INTERVIEW WITH ROY TURNER

January 24, 1974

Interviewer - Alice Hoffman

Interviewer II - Greg Geibel

INTRODUCTION

Roy Turner was born in Toronto, Canada, in 1917 and began his career in lithography during the depression years. The Second World War and active service in the Air Force interrupted his career temporarily.

Turner discusses in detail the six-month strike and lockouts in 1949, which involved five cities in Eastern Canada and centered around the issues of welfare and pension benefits. In 1956 Turner was elected full-time vice-president of his Toronto local with responsibilities mostly in the area of organizing. He describes the relationships and jurisdictional agreements between the Amalgamated Lithographers and the other graphic arts locals in Toronto at that time--the International Typographical Union and the I.P.P. & A.U. in particular--and the discussions of merger that took place. Turner also talks about relations with the Central Labor Body and with the National Federation in Toronto. He analyses the reasons why Toronto became an important printing center after the war and reminisces about Ken Brown who was president of the Toronto local of the A.L.A.

Turner was elected president of the Toronto local in 1959 when Ken Borwn became International president. Then in 1961 Turner went on the International Council and discusses the election that led to this position, the whole Photoengraver-Lithographer merger situation as seen from the perspective of a Council member, the prospects for merger with the Printing Pressmen, and the current tendency on the part of some Canadian unions to disaffiliate from their United States international ties.

Turner: Roy Turner, born May 12, 1917 in the city of Toronto.

Interviewer: All right. And today is January . . .

Turner: 24th.

Interviewer: 24, 1974. All right, just as a little bit of background, Roy, why don't you tell us something about your schooling and your family background and how you got into the labor movement in the first place.

Turner: Well, I was going through high school. My first objective was to be a teacher when I was going to high school, and this would be in the depression years of the '30's. Things were very difficult in Toronto in those years--high unemployment and. . . I guess my father happened to be in that area where he was out of work. My brother-in-law, who was a lithographer by trade, spoke to me about whether I wanted to get into the trade or not because it didn't look too bright to go on to. . . well, even to finish high school. ... or go on to university at that time. So what I did, I started in the trade and continued with my high school education at night school and did that, continued to go to high school, and received most of my upper school papers by writing them at the end of the term. I guess that went right up until I went into the Air Force in 1942.

Then the question came up again whether to go back to school or go back to the trade. And I was very fortunate in that, with the papers I received at high school and night school, I was able to go into the Air Force and be part of Air Crew. Of course that was a real assist to my education because I went in as a pilot or navigator and actually graduated as a navigator taking all that course.

Then, after I finished a tour of operations in England, I was interviewed by the Air Commodore. Because of my marks, etc., in the training program, I was asked if I would be an instructor. To be an instructor it was necessary to go to the Air Force College in England, which I did. Of course this was a terrific help again along educational lines. Then after graduation I became an instructor and I was on that job for a while, instructing the students on the last stage before they went on to operations. So it was a very interesting part of it.

Then after I was on that for a while, I was appointed to another position where I went to the squadrons to see that the students' training was right up to scratch. I became a liaison officer as well as an instructor. Then when the war in Europe was over, we still had our school going, but of course as far as navigation it all had to be changed because of the war going on in the Far East. The stars and everything you used for navigation, you had to change it over there. So we were in the process of doing that when they transferred us. . . they were

going to transfer us out to the west coast of Canada. When we were sailing back on the Atlantic, V.J. day was declared so that the war was over. By the time I got back home there was a letter from the president of the company that I had worked for before signing up, telling me that on the day that I was discharged my job was waiting there. So with that. . . oh, and I should also add that before going overseas in the early part, I was married so that it was a matter of picking up the strings again. So I went back to the company that I worked with before and. . .

Interviewer: What was that company, by the way?

Turner: Litho-Print Limited in Toronto.

Interviewer: Was it a very big company?

Turner: It was a fair size at that time, yes. It was what they called a combination shop with the preparatory department, the pressroom, and then they also had the other branches of the trade in there--the printing pressmen, the typographical, and the bookbinders.

Interviewer: Uh-hm.

Turner: So then I worked there until the strike and lockout in '49. I think it was either four or five companies were picked for the strike to start. Then the Employers Association in Eastern Canada locked out the rest of the plants. So we were locked out, and the strike continued for approximately six months.

Interviewer: Now, were you a member of the union at this time?

Turner: Oh, yes. I was a member of the union before I went overseas. I'd been initiated in the early '4o's and was a member of the union. At that time we retained our membership when we were in the service; so when I came back, there wasn't any problem of reporting for work, and the membership. . . of course we didn't pay dues or anything like that when we were in the service; but as soon as we started to work again, we did; and all benefits were picked up again.

Interviewer II: How long an apprenticeship period did you serve?

Turner: It's a four-year apprenticeship on the press, but I guess I should tell you an interesting thing about that. The fact that when I went back, I was an officer, a few ribbons and that sort of thing; and I had really not taken over a press before I left. I was a feeder by trade. So when I came back, they put me on a press; and I literally didn't serve any apprenticeship as far as the money was concerned. They gave me the journeyman's rate right off the time. But as far as the learning and all, I had to do that, but the fellows that were there were very, very helpful with me. I was very fortunate.

Interviewer: Was the fact that you were a returning veteran, was that part of the reason they were very helpful, do you think? Or they would have been helpful anyway?

Turner: I think a little bit of both. Because the fact that I had worked there quite a long time as a feeder before and knew them all well and had a good relationship with them and had been one of the early ones back. . ... and that was just really coincidence because we weren't really coming back to be discharged or anything. We were coming back to set up our navigational school in Western Canada, but it so happened that the war ended on our way back. Well, then we just stopped in Toronto and stayed there.

Interviewer: So you had the benefit of all the parades and the welcome home and so on. . . (laughter)

Turner: Yeah.

Interviewer: Well, I guess we better describe this strike in 1949, (because it was a pretty significant one) in some more detail. Your own situation was that the company that you worked for was locked out?

Turner: Correct.

Interviewer: What kind of effect did this have on the membership?

Turner: Well, it had two effects as I see it. One effect, with the. . . and I'm speaking primarily of the Toronto situation because I was more familiar with it at the time. . . we had a number of older members that were sort of "comme ci, comme ça" about the strike issues and figured that the firms had been so good to them over the years that they just couldn't bring themselves to going on strike against. . . . . because in a number of cases it was the only firm they worked for. So that was the one effect that it had that was a benefit to us because it made up the minds of all the older group that "Here, we've worked for this firm all our lives and all he thinks about us is a number on the clock and he's locking us out."

And then of course, the other effect it had with the other part of the membership was that it solidified them. We couldn't have done it at all--a lot of the younger ones who might not have been too enthused about the issues at that time.

Interviewerer: Now, one of the issues was an adequate pension program, was it not?

Turner: Yes, pensions and welfare were really the issues.

Interviewer: So it surprises me a little bit that the older workers

weren't more. . . I mean, that is often an issue which historically has separated older workers from younger workers. But what I'm hearing you saying is that even some of the older workers weren't too excited about that as an issue in terms of their loyalty to the company.

Turner: Yes, well, this is. . . yes, there are really two issues there. Of course, pension is a different thing now. But at that time we would be one of the few unions that would even be talking about pension in 1949. The other part is something we were concerned about with the older members; that is, would they really come out, would they really support a strike of that nature?

