

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Education Project

Education and World War II

O. H. 124

DONALD R. FORD

Interviewed

by

Jay Toth

on

June 3, 1979

## JUDGE DONALD R. FORD

Judge Donald R. Ford, age 47, is a life-time resident of Warren, Ohio. His father was Irish and his mother was of Polish descent. He was raised by his Polish maternal grandparents, who taught him to be bilingual and Roman Catholic. His maternal grandmother had the greatest influence on him. His mother worked at the Sunlight Plant, division of Packard Electric Company.

Judge Ford attended McKinley School in Warren. There was much racial bigotry in Warren at that time. The secondary schools were very good. The first school psychologist's advice has been his guideline. He feels that today the schools do not stress the basics.

Being on the school newspaper, he was persuaded not to publish an article that would reveal Massillon athletic violations. The person who put the pressure on was Mr. Mollenkopf.

His newspaper route was his big honor during school, as he received his route at an early age. He was a good baseball player and received several scholarships to major universities. His mother, who was ill, persuaded him to attend a small college in West Virginia called Bethany. He was president of the student body in his junior and senior years and was involved in several liberal changes in the school. From Bethany he went on to law school. Ford became Assistant

Prosecutor, then proceeded to become Municipal Judge. He was then elected to the Trumbull County Common Pleas Court, where he is serving his second term.

Jay Toth

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INTERVIEWEE: DONALD R. FORD  
INTERVIEWER: Jay L. Toth  
SUBJECT: Education and World War II  
DATE: June 3, 1979

T: This is an interview with Judge Donald R. Ford for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program by Jay Toth at 3564 Kimberly Drive, Warren Ohio on June 3, 1979 at 1:00 p.m.

The subject is education and World War II.

I'd like to start with kindergarten and work our way up from there.

F: Well, I suspect for purposes of your tape you'd want to indicate that I am Judge Ford here in Warren, Ohio I would think as a predicate. And I would indicate that I have been a lifelong Warren resident. I was born here and into a family ethnic situation in which my father was of Irish ethnic background and my mother of Polish. My father passed away early in my life and I was essentially raised by my mother and my maternal grandparents who were both from Poland.

I suppose, like many in my age category who were born in the early years of the Depression, we had a great deal of ethnic kind of involvement in the family circle and in the religious fabric. I was baptized and confirmed a Roman Catholic but my grandparents on my mother's side were members of the Polish National Church.

So I spent a great deal of time with my maternal grandmother as a preschooler since my mother was one of the fortunate people who did work in the Depression years at the Sunlight Plant which was later acquired and purchased by the Packard Electric division of General Motors in the

late 1930's and as a result of that kind of early family structure, I was bilingual. In my years in starting public school in Warren, they did not offer a kindergarten program or preschool program. I attended McKinley School on Elm Street in Warren and I can recall as, I'm sure, many youngsters, particularly in that time frame and an earlier one, found myself thinking in Polish and responding in class to the daily recitation process in Polish rather than in English.

And I can remember a kind of chastisement from my first grade teacher whose name was Miss Jones and the type of trauma that I underwent when she chastised me for speaking in that other language. I remember going home one day quite despondent and telling my grandparents I wouldn't speak that language anymore. There was a mild kind of furor in the home circle over that. Nonetheless, I attended elementary school all six years at McKinley.

That particular area of Warren was not integrated and I remember early in my years, the exposure to discrimination, and I think I was in about third grade when a black family moved into the Larchmont area. We lived on Larchmont, and then later on Laird between Hollywood and Edgewood, and how badly treated those youngsters were by the other contemporaries of mine in the school structure, that caused that family to move after being there for about a year, a year and a half.

I recall, at that time, that we had an excellent type of elementary program and school program in Warren. H.B. Turner, the Superintendent of schools, although the gentleman was very soft-spoken and suffered from a malady that had him appear as though he was sleeping in his chair in later years. Apparently, he was an outstanding educator and I think, looking back at the cosmopolitan makeup of Warren as it was, the school system was excellent, perhaps still is for that matter so far as the secondary school system is concerned.

We had a refined music program, for example, separate music teacher from grades one through six housed right within our grade school. We had band involvements starting at the first grade level. Mr. Corlett, who was the supervisor of instrumental music in Warren, travelled to all of the elementary schools and he had one day that was assigned for a few hours for that kind of exposure and training and we went into writing, fundamentals and very simple scores of music as well as the instrumental training that augmented any private type of training or teaching that the family might supplement on its own with any given youngster.

We had art taught in the same manner as music, where a separate teacher was available. We had a separate art class and crafts class, I think, from fourth through sixth grade with some basic exposure to very basic principles of mechanical drawing at that level.

