

**1Dusit (Du) Kriengsak-Obhas, a Thai American, discusses his career as a production worker
2and UAW member at the Fisher Body plant in Lansing, MI**

3
4
5Gary Judy: This is the Fisher Body Historical Committee, Local 602, Lansing,
6Michigan. We're at the Frank [Dreyer 00:10] Greenhouse and it's
72/22/06 and it's approximately 11:10 and I'd like to introduce the
8group.
9
10Earl Nicholson: Earl Nicholson.
11
12Jerri Smith: Jerri Smith.
13
14Cheryl McQuaid: Cheryl McQuaid.
15
16John Fedewa: John Fedewa.
17
18Gary Judy: And Gary Judy. We're here today to interview – [00:35] could you
19introduce yourself?
20
21Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yep. Name is Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas.
22
23Gary Judy: [00:42] And could you say your address and spell it for us?
24
25Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah, 3397 Hollow Spring Drive, DeWitt, Michigan, 4820, 48 –
26excuse me – 48820, that's right.
27
28Gary Judy: [00:56] Could you please spell your name for us?
29
30Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Okay. Last name or first name?
31
32Gary Judy: Both.
33
34Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: D – first name spelled D U S I T. Last name, Kriengsak-Obhas, K R I
35E N G S A K - O B H A S.
36
37Gary Judy: [01:27] Could you tell us a little bit about your, uh, family? Do you
38have children?
39
40Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yep. I have three children. Uh, age 22, 14, and 12. A boy 22 and the
41two girls.
42
43Gary Judy: [01:43] And can you tell us where you came from, Du?
44
45Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Bangkok, Thailand in 1968.
46
47Gary Judy: 1968?

1
2Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Actually, October 13, 1968... in New York.
3
4Gary Judy: [02:06] Du, could you tell us where you were born and raised?
5
6Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Uh, Bangkok, Thailand.
7
8Gary Judy: [02:13] Did, did you have any military –
9
10Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: No.
11
12Gary Judy: Experience?
13
14Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: No.
15
16Gary Judy: [02:17] And what did your parents do?
17
18Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Owned a small business. Uh, more like a 7-11. We'd have about four,
19 four or five employees. Sometimes six depending on the season.
20
21Gary Judy: [02:30] Okay. So, could you tell us a little bit about how you came to
22 the United States?
23
24Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Actually, I studied a lot about US in school. We had to study all the
25 different country and it was interesting to see a lot of pictures of the
26 US. [Inaudible 02:45] I'd like to go see that [inaudible 02:46], and I
27 get lucky. I have chance to come to see, and here I am.
28
29Gary Judy: [02:53] So, so how did that take place? How did, how did you go
30 about coming here?
31
32Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, first of all, we have to, uh, to be able to come here, you have to –
33 [two thing 03:01] you have to be a refugee or a student. And at that
34 time, you know, I didn't have no problems, so refugee is out of the
35 question, so I have to be a student. So, I applied for the student visa to
36 come over here.
37
38Gary Judy: [03:15] And, and where did you go to school when you first –
39
40Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Well, in New York.
41
42Gary Judy: [03:21] Can you tell us –
43
44Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: City.
45
46Gary Judy: What, what were you going to school for?

1
2 [sneezing]
3
4Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Well, we have to go as a basic English major. That's a requirement for
5 us.
6
7Gary Judy: [03:31] Okay. And, so, you were in New York going to school and
8 what – how did you end up in, in Michigan?
9
10Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: [Well, the same like 03:41] New York, my brother had some friend...
11 goes – gonna go to school at MSU, master degree, and then we asked
12 him, "Where you go to?" And he said, "Michigan." "[Oh, never been
13 there before 03:56]." And then when he come here later, he called,
14 and we talked about it. He said, "You should come here [and visit
15 04:03] [inaudible] sometime," and I would come visit him, and I like it
16 here. Actually, when I left Thailand, I didn't finish the high school.
17 [And it's a long – good chance 04:12] for me to [finish high school
18 04:13], so I end up go to school here to finish my high school.
19
20Gary Judy: Cheryl McQuaid?
21
22Cheryl McQuaid: [04:23] Du, what school did you go to in New York?
23
24Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, just a language school. Just a –
25
26Cheryl McQuaid: Like a community college?
27
28Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Not, not really. More like a special for foreign student.
29
30Cheryl McQuaid: Okay.
31
32Gary Judy: [04:40] So, so, you ended up coming to Michigan to visit with a
33 friend?
34
35Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Mm-hm.
36
37Gary Judy: And can you tell us a little bit, uh, what happened? How, how you
38 ended up staying here?
39
40Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, yeah. I had... end up, you know, met a friend – a friend of my
41 brother go to school at MSU and then told me about a school here, so I
42 say, "Well, good idea for me to finish my high school [inaudible
43 05:09] high school. Went to talk to the principal at [Eastern 05:13],
44 Mr. Johnson, [inaudible 05:15] Johnson, and he said okay [inaudible
45 05:19] that time. He have no problem with that, so... I met my wife

