

C.C. Reader Interview With Mr. Paul

May 14, 1974

Questions directed to Mr. Paul by Fred Prouser and Bill Squires. Transcribed by Peg Dillon.

Q. Not recorded on tape.

A. To my understanding, it was to try and get better acquainted. Correct me if I'm wrong.

Q. Right. And it was to bring your side, your view of the situation on campus regarding security in an open forum so that it could clear up some misunderstandings and it would provide a vehicle to express your views on subjects that a lot of people would have in their minds but either don't have the opportunity or for some other reasons can't express them. So one of the things, with the establishment of the Student Security Committee, there seems to be a conflict that it was seen, the need was there for a long time but the students went out on their own, pressed for it and finally were successful and have gotten some force in action and finally, how do you view that in your terms? (Prouser)

A. Well, we've been trying since I've been here to get a student patrol and I wanted to take contract people away from the issuing of traffic violations notices completely and we were unable to get volunteers for the position. We were successful in taking the 5:30 to 8:30 position

Q. Is that p.m.? (Prouser)

A. Yes, p.m., traffic control, parking control out in front of the building away from the Guard Service and giving it to the students and I'd say pretty near, this is the third year now. In the past, we had two young ladies working and the rest of the time it was men.

Q. Now, are their student security officers during peak traffic hours directing traffic? (Prouser)

A. No, traffic control per se is not permitted by the student patrol. Right now their jobs are to control the parking lots and as soon as we get locomotion in for them, mobility, then they are going to expand from simply the main parking lot to the placement center, the athletic activity building, the engineering lab, Meade Heights, as well as the Residence Hall areas. Right now they are only patrolling the main parking lot.

Q. So, for the time being, their purpose will be just to control motor vehicle violations? (Prouser)

A. No, they also have foot patrol in the Heights, when we have no other coverage. We depend on Maintenance personnel during the business day when they are well covered in the Heights there, the office is open and so forth. At five o'clock when security police comes on, in the form of Mr. McGregor then the student patrol secures. On the weekend, during the days when there are no security police on, student patrol is on.

Q. What specific powers do they have in the Heights? (Prouser)

A. Observe and report. Q. Just observe and report. (Prouser)

A. Yes.

Q. And then it's up to your office to carry through on the reports? (Prouser)

A. Yes, to carry on the investigation, make a determination, and such, or if it's of an emergency nature, the civil police, the patrol is instructed to contact the civil police. They are not, under any circumstances, to put themselves in jeopardy. They are to observe and report. They don't have any authority other than civil arrest. It's ridiculous to expect them to go in and stop a brawl or something of that sort.

Q. Right. (Prouser)

A. The main thing is to have the student contact there to preclude situations that may be

developing going into something that the police would have to move in on.

Q. Well, with their powers as they are now, why was the waiver of, the statement asking for permission to go into their personal records, credit, school, military, financial necessary? (Prouser)

A. That is always a requirement when you go into a position of trust and confidence. The job they have is definitely a position of trust and confidence. You've got to have someone that you can place your trust and confidence in.

Q. (Bill Squires) If you can do it, why were the signatures required?

A. As a courtesy to the individual, to let them know that it would be done.

Q. Could it have been done without their signatures? (Prouser)

A. Absolutely, yes sir.

Q. What is the image that you project to the students? How do you feel you come across to people? Do you feel perhaps there might be any communications problems here? How do you see yourself in the students perspective? (Squires)

A. Within the last year, taking the term, the last school year, very poorly because of unjust and bad press.

Q. Do you feel that it was, as has been said, or I've heard it mentioned that it's a few that are bad-mouthing and . . . (Prouser)

A. An absolute minimum, yes.

Q. And then it spreads? (Prouser)

A. It's less than, I'd venture to say, less than 50, maybe even down to 30 people and the hard core of that is down to just a few. The reasons are well known and such, but what can you do. I'm in the position, we went through it before, of the police department in a small community a township, a residential area. You're a public servant. You're paid as a professional police officer and part of that is to take the abuse as a professional police officer and part of that is to take the abuse that is given to you for performing your job.