I recall that our type of education exposure stressed grammar at an early time, I believe from the fourth through the sixth grade we received--compared to what I would believe today, a much better fundamental exposure to basic grammar and language in the English renderings that we received.

T: You say much better in what fashion?

F: I think that grammar was stressed, and I hate to use this reference of "back to basics." I think basics have always been taught in the school system but I think the basic language tools were emphasized with all students regardless of how they feathered out as you progressed through the grades to the high school so that the basics of how to write a business letter for example, something that almost everyone would have to do regardless of whether or not they administrated a small or a large business, applications for work, that type of thing. I think our exposure started at a much earlier age and I think our generation, as a consequence, is much better skilled than the current generation and my frame of reference is in hiring young ladies, for example, who come and do the secretarial work and clerical work; have done well in school academically by their grade quotients but lack the skills that my contemporaries universally had, at least to a much better degree.

I remember one other type of thing that happened with me that stands out in my mind by way of the sign of the times--if you will. After the Second, or, at or about the time the Second World War broke out, we had some German families emigrate into our area and with the strong feeling against the Germans existing then, again we had a situation where these youngsters were extremely badly treated by contemporaries of mine because they were from Germany, with little thought given to the fact that they came here to escape the very tyranny of that country. But it was another lesson I learned very early in life about human nature. We didn't have Japanese families here as I recall, but we did have a number of German families and these youngsters underwent a tremendous resentment, bad treatment by way of verbal vulgarities on a constant kind of basis, beatings by way of fights by older children with them or larger children

within the same class structure. And that really didn't subdue until the war was about over and getting into junior high where I think maturity started to set in a little bit more when the war coming to an end ameliorated that with a few of those families that remained in our Warren area. It was a difficult time for those youngsters, and I remember that quite vividly.

As a youngster growing up through the Second World War and coming out of the Depression, I remember a good, good many things. Things that families did then, the cohesiveness of the family units because of a lack of money and work. Although the times were difficult, I think most people who lived through that, in part, would acknowledge that there were values that existed in the time of travail that we've lost through years and years of prosperity, increased liberalism, permissiveness - if you will, divorce rates increasing substantially, crime rates. In small-town America, we had very little of that kind of thing. People responded to basic values. They lived basic values so much more. The family unit was so much more integral. The church kind of unit was much more dramatically involved in everyone's lives. And people grew up faster I think, too. They had to shoulder responsibilities earlier.

As we got into this crisis period in the Second World War, scrap drives were one of the things. Of course, the country was caught up with much greater feeling of support for the war effort than they had then, particularly when compared with Vietnam action. People, by and large, were much more patriotic at that time. The elements were there for that type of feeling but as a young person, you'd be involved in going out on paper drives, scrap drives at school, that was a kind of sign of the times. Bond sales and saving stamps sales were encouraged through the school, so that youngsters felt they were part of the war effort even though they were not old enough to go--in my age group--to participate actively.

But some of my near contemporaries, for example, at that time, to carry a Tribune route, to have a Tribune route, carry newspapers almost always during the latter part of the Depression, first part of the Second World War, you almost had to be a junior and senior in high school to have that newspaper route and that was quite an honor for a young man to carry papers at that time. They used to walk with the bag and throw them from the sidewalks in Warren onto the porches of houses. Well, in my time, I got a Tribune route much earlier and a Vindicator Sunday route much earlier than I would have

because boys that start to approach fifteen or sixteen were working in plants around here after school before they went to the service. Certain young men--if memory serves me correctly--could get into the Merchant Marine at age sixteen with parental consent and seventeen with parental consent in the other armed services if memory serves me correctly. And there were those young men who fudged their age and perhaps weren't happy at home or school and went into the service at fifteen or sixteen.

But it was nothing to see young men at that time, go to school during the day time, work afternoon turn in one of the plants around here full shift. Some of the requirements were waived that we have, so far as Child Labor Laws simply because of the need for manpower on the homefront, so to speak, in production work.

It was a different time. Rationing, I remember, and although some people obviously abused the rationing program, by and large, most of the people around whom you lived, honored the rationing programs and did not get involved in black-marketeering. There was a strong sense of patriotism on that. Very few people really, as a matter of fact, in my time, my area here in Warren apparently abused those things, either the gas rationing or food rationing whatever.

I recall the tremendous excitement, not so much on VE Day [Victory-in-Europe] Day but I carried papers and I remember the extras that came out when Roosevelt passed away in April of 1945. People waiting along the streets, running out from their houses to get the papers. The papers were so heavy that the area that I covered was four, well actually it was about five or six major streets but it was an extensive walk and I had to get a wagon, as most of us did and carry them in units in the wagon because they were so heavy and go back to the high school corner. By Harding High School is where our papers were dropped for our area of Warren at that time. It took me about three hours to deliver the papers.

