STANLEY and MARGARET NOWAK
8/14/84
TAPE 1, Side 1

SN: . . . the American Federation of Labor, under the auspices of the American Federation of Labor, the feeling was that we could organize a local openly. Otherwise, under the other union it would have to be illegal, underground, because it would have no chance of being recognized. Well that thinking was mistaken because the Ford Motor Company had no record of, they had no more respect for the American Federation of Labor any more than they had for any other union. And they just fired them and there was no talk for quite a few years. There was no way of correcting it. It was not until Roosevelt days and when we already had partially Ford organized and the Ford Motor Company was put on trial for discriminating against unions, against (?).

MN: That famous NLRB trial, that Sugar, that started in '37?

SN: That's right. So you see it was not until then.

Q: He took care of ..... that case?

SN: Yes, he was in charge. There are some pictures here, some very interesting pictures. Of that case. So that's the--it had a background. The first real pioneers. The first people who actually risked everything they had.

Q: How far did they get along? Did they get a lot of workers to join?

SN: That's hard to tell. I really couldn't answer that question. But was of interest, was that they distributed a lot of material, leaflets. And how did they do it? The workers would bring with them and they would put them on the machine, on the conveyor, those leaflets would go out through the whole thing. They did that kind of work. Now how many of them were involved in it, I couldn't tell you.

MN: That's how Tony Morandus(?) got fired. They caught him, he put a little stack of leaflets on the conveyor belt and they'd go down the line.

SN: Many of them and that was at work, Bill Langraf(?). Do you remember Bill Langraf(?) there?

MN: Yeah.

SN: Well that was years before that. That must have been '34-'35. And he was caught with one of the leaflets. Or he had it in his pocket and the foreman found it. He said you have no right to look in my coat, in my pocket, that I have. And he kind of bluffed that foreman. But it is one thing to have them in your pockets and another thing to distribute. But he distributed a lot of them. So that's how the work was done for years. But it was a very risky business. You see the Ford Motor Company had well-organized what they called security guards, or whatever the hell they were. And they had stool pigeons

everywhere. You appeared at a union meeting, public meeting, even in the days of the CIO. And the next day you were fired.

Q: Where did they get all these, the people that were willing to be stool pigeons?

SN: For money.

Q: Just offered them an amount of money?

SN: Absolutely. Later on something else happened that I'll tell you in this factional fight. One of the individuals tended to be a company stool pigeons and gave them applications that we brought in so some of the people that I signed up were fired. (LAUGHTER) So at first it would be like a stool pigeon that they had, you know, that agency, the agency that they had at that time that did this job for money. And then the Ford Motor Company had its own. You see, he had a highly developed method of dealing with workers. Not for their interest but for the company's interest. For example, in the black community he would have individuals who were able to give jobs for black people.

Q: Were these ministers, do you know?

SN: Some were ministers, some were not.

Q: In every language group--you remember that woman who worked in our Polish office in the paper. She first was a secretary to a Ukranian by origin, an American born, who was a lawyer. He did that kind of a job among the Ukranians. He would get a few jobs for them and then he would also report to the company whatever he found. An advisor. He was sort of a link in a chain through which the Ford Motor Company kept track of the Ukranians.

MN: Horace White was one of the black ministers that tried to get commissions for some black people and then he got jobs through Ford in return some of the people from (VOICES TOGETHER) and then Horace White turned against them.

SN: Sure. And that's how this thing worked in the past. But that's why we had such good (?). We would call a meeting and if it was in a public hall, people wouldn't come. And for a very good reason because somebody would report who was there at the meeting and he would lose his job and very likely be put on the blacklist. And in those days it was very difficult. And we would call small meetings in homes. And then we would have ten-fifteen at private homes ---

MN: All the workers on one block would meet in homes.

SN: Well, maybe a few of them. And we would have somebody in front of the house in summer watching if any stranger appeared nearby, a message

was sent to us and we'd immediately put beer, a case of beer, some cards and make it a party at home. Yes, that's ----

SN: So, that's how we worked. And the Ford Motor Company controlled--you see, the Rouge plant at that time, located where it is now in Dearborn, and it employed something like over 80,000 people. Today its only thirty-six. And it actually controlled the municipalities: Dearborn, all of Lincoln Park, ---

MN: River Rouge . . .

SN: Pardon?

MN: It controlled, yes, Ecorse, River Rouge.

SN: Ecorse, all of the municipalities down the river. Because that's where the Ford workers lived. They controlled it--well they had all kinds of municipal acts against distributing leaflets, against organizing meetings, and in Dearborn particularly. So to get in front of the Rouge plant, nearby where workers were going to work, it was impossible. You'd be arrested for the violation of a city ordinance. In the early days, they later broke up that violation but at first that's what it was. It was absolutely impossible to get anywhere. And they hold the Rouge plant today, almost today it is like a military camp. And if municipalities let you get through the (?) it

is fine. If they don't, you can cut you up. Of course it is all broken down now, there's no (?). That was like a fortress. That's why it was so difficult ---

MN: Excuse me, right on this point I want to let that--have you seen this book? The Legend of Henry Ford, by Kieth Sward. You can get that. He has a lot of data in it and it is very well documented. On what went on internally in the plant, let's see, "Men and Servicemen Operated," "The Terror," and Ford's tendency to hire criminals, from prisons, you know, when they were out on probation and used them in his service department. That's why he gets his ruthless elements there. They didn't care anymore.

Q: Is that Sward? I think I've seen that. I haven't read the whole ---

MN: Yes. I've used this a lot in getting background for my book and a couple of it was--plus Stanley and I actually learned from the men that worked in the shop. But this is a very valuable book in that respect.

SN: So, we'll go in a minute, she'll be here in a minute. One aspect, you see the factional aspect appeared later and it's true that of all the companies, the left-wing element were most, more rooted at Ford than any other plant. And this background I gave you is the explanation for it, because it required a very dedicated people, and politically quite sophisticated in many ways to face the first work.

Q: So you think that challenge could have drawn very dedicated organizers to the Ford plant?

SN: Of course, It's not that it drew them, but it's the only one that would go there.

MN: That's right. They were the only ones who were brave, the conditions of the time. They were really anxious enough to have a union and willing to face up to get it.

Q: It seems like there were quite a few union leaders that were working at the Ford plant that the time that it was to organized and later became pretty important in the local. And of course a lot of them became progressives. Did the early organizer secured more progressive, more dedicated, more militant, these were the ones that were working at Ford at the time, and they eventually became the union leaders. (INAUDIBLE)

MN: You see with that kind of a struggle that helped (?) too.

SN: You see the association, the association of the left-wing government from the very beginning, would take an individual black (?) white

MN: Even the very first President of the infant (?) union, before it was really chartered . . .

SN: Also, Scotchmen, /~Percy Llewellyn_7 he was politically not a socialist, not a communist, he was politically suited and oriented to the extent of knowing that labor should have its own political party. But chiefly interested in the union. Studied quite early and all of his associates were left-wing because that's all there was. And he remained very loyal to them.

MN: He just died recently.

SN: Yeah. He died.

Q: We talked with his son-in-law and his daughter.

SN: So, that's it. That's one example. There are other examples. A number of examples. There was for example, a black fellow who is still alive ---

MN: Sheldon Tappes

SN: Yeah, well that's one thing. And what I have in mind was this fellow who . . .

Q: Dave Moore?

SN: No, not Dave Moore, but he was black too.

MN: Married to a little white woman.

Q: Is he dead now?

MN: No, he's still around.

Q: Not Johnson.

SN: I had in mind this fellow that was active in the Urban League.

Q: Horace Sheffield?

SN: That's right. Exactly right. Horace Sheffield. Now he was a very conservative leader, an old time Ford worker. Very conservative.

MN: He was so conservative that one time, when Stanley would start to speak at the union, he would get up and leave.

SN: But in time it was somehow, he didn't fully grasp theory. His father was a socialist(?) of many left-wing people. Until somebody persuaded him to go to the Soviet Union. He came back completely changed and I didn't know that. I only knew that an individual who had not (?), but

INAUDIBLE

who so disagreed with it otherwise, . . . (?). But as she said when I spoke at the meetings . . . he would walk out of the meetings. All at once he changed. Became very friendly, and somebody told me, you

know, he went to the Soviet Union for the first time, it changed him completely.

MN: I think that was Walter Reuther.

SN: Yeah. That's right. But left-wing people are real friends of the blacks. Today, he was the one who, among others, recommended me to the honor.

MN: The Honary (?), what they call their distinguished award. People who have contributed for a long time are given that award.

SN: So he recommended me for it and today he's one of the closer, best friends. But that's how these people . . . .

Q: It was a long time before he changed

SN: And he was one of the black community, . . . First General Motor . . . with one exception, in the foundry, they never voted for him in the foundry. In Ternstedt, the big shots . . . . 12,000 people worked there, . . . shine the cars.

MN: I think there was another one that Reuther (?)

SN: I only personally met (?) But Ford Motor Company hired blacks. But what they did, they would . . . between black and white . . . . And

of course, with this kind of a situation, the black people would have difficulty finding jobs anywhere, and would go out of their way to produce more. And considering how . . . when I was elected to the State Senate in '38 and in '39, there was only one black man in the Senate, black . . . and he could not get a room in a hotel . . . . He had to live in a black community . . . . So you see how difficult it was. So on interest of consensus the Ford Motor Company appeared as a . . . There also, there were no black leaders in the union, all these black people saw in the union were white, white, white, white. And they had all kinds of reservations. Now, many locals have changed. But at that time, they were not.

Q: The Rouge plant was the only Ford plant that hired more blacks.

SOUND RESTORED

Q: Okay. I guess if we could just start with a short autobiographical statement about how you came to be involved with labor.