Interviewer: How did pensions get to be an issue if it was not terribly common for it to be a negotiable issue? Did it have something to do with your being in the CIO?

Turner: No. My recollections of that. . . the pension wasn't really the issue in '49 because our pension didn't start until 1953. The real issue, as I recall it, was with the welfare because we didn't have anything at all in the contract as far as welfare was concerned. And, of course, at that time some families were almost financially destroyed if they had a serious sickness or operation, accident or whatever in the family. So this is the reason that the emphasis was put on the welfare at that time.

Interviewer: Uh-hm.

Turner: And I would say that as far as the pension, it was a secondary issue at that time because it didn't really come in until 1953.

Interviewer: I see. What kinds of welfare demands did you make?

Turner: Well, one of the things that we wanted at that time was some form of weekly indemnity. If a member was off sick, naturally his income from the company was stopped so abruptly that there wasn't a cent coming; and we didn't have any form of welfare in the province at that time, so he needed something to keep the bread on the table when they were off sick.

Interviewer: What kind of support did you get from the other locals? This was a long strike--six months--if I'm correct.

Turner: Oh, we had fantastic support from the locals in the States. I can well remember checks coming in from the big locals like New York, then Local One; it was a strong supporter. Checks of $10,000 and $15,000 at a crack. Chicago was another big supporter. . . Philadelphia. Then, of course, the border cities that knew us a little better, like Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse, etc. But I do still remember the big checks coming in from the

large locals. And of course, it didn't just come to Toronto because we had the five cities that were out with us at the time so it had to be distributed amongst the others. We were in a fortunate position in that we had a fair bit of money in our treasury, but it soon disappeared with the length of the strike. So that initially the money had to be distributed to some of the other locals.

Interviewer: Was this master contract with five cities, was that in existence prior to the 1949 strike?

Turner: Yes.

Interviewer: When did that come into being and how did it come into being?

Turner: Well, I guess it would be A. W. Brown that would be the first Canadian vice-president to be involved in that collective agreement for Eastern Canada. The Canadian locals in Eastern Canada always had a fairly close relationship; and, as I understand it, the first contracts were really what you would call it in this day and age memorandums. They weren't put up in a contract the way we understand a contract today. But I couldn't give you the exact date when they started, but we do have contracts in booklet form before '49.

Interviewer II: The memorandum form, how. . . do you recall at all how they evolved? How you got a memorandum issued by the employers?

Turner: It's written out in longhand and signed. And of course, in those early days the main thing would be the rate of pay, the hours, and that's about it. They were so simple compared to the complex articles that you have in a contract today that cover a hundred-and-one things.

Interviewer: Right. As a matter of fact, I've heard some people--and this is kind of an aside and you might want to say something about it--but I've heard a lot of rank and filers talk about the fact that it's not possible for them to understand the contract. They express a good bit of irritation and frustration. Do you have that problem? Or do the rank-and-file people just say, "Well, we have to hire experts, and we trust our leadership."?

Turner: Well, we haven't really had that problem like some of the other unions. I know something about the problem because we negotiate with American Can and Continental Can, who have the Steelworkers contract, and that's this thick /obviously indicating with his fingers/, as you likely know, whereas ours is only a few pages. We've tried to keep it to a minimum. And then we have a very active shop delegates'--or shop stewards'--organization in Toronto

and have had for quite some time so that we're able to keep them well-informed. Then if an individual member in a shop or department has questions, he can call the delegate; if he can't answer it, he'll either call us or put the question through, and sometimes we'll give him a written answer on it if it's necessary.

Interviewer: You feel that through your education program, plus the fact that you have kept to a simpler contract, you don't have that problem, right? Well, now, what about the kinds of settlement that you were finally able to make in this Eastern Canadian strike? Were you successful in sort of catching up to some of the patterns that had been established in American locals with respect to fringe benefits, or were you still behind?

Turner: Oh, in '49 we would still be behind, primarily in the money. Of course, it was a major breakthrough in getting the welfare plan into the contract for the first time.

Interviewer: So what it did was, it set a pattern?

Turner: Right. And, of course, the other thing it did, it really helped us with the pension shortly after this because the people were united and realized that, if they were going to make these major breakthroughs in the fringes, they'd have to be serious about it and they'd have to put a concerted effort on. So that with acquiring the welfare in '49, I firmly believe that helped eventually to get the pension shortly after.

Interviewer: Now, was this ALA (Amalgamated Lithographers of America) convention in '53 in Toronto, was that the first convention that you attended, Roy?

Turner: I really didn't attend it as a delegate. The times I'm telling you about, I wasn't active in office in '49. As a matter of fact, the convention in 1953 I still wasn't in office, but I was the chairman of the entertainment committee. So that my wife and I had a good deal to do with the convention, the social side of it.

Interviewer: Right. When did you then assume. . . you were elected vice president of the local first, is that correct? Was that your first elected position?

Turner: Yes.

Interviewer: Was that a full-time job?

Turner: No. That was part time. Ken Brown was president, and I was elected vice president, but I still worked at the trade.

Interviewer: Now, was he elected president in 1953 or had he been

president?

Turner: No. He wasn't president in '53. About 1954 would be. . . because he was president for five years and then went to the International.

Interviewer: I see. So you were elected vice-president after he was already president, that's what I'm trying to get at.

Turner: Yes. That's right.

Interviewer: And you were elected then in '56?

Turner: To the full-time job.

Interviewer: Oh, to the full-time job. I see.

Turner: I was working at the trade as vice-president for a year and a half or two before that.

Interviewer: Oh, I see. What you're telling me is that Ken Brown made the vice presidency a full-time position.

Turner: That's right.

Interviewer: Okay.

Interviewer II: What kind of things do you do as a vice-president, contrasting between the full-time and the part-time vice president? What were your responsibilities then?

Turner: When the vice presidency was made a full-time position, he was made the chairman of the organizing committee so that the vice president's position at that time, when it was first full time, was to concentrate on the organizing and trying to sign up some of the non-union shops that were developing at that time.

Interviewer II: Was this just Toronto, or was this elsewhere . . . ?

Turner: No, just Toronto for our jurisdiction.

Interviewer: About how many members did you have?

Turner: When I went on full time?

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Turner: 850. I just happen to know that one. (laughter)

Interviewer: 850.

Turner: Because I kept track of the organizing, I knew I had to justify my position.

Interviewer: So you knew it had to be at least 851 come next year!! (laughter)

Turner: Yeah.

Interviewer II: Do you remember what kind of things you were confronted

with when you went out to organize? Were people willing to join if they knew about it or was it a strong sell that you had to. . . . . ?

Turner: I would say that at that time, initially it was easier because we were in a fortunate position. We'd had a number of contracts signed since the strike so that we had welfare, we had pension, we had the statutory holidays, enlarging the number, and we were working fewer hours than industry in general. Most of the shops were still family affairs at that time, and I actually was successful in organizing and signing some contracts at that time by going through the front door. You can't very well do that today.

And of course, the second part was that most of our negotiations were with the owners, which made a tremendous difference. I can remember one owner: after we had everything straightened away and had signed the contract, he wanted to offer me a job. I said, "I got a full-time job. What kind of a job could you give me, anyway?" And he says, "Well, I thought I had my members sold on the idea that we were going to have an open shop here. But you've come along and sold them on the union. I kind of like your approach. I think if you can sell unionism to my members, you can sell lithography for me." (laughter)

Interviewer: He was probably right! You probably could have!

