INTERVIEW WITH DAN STREETER

August 13, 1975
Washington, D.C.

INTERVIEWERS: Alice M. Hoffman
Greg Giebel

INTRODUCTION

Dan Streeter started in the engraving business in San Francisco in 1930 when he was sixteen years old. His father, a photoengraver under whom the younger Streeter was apprenticed, had been associated with the Photoengravers Union since 1913.

In 1936 Dan Streeter, now working in Chicago, joined Chicago Local 5 of the Photoengravers Union. He gives the reasons for the organization of his own particular shop and describes the organizing campaign that took place under Larry Gruber. Fired from his job in Chicago, Streeter went with Simplicity Pattern Company in Niles, Michigan, helped to organize that plant, and became secretary of his local. From there he went to Los Angeles and eventually in 1946 became president of Los Angeles Local 32P. He describes how he helped form the Pacific Coast Conference of Photoengravers which worked to gain more representation for West Coast locals in the International union. He tells how the Photoengravers, in a race with the Amalgamated Lithographers of America and the Pressmen, won an election for the plate-making department of Pacific Press and wound up in a strike.

In 1956 Dan Streeter, now business agent for the Los Angeles local, was elected vice-president of the International union under President Bill Connell. Bill Hall was also elected vice-president at that time, and the two men developed a close relationship.

Streeter undertakes to trace the merger between the Photoengravers and the A.L.A. back to its beginnings in 1962. Streeter was himself a participant in the merger negotiations. He analyses why Bill Hall was willing to step down as president of the Photoengravers to the position of senior vice-president of the L.P.I.U. He discusses what changes had to be made in the organization in response to technological threats. He sees the merger as a safety precaution against the development of conglomerate printing companies.

With the merger Streeter lost his vice presidency and returned to California. He was soon appointed International representative on the

West Coast. With the death of Ben Schaller, Streeter became treasurer of the International in 1965. The treasury office was moved from St. Louis to New York City and finally to Washington in 1971.

Streeter reflects on his fifty years in the labor movement, the future of the labor movement and of his own union, and the nature of his job as financial secretary of the Graphic Arts International Union.

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STREETER: My name is Dan Streeter, Jr., born Dallas, Texas, July 21, 1913.

INTERVIEWER I: Now, how did you come to be born in Dallas, Texas, because we associate your beginnings with Chicago?

STREETER: Well, my father was a photoengraver who was at that time on a catalog season, school season in Dallas, Texas, and working at the Southwestern Engraving Company and the Zeiss Engraving Company in Dallas, Texas. We stayed there for a couple of years and then went back to Indianapolis. He's worked all over the country. He finally went into Cleveland. We lived in Cleveland for about seven years. At the age of ten, we moved to California where he stayed the rest of--or the better part of the rest of--his life.

INTERVIEWER I: So you were, as a child, constantly moving and changing schools and so forth. Do you think this had any effect on you?

STREETER: No, I don't think it had much effect on me. In those days, it didn't make that much difference, the schooling that they had. I went to parochial school.

INTERVIEWER I: In each of these places, you went to parochial school?

STREETER: I started in at St. Patrick's in Cleveland, Ohio, Rocky River Drive, which was out by the old Purtais Spring Park at that time, out by the Airport now. As I say, we lived there for seven years. Then I went to California and started school out there, graduated from parochial school, and then went to Huntingdon Park High School and graduated from there. I went into the trade in between times in the school season and during the summer, working in a shop. Then

when I got out of high school, I started in the engraving business in San Francisco in 1930.

INTERVIEWER I: How many children were in your family, Mr. Streeter?

STREETER: There's three children in the family. I have an older brother, Edward J. Streeter, who is also in the trade. I have a sister, Armetta Streeter, who is the second oldest; I'm the youngest in the family.

INTERVIEWER I: So both of you boys apprenticed as photoengravers.

STREETER: Uh-hm. My brother never stayed with it; he didn't like to get his hands dirty. He liked to sell, so he went into the sales work. He never stayed with it after he finished his apprenticeship.

INTERVIEWER II: But the craft was very much present in your home. . .

STREETER: All the time.

INTERVIEWER II: . . . . and your father's friends. . .

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER II: . . . and very much a part of your life from your earliest memories.

INTERVIEWER I: Was your father active in the union?

STREETER: Yes, he was, but not as far as being an officer, you know what I mean. Usually on the Executive Board or a Sargeant-at-Arms, you know, not a top officer in any of the locals. He originally joined the local in New York in 1913. He had previously worked with Ed Volz in Cincinnati when Ed Volz was an apprentice. My dad originally came out of the pressroom. In those days, the proofers, which they called the proofers who proofed the color work and black-and-white work, and the engravers were in the Pressmen's Union.

Some years later the Pressmen agreed to let them all go and join the Photoengravers Union. That's how he became associated with the Photoengravers in 1913.

So I've known the engraving industry ever since I've been knee-high to a grasshopper. This was quite interesting. I was in Toronto the week of July 15th this year, and I get a phone call at the hotel. It was from a fellow who's retired now, lives in Canada. My dad worked with him in Canada, and he also (this fellow) worked in Cleveland. His name is Cliff Stagg. He lived with us in Cleveland, and he said, "I'll bet you don't remember me." I said, "The hell I don't remember you!" (Laughter) His kids are all grown, and he has about five grandkids. But he lived with us in Cleveland, Ohio, and I always remembered him because he had a fancy yellow sport car, one of these two-seater jobs, you know. (Laughter)

INTERVIEWER I: Was this very common that as people travelled around they would board with. . .

STREETER: They'd board with other families or there'd be two or three guys get together, you know, and stay at a hotel.

INTERVIEWER I: And this was because at this time the degree of skill was a very high level of skill and these people were in demand all over the country.

STREETER: Yes, they were, they were in demand. And it was hard to get a color etcher or a good proofer. When you've done school season, you've done these yearbooks for colleges, high schools, and stuff like that. Well, they may have an order of a thousand books they have to get out and you know how many pictures, those little pictures, they have in them. In those days, we used to just load up the different presses and proof them when they were mounted on the blocks. Most of the school work that's done now is done on a lithographic because they don't have to make ready or anything like that. The photograph is put right on the plates. But that part of the engraving business is really going down to nothing.

INTERVIEWER II: So when you, in 1930, make a decision to apprentice within the union, what other option did you have? Did you kind of feel you were always going to inherit this?

STREETER: No, when I was in high school, I took a real tough course, which was a printing course, and I learned how to set type on a linotype machine, run Miller Feeder presses, Kloug Feeder presses, and Pony Presses. In 1929 my dad was working in the Sterling Engraving Company in San Francisco, and I was with him. That was after I got out of high school. I went to work in a print shop and worked in this print shop for quite a long time--Patterson's Printers, in San Francisco. I worked for them for about six or eight months. Then I quit there and went over and run a Coates Army Press at another place. Then I heard there was an opening for an apprentice at the Bingley Engraving Company in San Francisco.

INTERVIEWER I: Bingley? B-I-N-G-L-E-Y?

STREETER: Yeah. So at that time I was making about $30 a week, which was good money then, running the press, you know. I went over to Bingley's and they hired me and I started as an apprentice at $13 a week. So I went to work over at Bingley Engraving Company, and I worked there for about two years, I guess; then there was a layoff. Then I went to work at Sterling Engraving Company, and I worked with my father. When I had previously worked at Bingley Engraving, I was working in what they called the stripping department; and I cut part of my finger off on the guillotine, and I got bichromate poisoning. . .

INTERVIEWER I: What kind of poisoning?

STREETER: Bichromate. That's a chemical that they use in the coating to put on the plate which makes it light sensitive. You know, in the old days they never had the restrictions and the stuff mixed up the way they do now, and you were more or less careless with it, some of the chemicals that you used, you know, the old cyanide. So in coating the plate, the stuff run down through the bandage, and I got the poisoning. Well, once you get it, you might as well get out of the business, unless you get into some other end of it because it will keep reoccurring. So I went to work with my father over at Sterling Engraving, and I went to work as an apprentice proofer, which he was, a journeyman proofer. And I worked with him for two years there and then there was a layoff and I went back to Los Angeles. I was working there in 1934 and '35, the Studebaker plant, assembly car plants--that's before any of it was union--and then I left there when I got word from my dad that there was a job opening in Chicago. He was back in Chicago.

So I went back there, and I went to work at the Rapid Engraving Company as color proofer. I worked there for about seven or eight months and then a job opened in the Federal Corporation where my dad was working and I went over and went to work with him.

INTERVIEWER I: How did you feel about, incidentally, what was it a two-year stint working in an automobile factory?

STREETER: Oh, that was horrible. In those days, we worked in a big assembly line, but you. . . I worked at what they called "relief on the line". Every-time somebody wanted to go to the bathroom--you see, you weren't allowed to smoke--I'd jump in and fill in their spot. Half the time, by the time I got into the end of the assembly line, they were covering me up with a body. You'd come in one day--normal run on the line was sixty cars--maybe they'd get a big order in, and the next day you'd have to put out eighty. You really worked! You know, you'd try to sneak off to go to the bathroom to have a smoke, or something, and people would be watching you and down to the office you'd get called. That's when they started to organize the union. Right after '37 it became organized.

INTERVIEWER I: Was there any talk about unionization when you were there at Studebaker?

STREETER: No, there wasn't that much. I used to talk about it, but I never could get them going very good. Finally, they had somebody come out from Detroit, where they had been working pretty heavily, and that's when they started organizing it. But I had left then. Otherwise I might have wound up in the Autoworkers. (Laughter)

So anyway, I was in Chicago, and these were non-union shops at the time because prior to that there had been, in 1929, I think, there was a general lockout of all the union engraving plants across the United States. The fellows came down to work one morning, and the doors were padlocked. If they wanted to come in without a union contract, fine. So most of these plants at that time were non-union, and the Photoengravers Union was just getting back in the thirties again into organizing after the Wagner Act had been passed.

So I was working at the Federal Corporation with my father, and I got signed up with the union, Chicago Local #5, as they called it in those days, a Class-A member. You paid just the regular international dues to the local, and it was done under an organizing program until they got the complete shop signed up.

I joined that in 1936. I worked in the Federal Corporation from the latter part of '36, through 1938. And in the last part of 1937 we got the plant organized. In those days they used to use a different technique to get everybody signed up in the plant. We had everybody signed up except the boss' two sons and his two nephews. So that in those days Ed Schward was the secretary-treasurer of Local #5, which was the old Photoengravers Union. Jack Schussler was the president. They came down to the plant one day, and they handed a contract to the employer and said that all the fellows were union and they wanted them to sign a contract. He (the employer) said, "No, they didn't belong to the union." So they showed him the list, and my name was heading the list. So you know what happened to me.