SN: Well you know I was born in Poland and you probably could guess that. I came to this country at the age of ten. My people and my entire family located in Chicago, in the packinghouse district. The famous Chicago packinghouse. And I went there to parochial school and my brothers worked at the packinghouse. That was during the First World War. At the conclusion of that war, there was huge strike. First

there was an attempt to make--organize the packinghouse workers, and then the strike took place and, of course, another aspect of the strike that I saw because my brothers were participating in it for the first time. They agreed when the company brought in black people from the south to work as scabs. And I saw the white workers who were on the picket line and they actually could not put a picket line within the packinghouse because that was all company property. It would be on the outside. They would drag--these pickets would drag these black workers from the streetcars and beat them up and I saw that but the only explanation my brother could give me was, "Look, they are scabs and they are trying to break our union." The union was broken up, of course, and there were some very bloody fights. And that was my introduction to ---

MN: Don't forget about your two organizers that were murdered.

SN: Yeah. There was also the question of ethnic fair groups. And the packinghouse, most of the workers were either Poles or Slavs like Russians or Czechs, or Lithuanians. Lithuanians are not Slavs but they are a big group there. Two--there were three locals. Two of them spoke at their meetings in Polish because they didn't speak English at all. Polish-speaking locals. That's how many of the labor unions in the early days were organized that way. There were Polish organizers and one of them first was slugged and killed on his way home from a meeting. Then someone else hired in his place, a few weeks he was killed in the early of the day by sluggers who were never

apprehended. So these were the things that I was introduced to at a very early age.

Q: This was in the 1920s then?

MN: Umhum. Yes, in the 1920s.

SN: Yes in the 1920s. That's right. I was also at that time introduced to something completely new. It was the Palmer Raids. I saw in my neighborhood clubs, Russian, Polish, Lithuanian clubs, social clubs. And they were raided by the police. They used these tactics that on Sunday, Saturday night, Christmas Eve,

MN: New Year's Eve.

SN: New Year's Eve party. That's right. As the people went into the halls to celebrate their New Year's Eve, they would raid them and stay there and arrest everyone who came into the hall and take them to the police headquarters. And then from there, for a time, for weeks, the families could not locate their sons or their husbands, at what station they were kept. Because even the Police Department didn't know. They were not prepared for these kind of raids. There was something like ten thousand people arrested throughout the country. How many of them were in Chicago, I don't know. But that was my introduction to it. And later on ---

MN: What made it more impressive for him, he told me, as we tried to write his book he had to dig into his memory, is that many of these people who were arrested were people who had come from his village, his community, he knew them. And to a boy who had been educated in American schools about, you know, our great traditions and so on, and he saw these things happening to these people who had never done anything to anybody and it disturbed him.

SN: And so later on I worked in clothing. I went to work at the age of fourteen. My (?) for education. I couldn't afford it. So I got a job in clothing. I worked for Hart, Schaffner & Marx. There was already a union there. We didn't need to organize for a union there.

Q: This was in Chicago also?

NM: In fact, you had to join the union after you were there a certain length of time.

SN: Yeah.

Q: It was a union shop?

SN: That's right. It was a progressive union. They founded the union, were old-time Socialists from Europe: Polish, Jewish Socialists. And they had many very progressive aspects of it. They would not have, deduct dues from the paycheck. You had to come and collect dues from

them against the checkoff system. And they also had a provision that no worker would be laid off for lack of work. The work would have to be divided. I haven't seen that done anywhere since then. There were a number of very progressive things. And in the shop that I worked there were quite a number of Jewish socialists from Poland, who migrated from Poland, and they took sort of an interest in me. Delighted me with books and taught me a lot of things. Later on they elected me as the youngest steward. They called them Chairman.

MN: That was in 1922.

SN: Yeah. The youngest steward in the history, and they called it Chairman. And the reason for it was--one of the reasons I would say was that the entire leadership of the union and the local there was Jewish. And, of course, they founded the union, that was logical. But there were other groups, ethnic groups, and among them were quite a few Poles, Russians, and Rumanians with them. So that was during election and they had a very democratic election. Every year the Chairman of the local would be reelected and every official. And at the election anti-semitism developed there. And by my countryman, a Polish fellow, the underground said, "Well Jews control everything." It was--I realized that, as little as I knew and I knew something, I realized that it was bad because the union was good, the edicts were good, and just because they were Jewish, origins, so what. So I did not agree with it. And the leadership came to the conclusion that the way to block this thing was to have a non-Jewish person to run for

that office. So they put me in. They trusted me and insisted and I finally agreed to it and it's true that once I appeared as a candidate this other man withdrew and all anti-semitic campaign stopped. Because they couldn't Jew-bait me. So I say, that's the kind of introduction I had, I benefited a lot and I learned a lot from that experience. And I worked there until the great Hoover depression. And then when the depression started the section, as we called it, all the workers, all of those who did the same work, and we divided according to the agreement, one part worked one week and another part worked another week. Well it got so bad that we would have one days in two weeks to work. And I said to myself, well what's the use. I had a little savings and I thought I would catch up on my education that I needed it badly or see the country a little, so I resigned. And a month after I resigned, before I decided what to do, the Chicago Tribune, the local, a very old paper there, came with a screaming headline across "Seventeen Banks Close in One Day." One of them was the bank, where I had my savings in there, was closed for three years, if not more. So I was left without a job and $50 to my name. (LAUGHTER) That was an experience.

Q: He laughs about it today.

SN: But ---

MN: He survived.

SN: I survived. I joined the unemployed movement.

Q: In Chicago?

SN: In Chicago, yes, and I took a very active part and then also continued my education. But I didn't go much to school anymore. I would rather be reading. I spent hours at the library, a private library in Chicago, and it has classics and among the classics it has some philanthropists' letters. The Creole Library, I think it was.

MN: The Krurar(?).

SN: Yes. They had Marx's first volume of capitalism. And I remember how I was introduced to it. I asked the librarian there for books on economics and he gave me a few here and there. And I was not making any headway so I told him I don't get much out of it. So he looked at me and said, "Are you serious about it?" I said, "Yes, I want to learn all I can at a time." "Well," he says, "if you are serious I'll advise you but you cannot take this book out of the building, you'll have to work here." I said fine. So here he is--he showed me a first volume of Marx's capitalism. And I would come there every day and spend a few hours working at it and then back. Oh I don't know, I spent months on it. It was very hard work for me because Marx used in his quotations ---

MN: Mathematical equations and all that stuff.

SN: And I did not know the Mathematics. Not only that but in that first translation that was published by Charles H. Kerr Co., Marx used a lot of quotations in other languages and they would not translate those quotations. The Greek language and all those (LAUGHTER). So that's-- but I struggled with it and as I did and I started traveling and started speaking on economics and people would throw questions at me. So that's how I acquired my education and I finally landed in Detroit in all my tours.

MN: In one of his Unemployed Councils. That's when we met.

SN: That's how we met, yeah. And I remained here. So that was my background.

MN: He would travel from city to city with just enough money ---

SIDE 2, TAPE I

SN: . . . One of them was the Vice President of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers by the name of Leo Krinsky. And he was assigned here by Lewis to come and help to organize the auto workers once the UAW decided to work with the CIO committee at that time. And Krinsky who was of Polish background, a former socialist from Milwaukee, knew enough that he knew first that this is a big Polish community, and that to win the Polish worker required two things. Required to do quite a bit of work

in their language and second by someone in whom they would have some confidence, especially was one of them. It's just like black people, in a sense, he knew this much. When he came here I accidentally met him at a meeting of the Polish workers' paper here. And we both were to speak and Homer Martin who was then elected President of the UAW --

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MN: It was a picnic.

SN: And was also speaking at that picnic. So the first thing he asked me was what are you doing? So I said, well I was by that time selling paint for a living because I had to do something. So he said you shouldn't sell paint. Why don't you come and work with us. So I asked why and he told me. And he engaged me to come before the Board and talk to Homer Martin and so I came before the Board and the question was not whether we should organize but how to organize.

Q: So Homer Martin was letting radicals, or people to the left, do his organizing also even though he was more conservative.

SN: Yes, you see ---

MN: They were the best organizers.

SN: You see he, as a result of that convention in Boston that occurred in

MN: South Bend.

SN: South Bend in the early part of May in 1936 when the union got its independence and it elected new officers. He was fully in agreement to work with the left. And when Leo Krinsky told him of this problem of Polish workers and how it should be, we need somebody to attend to this, he fully agreed to it and he recommended me to the Board. And there was a brief discussion at the meeting of the Board and they assigned me to come with a plan, how to organize. So they gave me a few days time, I went over to some friends who had worked together, thinking how to do this. Because in the past when you were organizing language locals and small shops like clothing, there was not much of a problem. You'd find people who were Polish workers or Italian or whatever they may be and they would do most of the job. They would have contact with people. But here you have a few industry. You have shops where tens of thousands of people are employed of all nationalities, all over the city. And as it was generally known, you'll find Polish workers and other Slav groups in every shop. So how do you approach them? Do you go where it is necessary to approach them in their own language, that's one thing. But what do you do, go by the gate with your own (?), when there are workers of a variety come. And whether we should have local language-speaking locals at all when that's such a mass industry. So, we debated and prepared a plan and we suggested that we do not organize language locals, but we do have a ethnic committee, a Polish committee. Organizing committee who would carry on the organizational work of the Polish workers, in

both Polish and English. That was one thing. Second, the question was how do you get them. Well, I knew that there were nine radio programs at that time in Polish. What they did--they would buy time for one hour or two hours. They would give news, they would give Polish music, some cycles (?) and advertising. That's how they sold it and made money on it. But people listened. The Polish people listened to these programs so I found locally again, it's like--there's always a piece of luck in it. So in these nine, I found someone I knew from Chicago who was a former Polish actor who had a program like this. So I went to him, approached him and got a proposal, an agreement that he would sell us ten minutes twice a week for certain sums of money, I forget now how much, not much, very little. So we presented that thing and you had to find things, two broadcasts a week, ten minutes a piece. A Polish program. Now in relation to this radio program, we learned something that I had very little knowledge, that was possible. I didn't think about it, I have no excuse for it. That many of the Slav groups like Czechs, for example, or Slovics-Ukranians, Russians, even some Serbians, listened to this Polish program because they didn't have their own program and listened to the Polish music and they learned enough to understand the language. So when I got to speak on it, within a few weeks I had a terrific audience. Thousands not only, but all the Slavs.

MN: All through Wayne County _____.