Well, obviously one of the problems that we see here in the States in this very period of time that you're talking about is the whole business of the National Federation attempting to put pressure on the Amalgamated to sign a no-raiding pledge or make some kind of agreement with the ITU and Printing Pressmen. And I think it would be useful if you would talk about how that problem manifested itself in Toronto. How serious were the wars that you had?

Turner: Yes, well, actually, we were in a fortunate position in Toronto, and this bit that I'm going to tell you goes back to when Ken was president in Toronto and his father, A. W. Brown, was vice-president. Another vice-president that's here--well, he's not here right now because of sickness--but Burt Groves, he was the president of the Bookbinders in Toronto. . . .

Interviewer: Grove?

Turner: Burt Groves. Yes. We actually had meetings in Toronto with five or six unions including the Printing Pressmen and the Typographical, Photoengravers, Bookbinders, and ouselves, and we were talking about an association in Toronto. We really didn't have a name for it because we knew we would get some static from the International--not our own--but from the ITU and the IPP&AU. But nevertheless, we had a number of meetings and as a result of those

meetings, we had a good relationship with the other locals. I know that as far as the Printing Pressmen and ourselves because they were just starting to. . . some of their shops were putting in offset at the time. So we made an agreement with them that those shops that they had the contract in, we wouldn't interfere if that's the way they were going to get into offset; but if it's another situation where it was an open shop and it was lithography, that would be sort of open game, and we would certainly have the advantage then. That was one of the reasons we had the second full-time man put on at that time. So we really didn't have the history that they've had in some cities where there've been bitter struggles over the jurisdiction.

Interviewer: What about Photengravers? Were there very many Photoengravers in Toronto?

Turner: Yes, it was always a fairly active local.

Interviewer: Were they involved in these discussions that you're describing?

Turner: Yes.

Interviewer: They were too?

Turner: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. Well, I think it would be interesting to talk a little bit further about this in the sense that you sort of alluded to the fact that you had this local cooperation. You really almost had a local. . . the concept of merger.

Turner: Merger. . . oh, yes, that's the way it was at that time.

Interviewer: And yet you didn't feel you could get anywhere because the Internationals would sabotage this.

Turner: Well, we had. . . not our own Internationals because A. W. Brown was sitting in, who was an International Canadian vice-president at that time. But we knew that it was a delicate, ticklish situation with the ITU and the IPP&AU. As a matter of fact, after we had a number of meetings, they received a directive from their International offices to stop meeting on this until it was approved by the International.

And then, of course, the second thing was the politics--or the two party system--in the ITU. The chap who was president in Toronto, he was of the other party and of course there was always a little bit of friction between the Toronto ITU and the International office. As a matter of fact, so much so that when the ITU strike finally took place, that was one of the very

serious situations because they had approved on two or three occasions a settlement that was acceptable to the Toronto papers, to the members, to their executive; and then the International president turned it down.

Interviewer: I wonder if I could ask you to be a little bit philosophical at this point. We always. . . when we teach trade union administration and when we talk about trade union structure, the ITU is always brought up as an example of being an extremely democratic union because of this structure of opposition parties to the encumbent. And I wonder if you could say something about how you observed this in Toronto. Do you feel that this structure does more likely preserve some kind of local autonomy or democratic procedures, or do you feel it doesn't really have that much effect?

Turner: No, I myself, I guess it was because I was so close to Bob McCormack, who was the president of the Toronto ITU. I felt it really worked the other way, rather than being democratic. Because we were all. . . . being close to this, we were so shocked when we figured, "Oh, it's coming along nicely now. They've got something that's acceptable to members;" because after all they're the ones that should decide. And then to have the International office put a veto on it and have it go back, it seemed to me to be acting the exact opposite to what a truly democratic system should. And then, of course, I also knew that there was basic friction in there because of. . . . one was one party and the other was the other party.

Interviewer: Right. So the ALA has always had a strong tradition of local autonomy, but maybe local autonomy is not necessarily and always the same thing as democracy. It may be, for example, that the Toronto locals were out of step with the rest of the ITU in terms of talking about merger. I don't know, but I would be interested to know if you have any sense of whether that was in fact true or whether this was really the International coming in and exercising its muscle on the locals. In other words, was the International representing some kind of democratic sentiment in their own union that this should not be allowed to take place in this spot.

Turner: Oh, I think that's the key because we know, from our discussions with the ITU, they've had hard-line policies that haven't changed for a hundred years. "We're the first union in the graphic arts, so you have to do it our way." And what really happened is really a disaster as a result of that strike. The ITU isn't even in the paper in Toronto. They lost the strike, and they lost all those positions; and along with losing the positions for the ITU, the

mailers lost their positions as well. As a matter of fact, the mailers suffered more in that strike than the craftsmen, that is, the ITU craftsmen, because of the fact that they were able eventually to go to other jobs; but the mailers just didn't have another place to go. So they were the ones who really lost out.

And knowing full well as far as the members in it. . . because we worked with them in the different shops. We knew that basically they thought the same as we did about unionism. And we used to help them out on commercial. . . small shops where there would be a strike. Yet this is the thing that we were doing that the International should have been doing at that time--all getting together. And I think they realized that it was going too well. (laughter)

Interviewer: And they blew the whistle!!

Turner: Right.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewer II: So A. W. Brown at that time, an International representative, . . .

Turner: Vice president.

Interviewer II: . . . vice president, participated?

Turner: Oh, sure. He was in the meetings.

Interviewer: What kind of feedback did you get from the Canadian Labor Congress on these merger discussions?

Turner: Well, we didn't really have anything official, but the CLC has always encouraged mergers. So that if there had been anything official coming out from their office, it would have been encouraging.

Interviewer: Now I think when you talked with Greg, you mentioned that this cooperation with other local unions, which was fairly unique in Toronto, made for good relations with the industry. I wonder if you could say a little bit about the relationships with the industry and how it may have changed over time as they became increasingly automated and not family-owned kinds of shops.

Turner: Well, at that time in the various shops there were definite jurisdictional lines between the ITU, the IPP&AU, our own, and Bookbinders. But then. . .

Interviewer: What about the Photoengravers? Were there definite jurisdictional lines there too?

Turner: Yes, but I wasn't working in a shop where the Photoengravers

were so I can't speak on it. We did have a few trade shops with Photoengravers in, but there wasn't ever any jurisdictional problem with them because it was. . . . it's just recently that some of the photoengraving shops have put in offset equipment. At that time a photoengraver either worked for the rotoengraver or the newspaper or commercial letterpress, so there wasn't any problem. And we've never had a jurisdictional problem with the Photoengravers in Toronto because they gradually worked into the offset, and if they've. . . one shop in particular. . . they have the contract, and it's most of our members that are in there, meaning the Lithograph members who are in there doing the offset work.

Interviewer II: So the industry conditions during this time when you were having cooperative relations with the other locals in Toronto were favorable?

Turner: Yes.

Interviewer II: What was the nature of the favorable relationship? Were there schools set up at that time or. . . how would you characterize the relationship more specifically?

