rigidly?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I can't say that it is. I couldn't say that it was not.

Mr. Cooper. Well, were there or were there not girls on the street after 9 o'clock?

Mr. Kerr. There may have been.

1886

330 Mr. Cooper. Now the Springfield rifles, how much did you say they cost, that you saw in the stores?

Mr. Kerr. $1.69. I remember that quite well. I thought it was an awful cheap gun.

Mr. Cooper. $1.69?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. And they were standing in store windows for sale?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. Anybody could go in and buy one for $1.69?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. Do you remember the stores in which you saw these?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I don't know. It runs in my mind that they were in dry goods stores, in furniture stores--- well the larger class of stores, you know.

Mr. Cooper. About when was that, Mr. Kerr?

Mr. Kerr. I think about three years ago.

Mr. Cooper. Do you know how those guns came to be here and put into those stores?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I don't know that I ever had any information on the subject, but I felt that either the Government had done away with the use of them , or the State had done away with the use of them.

Mr. Cooper. You understood that they were discarded rifles, either by the State or National Government?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. As I understand, the National Government

1887

has refused to sell any discraded rifles since the war began, the war in Europe. That is so, isn't it, Doctor?

Mr. Foster. That is so, yes.

Mr. Cooper. Now if that is so, those must have been purchased, if purchased since the war began, from the State government?

Mr. Werr. Well, you understand, Mr. Cooper, I didn't mean as a positive thing. Of course I am positive about their being sold here, but it may have been a year or 18 months previous to that time. I am not just positive as to the dates, but I know they were sold here for that.

Mr. Cooper. Did you observe whether those standing in the windows were sold. Did you notice whether theywere sold. Did they disappear from the windows?

Mr. Werr. Well, I haven't seen any of them in a long time in the windows.

Mr. Cooper. How long from the time you first saw them there was it before they were all gone?

Mr. Werr. Well, I couldn't say as to that. They may have been replenishing the window every day. I don't know. They may have had a carload of them.

Mr. Cooper. How long did you continue to see them in those windows?

Mr. Werr. Well, at that time I wasn't on the street so much as I have been in the last couple of years. At that time I was working every day at my labor.

Mr. Cooper. Then on that Monday afternoon of the 2nd of July you saw no violence?

Mr. Werr. Well, I was none, but I realized that it was

1888

going on.

Mr. Cooper. Did you see soldiers standing about the streets?

Mr. Ferr. Oh, yes.

Mr. Cooper. Did you see colored men fleeing, apparently for their lives?

Mr. Ferr. Yes, I seen them running.

Mr. Cooper. Did you see any soldiers in any place at any time on that date try to save any colored man from assault?

Mr. Ferr. Well, no, I couldn't say that I did.

Mr. Cooper. Witnesses have come here, a number of them, and testified that they saw soldiers shoot colored men on that day. Did you see anything of that kind?

Mr. Ferr. No, sir.

Mr. Cooper. Did you see any soldier hand his gun to a white man for the purpose of having a white man shoot anybody?

Mr. Ferr. No.

Mr. Cooper. Is it your opinion, Mr. Ferr, that law and order had broken down in this city on the 2nd of July?

Mr. Ferr. Absolutely broken down.

Mr. Cooper. That the police force had broken down, the whole thing had broken down?

Mr. Ferr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. Riot, lawlessness, open murder, right here in your streets and nothing to prevent it. That is so, isn't it?

Mr. Ferr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. When did it first begin on the night of July 2nd or the evening of July 2nd?

1889

Mr. Kerr. I think I went home along about half past four in the afternoon and I didn't come out again until about 10 o'clock.

Mr. Cooper. That night?

Mr. Kerr. That night. We had five or six of the neighbor women at our house. Our folks were alone. They all gathered together there, and I, being the only man around, I stayed with them. Of course they were all scared to death, and we could see it over here. I live at 1111 St. Louis Ave., out the next street over here, but out the other side of 10th Street, and you could see all down in here. It first appeared to show up about dark and looked to me like that was about the time the fires were lit.

Mr. Cooper. How late did you stay up that night and observe the fire?

Mr. Kerr. I don't know; I guess about 12 o'clock. I came down town about 10 o'clock. The fire had started down here about Third Street, or had been burning for sometime down there, and I don't know--- it kind of runs in my mind it might be Collinsville Avenue--- the central part of town--- and I thought I would come down and look, and one of the neighbors --- I can't recall his name right now, but he lived just across from me,--- he came along and sat down at the house for a little while, and he or I suggested coming down here, and we came down.

We came down from St. Louis Avenue to Collinsville, down Collinsville to Missouri, and Missouri down to Third Street, where they stopped us. The soldiers stopped us there and wouldn't let us go down any further. WM The west

1890

side of Third Street was burning at the time, and they turned us around and we came back,--- I don't know whether we went up Main Street or whether we went back to Collinsville Avenue and out that way. They stopped us again from going any further on Broadway.

Mr. Cooper. That was after General Dickson had taken control here?

Mr. Kerr. It was after 10 o'clock at night. It must have been pretty well towards midnight. We came back here again and down to Sixth Street and went across the street into where the body of the fire was, but there wasn't anything, only just smoldering ruins; there wasn't anything there but just ruins. It was all burnt out there.

Mr. Cooper. What did you do after you got home?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I went home again, and of course the women wanted to know how conditions were down town, and we talked the situation over, about what was going on, what we could see, and what we did see.

Mr. Cooper. Did you see anybody shot or wounded the next day, or assaulted, on the 3rd?

Mr. Kerr. No, I don't think I did.

Mr. Cooper. You don't now recall that you did.

Mr. Kerr. I don't remember now whether I did or not, but I don't think I did.

Mr. Cooper. You spoke of an agent having 50 or 75--- between 50 and 100 negroes with him, that he had brought up on the street, and you saw them standing here in a group on the street, men and women?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

1891

Mr. Cooper. With grips and boxes and so forth.

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. Did you see they were from Tuscaloosa, Alabama?

532 Mr. Kerr. Tuscaloosa, Alabama. That is my information from one of those men there.

Mr. Cooper. One of the colored men?

Mr. Kerr. Yes; one of the colored men.

Mr. Cooper. How do you know that was an agent? What made you think that?

Mr. Kerr. Well, he handled them-- it appeared to me that they done just exactly what he told them, and he appeared to consult with Con Hickey about that--- that is the night chief of police--- about the moving of these men from there.

Mr. Cooper. It was plainly a parent then that this white man was in control of that body of colored people?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. Just up from Tuscaloosa, Alabama?

Mr. Kerr. That is the impression left on me, yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. How--- what would be the average age of these colored people, the men? Were they young? Middle-aged, or elderly people?

Mr. Kerr. Well, you mean the people coming in here?

Mr. Cooper. No, I mean this group of 50 or 70?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I would figure that they were about what the employer would want, good, big strong husky fellows.

Mr. Cooper. Did you ever hear about the packing establishments ~~and the~~ any other establishments in this city sending

1892

agenst South to bring up colored labor?

Mr. Kerr. I have heardsuch a story.

Mr. Cooper. When did you first hear such a story?

Mr. Kerr. Well, it was supposedly when those 1500 men were coming here. It was charged in July, 1916, that some agents had gone down there after them, and I have heard it said that their traveling agents were used for the purpose of inducing colored labor to come up to East St. Louis, while taveling around on their other duties.

Mr. Cooper. That is, while out selling meat and doing their business as general agents, they were at the same time agents to secure laborers to come North?

Mr. Kerr. I was also informed that they sent route agents with shipments to the different packing plants, and they took- encouraged labor to come North.

Mr. Cooper. Did you ever hear of any otherplants but the packing house plants doing that?

Mr. Kerr. Well, it has been said here repeatedly, and been charged here, that this whole proposition was chargeable to the employer inducing labor to come in here, if not directly then indirectly, of some sort.

Mr. Cooper. Do you know about the soldiers coming here and camping in this city along last spring, outside the property of the street car company?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, but I couldn't recall just exactly when they came; but they camped out here at 19th and Illinois Avenue, between there and Ridge Avenue.

Mr. Cooper. Did you ever go out there to see them?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, I have been out past there.

1893

Mr. Cooper. Do you know how many soldiers there were ?

Mr. Kerr. No, I never got inside of the camp, and I didn't talk to many soldiers.

Mr. Cooper. Do you know how they happened to come here?

Mr. Kerr. Well, there were all kinds of rumors here. It was rumored here that they--- the street car men--- were negotiating for a wage scale. Of course naturally when the militia comes in where there might be a strike pulled off, it looks right away like the militia is there for a purpose.