People, regardless of their political points of view and I, even as a young man, you knew who the Republicans were on your streets and you knew who the Democrats were. That was just the kind of thing people knew more about I suspect, at that time. The tremendous feeling of loss on that day is very vivid in my mind. It's as if America stood still for a day or two in tribute to F.D.R. The country came back together quickly but it was a tremendous emotional impact on the country. In some ways



perhaps, not literally as strong in my memory, that is, the comparison to President Kennedy's assassination but it took on that tone and it was something where people, regardless of how they felt about F.D.R.'s political philosophy, the New Deal philosophies, they felt the tremendous depression and sadness and a concern about where our country was going to go.

Little was known nationally or in our area about Harry Truman at that time when he came into office and there were a lot of misgivings about him comparing him to F.D.R., who was such an eloquent speaker and such a dynamic personality and who had permeated our scene through the Depression and the Second World War so much. He was ubiquitous in his involvement in every corner of America. That stands out.

VE Day of course, people were relieved particularly if their loved ones were in the European Theater of action. Again I can remember the papers at that time. They were again, heavy, same routine of carrying them in a wagon rather than the normal sack because of their weight.

I believe I have just been commenting on VE Day. As I say, people were pleased, happy and relieved. Those that had loved ones in Europe, particularly in the European Theater of action were greatly relieved but there of course was talk about service men from Europe being transferred to the Pacific so people weren't left in any state of thinking or a mental condition that the war was over because you have to recall that at that time, the general public had no notion or inkling of any calamitous type of weapon like the atomic bomb. So the Japanese manifested no real intention--as it was fed back to the news media--to capitulate, so that the public still knew that there was considerable effort to be put into the war in order to bring it to a conclusion.

Although things were progressing, as history shows us, quite well, or at least in the Pacific Theater, the allies were on the move so to speak in regaining the land territories archipelagos, the islands, the cities that had been taken by the Japanese through the early part of the war.

So, that we went along into August and of course, I can remember again, papers, extras with the atomic bomb and not really understanding the headlines. What was the atomic bomb? People were mystified. They just didn't comprehend what this thing was and morally, from a moral point of view, the Americans thought this was tragic but they hadn't had enough feedback when the first bomb was

dropped or the second one, Nagasaki and Hiroshima. They just didn't understand what this was other than perhaps "blockbuster" was the term used for the larger destructive capacity of the conventional type of bomb and many had the impression this was a larger form of that. They just didn't understand the nuclear fission involved here, the radioactive harm that would go on for years, devastation to a civilian population.

Although, I think many people had empathy, they also felt, the Japanese attacked us, the Germans had slaughtered people unnecessarily in concentration camps, exterminated so many Jewish people throughout Europe. They weren't consumed with that much sympathy, as you might by comparison have exhibited today if the same thing were done. The realities of nuclear warfare, hydrogen warfare, bacteriological warfare, these things have become much more knowledgeable to the average person in the last thirty or forty years, ever since the conclusion of the Second World War through thirty-five years than they were to the public at that time. So the moral views at that time were entirely different than they would be today by comparison. That's a very vivid comparison. I think one that most thinking people would share.

I then can recall when VJ-Day [Victory-over-Japan Day] occurred. I was playing baseball in the city league over behind Frances Willard School and we heard this tremendous outpouring of shotgun discharges near the Trumbull Home area and horns tooting and what-not that I do recall. But it finally got to us that the war was over and I think it was about six thirty in the evening, quarter to seven when that came and I don't have to tell you that the game stopped at that point and we were on bicycles, those of us from around the Elm Street, McKinley school area here, and I can recall it took two or three times as long to ride the bicycles back to our home area and to catch up with our home people. Streets were clogged with people. Everyone seemed to want to go downtown. Downtown of course, was the hub of activity and when we got the word, that's where everybody was going. You didn't have to talk to too many people. People were just walking that way. Cars were out and everybody was heading for town. We went to Warren and the streets were crowded. People were very open in their emotions and happiness and ecstasy, whatever descriptive adjectives you can bring to mind. People were embracing each other openly on the streets and showing signs of affection, kissing, hugging and singing. So this type of occurrence was as much part of smaller town America as it was in

Times Square. I would not be able to estimate how many people were downtown but I've lived here all my life and in the downtown area, when we've had large assemblages, I have never and perhaps never will ever see as many people in the Warren downtown area as we had. The streets were literally clogged. It was as if you were coming out of a ball game where you were wall to wall people and moving in accord and you really didn't have the ability to change directions. You went with the crowd. Near some of the taverns and saloons, people were imbibing too much, doing rumba dances out on the streets, snake dances and that kind of thing. I remember that. I remember that very clearly.