1 there, future wife. And [then I planned on marrying her 05:38]. By
2 that time, I had to get a job. [laughter].
3
4 Gary Judy: [05:32] So, so you're, you're – you moved to Lansing, you started
5 going to school.
6
7 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah.
8
9 Gary Judy: You, you met your, your wife and –
10
11 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Future.
12
13 Gary Judy: And got married and, uh, started looking for a job.
14
15 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: That's right.
16
17 Gary Judy: [05:45] And can you tell us a little bit about that and, and what
18 happened?
19
20 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah. When I – looking for the job, I went to [apply in the Meijer
21 05:53] and then, you know, [ask me anything else 05:56] just like I
22 already job or something. [laughter] So, like [inaudible 06:00].
23
24 Gary Judy: Okay.
25
26 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: And then it turned out to be pretty good because less than a year, I was
27 a full-time. And [Meijer at that time 06:08], nobody had a full-time
28 job [unless you have at least 10 year 06:12]. Most people don't have
29 full-time – with – well, in less than a year, I got a full-time job, so not
30 too bad. And after that, a whole lot of people talk about Fisher
31 Automobiles, you know, [hiring at Fisher Body 06:27], stuff like that,
32 and I could try out one.
33
34 Gary Judy: [06:31] So, so how did you – you heard about Oldsmobile and Fisher
35 Body. What'd you hear?
36
37 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Well, some-, sometimes on TV and the paper, the people stand in line
38 waiting for – apply for the job, so, I thought, "Well, I might as well go
39 try out for that thing, see how they work."
40
41 Gary Judy: So, can you tell us how you did that?
42
43 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Well, they [inaudible 06:48] news [inaudible 06:49] hire people.
44
45 Gary Judy: [06:50] Did you, did you just go –
46

1Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Go [apply for 06:53].
2
3Gary Judy: Stand...
4
5Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Stand in line like everybody else.
6
7Gary Judy: [06:55] And what, what year was that?
8
9Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: 1977.
10
11Gary Judy: So, you, you went and stood in line and...
12
13Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Applied for it and get the call.
14
15Gary Judy: [07:06] How long was it before they called you?
16
17Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Uh, I'm not quite sure. Maybe... been a long time, I can't remember
18 how long.
19
20Jerri Smith: [07:19] Jerri Smith, where did you stand in line at? At the plant –
21
22Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Outside.
23
24Jerri Smith: Or did you go...
25
26Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Outside.
27
28Jerri Smith: Outside the plant? I mean –
29
30Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Outside, you know, on [inaudible 07:26].
31
32Jerri Smith: Okay.
33
34Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I went to the corner, actually. [laughter] At that time they interviewed
35 people. The full interview was [the line in front of that 07:35]. Uh,
36 what do you call it? It's a security office, when you comin' down...
37
38Gary Judy: Right.
39
40Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: [Inaudible 07:40].
41
42Gary Judy: [07:42] So, so, you got the call from Fisher to report to work.
43
44Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Not yet. They, they interview me, and then they call me back later to,
45 you know, the first time and then they said second day to come back to
46 interview again.

1
2 Gary Judy: So, you went through two interviews...
3
4 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Mm-hm.
5
6 Gary Judy: And they called you...
7
8 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah.
9
10 Gary Judy: And, uh, what did you – how'd you feel about that?
11
12 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I said, "Well, my lucky day."
13
14 Gary Judy: And, uh...
15
16 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: And then I actually have to tell them that I cannot work right away.
17 That's [inaudible 08:12]. [It's especially important, so you can't drop
18 everything 08:14] because I still worked for [the Meijer 08:17]. I don't
19 want to just walk away. I like to leave, you know...
20
21 Gary Judy: Mm-hm.
22
23 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: On a good term because they take care of me too, so I'll leave on a
24 good term so I [inaudible 08:26] two week later.
25
26 Gary Judy: [coughing]
27
28 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: The Fisher Body.
29
30 Gary Judy: [08:32] So, you told Fisher Body that you could start working within
31 two weeks?
32
33 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah, that second day – yeah, second – yeah, because I have to let –
34 they understand. They say they have no problem.
35
36 Gary Judy: [08:43] Well, good. So, can you tell us a little bit about your first day
37 at Fisher Body?
38
39 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Well, I was really kind of nervous because I – you have five, six of us
40 sit in a small office, you know, we would sit [quite a while 08:56] and
41 then... everybody – a few minute later, they have somebody – get
42 somebody to a different area. Come pick up somebody, and then I
43 think me and, and, and two – another girl were the last two out of a
44 good six, seven of us, and then take up to the trim department.
45

1 Gary Judy: [09:16] Now, I'm kind of curious, did you speak fluent English at that
2 time when you first hired in?
3
4 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Um, not really, but good enough to get by.
5
6 Gary Judy: So, you understood what they were saying to ya and, and you didn't
7 have a problem with communication?
8
9 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: No.
10
11 Gary Judy: Okay. So, Earl Nicholson?
12
13 Earl Nicholson: Uh, [clearing throat] Du...
14
15 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yes?
16
17 Earl Nicholson: [09:38] Uh, you had never worked in a factory before, correct?
18
19 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: That's right.
20
21 Earl Nicholson: [09:42] When you first walked into the factory and you walked out
22 onto the floor, were you shocked at what you had seen?
23
24 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, yeah. Amazing, but shocked. That's like, wow, it is so noisy.
25 First of all, going into – noisy people everywhere, you know, just like,
26 oh, like [inaudible 09:57] hour. [laughter]
27
28 Gary Judy: [10:01] So, what, what department did they take you to?
29
30 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: They take me to trim. Almost ... where they put the seat and put the
31 door panel that –
32
33 Gary Judy: The cushion room?
34
35 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Cush-, no, not cushion room. It's, uh –
36
37 Female: [clearing throat]
38
39 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: The one – they install the seat in the vehicle.
40
41 Gary Judy: Oh, 3X, 3X.
42
43 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah, 3X, yep.
44
45 Gary Judy: [10:25] Can you tell us – do you remember the first job that you had?
46

1Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah. Ac-, actually... I worked to put those cover on those, those, uh,
2 [patterned 10:37] cover on the base of the seat, front seat, the little
3 cover on the front. I worked with a lot of nice people. Really, we
4 have a lot of fun.
5

6Gary Judy: [10:50] What, what was the work like? I mean, did you – compared to
7 working at [Meijer's 10:53] and – had you ever worked in a factory
8 before?
9

10Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: No, but I thought it pretty – a pretty good job because that's all you do
11 and the job not really heavy. I heard that there really a lot of heavy
12 work. [Meijer 11:04] – my job as a – I actually have no job that when
13 they need something, they call me. They needs – anybody want to go
14 [inaudible 11:15] busy, they ask me and then something – somebody
15 [spills 11:20] something, I go help them out, clean them up. I'm more
16 like a utility guy that do a little bit of everything.
17

18Gary Judy: [11:27] So, it was a, a different type of work you were –
19

20Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Different type of work, yeah.
21

22Gary Judy: You were tied down to a assembly line.
23

24Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Assembly line, you stay where you, uh, you know, certain spot, so
25 many feet you have. At [Meijer 11:40], basically, I roam around,
26 whatever they need, they will page me or call me, you know.
27 Basically, [inaudible 11:49] pick my hours. [laughter]
28

29Gary Judy: [laughter]
30

31Earl Nicholson: [11:55] Uh, Earl Nicholson. Uh, when you first hired in and you go to
32 your job and you're working around all these people, what were these
33 people like?
34

35Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Most people really nice. We still friends even after that [inaudible
36 12:09]. Most people [I know 12:10].
37

38Earl Nicholson: [12:12] Do you remember any of the people that you were hired, hired
39 in with?
40

41Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, yeah. Oh, yes. I still see them. Only person – my partner, my
42 first partner was Dave Harvey. He's a tour guide. He passed away
43 though. He [inaudible 12:25] partner, we had a lot of fun. And have
44 Tim, uh, Jim, Jim [Holt 12:30] that I see a lot later on, and then
45 another Jim on the QC. I can't remember what his last name. I still
46 see him, and then, uh, Big Red. I know – anybody know his last name,

1 the truck driver. I basically follow in his footsteps wherever he go.
2 [laughter]
3
4 Gary Judy: [laughter]
5
6 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Actually, I take his job, Big Red job, and then he goes [inaudible
7 12:56], so I follow him every step. [laughter]
8
9 Gary Judy: Red Top?
10
11 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Red Top.
12
13 Gary Judy: Red Top, yeah, yeah. I remember. I worked with Red Top. [13:03]
14 So, can you tell us a little bit about when you were, were – first started
15 working, did you ever have any initiation fees or any pranks pulled on
16 ya by the senior employees?
17
18 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, yeah. Lot of them, lot of them. We were – really, that time was –
19 that time in the factory on assembly line, we had no seat, no break
20 area. You find a seat [whenever 13:26] you can within the break, you
21 know. It's a [inaudible 13:28] before you can sit, waiting for your
22 turn, you know. Sometimes you go sit down on the box. Just – before
23 you had no chair. You have to sit on the [inaudible 13:47] stock.
24 Stock just piled everywhere around here. You sittin' on the stock.
25 And my partner would always take the stuff out and leave the empty
26 box. I would sit and sink right down into the box.
27
28 Gary Judy: And you'd fall into the box?
29
30 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: [laughter] Yeah.
31
32 Gary Judy: [laughter]
33
34 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Many times. Many times.
35
36 Gary Judy: [13:54] Did you ever pull any pranks on any of your coworkers to
37 pay'm back for that?
38
39 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, yeah. Couple of times I have on him. Not too many times, but
40 most of the time they count because you're not supposed to get those
41 kind of things [inaudible 14:07]. Actually, it's only a few times but it
42 was more than four or five times because [he was shocked 14:13].
43 [laughter]
44

1 Gary Judy: [14:19] So, do you remember any supervisors that, that, uh, stood out
2 and how did they treat you and, and do you remember any that stood
3 out?
4

5 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I remember [Leon Hill, Leonard Hill 14:29] and then, uh, Burt. I can't
6 remember what his last name was, short guy.
7

8 Gary Judy: Burt?
9

10 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah. He retired long times ago. He had [inaudible 14:40] partner
11 [would alternate day and night 14:44]. And then, uh, I can't remember
12 another one now.
13

14 Gary Judy: [14:52] Were, were they all pretty good or did you ever have any bad
15 supervisors?
16

17 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I had some bad supervisor but, you know, you try to get along [as
18 much as 15:00] you can.
19