But one of the big causes of the organization of the shop at that time was that we were getting a dollar an hour for forty hours' work. Normally they paid you time-and-a-half after forty hours. So the shop was owned by a fellow by the name of George Zilligan and another fellow by the name of Rube Haigbert, and they had another fellow in who was a silent partner, who was a millionaire. He claimed he wasn't making enough money in his investment, so they called us all together and they asked us if we would work straight time for overtime until they could buy him out.

We thought this was a good deal, so we did. We worked straight time for overtime, and they bought him out. Then in comes a new two-color press, in comes a new camera, in comes a new router. We never got our overtime back. That's one of the reasons why they got the shop organized. That's the way they used to operate in those days.

INTERVIEWER I: Now, I understand there was kind of a vigorous organizing campaign. . . .

STREETER: Oh, there was a terrific organizing campaign at that time. The director of organizing was Larry Gruber, who later became president of the Chicago local, and Larry was the one who signed me up. He came over and said, "I want to talk to you about joining the union." I said, "You don't have to talk to me. I'll sign the application now." So that's the way I got into the Photoengravers Union.

INTERVIEWER II: Can I just go back and ask, now you were working out in California at $30 a week running the press?

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER II: Then you decide you're going to take a chance with photoengravers at $13 a week.

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER II: And then seven or eight years afterwards you're earning only ten dollars more and your work isn't real steady. Why, in heaven's name, do you want to get into the Photoengravers Union? What about that craft that's so attractive other than. . .

STREETER: Well, the craft to me was more attractive because of what you produced. You know, you had something that you could really see, where, with the press, somebody else produced it. You just run it off, and you know, there's not a great deal of enthusiasm getting a big galley of types and putting it on the press and making it ready to run. Of course, with the mechanical features, too, you're always having breakdowns and everything else. They weren't as sophisticated as they are today. So my dad, talking with him, he always made good money because he worked on the college seasons and he was the top craftsman and he could go out and, if the scale was $20, he could always make $50. What most of us done throughout the country and what most of us done even after it was completely unionized, we negotiated just a minimum scale. It was up to you to negotiate with the employer and get your premium. I never worked for scale in my life after I joined the union because I always negotiated and got the premium.

INTERVIEWER II: And that tradition still lives on?

STREETER: Still lives on, yes. For instance, I have a son that's also in the business. . .

INTERVIEWER II: Third generation. . .

STREETER: Yeah, third generation. He made more money than I did when I became treasurer of the International Union. (Laughter) It's just one of those things. If you're a good craftsman, you can demand a good wage. Of course, now it's beginning to fade out a little because of the fact that they're getting a lot more new technology in the industry now. In the old days, the cameraman had to know just exactly what he was doing because he didn't have densitometers to check his dot, he didn't have this to check the chemicals. They

weren't mixed for him; he had to mix his own, and so on. You really had to be a craftsman; it was nothing unusual to work in a shop and see a guy with his book that he had. My father had one, I wish I had it now, I don't know where it went to. But in that was all the different types of formulas they used to use for the chemicals for the camera, chemicals for coating the plates, different things. And they were all made by hand. You just bought the raw material and mixed them together and did them by hand. And that's where they really demanded the premium wages. The same way as far as proofing color. In those days we didn't have these electric presses. You done them all by hand. You rolled up the plate with the hand roller, run them on the old George Washington hand presses. You should have seen those! You'd do those one color at a time.

INTERVIEWER: How did you match the colors? Did you have to do that by eye?

STREETER: You had to mix your own ink and match your own ink. In those days they didn't have a standardization of the primary colors of red, yellow, blue, and black as they have today. Now everybody uses the same so, when they get on a production press, they're supposed to come out the same. But in those days, if you couldn't exactly match the color with the plate you had, you'd change the ink a little bit. When you used to get a painting, artists have different conceptions of colors. If you got one that used a lot of what we called "poison purple", you could never make it with the four primary colors; you had to put something else in to get it. So you had to be an expert in mixing ink as well.

What they used to do was they'd tear off a piece of something and send it in and say, "This is the color I want it run on." So you'd just take your ink, and you'd mix them up yourself. The other thing my dad did before he became a pressman he worked in an ink factory where he mixed ink; so he knew the trade from beginning right down to the end. I never served a tougher apprenticeship than anybody who served under your dad. In those days you had to keep those presses in tip-top shape, washed up. He never done it. I did it!

INTERVIEWER: What was your relationship like with other apprentices in that you were working with your father?

STREETER: No problem at all. That was predominant in the old days in the engraving business. You'd always find a father and a son.

INTERVIEWER: It was accepted that a father would be teaching his son the craft?

STREETER: Yes. It was an accepted practice. In fact, it didn't change too much until after World War II.

INTERVIEWER: Well, now you mentioned that, when the leadership of Local #5 came into the Federal Corporation and showed them the list of people who had belonged to the union and your name was on the top of the list, did you mean to indicate that they fired you?

STREETER: Yeah, they fired me, right. Then I went down to the union office, and they called a meeting at the union office of all the fellows in the shop. So they told them they weren't coming back unless I came back. They called up the employer and he said, "Okay, send him back." So I went back, and he said, "What the hell are you doing here?" I said, "I went down to the union office, and they told me to come down, (that) they'd talked to you, and I was to go back to work." He said, "You go back and tell them they're not running my shop for me." So then I went back, and then they closed the plant down until they took me back.

I stayed there until. . . well, I got married on the 18th of June, 1938, and I took a week off for a honeymoon. I came back, and I happened to drive by the shop on Saturday, and they were working. I came in on a Monday morning and said, "I see you guys were working Saturday." So then I got fired because they said I was spying on them all the time. I couldn't get back in again then.

I went up to the union office and signed up up there. I remember at that time they were paying $25 a week unemployment benefits, so I drew $25 a week from the Chicago Local unemployment fund. The funny part of it was they used to run a pool there and I won $25 from the pool, and I got $5 of it because I owed dues of $20. But I got five dollars of it.

INTERVIEWER: Did they make any kind of appeal to the National Labor Board to protest your being fired?

STREETER: No. In those days there was very little of that that went on at that time. There wasn't no National Labor Relations Board at that time. It was all under the Wagner Act at that time, so you didn't have recourse to the boards and the unfair labor practices that you have today.

INTERVIEWER: When was this?

STREETER: This was in 1938.

INTERVIEWER: 1938. So you're saying the Board was not an accepted enough. . . I mean a Board did exist. . .

STREETER: Well, they did exist, but not what was really the National Labor Relations Board. As I understand, the National Labor Relations Board really came into prominence after the Taft-Hartley Act.

INTERVIEWER: Well, no, but there was a National Labor Relations Board prior to that.

STREETER: But they never used to operate like they do now with the filing of the charges. So I hung around for awhile, and I seen an ad in the newspaper: ENGRAVER WANTED. So I answered the ad. I'll never forget, I came home, and there was a letter there, and it was from Simplicity Patterns Company, and it was addressed to me. I thought, what the hell is Simplicity Pattern Company writing to me for? Well, they had an engraving department in the Simplicity Pattern Company in Niles, Michigan, which was about 120 miles out of Chicago. So I went up to see them. It was Labor Day week of 1938. I got hired by the Simplicity Pattern Company as a color proofer. I went to work right after Labor Day up there with a salary of $40 a week again, a dollar an hour.

INTERVIEWER: You weren't making much progress, were you? (Laughter)

STREETER: Wasn't making much progress, no. I stayed there--we were having problems with the plant at the time--I, along with two other fellows, finally got all of the fellows, got them all organized and joined the union. We were issued a charter, and I was the first secretary of the local. We got the contract negotiated. At that time Arthur Rehage, who was a vice president, came up and helped us with the contract.

INTERVIEWER: Arthur who?

STREETER: Rehage. He retired in 1956, J. Arthur Rehage.

INTERVIEWER: How do you spell that?

STREETER: R-E-H-A-G-E. He died at our convention in New Orleans four years ago. But he came up, and we finally got the contract settled. I worked there until May, 1939. There was a layoff, and I was the first one to get laid off. I said to my wife, "The hell with this. Let's go back to California. I'm not going to stay in the East." I went back to California; there wasn't anything open there. I took a travel card to Local #32P. There was nothing open there so I went to work in a gas station, and I worked in a gas station for about a year. I said to my wife, "If we don't get anything by the first of April, we'll go back to Chicago." I'd go back to work in my trade back there.

She was a registered nurse and she was working in the same order that had the hospital in Chicago as had it in Los Angeles--Queen of Angels. So I got a call. . .

INTERVIEWER: Queen of Angels?

STREETER: Yeah, Queen of Angels. So I get a call from the union office, Jack Sessler, who was the business agent, and he said he had a part-time job for me. That was in 1941. I said, "Whereabouts?" And he said, "The newspaper." Which was then The Examiner, a Hearst paper. So I went up to see about the job, and the superintendent of the plant was Cliff Schaler at the time. He wanted to give me a job three days a week. I said, "Nothing doing. If I don't work five, I'm not going to work." So I finally went to work for five days a week. The wages then were--we were working forty hours, and it was $57 a week. So I went to work for five days, and I stayed there until the war was over.

Then during that interim period I run for office. In those days we only had one full-time officer, Jack Sessler, but he went into the service at the time they had this war. We were in the newspaper because it was considered to be vital to the national interest at the time, so we were exempt from the draft for a period of time, provided we stayed at the newspaper. So I stayed at the newspaper until the war was over.

Then I ran for office in 1946 and became president of the Los Angeles Local 32P.

INTERVIEWER II: What year was that?

STREETER: 1946. I held various offices in the Photoengravers Local there. I attended my first convention, which was the first convention held after the war, in Cincinnati, 1946. That's where I met Bill Hall. He was at his first convention as the vice president of the Chicago Local. We came into the convention from the East Coast and kind of upset the place. We were called the "upstarts" at the time.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, why?

STREETER: Well, we were. We'd been in California all these years, and we never had an international officer out there or anything else. Of course, you could realize it in those days because it was a long trip, you know, to come out there. But we felt we weren't getting the representation we were entitled to. So in 1946 we formed what we called the Pacific Coast Conference of Photoengravers, which included all the locals on the West Coast--San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, Vancouver--and we sat down and drew up some propositions for the convention. One of the propositions that we drew up was to change the structure of the International into sections, in other words, have four sections of the International and a vice president elected for each section of the country, so at least they'd have some representation.

INTERVIEWER: Elected by that section alone?