533 Mr. Cooper. Now let's get that clearly. One of the witnesses has intimated something of that kind. At the time these soldiers came here-- or shortly prior to that--- the street car employees had begun negotiations looking to higher wages?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. And those negotiations were still pending?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. They were not finished?

Mr. Kerr. No, sir.

Mr. Cooper. While those negotiations were pending and unfinished, the soldiers came and camped near the plant or the offices of the street car company. Is that so?

Mr. Kerr. Within two blocks.

Mr. Cooper. Near the power house?

Mr. Kerr. Yes. They are closer than that to the power house.

Mr. Cooper. And the car barns?

Mr. Kerr. Yes. The power house stands back on Illinois Avenue, and the car barn stands between there and State

1894

Street.

Mr. Cooper. And the car barns are the barns from which the cars come every day to go on the route?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Cooper. And near those barns these soldiers were camped?

Mr. Kerr. Well, on this side of the Southern railroad track. They were on this side of the track.

Mr. Cooper. How near to those car barns?

Mr. Kerr. To the car barns themselves? They were very much closer to the power plant, but to the car barns they would be about three, maybe four, blocks.

Mr. Cooper. How near to the power plant?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, a block and a half.

Mr. Cooper. Have you any means of knowing how many of the soldiers there were?

Mr. Kerr. I haven't any idea.

Mr. Cooper. Did you ever see any cut in line?

Mr. Kerr. I never saw them in line. I saw their tents there.

Mr. Cooper. Had you heard about how many came here at that time?

Mr. Kerr. I have heard it said 300 or 400.

Mr. Cooper. Did you continue to see those during the summer? Did they remain there, the tents in which the soldiers were encamped?

Mr. Kerr. Well, off and on. It is kind of an out of the way place.

Mr. Cooper. Do you know that other soldiers came here

1895

after the riot of July 2nd?

Mr. Kerr. I believe there was a company or two came down here and camped in this Webster School yard.

r. Cooper. Do you know anything about the trouble at the Aluminum Ore Company plant?

r. Kerr. Well, of course I would have to know something about it.

Mr. Cooper. Well, what do you know about it?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I know that they went out on strike there, and the strike was on for some two months or more.

Mr. Cooper. When was that?

Mr. Kerr. The 18th or 19th of April until, as I was told by one of the men here who knows--- whom I asked about it --- that it was the 27th of June.

Mr. Cooper. Now, do you know what that strike was about?

Mr. Kerr. Well, sir, that would be a hard thing to determine.

r. Cooper. Well, it has been testified here that that strike was one of the elements which entered into the trouble here, culminating July 2nd in the riot. Now what was the cause of that strike, in your judgment.

r. Kerr. I don't know. According to the evidence I heard here this morning it was somebody that had something to peddle, and he didn't peddle it.

r. Cooper. You refer to what?

r. Kerr. I refer to charges made here by Mr. Fox and Mr. Rucker that this man Wolf offered to peddle the

1896

Aluminum Ore protective association for $10,000--- or sell it.

Mr. Cooper. Or keeping the American Federation of Labor out of that plant for $10,000?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. Had you heard that before?

Mr. Kerr. I didn't hear that before.

Mr. Cooper. Wasn't that printed here once in the papers, or wasn't there
3034 rumors of that sort circulating through the community?

Mr. Kerr. Well, there was after a while. When that strike was called there, Mr. Fox or Mr. Rucker, or both, had an article in the paper here stating that it was a pro-German --- that it came from a pro-German element.

Mr. Cooper. Oh, Mr. Fox and Mr. Rucker charged that?

Mr. Kerr. One or both of them. That is supposedly, through the press.

Mr. Cooper. Through the press?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Cooper. It now appears from their testimony that it was an attempt--- as they testified about it-- an attempt to extort money from that company under thepromise that if the money was paid over, the man receiving it--- or the men receiving it--- in control of that plant's particular association, would keep the American Federation of Labor from organizing the plant. That is what it now appears?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, I see that.

Mr. Cooper. And it is what Mr. Rucker characterized as a blackmailing scheme.

Mr. Kerr. A blackmailing child of their own adoption or raising.

1897

Mr. Cooper. Well, but that is what he said. I am not testifying or anything of the sort. I am simply quoting what he said. Do you say you never heard anything about that until they testified here?

Mr. Kerr. About that $10,000?

Mr. Cooper. Yes.

Mr. Kerr. Well, no; I don't know that I could say exactly. I have heard some statement made that there was some kind of a trade, either in a lump sum or by the week, or something of that kind. I don't know-- didn't pay much attention to it--- because in times of strike you can hear pretty near anything, you know, either from the men or from the company or from the press. There is always something stirring that don't ring true.

Mr. Cooper. Did both the men and the company present their respective sides of the controversy in the public prints?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I don't know. The first charges that I knew in the press was that it was a pro-German movement; that it had pro-German origin; that they had United States contracts in there, and kind of leading the public to believe that there might be a possibility of some German spies or something of that kind--- or anything to retard the work of the plant.

Mr. Cooper. Were any such charges as that made in connection with Wolf?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Cooper. And Simon?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, he was really the pro-German element, I think. They kind of charged Wolf with being pro-German.

1898

Mr. Cooper. And Simon?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I didn't get Simon in that?

Mr. Cooper. Mr. Rucker said he thought Simon was an Itishman. Do you know about that?

Mr. Kerr. No, I don't. I heard Mr. Wolf refute the charge as to the pro-German stuff. He said his father or uncle or brother or his relatives here had fought during the War of 1861 to 1866, and he was born here and raised here, and that there couldn't be anything to a charge of that kind.

Mr. Cooper. He was born in America and was an American at heart?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, and his people were here long before his being born.

Mr. Cooper. He refuted that absolutely?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Cooper. Well, is it your opinion or is it not your opinion, that any of that trouble was pro-German in origin?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, no; I don't think that had anything to do with it.

Mr. Cooper. What did have something to do with it? What was the cause of it?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I will tell you. I believe that the cause of it was the dissatisfaction that had entered into
535 this organization, this Aluminum Ore Employees' Protective Association.

Mr. Cooper. And confined exclusively to the employees of that establishment?

1899

Mr. Kerr. Yes. I think this, that for a while it was contended and ~~felt~~ thought that the Aluminum Ore people were responsible for the birth of that organization. In fact, it looked like it was encouraged by the Aluminum Ore people, and it has been charged that this fellow Wolf was in the employ of the Aluminum Ore Company, and in their pay when he went to find from Attorney Schaumleffle the mode of procedure he would have to go to get a charter and incorporate--- not incorporate, I think it is just a charter, a kind of a "lid charter"; and it turned out to be a lid charter.

Mr. Johnson. What did?

Mr. Kerr. The lid charter, like the Elks or the Eagles, or any of those other organizations where they can go and get a drink after hours.

Mr. Cooper. State charter?

Mr. Kerr. Yes. So that it is a child of Mr. Fox's own raising, and I understand. He was very bitterly opposed to organized labor having anything to do in the October strike of 1916, my information is, and I was out there with those men at that time, advising with them and doing my best to help them to organize in a proper manner under the banner of the bona fide labor movement. But I got it from everywhere, you couldn't make that stick; you couldn't get by with that; so they were bound to and did organize this other organization. They went along with that and they got to fighting amongst themselves, either about the discharge of their men out there ---- I understand when they went back in October a year ago that they had 53 committeemen appointed representing the shop.

1900

Each of those committeemen represented a certain portion of men or certain crafts, for at least they were representative and had been received by Mr. Fox as such. He was here as their committee. When this strike was called here on the 18th or 19th day of April, my information was that there was 11 of that committee left; that their organization had been all torn to pieces.

Mr. Cooper. What had become of the other 42? Had they been discharged?

Mr. Kerr. Well, you must remember that the very minute they are discharged from that plant out there, they haven't any further use for an organization that is entirely organized for that plant alone. It is no good outside of there. It has is no head nor nothing--- responsible to nobody. And Mr. Fox and the Aluminum Ore Company being bitterly opposed to the organized labor movement in their---- of course it is always up to the American Federation of Labor and their organizers to organize--- just keep on organizing all the time and all the time, and if the Aluminum Ore plant gets in the way of organization, it is organized if it is possible to do so; if it isn't, why it is let go to some other time when the opportunity does present itself.

But there was a great deal of dissatisfaction among the members of the Protective Association, and for weeks and
536 weeks before this strike was called I had been meeting two or three here, and two or three there, and meeting men individually and talking it over; and I would have somebody to tell me to meet a certain fellow on the corner, and we would talk over the matter in an effort to organize these people

1901

along craft lines of organization.