I can recall within a few days then of VJ-Day so to speak that gas rationing was brought to a conclusion and people were thinking how soon the food would be taken off where they could buy things that they hadn't been able to purchase for a long time and how soon all of the boys would be coming home, young men from families, and women who were in the service in different theaters of action. And they were explaining to us the point systems and how people would be processed out of the service and how soon you could expect your loved ones by that criteria, to be home and discharged. So that was a great moment in our history.

I am told by my contemporaries it far surpassed the reaction concluding the First World War. People were just plain happy, just plain relieved and they looked forward to being able to buy cars for example, hadn't been able to buy a car for a number of years. People were going on used parts, fabricated parts and all that sort of thing.

But all of those things didn't happen that quickly. The adjustment from the end of the active portion of the war had problems and I think that our leadership in this country anticipated some of the mistakes of the First World War and that predicated the G.I. Bill for example, so they didn't have as many young veterans coming immediately onto the labor market. As I look back, when I was in college and had that explained better, as a young person in high school thought it was just a real veteran's bonus that was motivated purely by good feeling and a moral commitment, but it was as much if not more, an economic step to prevent mass unemployment and a recession of great dimension. Keep a lot of these young people off the market by encouraging them to go on to college education, vocational training, that sort of thing. It made good sense along with the benefits it

obviously provided. It augmented a new era, the ability for so many more people to be exposed to formal education that never would have had the opportunity without that. But it was a grand time to live after the Second World War.

We did have some recession setbacks. They had a National Steel strike of some consequence. There were other problems that we were mindful about at the end of the war. The attitudes against Communism became very strong obviously, which led to the McCarthy period, McCarthy type of attitude. But the adjustments took place. We were a much more worldly people and a lot of people were far less willing to accept the types of locked-in conditions that were obtained through the Depression and after the First World War. They demanded more. They wanted more. We felt we were entitled to it and our country had tremendous economic growth through that period. Really we haven't had any economic recessions of great consequence since the Second World War. We've had probably the longest continuous period of economic prosperity that the world has ever known. And I don't speak as an economist, that's just pragmatic observation comparing it to my very early years.

High school was a different kind of period. At that time, we had so many veterans who were attending high school, to finish up high school credits or needed more kinds of exposure in order to qualify for certain fields in college. I can recall that we probably had two or three hundred veterans attending Harding High School when I was there after junior high school after the war, entering Harding in the fall of 1946. And I can remember some mild resentment when some nineteen year old veterans came back to play ball and kind of blocked some of the younger people out of an opportunity to play ball in the tenth grade or so because they were back on the scene and that kind of thing at that time.

Looking specifically at the type of high school I attended, Harding at that time, again, was a cosmopolitan high school, drew people from all over the community. Very few people from Warren at that time left for prep school exposure. And I kind of felt that was an excellent kind of situation in which to go to high school, particularly by way of hindsight or retrospect. We had loose tracking and I always appreciated that. It was not funnel tracking as I would refer to it today. If you wanted to sign up for a course, you were permitted to, you had the opportunity to flunk, and they didn't have it all worked out from seventh grade that so-and-so would be taking solid geometry or calculus or whatever

by twelfth grade as they do in some of our systems around here today and that's always been kind of negative to me.

We did have a remedial situation. It was labeled "remedial" but within the academic framework. If you were a remedial student and you wanted to sign up, you were able to sign up, you were to take a class and I was appreciative of that because by and large I found that students learned as much from other students if not more sometimes and some of the more demanding disciplines than they would from a good teacher necessarily, on occasion. And some students who are close friends with them through a given course rendering. And there was less looking down your nose at somebody that didn't have the same grade achievement or perhaps wasn't enrolled expressly in the academic subjects per se.

I mention this because I have watched my youngsters go through the Howland School System here and I have not been a proponent of tracking. As a matter of fact, I gave a commencement speech at Lordstown High School here last Friday night and I had attended one of my son's graduations at Dennison University and Reverend William Sloan Coffin was the principal speaker there. He asked one of the basic questions of the graduates or one of the questions he asked was, "Who tells you who you are?" His theme being: institutions, pedagogues, money, power, et cetera, should not tell you who you are. You should be able to determine yourself what your achievement level will be and have more to do with your destiny than being labeled in a school situation which I think is extremely negative.

Ours, as I say, was not an expressed tracking situation and one which I think, provided a kind of atmosphere in which you participated in the learning exercises with less snobbery and less inclination to look down your nose at somebody that wasn't taking let's say Cicero or another language entry or Creative English as we had at that time or a number of the other so-called more demanding academic subjects.

