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Interview no. 1778

Herrera

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Herrera

Interviewer: IOH

Project: Farah

Location: El Paso, Tx

Date of Interview: n/a

Terms of Use: Unrestricted

Transcript No.: 1778

Transcriber: Roberto Cristoforo

Summary of Interview:

She said her husband worked for Farah, but they treated him very poorly, and were told to keep working with the bad conditions. All they could do was keep working, but eventually tired of the abuse. She says that his job at Farah included cutting metals that left a lot of metal debris, which were labor intensive and heavy jobs. She claims that before the union there was no one to turn to for help and his husband was part of the union. They believed a union would improve their situation, but it didn't work. When you were hired, supervisors watched over them to make sure you were doing your job properly, but sometimes they were intimidating and took too long to complete tasks. Farah fired many people for doing a lot of things that they shouldn't be doing even though it was extra work for them and they were just trying to help others. One day, her husband got molested by a supervisor for getting injured and the health care inside the factory was terrible. She believes this is due to the lack of materials for all kinds of medical surgeries and her husband can confirm this. There was a time when she said that her husband was planning to continue to work at the factory because they need to help ensure that their families have a place to

live and food. Many workers were reluctant to go on strike. I knew they could spend months without pay and many of them had dependents who needed money. The union and its bosses took action against many during the strike, fined them, and threatened to regret their participation, even though hundreds of people attended. She chooses not to go on strike for legal reasons, but insists the strike is necessary and will cover the costs because she stood up for their rights. She claims it wasn't easy to protest because those who didn't belong to Farah also suffered but couldn't quit their jobs. He claims he should get them, but his boss refuses to implement these raises, which is another reason for the strike. They were doing a huge amount of speculation and the company was not happy about this, but after the strike many people hoped to get pay raises and better working conditions. She argues that managers should provide guidance, but that they thought only of their own interests and did not support their employees. Farah argues that the strike was beneficial because he recognized the importance of workers, but Farah did not care about workers and was a place to challenge them. Women made up the majority of the workforce there, and they claimed that they were sometimes abused by their superiors. She thinks that it would be better for his husband to start working in another place. After the strike, many people were unemployed or without other forms of financial assistance. And for many employees with families, it was extremely stressful because they didn't know for how long they could support their family. The strike had minimal impact on the situation, but staff were finally able to achieve some adjustments after prolonged protests.

Length of interview 2:06:48

Length of Transcript n/a