Now it is a little bit different now than it was a year ago. A year ago we had no organization here for common labor and we haven't any yet. We have got a charter here, however, but a very few members. The unskilled labor or common labor is not organized in this town in no one place or no other place unless it be--- all that I know of is the colored hodcarriers, who have an organization of their own, and the teamsters. The teamsters, I have heard it said, have eighty members in their organization.

Mr Cooper. Are they white?

Mr. Kerr. Black, colored. During the past two years on two different occasions I tried to organize the porters and janitors of East St. Louis, and had a number of meetings with those men, but when it come down to getting the money to apply for a charter, why the stuff was off. There would be no organization. On two different occasions while I had several meetings I had two different separate bucnhes that had got together. I had 17 or 18 men one time that had met three or four or five times for the purpose of organizing the porters and janitors in this town here; and I had some 12 or 15 another time that wanted to organize, all imbued with the spirit of organization, but when you would come down to getting the dollar---

Mr. Foss (Enterposing) Were they white?

Mr. Kerr. Colored, entirely colored.

Mr. Cooper. What hours do these janitors work?

1902

Mr. Kerr. I don't know. I guess they work the hours they are told to work. Some of them work three or four hours here and three or four hours some other place, three or four hours some place else. Others are steadily employed. That is the saloon porters work mostly three or four hours here and three or four hours there. That is, they go around cleaning up.

Mr. Cooper. What is the aggregate ~~of~~ hours ~~per~~ a day?

Mr. Kerr. Well, just as many as they can get, I suppose. They make as much money as they can. I don't know exactly what their conditions are, but they are bad.

Mr. Cooper. Do you know about the housing conditions of labor in this city? What it has been?

Mr. Kerr. Well, the housing conditions of labor in-- the colored labor is awful. That bunch that was burned out down there was something awful. You couldn't fix it; that's all. A row of hog pens would look better. It was something awful, the conditions of the colored people of East St. Louis. It was something awful in districts. There were some districts where they were pretty fair. Out here on 10th Street they had as nice a residence district as there is for the average workingman most any place, but down in this neighborhood, down in here---

Mr Cooper (Interposing). Where?

Mr. Kerr. On the other side of Broadway, where that fire was.

Mr. Cooper. Designate it so it will appear in the record.

1903

537 Mr. Kerr. Between Rock Road and 8th Street south of Broadway. That was a terrible place in there.

Mr. Cooper. Well, there are a good many white laborers that had rather poor quarters, weren't there?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir; that is true. Up around the stock yards white labor got awful poor quarters.

Mr. Kerr. Now just describe the houses that some of the white laborers that you have described as awful poor. What did they contain; about how many rooms and what facilities did they contain, or conveniences did they contain, or did they not contain?

Mr. Kerr. Well, the working man's house up around the stock yards here, up around Second Street and Third Street and Bogart haven't any inside conveniences atall; nothing modern about them. They are just set up on four or five blocks, and three rooms would be an average I would judge. They are mostly foreign people that live up in there.

Mr. Cooper. These houses set up on blocks, is there anything to prevent the cold winds of winter from blowing under the floor?

Mr. Kerr. Whatever they would put there themselves, maybe boards around; maybe bank them up.

Mr. Cooper. Now then, did they have water conveniences and toilet conveniences in the houses?

Mr. Kerr. Not generally, no.

Mr. Cooper. Did they have wells?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, no; they have fauctes. They have city water out in the yards, a great many times. Most of the time

1904

they are out in the yard.

Mr. Cooper. Were the houses painted regularly; did they look neat and clean?

Mr. Kerr. Well, no I wouldn't say that.

Mr. Cooper. Did these men generally own these houses, or did they rent them?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I think they are rented.

Mr. Cooper. What was the rent that white men paid for accommodations of that kind?

Mr. Kerr. Up around there?

Mr. Cooper. yes.

Mr. Kerr. Well, I couldn't tell; I don't know.

Mr. Cooper. Or what did white men pay--- were there accommodations of similar character used for white employees in this city in other parts of the city?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I would figure that that would be the very worst up there. That would be the worst for white people.

Mr. Cooper. You don't know what they paid for rent?

Mr. Kerr. No, I haven't the least idea, although I have heard that the rent is high--- that it is high rent. They pay big rent for a small place, you know.

Mr. Cooper. Now these homes that were occupied by colored labor in this town that you said were awful, terrible, just describe those if you can.

Mr. Kerr. Well, the way I have got them figured--- I never was in any, but it just one shed after another. When they get a few boards they build another shed, and that is the way they were built; just a row of shacks.

1905

Mr. Cooper. They get a few boards and make a shed or a shack?

Mr. Kerr. Get a few boards and keep building until you have another little shed, and so on.

Mr. Cooper. How long has that been the condition in this town?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, well; it never has been the condition that it was in--- of course that always was the condition of buildings along in that section south of Broadway, but they had some semblance of not being packed in there like sardines. I was talking to a man who will be on the stand here later, and he told me had found as many as 27 men in a house down there?

Mr. Cooper. How large a house?

Mr. Kerr. He made an investigation and he said a small house.

Mr. Cooper. Twenty-seven in one little house?

Mr. Kerr. Twenty-seven, yes. I believe that will be brought out here later on.

Mr. Cooper. In other words, because, as a result of this influx of thousands, conditions became insanitary and unsafe?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, very. At our meeting on the 10th day of May that I told you about having in the Mayor's office, the Mayor told us there that the Board of Health was without a dollar, that there were 70 men in the pest house, 65 of them being black, with smallpox. Now that smallpox came on here shortly after--- well, shortly after the July strike.

1906

Mr. Cooper. Seventy men in the pest house and 65 colored?

Mr. Kerr. That was my understanding.

Mr. Cooper. Where was the pest house located?

Mr. Kerr. Out here some place in the east end of the city.

Mr. Baker. You meant the April strike, didn't you?

Mr. Kerr. No, I meant after the stockyards strike in 1916. They were out of funds along about the first of the year.

Mr. Cooper. They had no money in that fund at all?

Mr. Kerr. That is what he said.

Mr. Cooper. And smallpox had broken out?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Cooper. Is there anything else that occurs to you now as of importance that this committee ought to know in its investigation relative to the conditions in this town that brought on this riot?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I don't know. I think that this committee ought to have some way of finding out why the parties responsible for those conditions didn't do something to eliminate them. That is what I think.

Mr. Cooper. Now what parties do you say are responsible or were responsible?

Mr. Kerr. Why I feel that our Councilors, or Alderman, our city fathers--- somebody in authority--- somebody who had authority.

Mr. Cooper. Well, now, you think we ought to do or we ought to have power to do it. What would be your remedy, if

1909

you were in authority?

Mr. Kerr. What would be my remedy if I was in authority?

Mr. Cooper. Yes, what do you think we ought to recommend? What would you have done?

Mr. Kerr. I will tell you what I recommended to the Mayor here between those two riots, or just previous to the first one. I recommended that he go down here to the Relay Depot every morning of the week and every Sunday with enough officers to bring in the Southern people from the South take them to the police station; find out who they were, where they come from, who they were going to; whether or not they had a job to go to; how much money they had to support themselves in idleness if they didn't have a job. I made that recommendation to the Mayor myself. He said it couldn't be done. I have seen worse than that done here.

Mr. Cooper. Well, what have you seen worse than that?

Mr. Kerr. I have seen white men walked out of this town here any place from two to forty, walked out here to the bridge junction and beat over the back and told to leave town, "hit the grit".

539 Mr. Cooper. For what?

Mr. Kerr. Why, for being--- not having employment--- vagging.

Mr. Cooper. Vagabonds?

Mr. Kerr. Chase them out. Not possibly the word "vagabond", but men in search of ~~that~~ work. Of course that is years ago.

Mr. Cooper. Have you seen that recently?

1908

Mr. Kerr. No, not recently.

Mr. Cooper. I infer, Mr. Kerr, from your testimony that you think there are certain powerful influences in this community that are responsible for the influx of colored people?

Mr. Kerr. I certainly do. That is what I have been trying to show. There must be an influence in here that can allow, that will stand and allow, such a condition to go from day to day, realizing that it has been a condition and everybody has known it. It is not being hid; it has not been hid. Maurice V. Joyce here brought a resolution before the Chamber of Commerce, which is a representative body, showing to those people the very conditions that we are talking about here, and asked that there be something done. In his testimony here--- it is in the State Council of Defense, but it doesn't show in here-- he protested to the Chamber of Commerce, but never no further, I don't suppose. If he did, he may have been treated like ourselves were--- nothing but evasion. We had small committees and we had large committees, and we had a houseful. We were charged down there of being dynamiters and everything that the other fellow had a chance to say about the labor movement. I don't feel that anybody has done anything here but the labor movement to eliminate conditions here, or endeavor to. They have offered services; they have offered to do anything, but we never got anything that we could come back with. No committee ever went down to that City Hall and ever came back so they could make a report to their body --- that is, a success; that is, that they got anything by going down there.