STREETER: No. Elected by. . . .

(END OF TAPE I, side I)

STREETER: (mid sentence). . . new vice presidents that were added--they didn't change the country into sections, but they did add the two vice presidents. The two vice presidents that was added was Bill (Wilfred) Connell from Boston, who later became the International president, and Bill Graff from San Francisco, who at that time was the Business Agent for the San Francisco Local. So that's how we were able to attain a little representation as far as the western part of the country. Bill Graff was the representative for the western section of the country, Connell for the eastern, but they had plenty for the East as it was anyway.

But at least we've got part of the proposition that we brought to the convention at that time.

INTERVIEWER: Why didn't the convention leadership want to have the four regions?

STREETER: Well, they didn't seem to think it was practical at that time, you know. I think, at that time, I'm not positive, but I think at that time the only other one that had regions at that time was the Amalgamated.

INTERVIEWER: The Lithographers, you mean?

STREETER: Uh-hm, the Lithographers at that time had regions. Of course, I wasn't that familiar with the Lithographers at that time, but Eddie Volz and the rest of them were and had sat with them many times talking to them, you know. And I guess that's one of the reasons they didn't want to get into the regional deal because it conceivably could build up a power base in these sections of the country and they didn't want to get into that type of set-up. But we were satisfied anyway. At least we got some representation after all those years.

INTERVIEWER II: What did the International feel about your establishing the West Coast Conference?

STREETER: Well, they were very much against it. Other ones had conferences--the newspaper conference, the commercial conference in the eastern part of the country--but it was always held after the convention. Ours was patterned to be held before the convention so that we could go to the convention with some propositions. And while the conference was not allowed to present propositions, individual locals were. So we used to make the propositions from one local--San Francisco would present one, Los Angeles would present one. That's the way we got our legislation done; worked in the conventions we attended.

INTERVIEWER: Did you feel at that time that the leadership was not as militant as you would like to have seen it be? That is. . . .

STREETER: No, they were militant enough, you know what I mean. But at that time I guess it was like everything else. You were young and rarin' to go and I just guess you figured they weren't moving as

fast as you'd like to see them move. So we felt we could, by having some younger officers in there, we could move it along a little faster. It worked out. I'd say we always had good leadership as far as the Photoengravers is concerned--Matty Woll, Eddie Volz, Bill Connell, Bill Hall. If it wasn't for Eddie Volz, we would never have the gravure industry under the jurisdiction of the Photoengravers.

INTERVIEWER: How did he achieve that?

STREETER: Well, when it first came out, Eddie used to go around all up through the country talking to employers about the gravure process and talking them into going into that particular part of it and we would help them with it. And we were able to obtain contracts with them. He's the one that really pushed the gravure industry part of it as far as getting. . . that really goes back quite a few years. It really started to come into prominence in the thirties, when they really started working with it. At that time the Stereotypers and Electrotypers were interested in it, but they gave it up. That's how we obtained the jurisdiction of it.

INTERVIEWER: Why did they give it up?

STREETER: I don't know why they really gave it up, but Eddie Volz was a pretty convincing talker. They were pretty close together because of the Stereotypers and Electrotypers working in a lot of the plants that we had. They have electrotyping in a lot of the engraving plants and also stereotypers in the newspaper plants, so they were pretty close together. And I think he was able to convince them that it was not properly their jurisdiction because it was not the making of duplicate plates. Stereotypers and electrotypers never made an original plate. They always done what we call duplicate plates, substitute plates. And that was one of the ways we were able to convince them that we should have the jurisdiction. If it was a duplicate plate, they would have had it. It was not a plate, it was a cylinder, but that was the premise that they used at the time in obtaining the jurisdiction over it.

INTERVIEWER: Well, I know that there was considerable discussion during this period of time and previous to this about Matt Woll's conservatism in the sense that he had been involved in something called the National Civic Federation and subsequently was involved in, what was it? The Labor and Life Insurance?

STREETER: Union Labor Life Insurance. Yeah, he was the first president of the Union Labor Life Insurance.

INTERVIEWER: And I'm wondering if there was a discussion about that in Chicago or in California.

STREETER: Well, even though Matt was not the president after the forming of Labor Life--he became the president of Union Labor Life Insurance--he was always the first vice president of the Photoengravers. While Eddie Volz was president, Matt Woll headed up the Council and was always the spokesman for the Council.

INTERVIEWER: And was also the voice in the AF of L.

STREETER: Yes, he was the voice in the AF of L. because he had worked up through the ranks and finally became the second vice president. I guess at that time they had nominations for president of the AF of L, and I guess he was in line for the job when [William] Green died. It didn't materialize. But Matt was very conservative. I remember in 1946 when we were at the Concinnati convention, we'd had a big strike out in L.A. We had organized the Pacific Press, which is part of the J. W. Clement out of Buffalo. At that time we were battling with the Amalgamated Lithographers over the jurisdiction of who was going to have the plant because they had litho in there and they had letterpress and engraving. We won the case against Ben Robinson, who was the attorney for. . .

INTERVIEWER: (Laughing) You really did something!

STREETER: . . . the Amalgamated. And in every case that was handed down after that by the National Labor Relations Board, they always mentioned, "But it did not apply as same as Pacific Press." So we had spent a hell of a lot of money. We spent about $15,000, I guess, on attorney fees alone. And we were a small local; we had 200-some people. We were organizing pretty heavily, you know what I mean, and we had this strike. We weren't going to turn loose of it, and we finally won it. So I appeared, along with a delegation, to try and get some reimbursement from the International Union for the payment of attorney fees. And I'm telling you, Matt Woll may be conservative, but he was damn tight on the pocketbook, too. But we were able to get the money from the International to pay the attorney bills for the case because it did establish a precedent throughout the United States and the National Labor

Relations Board. Matt ruled with an iron hand when he was on the Board. It was the first time I'd ever appeared before the Board. It was a little bit eerie. You walk in there, you know, and here's five guys sitting there and Matt does all the talking and nobody else says anything but "yes" or "no".

INTERVIEWER: Was Volz on that Board, too?

STREETER: Yes, Volz was the president. In the Photoengravers, at least in the local unions, you may have been president of the local, but you were never chairman of the board. The vice president was always chairman of the board. I guess it evolved from the way the International had been originally set up. But anyway, we had a few good battles with Matt throughout the years, but they came out all right. (Laughter)

So, as I said, I became the president of the local. I got out of the presidency of the local for a couple of years because my daughter was very ill and we had to move to San Fernando Valley right at the end of the war. I went out there to build a house, and I built it myself. So I had to have time to do it, and I didn't have time to be tied up with union business. But after I got it built, again I became vice president of the local.

INTERVIEWER: Of the same local? #32P?

STREETER: Same Local. And I stayed as vice president until 1952 when I became the Business Agent, which was a full-time job. I stayed there until the time I became an International officer. In 1956 at the Montreal convention I was elected as. . . how many vice presidents did we have at that time? I think we had five vice presidents. I became the fifth vice president. It was the same year that Bill Hall was elected as a vice president. We were both elected at the Montreal convention. I'll always remember Eddie Volz. Eddie was retired. Eddie had retired at the Boston convention, and Bill Connell became. . .

INTERVIEWER: What year was that?

STREETER: 1954.

INTERVIEWER: 1954 at the Boston Convention.

STREETER: I'll always remember, Eddie was at the convention, and he said, "Well, now that Bill and Dan have been elected, I can see the peace and serenity of the Council has come to an end." (Laughter) But it worked out all right. We had our arguments and everything, but. . .

INTERVIEWER: Did your relationship with Bill Hall go back to Chicago?

STREETER: I never knew Bill Hall in Chicago. It was really funny because he didn't work too far from where I was at. He worked at J & O [John & Ollier], down on Madison & Hallstaff, on the corner. I worked up on Erie Street.

INTERVIEWER: Larry Gruber organized Bill also.

STREETER: Yeah, right, yeah. In fact I was in the union before Bill was. So we both came out of the same area.

INTERVIEWER: But you didn't actually meet until that first convention in 1946.

STREETER: Didn't meet until 1946. And then we didn't have too much association after that except when we went to the convention every year. I'd see him and get to know him. Where we really became very close friends was after we were elected vice presidents because I used to stop in Chicago; if we had a meeting on the East Coast, I'd stop in Chicago and see Bill. We'd come out through [to the East Coast]. We became pretty good buddies from then on.

(This part of the interview ends in the middle of Tape I, side 2. The interviewer for the remainder of the interview is Greg Giebel)

INTERVIEWER: Today is Thursday, the 14th [August, 1975]

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: I guess a fair place to start today would be where we left off yesterday. That is with your emerging relationship with Bill Hall. You two were now, as of 1956, vice presidents on the Council. What's the nature of your relationship in relationship to the Council, relationship to Hall and relationship to the Council?

STREETER: Well, at that time I was Business Agent of the Los Angeles Local and fifth vice president of the International Union. As such, the Council was the ruling part of the International Photoengravers Union.

INTERVIEWER: In fact, or in theory?

STREETER: Oh, in fact. We had our vice presidents. At that time Dennis Burke from New York Local #1P was a vice president and myself, and we were local officers. The other vice presidents that were on at the time were Frank Smith, who was from Canada and was a full-time officer in Toronto Local #35P. Then we added to the Council the other members who were vice presidents but they served as representatives as well. The three of us were the three vice presidents not full time. There were no full-time vice presidents of the Photoengravers Union at that time. There was a president, secretary-treasurer, and then the International representatives. Well, Bill Hall in 1956 also was vice president that was not full time, being president of the Chicago Local. But the officers at that time in the International Union, of course, were established; the secretary-treasurer was always in St. Louis, had been for about forty-seven years. The International president's office was in the city whioh he came from. So at that time Bill Connell was International president, and the office was in the Statler Office Building in Boston, Massachusetts.

INTERVIEWER: But the secretary-treasurer was the more important of the. . .

STREETER: Yes, they'd handle all the book work and all the contracts and everything went through that office as far as financial and record keeping and so forth. Henry Schmal was--I can't remember the year that he was elected--but he served forty-seven or forty-nine years as secretary-treasurer. Then he retired, and Ben Schaller went in as secretary-treasurer. In fact, he was on about a year prior to that time and served as an assistant to Henry Schmal and

then became secretary-treasurer in 1959 at the Los Angeles Convention.

INTERVIEWER: So I guess a natural question would be is, you were, in fact, really playing an important role as vice president in policy determination, while you were drawing salaries as head of the Chicago Local or business agent for Los Angeles. Were you of mixed loyalties in one respect or could you really devote full time to what was clearly going to be a much more national. . . . ?