S.N: Some things, you know, you learn. So that's one thing. Then we had meetings, an open air meetings at street corners, parks, both Polish and English. And so that's how I was hired, you know that's all part of the records, it should be. Our great pay was $40 a week and $10 expenses. Actually, each week what I returned to Margaret, to our home treasury of my earnings was about $30.

NM: And sometimes not even that.

SM: Yeah, because of expenses we were constantly on the go.

NM: They had to eat so many meals out on the ---

SM: We had to eat meals and so forth. So that's how we got started then. And that's how we organized General Motors, incidentally that radio reached Flint. And I used to go every week to a Polish meeting in Flint. And that's how we organized.

MN: Because they would be largely GM workers, Poles

Q: This is a language club? That where you went to?

SM: Sure. Dol Polsky they called it. Then we had--so we organized General Motors, we organized Chrysler, but we couldn't touch Ford. We did but we had so little, so scattered. So it was not until the strike at Ford took place in 1941. Margaret knows that.

MN: When you went to work for Ford?

SM: No, no, no. When the strike took place at Ford.

MN: 1941. March-April, 1941.

SM: So, it was on Reuther's suggestion because both GM plants that we had were mostly on the east side of Detroit, Chrysler was all east side. The big General Motors plant on the west side we had not touched at that time yet. We couldn't get to it. Ternstedt They employ mostly women there. So it was Walter Reuther who was the president of that newly organized local, went to Homar Martin, spoke to me that I should be assigned definitely to the west side of Detroit because we have to organize and then on the west side was the Ford local. So that's how I was then transferred over with exclusive attention to the west side. But I still had my regular program. So that's the background.

Q: Okay. Did they have language clubs that the Ford workers attended also? The Polish language clubs?

SM: No, we did not have--there were language clubs in the Polish community but we did not organize them. We had Polish committees and the Polish committee consisted of both European Poles and American Poles, and we used two languages, both, we exchanged. But it was only a propaganda committee, organizing committee, there were never clubs. No ethnic

clubs. Later on they had a talent committee. I think they even had some other committees. But there were no clubs.

Q: Okay, so in 1938 you were first elected to the State Senate?

SM: That's right.

Q: Can you explain a little bit about your campaign and how you came to run for the office.

SM: Well as Margaret mentioned to you, it came as a part of a Ford drive. Since we encountered very, extreme difficulties to get to the Ford workers, much more than in General Motors or Chrysler. At General Motors or Chrysler we went on to the factories, with leaflets, amplifiers, speaking and so forth, but at Ford we couldn't because ---

MN: Union men seen attending Ford meetings were beaten. Read Kieth Sward's book. There's a lot of information on that.

SM: So in that struggle, how to get to Ford workers, I probably with my radio program did quite a bit of that. These Ford workers were Polish workers. But outside of that we had no mass way. And we, somehow, you know, you learn. You struggle with problems and you learn something. And I observed and others observed that any Ford worker who were afraid to attend union meetings, attended the Democratic Party, picnics, clubs, a variety of them, so the idea was that if one

of us was a candidate for public office, he would have a right to speak at these meetings. That was one thing. And a second thing too. Why we selected the State Senate as a candidate is because the individual who served in the Michigan Senate at that time was in a sense a stooge of the Ford Motor Company. He was Ford worker, incidentally, before he was elected to the Senate, and when he was in the Senate he would return and do some odd work at the Ford Motor Company. His name was Joseph Roosevelt. That was not his name. He changed that name.

MN: His name was Capola

SM: Yeah, he was of Italian origin. That's not, I have nothing against that, of course, but it was mentioned. But he changed that deliberately in 1932 because he felt that that was a name that was particularly on the Democratic ticket he could be easily elected. He was right. He was in 1932 to the House and then in 1936, I believe, he was elected to the Senate. That's where he was. And we learned from Governor Murphy, who was the governor at that time, that he was a most reactionary senator in spite of he was a Democrat, and a big business senator because he was a Ford man.

MN: He was killing some of Murphy's rural electrification programs --- for example.

SM: So of all those friends who participated in that meeting--also John L. Lewis wrote to Detroit here and suggested organization of the labor Nonpartisan League. Suggested that I be (?) go into politics. So between the two there came an idea, well we should have somebody running for public office in that way. Well who would fit that? In general, I had certain hesitation because I had never run for public office. I had no knowledge what to do--it was completely new to me. Much more new to me than labor unions were. But they said, well you have the best chance because there is a large group of Poles there; second, because of the radio program that I had yet for the union. So I accepted that. And there was also this thing. There was also a great deal of democracy within the Democratic Party, if I can use that term democracy. In what sense? The only thing that was required was that if you wanted to be a candidate, was to deposit $50 at the Secretary of State (?), and a certificate: your birth certificate or your citizenship, and that's all. And then you were already a candidate in the primary.

MN: Or in place of that you could get subscriptions--I mean signatures.

Q: Oh. In place of the $50?

MN: Filed in a certain order. But, we didn't have time to do that.

SM: You see you had two things: either you pay $50 or you had a petitions. Well I didn't have time to collect petitions, I didn't

have any organization. So some people donated in the campaign immediately $50, so I deposited the $50 and I had a little card like this and at the Democratic Party meetings, in that district there, I would show that to the Chairman and he would grant me the right to speak. Well what I did, (I see Margaret) I tried to link together the question of election and ---

MN: Before we get into that, I want to tell them the part that the women played in making sure that you got on the ballot. There was group of women, they called themselves "The Eleanor Roosevelt Democratic Ladies American New Deal Club." Great big long name (laughter). And these were all Polish women who had worked with him in Polish work and at many of these meetings where he spoke and all this. And so when he needed the money to file for that petition, he went to them as an experiment, told them what he needed and asked them if they would make a contribution. Well they not only made the contribution, they advanced the entire $50 for his filing fee, and endorsed him, and went out and actively campaigned for him.

Q: Wow.

SM: Yes that was the beginning of it. And as I discovered--well it wasn't exactly a discovery, I realized that here I had audiences, people would have two, three meetings a day on Sunday, weekends. We would have on Sunday five picnics. Just a huge audience. And these were workers. It was on the west side. All, most were Ford workers, many

of them. So I would linger, I would tell them that it was not enough to gain conditions in the shop but you have to protect them with some laws. And you have in Michigan something like a Wagner Act, nationally. Actually, my message was that you people have to organize, you have to have a union. That was the message. And there were quite many candidates for that office, you see. That district was a Democratic district. The fight was to get the Democratic nomination.

Q: The district included which cities?

SM: It included two wards in Detroit, Dearborn and all the downriver until the end of Wayne County. All the municipalities, you know about that, and Lincoln Park, Wyandotte, that was a big community. Well there were two things: in all of these municipalities there were quite many Polish workers and most of the Ford workers lived either in these two wards of Detroit or in these municipalities and downriver. So, a committee was organized to carry on the campaign and the committee grew very rapidly. I was surprised. My fellow democrats looked at me funny and they said, "You expect to win the election that way." I said, "Yeah." "Do you think you can defeat such a name as Roosevelt on the Democratic ticket?" I said, "Well, I'll try." (Laughter) Actually, I had my doubts very much. But that was not my objective. My objective was to get this union message to the Ford workers. To get around this whole difficulty.

Q: So the workers, the Ford workers were pretty active politically. They were coming to all the rallies.

SN: Yes. So when we came to the close, a week or two before the primary election, I was offered money to withdraw. Well, I thought to myself, that looks good. That looks good.

Q: Who offered you the money?

SN: Well somebody not too well known. But he was only an agent put on by someone else I imagine. So I said no, no. "Hey look, you are not going to win the election so why can't you not, you have a chance to make some money?" I told him very friendly, whether he believed it or not, I told him I'm not out to make money. And I don't intend to withdraw now. Then on the day of the election, we had to cover three hundred precincts with campaign workers, you know, workers with leaflets. That's one. Later on when they closed the voting booths and the counting took place to have watchers to watch them how they counted. It required a tremendous amount of people.

MN: And we had them. All of these nationalities groups. Every single one of them sent many, many people to work in the campaign. Ford workers came by the hundreds. They managed the campaign, they raised money, they made speaking engagements for him. They knew he didn't have the money to do it. We couldn't have done it otherwise.

SN: After the Hoover Depression, working on $40 a week. How could I? So, they finally--when the returns were broadcast on radio, Roosevelt and I were running head on. Sometimes I would be a few votes behind, next time he was ahead, next time I was a few votes ahead and he was behind. Because there were other candidates. Quite a number of them. Then around 2 o'clock in the morning the news came that I was two thousand votes behind. So I said that's the end of it. I made a good showing.

MN: We tried to console ourselves.

Q: Yeah. (Laughter)

SN: So we better go to sleep and get some rest. I had some union negotiations for the next morning, so I had to get some rest. And then the next morning I went to do my negotiations with the company and around 3 o'clock in the afternoon when I was through I decided to go to the County Building to find out what was the final results because I never had find out. And then I met one of the ---

MN: Mort Hurray(?).

SN: Yes, who was in charge, of the Labor Nonpartisan league, a big Irish fellow. "Senator, congratulations!" I didn't do it but he congratulated me. I didn't get nominated. "Like hell you didn't. And now I'll take you in to your office." And I said, "Look, how

could I catch up being two thousand votes behind?" "You'll see." So he went into his office and there they all said yes you got elected, you got the nomination.

MN: They all started greeting as Senator.

Q: And you didn't know about this at this time?

SN: No, I surely didn't.

MN: He called me later at the office where I worked and told me.

SN: So what happened was, that's interesting, ah, they said a mistake was made. And Mort Hurray(?) who was all night watching, when he saw that he got disturbed about that. He rushed about and demanded a complete examination, recheck. They discovered a mistake was made. So I was not 2,000 votes behind and I got nominated ---

MN: Two hundred and some votes ahead in the end.

SN: That's right. How close it was.

MN: Narrow margin.

SN: But that's not all, that's (?). Well my opponent, who around the same time as I did, 2 o'clock in the morning when he saw that, he was sure

he had gotten the nomination. He packed his bag and went on a vacation.

Q: Oh no.