Mr. Cooper. Now, Mr. Kerr, that is what I want to get

1909

at. The Chamber of Commerce consists, we have been told by witnesses who are themselves members of it, of the big employers in this town, the packing plants, Aluminum Ore people, stockyards, et al, and the street car company-- some others, possibly of the same general type of citizens--- influential people--- and when the resolution was presented by Mr. Joyce calling upon them to do what they could to do away with these awful conditions in this town, absolutely nothing was done or recommended by that Chamber of Commerce?

Mr. Kerr. No, the resolution was tabled.

Mr. Cooper. The resolution was tabled.

Mr. Kerr. In his evidence he said the resolution was tabled.

Mr. Cooper. The only people that have done anything in this town, according to your testimony, to ameliorate the conditions of the laboring class in this city, have been the labor people themselves?

Mr Kerr. Not only the labor classes, for the labor
540 classes of this city form the bulk of the people of this city.

Mr. Cooper. Your idea being that what will benefit the labor class will benefit all the citizens?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. Raise the standard of citizenship?

Mr. Kerr. Publicly that is the only organization that I know of that did anything to try and better the conditions here, or try and bring to the attention of the people who should--- or it is felt by us at least should--- have some authority to do something.

1910

Mr. Cooper. your statement is then that the employers as a class have done absolutely nothing in this city to help the great mass of the citizenship, the laboring people?

Mr. Kerr. Here is the conditions to prove for themselves. They don't live here.

Mr. Cooper. Is it in your mind, or do the conditions here, in your mind, present in one of the most aggravated forms the evils of foreign resident ownership and proprietorship; owners not living in the town where their men live?

Mr. Kerr. well, if you will add to that the dominating of those very powers and interests that are foreign to the town, I will agree with that, yes, absolutely.

Mr. Cooper. In some cities in this country we have had investigations which revealed that fact, that great commercial interests and manufacturing interests; great financial interests, ignored absolutely what was going on in the matter of municipal government, being content that the salaries should be small and that corrupt men should get control of the municipal government, and then the big interests owned the municipal government and the corrupt officials. Has anything of that kind been said about this government?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I want to make myself clear on the situation here. I am not charging that our Mayor here has been corrupt.

Mr. Cooper. I don't mean the Mayor, but I mean possibly---

Mr. Kerr (Interposing). Well he is a man that we first do look to. I feel that Mayor Mollman is an honest,

1911

conscientious man, but there have been influences at work upon him that don't allow Mayor Mollman to stand up under those influences and be the man he ought to be.

Mr. Cooper. Well, what are the influences?

Mr. Kerr. I am not taken into the confidence of those fellows. I don't know.

Mr. Cooper. Well, Mr. Kerr, the influences that brought ~~that~~ this labor up here keep out of sight?

Mr. Kerr. Exactly, out of sight.

Mr. Cooper. And you think that the same influences that are brought to bear upon the city administration?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cooper. In other words, their work is done in secret, to the great injury to the city of East St. Louis?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir; of all the people.

Mr. Foss. You are a district organizer, I understand, of the American Federation of Labor?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss. You spoke of common labor as being unorganized in this city?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss. You have tried to organize the colored labor?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss. But, as I understand, you met with poor success?

Mr. Kerr. None at all, absolutely none at all.

Mr. Foss. How about the skilled labor?

Mr. Kerr. Well, the skilled, or craft, labor is pretty

1912

well organized in this town.

Mr. Foss. Have you ever estimated the number of skilled laborers in this community?

541 Mr. Kerr. Well, no, I haven't; but I have heard it said that there were eight thousand men affiliated with the labor movement in East St. Louis; but I believe that is a little high.

Mr. Foss. How many men all told do the packing interests employ up here, of skilled labor?

Mr. Kerr. I don't know. I couldn't tell. The packing interests up here-- there are a few of the organized skilled labor that they will employ.

Mr. Foss. They employ more colored labor than some of these other establishments?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, they have in late years been employing an awful lot of colored labor, especially in the past year. In my estimation they employ a larger per cent of colored labor in the past year than they ever have done, with the one exception possibly of the 1904 strike. But they weeded them out and brought in foreigners to fill the places of those men that went out. They drove the American men out of the packing plants in 1904.

Mr. Foss. Outside of the packing plants, what are the other concerns that employ skilled labor?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, the Steel Springs out here, and this American Car & Foundry Company out here, of which Mr. Roach is an official; the Aluminum ore and the Elliott Frog & Switch Company; the Grandy Company out here; the Smelting

1913

Company out here.

Mr. Foss. The railroads here, too?

Mr. Kerr. And the railroards. The railroads don't discriminate against organized labor very much.

Mr. Foss. Well, most of this skilled labor, you say, in your judgment, is unionized at the present time?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, but the common labor is not.

Mr. Foss. I believe you said in the beginning of your testimony that you thought the trouble began back over a year ago?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Foss. At the time of the strike at the packing houses?

Mr. Kerr. That was where that I realized first that there was--- where I first begin to notice that the negro was coming in. From that time on-I paid some attention to it. I couldn't help it, being brought to my attention.

Mr. Foss. Do you know anything about the meeting held on May 28th?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Foss. What was that meeting? Where was it?

Mr. Kerr. It was over here in the City Hall auditorium.

Mr. Foss. Was the Mayor there?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Foss. The City Council?

Mr. Kerr. yes, sir.

Mr. Foss. How did that meeting start?

Mr. Kerr. Why, I think it started along about half past

1914

eight or a quarter to nine. The first intention was that there would be just the union labor people there. They were going down--- they had found the Mayor and Council and asked them to do something, as a body, ~~the~~ a whole ~~party~~ body, to protest to the Council in the presence of the Mayor, so that there wouldn't be any passing of the buck. If there was any responsible party at all it would get to it. There was a letter put
542 out calling delegates only together for the purpose of meeting with the Mayor and Council to protest.

Mr. Foss. Where did the delegates meet?

Mr. Kerr. Well, they were to meet at the City Hall over here in the evening of the Council meeting--- Monday evening.

Mr. Foss. Well, wasn't there a large body that gathered down there?

Mr. Kerr. Oh yes, there was a big body of men there.

Mr. Foss. Where did they meet?

Mr. Kerr. They came there too.

Mr. Foss. Where did they come from?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I don't know. It just looked like all of the citizens turned out. I got a letter to appear there, and maybe I showed it to my friend, and my friend told his friend, and there they were. It got out that there was going to be something done.

Mr. Foss. How many were there there?

Mr. Kerr. I don't know. I have read in the paper about six or seven hundred, but I have heard it said that the City Hall held 1500 people, and I couldn't see where you could

1915

put the difference in there, because I thought the City Hall was full of people-- that is, the auditorium was full of people.

Mr. Foss. You were there?

Mr. Kerr. I was up there, yes.

Mr. Foss. What did they demand of the Mayor? Were there speeches made?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, there was some talk made there. They tried to represent to him just exactly what I have been trying to tell you here; that there was an awful condition here and something had to be done.

Mr. Foss. Who made speeches, do you recall?

Mr. Kerr. I think Mr. Alleger made a speech; I think Mr. Kane made a talk. Mr. Alleger is editor of the Illinois Labor Press.

Mr. Baker. What is his first name, do you know?

Mr. Kerr. No, I don't know. I think J. J Kane made a talk there.

Mr. Foss. What was the purport of the talk made that night in these speeches?

Mr. Kerr. Well, it appeared to me one purpose of the meeting was to show those people that there was a responsibility here and that in some way they had to face it. You know the city government, there is no other city power except your alderman and Mayor, and it was felt that the protest made to those men in a body, to bring it home to them--- that there must be something done; that there was an awful condition here. I think that was the whole intent of their whole meeting.

And of course we tried to tell them what those conditions were.

1916

Mr. Foss. Well, how long was that meeting in session?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, I don't know; I should say an hour, or an hour and a half. I couldn't say as to the exact time.

Mr. Foss. Well, were there any speeches that might be called of an incendiary character made at that meeting, exciting people?

Mr. Kerr. Well, one of our lawyers around town here, who usually makes a talk at all kinds of gatherings. He got up and made a talk that left rather an impression that if they went a little further to bring about the results, there was a way of doing it.

Mr. Foss. Do you recall his words?