I would mention to you in that connection that because of the Korean War which followed, a number of my contemporaries in my class who took the remedial offerings as I suspect, some of those who went through the Second World War situation in coming from high school in that period of time from the Warren area and anywhere in this country. I have followed my class pretty

closely and I will tell you that from our remedial and as my high school class showed subsequent to graduation from our so-called remedial course programs, we have individuals who were in these programs who have been real achievers. One is presently the assistant superintendent of the Atlanta City School System which is supposed to be one of the largest and most demanding public school systems in the country. We have two lawyers with whom I am acquainted. We have at least three or four engineers and just a host of people who have lived around the Warren area who are in supervision and industry and have responsible jobs, demanding jobs, who came from that kind of tracking grouping, albeit a loose one.

That always reinforced my notion that tracking as it's practiced in, for example, Howland Systems and other systems around here that reinforce the so-called gifted youngster, doesn't really accomplish a whole lot other than perhaps leave psychological scars on a number of students who would otherwise, with a different philosophy, never find themselves in a negative mental posture and outlook about life. And that comes back to what I said that theme was at the commencement speech, which I underscored on my own. Who tells you who you are? You have to be able to tell yourself who you are.

If you've had a lack of a combination of maturation, interest, combining whatever your abilities are come together at a given point of life, they may very well come together at a little later point of your life and if you have a proper psychological attitude and if the school provides one for you, I think your ability to achieve is greatly enhanced rather than negatived, inhibited or limited. That's a thing that I feel kind of strong about.

My high school years of course, were in I think, a period where people were still strongly inclined to feel they were true professionals, very dedicated about teaching. I don't say that we don't have dedicated teachers today, but I think we've lived a different time span where because of the upheaval, the lack of support in the state of Ohio for example, for secondary education, that you don't have to be too bright an observer or too keen an observer to understand that these forces are negative and that a good many young people today that have to think three or four times about wanting to go into secondary teaching. The financial rewards are not commensurate with the school requirements and the career preparation and I have to feel therefore that they are

going to be less professional in their attitudes.

It isn't enough just to keep school doors open because that begs the question that our mentality seems to be today, pass the levy-keep the door open. How much do you improve what goes on inside the doors by merely reaching or keeping your head above water so to speak, on the bottom line or bottom table of operation? We substantively have to be weakening our programs in the school systems in the state and in this country with that kind of mentality. Our priorities are completely out of kilter compared to the Depression years in that regard and the years soon after the war.

I would think too, that there in that time period, there was a kind of situation in which the philosophy of life was something you I think imparted from teachers because of their professionalism and their broader involvement in being a primary element in the student's view toward life, what he was going to take up or attempt to take up.

I can remember being a recipient, my mother was ill in the hospital about two and a half years out of my four years from ninth through twelfth grade and didn't work but about three months during that four year period of time. So I was the recipient of a great deal of empathy and support from certain teachers at Harding, particularly a counselor whom I didn't have in class Miss Mary Duck. She was a psychologist at the school, one of the first there, being involved in writing testing programs for college entrance requirements et cetera, our state senior examination sheets and exams what-not. And she saw fit to spend a great deal of time with me and we hit the notion of developing a philosophy for life and I learned early to be appropriately expressive about conveying thanks for many of the nice things that came my way during that period of time. I often said, "I don't know how I'll ever be able to repay you." She provided me with a part of my life philosophy. She always indicated that it was very important for a person to have framed a philosophy of life and I suspect that the home, the family and the church had much to do with anyone's philosophy but she certainly provided a substantial portion of the basis of my own. She said, "Aside from being appreciative and going on and trying to do your best with the assistance that you have and will receive, your responsibility therefore, and a part of what your heritage ought to be is always to remember to try to help another young person and many young people who are similarly situated or will be similarly situated as you are at this time," speaking of my high school

years. And it is kind of a thing that I've tried to remember.

I don't think that kind of thing is the kind of thing you want to get an eagle badge for or merit badge everytime you try to be kindly toward young people and a lot of it should be done in the spirit of anonymity but it is an important part of my philosophy. I'll never be a wealthy human being by anyone's standards but I feel that is a great richness in giving a little bit of support and help, encouragement, lending my chemistry to aid young people is a very important part of my life. So that certainly is a part of the philosophy that I received.

I think the teachers then were concerned with being helpful. They kept up contact with people individually, with good students in their given class, particularly if the person went on in an area in life stemming from their particular teaching input. A lot more than I see with my youngsters today by way of comparison. So, it was a good time to go to high school I think, anywhere in this country. We had a lot of excellent teachers who were indeed, committed, professionally to that calling and who took great pride in their student's achievements.