Q. Do you think that students understand you intentions? (Squires)

A. I think the major part, yes. I'd like to hope they do.

Q. Do you see, okay, the Student Security Force was instituted this term. The Juniors, that will be Seniors next year, will have experienced the whole transition. The next class, in about two years, they will come to the school and there will already be an established Student Security Force and it will be the status quo per se. Do you view that then a change in attitude in views might be possible with a new student body and the quote "few" who are spreading the bad press are out? (Prouser)

A. In theory, this should work out.

Q. And with the new class, could you see an opening of chance for communication perhaps? (Prouser)

A. Really, I think anyone in the student body that has made any effort to communicate with myself has found you might say, a rude awakening to the point that I'm eligible to be communicated with, sure, I'm a father. I had a boy who got his ass in a jam and I had to correct. I got a daughter that lies like hell, she's going to school and man, you know, it's no different and I was a kid once, got in jams and lied. You and I had a little bit of difference one night when a situation was going on and you were looking to do your job and your job, in accomplishing it, was giving me a bit of a hard time. I asked you to please stop and desist and you wanted to do your job so you continued, so, I don't think you can say I held a hard-on for you,

did I?

Q. No, we were in the wrong to an extent. (Prouser)

A. The individual that I spoke to in the initial point was definitely in the wrong. The spirit of the law was enforced. The letter of the law, no. He didn't get a ticket and look he could have, he should have, really because he was endangering traffic pretty badly.

Q. Right. (Prouser)

A. But I don't think that a ticket would do that young boy any good, to pay a fine like that. I think the way it was handled, it did him a lot better. Of course, you and I got off on a bad start then, but then it rationalized itself later and one thing I don't do and this is, personally I'm making the statement, it's up to other people to verify it later on. I don't hold a grudge. If a lose a battle, what the hell, that's what I'm fighting for. That's what I'm working for is as an American form of justice. If somebody higher than me says "You're wrong" okay they made the decision. I don't agree, with them - I don't have to agree with them. But that's it.

Q. For the most part you're instructed to enforce the University regulations and there's . . . (Prouser)

A. No, my job charges me with enforcement of state law and University rules and my regulations for safety and security.

Q. Okay, there's a conflict there, within the University policy that in effect when we have a dorm contract or a house contract, we are renting the space and that the house may be entered or the room may be entered at any time. That's a conflict that has to be resolved in the courts eventually, could you say? (Prouser)

A. No, it's been resolved in the Courts already. It's been to the Supreme Court on a minimum of three occasions that I know of, decisions have been rendered favorable to the institution but decisions came down that security police, or security officer in the routine performance of his duty may enter, he may not assist or service another law enforcement agency or organization and enter. If he is assisting another organization then the warrant must be obtained. But if he is in the normal performance of his duty within his jurisdiction, he may enter.

Q. How does probable cause enter into that, clear and present danger? (Prouser)

A. Well, you must have probable cause before you do anything. Before a peace officer is justified in any action he has to have probable cause. In other words, he has to have information from a reliable informant, or he must have observed contraband or something of that sort, personally, himself or it must be at the request of another University officer.

Q. When a house is entered on campus, must another University official be with you? (Prouser)

A. A University official is any other employee of the University, housing and food service.

Q. Administrative? (Prouser)

Q. Coordinator, housing coordinators, administrative officer, finance officer, Mr. South, any professor, any person. Any other employee of the University who is an agent or University officer or a student for that purpose.

Q. Getting back to the student security force, it's just been in effect a few short weeks, could you assess it at all, the eight people that are now on the force? (Prouser)

A. It's fantastic as far as I'm concerned. The men and young lady . . .

Q. Irene (Tunier). (Prouser)

Q. When I say men I take Irene in too, they have good

spirit, they are working pretty closely together. The patrol has been instrumental in furnishing information of a very sensitive and serious nature which resolved a pretty good-sized criminal activity on the campus that through their help, they initially gave me the leads that worked up in breaking the case. And they are diligent in the performance of their duties and Paul (Reich) here is the Student Supervisor. The only problem is that as students and youth, you know, they don't have the sense of responsibility that is required, that the job comes first.