STREETER: At that time, yeah, we devoted quite a bit of time to it because matters that concern the International are forwarded to our officers as far as acceptance of contracts, who votes on various propositions that came before the Council, strike benefits, things like that. So we participated and were, I think, able to contribute quite a bit to it without jeopardizing the representation to the people that we represented in our various cities.

The Photoengravers Union at that time was growing in 1956, and I guess it got to its top growth about 1957 or '58. Then right after that it started to go down a little bit, but I think in 1957 we had our top membership at that time. We knew, by the way the organization was going, that we had to have more direction from the International Union and we had to develop a new system because we were just floating along. If we didn't develop a new system, we were going to be going down the drain as far as membership was concerned, as far as exerting any influence in the labor community.

INTERVIEWER: These changes were, obviously, the technological ones.

STREETER: Well, it was the technological changes coming in right about that time. We had a case in Milwaukee, I think, at the newspaper there when the phototypesetter first came in, and that was settled by Bill Connell and Bob Blumenthal. At that time we always contended that the jurisdiction of the typesetting machine belonged to the Photoengravers because it was a camera stimulated by a keyboard. They came to an agreement with the Milwaukee paper, and that jurisdiction wound up in the Typographical Union. From that decision that was made at that time, we had a hell of a battle on our hands, retaining jurisdiction as far as new things coming into the industry was concerned, particularly in the newspapers where they were trying to go into automated type of photoengraving as it was.

INTERVIEWER: Was this an NLRB decision?

STREETER: No, no, it was an agreement that was reached between Bill Connell, Bob Blumenthal who was a vice president at that time, and a representative as well, and with the publishers in Milwaukee. I think it was the Milwaukee Sentinel.

INTERVIEWER: So they signed over. . .

STREETER: Yeah, and the way the thing worked out, it was really supposed to be our jurisdicition; but when you read the thing clearly, it really wasn't ours. It was given away.

INTERVIEWER: And that quickly became known nationally, and it was certainly to the typesetters' advantage to promote that.

STREETER: Right. Of course they were battling for it too, you know, at the time. We knew that, if we didn't get that under our jurisdiction, that everything else that came in, every new type of camera that came in, or anything else, they were automatically going to give it to the ITU [International Typographical Union]. So I would say at the time the leadership we had was fair, you know what I mean. It wasn't a progressive type of leadership that we should have had. We kind of fumbled along in many cases.

There was in Louisville in 1962 at that time, the Photoengravers always held a convention every year, and then Bill Hall ran against Bill Connell for president of the organization and was defeated by three votes or something like that in the convention. So it continued on for another year. Then the next year the convention was held in Chicago, and Bill ran against Connell again and was elected president of the organization. In the meantime, (and this really works up to the way the merger started) there had been some conversations in the printing trades unions about getting together, and Walter Risdon had been appointed as a representative in the Washington area and some of the surrounding areas. There had been a change in some of the vice presidencies--Denny Burke had retired; Eddie Nyegaard, who was then a vice president of New York Local, became president of the New York Local and then ran for vice president of the Photoengravers and was elected.

So when these talks came about, Bill Connell assigned Walter Risdon and Eddie Nyegaard to start talking with the

Amalgamated Lithographers, or talking with the printing trades unions about merger. The Pressmen were in attendance, the Amalgamated Lithographers were in attendance, the Typographical Union was in attendance. . .

INTERVIEWER: Did you bring them all together? Did the Photo-engravers bring them all together?

STREETER: No, it was brought together more through the AFL-CIO organizing to see if we couldn't get the printing trades all on one footing with the idea of maybe merging together. And one of the big things that brought it about was technology being advanced in some of the newspaper plants as well as some of the commercial plants. So that's where the merger started about talking about it about 1962, when they met. I think Leon Wickersham was the representative from the Lithographers sitting in on it, and I can't remember who sat in on it with him. I don't know whether it was Gus Petrakis or not. I'd have to check on that and see.

INTERVIEWER: Connolly, maybe?

STREETER: No, no, no. It was two fellows out of the eastern part of the country, out of New York, and I don't remember who it was; but I know Wick was one of them. That's how we got to talking on the merger deal. And then finally, there was a meeting arranged for Connell to meet Ken Brown in New York City, and they started talking a little more about merger and so forth. Then in 1962 when Bill was elected International President, they had been talking; but we had never sat down as far as members of the Board were concerned or anything like that. In talking with Bill, we knew we were going to have to do something. Either we were going to have to merge with another union because we weren't viable for our size, or we were going to have to restructure the International Union altogether. Restructuring is a hell of a lot easier through merger than it is on your own. So we took the merger path and sat down to talk. At that time Bill appointed me to sit in on the merger negotiations along with Ben Schaller, Bill Hall, and myself, as a committee that were sitting down and negotiating the terms of the merger with the ALA [Amalgamated Lithographers of America].

INTERVIEWER: Let me ask you about a couple of things that go on in the background, and maybe you can, if you choose to, make some comments about them. I guess that the year preceding Bill's election as president, he takes a position of not being for merger. Now, what changes him? Was that primarily political or does he really feel at that time that he doesn't see the problems totally as he does. . . .

STREETER: I think maybe that would be right. I think, you know, he was on a local basis all the time that they were talking prior to that and had not had really any information as to what was going on in the talks before. But then, when we decided to continue the talks after he was elected and sat down, well, you know, a couple of decisions had to be made. A lot of people say Bill Hall was hardheaded, which he is, but he's willing to compromise at times. And that was one of the ways that he was willing to sit and listen.

INTERVIEWER: Well, it seems like a real personal compromise on his part because he goes from a newly-elected president to a newly-elected senior vice president, a considerable sacrifice.

STREETER: You know, we could have sat and talked for months, and nothing would have happened until a decision was made as to who the hell was going to head up the organization. And naturally, with the Amalgamated Lithographers being the larger group, representing more people, it was natural for them to say, "Well, Brown will have to be the president." Well, we finally agreed that's what it was going to be. And we agreed on the structure of the International Union, how many vice presidents there would be from the Photoengravers, and so forth. When Bill made the decision that, yes, he'd go as Executive Vice President, that's when the movement started. Then we were able to sit down and start talking. But in a merger talk, when you're making the decision what's going to happen to the present officers in both organizations, you're not going to get anyplace until that's settled. Once that was settled, we were able to move.

INTERVIEWER: I've seen that on the local level, but I guess it's interesting the comment you made earlier about mergers seeming to provide an opportunity for you to change aspects of the organization that would otherwise be very difficult to change.

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: And you and Bill when you first became vice presidents could see the need to change certain things, but it wasn't until later that Bill becomes president, and you spent some time in your office, that you're able to find a way to change these. Now, can you talk about what things really needed to change in the organization in response to the technological threats?

STREETER: Well, I think the main thing in the change was, as I mentioned before, the Photoengravers Union were not Internationally oriented; they were locally oriented. They built strong local unions, and they would have a tendency when the International was involved to say, "Well, the hell with the International. We're going to do as we please." And you don't get anyplace that way if the top of the organization isn't running it. That's why we felt it had to be restructured so that the local unions had more respect and agreed to abide by the rules and regulations of the International Union as the top organization. And that was the big thing we were able to do by merging with the Amalgamated because the Amalgamated was just the opposite. They were Internationally-oriented and not locally-oriented. So we felt it was a damn good compromise, and it's really worked out beneficial for everybody.

You know, during that period of time we both had constitutions and by-laws that had been amended and amended and amended over years and years by convention action. And nine times out of ten they were amended to take care of somebody's local problems. Maybe it applied to that local, but it didn't apply to the locals in other parts of the country. This was one way of devising a new constitution and by-laws which would apply to a modern labor organization. The invocation of all of the labor laws and so forth that had taken place over the years, we were now able to bring our constitution and by-laws into alignment and be under. . . .

(End of Tape I, Side 2)

INTERVIEWER: (mid-sentence). . . factors was that the change in technology just meant a whole lot less situations. Although the work was still there, it was just a loss of situations, and you were talking about a fast etching process.

STREETER: Fast etching process for zinc. In this plant we had two men on each shift and sometimes three on each shift, and we ran three shifts in order to supply the ads for the newspapers. Well, when the fast etch machine came in and was finally developed, we wound up with two etchers. We had one on the first shift and one on the third shift. What happened on the second shift, they'd get all the plates ready, get them touched up and everything; and when the guy came in on the third shift, he'd run them through the etching machine. And that's where we were falling down the line. The same thing applied in the proofing end of it--the color proofing end of it. We used to do everything by hand on a single color press. First it was by hand, and then we came out with the cylinder press, which worked by hand. We had to run each color separate. Then about

1935 they came out with a two-color press, which was made by the. . . . the first one that came out was made by the Hacker Press Company. Then VanderCook Press, they were both in Chicago, came out with them.

I operated one of the first two-color proof presses. You still run it by hand, but it was wide enough that you could put two colors on and you could shift the sheets back and forth. So you ran your yellow on a red; then when you got through, you ran the blue and the black. It was faster. Then pretty soon, it wasn't too many years after, they developed a four-color press with four beds in a row--yellow, red, blue and black--with your fountains for each one of them. I remember I run the first one that was in Los Angeles. That press, I figured out one time, in a day I walked five miles, just walking down the length of that press. You'd put the sheet in, it went through, and then you'd walk down to pick it off.

Then they finally developed a press where they had an automatic feeder. You'd put the feeder on, push a button, the cylinder would go over all four plates; and as it came up, a gadget caught the sheet and then brought it back. So that left it so you could stand at the head of the press and feed it. But those were the types. . . when we were proofing before on the single presses, we had four guys. You wound up with one press and one man on the press. So you were eliminating three jobs, and you were doing it faster.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, that's interesting because often it's just seen as a much more simple problem of new investment going into lithography and the new techniques of lithography replacing photoengraving. But you're saying it's much more complex than that. Not only was that happening, but the changes in automation within photoengraving was chewing up jobs as fast as the future growth.

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: So the merger would then make a lot of sense if retraining was possible. And you're saying that it often was for a photoengraver not too difficult to [retrain].

STREETER: You take a man that was running a four-color proof press. He knew presses. He didn't have much trouble, no more trouble than he would have had if the employer had bought a new press and

brought it in and said, "Here you're going to run it." He'd have to learn how to run it. And that's what happened. They went over into the litho, and they were able to run four-color proof presses in litho. Some of them could go on to the sheet-fed presses as well. They knew what they were doing as far as presses were concerned. So there was a greater opportunity for our people to go into litho, as I said before, than the litho people coming into ours.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, so 1962 you're put on a committee to start to talk. You and Mr. Hall and one other fellow?