T: Just for the record, when you spoke of this psychologist and that you help younger people, I want to say that you helped me a lot. Okay?

F: Well I helped you a little bit. I tried to, let's put it that way. That was something, if I haven't told you that before Mary Duck . . . you have to picture it: I had no father, my mother was sick, didn't know whether she was going to die at that time. I didn't have any money and I was committed to her to go to college. I didn't know how I was going to get through. And I can remember a lot of people being nice by way of providing summer work opportunities for me and scholarship help that I got in high school with a little one here and a little one there and a little one here. They all went together, plus the scholarship programs that became available to me through her.

I went on to college and while I was going I would come back and tell her that I wanted to do something nice for her. I wanted to get her something. She would pooh-pooh that all of the time and she would repeat just what I've told you here. "There are those who have been helpful to you. Your way of paying them back is to be helpful to other young people." And I've tried to live by that.



I really have. I'm not a phony-baloney, at least I hope I'm not when it comes to trying to be helpful to young people because I lived that in my own life. I know what it was to get a helping hand. Whether it was through words, conversation, whether it was direct reference, whether it was a two hundred dollar scholarship, those things all helped me get to where I wanted to go and what I wanted to be and without that kind of support, I wouldn't have gotten there. And a lot of young people always will need that kind of thing, a word of encouragement, maybe someone to help open the door a little bit, just a crack, enough for them to get their foot in the door, all of those things, they're pretty important and it is important. She's the one that really stressed that with me. She really got that across to me.

- T: Since we're on the subject of high school and education, you had a case where parents were feeling that books were . . . what? I think it was Western Reserve or something like that?
- F: The whole city school system, yes, that one book was a violation of their first amendment right to religion, free speech, parental right to raise their children, well actually, the first amendment: freedom. Freedom Frontiers I think, was the name of the book, a textbook in Warren. It was quite an explosive topic for a while. They had that about two years ago.
- T: Can you elaborate on what the book had said and what the parents felt was offensive about it?
- F: Well, I have to think about that one for a minute. I'll tell you what we'll do, why don't you leave that one and later on, what we'll do, lets finish the bulk of this tape.
- T: Okay.
- F: Of course, growing up in Warren, I would say that football mania was just as strong in our geography then as it is perhaps now at least with Harding, and Niles, and Massillon and Canton McKinley kind of fever that has continued. That has kind of been a hallmark of our specific geography and I don't suspect that as long as time goes on and football is played that that will ever change.

There were a lot of positive things about the active football programs in our schools, a lot of negative things too. I saw a lot of our products of that who tried to live on

being a high school football hero for the rest of their lives - in a little sad situation. The excessive emphasis on the football program certainly doesn't leave us with all positive results. I think it's a stem, largely, from the area.

In my time, Massillon, of course, abused this whole thing to the point where people over here felt we had to compete with them. And I can remember when I was sports editor of the high school newspaper at Harding, that I had written an article that I felt, because at the time, it was reported to me by Massillon students when I went to Hi-Y camp, there weren't any football players there and every major school around here had some athletes there but Massillon didn't. Well, the cheerleaders there informed me that they were all up in Canada supposedly working in lumber camps but they were working out in June and July on football. I followed with some interest the kind of progressions with Massillon scores at the beginning of any season, they would be clobbering people seventy, eighty to nothing, that kind of thing. But as the season wore on, if they met a formidable opponent like Warren even though they might beat them or Canton McKinley, they didn't destroy them. I often wondered if Warren had played Massillon, or Canton had, at the beginning of the season whether the scores wouldn't have been more lopsided, but so be it.

When I wrote the article, I felt major schools like us should just boycott Massillon for a few years till they brought their programs into order and cut out this act of recruiting of bringing parents up to the Republic Steel structure and offering them better jobs from Alabama and Indiana, if they had junior high athletes that were outstanding and they did do that. There's no question about their abuses of this kind of thing. They did have excellent coaching and players but they also abused things and were not brought to task.

The A.P. editor of the sports in Ohio was a Massillon area resident and he did little if any to expose this kind of abuse. The athletic commissions at that time were apparently inclined to look the other way at those kinds of abuses. And I can recall the pressure put on me to not submit that article in the name of not stirring a tempest in the teapot and I finally acceded under the pressures to change the article somewhat. I wonder how that would come off today? I remember Milton Mollenkopf was an outstanding high school principal and we dearly loved and respected the pedagogue.

Intertwining his logic in the discussion he had with me on that subject, he felt since I played ball that I would understand that these things should be resolved on the playing field and not through debates which were excathedral, so to speak, out of the direct line of athletic competition.

