

SPEAKER 1: Did you have Italians under you?

CRESCENZO: Yeah, I had three.

SPEAKER 1: You had just three Italians?

CRESCENZO: Three Italians.

SPEAKER 1: How about the non-Italians working under you, was there ever any resentment?

CRESCENZO: No.

SPEAKER 1: No resentment.

CRESCENZO: No, but [unintelligible - 00:00:27] understood as soon as we – I represented them before I became supervisor, chairman of the committee, the women’s committee for years. And they were all Norwegians, Germans, and... well, there were nine Norwegians and nine Swiss and [unintelligible - 00:00:44]. They’re evenly divided. That’s one, believe it or not. And they were all favorably identifiable.

SPEAKER 1: Okay.

CRESCENZO: All but one or two.

SPEAKER 1: So you had agreed in this committee that you were not organized formally from [unintelligible - 00:00:59] union?

CRESCENZO: Yeah, we were. We were, oh, yeah. Yeah, they organized in 1937, I think, or 38, [unintelligible - 00:01:12] union.

SPEAKER 1: So you had been active in union before you came to the [unintelligible - 00:01:16].

CRESCENZO: Yes, I represented them at the State Assembly, as a delegate.

SPEAKER 1: And these were not used against you in any way.

CRESCENZO: No.

SPEAKER 1: Were there any strikes [unintelligible - 00:01:27] in which you worked for the union?

CRESCENZO: No. We were close to a strike but I was able to prevent it.

SPEAKER 1: You did?

CRESCENZO: Mm-hmm.

SPEAKER 1: Did the company come across [unintelligible - 00:01:39]?

CRESCENZO: No. The state especially the state...

SPEAKER 1: State, yeah.

CRESCENZO: We went a lot of [unintelligible - 00:01:43] strike anyway, but they went and decided in Minneapolis and of course the local union was to go and [unintelligible - 00:01:51] I spoke to them. And they [unintelligible - 00:01:55] civilized through the economic union; they wouldn't kick me out of the union because it was too high. So you can see that I was quite [unintelligible - 00:02:05]. But I'm not [unintelligible - 00:02:07]. There's only with one or two, you know, that [unintelligible - 00:02:10] and I was hoping to get the job in south, and I was number two in the whole state in the examination. Number one was an attorney [unintelligible - 00:02:22] and worked for the state in Minneapolis and that's the reason for my being—I'm not bragging--in number two was longevity, seniority and then the [unintelligible - 00:02:38] veterans, you see, gave me 10 points. So I'd say seniority has – it took me up to number two.

SPEAKER 1: Let's talk about that a little bit. Did you ever work for Interlink Iron in Duluth?

CRESCENZO: No.

SPEAKER 1: You never did [unintelligible - 00:02:53]?

CRESCENZO: No. I worked there at the estate various times. In fact we had the – somebody raising up a quarterly and they had to [unintelligible - 00:03:07] and there was [unintelligible - 00:03:11] Interlink Iron.

SPEAKER 1: Were you aware of a strike there which occurred at one time in which Italians were asked to take the place of striking workers [unintelligible - 00:03:23] they were asked as staff?

CRESCENZO: I was here then. I don't think. Not since 1917 there has been a new strike. In fact, when the [same plant] had a strike, then the union strike, for the benefit from the race [unintelligible - 00:03:41] but they benefit from the [unintelligible - 00:03:54]

SPEAKER 1: Okay. Now, you did tell me at one time that you had to intercede on behalf of a couple of your Italian friends while working at Stanford, while you were **[unintelligible - 00:04:09]**.

CRESCENZO: Well, I **[unintelligible - 00:04:10]** seen it through one, like one I'm with the **[unintelligible - 00:04:14]** and of course he was a brother of my secretary **[unintelligible - 00:04:21]** estimation. And I had to lay him off because you can't become **[unintelligible - 00:04:30]** because of your life and the life of others. And for one, they want to disqualify him. A quarter to six months was up; you have a probationary period of six months in simple terms. And of course I interceded for him and I kept buying **[unintelligible - 00:04:55]** he got told [bad smart], couldn't get along with the others **[00:05:00]**. I couldn't keep him anymore. But I interceded for him.