Turner: No. There would be. . . before the schools were set up. . .I would think the time of those meetings would be about 1957, early '58. Ken was still president, and I had been in the office a little while. And the employers really didn't object to language in the contract at that time that would be specifically directed to lithography or the printing trades. And it wasn't until after that that the Printing Pressmen started asking for language that would also cover lithography and the same thing with the ITU. So that as far as the negotiating at that time, it was a straightforward procedure for your own craft.

Then, of course, the jurisdictional lines started to disappear, and that's when the Printing Pressmen came after the presses and the ITU put in the language to try and get some of the preparatory department. So that there wasn't really a problem with the other unions or with the employers at that time. That came along at a little later date and mainly as directives from their Internationals because, particularly with the ITU, they would devise a new clause and they would insist that their locals put it into the contracts. And in some cases it wasn't always an advantage for them to do that.

Interviewer: But what I hear you saying is that the nature of the industry is changing in that you no longer have these small shops in which an owner-worker, kind of, I mean who was actually there, who. . . . pretty clearly

in his own mind was doing a lithographic business or he was doing a. . .

Turner: Printing business. . .

Interviewer: Yes, but that this began to change, that the printing became. . . all kinds of things began to appear in one shop under one roof.

Turner: Uh-hm. Well, what happened in a number of the. . . and this could be large shops, too. . . where they had run printing presses for years and years and no change there, the typographical men would have been setting the type by hand. Well, then, their business finally started to disappear because it became so expensive to do it that way. The lithographing shops were putting in modern equipment with presses that would run three, four, maybe five times as fast. So a lot of those jobs in the printing industry for the printing pressmen gradually became obsolete. And they just couldn't afford to run those presses. So what would happen in a printshop, if they didn't have a lithographic unit, they would buy a lithographic press and put it in that print department. And then what would happen over a period of years, that could develop from a print shop into a lithographic house. And that was about the start of it in Toronto.

Interviewer: Let me ask you a question about the trade or the craft itself. What is involved for a man who has been operating a printing press to move over to offset in terms of the change in skills and how long it takes him to be able to do this if he is asked by management to do this?

Turner: Well, we. . . what the Printing Pressmen's Union did at that time, that's when they opened their school in Tennessee; and they would send someone down there for a crash course. But this wasn't really successful because he wasn't brought up to the problem of lithography where you have to balance oil and water. He was just trained to handle the inks which were greasy and the relief plates and relief type, so he didn't have to worry about water at all. So this was the biggest change. I worked in a few shops where they tried to do it, and what we. . .

Interviewer: Where they tried to do what? To get the printing pressmen to do. . .

Turner: Run offset.

Interviewer: Run offset. Uh-hm.

Turner: And some of them were able to make the change, if they were young and they. . . over and above the crash course they got at Tennessee, if they went to, . . . and at that time the technical schools in Toronto were putting

in small offset presses. They could learn to control the problem of the balance between oil and water. What we did in our local, we had some of the machines. We would insist that they become a feeder, that they spend some time on the feeder, so that they could gradually pick it up and weren't all of a sudden confronted with the responsibility of a press and not know what to expect because the presses, generally speaking, were so much faster than what they had been running, too, which was a problem because you get an older man who has worked on a press for many years and its clunking along like this, and then all of a sudden, he's on a press that's going 6000. Well, it affects his insides.

Interviewer: Right. He has to be completely differently paced.

Turner: Yeah. And what would happen with some of them, that tremendous change overnight would bring on a sickness or nervousness or something like that because they automatically would think they had to go that fast, after watching the other for years.

Interviewer: Well, I wonder if maybe this is the place to talk about your relationships with the labor movement in Toronto, that is, with the Central Labor Body and with the National Federation. I think you mentioned before that there was some pressure at the time you withdrew from the CIO in Canada you had to go out of the Canadian Labor Congress as well. I wondered if you were aware of why those changes took place? Why would it make any difference?

Turner: I was somewhat aware, but the part that I can recall. . . . when the International office in the states withdrew, Ken Brown appeared before the Executive Board of the CLC. I was with him and Dick Clarke was with him and a few other of the presidents. We were summoned there because of the charges of the Printing Pressmen in the States. As I recall, that was one of the main reasons for withdrawing. They had advised us, because we had some problems, particularly out in Western Canada, with the Printing Pressmen, that we would just have to abide by the regulations and if we didn't change, we'd just have to withdraw from the CLC.

Interviewer: So they held you to the no-raiding concept. . . .

Turner: Yes.

Interviewer: . . . as it was articulated south of the border.

Turner: Yes.

Interviewer: Now, Greg [Interviewer II] has said that you noted a difference between the United States and Canada with regard to members opening a

shop and retaining their membership and the fact that new firms often attempt to be more competitive by being non-union. This is obviously a growing thing that begins to take place in the '60's and not in the '50's when there was a tremendous growth in lithographic shops. Is that right?

Turner: No. Some of the shops were opened in the '50's. I could tell you better this way: After the war, (and I was on the verge of doing it myself because I had an offer), when the fellows came back from the service and they worked for a little while, they had some kind of a gratuity in some cases, depending on how long they had been in. And this was in some cases a fairly large sum that they received so that if they were fortunate like I was and went right back to a job and then had this money, it was fairly easy for them to go into business. So that actually some of them went into business at that time and some in the '50's. It wasn't really. . . it wasn't a big change in the '60's as far as going into business. But in Toronto we have had over the [years] and I guess there hasn't been a year go by that we haven't had somebody go into business.

But the other thing that I'd like to mention is that we've always had a fairly good benefit plan in Toronto. As a matter of fact, we started. . . we still have our own pension which we started in 1944. So this is one of the other reasons that the fellows in Toronto don't drop the union if they go into management or if they're owning their own business because I guess we're sort of in a unique position. We must be paying four former owners a pension. (laughter) But this is a very small pension; we started then putting 25 cents a week into it, but over the years it has grown so that I guess we have close to two million dollars in it now. But that, plus the attitude we had toward the union in Toronto, has always kept the fellows together.

One of the chaps now, just as an example, that owns Graphic Litho-Plate--I guess it will be developing into one of the largest trade shops in Toronto--before Ken was active or before I was active and before he owned the business, the three of us used to go out socially and, of course, we still see one another. But he started his business, developed it into really a going concern now, and he's still a member and pays his dues every week.

Interviewer: It's sort of a unique situation in the labor movement.

Turner: It is very unique, yes. Because the other thing that's also happened. . . of course with these negotiations in Eastern Canada, we have one chap on there now that's president of another trade shop and he's still a member

of ours and he sits across the table from us in negotiations. That's a unique situation.

Interviewer: How does it affect negotiations, do you think?

Turner: It doesn't really affect them.

Interviewer: He's just as tough?

Turner: Sure.

Interviewer: Is he more tough?

Turner: No, I don't think so. He could even come to our meetings if he wanted, but he wouldn't do that. He just acts strictly as an employer. Another example I can give you is the fact that with our school--ours is a very successful school and that first chap that I was telling you about, his executive vice-president is also a member of ours. He and I are co-chairmen of the school, but if he thinks that we are moving a little too far off base or we're not acting the way we should as far as some of the funds or something, he won't hesitate to tell me, even though he's still a member of the union. So it really doesn't affect them, when the chips are down, as far as business is concerned.

Interviewer II: Were there any large firms, very big firms, in Toronto at that time?

Turner: Yes.

Interviewer II: Did they have a different relationship than the union had with a lot of these smaller firms that were former union members? Were there differences with. . .