Q. When you assume your post in the afternoon as Student Security officer, you're no longer a student any more for that time period? (Prouser)

A. No, I wouldn't say that. You're still a student but you are also an agent of the University now.

Q. So you're two roles? (Prouser)

A. This is true.

Q. And how do you . . . (Prouser)

A. This is true, this is part of the training and we have a continuous training program to where they will, I hope, see the situation in the eye of the student and they can mitigate their actions a bit along that line like, well, take for instance, the Heights. On the evening patrol, 9:30 at night or so, party going on, alcoholic beverages, it could be inside or outside, in open view, and a little boisterous and somebody is trying to study near by, okay? Each one of these people have rights, and the rights of each must be honored. So rather than the patrol having to go over with the security police, I think it would be much more compatible for the student patrol to go up and say "Hey, come on, the people next door are wanting to study, they have exams in the morning" or whatever the case may be, "they've complained about the noise, can you take your party inside or temper it or keep it down and the alcoholic beverages has to be served inside, it can't be outside." And in theory, again, it should be received a lot better than the police have because, although, I've got to say this, in the four years that I've been here I've never had any problem with the nature in going in to parties and asking them to quiet down and such. You get a lot of ribbing and "have a drink" and so forth, but what the hell, this is good clean fun. We never had a bust for that, I told people: "If you can't have your keg outside here, put the damn thing inside the door, close the curtain and keep the spigot sticking out, I can't see the keg then and they still get their beer outside. So what are you doing? It's the spirit of the law, not the letter and this I think is what you know, is . . .

Q. The whole idea of campus security is . . . (Prouser)

A. More or less to protect themselves.

Q. You're not out to give everybody a royal hassle? (Prouser)

A. No way. I think this can well be substantiated by anybody that wished to, can come over and look at the log and look at the number of warning notices issued, the written warning notices, hell, they run up to 150 or 170 for a ten-week period and the written warnings, the notices without writing go up pretty good too, as opposed to maybe 10 or 15, to be on the safe side, say 15 to 20 cases of moving violations that are issued.

Q. Cases that are taken to Student Court? (Prouser)

A. Yes, either they pay the fine, most of them cause they know damn well that when they got it, they were really guilty, like say 55 in a 20 mile zone. I have no complaints. I like the job as such. Besides the hassle on a stop sign they are paying five

dollars to learn the lesson. That half of the state fine and there's no court cost and no points involved and it stays here on campus. Well, it's a gentle reminder that hurts like hell because it happens in the wallet and that hurts anybody. By golly, you can't drive like that. Bul it has to be a pretty flagrant, open violation for them to get the ticket.

Q. Now this is University property so any moving violations do not carry points with them? (Prouser)

A. Only because of the policy.

Q. Right. (Prouser)

A. It may well change . . .

Q. Yes, that's what I'm getting at. They are thinking of changing it to a municipal road. (Prouser)

A. No, it is a state road now, but the University counsel is reviewing the matter on whether they want to go totally to the Magistrate's Court.

Q. Any moving violations would involve points?

A. They're waiting a decision from the Board of Directors and the University Counsel.

Q. Will it have a big effect? (Prouser)

A. Yes, sure because they fart around up there in the Heights, drag race, and such like that, because if there is that, then it's no longer a University situation. The magistrate listens to hear a violation of the law and if there's a violation of the law and mitigating circumstances don't count unless it's an emergency or something of that sort, simply because you're too late for a class or your buddy was down the street waiting on you, something of that sort, it don't count, where now it does.

Q. Are you the same off duty as on duty? Are there two different roles that you . . . (Squires)

A. Most people say I'm a prick both ways. No, I'm hard-nosed with my children, in certain respects and the rest of it, well I'd say I'm human. You can talk to the fellas on the patrol, the people on the patrol have gotten to know me and you know they do get to know each other when you work with one another. I don't think there is anyone that likes a practical joke more than myself. I love them.

Q. If you could wrap up, like what you would like your image to be, what you would hope for in the future for security between administration and between students and the whole campus community, how would you like it to be? (Prouser)

A. Well, honestly, an honest thumb nail sketch, it would have to be a person who believes in his job and believes in the requirements of the job and looks to the better the community by enforcement of the rules, regulations and laws with temperance of the University atmosphere because you couldn't possibly hold the job if you didn't temper the situation to the University atmosphere.

Q. You had mentioned once before that it is a rather unique arrangement here with the Heights and the dorms? (Prouser)

A. It could be a beautiful situation if the student body would move into it and take it. It could have, I, actually, I could perceive, what I foresaw when I first came in here was that the Heights be established as an entity in itself, a political sub-division for experience in living where you could have your own so to speak Mayor, council, your own magistrate, your own student police department, just, you could duplicate Lower Swatara, the township, of the borough of Middletown or such within the campus and the magistrate could sit every other evening or whatever and hear the complaints of the individuals, that maybe he is pissed off at

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