Mr. Kerr. Well, he said-- this is what I get--- I 943 think he said that there was no law for mob law--- something to that effect--- no law for mob law.

Mr. Johnson. No law for it, or no law to punish it?

Mr. Kerr. The inference was there was no law to punish mob law. But personally I didn't take that seriously. I know him and everybody here knows him, and I don't think that would be taken near as seriously from him as it would from you or from almost any other man in East St. Louis, because he is somewhat of a joker.

Mr. Johnson. Who is the lawyer?

Mr. Kerr. Alexander Flannigan.

Mr. Foss. Well, what happened after the meeting?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I tried to tell you awhile ago about them coming out of there and a great body of them came over to look at this sign, to see whether or not that was there.

1917

it was charged that it was there, and it was charged for the purpose or showing just exactly what--- you know you can feel it better than you can express it.

Mr. Cooper. What sign?

Mr. Kerr. This sign stuck up in the window, "Buy A Gun For Protection". You can feel it better than you can express it. Here is a business man trying to sell guns to somebody to defend himself against what?

Mr. Foss. And they went right over there to take a look at the guns?

Mr. Kerr. I don't know whether they went over there to look at the guns or to take a look at the sign, to see whether or not it was true, but they were both there, the gun and the sign were both there.

Mr. Johnson. Was there any indication on the sign to show to whom it was addressed, whites or blacks?

Mr. Kerr. No, that is just exactly what it said, "Buy A Gun For Protection". It didn't say white or black.

Mr. Foss. Well, there were some negroes beaten up that night were there not?

Mr. Kerr. Well, all that I know was that one, ~~when~~ and I saw Officer Brockman get him and take him away, and he couldn't have been beaten up very bad. They got him within 100 feet or where I saw him. No one had him then.

Mr. Foss. There were a number of beatings following that right along, weren't there, of negroes?

Mr. Kerr. You mean that night?

Mr. Foss. That night, and the days following.

Mr. Kerr. I don't know. I didn't stay there but a

1918

few minutes; I went on home.

Mr. Foss. You don't know of your own personal knowledge?

Mr. Kerr. No. I was there but I went on home in a few minutes, and didn't pay particular attention to it after they took him away.

Mr. Foss. Did you notice that the feeling between the two races was more embittered after that meeting than before?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I feel this way: that the investigation made by the State Council of Defense had a tendency to kind of settle the bitterness, or the growing feeling. I don't know. I just felt that way. I don t know that I ever heard anybody express it. I don't know that I ever expressed myself, but I felt safer after they had made it, because I felt there would be some results--- something good would come from it.

Mr. Foss. What is the situation today in this community with reference to the feeling between the two races?

Mr. Kerr. Well, my reason for making this statement is that we have a good feeling here today, and my reason for making
044 that statement is that we haven't had a hold-up nor a murder nor a woman hasn't been attacked since the night of the riot. Now it appears to me that everything looks ~~good~~ smooth. I don t know that there is any feeling. I don't hear it expressed. If there is, you don't hear it expressed. People are just minding their own business and we are having a nice peaceable time in East St. Louis.

Mr. Foss. Do you think the citizenship of this city has reached that point today where there is a strong virile

1919

sentiment that insist upon the maintenance of order and the putting down of all lawlessness?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir; I do. Yes, sir; most emphatically I do. I absolutely contend that that not only now is so but has been so. But those people were unable to get results.

Mr. Raker. There has been no change in the Aldermen?

Mr. Kerr. No, sir; the same Aldermen.

Mr. Raker. Can you give their names?

Mr. Kerr. No, I couldn't give them all.

Mr. Raker. How many have you in the city of East St. Louis?

Mr. Kerr. Twelve, I guess.

Mr. Raker. The same Aldermen are now in power that were in power between the 1st of January and the 3rd of July?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Raker. You found that those aldermen between the 1st of January and the 3rd of July did nothing, so far as the complaints made by yourself and associates were concerned, to relieve conditions in East St. Louis?

Mr. Kerr. No, sir; not to my knowledge.

Mr. Raker. They were advised as to those conditions in a minute detail as to just what the horrible conditions were, were they?

Mr. Kerr. Yes--- well now, just a moment. The aldermen hadn't been approached by committees as aldermen. They had been by individuals. I spoke to half a dozen aldermen myself, talking about those conditions--- only at the one time, and that was the 28th of May.

1920

Mr. Baker. Then I understand, so far as the aldermen are concerned, so far as you know, they never were met by a body of men or committees or consulted with or advised of these conditions prior to this meeting that was had on the 28th of May?

Mr. Kerr. Never to my knowledge; that is, as an authorized committee.

Mr. Baker. Have you anything to say as to the conduct of these various aldermen between the 1st of January and the 3rd of July, as to officials?

Mr. Kerr. As to officials?

Mr. Baker. As to being officials. Were they competent, qualified, doing their duty?

Mr. Kerr. Well, with all things you have just heard--- you have heard of this meeting here-- I don't feel that they did anything.

Mr. Baker. Well, what is your answer to my question?

Mr. Kerr. That would be my answer to your question. There was nothing done.

Mr. Baker. But what as to the aldermen as a body as well as individuals? Were they competent, qualified men, trying to do their duty?

Mr. Kerr. Well, there is no doubt about their being qualified, but as to whether they did their duty or not, they may have done it ~~of~~ as a sort, but I wouldn't consider that they did any duties at all, performed any duty.

Mr. Baker. All right, what was the understanding and the impression among the people of East St. Louis generally

1921

during the period I have named, as to the aldermen failing utterly to do their duty as county or city fathers?

Mr. Kerr. Well, they appeared once a week; they passed their ordinances and they went through their routine and got their money for it.

545 Mr. Raker. What else did they do; anything else?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I suppose they figured they were doing their duty. That is, what is officially required from the aldermen in so far as the people are concerned, it looked like. The people were satisfied with that.

Mr. Raker. Now, see if you gather my question. From the general discussion and talk in East St. Louis, what was it relative to the aldermen doing their duty, or neglecting it, so far as the city was concerned--- that is, official duty?

Mr. Kerr. Well, that is what I have been trying to tell you. Nobody did anything. They just sat down and let things go, as they seemed to go, like the Mississippi River flows.

Mr. Raker. Now I didn't ask you about nobody did anything. I am directing it to the aldermen. Was it said the aldermen didn't do their duty? These were officials, city officials. Was it discussed that they didn't do their duty, just like everybody else?

Mr. Kerr. Of course it was.

Mr. Raker. Well then, put it right plain. That is easy.

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Raker. That was the general impression. Is that right?

Mr. Kerr. That was the general impression, yes.

1922

Mr. Raker. Discussed among laboring men, among working men, among business men, and others or East St. Louis?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Raker. Nothing was done to remedy the conditions?

Mr. Kerr. Nothing.

Mr. Raker. These same men are still in office?

Mr. Kerr. Those same men are still in office.

Mr. Raker. Now lets get down to the courts, the city courts. You have police court, have you?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Raker. How many police courts?

Mr. Kerr. Well, there is just a police court.

Mr. Raker. Yes, just hold to that.

Mr. Kerr. There is only one police court.

Mr. Raker. One police court judge. Now what is his name?

Mr. Kerr. Eggeman.

Mr. Raker. How long has the judge been on the bench?

Mr. Kerr. Since the last election.

Mr. Raker. When was that?

Mr. Kerr. Last April a year ago.

Mr. Raker. Was it April, 1916; or was it April, 1917?

Mr. Kerr. 1916 I think.

Mr. Raker. Now what has been the discussion as to these men whom you have discussed? That they paid no attention to law or order; murders were committed, hold-ups, women assaulted --- what was said about the judge enforcing the law against these fellows?

1923

Mr. Kerr. Well, I couldn't say as to that. We have five Justices. Four of them are Justices of the Peace, and the other one is elected by the people as a Police Magistrate.

Mr. Baker. Yes, I would like to just hang on to the police magistrate individually. I would like to drive my questions to that particular office and the individual during that time, first, so that there can be no misunderstanding of what my questions are and what your answers are as they go on the record, who they apply to.

You said now that there was an invisible, unseen influence that permeated not only the police force but the fire department, the justices and the police court, and every other governmental function relating to the city here. Is that right?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I don't know that there was anything bearing on the fire department. I don't know of anything.

340 Mr. Baker. We will just leave them out for a few moments; but otherwise, so far as your statement is concerned, it applies to the rest, does it?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir.

Mr. Baker. Now you folks discussed and had your meetings and went over how the law was being enforced by this particular police judge--- court and/judge himself, did you?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, no; we brought the attention of our representatives to the Mayor. That is the one we went to. We didn't go to the courts/and so far as I am personally concerned I have never been in Judge Eggeman's court in my life.

