

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

I'm in the real estate business. Um, been a realtor since 1955. Uh, so about 50 years here in the community, uh, started out as a young person when they didn't have young people in the real estate business. But my father in law on the business and had been started at 1924. So after I finished my master's degree up at Michigan state and business, I came back into the real estate business here, which has been, as you might imagine, just, just phenomenally wonderful. If you could, right. You could make a living and if he could sell, you did very, very well. And how did you meet Bob? Well, Bob wanted to sell his house. Then of course we could see a lot of publicity about him and so forth. And so he lived up on grand river Avenue and I went up and listed his house.

Speaker 1 ([00:54](#)):

He felt that he had to get off of grand river. Uh, so went all through the house and had an opportunity to talk to both he and his wife, and then did offer it for sale. I did not end up selling the house at that time. There wasn't a real tremendously active market. We had a fairly strong price on the house, but he felt he just had to move that the blacks were coming out grand river, which would have been old us 16. And we're going to firebomb small towns like Howell and particularly his house. And so he felt that he had to move. He felt so sincerely a better, apparently his wife and the youngsters, they were scared to death. They pulled their shades every night and all this type of thing, because they just knew there was going to be firebombing on, uh, how in towns like how, and particularly his property. So he did, he finally moved, uh, finally sold his house. And, uh, I say finally he had a nice home, nicely decorated, nicely done. Uh, it was just a case of the market at that time, bought a farm out in [inaudible].

Speaker 1 ([02:17](#)):

Um, the, I hadn't, but in the farm I knew it had to run rather unique thing because it was to me, uh, a barn and I think the barn was gone, but there was a silo on the farm and the silo was really kind of by itself. I think later on he had some lights on it or a cross or something of that nature, but that wasn't what really interested us. Uh, at the time I was a student pilot out here at the airport and we would go up and this farm happened to be in the practice area for the student pilots of the airport. And we looked for places like crossroads, where we could do turns like 360 turns without losing any altitude without gaining and the altitude or a point on which we could make, uh, turns. And his silo was by itself and so visible.

Speaker 1 ([03:21](#)):

And in our practice area, we go up and we would fly for that silo and then make three 60, uh, or seven 20 turns around the silo or the intersection just beyond his firearm. And I felt so sorry for that, because later on when it got an all kinds of problems and promoting his people to go to Pontiac and on ruined those buses, like, uh, he complained about the FBI who had aerial surveillance of his health, his firearm nearly every day. And it was, it was all these poor student pilots going and find a good spot to make the turn in our practice area. So we didn't realize it must have been driving the guy paranoid about being watched from the air. And, uh, we didn't know whose property it was, but that came out later in the testimony. But we, uh, we were disturbed with miles here.

Speaker 1 ([04:27](#)):

I don't think there was a whole lot of people in this community had anything to do with him or anything else. He seemed like he pulled his people out of the Detroit area, the manufacturer, the car industry, the guys on the line. They seem to be the ones and he could influence him. Uh, as I say, he was one smart

cookie. And I think he found a group that he could influence very much with his, uh, uh, mountain church and his mannerisms and so on. Cause he was a sharp executive. And so I think he led them into it, but the Detroit papers, uh, would come out and interviewed. And uh, I recall one incident, um, and to this day we will not give an interview to the Detroit news free press. They came out, they came to the chamber, they came to whole group of us and we have an office right on grand river and interviewed us, ask us about how business was, ask us about downtown, how the merchants were doing this type of thing.

Speaker 1 ([05:40](#)):

And then that Sunday came out with a great big article about the Klu Klux Klan, and used our names in different places who they had interviewed. They never want to ask us anything about the two drugs that they once asked us about miles. We checked with the chamber of commerce and they were not interviewed in that manner at all. It's a case where we think the news had written the article long before they came, they came out, interviewed us and put our names into their article about miles and the two Klux Klan. And there was a group of us then who said, we'll have nothing to do with them. Well, they came out again about six minutes, very similar, hit some other people. And so, and one of the real estate people we knew had taped it either by God. We said, don't even give him an of a doorway.