SN: And then suddenly he was told that he lost the--they caught up with him to tell him that and he immediately came back and asked for a recount of thirty of my biggest precincts. And I was puzzled by that. Why did he ask for a recount? Certainly no possibility of stealing the votes on my behalf. It was out of the question.

SN: And I said to myself: what to do? I can't just stand by and do nothing. So I went to an old acquaintance that I had made who was a Lieutenant Governor at that time.

MN: Leo Novisky(?)

SN: Yes, a Polish fella, and I said, "Leo, what do I do? There is a danger that I might be tricked by this. Why is he asking for a recount of my 30 precincts?" He said, "Very simple." In those days they had a little box like this and you put your cross with a pencil and if that was a little out of that box, the pencil moved to the right, the whole ballot can be thrown out.

MN: Invalidated _____.

SN: And he says, "Heavy precincts with three hundred and fifty people, you'll find one or two like this. And since your vote is--your margin is not very large you can do that." But I says, "Leo, what do I do?" He says, "You do the same thing to him." (LAUGHTER) All those things I didn't know. You know, you learn from experience

Q: Yeah.

SN: So you have to raise $5 for each, precinct.

MN: Normally about $300 altogether. You had to raise within twenty-four hours. But the union guys did it.

SN: Yes.

MN: They went out--all these fellows that had worked in the campaign--they went out and within twenty-four hours they had the money and everything was ready to go.

SN: And then further on, this Lieutenant Governor said to me, he says, " you know, tell your fellow," they picked up big, husky fellas, husky, people to watch.

MN: Put one beside each worker he said in the recount.

SN: Yeah. "Watch their fingernails." I asked why. "Because behind their fingernail they'll have a piece of pencil, and the pencil can put a mark on the ballot and then throw it out. (LAUGHTER)

Q: Just amazing.

SN: Yeah, amazing. You really learn something. And he says, "Tell your men when they see something funny with their fingers, tell them to hit them over. Break their arm god-dammit but do that." I said to myself--I said, "Leo, look you're advocating violence." (LAUGHTER) He says, "Never mind," he says. A practical politican. And I did that. I got that. No problem.

MN: Dave Miller, I'm going to tell them about. Dave Miller--I just found this out within the last two years before Dave Miller died. We were over here at the Dave Miller Center, and he said, "You know, Margaret, when they were doing that recount for Stanley and we were all, each of us, standing behind one of the workers," he said, "we actually did find one of them doing what they had told us about." And he said, "I hit his fist--I hit his hand with my fist and out goes the little piece of lead on the table. And this guy followed me out of the room. And then the recount went on."

SN: Well you see, when this fellow Roosevelt saw what I was doing, he decided to quit because he would have to pay $5 for every precinct so he would naturally pay for the precincts that were already counted,

but not all of them. He withdrew and we withdrew too and so that's how I got nominated. And then this thing broke up in the Press because ---

MN: He had about a hundred and ninety some votes margin in the end, but he was the nominee.

SN: And then the Press began to publicize my picture and they wrote a lot about this Strange fellow, how, about how he got to be nominated.

MN: Ford had a bitter editorial about it. That was among those papers that I had up in Irene and Dan's attic. And the FBI got up there into those papers and that thing disappeared. But The Ford Independent, the old man's newspaper, bemoaned the fact that their district was represented by a Communist.

Q: He said that?

SN: Yeah.

SN: And then the news came to me by some friends who said: "Look, your Republican opponent, because I had to run against. A Republican--was a fellow by the name of Hubbard. I knew nothing about him and the news came to me that he was a member of The Black Legion. You know what that name is?

Q: Yes.

SN: And that I should be on the watch out because they may use some physical attacks. Be careful of them. Well, I was careful. I--actually there was a period when not only they were doing that but before that when union people were being slugged, union organizers were being slugged. So I was careful.

MN: He was well protected. The boys took good care of him.

SN: Sure.

MN: Always sent a bodyguard--in the group, he was well guarded.

SN: Sure. And then just before the election, the final election took place, I thought to myself it was rather quiet, everything was quiet. Something is being planned for the last minute. So I thought to myself I better be prepared for it. But how could I prepare? Well, I had ordered it and paid in advance for radio time, political time, on the Canadian station was the only, place I could get. And also, I had reserved the

END OF TAPE 1

SN: (CONTINUED) that what would happen would be Saturday or Sunday. So I had the print shop ready and radio program reserved. So Saturday afternoon, early afternoon, one of our men brings in a leaflet to show me. It has my picture, Stalin's picture, all in red. And a clipping showing that churches have been closed in the Soviet Union and that's what I was ---

MN: Implying that's what he was doing to do.

SN: (Laughing) and underneath names of a variety of churches--not churches--clubs, names of individuals.

MN: And they were all fictitious.

SN: All fictitious because the people who prepared it knew that there would be lible, so of course all fictitious.

MN: They had to be careful. They were very careful of planning this.

Q: Were they simulated as if you had put it out?

SN: No, no, it was against me.

Q: Yes, but sometimes they do that, you know, make up a leaflet as if the candidate himself had ---

SN: No. So at that time he was not the editor any longer but he was previously editor ---

MN: Henry Kraus.

SN: Henry Kraus, editor of the Auto Worker. He was ready to immediately write a reply, got their printers to print at night, and in Sunday, early morning, we had something like fifty thousand copies of these people's names and ----

MN: And there were several hundred men ready to go to work.

SN: Yeah, and we had men, cars. So what we did, two things: first, we knew that they were going to concentrate on churches, in the community, particularly Catholic churches, big churches. So there we found not men distributing leaflets, but boys. So these boys had been given 50¢ or a dollar and they'd gave us all those leaflets. (LAUGHTER)

MN: And then our men would pass ours out ---

SN: And then the other group would pass house to house, on porches, Sunday. And they found these leaflets on porches, so they picked these leaflets out of the door. (Laughter) And so the election took place on Tuesday and I think we, well that was a Democratic district. I think our vote was two to one. Both the congressman and I ran from

the same district. So late at night, who appears at the door of our house, this Mr. Hubbard.

MN: He came early in the morning before I went to work.

SN: Oh early in the morning, I guess.

MN: He didn't come up the stairs like I told him that you were asleep or that you had gone to negotiations. And he said, "Tell him I want to congratulate him on his victory, and he introduced himself." And he was big, athletic-looking type of man, typical football player guy. He was some character. He was Mayor of Dearborn for many years. Many, many years.

Q: Ford controlled:

SN: Yeah.

MN: It was, The ticket ---

SN: Well later on at, we managed the courts (?). I mean, in Dearborn, to change that situation very much. The courts made the decision.

MN: We got some very good judges who declared some of their ordnances unconstitutional.

SN: So that's how the thing went on. And well, I got elected. And after that we went on a vacation, right before the big campaign in our Ford jallopy.

MN: Little Flivver.

SN: Yeah, then we came to Lansing. Well Governor Murphy who was a liberal Democrat was defeated in that election. The thing was, that political leader of the state (?). But at that time we found ourselves in that Senate Chamber and there was people introducing themselves. Margaret was the there, everybody rushing to talk her. But the question was what can one man out of thirty two? There were five or seven Democrats ---

MN: There were nine Democrats.

SN: There were nine Democrats out of a body of thirty two.

MN: Out of thirty-two.

SN: Something like that. And these Democrats, some were from upper pennincela were not bad, but Detroit people were typical politicians elected to make a lot of money they could out of it. Only they respected the labor vote by that time. That's why they would vote with me, as I discovered that soon. But what I could do? Well it was a big question. In fact, I debated in my mind whether it was not a

waste of time. But you learn things. I started in a simple way and when the chairman of the Finance Committee came with a budget for the next year. Budget of the employees of the Senate, the first question was all the secretaries, the other people employed by the Senate were to be paid. And when this chairman reported the budget, I asked a rather sort of simple question: were the wages of these state employees, Senate employees, ever raised or were they same as last year. "Well," he said, "for the last two terms we haven't raised any wages at all." So I made a motion that we raise them by $10 every wage. Oh, oh, this chairman's face. They talked, he was very much disturbed that somebody should question his recommendation, and he immediately accused me of being, he knew very well I was a union organizer. That I am trying to organize. But the Republican senators were on a spot because many of their secretaries were involved. Many of the other employees were there and were their appointees. They appointed them. They were their people. So one of them got up and made an amendment that the wages be raised $5. Well that went through and they all got at least $5 a week. I made friends of all the different secretaries.

MN: They were in alligned to him, for he did little things like this all along the way. And many a time they would come and they would help him with drafting bills or looking, doing research, and many a time they would come and warn him if he had left the Senate Chamber and some measure of his was coming up for a vote or some measure that they

knew he was interested in. And they would tell him, "Get back on the floor, Senator because they are going to vote." So he would get back.

SN: I was later on accused that I had an intelligence ---

MN: That he had his own staff. (LAUGHTER)

SN: I didn't because these were not my people. I had no appointments to make. I never knew them when I got there but the mere fact that I did this and little things later, I'm constantly doing little things, that's all that it was. And it was on that basis that they had confidence in me, they would tell me. They were discussing certain committees. The only person who would be present, your members of the committee or somebody we invited, and the secretary of the committee which was one of the girls. Well the secretaries knew all of the things that were taking place in these committees and that was my intelligence, sort of. But then I learned this: that the Republicans were not always united on everything.

MN: There were some good ones.

SN: There were some individuals, yeah, who varied.

MN: Really good people.

SN: Yeah. Some of them who, like who--one of them was lawyer who was once upon a time a member of this socialist league, Young Socialist League when he was young. Student in the university. There was another farmer who was elected under the Republican ticket, who was a great admirer of Eugene Debs, many years ago.

Q: Why would he run under the Republican ticket?

SN: Because from the part of the country he came in that was the only ticket he could ---

MN He couldn't win under the Democratic ticket so he ran under the Republican.

Q: What kind of an appeal could they make to their constituents when they were campaigning?

SN: I don't know. I think ---

MN: I think they may have referred to things that they did in the Senate, you know for the benefit of the district or something.

SN: And there were a variety of them. A question of committees. While we were asked what committees we would like to serve, and I have expressed my opinions and naturally I wanted to be on the Labor Committee but I didn't get it.