Be that as it may, my high school years were enjoyable. I was involved with student activities, student body president. I was national secretary of the American Junior Red Cross. I had a lot of wonderful opportunities that came to me as a young person through our extracurricular program, athletics as well as the academic side. I thoroughly enjoyed my high school years here.

My mother was again, still bedfast when I was entering college. I had wanted to go to a few schools where I had an opportunity to combine scholarships to continue with baseball. At Harding I had played on a team that was runner-up in state baseball in the finals which would be like a triple A division and I had been selected the Outstanding American Legion Baseball Player in Trumbull County one year. So I liked the game, enjoyed it, and was fairly decent, a fairly decent player. I realized my physical limitations and had no illusions about trying professional ball but I had had excellent offers at Ohio University, Miami of Florida, Tulane University of Louisiana, Arizona and Duke, all of which were outstanding college baseball teams at the time.

My mother was led my Miss Duck and Joe Ross who was the executive secretary of the YMCA here, and a few others, to go to a small school and avoid all of the bad influences of the so-called devil's pits and I acceded because of her health and to her request and went to Bethany College in Bethany, West Virginia. There, I went about a pre-law kind of program. I was active in student affairs and I performed adequately academically and I really enjoyed my college years. They were of course, have been postured as the conservative years, the conservative students of the fifties. I don't know as all of that labeling is so accurate.

I found, when I entered college, I was seventeen years of age. The average age of male students on campus was, I think, somewhere between 26 to 28 years of age. This was still the G.I. period, and the GI's predominated, as in the makeup of any school or institution at that time. And I think ours was the last class at that time

to have a higher number of entering students who were not coming directly out of high school, in other words, made up still by a larger percentage of veterans in the post-war era. So you found with college campuses, and ours was a typical one with male students in their mid, late twenties, many of whom were married already starting families. On campus, wives were perhaps going to school. It was a wonderful time to go to college. You had the ability to "rap"--in today's terms--with young men that had seen a lot of life through the Second World War and the post-war period. It made you grow up much faster. You had to mature around that atmosphere. And you found a tremendous interest in education for education's sake alone. Grades were important and people still competed in that respect but there was a far greater awareness of what you were doing by way of learning, improving your skills, your ability to think.

I can remember the discussions among these veterans groups and being involved with them as a young freshman and sophomore. The manner in which they would literally devour any course, the interaction between majors in different fields who would spend a great deal of time talking with other people about what they were taking, basic exposure, a tremendous awareness of what they were going to be doing, what they wanted to do when they got out of school.

And I can remember the tremendous clash that occurred in our school and in talking to other contemporaries of mine, it was happening all over the United States in colleges and universities at that time when, I'd say by the time I was a junior in 1952 or a senior in 1953, that where we were now seeing a situation where the percentages had changed with the number of people coming directly from high school; how much more immature they seemed to us who would perhaps only be one or two or three years older chronologically, than they. The different sense of values, the abrasiveness that happened within the school structure because of that. In the fraternity I belonged to, it was almost as if you were from two different worlds, so to speak, and that was a significant, sociological kind of thing that was occurring at that time.

T: What was the name of the fraternity?

F: I belonged to the Sigma Nus at Bethany and ours was not a situation in which quote, unquote: "rah-rah" in their impact. Almost ninety-five percent of the people at



him then they would have other exceptions - ingrained.

I make mention of that because of the fact that many church related institutions in this country today do not any longer--as I understand it--require chapel in the same way, or convocation as they did in my time which had been a tradition for one hundred years or more in our country at the time. And I can recall then, refusing to attend chapel services myself because of the symbolic meaning of that situation with this young man and it was at the risk of not being able to graduate myself. I felt very strongly about this and I did not try to make a crusade out of it in a sense of involving all other students on campus in it, but I did pick up some minor support.

You have to think in terms of the fact that Bethany was a school in 1917. Everyone tells me in 1918, after the war, the seniors went on strike, so to speak, because they were against ROTC being maintained on Bethany's campus. Nearly all of the graduating class of, I think, 1919 or thereabouts did not graduate. Very few of them got their degrees. So there was a predicate rebellion at Bethany and I can recall being warned by the president, dean of faculty and dean of students and emissaries of the board that unless I ceased and desisted my attitude on this and my boycott that I would do it at the risk of not receiving my degree and not receiving recommendations to law school. So it wasn't a light kind of matter but I was, I think, somebody who had an ear to the ground swell.