STREETER: Ben Schaller. He was the secretary-treasurer at the time.

INTERVIEWER: What was the tone? Now, you see the advantage to merging, but you can't walk into the room and say, "Yeah, we really have a lot of advantages." What were the advantages for the Lithographers? What sort of things did you have to offer them?

STREETER: Well, I think that we had strong local situations, by merger of the locals in the area that we were going to build more strength in the local locales and we weren't going to have this continual fight that, whenever a contract come up or a strike situation called, why, we would be fighting them.

INTERVIEWER: That didn't happen in the newspaper end.

STREETER: No, no, this was in the commercial end of it.

INTERVIEWERS: . . . between Printing Pressmen and ITU and yourselves. . .

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWERS: But in the commercial end, which was in relationship to newspaper, was it more important, about the same, or less important?

STREETER: Well, I think, as far as that's concerned, it was more important in the commercial end because we

had plants that. . . . they also owned litho plants. I remember a time in Los Angeles when we had a commercial strike, a picket line around the plant. One plant was Mission Engraving Company and they also owned Mission Litho Company. They were on different floors. But we had a picket line out. At that time Ted Brandt was president of the local out there; he was formerly a vice president here before he retired. I was out on strike for two weeks, and he never crossed the picket line. When I took my people back, he went out on strike and was out for ten days, and our people didn't cross. These are the types of things we were running into in the industry.

Christ, we were batting our heads against the wall. The employers, you know, were using this from one end to the other. It only seemed natural that we had more in common than with anyone else in the printing industry, because of the preparatory department, the camera, the stripping, etc.

INTERVIEWER: You're saying the general rule would be to cross the picket line?

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: And you didn't in this one situation in Los Angeles, and you could see the advantages. . .

STREET: Right. And there was other areas where they'd say, "Oh, the hell with you. You don't even belong to the AFL-CIO. Why should we respect your picket lines?" And they'd go through it. The same thing would happen with us; the Amalgamated would go through our picket lines. You could just see that you weren't going to get anyplace. In the old days, when the printing trades were all under the Typographical Union, you could see it at that time; and you could also see the reason that they broke away. And it served its purpose over the years because each one of the unions--the Pressmen, the Stereotypers & Electrotypers, and the Photoengravers--they all built up their organizations to get recognized in the industry, obtained good wages for their people. If they had stayed under the old deal with the Typographical Union, the same thing would have continued to happen that was happening before. The Typographical Union would always settle for the highest wages, and the other crafts would get less. That's the reason for the breakoff from the Typographical.

When you come back to the times now and the size of the printing plants and everything else, you have got to have a big organization in order to be able to compete within the labor market and also to compete against these conglomerates. You take a

little organization like the Photoengravers with 18,000 members, how the hell long could they go fighting a big corporation? They couldn't begin to fight.

INTERVIEWER: Now is that, in fact, what eventually happened within the industry? The conglomerates came in? Or is that something that is rumored to have happened. I mean, is there any way you can pin it down? Did you actually. . .

STREETER: No, no. There were conglomerates coming into it all the time. While some of them may have been printing companies, they were conglomerate printing companies. For instance, J. W. Clement out of Buffalo, they bought Pacific Press in California. They also owned Philip VanArden in San Francisco. And they had, you know, different plants, the one in Buffalo. When you're dealing with those, so you have a strike with them on the West Coast. What the hell do they care? They'll do the work in Buffalo. You don't get any place with them. And you've got to have all of them covered in order to be able to bring any pressure to bear.

INTERVIEWER: Now, did these conglomerates also affect the rest of the industry? Did they begin to be the trend setters?

STREETER: No. I think they tried to, but they didn't get away with it. They tried to. In fact we have right today a few of them that are trying to and trying to get the unions out, particularly since the merger with the Bookbinders. They feel we're getting too strong. There are so many of the. . . you take the American Standard, a plumbing outfit. What the hell are they doing in the printing industry? They're using them as profit centers. That's all they're doing. Beatrice Foods, for instance, they've bought up Collins, Miller & Hutchins in Chicago; they bought up John & Ciliers in Chicago, they bought up Adams & Sons in Los Angeles. They use them as a profit center, that's all. They put the people that owned them and operated them under contract for a five-year period at a good salary and buy it at a good price, and they're in the printing industry. These are the type of people that you have to deal with.

INTERVIEWER: Now you've seen this change, and you've walked into negotiations. Can you describe some of the differences that probably these changes brought on with negotiations? At one time you were dealing

primarily with "mom & pop" shop owners who had grown up through the industry and in some cases probably still had a card. And now you're dealing with management people who. . . Are they more skillful or don't they know as much as mom & pop? Did mom & pop really drive a harder bargain in some ways?

STREETER: The conglomerates now, of course, naturally, they hire people who are public relations and labor management people. They know all the goddamn laws; and if they don't, they have an attorney sitting there with them all the time. We never went in to negotiations where an attorney was sitting in. If there was some difficulty as far as clarifying a certain section of the contract as to whether it was legal or not, we always put an escape clause in it. You know, if a particular section was found illegal, it wouldn't effect the rest of the contract; and it would be taken out until it was renegotiated the next time. But you start off now with these attorneys and these here industrial relations people. You take a small local, and they have a hell of a time trying to negotiate with people, particularly if they work at the bench.

INTERVIEWER: Oftentimes these large conglomerates like to negotiate locally.

STREETER: Yeah, they want to. . . .

INTERVIEWER: Have you ever tried with Beatrice Foods to sit down and. . . ?

STREETER: Well, Beatrice Foods now, of course, is a little bit different because those shops belong in the engraving end of it. They belong to an association, and usually the association represents those plants during negotiations.

INTERVIEWER: But with American Standard, for instance, the firms that are unionized never, with the exception of one, I understand, never negotiate within a group. They negotiate separately, and they have a team in Baltimore that gets flown in.

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Do these people in some cases not know the industry or are these experts who have come out of management?

STREETER: Well, they are experts that come out of management. They don't really know too much about presses and different things like that, you know, or what production of the plant means. They know what they want to pay. And that's one thing they can't understand is why we won't accept the type of wages that they could do on an industrial basis. They don't settle for it now, but, you know, they used to go in and settle for five cents an hour or three cents an hour. It was a big deal! All down the assembly line, you know. All through the plant. When they have to sit down and negotiate with the crafts, they have to come up with some money. This is what they couldn't understand is how the hell we could demand that kind of money and, if they were going to have to pay it, why we wouldn't go along with it with other people.

We lost a big gravure plant in Springfield, Ohio, which was owned by American Cyanamide. American Cyanamide just said, "That's what we're going to pay. You guys want to go on strike, go ahead and go on strike." And we did. We set there for nine months. We wouldn't go back, and they wouldn't turn loose. And they finally sold the plant to another printing company. But they couldn't understand because they deal with the chemical workers and some of the others. They have a big plant up there in Manuet, New York. Practically every time they negotiate with them, they go out on strike because that's the way they deal. Just come in, you know, and say, "We're going to give you so much." It's the old Bulwarism that was developed by General Electric. That's the thing you run into.

INTERVIEWER: Another factor, I guess, since we've been talking about that, what about the competition that comes from an unorganized segment? Traditionally, the Photoengravers had a real nicely organized segment of the industry. Did you eventually fall victim to the more easy transportation systems that allowed firms to locate in right-to-work states or locate in regional areas that were hard to organize? Did that come into your segment?

STREETER: Well, it did, but we were pretty well organized throughout the country and Canada. Those plants that came in in the southern parts of the country--and we were very heavily organized in Texas and through those areas--those plants that came down into the southern part, the southeastern part of the country, weren't that detrimental to the regular employers. They were servicing a market that was not a national market. They weren't servicing big publishers and stuff like that.

INTERVIEWER: So you didn't have people who were willing to move out of Chicago and move to Tennessee or Kentucky to avoid the labor costs because the process itself was perhaps not so long term that they were willing to take the high initial cost of setting up a new plant.

STREETER: Right. Everything was tailor-made as far as. . . nothing on the shelf. Every job in itself was a distinct and different job. It isn't like going in and bidding, saying, "I'll do 100 pages of four-color work for so much." You can't. It just isn't done that way. Each one of them is a set of four-color plates and is done differently on each one of them.

INTERVIEWER: So it was too complex and too costly to move the way lithography was able to move away, or book-binding?

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: I guess that's good for that section. I guess there are a couple of things that I want to go back to, and maybe as we go back we'll come up front again to the contemporary situation. We talked yesterday about a very significant case on the West Coast.

STREETER: Pacific Press?

INTERVIEWER: Pacific Press. And that's mentioned in Munson's book on lithography, and he treats it in a certain way as a writer for the lithography segment. I think he naturally tended to view it from their perspective. Now, you were the president of the Los Angeles Local at that time?

STREETER: Yes, I was the president. I wasn't full time.

INTERVIEWER: But you were very familiar with that situation? Can you go back and recall what some of the issues were and why that was a significant case as it was presented?

STREETER: The old Pacific Press started out as far as the engravers was concerned, which was called The Shopping News, where the engraving departments made all of the engravings for The Shopping News, which was a throw-away paper at the time. And they gradually kept getting bigger and bigger and going into different segments of the printing. It was naturally non-union, and no individual craft was ever able to organize. So we, through the Los Angeles Central Labor Council, set up an organizing committee, which consisted of all of the crafts in there and was under the direction of Bill Bassett, who was the secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles Federation of Labor. We all each worked on our own segment of the industry. Now, they had an engraving department and they had a litho department, but it was interchangeable. When our people didn't have anything to do, and they weren't separated as a complete separate unit by a wall or anything else, when our fellows had nothing to do, they'd be over working in the litho department and vice versa. So we had engravers who always worked in the litho department. The ALA was then trying to organize it because some lithographers were in it and some of them wanted to go ALA, some of them wanted to go Photogengravers. So naturally we filed for an election in the place, and there was ALA, the Pressmen, and the Photoengravers. . .

INTERVIEWER: All for the same. . . ?

STREETER: All for the same unit. All for the same unit.

INTERVIEWER: Within the larger shop, which had other. . .

STREETER: Right. Yes. See, they had the letterpress in there as well as litho, and the Pressmen were trying to get the plate-making end of the litho department as well. But they had never been in working in the department or anything, but they felt, you know, they had. . .

INTERVIEWER: To get on the ballot.