MN: He was scared to put him on the Labor Committee.

SN: It was not until my last, fifth term that I got on the Labor Committee. But they would give me Public Health Committee, Educational Committee, Farm Committee--I knew nothing about farms but--Bank Committee. So on these committees I saw a differences of opinion.

MN: Did you tell them Taxation Committee?

SN: Taxation, I was on the Taxation Committee. Now these are the kind of problems that the Taxation Committee--at that time there was a big fight. As to whether money that are just in the bank, not used, should be taxed. And the bankers said no, but heavy property owners said yes. Because it was a question of taxation. You can't put all taxation on the property owners on the buildings and farms, and so forth. So there was a big fight there. And I felt that there was no reason why banks, insurance companies, who have large surplus of capital, idle capital sometimes, should not pay interest on that. And of course I became a friend of those who ----

MN: The old guy who was the head of the Taxation Committee was a very highly respected--he was a tax expert. Senator McCallum(?) from, wasn't he from Ann Arbor?

SN: Ann Arbor, sure.

MN: And I was told, figuratively, that he owned half of Ann Arbor. He had a lot of real estate holdings and he really was into taxation. And Stanley was the only one on the Committee who was interested enough to want to learn. It made the old Senator so unhappy that most of his Committee members would either go to sleep while they were having meetings, or they would pay no attention or they wouldn't sometimes show up and that he was always there and that he was anxious to learn, and he was very pleased and they went to bat together for a number of things. And even though they were on the opposite sides of the fence, the old guy raved about welfare. And when ever Stanley would get up and tell them about the terrible financial situation in Detroit and how they needed more of a welfare appropriation, the old guy would say--look we don't need any more campaign rhetoric around here. (LAUGHTER) Nevertheless, when Stanley was indicted the first time and they tried to take his citizenship away, we were afraid, there was a rumor, a strong rumor that he might not be allowed to take his seat. The old guy was in his favor and he went to his--he wrote us a beautiful letter at the end of the first sessions saying what a privilege it was that he had a chance to learn to know him and he appreciated his attitude in committee. And he did write a good letter at the time of your indictment which I have at home in the book.

SN: Yeah. You see there are things that we didn't do even if you are in a hopeless (?) as I was at that time. First, you take such questions as relief. And in '39, that was in '39, unemployment was increasing. The situation was getting worse. That was just before the War. And

Detroit was in critical times, so we needed state aid. State help financially for instance. And this majority of Republicans, a Democrat went along with them but also too in relation to the Democrats, if I did not provide that leader, sort of a leadership, if I did not pick up and fight and argue and answer questions to this, they would not support the Democrats. They would probably not even vote on the right (?). But they never spoke on it. I had to do all the speaking on the floor. But they still supported me, but there were nine of us out of thirty-two. So it was a question of--so in relation to that we did--it was like Margaret had that in ----

MN: They issued press releases which went out to the public and publicized certain issues. And also he would come back over the weekend and the UAW Polish Trade Union Committee, even the official UAW side, didn't pay for it, the Polish Trade Union Committee still would hire--or buy time and he would speak on legislative issues over the radio when he went back home. And this way he was able to keep the people back home informed about crises and urge them to come to Lansing or write letters and so on, and they did. And so one person, you know you often think one person just doesn't count but they do. And you can do more than you think you can if you just make an effort. And that's what he did. So he did.

SN: You see a lot of this might be humorous but, what I had to prove in my first, to come to prove myself and to win certain confidence was two things: First, that I could not be bought. Second, that I was not a

fool. Because they had some sort of a conception of a left winger that he was just a fool. Or he could very easily be bought. The newspapers in particular, they thought--at first they said the difference between Nowak and others is that he is a high priced and nobody has offered him a deal. When that comes well--. Well I had to prove that I could not be bought. And then questions of proving that I am not a fool. I would not engage myself in discussions on things that I knew nothing about it, or knew very superfically. I remained silent on it. I didn't participate in it. But I participated in questions that I was well prepared for and knew: labor, relief, and things like this. So what these lawyers--half of them are lawyers. Some of them are experienced lawyers, former attorney generals, prosecuting attorneys, former judges, retired judges. So they thought that they would just demonstrate by firing a variety of questions at me. They did not realize two things: First, that they knew very little about the subjects, labor particularly. And they would ask silly kind of a question that people asked me on the soapbox many times and I had to answer them. And second, I had experience in answering these questions, I was well prepared for them. So I went very nicely and answered the question, take for granted that here are a group of people who don't know and I tried to inform them as much a I could. Well not only that they realized that I was not a fool but I gave certain confidence to these people. And later on they started to come to me and ask me simply, quietly on the side, a question: what do I think about this or something else? Those are the things that we had to do. And I introduced, for example, one other thing in relation

to Ford. And I introduced a resolution to investigate job selling at Ford's.

Q: Oh.

SN: You see I don't know how you ---

MN: They had quite a racket going there.

SN: Yes, quite a racket,

MN: I suppose they've told you about that.

Q: Yes, I read about it in some place ---

SN: There were people who would come to me and there there were women, particularly, women who had small restaurants or bars or small hotels where the Ford workers, single workers, lived. And they told me that, particularly one woman who was out of the business, that she sold probably over five hundred jobs like this. And the process was that somebody would come to her and leave eighty, ninety, or a hundred dollars and his name and address. She next would submit it to somebody and she got a percentage of it. And the next week they would get a job. And he worked for two-three months and then he was fired.

NM: And then sell it to another person.

SN: And it went on and on.

MN: What he could do and what he did do in this respect, when he introduced that resolution he showed it to some of his colleagues in the Senate so that they would know what he was going to do. And one of them said would you hold it awhile and let me get in touch with the Ford Motor Company. Hold it for a couple of days and see if I can get a statement from them. So he said sure. Well he didn't get a statement from them but he found a representative from the Ford Motor Company sitting at his desk the next morning when he went in. And it was a typical football type figure that Ford loved to hire. In fact, he was one of the famous stars of football. Newman, Harry Newman. So he tried to persuade Stanley that it was all a mix up and said well Bennett would like to see him. And Stanley said, "Well, alright, if he wants to see me. He can come here. Here's where I see all of my constituents." And he was unhappy about that this fellow because he said well he wants to see you there. And Stanley said, "No. I make it a practice to see my constituents right here in the office. Particularly since its a big company, I don't go to them they come to me if they want to see." Well he finally bothered Stanley until Stanley threatened to have him thrown out and he didn't come back any more. But in addition to that, Ford was obviously disturbed about it. In addition to that, the thing was announced in the press. He talked about it on his radio program that he had introduced the bill. There was a lot of press publicity so the racket sort of stopped temporarily for a year or so. Then in the next session two years later he

introduced one again. And the senators finally told him no, they weren't going to release it from the committee. He could see that they weren't. And they said what you need is not an investigation but you need legislation. So he said, alright. Suppose I bill, draft a bill on this, would you support it? And they said sure. Not only that, one of the prominent Republicans, Senator B. L. Drake(?) said I'll help you draft it. So sure enough, they went through the statutes and they found one that prohibited job selling but it did not spell out the terms so that they could trace the people who did. So by offering a simple amendment, and Drake agreed to even introduce it, with him, become co-sponsor that would take care of it. Well, it didn't get released from committee. They voted it down, but by that time it was obvious that there was going to be a full strike. Stanely knew. He had done what he could to publicize it. Now if the union were established it would end it anyway, in any case.

Q: The legislation was going in '40 or '41?

MN: Yes. The first one he introduced was in 1939 and then the second was in '41.

SN: So, I learned--I learned a great deal in the last quarter. It was hard work. A lot of work to do and there would be three hundred bills introduced in every session. Some long bills and advice (?) went to committees. And as I said earlier, all these things were completely new to me. You are also required a great deal of judgment. You see

you have to be aware that you cannot change things over night when you are in that situation. You try to learn what you can do, what little you can do, but do. And in many ways I was surprised how much I could do because in a sense, a negative sense may I say. There were introduced, they could be very bad, bills. Particularly. they were on civil rights. Every term that I was there there was a bill introduced to outlaw minority parties. Not openly, completely, but made it practically impossible for minority parties. Well, I have to say that I did not get any real support from my Democratic colleagues on that too. They were not interested. They were interested in maintaining the two-party system, that's all. They were not interested in helping a small party. But I managed sometime by one vote in the Senate to defeat every one of those bills. Sometime by a single one vote. How? Well it sort of appealed to this whole American principle of freedom of speech, freedom of political action, and how do you have freedom if you outlaw minority groups? The minorities are a part of it. And I would refer--I made a study of, that is, of individuals who spoke on the subject (?) and I managed to slip perhaps through--the majority of the Democrats went along with it. But they did it as a sort of a favaor to me or the fact that they respected the labor votes. But the big problem was to split the Republicans to get them. And I periodically would get a sufficient amount of of us that we had by one vote we would ---

MN: I think the most outstanding example of your success in that was on that little Dyes bill that Baldwin introduced. In the first session,

Baldwin who was really the one that had questioned him, thinking he was a dummy, and discovered that he was not a dummy. And he really dusted Baldwin in that but Baldwin respected him for that. And later when Stanley was indicted, Baldwin was the first one to write to him and say that they had forgotten that a man is presumed innocent until he's proven guilty, and said I would be the first one to come to your support in case they tried to take your office. He said he had come to respect him over a period of time. But Baldwin introduced this bill establishing a little committee and Stanley immediately dubbed it, much to Baldwin's unhappiness, "The Little Dies (Dyes?) Committee" and the name stuck. I noticed in going through those press clippings that they referred to it as "The Little Dyes." So your name stuck. And it was going to set up a local Michgan state subversive investigating committee like the national one. Well, Stanley debated in, oh, there were firey hearings from people all over Detroit. People from both the AFofL, CIO, from prominent church people, community people. They came and they debated the bill and they were against it. And finally Stanley invited, he had the gall to invite Baldwin to come to Detroit and debate the bill publicly. And Baldwin was scared--he said oh, they would skin me alive down there! No. But he said people would like to hear why you introduced the bill and why you think it should be passed. So, he came and there was a debate here and, of course, that was all publicized. Well in the meantime there had been so much debate on it and there was so many highly respectable people against it that when the vote came, there was one Republican senator that, I think, took the ballot. That was B. L.