1924

The fact of the matter is, in the 20 years I have been here I don't think I have been in the court room that many times, either officially or on any other business (indicating the fingers of one hand).

Mr. Baker. I am asking you now if you discussed the police court and its proceedings during the same time you were discussing the want of the enforcement of the law?

Mr. Kerr. No, we didn't--- I don't remember of discussing the police court proceedings or the police court judge.

Mr. Baker. Well, the general onslaught as to the police court and the occupant don't apply to this particular judge; is that right?

Mr. Kerr. No, it wouldn't apply.

Mr. Baker. He then was administering the law equally and exactly and justly?

Mr. Kerr. So far as we knew, yes.

Mr. Baker. And you had no complaint now in discussing with your fellows, as to the enforcing of the law through this particular court and justice?

Mr. Kerr. No, sir.

Mr. Baker. You want to change your statement now as to the fact that this court and judge was implicated with the rest; is that right?

Mr. Kerr. Implicated with the rest?

Mr. Baker. With the other officials?

Mr. Kerr. From our point of view we don't consider the police magistrate. The police magistrate and minor officials has got nothing to do with the people who are respon-

1925

sible to the people.

Mr. Baker. Well now, I am going to put it that way. You know that the Mayor hasn't anything to do with the justice elected by the people, so far as that officer performing his duty or his functions are concerned, don't you?

Mr. Kerr. That is true.

Mr. Baker. Then if the courts were not doing their duty as you understood it, you wouldn't look to the Mayor for relief, would you?

Mr. Kerr. I didn't say that the courts weren't doing their duty. I said that the city officials weren't doing their duty. I didn't figure that the courts of a justice is a city official. I believe he is there to deal out justice, whether it be for me or for the other fellow.

Mr. Baker. Did you people believe he was dealing out justice?

Mr. Kerr. That is my understanding, so far as the judge is concerned, and my knowledge of the judge, he was doing all right.

Mr. Baker. All right now. There are four justice courts. How about them? Have you got any complaint to make?

Mr. Kerr. I haven't any complaint to make about them at all.

547 Mr. Baker. Nor about the methods, the way that this business has been transacted from January first, 1917, until the third of July, of the same year?

Mr. Kerr. I thought there ought to have been something to eliminate this crime, whether it wound up with the justice

1926

of the police court or at the police station or with the sheriff or with somebody else.

Mr. Baker. I know now, but what I am asking you is, Was it discussed? Was it talked over among yourself and friends and those that you met up and down the street, that your local courts, the justices courts, are not doing the right thing; they are not administering the law rightly or justly; they are turning these vags and thugs and criminals loose; are not punishing them as they ought to be doing? Were those things discussed?

Mr. Kerr. No, my own impression was that those people were---

Mr. Baker (interposing). If they weren't discussed, that answers my question. I don't want to take any more of your time. If you say no, it wasn't, that ought to end it.

Did you discuss during the same time--- I will get to the Mayor eventually. I am not talking about the Mayor at all now.

Mr. Kerr. You just stopped there.

Mr. Baker. I was obliged to stop. I got a direct and positive answer, and there was no need of going any further.

During the same time now that the Mayor was discussed, did you discuss the condition, inwardly and outwardly, as well as the personnel, of the police commissioners?

Mr. Kerr. Inwardly and outwardly? I don't get you.

Mr. Baker. That is, what they were doing in office and out on the street. Did you discuss the police commissioners and what they were doing?

1927

Mr. Kerr. Yes, there had been a great deal of discussion relative to the police commission.

Mr. Baker. Favorable or unfavorable?

Mr. Kerr. Well, very unfavorable.

Mr. Baker. Now, would you just give it to the committee, to what extent it was discussed?

Mr. Kerr. We felt that as laboring men we demanded a representative on that board here about a year ago, and we were given that representative. That representative hasn't had any courtesy shown him--- I don't mean courtesy, but he hasn't been treated with the confidence of the other two, and it never was felt that he was. They would hold meetings and eliminate him from the proceedings. In fact, that goes back a little bit to the trial of a police officer here on the corner, that did some things for which he was afterwards put out of office. It was charged, both by men who knew well our representative--- had known him to be a good square, straightforward fellow, and a clean-cut fellow, and who would stand up either in public or in private and defend his own opinion on any position that he took-- that he would be dangerous to that board. Now that board has been a source
548 of more or less trouble--- gave more or less trouble to the labor movement here--- that is, gave them food for discussion--- for the past two or three years--- several actions of the police ~~security~~ board. After getting our man on there we thought we were going to get a show. When that police board--- now this is the general feeling--- would feel like doing something;

1928

why they would have a special meeting of the board, to which Mr. Smith wouldn't be invited; wouldn't know anything about it.

Mr. Cooper. Was that your representative?

Mr. Kerr. That was our representative. Mr. Smith is a painter here in town.

Mr. Cooper. What is his full name?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I know what his full name is--- William Smith.

Mr. Raker. Go right on.

Mr. Kerr. That is all.

Mr. Raker. What were the other two commissioners?

Mr. Kerr. Mr. ~~Stern~~ Schein and Mr. Watkins.

Mr. Raker. Well, was this made public and discussed in the papers, ~~or~~ and otherwise, that these two commissioners met secretly and out of the usual order and transacted business?

Mr. Kerr. No, I don't know that it was talked of in the papers, but it was talked of amongst the labor men, who felt that they were being slighted.

Mr. Raker. What I am getting at is, I am trying to make no distinction here; I am just trying to get the facts and I am making no comparison and don't want to. I want to simply get at facts as to what was done. Now can you tell the committee how it would be possible for two of the commissioners to meet without the other one being present at the regular place of meeting at the regular time of meeting, if you can?

Mr. Kerr. Well, the City Hall is rather a large place,

1929

and they hold over there what is known as caucauses, if you know what a caucus is. If you don't know what a caucus is, the place to go---

Mr. Baker (interposing). Just assume I don't know anything about it.

Mr. Kerr. The place to find out is where they hold these caucuses in the City Hall. Three or four or five of those fellows get together and there they plot and plan against the judgment of the other fellow.

Mr. Baker. There couldn't be three or four or five, because there are only three of the commissioners, and only two meeting. They would have to have a clerk, wouldn't they, and did have one? Isn't that right?

Mr. Kerr. Supposedly.

Mr. Baker. And he would have to falsify the records if they met at any other place except the regular meeting place, wouldn't he?

Mr. Kerr. I don't know.

Mr. Baker. Isn't that true?

Mr. Kerr. It looks true on the face, yes.

Mr. Baker. And if they met and closed the door and didn't let the third member in, why the clerk would have to make a false record of what occurred, wouldn't he?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, I suppose he would, but suppose one of those commissioners was the clerk? Right now he is the clerk. One of the commissioners is the clerk.

Mr. Baker. Well, I asked you did the commissioners have a clerk, a separate individual clerk?

1930

Mr. Kerr. Why, the City Clerk is supposedly--- or was at that time, at the time we had the argument with these people about some things that were going on--- it was the City Clerk or assistant City Clerk.

Mr. Baker. It wasn't one of the two commissioners?

Mr. Kerr. No, but it might have been. It is now. The Secretary of the Police Board is one of the members of that board right at the present time.

Mr. Baker. And they have no outside clerk?

Mr. Kerr. No.

549 Mr. Baker. But that didn't exist during the time I have inquired about?

Mr. Kerr. No. That is my information now.

Mr. Baker. Where is Mr. Smith now?

Mr. Kerr. He is a painter here. He lives out here on 10th Street, I think.

Mr. Baker. There is Mr. Schein?

Mr. Kerr. He is down here on Missouri Avenue. He may be in here. I saw him up in here.

Mr. Baker. And Mr. Watkins?

Mr. Kerr. I don't know where Mr. Watkins is.

Mr. Baker. Your belief now is, from what you learned, that the board of police commissioners was thoroughly incompetent and corrupt?

Mr. Kerr. Well now, I wouldn't say that they were corrupt.

Mr. Baker. What would you call that?

Mr. Kerr. They didn't do things as the people--- they

1931

were very much disliked, and the people were dissatisfied with some of their actions.

Mr. Baker. What would you call now the fact of two commissioners excluding the other man, getting away from him, and then taking action and proceeding and doing things for the purpose of affecting their friends and their interests, so that this one individual man could not participate or be heard in the meeting?

Mr. Kerr. I say that they are not giving the people representation.

Mr. Baker. Well could you think of anything practically more corrupt?

Mr. Kerr. No, if that is your definition of corruption, I think it as corrupt as the Devil.