Speaker 1 ([06:38](#)):

He taped it. And he demanded that he have the article before they printed it. Well, they didn't even contact him again. They printed the article, the user's name. And I remember at that time, and I don't remember the town, but we'll say it was Oak park. There was some racial, there was the, the blacks were moving into Oak park, something of that nature. They wanted to do an article park and they talked about how all of the Oak park people were coming out every Sunday to the real estate people in Howell looking for real estate. And this particular person had a tape on it. And Kaufman said, I didn't say anybody. I don't know anybody from Oprah never met one and says, well, in essence, you said there was a lot of people from Detroit coming out. So in essence, that's what you said. And as you lied right out of your teeth into paper, and I said, no, we didn't. This is basically what was going on again. They knew what was going on and we were used. So we just got the gun to say, you know what? We will not talk to the press again, because we don't know anything about the plan. We don't know the people, we don't hang about them. They don't having to do with us. We don't have anything to do with them. Uh, and uh, yet they were using us and I think they still are.

Speaker 2 ([07:53](#)):

What about how before Robert Miles? What about race relations in howl before Robert Miles show? Huh,

Speaker 1 ([08:03](#)):

There wasn't, you know, because there wasn't anyone of other color here and there were a few, there was the Shoemaker, uh, and, uh, bless his heart.

Speaker 2 ([08:13](#)):

He had a, uh, when my father talked about it,

Speaker 1 ([08:16](#)):

I don't remember how many years he had, uh, a game meal for the business people and invited them in. And he had all the special things, not only pheasants, so deer, but then he would have like possibly Coon and this type of thing of animals that we normally would not eat and so forth. Um, this guy was very, very well liked. I mean, just a real nice person. I can only remember two prior to all this time. And another one was the name, uh, only uses a name. I knew him by Scott and he was a painter and it probably the painter in all of how I lived down here, uh, South, uh, South East part of town and his wife was very well liked. Uh, there wasn't any, and it problem any way. If somebody stopped into the family restaurant, it's kind of the main restaurant up here on the street for a cup of coffee or whatever.

Speaker 1 ([09:15](#)):

Uh, that was it. Nothing was ever said. Now later on when all of the racial stuff happened in Detroit, every place else is my understanding that there were some boxes that one gal I remember worked at citizens down here, came out and worked there and said that she had had the slurs or something remarks on grand river. And every time we looked into it was some kids, some young folks, there wasn't anything in the mature, the business or whatever. Uh, people, we had, a lot of people come out. We had a tubercular sanatorium just outside of town where the largest ones in Michigan. And so, uh, our, my folks had a bus station, a taxi service, and a Greyhound stopped here in town. And they came out all the time and there were people of color. Then when paying attention, they got off the bus and they hired our taxi.

Speaker 1 ([10:16](#)):

We took them out to Santa. They came back in, they stopped for lunch or whatever. And then, uh, but their prejudice, uh, there was, uh, a sale out West of town, uh, to the guy was servicing these people who came to the sanatorium and, uh, the, the owner and the real estate. They just, they were called everything else, every demon of the book, because this guy bought this place. As I Roadhouse for the folks to come out and stay overnight, we didn't have any hotels or mojo. And they stayed overnight there on the way to visit their friends. And I know that there was a lot of repercussion, but then it died and nothing much else was said, but that was in the, you know, that was when it was happening all over the United States in the late fifties and early sixties. So wasn't any different than any place.

Speaker 3 ([11:12](#)):

A reporter who was here earlier today, um, asked me something. And my comment as an outsider was that Holly has been taking it in the shorts ever since, uh, Bob miles was here, but the, that this is miles. This is not how it,

Speaker 1 ([11:29](#)):

Yeah, there's no question about this in that the people here didn't participate, we didn't see him. He didn't see his family or anything else. We, we were not aware of his cross Bernice or whatever his group or his church got together out there. Uh, we were in, so the, all of a sudden, the press reported last weekend, there were umpteen number of people at his farm. We didn't know that would advantage nobody here having to do with him first. He was whatever, it was six miles or eight miles out of town, but people would come up Oh 16 probably, and then go out Oak Grove road to his farm, uh, or Byron road. And, uh, we didn't know what he was doing. We had no idea what we knew about it was what the papers wrote about him. We didn't have it. There was no social contact.