Drake, the one that helped him to reword the investigation of the Ford thing. And when the debate came in the Senate on the passage of the bill, Stanley said, "I think that Senator Drake has a remark on some ideas on this that would be worth hearing." And he said, "Would the Senator mind?" And Drake was reluctant, he probably would have killed him. (LAUGHTER) But he got up and he did, you know, skirted the subject for a little bit and then finally launched into it and he said that he didn't think that there were any people here who were qualified and unbiased enough to conduct such an investigation. And there were federal agencies, this was one of the arguments that Stanley and others had used, there were federal agencies to do the job. And that for that reason he would vote against it. Well that swung the tie. So sixteen to ten they killed that bill. That was his way of working with people in the senate.

SN: There are some, as I say, I served there ten years. And there was one more incident that I want to mention because I don't want to go through all the incidents of ten years. Particularly since Margaret is writing a book.

MN: Yeah, this is only three chapters out of twenty.

Q: Oh my.

SN: That was when there was a Grand Jury investigation of the Legislature. The only time in Michigan history. What brought this on was that a

fight developed between two groups of bankers. One was a group from New York who wanted to open chain banking in Michigan--the other group was a group of Michigan bankers who did not want to have that kind of competition. And naturally the chain banking were required legislative action, permission.

SN: So there was a big fight between the two groups and of course there is no question about it--I couldn't prove it, I didn't see it, but money was floating right and left. The bankers had money and they had a big fight. So when the resolution was--oh, and the Michigan bankers lost out in the first vote. So the individual who sponsored the Michigan banks was Senator--that she just mentioned--ah Senator ---

MN: Baldwin?

SN: No.

MN: Drake.

SN: Drake. He was the spokesman. He then followed immediately with a resolution to have investigation of the Legislature.

MN: I didn't know that Drake had introduced that bill.

SN: Oh yes, he was a spokesman for the Michigan Bankers and he and he introduced that resolution. Well no one in the Senate could dare to vote against that kind of resolution to investigate ---

MN: Because they would think you were guilty if you voted . . .

SN: So it carried a majority. An overwhelming majority. Nobody voted against it. They appointed--you know in Michigan we have a one-man Grand Jury and we still have it today. They appointed a Grand Jury prosecutor, some individual from Detroit.

MN: Ken Slayton(?).

SN: No.

MN: Oh that was Dowling(?) in Detroit.

TAPE 2, SIDE 2

SN: . . . and they subpeonaed probably half of both Houses. And they subpeonaed me too. And I expected they would because how could they subpeona so many and not me, and they will. So they did. Me, when I was on vacation at that time.

MN: That's not important.

SN: Yeah, so I came there and this fellow who I never met, this prosecutor, before, never saw him in my life, met me in the hallway and asked me to go to a side room, he told me he wants to talk to me. Finally he said, "You know, Senator, you have the best record here in the Senate. Clean as a whistle." So I said to him, "Well why did you subpeona . . ."

MN: Said what am I doing here?

SN: I was surprised. I wasn't surprised that he said this because it's true. I established some sort of a, not that I wanted, but some kind of a record that the lobbyists would not approach me really. I never was approached and I never offered. The only time I was approached and offered was in my campaign. Outside of that, nothing. So I said "well why did you . . ."? He says, you, I want you to help me. Help you in what way? To clean this House, Senator. It's all corrupted and you can help. So I said well what can I do? He said you can tell me who takes money, who takes money. (LAUGHTER) I said to myself, first of all I've never been a stool pigeon in my life. And second, here I would have to completely lie because I did not know. Nobody ever offered me I ---

MN: He had suspicions but he had no way of proving them.

SN: Of course, I didn't. So I said to him, I said, "Look, I cannot help you because I do not know." "You mean you, you the most intelligent

man in this House, you don't know? ---." He implied that I had something. Well I said look, yes, there are rumors. There were, but rumors are not evidence. You are the lawyer and I'm not a lawyer and I am not going to repeat before a Grand Jury judge rumors that I have heard. That I will not do. Oh he tried to convince me and finally he failed so he says okay. Until then he called me before this judge and jury and there he was the prosecutor, you know.

MN: He grilled him unmercifully.

SN: There was an incident--at the same time that I was elected to the Senate, someone that I met later, actually I didn't know it, ---

MN: We met him when we went to the Legislature.

SN: His name was Francis Nowak and he was elected to the ---

MN: Spelled exactly the same as ours.

SN: The last name but Francis. He was elected to the lower House, to the ---

MN: The House of Representatives.

SN: And they found out that somebody--because he married during that very time that he served in that first session, that was in '39, that

somebody furnished his house. Who it was, I do not know. So they knew the time, the year, that he was married and when that happened. So he immediately wanted to know what year I was--we were married. So I told him. He says, "Are you sure of it?" I says, "Look, my wife would never forgive me if (LAUGHTER) ---. Of course I know." Where were you married? Well it so happened that we did not marry in Detroit, we married in Plymouth, Indiana, right next to South Bend. The reason for it was that she worked for an employer who would not employ a married woman. And in those days, particularly when I was in the Senate, but before that even, her income was very important in our account, so on her suggestion, or someone else' suggestion, we went to South Bend, Indiana and ---

MN: They, our friends took us to Plymouth and got us married there.

SN: Ya, ya, that's how we got. So I told him that. Why that? I told him because my wife worked for an employer who would not employ married women. We did it and we needed that job. And he said how can you live on $3 a day. That's what we were getting. Oh he went on, and on, and on, and he got nowhere when I answered his questions. So finally he said to me, "Alright, I don't want you to leave Lansing." Because I was still under subpeona. "I want you to be here. I may call you back at any minute, any time." Well I thought to myself I was very honest. Here's a guy that spoiled my vacation, that's one thing. Second, what am I going to do and sit here in Lansing because

there was no session then. So I said to him, you know, I have a very sick sister ---

MN: He had just gotten a telegram that morning before he went to Lansing that his sister was dying in Chicago of cancer.

SN: So I said I would like to see her. So all at once this man changed. You have a sick sister and you would like to see her? I said yes, of course. Oh, he said, oh. Not only that I, my driver, will take you over to the railroad station.

MN: He said that there was a train leaving within an hour to Chicago.

SN: Within an hour, yes.

MN: I thought that was ----

SN: What the hell, this stranger here. But fine. So this driver takes me over to the railroad station and stays with me until I took the train and left for Chicago. I got to Chicago and I got to my sister's home and I was there maybe ten minutes and there was a telephone call. Margaret called me. She said she was subpeonaed.

MN: You see what the judge did--the head of the Grand Jury--as soon as he saw that Stanley was safely on the train for Chicago, he issued a subpeona for me, and gave it to one of the state police to deliver to

my home that evening. And so I called him just about after he had arrived. And I was terrified because I didn't know what was going to happen. I said what do I do, what will I tell him? He said just tell him the truth, just answer their questions. Whatever they ask. You have nothing to worry about. So it didn't comfort me very much. There I was the next day and they had also subpeonaed the bookkeeper, you remember Mrs. Politica(?), and somebody else with the records of the Senator Nowak Club that helped to run his elections. And they wanted to make sure that we weren't getting any of that money. That that wasn't being given to us personally. So she and I took the train together in the morning with all of her check stubs and the receipt books from the Nowak Club. So he questioned me the same way. You know, he said, when where you married, where? And he kept asking me repeatedly over and over again. I said I told you when we were married and when. And so finally they let me go and I went home.

SN: Tell her what the judge said that we ---.

MN: Yeah. The judge called me into his chambers. He was a real nice guy and I had always liked him. So he had a little personal talk with me and he said, "Are you sure that Stanley didn't get any money?" I said, "Judge," I forget what his name was, "if he had gotten any money I would have seen some of it." And I said, "It has been against our principle to accept money from anybody. And so we have just had to manage to live on what we have and that's all there is to it." So he was very nice and then they questioned me on the stand, the

prosectuor, they let me go home. And eventually nothing ever came of it but later on it was discovered that the Nowak they were look for was this Francis J. Nowak who was married during that session of the Legislature. And whose home was, you know, fitted up and furnished by the lobbyists. They had a very slick way of doing it, they would play poker and he always won. (LAUGHTER)

SN: There was one other game. You see they they would try to engage me in it. And I said, look I don't play cards.

MN: We'll teach you.

SN: And the same thing in relation to ---

MN: It's so easy to hook somebody into something. Like that and this kid was probably nieve too, to begin with.

SN: Well there was this conception there. It was easy to trap people. There was this sort of a conception. Here we were, getting a miserable $3 a day. No compensation for committee service. The only expenditure was the trip to Lansing at the beginning of the session and the trip back from Lansing at the end of the session.

MN: In May or June. One round-trip per session.

SN: And that was in the Constitution and we couldn't change that unless we changed the Constitution. So it was rather difficult for someone who had no other income, or for someone who was poor. Like this fellow from Ann Arbor who was a real estate individual. He was well-to-do men. The lawyers had a way of making extra money because of their services.

MN: Retainer fees

SN: Retainer fees. A chairman of my Taxation Committee was getting $20,000 retainer fees from one insurance taxation and insurance company, you know. But I was, you know ---

MN: And the wealthy farmers had nothing to worry about because the session was always in their off-season anyway.

Q: Oh yeah?

SN: So that's why ---

MN: But there was one little thing that did finally solve the problem because others must have had very much the same problem. The were other working class people who came from Detroit like the Wilkowskies and some of the others. They passed a Senate resolution to draw $50 a week against their annual salary which would amount to $1,095 per year. That's $3 times 352 days a year. And then you would draw that

whenever the session was in session, $3 a week. And then at the end of the session you would go home and you would get a monthly check at the rate of all the many days that had occurred in that month. And that's the way it went. And that helped us to get by. And I was also getting unemployment compensation at that time too because I had to leave my job to go to Lansing. And then whenever he went home he would hunt for a job again. He'd get an organizing job during the summer and pay off our debts.

Q: Boy, that's a hard way to make it.