Turner: I would say that not too long after the war our biggest firm was Rolph, Clark & Stone, and we would have at one time pretty close to 150 members in there. But they were members of the Employers Association, and we didn't meet them individually, of course, on negotiations. We just met the negotiating committee. . .

Interviewer: The representatives of the Employers Association. . .

Turner: Yeah. We had more contact with the smaller companies that were not members of the Employers Association because, after we signed the master contract, then we would go and sign an independent contract with the smaller ones. So that we had the occasion then to go in and talk to the owners of the small companies. So that's the reason we had more contact with the smaller company management than we did with the big companies. And that's still the case. Just recently two employers' groups merged in Toronto, and the old one, the Canadian Lithographers Association, merged with the Council of Printing Industries, and

they actually picked up the new name and dropped the old one.

Interviewer: What was happening in Toronto to make Toronto become one of the great printing centers of the world? I mean, you always used to think of Boston and New York and London. Then all of a sudden, somewhere here after the war you began to have to think of Toronto as being one of the great printing centers of the world too. And I wonder, you know, what were the factors that were bringing this about?

Turner: Well, I guess there would be two or three factors. One fact, of course, is that Toronto is on Lake Ontario and the Toronto harbor now, with the development of the Seaway, the ocean boats can come right into Toronto, where before the St. Lawrence Seaway was built they couldn't get into the Great Lakes so that materials can be brought right into Toronto on the boats. Plus the fact that Toronto is so central to all of Canada and so close to a number of areas in the states. Then the development of industry in Toronto really mushroomed and still is, as a matter of fact. There are several stories going around, even though Montreal is still slightly larger than Toronto, that Toronto will be the largest city in Canada before very long. The third thing, it has a favorable climate. Even though we're in Canada, we're further south than a number of American cities when you look on the map, you know. Then, of course, the fact that we have water all around us (they call us the Banana Belt of Canada) it has quite an effect on. . .

Interviewer: So, it wasn't that the printing industry was unique; what you're trying to tell me is that everything in Toronto was exploding.

Turner: Yes.

Interviewer: But I think printing must have been ahead of some of these other things, wasn't it?

Turner: Well, yes, they had the agencies there, the advertising agencies in Toronto. Of course, there's still a good number of them in Montreal, but I think the other thing that helped was that the automotive industry was close to Toronto. It's just in recent years that General Motors put a plant in Montreal. Before and still in Oshawa, which is about forty miles east--it's a big General Motors town--practically the whole town relies on GM. Then you go the other way . . . . you had to go all the way to Windsor at one time for Chrysler and Ford. Then the Ford people moved a tremendous, big--well, they built it from scratch--a tremendous big operation just twenty or twenty-five miles from Toronto on the other side. And the automotive industry alone gave so much work to the litho-

graphing and printing trades that that was a shot in the arm.

Interviewer: Yes. Right, right.

Turner: And then I would think that the final thing that some of the head offices were moved to Toronto after the separatist problem in Quebec. That's more recent, that. . . but all those things, you know, they're all helping because the printing industry in Toronto is still growing; the number of new presses and that is surprising.

Interviewer: What kind of a local union president was Ken Brown? One of the things that is obvious is that, in terms of some of these serious jurisdictional disputes that you had in other places, he didn't go through that in his formative learning years. But I wondered if you could say something about what kind of innovations he was making? What kind of thinking, you know? Not the Ken Brown you know now, but the Ken Brown you knew then, a much younger person.

Turner: Well, I think the main change that came about after he became president is the fact that he was so much younger than any other president that we had. . .

Interviewer: Local union president?

Turner: Local union president, yes. . . that he was interested in changes and interested in developing Toronto more along the lines of some of the better American locals because he had been on the International Council for a number of years, had the advice of his father who had traveled back and forth for many years; and they knew the weaknesses that you can fall into, but they also knew the better points that, if they could be instituted in Toronto, they would certainly make us one of the stronger locals. And so that we moved along in that direction.

I guess we even put more emphasis on the fringe benefits and on the benefits of the members because we didn't actually start the school until after Ken left, but we had been trying. We had a more difficult time in Toronto and Eastern Canada with the school than some of the areas in the states would have. So it wasn't just a matter of it happening when I became president because a lot of work had gone into it beforehand.

And then Ken, I would say, added a fair bit of expertise to the office in that he introduced diplomacy and a higher grade of negotiating so that you just didn't go in with a warm feeling in the pit of your stomach and say, "I have to have this or my members have to have that." He was the type of person who would do some homework and have some facts and figures. Of course, Ken was in the

service too, and I think that had a bearing on the way he operated when he became president. Then, of course, the overlying thing is the fact that he had such a strong training right at home with his father. . .

Interviewer: Right at the breakfast table!

Turner: Yeah. . . with his father being president of the Toronto local and then being International V.P. president for twenty years.

Interviewer: Well in '59, when Ken went to New York, you then became the president of the Toronto local, is that correct?

Turner: Yes, well, what happened there and I remember those dates well . . . in April of '59 Ken was approached, and our local agreed to give him a six months' leave of absence. And in that time I was not "elected", but "acting" president, until October of '59. Then at the Portland convention, Ken was nominated unanimously, without any opposition, to the presidency. So we had an election then, and I was elected president at that time.

Interviewer: Well, I wonder if you could say something about the events that led up to your running for the International Council. Am I correct, you went on the International Council in '61? Is that right?

Turner: Yes, I think that's when I was elected.

Interviewer: And you had opposition for that office; you ran against. . .

Turner: Bob Edison.

Interviewer: Bob Edison, who was the incumbent, right?

Turner: Uh-hm.

Interviewer: Well, I wonder if you could say something about what caused you to decide to run against the incumbent. What were some of the issues in that election?

Turner: Well, at the convention in Portland, of course, that was the first time that Ken didn't run as a councilor, with being the assistant to the president, so Bob Edison, president of Montreal, ran. No, excuse me, that's not correct! It was first of all our vice president from Toronto, Frank Powell, who ran at that time. And he did it without any consultation of our executive board or members.

Interviewer: He just popped up at the convention and did it.

Turner: He. . . yeah. . . he let his name stand. Now, he likely wasn't even at the convention, but I'm pretty sure it was London local that nominated him. And so his name stood. And, of course, it became a problem because of our rule in Toronto that a president and vice president couldn't be away at

the same time. So before the term was out, he resigned. And then Bob Edison, they had an interim where he was appointed, I forget. . . but anyway Bob Edison became the International Councilor.

Interviewer: Appointed by whom?

Turner: Well, it may have been by Ken, because of the short term for Frank Powell's term. Well, anyway. . .

Interviewer: In other words, . . now let me get myself clear. What happened was you realized you had a problem because both Powell and Ken could not be away at the same time. . .

Turner: Powell and me!

Interviewer: Powell and you could not be away at the same time.

Turner: Yeah. So. . .

Interviewer: So Ken had to appoint somebody. . .

Turner: No. Frank Powell resigned from the job and then. . . there may have even been an election. I'm not that clear on that particular point at this time. But anyway, in any event, it was Bob Edison who became the International Councillor.

Interviewer: All right. And then in '61 you ran against him?

Turner: Yes, right.

Interviewer: Right? Okay. Well, that's what I wanted to ask you, basically. What were the events that led up to your deciding to try for the Council.