20 Gary Judy: [15:04] What, what do you feel made a good supervisor and a bad
21 supervisor?
22

23 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Well, you know, common sense when you get some, some stuff go on,
24 he understand. I remember one of them was really bad. It was a
25 woman; I don't want to mention her name. My, my wife had had baby
26 and then after surgery, you know, C-section, anybody – woman know
27 the C-section is really tough for the woman. I was come to work that
28 day and then take a day off so, when, you know, she was ready to
29 come out. I did go pick up and come back, you know, to work. She
30 was told me that, "Why don't you have your neighbor pick her up?"
31

32 Earl Nicholson: [laughter]
33

34 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: So, I said, "Don't you ever have baby? If your husband do it to you,
35 that doesn't mean you have to do it to everybody." She kinda looked
36 [pissed off 15:55] when I said that. [laughter]
37

38 Gary Judy: [15:57] So, so you, you missed work?
39

40 Cheryl McQuaid: [clearing throat]
41

42 Gary Judy: Or you, or you –
43

44 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I didn't miss work. I had to work and then...
45

46 Gary Judy: Or you wanted to leave?

1
2Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I wanted to leave and she say no. And then said, "Why don't you go
3 call somebody to pick her up?"
4
5Gary Judy: And did – what happened? Did she let you go? Or...
6
7Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: She [forbid 16:09] to let me go and then – but my, uh, repairman, you
8 know, at that time [in-line 16:14] repairman – can't remember what his
9 name is. Uh... It's Rusty...
10
11Gary Judy: Russ Martin?
12
13Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: No. Russ Mart-, Rusty [inaudible 16:26] or something.
14
15Gary Judy: Ziegler?
16
17Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Ziegler, yeah.
18
19Gary Judy: Rusty Ziegler?
20
21Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah. Can't remember. Neil, Neil Ziegler, yeah was my – he said,
22 "Don't call her, I'll take care of it." So, I left.
23
24Earl Nicholson: And Rusty Ziegler was a committeeman?
25
26Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: No, he was a repairman. He would, you know, every time you
27 [inaudible 16:44] go down the line, he'd be pickin' up all the job or
28 cover you. That's what – most of the time. Like a utility man and
29 repairman at the same time. At that time, it's how the system worked.
30
31Gary Judy: Cheryl McQuaid?
32
33Cheryl McQuaid: [16:59] Du, um, we're all callin' you Du, but your name is –
34
35Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Dusit.
36
37Cheryl McQuaid: Dusit.
38
39Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah.
40
41Cheryl McQuaid: Was that Du just easier for people to pronounce?
42
43Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I think people more comfortable to call that because when you s-,
44 when you read my name, people – how I say it, you know, and then
45 Du is – a lot of people call me Du even when in Thailand [inaudible]

1 17:16] because my name – a lot of people call me Du anyways for
2 some reason. I don't know why. My name not that long. [laughter]
3
4 Gary Judy: [laughter]
5
6 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I don't think it's that bad, but people just call me all the time, so I just
7 go by what is comfortable for people to call you, you know, matter to
8 me, you know.
9
10 Cheryl McQuaid: So, it was not a problem?
11
12 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: No problem. You can call me Du or Dusit, you know, and then people
13 call me Dusit. I say, wow, this guy really... [laughter]
14
15 Cheryl McQuaid: [17:41] What shift did you hire in at?
16
17 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I actually, uh, they were gonna put me in a first shift but I heard a lot
18 of stuff that [you don't have enough seniority 17:52] to hang on to it,
19 you go night. That's why I told'm to put me to night. Then offered –
20 actually, they offered me sanitation job. And then they said that
21 [inaudible 18:03] [don't matter] [laughter] because [inaudible 18:07]
22 for two or three weeks and then people find out you no, no seniority,
23 they gonna bump you off 'cause where you belong anyways, so why
24 you risk [inaudible 18:17] belong.
25
26 Cheryl McQuaid: [18:22] Was it – how did you feel about the people that you worked
27 around? Were they all very friendly?
28
29 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, yeah, most of them.
30
31 Cheryl McQuaid: [18:31] Did they help you out?
32
33 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, yeah. It was real good. When I first hire in, I really had nice
34 people work around me. We were really good friends, you know, like
35 get along good.
36
37 Gary Judy: [18:43] Du, were, were you the only Thai person that – in the plant or
38 were there other people from...
39
40 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I think it's, uh, maybe there's only one. Maybe – I don't know how
41 many Oriental there but I really count one h-, one hand. I don't see
42 anybody except me.
43
44 Gary Judy: [19:00] So, you were never called upon to translate for...
45

1Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Later on, later on I – they called me. When they had a lot of people
2 from Laos. Had one guy from Laos, you know, have to help him out
3 and everything.
4

5Gary Judy: [19:13] Is it the same language then?
6

7Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Uh, Lao a little bit different from Thai. Just a – but, 80 percent or
8 more the same, only pronunciation really. Basically, the same
9 language.
10

11Earl Nicholson: [19:29] So – Earl Nicholson. Du, what were your – what were your
12 lunches like?
13

14Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: My lunch?
15

16Earl Nicholson: Yes. What did you do for lunch?
17

18Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, I, uh, actually I have no idea, you know, [inaudible 19:43] all the
19 stuff. I have awful time first week because I didn't pack my lunch. I
20 looking for some place to eat. I don't know to go. Nobody show me.
21 And actually, when I hired first, first couple weeks, didn't go
22 [inaudible 19:58] all the time. Everybody left except me. I was
23 standing there and said, "Where is everybody?" All on break, nobody
24 come back. [laughter]
25
26 [laughter]
27

28Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Everybody's [inaudible 20:06] sometime I was stand there and say,
29 "What happened?" Everybody left. [laughter] I would stand there.
30 [laughter] And the boss said, "What are you doing here? Trying to get
31 overtime?" [laughter] I didn't know how he mean. [laughter]
32

33Gary Judy: [20:22] So, so did you ever get lost in the plant when you –
34

35Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, yeah, many times, especially when they constructed a new paint,
36 paint department. And then when I come in, they show me how to get
37 to the paint department, you know. That time, I think it's off limits to
38 the employees to walk through that way and I get caught. But I told
39 him, you know, that's the only way I know. They showed me how. [I
40 don't know 20:46] another way. [laughter] I now park out front and on
41 the side. We park in the – by the south side. That's the only way I
42 know how. [Inaudible 20:56] but they let me go in that time because a
43 lot of people tried to make a short cut that time. Get in a lot of trouble
44 for that. So, I have no, no other way to know – to go to the plant.
45 That's the only way I know how. [laughter]
46

1 Gary Judy: [21:05] So, so, you hired in in trim?
2
3 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah.
4
5 Gary Judy: And...
6
7 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I got started in the 3X. You come into the south side, you walk
8 through the, you know, the body shop with the paint.
9
10 Gary Judy: [21:18] Is, is that the only department you ever worked in?
11
12 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: For a long time.
13
14 Gary Judy: [21:22] And then, well, did you – where'd you go from there?
15
16 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: And then after that, uh, I went to the material.
17
18 Gary Judy: Right. We, we worked together in materials. So...
19
20 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah. For about, I think it's four year. Two or four years.
21
22 Gary Judy: And...
23
24 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: After that, I went to the QC.
25
26 Gary Judy: [21:43] What was it like, uh, going into material? How did you, uh,
27 how did you go about getting into material? That was kind of a
28 preferred job and can you tell us how you went about doing that?
29
30 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I put in a transfer, and then they asked me do I want to take it. I said,
31 "Well, yes, I can." You know. I like to do something different.
32
33 Gary Judy: [22:05] Did you enjoy material? Or...
34
35 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I liked material. A little different. Gave me a little free time to do
36 stuff, you know, [roam around 22:12].
37
38 Gary Judy: It was a little better.
39
40 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Every time you work the same thing all the time, you get to the point
41 you can [inaudible 22:19] same old thing, so [inaudible 22:22]
42 material, actually a lot more work. [Inaudible 22:25], you have a little
43 work, but you change the pace, so it make everything go faster.
44

1 Gary Judy: [22:32] And so, from material, you transferred out of material and
2 went to QC? You say you went to QC. Can you explain to us what
3 QC is?
4

5 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: QC is, uh, quality control. I, I put in a transfer for qual-, quality
6 control. It's, you know, check the fit...
7

8 Gary Judy: Fit and finish on the car.
9

10 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Fit and finish, all different stuff.
11

12 Gary Judy: [22:58] And, and what department – where did you work at when you
13 did this job?
14

15 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I worked on the trim. I worked in trim.
16

17 Gary Judy: In trim?
18

19 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah. Actually, when I, uh, put in to QC job, quality control, after
20 they accept me, I went overseas and they called me at home.
21 [Inaudible 23:14] pick up the phone. [laughter] So, I told'm to call
22 [inaudible 23:17] accept the job but I cannot be back in another four
23 weeks. Somehow, they hold a job for me.
24

25 Gary Judy: [23:25] So, you, so, you went back to Thailand and – while they
26 offered you the job?
27

28 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah. [Inaudible 23:28], you know, I'm not gonna do – we spent
29 about 4,000 or 5,000 for the airplane for the whole family. I'm not
30 going to just come back like that, you know. [laughter]
31

32 Gary Judy: Yeah. [23:38] So, so did you spend all of your time in trim on QC or
33 did you, did you move to...
34

35 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Most of the time, uh, for about – I'm not sure exactly, but not really
36 long because they cut back, you know, back on the line a little bit and
37 that – actually, no. I went back on the line to QC and then I put in a
38 transfer – they [inaudible 24:00] order QC job, so my boss told me
39 they have some jobs down in QC in the body shop.
40

41 Gary Judy: [24:10] Can you tell us a little bit about that job and what you did
42 there?
43

44 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah, that was a weld integrity job. It's part of the QC – at that time it
45 was part of QC. It's the check and fit. We'd check weld, spot weld, all
46 different stuff have to do with the body before the body put together.