Speaker 1 ([12:25](#)):

He didn't come to the chamber. The chamber didn't announce his meetings or whatever. We didn't know who he was. Uh, he was just somebody out in the firearm. Uh, and yet you'd met him. Oh, he described him as intelligent. Oh yeah. Well, in my process of listing his property, you would have met him as a real sharp, very good businessman. Uh, he was, um, uh, dressed very, very well suit and tie that type of thing. And his family was, uh, you wouldn't know he about it, of his house until you went in his house. And then as I say, he was, uh, maybe chairman and Michigan chairman of the Wallace for president campaign or something. So he had hats in there, but it's no different than at that time going through one of the houses that everybody had the Romney for governor, hat's a little heads with a stuff on it, and everybody had their own political party.

Speaker 1 ([13:25](#)):

Nobody paid any attention to nobody paid any attention to Wallace in this community. I am sure there was a conservative group who were involved because at one time, probably prior to this, uh, the Birch society was very much involved in the community. Uh, very much involved. It seemed like, uh, the, uh, farm Bureau folks could serve the functions of we've found some, uh, relationship to the bird society. So it was, it was just very strong for a while. And we had one individual here from the community who ended up being Welch's personal pilot. Uh, but, um, this was something that, again, uh, in a small group of, was it anything is in town? What did he do that Howell had to do with anything? We were just a bunch of conservative Republicans. How much work, uh, not on any friend you basis or, you know, that nature, um, uh, very much offended the whole community when something happened, there was a cross burning on, uh, uh, I think the woman's name is Griffin, very close to the mining.

Speaker 1 ([14:45](#)):

Very lovely gal, uh, church here now. And a couple of guys, I guess, half stewed one Saturday night drove up to her yard. Not far from her, lived over there and put across on her yard. And the next morning she reported it. And I mean, this made the news, like you wouldn't believe in particularly Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti was having this about every three months and no big deal, but when it became hall, um, I don't know, maybe they were holding us to a higher, higher standard. Well, I, and one of the things I came in here to tell him, frankly, is that I'm going to be very disappointed if he doesn't write a thank you letter to the County press. Uh, I mean, they, they would know what's going to happen Saturday if they didn't, I wouldn't know that he was going to have the auctioneers editor at the County press.

Speaker 1 ([15:44](#)):

Hadn't again, plastered all over. They said in their article that he had a robe in the front window and that many people complained. It was my understanding. At the time they wrote it. One person complained from across the way, and they took the robot of the width. Now there may have been quote unquote many, but the news article this week about the, the auction being held here, I think it's Saturday or Sunday, whatever it is, uh, uh, they said that many people complain. I don't think anybody knew what it was burst. Don't invoke the one across the street can see it clearly, cause they weren't going by it 25 or 30 miles an hour so they can play, they took it out of the window. And then it was my understanding. I don't know this, just my understand is that the County press at that time notified the news, uh, people in Detroit.

Speaker 1 ([16:45](#)):

And as I say this coming, when I did not know, I'd heard that it was going to have the auction different places around the state. And for one reason or another they've been turned down or quit. And then all

of a sudden that was going to happen on Saturday. I wouldn't have known it. And I will wager that 99% of the people in the community that gets the County press didn't know it was going to happen until it was in the County press. And so, I mean, I can't in my real estate business, I can't buy that kind of advertising for, and I can't afford it. So I, I was just coming into kid and say, Hey, you ought to write a letter and say, Hey, Connie price, thank you very much again for the publicity about my sale. And when I get another sale, Oh, I may be only selling decoys, but gee, I hope you run a front page ad again.

Speaker 1 ([17:34](#)):

He's been pretty well vilified though. Hasn't it? They didn't know what to do with him. I think what he has said is that I'm a businessman selling stuff that on consignment or however it is, and I'm trying to get rid of it. And, uh, I don't know, they know what to handle. Had he come out and said, Hey, uh, you know, my father was a planner and I want to do this stuff fine, but it hasn't come down that way. It's come out that, Hey, I've got this thing and it's unique and it's different and let's face it. It's kind of activity I've had in the real estate business. 90% of the people in this community who had no association with Myra miles knew anything about it, the only thing they ever learned. And I think about it is if they read the local press or the Detroit news, uh, on what was happening in the hall, cause they haven't seen it, heard it, it hasn't been here.