Turner: I think those dates are. . . I was on the International Council in '63, so I must have been elected in '61. That was the convention in Miami.

Interviewer: You were elected at the convention in. . . I mean. . .

Turner: Well, I was nominated and elected after. . .

Interviewer: . . . at Miami, right.

Turner: Yeah. Because I was on the International Council at the convention in '63.

Interviewer: All right, that makes it a little different because then there's less period of time between '59 and '61. It's the next time you could have run, really. . .

Turner: Right

(END OF SIDE ONE)

Interviewer: Okay. Well, we were talking about what led up to your decision to run for the Council. And we established that there was really a very

short period of time between the Portland Convention when Ken was nominated and the next one in Miami where you were nominated to the Council. But Bob Edison decided to run for Council, too, apparently. Okay. So what were the issues in the election? Were they just the issues as to which man could do the better job, or were there some substantive issues with respect to contracts or negotiations or education or anything of that sort?

Turner: There weren't any real main issues that I can remember other than. . . the reason I didn't run in Portland, of course, was that I knew that if Ken was elected International president, then I would be running for the presidency in Toronto. And I had been acting president for such a short time I felt that I needed to concentrate on that for a while, so that's the reason I didn't run out there. And then when the nominations were open in Miami, it was a matter of support from our delegates. They wanted me to run, feeling that we were the largest local in Canada and that we should be represented. But no major issues; it was just a matter of support from our own delegates. They wanted to nominate me.

And then, of course, I had the support of our own local, too, because they were familiar with the president being away part of the time and it wasn't a case of having to educate them on leaving the local. The local then wasn't unattended because the second man was in the office and there wasn't really that problem.

Interviewer: Who was that second man, by the way?

Turner: Frank Powell.

Interviewer: Frank Powell. Okay.

Turner: During the six-months' leave of absence of Ken, he came in on a six-month basis. Then he was elected, and so was I when Ken was nominated for the International presidency.

Interviewer: I wonder if you could discuss then. . . You've been on the Council for almost eleven years, close to thirteen years, so you've been in a real position to see the whole question of merger with both the Photoengravers and the Bookbinders arise and be dealt with and successfully concluded. I wonder if you could say something about what your feelings were about merger and what some of the difficulties were, what some of the hang-ups were as you watched this progressing. And also, of course, if you will, the various abortive attempts that were made with the Pressmen.

Turner: Well, I think, going back to the first merger discussions that

were held, I'm not able to speak authoritatively on it because I was never on one of those committees that just dealt with the requests that were given. I think the biggest disappointment to us was that, when we first started to talk with the ITU, a number of meetings were held before we realized that they didn't want to really merge. They would be agreeable to join the two organizations together, but as far as they were concerned, it was a take-over for the ITU and not a merger like we understood it. So that fell by the wayside fairly quickly.

As far as the Photoengravers is concerned, it, to most of us, just seemed to be a natural merger because even the skills are similar in the preparatory department. And we had gotten along so well in the majority of the cities, so that wasn't a problem either. And our contracts were similar so that it's unfortunate that it didn't start there in the first place because in some of our meetings, looking back over old minutes, merger had been talked about in Toronto with the Photoengravers long before it came about on the International level.

I think the other big disappointment is that we were never able to merge with the Printing Pressmen. I still feel that way; that's really one of the drawbacks because with our own members in the shops, they've worked so closely with the Printing Pressmen over the years and with the two branches coming so close together that. . . especially in some of the cities where they've had bitter disputes and thousands of dollars have been spent on law suits and that sort of thing.

Interviewer: How did the Printing Pressmen in Toronto feel about this? Do they communicate to you how they feel? Do they let you know how they feel? At the time these discussions were going forward, for example, did you have contacts with local union presidents in Toronto?

Turner: Oh, yes. We've had a fairly close relationship. They were very much in favor of it because, generally speaking, the Printing Pressmen have lost so many members out of their commercial shops where the old printing presses have just gone out of existence. So that we actually have Printing Pressmen in Toronto that would still like to join our. . . but we know that, in one shop in particular, if we started on it, it would only open up a big jurisdictional problem. So that we're sort of holding them at arm's length, hoping and hoping that the next merger will be with the Printing Pressmen.

Interviewer: In other words, they would like to sign cards to be represented by GAIU at this point?

Turner: Right.

Interviewer: That's how strongly they feel about it.

Turner: Right. Yes.

Interviewer II: What advantages would they have in leaving the Printing Pressmen and joining GAIU? What are the differences now between the two?

Turner: Well, the main thing that they would have would be job opportunities. There are so few opportunities in Toronto for Printing Pressmen who are running lithographic presses, just the odd job here and there. And usually the presses that are put in these plants are small presses so that they're limited financially on the level that they can reach. Whereas if they were in our union, they would be able to move up onto larger presses, multi-colored presses, and they. . . see, we have pretty close to 2000 members in our local, and we would have something like about 85 contracts. So that the limitations are expanded for them if they were a member of ours. And with our system, if a man wants a change of job, he writes a letter into our office; and we keep that on file. If a job comes in that we don't have a man out of work for it, then we go to the letters and then he would be put in touch for an interview for that particular job.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewer II: What was your general feeling about the mergers at the time? You were, I take it, favorable.

Turner: Oh, yes.

Interviewer II: Were there people in your local or in Toronto that were not in favor of merger with the Photoengravers and then the merger with the Bookbinders?

Turner: No, I can't say there was any concerted effort in Toronto trying to oppose the merger because of our good relationship with both the Photoengravers and the Bookbinders. There is still a little bit of feeling, and I've heard about it recently in connection with the Bookbinders, but not with the Photoengravers, because we will have to change a lot of our rules and regulations with merging with the Bookbinders because we're primarily an all-male local. And naturally some of them, they voiced it to me, "How are we going to make changes in so-and-so if we merge with the Bookbinders?" But it's just a matter of education and getting used to it.

Interviewer: Well, what were the problems then with the International as you saw it from Toronto? You had no problems locally, but there were certain

problems with merging with the Photoengravers on a national level--Local #1 in New York, that Montreal merger convention, and things of that nature. Can you comment on that for us briefly?

Turner: Oh, yes. Well, we had a problem in Toronto. That's one of the reasons we're not merged, because Les Young was part of that group. Although they said they were in favor of merger and voted in favor of merger, they didn't really work at merger, because we met in Toronto on two different occasions. And when I say "met", this is really a series of meetings. And Les Young was the secretary-treasurer of 35P in Toronto, and they were literally going through the motions, but we weren't getting any closer to merger.

Interviewer: Why was that? Was it a question of the merger of the jobs or what?

Turner: We really don't know why they were opposed to merger, but there was a group of them. There was Charlie Thomson of Cleveland, and Norm Park of Detroit, and Les Young, and we know that they were holding meetings unofficially. Whether it was a matter of the jobs or whether they were just opposed to merger, it finally came to us as a cold reality that we would not be merged in Toronto until Les Young retired. And that's the case in some of the other cities. Les retired last summer, and we've had the merger meetings, not only with 35P, but with the Bookbinders; and the whole tone is so different now. They are really anxious to merge and are going out of their way to supply us with information that we just couldn't get before. So that would be the only problem that we've had with the merger that I can recall in Toronto.