1
2 Gary Judy: [24:29] How did you, how did you check the welds? What – did you
3 have any special tools you were working with?
4
5 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, we have a hammer and chisel, basically. That's our main two...
6 mostly a good eye.
7
8 Gary Judy: A good eye and a hammer and a chisel?
9
10 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yep.
11
12 Gary Judy: [24:44] And so, uh, what'd you have to do? Did you have to – can you
13 explain how you, how you check a weld?
14
15 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah, okay. That time, when I go in, I have to check the car. Side
16 frame is, you know, side frames is where all the quarter – front quarter
17 panel and the rear quarter panel and the door opening weld together.
18 We check all the weld in that section. I have one side, my partner
19 have one side. It's about 300 or 400, close to 400 – how many? Well
20 over 300 to 400 welds, something like that.
21
22 Gary Judy: [25:18] So, you had to check 300 or 400 welds in an hour? Or...
23
24 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Every hour, we pull – we check one. But that time, when we check...
25
26 Gary Judy: Three or four hundred welds in an hour? So, you'd have to hammer –
27
28 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Actually, physically take'm out – take them out from the assem-, uh,
29 on the line, set on the stand, and we checked them then.
30
31 Gary Judy: With a chisel and a hammer?
32
33 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah.
34
35 Gary Judy: You would, you would hit the weld with the chisel...
36
37 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: And the hammer.
38
39 Gary Judy: And the hammer. Three to four hundred hits a hour? [25:44] How,
40 how did you find that? Did you find it physically demanding?
41
42 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, really physically because, you know, we use a hammer and chisel
43 and your arm really not get used to it, you know. I just really – after a
44 second or third check, you're just about – your shoulder gonna fall off
45 because you're not used to it. And that time, we have to switch the
46 side frame that, that even more demanding because you have to switch

1 – take'm off from the rack, hang them back on the rack, and put on the
2 job. Usually after the – but a lot of times, your shoulder would just
3 about had it because it's so heavy. You cannot just drop it or you are
4 going to ding it, so you have to be careful. You and your partner carry
5 one, each end, drop in the slot before you can check. And then you
6 have to open the two door, four door and then, uh, Buick – not Buick
7 at that time [inaudible 26:31].
8
9 Gary Judy: [26:40] Did, did you ever get in trouble on that job for missing any
10 weld checks or – I know that was a problem.
11
12 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: We had some trouble, but a lot of time, it not your fault or acceptable
13 because you're supposed to be able to – no, on the General Motor they
14 accept five percent of bad weld. And a lot of time, you miss one or
15 two, one or two out of 300. That's not five percent. You know, they
16 try to burn you. They, they cannot. They try to get you in trouble, but
17 sometime they – if General Motor accept the fit, you know, the fit is
18 five percent, if you have one or two weld, how can it be five percent?
19 It's under five percent. It depend on supervisor too and how they want
20 to go about it.
21
22 Gary Judy: [27:32] So, was there, there was good and bad supervisors in weld
23 integrity?
24
25 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, absolutely.
26
27 Gary Judy: [27:38] Do you remember any names?
28
29 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: [laughter] I don't want to name them. Most of them really good. I'd,
30 I'd say, you know, most but [I feel them 27:48].
31
32 Gary Judy: [27:49] Did, did you ever have to call your union?
33
34 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, all the time. [laughter]
35
36 Gary Judy: [laughter] And, and what was the reason why? You missed welds?
37 Or...
38
39 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Well, a lot of time, when you miss weld, it technically acceptable but
40 for some, it not acceptable. And for some people, the same thing you
41 missed for them, another person do the same, they could be okay with
42 them. So, you, uh, you know you're not being treated right, you have
43 to call people to...
44

1 Gary Judy: [28:22] So, you, you felt they kind of discriminated against certain
2 people? They would let some people get away with certain things and
3 other people...
4

5 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, yes.
6

7 Gary Judy: Cheryl McQuaid?
8

9 Cheryl McQuaid: Du, I've got some questions from a while ago. Um, you said that when
10 you first hired in, if you wanted to take a break, you sat on stock 'cause
11 stock was sittin' everywhere.
12

13 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Mm-hm.
14

15 Cheryl McQuaid: [28:45] When you became a material driver, was the stock still sittin'
16 everywhere or had the system changed at all?
17

18 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: At that time, it started to transfer a little bit, but they still spent most of
19 their time there. When they come to material later on, they started to
20 have [inaudible 28:59] crate for the – all the materials stock. We
21 called the supermarket. It's a long, three, four stack of rack [inaudible
22 29:09] the whole length of the floor. Might be 50 feet, something like
23 that for each one. And then divided in different sections on the main
24 floor like in the [C-line 29:22] whole length, run all the way from the
25 north end to almost all the way to a step to go up in the 3X. And then,
26 uh, on the B-, that time on B-line, up in the 3X, they have their own
27 little, small supermarket up there too to supply the stuff up there. And
28 then on, uh, trim, on the B-line, they have their own [inaudible 29:46]
29 on the side, on the north side, but second floor. So, basically, they just
30 stock the stuff.
31

32 Cheryl McQuaid: So, there wasn't as much stock sittin' by the jobs?
33

34 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Not – a little less.
35

36 Cheryl McQuaid: [29:58] Where did the employees sit then? Did they bring in benches?
37 Or...
38

39 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: That time, when I hired in [inaudible 30:03], basically we find any box
40 solid enough to sit on on the side. Get no chair, nothing. Only people
41 that have a chair is the boss in a desk.
42