Mr. Baker. And they were doing this for improper purposes?

Mr. Kerr. No doubt in the world. There would be no necessity--- if the cards was on the table there would be no necessity to pull that off.

Mr. Baker. Well, then they employed the police force?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Baker. Was the third member excluded in the employment of the police force?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, no; I don't think that; I wouldn't think that.

Mr. Baker. Well, you talked with him and he said he didn't have a fair deal now?

Mr. Kerr. Well, he was charged that they have held

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meetings without him and that he didn't have any knowledge of those meetings.

Mr. Baker. Well, what was the character of the police force?

Mr. Kerr. Fairly good.

Mr. Baker. Doing good work?

Mr. Kerr. Well now, that is as you may term it. I say the character of the police force was fairly good.

Mr. Baker. I mean as to doing their work.

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Baker. They gave efficient service?

Mr. Kerr. Well, possibly, up to a certain time.

Mr. Baker. To what time?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, for the last four or five months.

Mr. Baker. I am talking--- I haven't gone after July the 4th at all. I am holding myself between the 1st of January and the 4th of July, 1917.

Mr. Kerr. Say from the 1st of January, they haven't been overly officious in carrying out their work.

Mr. Baker. Well, if they were efficient, careful, cautious, and on the job, would it have been possible for such an amount of crime to have continued?

Mr. Kerr. Well, not with a sufficient force of men. The city of East St. Louis has been hard up-against-it here. They haven't had money. The officers have been paid maybe at two months' intervals, and maybe they would get it in a month, and maybe go three months, and they haven't always carried a full force.

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Mr. Baker. Well now, did you hear any complaint or want of efficient service from the police force from the 1st of January to the 4th of July here this year?

Mr. Kerr. Well, the very fact of these hold-ups and everything that was going on then. Some of them were arrested and some of them got away, or they weren't taken care of. They weren't stopped. It wasn't being stopped.

Mr. Baker. Well, was there any criticism as to the want of the policemen doing their duty?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Baker. A good deal?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Baker. Then you discussed these subjects with the Mayor you appointed a committee and went to see the Mayor?

Mr. Kerr. That was in May.

Mr. Baker. Any time between the dates I have named?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Baker. And the Mayor said he couldn't do anything?

Mr. Kerr. That's what he said; he couldn't do anything.

Mr. Baker. Did he give you any reason why he couldn't do anything?

Mr. Kerr. No, he asked for suggestions. We suggested like I said before, that there be a representative meeting of the citizens of this town to go with the Mayor and see if there couldn't be something brought out to solve this condition that we were forced to live under.

Mr. Baker. Tell, the consummation of that interview was at the meeting of May 28th, 1917?

1934

Mr. Kerr. Yes, because we hadn't got anything we could take back and report. We reported what we had done just like I have told you here, and he was to let us know, and we have never heard yet what he was going to do.

Mr. Baker. Did any of the councilmen speak at the meeting of May 28th?

Mr. Kerr. I don't believe there was.

Mr. Baker. Who else besides those you named, Alleger, Kane and Flannigan, spoke that night?

Mr. Kerr. I don't remember who else. I don't know that there was anybody else?

Mr. Baker. Just a few moments now on the 2nd of July, 1917. You were in and about town as you have described?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Baker. Did you make any effort to get any citizens to help you stop the riots?

Mr. Kerr. No, sir.

Mr. Baker. Did you call on anybody?

Mr. Kerr. Relative to that?

Mr. Baker. Yes.

Mr. Kerr? No, sir.

Mr. Baker. You made no effort yourself?

Mr. Kerr. No, sir.

Mr. Baker. Why didn't you, Mr. Kerr?

Mr. Kerr. Well, sir, what is the use? That is their system. That is the way it got to be here. What is the use? You couldn't get any place with it. What is the use? Now you have run up against the police department. What is the use?

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they have been doing those things, but you have hit up against the wrong thing. There is no use going three or four times to a man if he won't do anything. I don't mean that as an individual man, but any person. There is no use going and trying to do something if you cannot put it over. If you ask for help repeatedly and can't get it, then there is nothing to do but sit down and say, "What is the use" and get out of it.

Mr. Baker. Now you know, Mr. Kerr, I have been very diligent, and possibly wearied the patience of some in regard to the courts, and you found no complaint with the courts. I was very diligent in regard to the policemen, and you found no objection to the policemen. Now why do you say that it was no use to have called on the policemen on the 2nd of July?

Mr. Kerr. Mr. Baker, I take it that you, when speaking about the policemen, were speaking about the policemen on the beat.

Mr. Baker. I am speaking as a whole and as individuals.

Mr. Kerr. I took it from your form of questions that you were speaking about the policemen on the beat, the man
651 whom I meet every day.

Mr. Baker. No, I am talking about the whole force, the whole system. Now what is your distinction between the man on the beat and the whole system?

Mr. Kerr. Well, there is a great deal. The man on the streets arrests a man and takes him to the station. Where he does that he is there ended until it goes to the police court. He has got no more to do with that man until

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he goes to the police court to prosecute him.

Mr. Baker. When your explanation is that between the time the man was arrested and taken to the police court, way something was done by some manipulation, and Machiavelian methods by which he was turned loose or wasn't prosecuted?

Mr. Kerr. If he ever got to the police court, yes. You have said it there. And I am going to tell you, I believe it is between the time the police officer leaves his prisoner in the police station and the time that he is taken--- if he is ever taken--- to the police magistrate. Now you appeared to me to be keeping me away from that, and I want to tell it. That is what I am here for. I thought you were speaking about the man, the police officer on the beat.

Mr. Baker. My dear sir, nobody would ever accuse me of not giving a man an opportunity to tell what he knows. Now I have given you full opportunity and now I want you to state if there is anything that you haven't stated, that will show up the corruptness or the want of efficiency and want of enforcement of the law in East St. Louis before the 4th of July, 1917. State it, will you please?

Mr. Kerr. Well, that is the way I feel about it. I feel that between the time ~~that~~ the officer lets go of that man and he again takes it up at the police court. Now that's all I can say about it.

Mr. Cooper. Who is in control during that time?

Mr. Kerr. The chief of police is in control of the police station, I suppose.

Mr. Cooper. Then you locate it pretty close to head-

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quarters?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir; right at headquarters. That is where I locate it.

Mr. Foss. What is the distance between the police office and the police court?

Mr. Kerr. The officer on the beat is the man we meet with.

Mr. Cooper. But after you get him into the police office, how far is it from the police office to the police court?

Mr. Kerr. You mean the distance?

Mr. Cooper. Oh, across the street, one hundred feet I should say.

Mr. Raker. Well, you don't believe that he got away between the other building of the police station and the court; but whatever was done was done before he ever left the police station?

Mr. Kerr. I don't believe he run away.

Mr. Raker. In other words, you are intending to convey to the committee and believe from what you know and heard, that the police officer, the chief of police, grafted--- took graft--- took money?

Mr. Kerr. No.

Mr. Raker. To let people go? Is that what you mean?

Mr. Kerr. No, I am not going to say that now.

Mr. Raker. What do you mean?

Mr. Kerr. I am going to say that there has been some awful influences brought to bear upon certain men in the police

1938

department, whom I have stated is between the police officer on the beat and the police magistrate's office.

Mr. Baker. Well, can you give us any idea as to what it is?

Mr. Kerr. I can't. There is--- I don't know-- there is something in there, in that department, but I don't believe--- I never saw anybody run away; never seen anybody run away from an officer; never seen an officer running after a man because he got away, but I believe just like I told you that that is where the responsibility is.

Mr. Baker. Now to consummate what I was working at, your view of the riot is that this void or vacancy or condition existing between the police headquarters and the justice's court--- police court--- together with the other want of enforcement of law is the cause of the riots on the 28th of May and on the 2nd of July, 1917? Is that right?

Mr. Kerr. Well now, sir, that is sifting it right down to one proposition, and I can't stand for that. I claim this proposition here is industrial, criminal if you please, and political. Those three enter into the situation, those three--- plain as the nose on your face. There ain't no way to get away from it.

Mr. Baker. Well then---

Mr. Kerr (interposing). Take it any way you like now.

Mr. Baker. No, I am just trying to get what you know, because I believe you know a good deal.

Mr. Kerr. Well, I am going to tell it here if you give me time enough.

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Mr. Baker. Outside now of what I have asked you of the condition of the riot, the cause of the riot, you say--- what else is to be counted with that?