Interviewer: Well, I know you don't know why he felt that way, specifically, but if he was the secretary-treasurer of 35P, would he have emerged as the secretary-treasurer of the merged local? Could that have been kind of part of the problem? That he might have had to surrender his office?

Turner: It may have been, because we--that is, the Lithographic section--were so much larger, because their membership has been shrinking, and I believe at the present time they're down to about 525 and we're around the 1900 mark. So that it was agreed that, if we merged, I'd be president of the merged organization, so it was possibly one of the reasons. But this never really came out in the clear.

Interviewer: Now in some locals I know the secretary-treasurer is really the more important job, and the president is kind of the figurehead. Is that the case here?

Turner: Well, that's the case in a number of the Photoengraving locals. The president takes the job as a sort of routine and obligation that he's required to do. He'll hold it. . . like in Toronto, since they've been merged, I guess they've had six presidents. And each one would only hold it for a term or maybe two, but the secretary-treasurer stays on in the job, and the same thing has gone on in Montreal. Gasdon Dorai, who's on the council now, since Les Young left, he's been secretary-treasurer for many, many years. The same thing I can remember many presidents down there that they work at the trade and they run the meetings, but as far as the local, the secretary-treasurer runs the local because he's a full-time man in the office.

Interviewer: It's a kind of typical, I think, AF of L pattern. I wanted to ask you about the presence or absence of activity on the part of the Allied Printing Trades.

Turner: I'm not really a good one to talk to about the Allied Printing Trades because in our local--and I'm still trying to fight it--we haven't had too much success with the Allied Printing Trades. I attended several of the meetings at the start, and we were all worked up and figured that we could do something about it and then found that any shop that we suggested, there was always some reason that we couldn't get the Allied label in. So after a number of frustrations we initially had a better list of label shops than they had, so we figured, well, we have so many other things to do, let's not beat our head against the wall on this Allied. And of course, at that time Chicago was having a problem; a number of other locals in the states actually withdrew; so we soft-pedaled it. And still, as a matter of fact, our list of shops would be better than what they have because of all the number of problems. So that I personally haven't been engaged in the Allied for quite some time.

Interviewer: And it hasn't really presented a problem because, as you point out, you have more shops with your label than they have with the Allied label anyway.

Turner: More shops of any consequence, you know, with the big houses, really, that we have. And particularly for the political campaigns, they know, if they want the label on it, they pretty well have to get it done in our shops.

Interviewer: There was one other question that I wanted to ask you just as curiosity. Then if Greg has anything on merger that he wants to ask beforehand, go ahead.

Interviewer II: I might just want to ask what you knew about the situation

with Montreal and the merger convention, and I wanted to know whether you know of any questions why that happened. I'm somewhat at a loss to try to explain how the merger with the Photoengravers looked so good on paper and in the preliminary conventions; but when it got down to the floor of the convention with the Lithographers, there seemed to erupt a terrific conflict. Can you explain that? You were kind of in an interesting role of being from the Toronto local where the president was from.

Turner: Well, actually there were really two issues as I see them. Ben Robinson, who has been the legal counsel for Local #1 of New York for many, many years, was also the legal counsel for the International. We found out that there was really a conflict of interest in the job that he was doing. And I do know that initially, when Ken Brown went to New York, he and Swayduck. . . well, they were friendly because Ken had been on the International Council for quite some time. And after he was there for a while, he realized that there was this conflict of interest in the job that Ben Robinson was doing. And I can remember at the International Council meeting, prior to that there was some very heated arguments, and we had agreed at Mt. Gabriel. . . as a matter of fact, Harry Spohnholtz made the motion and I seconded the motion and it has been a sort of historic motion in the international, that Ben Robinson would have to choose which he was going to. . . and that's the way we phrased it. . . that he would have to choose which he was going to be legal counsel for, either the International or New York. But he couldn't be for both. Then, of course, that was one issue.

The second issue was that Swayduck, for some reason or other, was against the merger from the start. And I guess that was really the big fight, starting in Miami and coming through to the convention in '63 in Montreal when they actually walked out of the convention. I can remember some of the byplay that was going on. Even though Ben Robinson didn't attend the convention, he was holding meetings in an adjoining motel. I remember John Stagg attended the meeting and came back with so many notes about what had gone on!! But he was trying to undermine the whole idea of merger; and whether he felt it was a loss to him or whatever, I don't really know.

Interviewer II: Would it have been a loss to him in terms of the strength of his position in New York or a loss to him in relation to his strength in the International? Was there any notion at that time as to why Swayduck should be so opposed to merger?

Turner: Well, I think the two things sort of tied together. And the fact that we had made the motion that Ben Robinson would have to make a decision, I think that sort of interfered with any plans they had because I do know for a fact that it was a bitter pill for Ben Robinson because he had been involved with the International for so long. And with he and Swayduck being so close together, they had a tremendous influence on the International Council with Swayduck being president of the biggest local and then with Ben being legal adviser for the two. He knew the insides of what was going on in both organizations.

Interviewer: Well, that's something that I've wanted to ask. You know, here was Ken, he was the president. But here were two people. . . you know, in most organizations, especially the International Council, which was not really a very large organization, there are a couple of people always who kind of sway it. You know, they come in well prepared, well documented, and everybody else kind of sits around and says, "Yes, that's a good idea. Couldn't see anything wrong with that." And I get the impression that that's the role Swayduck and Robinson were often playing.

Turner: Right. Yeah. As a matter of fact, I was so surprised, when I first went to the International Council, to see that Ben Robinson attended every meeting. Like, in our Council Boards in Toronto we sort of have an unwritten rule that nobody attends those meetings unless he's summoned or invited; and we're very careful on who attends them. This was often confidential information that was going on of the International, and you had Ben sitting there all the time. And quite often he would have an assistant or two and almost played an important role. So that certainly he and Swayduck were able to sway the Council because Swayduck is an expert on documenting information when he wants to make a presentation, plus the fact he's a terrific speaker.

Interviewer II: Was some of this merger, with the merger happening at a time when the power in the union was moving away from New York and away from the Council's office and more into the forces that grew up, in response to the dominance of New York on the Council?

Turner: Yes, I think that. . . it may have been coincidental and it may not be, but with the merger and then also this other power struggle that was going on happening, no doubt they could see that, if the merger was successful, well. . .

well. . .

Interviewer: They were going to lose.

Turner: They were going to lose. Then they tried desperately to get other locals around the International to follow them.

Interviewer: But would that have necessarily have been so? Wouldn't it have been possible for them to take the Photoengravers into camp?

Turner: Who?

Interviewer: Swayduck and Robinson.

Turner: I don't think so because they--the way I understand it--didn't really have any control with the Photoengravers and had actually a poor relationship. . .

Interviewer: In New York. . .

Turner: In New York. So that he really didn't have a base to start from, you know. He never was close to them.

Interviewer: So that in other words, part of what I hear you saying a little bit is the fact that Ken, with his father, had this experience of good relationships on a local level in Toronto with all of the printing trades puts him in a unique position to press these various merger efforts at an international level.

Turner: I would think so. Knowing full well that with the experience we had, the other places where they've had trouble they've literally spent small fortunes on these. Whereas if you can eliminate that, then you could spend this money on fringe benefits. . .

Interviewer: . . . and schools.

Turner: And schools and things for the local. Your membership is going to benefit. We certainly benefited in Toronto. If you can do that on a larger and larger scale. . . the ultimate goal of course is that we should have one union in the graphic arts, and the jurisdictional problem would be licked.