STREETER: . . . get on the ballot and get a chance to get in on it. Well, we had a young attorney at that time that was working for the Los Angeles Central Labor Council. He had previously been an NLRB attorney, and his name was Bob Gilbert. Bob handled the case for us before the Board for the local union. We had our fellows testify on the thing. When the rulings came down, it was handed

down in favor of the Photoengravers. The election was held, and we got the vote on it. I don't know whether it was ever appealed by the Amalgamated or not; I don't think it was. The issue was a clarification of the unit.

INTERVIEWER: Even though there were people doing lithography?

STREETER: Yep.

INTERVIEWER: These were the same people that were doing photoengraving, so what it really meant was that it wasn't a lithography unit any more than it was a photoengraving.

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: So this was significant in that it said that anytime someone was doing both it could be both.

STREETER: Right. And you see, the other thing is that they always claimed it was such a different process, you know, that nobody else could come in and do it. Well, you know, we knew the process from way back.

INTERVIEWER: So this is significant from the Lithographers' standpoint in that it was a very detrimental decision to their position that only lithographers would know how to do lithography. Therefore it should be a separate. . .

STREETER: Yes, and they always had a unit established. I was not that familiar with it at the time. Ben Robinson was handling it and writing the language that was the unit description. That's the one place where the Board never went along with that unit description.

INTERVIEWER: The specific case was decided in your favor, and then you went in and won the election.

STREETER: We went in and we won the election and we coordinated all of the negotiations and we wound up in a strike at Pacific Press. We had then Walt Turner, who was the head of the Specialty Union and was appointed to coordinate and handle the strike. I don't recall how long it went, but it went for quite a long time. We were finally successful in everybody getting a contract. The guy--I can't remember the fellow that owned it--said that he would never operate union, but he finally signed a contract with all--separate contracts--with all the units that were in there. And then he sold it to J. W. Clement. He got out of it altogether. But it was the biggest plant, I would say, at that time in Los Angeles.

INTERVIEWER: Another aspect of Los Angeles that's always been interesting is the big newspaper, The Times.

STREETER: The Los Angeles Times.

INTERVIEWER: And they're not organized.

STREETER: Still not organized.

INTERVIEWER: That's a strange situation. Did you ever have any contact with trying to get in there?

STREETER: Well, we had members of the Photoengravers working in the Times. They were members of ours. They wouldn't hire you if they knew you were members. Then they became a little repentant, you know, and the old man, Otis and then Chandler, changed around a little bit; and they would hire some of the guys, but we were never able to get enough people in there to where we could get an election. We would negotiate a newspaper contract; and if we got a five-dollar increase, they immediately gave them six dollars.

INTERVIEWER: They weren't even just matching you. They were. . .

STREETER: Always doing us just a little bit better, you know what I mean, paying a premium. As the guys say, "Why do we want to pay dues for?" We say, "We'll get you that increase." "Yeah, we know

that, but why should we. . . " Well, the only time they'd get it was when they'd become dissatisfied and they wanted to get the hell out of there. They had to be in the union to work anyplace else. That was the only place they could work. But we were never able to break it. Now, we did have a plant which was partly owned by the Los Angeles Times, and we had no problem negotiating contracts. I negotiated contracts with them all the time. That was California Rotogravure. We negotiated good contracts. They had a manager of the plant and he ran the plant for them and all of our people were union in the place and we never had any problems with them.

INTERVIEWER: I guess this naturally flows into another question. Oftentimes you hear the country is divided into two parts, and it's not the Mississippi. Maybe three parts--there's New York, there's everything else, and then there's west of the Rockies. You did form at one time a West Coast group. . .

STREETER: It's still in existence.

INTERVIEWER: What peculiarities exist for the West Coast that marks it as different from--if there is such a thing as the rest of the country?

STREETER: I don't think there's that much peculiarities. The big problem on the West Coast is being able to get into any other market because it stopped at the Rocky Mountains. You didn't go into Chicago or you didn't go into New York and try to get work out of them--at least, not in those days. You did later when the plane became promient, and you were able to ship stuff back and forth; but they had a very small market that they were tied down to, and there were no big printers that done any national printing or anything like that on the Coast. That was the peculiarity of it. When things started to loosen up in the latter years, you found people coming in from Kentucky, Chicago, New York, coming into Los Angeles to take work out of Los Angeles. While their rates were higher, I don't know how the hell they were able to do it because we weren't. . . New York always had the highest scale, and Chicago probably about second. I guess we were about third or fourth on the Coast. In fact some areas on the Coast, Seattle, at one time had the highest rate of any of them. But they were just stuck out there.

The other problem of it was, when a guy got out of work, he was stuck. He didn't have anyplace else to go but on the Coast or back to Chicago or New York or someplace else.

INTERVIEWER: Like you did?

STREETER: Right. There was no place in between to work. Denver had a couple of shops that didn't amount to much. But there was no other place. So either you didn't work at your trade, if you stayed in California, you just didn't work at your trade; you worked at some other until something opened up. So we felt that we didn't have the opportunities that they had in the Midwest and the eastern part of the country.

INTERVIEWER: California and the West Coast are often seen as a good, strong union. . .

STREETER: Well, it never was. Los Angeles was always known as the non-union city of the country. If you ever told anybody that you belonged to the union, you'd never get a job anyplace. That really didn't change much until around about 1940. Between '40 and '47 was when we really started organizing out there then. But, Christ, prior to that time, you didn't dare say you belonged to a union.

INTERVIEWER: Is that somehow the type of person who picked himself up and got out to California--the individualist?

STREETER: Yeah. You see, the other thing is they had the blacklist going through the Chamber of Commerce. You couldn't get anyplace. You couldn't go into a department store; you couldn't go into any type of a large store and get any type of a job because you were blacklisted if you belonged to the union.

(End of Tape II, side I)

INTERVIEWER: (mid-sentence). . . come back east again, now. They've got you on this big roller coaster going around the country. Another question that I'd like to ask you to reflect on a bit is: Was there a geographic pattern of conflict similar to the kinds of patterns that I think the ALA always had.

STREETER: No, we never had that because they were broken up into regions. As I understand, the vice

president was the head of that region and the representatives in that area were under his supervision and he really built up a power base within that area. We never had it in the Photoengravers; and, of course, by the time we worked out the merger with the Amalgamated they had changed it, had done away with it.

The only problem that we used to have at convention was, you know, New York, New York, New York. It finally got so that they hated like hell for these guys to even bring a proposition in from New York. And they did, they finally quit bringing propositions in to the organization unless maybe it was something like, well, the International officers should have an increase. New York local would propose it. But if they proposed anything, right away the rest of the country was against it because they'd say, "Ah, you guys, for Christ's sake, you don't know what's going on. You gotta do it the way New York does it." Well, you know, you don't have to do it. That was the only thing we had as far as the sections of the country was concerned.

INTERVIEWER: You had another kind of split, and that is between segments of the craft. You have the newspaper, commercial shops and gravure becomes very important.

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Now, was this a source of conflict or different needs at different times?

STREETER: No, not really. Not really. Because you see, you could take any guy from commercial and could work in a newspaper, and most of the guys on a newspaper could work in a commercial unless they were doing color work. They could always work in black and white. But it wasn't that conflict. Rotogravure was altogether different and we took our people and in some places we set up schools. I know in 1936 we had a school that they were running in Chicago for teaching the commercial guys rotogravure. And the same way in New York. So we took our people that were unemployed or disenchanted with the commercial end of it and retrained them and were able to get them into rotogravure industry. The other thing is that we had pretty good cooperation from the employers for a long period of time. But they didn't get the journeyman's scale. They got less than the journeyman's scale when they started until they got retrained. And we finally were able to negotiate that out of the contract. If they took anybody from the commercial field in or the newspaper field, they had to train them at journeyman's rates because they had had the experience in the industry and everything

else. They didn't demand the premium that they were getting in the gravure shops, but we trained an awful lot of our people into gravure. I would say that 70% of them in gravure today came out of the commercial field.

INTERVIEWER: What you're saying is that gravure people didn't meet at a convention any, say, granted there was separate times when you met, but there was never a political. . .

STREETER: No, no, no. . .

INTERVIEWER: . . . sub-group formed around different segments of the craft?

STREETER: No, no. We never had that, no. We had a gravure group that had a conference of their own, and I could see the reason for their having a conference because it was a different type of industry. And they were always trying to see if we couldn't negotiate a national contract. Well, you know, it's pretty hard to negotiate a national contract with all different companies. I would say the majority of the contracts we have now, as far as the standard part of the language is concerned, is national. The differences are fringe benefits, wages, and so forth.

Rotogravure is still a sleeping giant. If they can develop some way, which they're working on now, of not having to coat that cylinder, put that copper on there, and be able to operate with a sleeve instead of that big heavy cylinder, they'll really go to town because they'll be able to perform short runs and everything else. Rotogravure is more applicable to long runs on the press. But it's still going to be a hell of an industry.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Let's get back to picking up your individual role in this. Now, we described a little bit the merger in 1962-'63, and you were active in that. What other kinds of things were you doing then? What did the merger mean to you in terms of your vice presidency?

STREETER: As far as the terms of the vice presidency, I worked along with the development of all of the constitution and by-laws, the merger agreement, and everything else that came along. And, as you know, we held a special convention in Minneapolis in 1964 when both organizations were there. We had agreed that there was

only going to be so many from the Photoengravers which meant that there was going to be the Executive Vice President, the Treasurer, and two Photoengraver vice presidents. Well, naturally there was five Photoengraver vice presidents. At that time I was second vice president; I should have been first, but I didn't move up because Bill Hall at that time wanted to appoint Henry Dillon as first vice president. He'd been an organizer in Chicago and vice president there. So I said, "Okay with me. Put Henry on." So then, when it came time for the merger, we felt that they should elect according to the positions that were available--one, two, three, four, five. Instead of that some politics went on behind the scenes, and the damn thing got thrown into a horse race. So Henry Dillon and Walter Risdon were elected as the two vice presidents; Bill was the executive vice president, and Ben was the treasurer. So I was out altogether.

I could see a little bit of it because of the fact that they were International representatives working for the International at the time and vice presidents although, even if they weren't elected as vice presidents, they would have still stayed on as representatives. So I could see a little bit of that. I was, naturally, very disappointed.

I went back to my nest in California. Then I had a very good friend of mine, who I'd worked with for years, come out of the Los Angeles Local and then was president of the San Francisco Local of the Photoengravers, and then we got him appointed as International representative. That was Roy Ellison. Roy was going to retire in January of '65, so Bill, or rather Ken Brown, appointed me, in cooperation with Bill, appointed me as an International representative, which was fine with me because I would be working mainly on the West Coast.