Mr. Kerr. I say that this riot has been caused by our industrial conditions. It has been caused by a reign of terror, crime in our city, and it has been caused by political trickery, dodgery and playing with the negro population here. That is what I say--- political from that point. That is not one party; it is all parties. Any time they want anything in a political way they get out and get this negro, the poor negro, and buy him for fifty cents per. Can't tell me anything about it, because that is the situation and we all know it too. If there is any politicians around in here--- I don't see any.

Mr. Cooper. I would like to ask a question right there if I may. You said, in response to questions awhile ago, that the aldermen,--- or rather the police board--- two of them would meet, hold a secret meeting and ignore the third member, who was the representative of labor and you say a most excellent man, not afraid to have his own mind and to maintain it?

Mr. Kerr. That is true.

Mr. Cooper. Well now, in having those secret meetings, two out of three, they were only following example, were they, of your common council, your aldermen here?

Mr. Kerr. That may possibly be so, but I don't know that. I don't know anything about it. I haven't been told that.

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Mr. Cooper. What do you mean by "caucauses"?

Mr. Kerr. Well, that caucus is rather a funny joke. They have a meeting of the Council, and they first go down into the Mayor's office and they decide upon what they are doing.

Mr. Cooper. That is a secret meeting?

Mr. Kerr. That is a secret meeting. They decide about what they are going to hand out to this poor devil on the outside, you know. Then they go up into the Council chamber and read it off. It is already without argument or contest from anybody. It is already fixed, cut and dried, and there is nothing can be done other than what is done in that caucus.

Mr. Baker. So then these men, this police board, two out of three, holding a secret meeting, was simply following the practice observed by the Common Council, of having a secret meeting in the Mayor's office deciding on what laws or ordinances they would pass; then going up into the Chamber and having an open meeting and passing them? Is that it?

Mr. Kerr. That is what is done, exactly.

Mr. Baker. Well, that you call "routine work"? That is what you said awhile ago, and then you said they would get their pay?

Mr. Kerr. No doubt about that.

Mr. Baker. How much pay did they get? So much a meeting, was it?

Mr. Kerr. I don't know exactly; so much a meeting, $5 or $5, I think.

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Mr. Raker. They were always there at the meetings weren't they?

Mr. Kerr. They always got their money, if that is what you mean.

Mr. Raker. Now do you know whether it was a majority --- the majority members or the Council which met down stairs, or in the Mayor's office, or was it the whole Council?

Mr. Kerr. Oh, it would be the whole Council in caucus meetings. They had the whole Council there.

Mr. Raker. The whole Council had a caucus meeting in secret?

Mr. Kerr. If they appear there, of course.

Mr. Raker. At the Council meeting in the Mayor's office, the whole Council decided what ordinance they would pass, and then they went upstairs and in a public meeting it was passed. Not much debate upstairs, was there?

Mr. Kerr. No.

Mr. Raker. They would just go right up and pass it, so that the public listening in the Council Chamber wouldn't know any of the reasons which prompted the enactment of this ordinance, because there would be no debate upstairs, would there?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I don't know. I don't attend those Council meetings.

Mr. Raker. Did you ever go to one?

Mr. Kerr. No, I never went to one. I know that they caucus first there on the ground floor and I have met them in there.

Mr. Johnson. They are pretty nearly as bad as the

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popular opinion of the various State legislatures and the Congress of the United States, aren't they (Laughter)?

Mr. Kerr. Well, I don't know much about that.

Mr. Raker. Now you say you had absolute confidence in the Mayor?

Mr. Kerr. As a man, a man of honesty.

Mr. Raker. As a man his integrity is good?

Mr. Kerr. Yes.

Mr. Raker. But so far as his official work is concerned he was absolutely inefficient to do it?

Mr. Kerr. Yes, sir; that is my contention.

Mr. Raker. What caused that difference between the man who is honest and square and fair and right and wanted to do the right thing; and then in the office he was absolutely jellyfished? Can you explain it to the committee?

Mr. Kerr. No, sir; I can't explain it at all.

Mr. Raker. Was it an illegal influence?

Mr. Kerr. It must have been some awful influence.

Mr. Raker. What is your opinion? What was the discussion? I want to know.

Mr. Kerr. Well, it is like everything else. We don't get to that. People are stronger than we are, and we aren't taken into consideration at all when those things are fixed. We don't get to that. We only suspect those things. We are in a position where we know things to be a fact, but we can't prove it. We are placed in the position that we can't prove it. That's all.

Mr. Raker. Somehow or other I can't quite understand

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how a good strong member of the police commissioners like Mr. Smith, who had to be present when all of the work was done in the open, couldn't have invited you men to be present where everybody else was and make it so uncomfortable for the other two that were doing wrongful acts by bringing catastrophe and murder and arson upon this town; why he couldn't have so acted that he could have stopped it.

Mr. Kerr. Now, Mr. Baker, I want to answer you in your own words. You say you can't understand why that is. Now that very thing was brought about here when this meeting that I speak of went to the City Hall to strenuously do the very thing that you suggested there; to protest to the Council and Mayor, when the representative of organized labor appeared before that body to insist upon certain things; that is, the elimination of this crime, the betterment of our city. That is the very reason it was done, and you have stated so yourself, that you wondered why this one man didn't do it. This seven or eight or nine hundred men did that very same thing. They walked right down there and demanded that there be a change of conditions in this town.

Mr. Cooper. And nothing was done about it?

Mr. Kerr. Why, the riot. There was thirty days between that time and the riot, and not a thing done.

Mr. Baker. It wasn't that long, was it?

Mr. Kerr. Well, that first little shuffle didn't amount to nothing. There was no comparison at all.

Mr. Baker. Now what have you done, or your friends,

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relative to bringing about better conditions since the 2nd or July, 1917, with the Committee of One Hundred?

Mr. Kerr. With the Committee of One Hundred?

Mr. Raker. Yes.

Mr. Kerr. Well, you know that the labor movement---(laughing)---

Mr. Raker. Now listen just a moment. You have laughed. I want the record to show that it appears that you took it as a joke when I referred to the Committee of One Hundred. What do you mean by that?

Mr. Kerr. I mean this---

Mr. Raker (interposing). Now just a moment. What do you mean by that? And is it your opinion that the Committee of One Hundred is not representing law and order and the enforcement of the law in East St. Louis now? Now answer my question.

Mr. Kerr. I suppose I am on this witness stand as a labor representative.

Mr. Raker. No, sir; not at all. I am examining you as a citizen, because you have said that you were on the street here for days, up and down every day, and it seemed to me when you took the stand there was no better man has taken the stand here that could tell the facts than you; to give the actual conditions. That is what I am examining you for, because of your knowledge of conditions.

Mr. Kerr. Well you have asked that my laugh be placed upon the record there. I am going to explain that laugh. It is the laugh that is going to be in the record. In the

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first place, there is no feeling or anything but the very bitterest of feeling that exists between the Chamber of Commerce and the organized labor.

Mr. Baker. Well, that is absolutely new to me.

ooo Mr. Kerr. Well, I am going to bring it in. They are organized for no other purpose in the world than to beat down, crush down and eliminate organization from the ranks of labor. Now then, here is why the laugh: The Chamber of Commerce stepped in here after the riots and said they were going to take hold of this city. They were going to do things right on the jump. They were going to throw the Mayor into the Mississippi or send him down to the Gulf of Mexico or some place. They were going to move everybody out of the City Hall and turn the town upside down. They appointed a Committee of One Hundred citizens of this town. Cooney Reeb, the president--- now President of the Chamber of Commerce--- appointed these hundred committee. You get this?

Mr. Baker. I do.

Mr. Kerr. After they get the Hundred Committee properly organized, they then step out from under and says, "we go no further, but the Hundred Committee will now take hold". And still these fellows are underneath here with the wires pulling that Hundred Committee. That was why I wanted to explain to you why the laugh. It wasn't any disrespect for this court or any feeling that there was any joke at all, but it seemed so funny to me that you should ask the question from me in that manner.

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Mr. Baker. Well, I didn't know it, and I don't believe any of the committee did, and when you laughed it gave me such an opportunity to have you give the facts as you know.

So you feel now that the Committee of One Hundred is not representative?

Mr. Kerr. They are not representative, no. They are representing the Chamber of Commerce. They are not representing the people. They represent the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Baker. Then the people aren't getting represented at all?

Mr. Kerr. The people aren't getting represented at all. You are right, correct.

Mr. Cooper. You saythat man's name is Cooney Reeb?

Mr. Kerr. His name is Conrad Reeb.

Mr. Johnson. The committee will stand adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning. You will please come back, Mr. Kerr.

(Whereupon, at 5.35 o'clock p.m., the committee adjourned until 10 o'clock a.m., Thursday, October 31, 1917).

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