Interviewer: Right.

Interviewer II: Could you talk just for a moment about some of these benefits you mentioned--the school, the kind of possibilities the merger has unearthed or encouraged? Can you give an example?

Turner: Well, I can tell you more about the benefits we have in our own local. With the negotiations that we have right now, we've negotiated our Lithographers Pension Plan that started in '53. Then there was a 10-year agreement to '63 and then a 10-year agreement to '73. That's just finished, and

we're negotiating now. With that Pension Plan, with the early retirement from Washington, and from our own little plan that started in '44, we can have some of our older members retiring early at $500 a month. So that's a tremendous change from just a few years ago when they couldn't look forward to anything in the way of a pension. And then, locally, we are also able to do something else for them because we have a very healthy Sick and Out-of-Work Plan.

Interviewer: You have a healthy sick and out-of-work plan? (laughter)

Turner: Yeah, how do you like that? (more laughter) The reason I'm saying that is that in Montreal they have a very sick Sick and Out of Work Plan!!! But for example, if a chap retires--it doesn't matter if he retires at 60 or 65--if he hasn't drawn from that Sick and Out-of-Work plan in the last year, to sort of help him into the new stage of just receiving a check once a month, we give him an extra benefit from that plan. We give him $20 a week for a year which helps with the transition of receiving a weekly check all his life and then all of a sudden just a monthly check. That's an extra benefit that he gets. And of course, we've introduced Supplemental Unemployment Benefits for the fellows that are out of work.

So that our local, I guess if anything, sort of goes overboard on benefits. And this is one of the reasons that we're able to organize successfully in Toronto. Because generally speaking, it doesn't matter what you're selling; if you're selling unionism, people want to know what can you do for them over and above signing a contract. So that we tell them that, with belonging to our local, it's more of a lodge or a society rather than a cold industrial union that just collects dues. This is our philosophy, that if on the international level that sort of thing was jelled together, all that money that's gone down the drain over the years with fighting jurisdictional disputes, that if that was put into a constructive program. . . if we can do it with just a few people in Toronto, think of what you could do when you're talking about thousands in North America because there's millions of dollars involved in all of the locals when you put them all together.

Interviewer: Sure. Well, this leads me to one thing that I've been wanting to ask you and that is as it relates to the separatist movement, not only in Montreal, but also there's a number of unions where the membership, principally the Steelworkers I guess, where the Canadian membership is restive and is talking about disaffiliation. And I'm wondering how, if at all, that affects your members in terms of the contacts that they may make locally with people

from other unions who feel that way. I realize that this is not, you know. . . at least it's my impression that your members aren't talking about disaffiliating from the Graphic Arts, but how do they feel about the fact. . . I mean, supposing the Steelworkers would disaffiliate, it would make a big difference in Canada.

Turner: Well, we don't really have the problem for two or three reasons, I guess. Those members who knew Ken Brown and have been in the local since '59 don't feel that we're being short-changed. . .

Interviewer: Right.

Turner: . . . having their former local president as International president. Most of the members are pretty proud of it. Also the fact that A. W. Brown . . . and then the fact that I'm on the Council. As a matter of fact, I guess our representation is pretty high because, up until just recently, Earl Kinney, a Canadian, was on. Now there's Gaston Dorai, and Dick Clarke. Now with the Bookbinders there's three more Canadians on there. So that we really don't have the problem. But they are having it in British Columbia, and they're having it in Quebec. In Quebec it's sort of a different problem. That's a separatist, French problem.

Interviewer: Right. They don't even want to be in Canada!

Turner: That's right, yeah. What we're getting across the country, primarily from the industrial unions where their benefits are so low, they can't see what the advantage is other than to have somebody come in from the International and negotiate the contract because some of the industrial unions just don't have any benefits. If you're off sick, there is no sick benefit. If you're out of work, there's no out-of-work benefit. So that this is one of the problems. All they see is that the money is going across the border to the states. And of course, they are fed that kind of information in the newspapers and from their employers because a lot of the big industrial employers would very much like to get rid of the International tie because they know that's where the strength is. Then they also know that, if there is a strike, that's where they get their support from, whereas if they were dealing with a little local in Canada, they wouldn't have to worry about it. Of course, they're feeding it in the newspapers to the general membership, and my feeling is that the general membership is being misled. They're getting <u>some</u> of the facts, not all of the facts. Of course, with some people, they don't like to be the little pebble on the beach anyway, so the employers and the press are really capitalizing on them.

Interviewer: Well, the employers are already south of the border in terms of, even if they are Canadian nationals, a good bit of their money and their support. ...

Turner: Oh, yeah. Seventy-one percent, I think it is. It's a fantastic figure.

Interviewer: So that any time an employer tells a worker its a shame his dues are going across the border, he's obviously not being completely honest.

Turner: No, right. Yeah. And, of course, what we have also done. . . as a matter of fact, there was just an item on this meeting this week. . . the money that's collected for the International Early Retirement stays in Canada, and the money that's collected for the Photoengravers Pension Plan stays in Canada; and it's invested in Canada. Plus the fact that a good deal of the per capita tax stays in Canada. I guess we're really a better example than other unions because of our high benefits.

Interviewer: Yes. Well, I think other unions could learn from that.

Turner: Oh, yeah.

Interviewer: If the Steelworkers would make that kind of administrative decision that the money collected in Canada would be invested in Canada, it might be a different story.

Turner: Yeah. That's really a fact. And then, of course, all we need to do in Toronto, because we've had three or four strikes in the last few years, is just add up the amount of money that comes back in strike benefits because of our high strike benefit.

Interviewer: What have the issues tended to be on these strikes that you've had in recent years?

Turner: They are independent companies that changed hands in one case, and an anti-union employer bought the firm so that there was no way we were going to. . . we tried everything we knew and finally had to. . . well, he closed up the place and moved out of the area. (laughter) So that was all right with us. But naturally you hate to see a shop go. The other one was a situation where we organized a small-business-form company that was actually bought out by one of the big conglomerates, and it looked to us like they just issued a directive down the line that you can go so far, but. . .

Interviewer II: Do you know the name of the conglomerate?

Turner: Yeah. Ronalds Federated. The small company was Commercial Papers.

Interviewer: This was Ron's Federated?

Turner: Ronalds.

Interviewer: Ronalds.

Turner: Ronalds Federated. Their head office is in Montreal. And we have them as part of the master contract for the big plant. But this was a small subsidiary with Commercial Papers doing business forms. The business-form industry isn't organized by us in Canada the way it should be. But the reason for that is that this change-over from the Printing Pressmen's, their subsidiary is the 466 specialty--where they go in and organize the whole shop door to door. This has been a drawback for us trying to get into such firms as the Commerical Paper, where they just do business forms.

Interviewer: What do you mean by 466?

Turner: Well, 466 is the subsidiary of the Printing Pressmen's Union that organize shops door to door.

Interviewer: Industrially?

Turner: Yeah. Door to door. Such as the Moore's, the Moore's Corporation here and big shops like that that do that type of work.

Interviewer: Right. Okay. Well, is there anything that you want to add to this discussion?

Turner: I didn't think I could add so much. (laughter)

Interviewer: Oh, it's great. I think it's been a fine interview.

Turner: Oh, well, thank you very much.

ROY TURNER

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