As an earlier example, I was president of student body too. We, at that time, the student board of governors there selected the editor of the school newspaper and one was, in effect, put on carpet because a number of students complained that he was too acerbic--he was from New York, later he became associate editor of the New York Post--in his grammar reviews. And I remember my chairing that particular situation in which there was a campus move to have him removed. I was negative to it and it brought in the news media and wire services were all in attendance at that meeting. I stuck up for him and I refused to honor the action of the student board of governors when they voted to have him removed as editor. Although I didn't agree with much of his writing, I thought it was pretty fundamental and the right of free speech was inherent and the right to criticize was inherent and the thing that should be done is let

him finish his semester and then come to the selection of another person. He kind of made it easier for me because he then resigned after I refused to have him removed and he transferred from Bethany at that time. But that was the kind of example that I'm talking about, about upheaval and following the line, so to speak.

The upshot of this was, having had that experience, one other one that I'll mention to you as antecedent to this situation. One of the other ones was that we had had a tradition at Bethany, the singing three hundred for one hundred years. They also planted the arboretum and the students did this and they used to take a day off school. The college had made some money out of some strip mining activity across from our main campus and as, unfortunately was the rule, rather than the exception, the mining company had left the hillsides torn and they did not go back in and do the reclaiming work that they should have and it was a tremendous eyesore. So, as president of the student body at the time, I took the initiatives with the Department of Resources in West Virginia to get seedlings and plan a day to have the student body go out and replant these hillsides. The president called me in and said, "Well, we're not going to have a day off school. We don't believe in that." I said, "Well now, here you've advertised the rich traditions of Bethany, one of which you've always told us about. I've heard it at least one hundred times from you since I've been here at gatherings: that students cooperated in planting the beautiful flora and the trees and what-not around this to beautify the campus and they used to take off school to do this and have kind of a picnic and it was a big fun thing." And I said, "You're telling us now, we can't take off a half of a day when we've already set the day. You didn't negative it when I went through the steps to have it put on the student calender, which gave us the impression that it was, in a tacit kind of way, approved. Now, two days away, you're telling us we can't do this. We're doing it on a day when there are the least number of students affected, when there are the least number of classes in session. We're not ordering students to be there. It's a voluntary kind of thing."

He stepped out of the office and I couldn't help seeing a letter that he had had prepared. It was addressed to the board of trustees of the college in which he was announcing his retirement, which was a complete surprise. There had been no forewarning of this. When he came

back in--I have to say that I learned something about bargaining at that time--I suggested to him that without intentionally doing it, I had observed something on his desk and I gathered it was a matter that he wished to keep privy at that point of time, but I kind of thought since I was a kind of clarion of the college that I ought to tell everybody about this profound news that was forthcoming. Don't you know--we had our day! And we planted several thousand trees which now, of course, are beautiful, majestic and have just beautified this entire mountain. That topography across from the main campus of Bethany, I take great pride in that.

I give you those two examples as predicate to the situation with the Moslem student. He then was placed in this posture and I suggested to these good people that if they were going to continue in an unreasonable kind of approach to things, that part of the educational thrust was to learn the value of rights, the obligation to respect rights under our law. And that I would certainly be happy and not adverse if they felt that negative to my position, in citing the 1919 class, that I could certainly take it up with the news media.

I said, "I think we're taught here." One of the best teachers I had there was an outstanding national authority Forrest H. Kirkpatrick in Labor Relations, spent most of his life in the industrial world and labor world as a matter of compromise and I felt, certainly there must be some intelligent, imaginative kind of compromise that we could make, short of making this into a national kind of issue. And, with some additional chemistry then, we worked out a compromise for this situation which came down to having the Moslem student come into the convocation section of our main building. He would remain in the foyer, outside of the convocation hall so that he did functionally get there but he did not participate in whatever was going on in the chapel at convocation and that satisfied the college and it satisfied me and I went on to re-enter the chapel programs and obviously get my degree at Bethany.

I give you just those personalized examples that, to say that we were a generation of college students who fit in the mold, did whatever society prescribed for us. Whether it was the conservative kind of thing, I think, begs the question a little bit. We obviously didn't have the reason. We had come out of a war, going into the Korean war. Mentality, we were torn literally. In my years at Bethany, we had half of our male enrollment



taken out in a year, year and a half's time in the Korean conflict. It wasn't the kind of time that you were going to get into a state of rebellion about war. We were still too close to the Second World War mentality about containing communism and this was the thing that was necessary for us, as the fountainhead of democracy to do.

So I've always kind of not accepted those glib generalities that we were the generation of conformity. Our time was different. We had the potential for reaction and rebellion just as any generation does but we didn't have the occasion to do it in the same frame. But as I say, the time period again, it was a tremendous time from the standpoint of maturity, in college, to go to college, a very productive kind of thing to stress learning for learning's sake, the general interest and awareness in education and in all the callings and endeavors and professions. I thoroughly enjoyed those years. Those were tremendous years to go to college.

END OF INTERVIEW