SN: That is. It was a hard way. I mean it was all true. At the end of it, I regret. Well I don't regret now but in '48, my last sesion, I was then a member of a Labor Committee. I had quite many people in the Senate that I could work with quite well on many things, and I felt very much at home by then. But that was the period of the Progressive Party, the period of the great sentiment that we have to go forward in this movement. And many of my supporters in this district says, no Stanley, ten years in the Seante is enough. We must go to Congress. And my senatorial district was identical with my congressional district. And my congressional Democrat was at times getting less votes than I had then. So I yielded to that. And later on I regretted it because '48 was the period where actually progressive thinking retreated ---

MN: Yeah. The McCarthy period was beginning to get very strong ----

SN: And I lost the nomination by about three hundred votes. Got close, but ----

MN: So then he was out of both the Senate, and . . .

SN: Well what happened was this. I was out because naturally I couldn't run for two offices. But the next year, but while I run for the Congress, someone with identical my name, an individual also ---

MN: He was just a real nobody.

SN: He was just that he got the name and he had this much sense that he never appeared at meetings, he did not put out his pictures, he just put big names, Stanley Nowak, that's all.

MN: And he got elected.

SN: And he got elected. (VOICES TOGETHER) and he served there for twenty years.

Q: What did he get elected to?

SN: The Senate.

MN: And he ran for Congress (?) office.

SN: And then came this period of McCarthyism and I would be called continuously before the UnAmerican Committee. And then I was indicted and a long trail. So anyway, even if I was elected to the Congree, I very likely would have ----

MN: You probably would not have been allowed to finish your term because he was indicted in '52 and came to trail in '54 and then that went all the way through the Michigan Supreme Court, and then through the Federal Appeals Court in Cincinnati, and then it went before the Supreme Court of the United States.

Q: Oh, wow.

MN: And it was a landmark case which threw out of court. It was a long, hard period for us. Very difficult. But we didn't regret it after it was all over, as hard as it was, because we had worked in so many areas during all those years of our life that we were able to rally a great deal of support behind ourselves. We raised money to pay for the case and naturally we didn't have the money to pay for it out of our pocket. And many of the people who were being threatened with deportation did not have resources like that that they could fight with. And a lot of people kept saying well why don't you just give up and go to Poland. You could probably have a very good position in Poland and so on. But it would mean a new life and a difficult life for Lisa and me and he said besides this is his country. He's been here since the age of ten. He was an American not a Pole. So the

fact that we had all these resources to help us fight, it put us in a better position to fight than the others would be. So we decided to fight it out to the last ditch. And it is good that we did because his case, when it went into decision threw out hundres of cases that were in the lower courts on the simple basis of what his case as a reference in throwing out those cases.

(MACHINE CLICKED--TURNED BACK ON?)

SN: . . . only add to it this. The Attorney General, of another state I think it was, at that time I don't recall his name now, made a statement that 10,000 ---

MN: Brownell.

SN: Brownell is right. That's right. That ten thousand naturalized citizens would lose their citizenship and thirteen thousand aliens, or noncitizens, will be deported. And he made that speech at a banquet--

MN: The Sons of St. Patrick.

SN: Yes, that's right. Well what they did, they started and they had two or three cases before me and each one they won. The people lost them. Then my case came up, and no doubt that there was a number of things. First of all the whole period of McCarthyism was coming to a climax. There was a point where there had to be some change. That was one factor. The second factor, how do you denaturalize a person who

served ten years in the Michigan Senate? So what the Supreme Court--and that's what became ---

MN: I think that's what intrigued them into reviewing it because they had refused to review other cases.

SN: They reviewed this case. They made this two-point decision. First, that the government failed to prove their case. Because the whole case debated that I advocated violence. That's the whole thing that . . . . And of course, they had a difficult time to get any kind of evidence. They never did have it and the court recognized that I had never ----

MN: It's the same they even took notice in their decision--took note in their decision of how the prosecutor prodded the people who were testifying to try to dig statements out of them that they wanted. And even their statements were not the kind that were really ----

Q: Who defended you as far as ---?

MN: Ernie Goodman.

SN: Ernie Goodman and George Crockett.

MN: George Crockett wrote the briefs and Ernie Goodman did the arguments before the Supreme Court and ----

Q: Crockett the same ---?

MN: Yes. (VOICES TALKING TOGETHER)

Q: All the same office.

MN: And I worked for them for fourteen years in the office later.

SN: So that was the first point. That the government failed to prove their point. Second, that advocacy of violence is permissible by the Constitution under the tradition of freedom of speech. But practice of violence is prohibited. They separated the two things.

MN: And in no case did they prove that he had ---

SN: They never tried to.

MN: They didn't even prove that he had advocated violence. The closest they came to it was ---

SN: That's probably as far as the Supreme Court has ever gone on that question to the best of my knowledge. And my two attorneys were completely surprised by it.

MN: Well they didn't expect that they were going to win the case.

SN: Not by that kind of a decision and it was 6 to 3. And the Chief Supreme Court Justice is the one who wrote the decision. A very conservative person. And that was the contribution--that's why all the programs Brownell had was knocked off completely by that decision. He couldn't go any more, and they dropped the whole case. So that's the contribution we made. But this is not what you people want. You wanted to ----

MN: With all your questions you had a series going.

Q: No, I've got the specific ones on Ford, but I wanted to know also the connections between labor and your campaign, and the Progressive Movement in Detroit. This is also ---

MN: So you've got that.

Q: Yes. This is all part of that. How involved--you mentioned earlier that the UAW was instrumental in your campaign to begin with.

SN: Well how it was was this: At the beginning yes. And later on locals individually, locals supported me financially, and endorsed my campaign. Only--well even the Wayne County Council did that. But there was a beginning, and actual fight. There was opposition to my endorsement. But I always had support from down below. Even in the westside local.

Q: Did you get support specifically from Local No. 600?

SN: Oh that-particularly from 600.

MN: Well he was always welcome there because he had been on the organizing committee and these officials, of the Ford local, were people who had worked with him.

SN: They were the best support I had because the Ford workers officiated what I was doing there. They were the backbone of my whole campaign. And to this day, I--the only local I spoke to on Poland on my return from Poland was Ford. The retirees local.

Q: Oh, the retirees local.

SN: Oh, no it was Flint too. I spoke to Flint.

MN: The big local in Flint

SN: But Ford was the big factor. First because they lived in my district and they voted for me. And second because they were they were strong. Even the conservative element at the Ford local, would like us to call them conservative in the early days, were always ready to ---

Q: Like Paul Ste. Marie? Do you remember him?

SN: I remember him very well. Yes he was.

MN: Yeah, Paul Ste. Marie came out with a marvelous letter that he sent to, oh, Senator McCallum and some of the others in Lansing to make sure they would seat him at the time that he was indicted in '42 by these local elements. And Paul Ste. Marie was ok with us.

Q: How about Joe McCuster?

MN: He was not very friendly. (LAUGHTER)

SN: Yah, he was not very friendly.

MN: McCuster was one of those guys at the retiree thing when they wanted to put you on the Board of the Michigan Labor History Society.

Q: Oh, are you talking about Henry or Joe? (Q:) There's two.) Henry is now the President of the Retirees Local; his brother Joe was President of Local No. 600 in 1945.

MN: Now I wouldn't know which on it would be, but there was a McCuster.

Q: Joe is the one, from the story we heard, went to Poland and came back and bragged about how great the Polish workers were and shocked the whole right wing.

SN: Oh that was (?).

Q: Oh yes, it's supposed to be a great story. I think Walter Dorash told us that story. Or somebody or Moore.

SN: No, I really had very little to do with either or them. I know that they were ---

MN: Well the one that was in the Retiree organization was opposed to putting you on the Board of the Labor History Society when we formed that. Shelton Tappes oh three or four years ago.

Q: Oh yes it must be that because Joe is deceased.

MN: Yeah, Shelton Tappes--yes, he died since then. I know that.

Q: Oh. Henry is still alive.

MN: Well that must have been Joe then. Because Shelton Tappes' speech was the one that swung the vote and made them put you on the Board.

SN: Well Shelton Tappes--you see, there is one thing about black people and they had that experience. You have to win their confidence but once you win it they are with you all the way through, no matter what it is. And they disagreed with me on many things but they were always with me all through the --. But I had to have the kind of experience

I had with this man, the fellow I mentioned to you. He had to go to Soviet Union to discover that the black people would, there not discriminate.

MN: Horace Sheffield

Q: Oh, yes.

SN: You had to convince them but once you convinced them, you have a ---

MN: Listen I don't want to interrupt this too early but if you have some more questions ---

(SOUND OFF AND THEN RESUMED)

Q: So can you describe some of the early organizing attempts at Ford. Who were some of the most important people that were involved? Did you notice any difference in the workers between the building units at Ford. I know when they organized the locals there were nineteen different units. They had the Production Foundry and the Jobbing Foundry and the assembly line and Motor building and so on.

SN: Well I don't know whether I can help you much on that because I never worked at Ford and therefore I was not involved in their internal problems. I was only the one who helped to organize and get them into a union.

MN: And your organizing attempts that we had told you about, did not involve going into the plant.

SN: Yeah so that's a thing that I don't know if I can tell you anything that would be of importance.

Q: Who were some of the most instrumental organizers at the beginning of the organizing drives?

SN: Well some of the people that you mentioned here were.

MN: Those are the ones that we remember. That we worked with.

SN: That we remember.

Q: Llewellyn.

SN: Llewellyn, Dorash, Moore.

MN: Johnny Gallo when he was alive. You've probably heard of him.

SN: Yes, Johnny Gallo. Boatin. Yeah, Boatin.

MN: Paul Boatin.

SN: Then let's see.

MN: Some of the Italian fellows.

SN: A number of Italians.

MN: I have Lucchia(?), Zacharelli.

SN: That's right. And these were the people who--many of them have now passed away.

MN: You see they were all around at the same that we had a Polish committee that was organizing at Ford's, there was a very strong Italian committee that was working. And there was a Bishop--I forget what his name was--but they were also doing some organizing. You know Angelo might be able to give them more information. Do you know Angelo D'Vitos(?). Have you heard of Angleo D'Vitos?