SPEAKER 1: So this was not specifically a case of discrimination.

CRESCENZO: No.

SPEAKER 1: National wise?

CRESCENZO: No, no.

SPEAKER 1: In both cases.

CRESCENZO: Yeah, in both cases.

SPEAKER 1: So it was written?

CRESCENZO: It was written.

SPEAKER 1: But **[unintelligible - 00:05:15]**.

CRESCENZO: But I interceded for him anyway. I want to keep him. But **[unintelligible - 00:05:20]** I couldn't. He died while he was on the job and that's all **[unintelligible - 00:05:24]**.

SPEAKER 1: Now, when did you retire from the **[unintelligible - 00:05:29]**?

CRESCENZO: November... oh, no, really December 16. I had to take my vacation – 1957.

SPEAKER 1: 1957. And at that time you resumed your accounting career or you really had been doing it all along?

CRESCENZO: Oh, yeah, I was moonlighting.

SPEAKER 1: You were moonlighting all along. And at this time you've been a fulltime accountant?

CRESCENZO: Well, no. I had quite a few but I let some of them go and I got my service secured. In fact, I gave your dad about seven **[unintelligible - 00:06:01]**.

SPEAKER 1: So you've continued that work until very recently, haven't you, or are you still doing it?

CRESCENZO: Yeah.

SPEAKER 1: In this era, in this day and age, are you aware of any discrimination at all locally **[unintelligible - 00:06:18]** Italian that you – indeed you have a trace of your Italian **[unintelligible - 00:06:24]** since birth?

CRESCENZO: No. I have never been discriminated.

SPEAKER 1: Not discriminated?

CRESCENZO: In fact I got several Swiss and Norwegians that asked for my advice financially, even though they had kept books for. They sell the company **[unintelligible - 00:06:45]** and they had generally at the end of the year they've been **[unintelligible - 00:06:52]**.

SPEAKER 1: And now you said that when you first came to America, you found it was not quite the land of promise; it's not quite what you expected.

SPEAKER: 2: That's right.

SPEAKER 1: In the long run, has America been good to you?

CRESCENZO: Oh, yes. Oh yes, yes, and especially after **[unintelligible - 00:07:10]** two times. Although Italy is different today with all the inflation that they had and all the stuff that they had is really different from what I remember at the age of 16. I went to school **[unintelligible - 00:07:23]** till I was 60, eight days before I left. I left **[unintelligible - 00:07:27]** and I quit school on my birthday. My father was very, very poor. But he sacrificed and sent us to school. And, of course, I had the advantage of being the only one that succeeded in seniority, for the extent of my age. In other words, I couldn't go to university but I picked up fast. I loved school.

SPEAKER 1: Oh, I think they can see that. It's very evident in your knowledge of **[unintelligible - 00:08:11]**.

CRESCENZO: My knowledge at my age is **[unintelligible - 00:08:19]**.

SPEAKER 1: Pretty good.

CRESCENZO: Yeah.

SPEAKER 1: Okay, let me ask you this one last question: America has been good to the immigrants, what did the immigrants do for America in your opinion, especially the immigrants now **[unintelligible - 00:08:30]**?

CRESCENZO: In my opinion, they built America, they built America. All the construction, you should see where there is a nucleus of the region of the Italian immigrants. They built America, totally, especially the medicine, construction, railroads and the – in California especially, there are some very successful Italians and they worked hard.

SPEAKER 1: So the presence of the Italians is physically evident in the...

CRESCENZO: Evident, very evident, very evident, yeah.

SPEAKER 1: Mr. [Sander], thank you very much for your informative and interesting **[unintelligible - 00:09:15]**.

CRESCENZO: Oh okay. But it's not too informative. My memory, you know, confuses me sometimes.

SPEAKER 1: I can just [read] it.

CRESCENZO: Yeah, thank you./AT/ee