43 Cheryl McQuaid: [laughter]
44

1Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Nobody'll have anything. You find anything you can sit on.
2 Sometimes, we'd have to sit between the – when the line down, sit on
3 the job. Most people lay down on the job. [laughter]
4

5Cheryl McQuaid: Thank you.
6

7Gary Judy: So, okay Du, I'm gonna take you back to the last job you worked
8 though, weld integrity in the body shop. Um, that was a pretty
9 demanding job, a lot of inspection on that job, uh, they really kept a
10 close eye on the employees. [30:54] Could you ever – did you feel
11 that you were discriminated against at all out there in that job.
12

13Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, yes. Sometimes, depending on the incident but a lot of times I feel
14 that I would be singled out. Not just me, a few other people too that
15 people can do one thing wrong, the same two person, and one will get
16 singled out and the other person will be total ignored, might even get
17 reward.
18

19Gary Judy: [31:23] So, can you tell us about an incident where that happened with
20 you? Or...
21

22Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I remember one time they have a job come down from underbody. It
23 was a bad weld and somebody cannot fix it. They could let them slide
24 by and everybody okay with that, signed the paper, and then when I –
25

26Gary Judy: So, what you're saying is everybody had to sign a paper to...
27

28Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: To okay. [Inaudible 31:53].
29

30Gary Judy: [31:53] Now, who was – can you tell us who everybody was? All the
31 workers, the supervisors, who was it?
32

33Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, all the [inaudible 31:59] supervisors.
34

35Gary Judy: [32:01] So, the workers had to sign a paper?
36

37Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: No, no, the supervisor have to okay if something to not be fixed.
38

39Gary Judy: Oh, okay. So, a supervisor – you guys had to report the bad weld –
40

41Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yep.
42

43Gary Judy: And the supervisor had to sign off on the weld, knowing that it's bad,
44 acknowledging it.
45

1Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah. A lot of time, sometime we work with the production.
2 Supervisor said they want – they not gonna fix and then our boss okay
3 [with them letting it go 32:29] because production have a final say on
4 everything. They don't want to hold the line down. Everything have
5 to be goin' a certain pace. If they – we find something acceptable to
6 them and our boss okay, they acceptable, they sign the paper, we gotta
7 let it go.
8

9Gary Judy: So, so you were tellin' us about this job that came out of underbody. It
10 came to you and it –
11

12Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: That time I was, uh, we nicked named, uh, dog catcher. Any, anybody
13 in the weld, in weld integrity, we have three different sections. One is
14 side frame, one underbody, one [the car track 33:08]. When
15 something go wrong, they call to a dog catcher, that's a nickname for
16 the job. And we, uh, we try to track down one job –
17

18Gary Judy: [sneezing]
19

20Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Number, start fixing them. And one incident I remember they have
21 some job, maybe only passed when I started and then somehow, they
22 cannot really repair the Fisher Body. I don't know if they repaired the
23 chassis or not. They decide that they gonna let the thing go.
24

25Gary Judy: [33:40] So, they're gonna let this bad weld go?
26

27Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Mm-hm. And then when something like that, all the – at that time
28 with the MC of the trim, MC of the wall integrity, have to okay.
29

30Gary Judy: [34:01] The, the MC, now that's a like a general, general foreman?
31 He's the head –
32

33Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah, manufacture coordinator for the body shop. That time, that
34 second shift – they have, you know, day shift, night shift and then
35 that...
36

37Gary Judy: So, so they're like a, a supervisor's boss?
38

39Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yep.
40

41Gary Judy: Okay.
42

43Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: And they decide that it's okay and then it not gonna affect anything, so
44 we have it go. And then a few months later, I have some incident,
45 myself, some weld less important than – for me, than that weld, and
46 they tried to give me time off because, uh, somehow, I missed a weld.

1 When you miss a weld in weld integrity, it's random. You should have
2 no time off because you don't know – it's not every job. The weld
3 went bad. Some good, some bad, you only pull one every hour, so you
4 happen to hit the one so-so. So, you expect they could be all not too
5 bad.
6
7 Cheryl McQuaid: [clearing throat]
8
9 Gary Judy: Random sampling.
10
11 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah. Sampling, yeah.
12
13 Gary Judy: [35:14] So, so you got singled out for a weld and what happened?
14
15 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: They, uh, they put me on notice and sent me out the door.
16
17 Gary Judy: [35:22] So, you got time off for it?
18
19 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: That's correct.
20
21 Gary Judy: [35:27] And how much time off did they give ya?
22
23 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Three days.
24
25 Gary Judy: [35:31] And what did you do? Did you call your, uh, union steward?
26
27 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yep. I called my union and then we go to the – actually the job that I
28 checked and they say I miss it. And then it was acceptable with – they
29 were saying the three-weld break it's actually [one weld would – one
30 weld would 35:54] break. On weld integrity, if you have two weld,
31 three weld, side by side within the – each weld spaced about inch, inch
32 and a quarter between them. If you – you have one between them
33 acceptable, [inaudible 36:10] simple because GM accept bad weld five
34 percent total on the weld, so one out of three, four on the job is less
35 than five percent.
36
37 Gary Judy: [36:23] So, so what happened? You, you called your committeeman...
38
39 Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: And, and then we fought that thing and then, uh, later they paid me
40 back.
41
42 Cheryl McQuaid: [clearing throat]
43
44 Gary Judy: So, you got paid for your time off? Great. Earl Nicholson.
45