About at that time I came back. They were having a staff meeting in New York City. All the time I was connected with the International Union, I worked close with the secretary-treasurer's office. Even during the convention I'd be the assistant to the secretary-treasurer. We knew more of what was going on in the International Office than the rest of the fellows. So when I went back to that meeting, I think it was around about the 7th of December in 1964; and I was going on the staff as of the first of the year. I met with the group back there, and I got back to L. A., I think it was Monday or Tuesday morning, and I got a call from Bill Hall, and he said that Ben [Schaller] had had a heart attack. I said, "Geez, I hope he's all right." And he said, "No, he passed away." I said, "Geez, that's too bad. What's going to happen now?" He said, "Well, I've recommended you for the job, with the understanding that you'll go to St. Louis, close out that office, and move to New York." I said, "You know that's a hell of a decision to have to make right now. Give me a couple of days, and I'll let you know." He says, "Like hell a couple of days. I already told Brown you're taking it." So that's how I got into being treasurer of the International.

So I went to St. Louis and attended Ben's funeral. Then I stayed in St. Louis and then traveled back and forth until we closed the office out in March of '65. Then I ran for election in the interim period. I was elected and took office as treasurer on April 19, 1965.

INTERVIEWER: Now what did you find out there in St. Louis? Ben had been there, you said, forty years.

STREETER: No, Ben had only been in since 1959.

INTERVIEWER: Oh. But the office had been there for forty years.

STREETER: Yeah. Henry Schmal had been. . . I'll say he had a top office. His records were. . . all types of records. You had everything filed by name and cross-filed by dues number and everything else. It was quite an office. We had everything on our records, and there was never. . . anything that came into that office, as far as mail was concerned, that wasn't answered the same day. . . . Ben would stop, and Henry used to do the same thing, they would stop at the post office on the way down in the morning and pick up the mail; and by noon everything that came in had to be answered and out. When the afternoon mail came in, it had to be answered and out before the end of the day.

INTERVIEWER: It was all manually. . . but it worked. . .

STREETER: It was all manually, bookkeeping work, and they were on top of it, and they done a damn good job of it.

(some of the above is jumbled because both men are talking at the same time.)

To me it was the most efficient office I'd ever seen. Of course, we moved up into New York, and none of our people stayed with us coming out of St. Louis. We had a couple of the girls who came up and worked with us for a few months in order to show the people in New York our process as far as the Photoengravers were concerned. I'll tell you the records that the ALA kept were nowhere near the type of records that we kept.

That was the other thing as far as the Photo-engravers was concerned. Everything that was due was paid on time,

and that's the way they were brought up. When we got merged together, it was a little bit different. But we gradually cleared it up, and I think now we have an efficient operation by putting in the computer, you know, putting everything on. When you're processing that many more people, you can't really do it by hand.

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting because sometimes you hear the idea that the ALA were a group of managers. They came from a strong centralized International; they had strong individuals because their constitution allowed for the emergence of strong, even though in some cases it was regionally distributed. I guess often you also heard the story that they had very sophisticated management techniques, recording-keeping and stuff. You're saying that, you know, you felt the Photoengravers had a system that. . .

STREETER: I can take you out there and show you the original applications on file for every guy that came into the International Union since it was formed. They had a Cardex in the ALA. It may have the guy's name on it; it didn't have his birth date on it; it may have his beneficiary on it and it may not. So you had all of these factors. Their system of billing was altogether different than ours. We required the locals to fill out a form, but we billed them; and when they sent it back in, we checked it against the last month's data. We had all the applications that went in, so we knew exactly what was to come. But with the ALA their record-keeping wasn't. . . while it was good record-keeping. . . I think one of the problems that they had was that they were growing so fast. You know, first it was just Donald [Stone] and one girl; then it was two girls and three girls. It just kept mushrooming, and I don't think they really had time to oversee it and set up the kind of system that they really needed. We worked with that for a long period of time. Then we decided if we were going to have a correct and a better system, we were going to have to go to computers. So we done a feasibility study on a computer, we put it in, we hired somebody first who was a computer. . . in fact, the same fellow, Joe Camacho, who's running the department now. We hired him ahead of time and worked in getting everything written out and all the forms. . .

INTERVIEWER: Where did this happen? When you were still in New York?

STREETER: We were still in New York. That was in 1969, and then we went on computer in 1970. Then we were really able to set up the type of system that we needed. We really got a rude awakening

because we started billing by name, where before we billed by numbers. Five hundred, brought in 50, lost 2, you know, billed by number. When we first started billing by computer, by name and dues book number, heck, we found all kinds of guys that had died twenty years before, people they had paid per capita tax on that they shouldn't be paying on, people that they should have been paying on that they weren't. Their rosters weren't the same as ours. We had an awful uproar from a lot of the local unions, you know, about so much record keeping. But one thing that it did do, it did clarify. . .

INTERVIEWER: What was out there.

STREETER: . . . what was out there. If a guy was holding back. . .

INTERVIEWER: You could control that. And also. . .

STREETER: We could control that. You know, some of them would take a guy in and put him on probation for a year and collect dues from him but never enter his membership. Well, that stopped that kind of stuff because the certificates were issued as of the date he came in. So we worked out a pretty damn good system. We put our own mailing on it and everything else, and we've been able to have an accurate, up-to-date listing of all of our members.

We've done the same thing with the Bookbinders. They didn't have that type of record keeping. They had the names and everything, but they never had one beneficiary on.

INTERVIEWER: So by the time the Bookbinders come in, you had a good system that could just be expanded and you could offer them the advantages of what you two learned with your merger.

STREETER: Right. Right.

INTERVIEWER: So you moved to St. Louis for a bit and then to New York?

STREETER: I was in St. Louis for about six months, and then I went up to New York and was there from '65 to July of '71, then went down to Washington.

INTERVIEWER: Let me go back to the question of merger because I want to ask you what the things were like in New York during this time. Because really much of what was probably going on in New York grew out of the original problem that the ALA had with merger. You were pretty secure with your membership? You felt that your membership was going to go ahead and vote for this? Or were you leary at the time?

STREETER: We were pretty sure that they were going to vote for it. We weren't sure they were going to vote for it in an overwhelming majority, you know what I mean, but we were able to convince our people by our conferences and different things around the country that we either had to join another organization or form another organization or we were going to die on the vine. And they accepted it; and I think, well, we've got some dissatisfied people, but you always have. I'd say 95 percent of them are tickled to death.

INTERVIEWER: Well, you talk to former Lithographers, and they say that they were legitimately shocked about what went on in terms of New York dropping out of the whole organization because they couldn't block the merger.

STREETER: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Were you shocked, too? Or did you. . .

STREETER: Well, no, I think at the time we sat in, you know what I mean, I had only met Swayduck twice. That was when we sat in on the combined Council meetings with them, and he didn't impress me that much.

INTERVIEWER: You had heard about him?

STREETER: Heard some things about him, but he didn't impress me that much. He was saying that, if he merged with the Photoengravers Union, it was going to affect their pension status, which was a bunch of boloney. Because it was an independent pension deal that they had. There was nothing more untruthful that I can see than that. But that's what I think he convinced his membership on

as far as not going along with merger--that their pension was going to be jeopardized if they merged with the Photoengravers. It never came about. It wasn't anything new.

Not knowing the man that well, I just think that he found out that with merger coming along he was not going to be able to be the kingpin that he had previously been. And I'll never forget the day that we sat up at Montreal and we had everything worked out and Swayduck said, "Well, I'll agree to the merger; I think it's a good document. There's only one thing more that we need." And we said, "What's that?" He says, "An escape clause in case the merger doesn't work out." (Laughter) Bill Hall pulled up so fast. He said, "If you think we came here to work out a goddamn merger and then leave a loophole in it, you're crazy! You can forget about it." So then they had to meet together. We never would do a thing like that. We were going into a merger, and we were going into it with the idea that it was going to work. And work or not, we were going to be stuck with it.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. I don't know very many marriage ceremonies that talk in terms of an escape clause. So what happens? They meet separately? Did you have people that were starting to come to you and saying. "Don't worry about it. Don't get uneasy," or. . .

STREETER: Well, we didn't. . .

INTERVIEWER: Did you think it was off?

STREETER: No, we didn't think it was off. We thought there would be something worked out, but that's one point where we were not going to give in as far as Photoengravers were concerned. And I don't think that any of the people on the ALA Council were really thinking of anything except maybe Swayduck and one or two others, persons that, you know, he probably talked to. But no, we felt that, if we were qoing into something, we were going into it in a sincere manner; and we expected the other people to do the same thing. Okay, if they didn't want to come on that basis, they weren't going to come. So it wound up.

INTERVIEWER: So you moved to New York to the International following the merger?

STREETER: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And what you inherit is a local that is a powerful local--6,000 members or more--that's not in the association of the new union. Now, what goes on during this period in New York? Obviously there's a lot of hard feelings. There's financial problems; there's the question of funds. . .

STREETER: Well, there wasn't too much as far as the question of funds. Naturally Local One was trying, prior to merger, to tie up the funds of the ALA. They weren't successful in doing so and filed law suits all over the place. But as far as running the merged organization, Christ, I never even knew Swayduck was in New York as far being in the office, except occasionally you'd have a guy drop in that was from the local. But otherwise, we didn't miss him a damn bit. It didn't affect us financially. We were able to work out per capita structure that we had based on many people, and we were able to operate on that and worked our budgets out accordingly. Everything that I can gather from the meetings they used to have in the old ALA, the Council meetings that we had, it was simply a different organization altogether.

INTERVIEWER: I really think that that runs right down to every local level. I mean, at least the local I'm familiar with, the Photoengravers were really a family, you know. Brotherhood for sure, but it was even beyond that. You talked earlier about members living in your home and travelling together and that it pervaded from top to bottom in your organization. I think that difference is a significant one now. I guess we're coming close to [the end] of the interview. Are there some other things that you would want to comment on before I ask you to look back over your whole career? You're two years now away from thinking about changing. Is it two years or four years?

STREETER: How do you mean that?

INTERVIEWER: Are you thinking of retiring in five years or. . . ?

STREETER: I'm not eligible to run once I reach sixty-five years of age. So I'll be standing for election in the next convention next year, and that will be my last one. So I'll retire about 1979 or '80.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, so that's about five more years now. Well, do you want me to ask a question about the long run?

STREETER: Yes, go ahead.

INTERVIEWER: You've been in this since, when did you start? How old were you?

STREETER: I started in the business when I was sixteen years old.

INTERVIEWER: Sixteen years old, and you're going to finish at sixty-five. You look back over the whole thing, you know, as a. . . it obviously has been a good career, but what about. . . I guess, there's been so much heartache, the industry has changed, and stuff like that. When you get involved with union management as you have been in an industry where the conditions are rough, even though it's a craft orientation, what do you feel about it?