Q: No, no.

SN: He's a young Italian, I say young because he is younger than we are. He was then very young in those days. But he is still--of course he is not working at Ford, you know. Margaret?

MN: No, but they had a reunion every year.

SN: Oh yeah.

MN: Remember we went to that one?

SN: Yeah, but that . . . of the Italian. He worked at, Kelsey Wheels. But the question of the list of Italians, Paul Boatin should be able to give you. But these were the--Dorash, we used to meet at his home, and he was just a youngster.

MN: He was one of the young look-outs.

Q: Oh yeah?

SN: He was then in the high school, I believe. A youngster. And he was one on the lookout, most of that way, while his father was working in the plant, active in the union, they were meeting in his home.

MN: And there was an Italian fellow who later was president of the Ford local for a short time. We had met at that meeting, at his home meetings too. He's the one whose used car your constituents bought for your at that time. Remember?

SN: Yeah.

Q: Was he President early on?

MN: Fairly early.

SN: Let's see, he was the president quite early. He retired in ----

Q: I have the names here. Here are the presidents: St. Marie, Llewellyn, Grant, McCusker, Thompson, Stellato.

SN: Stellato. Stellato, that's the one, yah. So ---

Q: He was instrumental early on also.

SN: Yes. Only you see, some of these people, obviously because they told me--I didn't know that--that I met them at some meetings very early and even if it was a small meeting, twenty people. But they were everyday. You don't remember all of them. They ----

MN: Stanley met them in the homes of the workers when he started calling on these people and all of the workers on the block would gather together. Later workers from two or three blocks would gather together in one home. And we met them at these affairs. The picnics, even the Italian picnics, church affairs, political meetings. This kind of thing. And union meetings later. That he did and Stanley never was in on the innerworkings.

Q: Uh huh.

SN: You see you don't have to be a shop worker at Ford's. And a member of the local can take an active part in the local work to know these

internal problems. And I never did because actually that was not my job and I had a lot of other things to do.

Q: So earlier you mentioned that Bill McKie was pretty instrumental in the earlier period when they organized the union.

MN: Very, very early.

Q: Did he also participate in organizing Local No. 600?

SN: Oh, very much. You know he became ----

MN: He was a sort of symbol.

SN: Symbol. Because he was the first president of the first local that came into existence at Ford. And after that he was retired, that he is he didn't work, he was blacklisted. He would be in the front of that whenever he could.

MN: He had a shock of snowy white hair and he was like a (?). (LAUGHTER)

SN: And he was a symbol of that whole Ford drive for a long time. And like an individual that symbolized that whole, big struggle.

MN: Have you ever read that book?

Q: Brother Bill McKie?

MN: Yeah.

SN: Yes, even when he got very old and he was difficult it was amazing how he still was able to walk and go to these meetings and speak and argue (?)

END OF TAPE 2

Q (CONTINUED):. . . instrumental in organizing Local No. 600. Were they important in your campaigns also?

SN: Oh yes. Some yes. Dave Miller was one of the earlier organizers. He was in my campaign for all the time. And everyone. Of course we worked too. He was in Cadillac and when we were organizing and Cadillac, was part of the west side local there were problems. Like when I was involved, like there was a foundry where there were black people and Poles. Now the Poles were easily organized. They were all organized but they couldn't break to the black people. They were foundry workers. There was a reason for it too. The company catered to them, they had a club ---

MN: An athletic club.

SN: Yeah, an athletic club. The company provided uniforms for them, a variety of little things like this. So it was difficult to break through. So Dave came to me and says, "Look. You can help us." I said, "How can I help? I don't know any of these black people that you have in the foundry. How can I help?" He says, "But you have some Polish friends in that foundry, and they are friends of these black people." I said, "Yes. Who are they?" Well he gave me the names. I went to visit them ---

NM: And he called a meeting of these Polish people, remember.

SN: Yeah.

MN: (Inaudible)

SN: Yeah. And they said well look there's only one way to approach these black people. How's that? There's one individual who is a chairman of the club they had and who they all highly respected. And if you can convince him, you've got the foundry. So I went to see that one black fellow. He lived in a ---

MN: That was Percy Keyes.

SN: Percy Keyes was his name and I found that he was a thoroughly, intelligent individual. And he listened to me. Had a lot of questions. When I asked him in a very practical approach, he would tell you what they are getting from the company, petty little things, but it meant something to them. Will the union provide more for them? Well I said, "First of all, you're not getting any raise in pay. You have no security in your job."

MN: And they don't give them any jobs outside of the foundry and in other departments where they could work.

SN: Sure. Well these are basic things and he agreed to it. And finally, I managed to convince him, and when I did and he asked me for applications and I gave him a bunch of applications, within a couple

of weeks I had the whole black foundry organized. And that's how those things worked.

MN: And he became such a terrific union guy but he not only took part in local affairs. But he went with others to picket wherever mass picketing was needed at other locals.

SN: And you see in that kind of organization work, mass movement, you have a variety of problems. They may appear to be petty problems, but they are problems. And there is no general formula on how to solve these problems. There is no textbook that you can look at. (LAUGHTER)

SN: You have to figure it out. You have to use your brains--on how to approach it, how to do it, speaking on this relationship of the Poles and the blacks. And that first shop that we had a strike here led by John Anderson, a good (?) individual. But when he started organizing there he made some headway. But he couldn't ---

MN: Biggs?

SN: Pardon me?

MN: That wasn't Biggs?

SN: John Anderson, no that was ----

MN: Midland.

SN: Midland.

MN: Midland Steel.

SN: Fine memory. (LAUGHTER)

MN: Well I can't always remember either but usually by association.

SN: He came to me and he said, "I have difficulty with your colleagues or your friends." I said, "Who is that?" "Poles." "Why? Don't they join the union?" "Yes, they join the union but they don't like that we should bring black people to the union." And there were black people--quite a few of them. And he says, "I cannot convince them. Somebody has to convince them and I can't have the split in the shop because we will get nowhere, you know." So I went there and I got this group of Poles together and I talked to them. Well, you know how people--they don't tell you openly. They are glad they said, we can't understand John Anderson. He was a Scotchman too, spoke with a strong Scotch ---

MN: Had a very thick brogue.

Q: Yes.

MN: Or burr, I guess.

SN: Well, first of all they had limited knowledge of English and then with a scotch accent made it (LAUGHTER), difficult too. But basically, they were--and they didn't(?) want to bring black people into their own union. So I said look, you are working with these black people. That's true. And you are getting along with them. Yes, we are getting along with them. Then why can't you bring them into your own union? They said, sure we bring them into our own union but let them have a separate local and we have a separate local. That's the idea. I had to say, "Look when you give them a separate local, you know what is going to be? The company will try to divide you."

MN: Play one against the other.

SN: Play one against. And you will be defeated. And particularly at that time very few a shops were organized. It was the beginning, very early. And then these men would complain, "Oh, you bring socially these black people in and they'll have our women." And oh just other things. So I thought to myself how am I going to do this. Finally I said look, can I, because I knew some, can I bring somebody that works with you, you know him, to a meeting? Just one man, to a meeting where you will talk this matter over with. After all, you've talked to him in the shop. So what, yes they agreed to it. Well, this was a very young fellow and he came out beautifully, I was amazed myself. He knew exactly what to do. I told him what the problem was. He said

I know. And he got there and he spoke very intelligently and he said, "I know. You are afraid that--you don't want us to take your women away." He said, "We don't want your women. We have our own. Plenty of them. Forget this thing." And you know that broke the ice. And they came together and fine, as though nothing had happened. And I had that kind of problem at another shop, a very early shop that we organized--Midland Steel, no not Midland Steel. That one in Hamtrammck.

MN: You don't mean Alcoa?

SN: Yes, well Alcoa, yes. Here we had a ---

MN: American Aluminum Company of America.

SN: Part of a huge steel outfit. A very powerful company. They had a plant in Hamtrammck employing, I don't know, four or five hundred people. Worked three shifts a day. Men and women, black and white, no discrimination in that respect. They went on a strike without any organization. After they went on a strike they called our union office and said send us an organizer. (LAUGHTER) Oh what problems I had. I couldn't get inside the shop because the gates were covered by the company guards. I had to talk to them from atop of my car from on the street ---

MN: There was a fence and the workers would come to the fence.

SN: And they had a big yard and they were there. That's how we held these things. And we had problems and overproblems because these were completely inexperienced people. I doubt whether there was one who had ever belonged to a union or had any experience in strikes, and particularly sit-down strikes. It was very difficult because they need two (?).

MN: Did you have a racial problem there? We were getting to that problem. Because we are going to have to go.

SN: Yes, I had a racial problem there too. In fact, when the thing was over and it also was over the question of women, black, and men and white women or white women and black men, a variety of it. But when the strike was over and it was a victorious fight, they danced together, they were ---

MN: That was true of all the locals where we went to the union affairs. They were all black and white, they were all dancing together and celebrating their victory. They had become accustomed to one another and there was no longer that feeling of fear and distrust that had been there.

Q: I never heard of any large racial incidents of that Local No. 600.

MN: No there weren't any incidents as such.

SN: There was a problem of getting, during the strike because this strike also was not well planned. It was a sporadic strike. When the white people walked out and the Negro remained, black remained.

MN: Well now, the worst incident was when Bennett brought in black workers from the South and they pretended they that they were sitdowners, and so he made a federal charge that these were Communist sympathizers and saboteurs and they were destroying valuable parts for airplanes. But when the thing was investigated they found these were all people Bennett had brought in and who were pretending to be sitdowners.

Q: Oh, when was this?

MN: This was in a middle of the strike in 1941. So they had quite a lot. They would throw things out at the picketers. And they would throw them back and they were afraid that there was really going to be a race riot. But people like Rev. Charlie Hill, Charlie Diggs (Senator Charles Diggs), and Rev. Horace White, and other people, prominent black people ---

MN: And this fellow from the NAACP, this Mr. White, who was the head of the NAACP, he came here. And Stanley and Dick spoke together on various things. And Stanley and Rev. Hill. And they managed to avoid it. They finally got the thing under control so that there was no riot. Listen, we've got to go.

END OF TAPE 3