1Earl Nicholson: [36:35] Uh, tell us, uh, Du, tell us about your, uh, your, your union
2experience, you know. Do you have – you have been – were you in
3good relations with your, your committee people? Uh, did you attend,
4uh, union meetings?
5

6Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I don't attend the union meeting, but I went to every, uh, election.
7

8Earl Nicholson: You go at every election?
9

10Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah.
11

12Earl Nicholson: [36:53] And did you interact ex-, did you get along good with your
13committeeman?
14

15Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: A lot of time, really good, you know, some of them did not agree with
16me certain thing, I don't agree with them, but in certain way, we have
17to do everything right, but the way I see a thing should be done that
18way, but he don't see it that way. But bottom line, we just have to get
19the thing done.
20

21Earl Nicholson: [37:13] So, did you ever have to go, uh, were – did you ever have to
22go to the next level in the union?
23

24Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Oh, on one of the few time, but I, I think I did one time, but same
25answer, so I never go after that.
26

27Earl Nicholson: [37:29] So, Du, tell us about, tell us about the, the, the benefits, the
28benefit of working in, in – for General Motors.
29

30Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: General Motors really big company.
31

32Earl Nicholson: Mm-hm.
33

34Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: And then, uh...
35

36Earl Nicholson: I mean, you get good pay...
37

38Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Really good pay, good benefit.
39

40Earl Nicholson: Mm-hm. That'd been, been probably – that was probably – that's been
41good for your family?
42

43Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Best – oh, absolutely. The best.
44

45Gary Judy: [37:55] What's – Gary Judy. What, what benefit do you appreciate the
46most working for GM?

1
2Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Health benefit.
3
4Gary Judy: Your health care?
5
6Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yep. Health care, health benefit. You know, we got a good wage.
7 We can take care of our family better, easier. Everybody know to take
8 care of their family no matter how much they make, but with our
9 wages and benefit it easier than most people.
10
11Gary Judy: [38:18] Now, when you hired in to Fisher Body, it was called Fisher
12 Body and has changed over the years to different names. How do you
13 feel about the name changes?
14
15Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I, I think they just, uh, waste money changing all the names because
16 bottom line, everybody still call themselves a Fisher Body employee.
17
18Gary Judy: So, you still consider it Fisher Body?
19
20Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Body because they change the name so much, you don't know which
21 one now, next. Every, every two year, you turn around, you know,
22 they called different name, but the s-, s-, you in the same spot.
23
24Gary Judy: [38:50] Well, the plant's closed now and, uh, how do your – how do
25 you feel about that?
26
27Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: I feel sad because I worked there so long, like 28 year there.
28
29Gary Judy: [39:01] Can you tell us your best, uh, moment there and, and your
30 worst moment?
31
32Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Well, the worst moment when the thing shut down, you know, your,
33 all your life, get used to what you do. You come to work, same thing,
34 time, same spot or whatever you do every – you know, same routine,
35 but we all have to change. And you like to see them hang around, but
36 time will change, everything have to move on. My best time, when I
37 first got hired, I – my – actually, my first paycheck. It's a lot more
38 than, uh, three time more than – for the same, same hour you work,
39 you know, you get three time, four time more than most – your old
40 job. That's the best.
41
42Gary Judy: [39:53] So, uh, we're, we're coming to a close here. Uh, does anybody
43 have any questions? Earl Nicholson?
44

1Earl Nicholson: [40:01] Uh, yeah. Du, do you – are you involved in any activities
2 outside of the factory? Are you involved in community – type of
3 community activity?
4

5Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yeah. I, uh, I volunteer to be referee for the soccer. [Inaudible 40:17]
6 in DeWitt.
7

8Earl Nicholson: Excellent.
9

10Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Every Saturday I go referee for them, even when I'm working
11 [inaudible 40:29] sometime it tough. [laughter]
12

13Earl Nicholson: [40:30] So, are you, are you all set to, to go to the new factory?
14

15Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Well, yes.
16

17Earl Nicholson: Good to go?
18

19Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Yep.
20

21Earl Nicholson: All right. Fantastic.
22

23Gary Judy: [40:42] Do you have anything that you'd like to add to this, Du?
24 Anything that we haven't asked you?
25

26Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: Well, I hope the new factory work out good for everybody, not just
27 me, everybody. Everybody behind me, every... Hope for thing go
28 good for all of us.
29

30Earl Nicholson: All right. Fantastic then.
31

32Gary Judy: Well, we'd like to thank you for your time and the interview.
33

34Earl Nicholson: Thanks, uh, thanks, Du.
35

36Cheryl McQuaid: Thank you, Du.
37

38Earl Nicholson: Appreciate it.
39

40Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: You're welcome.
41

42Earl Nicholson: Very good.
43

44Cheryl McQuaid: [clearing throat]
45

1Dusit Kriengsak-Obhas: You're welcome. Hopefully, you can, uh, like I enjoyed it too. Kind
2 of a boring story. [laughter]
3
4Cheryl McQuaid: [laughter]
5
6Gary Judy: [laughter] No.
7
8Earl Nicholson: [laughter] No.
9
10
11/tl