

2-1-2023

Interview no. 1771

Estrada

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Estrada

Interviewer: IOH

Project: Farah

Location: El Paso, Tx

Date of Interview: N/A

Terms of Use: Unrestricted

Transcript No.: 1771

Transcriber: Roberto Cristoforo

Summary of Interview:

His last name is Estrada, he started working in 1966 and he worked in there for 5 years and in 1970 is where problems begging to occur. He says that he had to leave his job because it wants convenient for them to keep working in those conditions. He says that he did enjoyed doing his job and he will do the best that he could to improve the way he worked. He has never arrived late to any job and he was always compromised with whatever he did. He says that the most common injury to get in his department was getting burned in the hands and sometimes even fall because it was very dirty. He says that he never got into any problems with his coworkers or supervisors. The amount of work load and pressure they put in them it was unmanageably sometimes and they will get stressed. He says that one day many people will not go to work or they will leave early and around 200 employees left the company. He says that the union did helped him and they will give him help with rent and food. He says that he will get an extra 45 dollars to pay for rent, bills, food and medicines because he was coming from Ciudad Juarez to El Paso. He was relocated to the Westgate site and he was not too happy for that but he was given a card with a compensation to relocate. He says that he was working with other three thousand other workers at the new location, but he says that many people won't last more than 2 months because of the load of work. At the new location he and his coworkers will get into fights with the supervisor and they needed up going to jail several times. He says that many workers were Mexicans but not all of them, he says that he got his citizenship because he was born in the time where you could request and you will

be granted almost immediately. He says that the strike was a fight for right and many people joined the protests and they didn't even work for a company, but they knew they had to fight of equal rights of the workers. He says that those movements were to get the working quality they needed and improve other areas that had to be improved since a long time ago but they did nothing about it. The company promised thing to the workers that ended up not happening and they were mad because they trusted the company. He says that the raised the were promised was of 85cents and he got nothing, not even because of the strike. He was really mad at the super visors and he did nothing for some weeks because he needed the money but everyone was complaining about the promised they did. He says that the things they give them was the minimum such as increasing the amount of insurance but that wasn't enough for none of them. He says that more than 80 people just walked out of their job because they felt betrayed by the company, because things were supposed to change. Some of the people that did got a raise was the engineers but they already make a good wage and the people that needed it the most got nothing. He says that the company was supposes to give you a raise every 6 months or so but they gave them nothing and the prices were going up and many people barely make it at the end of the month, because they had to support their family and pay all of their bills and many other expenses that they had. He says that his salary of 3.50 dollars per hour wasn't enough because he had to make more than 850 pieces of the parts they manufactured and the pay did not match the huge amount of work and pressure, and they can't stop working or take breaks and every day they have to make more pieces. When there was any problem with production or a machine they will be blamed and had to make over for what they didn't do and that took a lot more effort from everyone. He says that many supervisors didn't do their job of supporting the employees they were just over them all of the time and the union did nothing about it. He says that overall the union did their job but they missed a lot of times and they did nothing about it.

Length of interview 1:01:59

Length of Transcript N/A