STREETER: Well, I think it's been a great experience. I don't think I'd change it if I had it to do over again. I'd be a hell of a lot wiser, but I wouldn't change it. I enjoyed what I was doing.

INTERVIEWER: You look at fifty years in the labor movement, really, because you were right away an apprentice. As you look back over fifty years, do you think you would have, in your youth, wanted to see the labor movement about the shape it's in now?

STREETER: Well, I was hopeful it would be in a better shape than what it is now, as far as that's concerned, nationally, you know. Possibly it could have been except for the stringent laws that have been passed in some cases, you know. Not that I don't believe we shouldn't have some type of regulations that we have to live by, you know, but we had the right-to-work law and stuff like that, for instance. Then the Taft-Hartley law was passed, and we finally went along with it as far as the labor movement was concerned. If there had never been the right-to-work states, it would have been a hell of a lot different. We'd have been a lot stronger

organized around the country, and we would have curtailed these run-away plants that we have all over the place, not only in our industry, but in other industry as well. As far as I'm concerned, I've had my heartaches in it, but I think the accomplishments that you make benefit, even though they might be small, but in some cases outweigh the heartaches. You felt you'd been able to do something for your fellow-man. And I think it's. . . well, one of these days it may be a little bit different, but it's hard to tell. I can't see it changing a hell of a lot in the next fifty years unless big brother comes around or something like that. But it's been a tough way of raising a family and everything. You see, you weren't home every night; you were out ringing doorbells and negotiating contracts, and you were doing this most of the time while you were working at the bench. So I think I've had my reward.

INTERVIEWER: It really has to be a love, is what you're saying, in order. . .

STREETER: Yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: . . . for it to have worked at all.

STREETER: If you're going in to it for just to be a guy that's drawing a good salary, forget about it because you're not going to do the job for the people that you represent. You really got to love the labor movement to be successful in it.

INTERVIEWER: What about the future now for this union? The labor movement itself, you say, is essentially going to look about the same as. . .

STREETER: I mean as far as the basic parts of the labor industry and what they represent. I think you're going to see a hell of a change.

INTERVIEWER: What things would you like if you could really influence direction. . . ?

STREETER: To really influence direction, I would like to see, just talking about the printing trades, that they all be in one union and represent the people the way they're supposed to represent

them. I don't say that some of them don't try to do a good job. I think some of them are interested more in members than they are in the people's welfare. I think if we could get the organization together, you know, we could really do a terrific job for the people we represent, and I think we'd do a good job for the competitive end of it for the employers. You know, you can't have your cake and eat it, too; you gotta work together.

INTERVIEWER: Well, maybe this is a bad last question, but you've seen the industry really change, going from a strictly skilled, highly intensified craft participation, to one where the graphic arts wants to go door to door because it wants to survive and it feels that's the only way you can get any real control over negotiation. You've had to change your whole orientation towards. . . you were a craft person and. . .

STREETER: Right.

(END OF TAPE II, SIDE 2)

STREETER: . . . . (mid-sentence) as far as jurisdiction is concerned in an industrial-type union is that the lines of jurisdiction have become blurred. There's no clear-cut jurisdictional lines anymore as far as printing crafts are concerned. The other thing is that the employer doesn't want to be negotiating with ten or twelve unions, which represent all different segments of the process. He's got to have some type of industrial peace that he can base production on and be able to give firm commitments to his customers.

INTERVIEWER: I guess that's an interesting aspect of your unions, the printing industry, is that you've always had a kind of real awareness of employer problems.

STREETER: Yeah, you have to. You just can't go in and take the club out of the closet all the time and beat someone over the head. You've got to base your demands on production and other things, and I think we've been able to convince our employers that we're getting the share of the profits that we should be entitled to.

INTERVIEWER: So today, now, just to kind of draw this to a close, you're down in Washington. You're actually running the books for the organization; you're financial secretary.

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: And what kind of job is that? Is it a thankless job? Is it a kind of a thankless way to finish your career? You know you're doing a good job, but for you to do a good job, it means you've got to be, you know, on the outs with almost everybody else.

STREETER: Well, I would say, you know, you get some nasty letters over it, and you get some of your representatives mad at you occasionally, but we have a budget that we operate under. We draw up that budget every year, and we have a budget of a little over $4,000,000 in our general fund, and you've got to watch every penny that comes in and the way it goes out.

It's not, when your price goes up, you go to your members and just raise the price. You've got to go to your members to get more money, and a lot of them don't want to give it, you know. So we operate pretty close under our budget. I think. . .

INTERVIEWER: Do you do the budgeting?

STREETER: I do it along with Dick Clarke, our Canadian vice president, who is the chairman of the Finance Committee of the Council. So we work up the budget every year. Then it's approved by the Finance Committee of the Council and then by the Board. Naturally, if the thing gets off, we get hell if it's off, you know what I mean. But I think we've been pretty fortunate. Since the merger in 1964, we've drawn up the budget, and I think we've only had two budgets out of the nine years that we ran in the red. The rest of them have been in the black. While they haven't been greatly in the black, we've been able to keep them in the black.

INTERVIEWER: The PIA [Printing Industries of America]and particularly the MPA makes great hay over any time they can catch you running a bit short. You know, probably those two years out of those nine. . .

STREETER: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: . . . they're very quick to send out flyers and everything like that. It's really in some

cases a strong watchdog. You've been budgeting now and have some budgeting experience with that. Is it something easy you can do, to manage a union's finances. . . (muffled, can't get last words)

STREETER: It's just like running a business. You have re-incurring costs, you know. You always look at the month that expenditures went on, and you figure, well, next month we'll cut out that. That's a non-recurring cost, but, of course, it keeps occurring, you know. We're just like anybody else. We pay our employees good wages, they're covered by good health and welfare, they're covered by pension and everything else.

INTERVIEWER: Now, that's another interesting aspect of your job now. You've come really full circle. You're now. . .

STREETER: I'm now on management side.

INTERVIEWER: . . . management negotiating with a. . .

STREETER: With another union.

INTERVIEWER: . . . another union. Do you want to talk a little bit about that? How comfortable is that for you?

STREETER: It's really, you know, you go in and you hate like hell to do it; but you have to put your different hat on as being part of management, not because you wouldn't like to give them everything they want, but because of the fact that you can't afford to do it.

INTERVIEWER: Have you picked up techniques over the years in negotiations. Do you know how to. . . .

STREETER: Oh, yeah. We can be pretty blunt with them sometimes. We don't kid around with them. I'll tell you in an office like this nothing is secret. Christ, the first penny that's

spent everybody knows about it, you know. So you don't keep anything secret as far as what your income is and what your outgo is. There's many times that you just can't afford to come up with the type of increases that the people would like to have. But I feel that in the long run, you have all kinds of people who want to work for unions because they do have good conditions and good wages. We believe in that. We're not hard on them. If they do a job, that's all we're asking. They do the job to the best of their ability. If they don't, we'll get somebody else to do it. It's hard to sit on that other side of the table.

INTERVIEWER: This is a more difficult question, but were there real difficulties with the Bookbinders' financial situation when they came in? Did you have to do a lot of work in finding out just what was there?

STREETER: Well, the unfortunate part of it is that I didn't sit in on negotiations with the Bookbinders or sit in on the drawing up of the budget until the last meeting that they had. Dick Clarke sat in on it and Don Stone, who at that time was Recording and Financial Secretary, so Don sat in on the negotiations with the Bookbinders. The problem of it was that, by the time we got around to where the budget was worked out and we got around to the time of the merger, the change in the membership made a hell of a difference. As far as the Bookbinders were concerned, I don't think they really knew just what the hell they did have--how much they had in the general fund, how much was here and how much there. By the time the Bookbinders came in we allocated so much money towards the convention because we were going to have a convention within one year after merger. But by the time they came into the operation, as far as the general fund was concerned, there was no money there. And, you know, it's a little bit different on a bigger organization. But it's like, when you're with two smaller organizations, they say, "Well, let's throw all the money in the cigar box and we'll work out of there." It's really what it comes down to. You come down to some of those situations where you're going to have to have equity on both sides for the number of members that you have. Hell, you'd never have a merger because one side is not going to pay more money into an organization when the other side isn't. We did it in the Photoengravers, but only in the defense fund because we wanted to have everybody drawing the same thing. The Photoengravers were willing to pay more money into their defense fund until they came out on the per capita basis with the Lithographers.

But as far as the general fund was concerned, we were okay in the merger with the Lithographers, but it was different in the Bookbinders. I think as far as the merger with the

Bookbinders is concerned it's the best damn thing that could have happened to the Bookbinders because I firmly believe if it hadn't been for the merger within this period of time they would have been in an awful financial condition. Because they weren't getting the amount of money in that they needed as far as dues. They did get some increase now, but I think we've been able to show the Bookbinders that, with the contracts we've been negotiating for them, they can afford to pay the increase that came about.

INTERVIEWER: Well, you have spent fifty years in this industry. If you want to measure it in even broader terms, your dad, you were telling me, died just a couple of years ago . . . 92 years old, and he preceded you in this craft. And you have a son, Dan, III?

STREETER: Well, we're all Dans, but there's not I, II, and III. In fact, there's four of them. I've got a grandson.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Well, your son Dan is in the craft.

STREETER: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: So, you're going to be stretched out over much longer than fifty years in the craft. I guess that's probably a fitting way to just recognize those changes. It's too bad your dad couldn't also sit in on this interview with us and tell us some of his stories. . .

STREETER: Yes, that's true.

INTERVIEWER: And I guess you've passed some of them on to your son.

STREETER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: I'm not sure whether you just don't want to say something to conclude your interview or. . . .

STREETER: The only thing I was hopeful of was that maybe my son would follow in my footsteps as far as the labor end of it, but he's on the other side of the fence. He's a night foreman in a gravure plant in California. He's a good craftsman; he does a good job for the company. I guess we all live our lives and that's what he wants and that's fine.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, I guess there's no way you can insure that. I have two small children, and I'd like to really pass some of my feelings on to them; but I wouldn't know how to go about doing it. I think I'm just going to have to learn as you have that everybody's just going to follow their own stars.

STREETER: Well, I had just the opposite with my daughter. She became an airline stewardess, and the first thing I knew she was the secretary-treasurer of the local and just missed being on the national negotiating committee for the airline stewardesses by one vote. She's out of the airline business now, but she was really coming along on that end of it. So you never know how it's going to turn out.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Well, thank you.

STREETER: Thank you.

DANIEL STREETER

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