Speaker 1 ([18:35](#)):

Uh, they're working with people of color, uh, Bailey or having lunch with them here. Nobody's paying any attention to this thing. This is, uh, this is reliving the civil war again or something, uh, uh, like little town down South or something. I it's a kind of, um, he sells newspapers I guess. And that's the way I look at it. Uh, they become a daily and they just feel that they have to have a daily crisis. And this is good. As long as he has a, uh, a, uh, auction, every Saturday shoot, they've got at least one day's dues taken care of every, every week. Um, and, and people will eat it. Of course I've never seen a road before. So I looked at the paper, the pictures they had, they'd take off the, see with I'm interested in that. And I've looked at the robe, the head and in the paper, I've never seen it except for old movies of the South. And that type of thing didn't know what they were about them. So that had, that was kind of interested in it as a community, as an area. I think we have been used terribly by the press for a sensational story on an ongoing basis and to color everybody in this community with that swipe, it, it just, it just hurts. I mean, the people in the people in these churches, the people in these service clubs and so forth,

Speaker 4 ([20:19](#)):

Uh, this is the furthest,

Speaker 1 ([20:21](#)):

There's just nothing about color or presence or racist any more than there is in hope or Adrian or, and I think there was a whole lot less than there is in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and, uh, I'm Detroit. And so I guess maybe they're trying to get us over there into their track. And there's a lot of us out here don't want to be, don't want to be that way. So that hurts. That hurts. Yeah. And, uh, but if you look at the people who write locally, and these are very young people and they feel, this is a community like help, where can they get on a soap box and promote something that they felt so strongly about in college or wherever they were. And so all of a sudden here's a little bait and we can take it from there. And I think it's stretched out of, out of context completely. Uh, I think it was cause we didn't have anything to do with miles. We didn't know who he was, except somebody else wrote him. I'll be very Frank with you.

Speaker 1 ([21:41](#)):

I represent the owner of this building and we're very concerned that there's enough kooks on the other side, that they're going to throw a brick or something through the window. I'm not going to say, I'm not going to say that they may, but this, this bothers me more than anything. Otherwise, is that the way they are doing this? Uh, they will create a situation where somebody thinks out, do some action, some something, uh, now I think the chamber and the rest of them now have quieted down. And, uh, and of course the diversity group and this sort of thing, uh, I think they have taken now all of a sudden more of a backseat on the, and um, let's face it. If his oxygen is just real good, it'll probably all go away. I mean, there's just so much of this stuff and we're going to have one sale and it's all done. Okay. Just miles of state. And, um, I don't know how many people locally come to the scene. I imagine there's a lot of people will come. Don't bid the one to see who's there. Who what goes for that type of thing. But, uh,

Speaker 5 ([23:00](#)):

I don't like, like you're sold this house, let's say, cause you know, maybe you will want the George Wallace pitcher or something. Right. I think

Speaker 1 ([23:15](#)):

Not really because he didn't mean anything. I think if it were part of the fabric of this community, we would have had one of these museums or a display early in the library or something with some of this is, this is part of howls history. You know,

Speaker 5 ([23:35](#)):

Ben, because today neighbor created it.

Speaker 1 ([23:37](#)):

Nobody knew it. Nobody knew him. Nobody could say part of it, if it was part of the fabric, the chamber or the library, or the would want to have a display or something historical with a background, like we do the Indians or whatever, you know, uh, we had the, the Indians walked up and down the, the Shai Wasi river from their winter, uh, uh, home in Ann Arbor up to their summer place up at Indian Springs rakes. And so the library, they have a big display of, uh, arrowheads. And this type of thing is part of the fabric of this community. This was, it never was, never was part of it. Nobody paid any attention to it, except what it was in some newspaper. And for many years it was only outside newspaper, nothing locally. So yeah,

Speaker 6 ([24:31](#)):

And yet the community is known when I tell people I'm researching the Klan, they always say, have you been to Hawaii?

Speaker 1 ([24:37](#)):

Yeah. Cause this is where if you go to the newspapers, this is where it was. It was at how, or in how, and I was wages at 95% of the business. People had no associated whatever with miles wouldn't have known him. If he walked into the store and he, or mrs. Miles or anybody out, they didn't know they were around. All of a sudden, we, as I say, we read in the newspaper, uh, it was a weekly newspaper and all of a sudden it came out on a Wednesday and you read J with miles out another one of his crowd out there. And [inaudible] glad we don't live out that direction for crying. It must have been a lot of road cars and

so forth here. And then of course, when they accused him of a bomb and buses and all that, and as I said, smart boy, he wasn't there. He wasn't involved. It wasn't him that lit the fuse.