ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

OF

LLOYD JONES

Interviewed By
Jack W. Skeels

University of Michigan - Wayne State University
Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations
March 10, 1960

Oral History Interview of Mr. Lloyd Jones by Jack W. Skeels, University of Michigan - Wayne State University Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, March 10, 1960.

I was born in 1901, February the 15th, 12 miles from a little town called Barbourville, Kentucky. That is in the extreme Southeast mountain section of Kentucky. I recall very well my father's farm which was about 300 acres. It was at least 75 per cent timber. We had very little cleared land. I cut down many trees, sawed them up for firewood. We have cut down in there and have burned in order to get rid of it in order to raise corn. It was valuable timber that in this year of 1960 I could realize that we were sawing down $500 trees, using itin the winter to keep us warm for that night.

Our school was a little better than two and a half miles away. We lived on a branch. Mostly in the summertime you waded the branch to get to the forks of the water where you run into another creek, then you crossed it with a log and went another mile to get to school. I believe we started in at school at the regular age, around seven years old. I am sure we did not go at six. In Kentucky our school was a six months' school. All of us country boys had to do the regular work of the farm, and we were in a rush to get our corn laid by as early as possible in June in order to get started in school. If we did not get it laid in time, then we did not get to go to school until we did get it laid by. So, many students would be two, three, five weeks late getting into school. Then, when August came, we had

to take off two weeks to pick blackberries because all the people had to can blackberries. And then in the fall you had to take off three to four weeks to pull your corn. Well, even previous to that many of us had to take off a week to pull fodder. We stripped the stalk, all the blades off of it, and that was used for feeding our milk cows in the winter time. So, in all, in that six months' school, we were lucky if we got about three and a half or four months of actual schooling time.

All of the people in my part of the country were Baptists in religion, missionary Baptists. Both of my grandfathers were Baptist ministers all their lives. And several of my uncles on my father's side were Baptist ministers, and it was natural that I too wanted to be a minister. I started reading the Bible at a very young age. I am sure that it was around ten years old I had read the New Testament through and through. It was hard for me to get any other book than just the Bible -- that is for religious study. I did get hold of a book one time called, The Story of the Bible. I learned that well, and at eleven years old I had read the Bible through. At twelve years old, I was an ordained minister; and at thirteen years old, I was pastor of four churches. And at that age I completed eighth grade. That was as high as you could get in a country school. I do not recall, but in my country there was only one education and that was the education to become a school teacher. No father ever taught his boys and girls to get any higher than a school teacher, but the most ambitious did want their boys to hurry up and get through the country school and go to town to what they call

"normal," usually taking about two years; some of the boys three years to go through "normal." That was just a higher grade of eighth grade. You did not get anything more than our children learn in first year high school. Advanced arithmetic, more history, more good health, and geography was all you got in the "normal."

I went to that school. It was called the Baptist Institute. I went there the first winter. You see, our school is out at Christmas time in the country. Then you go to the town school, that's what we called it, first of January. And there if your father had enough hogs to pay for your tuition, why you could stay on until school started again. I went to the Baptist Institute one year and then I went to "normal," that is another college in the same town. We have two colleges there.

I went to "normal" two years, and received the certificate for teaching school, but all this time every weekend I was pastoring the church or was invited and preaching in some other church. All these churches back in the country so deep that there were times when I had to ride a horse ten hours to get to the location where this church was, sometimes as deep as 45 miles back further away from the town and away from any railroads. I have been as deep as 85 miles from a railroad to preach back in these mountains. The town that I was nearest to when I got back in those mountains was Manchester which was further away. Manchester itself was 24 miles from the railroad. And then I would go beyond Manchester another 25 miles, back into what was

called Red Bird. In there they had what was called Double Creek, Sugar Creek. These creeks are just merely long branches, 12 to 15 miles long. And up those branches was a school house and eight to ten of these branches coming into the Red Bird River, that would be where the school would be. And most of those children would have any where from 2 to 8 miles to go to school.

Most of our preaching also was in the school house. The Baptists usually had them a church of their own, but the majority of the places you preached was in the school house itself. It was used as the church. Now, along at this time the First World War came, and the Haley's Comet convinced me the end of time was here. I saw no need of me going any further in school and wasted my time in letting all these people to go to hell. I thought I could be out saving before Haley's Comet got here and ended the world. I was convinced that blood had already run to the Bridle Range and that the Bible was fulfilled and all the other preachers told me it was true that the Bible was all fulfilled and the end of time was here.

I convinced myself that if the end of time was here, that I was wasting my time at Union College. So, I taught school approximately two weeks and went into the ministry. My first ministry was right around my home. However, from eleven years old I had been holding prayer meetings at least twice a week, from eleven years to this age which was now near eighteen years old. It was in the fall that I was seventeen and I would have been eighteen in February. By the time I reached my eighteenth birthday

I had preached in five or six small towns around my home town. I had reached Lenton, Indiana; Bedford, Indiana; Evansville, Indiana; and a town across the river from Evansville; Henderson, Kentucky. And a village out from Henderson, the name was Spotsville. I was in Spotsville, Kentucky, at my birthday when I was eighteen years old, February 15, 1919. From there I went to Carlyle, Illinois, from there to St. Louis, back to Evansville, and then back to my home town.

During the period about from my fifteenth birthday to my eighteenth birthday, a new railroad company known as the Manchester Railroad Company came in and built a railroad from Barbourville to Manchester, just twenty-four miles linking this backward town with civilization. You must remember that there were no roads in that country other than the branches. Horses had to pull their wagons on the branches. We still use oxen. I had a pair of oxen till I was sixteen years old to haul wood out of the mountains for heat and for cooking. I recall my mother's cook stove was a little four cap, what they called a step stove, and then she bought the great Home Comfort when I was about seventeen and that was real civilization. We had a Home Comfort. It had a tank on it. You could put about eight gallons of water in and roll it away from the stove and then roll it up against the stove. You could roll it away about three inches and you roll it up against the stove and heat the water. And that was great to have a Home Comfort.

Then when I returned from that round of the ministry, I went down into Horse Creek, Kentucky, which is again only about four miles from this new town of Manchester; it now has a railroad. A mining company came down there to open up several mines. The new mines all just opened up. Everything was new. Perhaps three to five hundred men were working building tipples, opening up the coal mines, building tracks into the coal mines. There was a big school down there and I went down there to hold revival among these heathens. I had around four hundred conversions there and built a big church. I don't recall the size of it now, but from my memory I would say that church was about sixty by one hundred and twenty. All during this period also, I had gotten away from the Missionary Baptist doctrine, and had accepted what was called the Pentecostal religion which appeared to me as a greater advancement in religion and nearer to God than the Missionary Baptist because the Pentecostal people taught that all the Baptists do is just get you saved. In other words, you get to heaven by the skin of your teeth. But the Pentecost preached that you need more than just be saved; you needed another work of God's grace known as Sanctification. And then they also taught you that you need a third work of God's grace known as the Baptism of the Holy Ghost so the evidence is speaking in tongues. And if you didn't get the evidence of speaking in the unknown tongue, you just didn't have the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. I just believed that and went right in there and just did that very thing. I spoke an unknown

tongue. Since that I had the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and started preaching then. In fact, I had this faith before I went to Indiana. In Indiana, I did not preach in any Baptist church. I preached in these free, open Pentecostal churches.

After this Horse Creek, Kentucky, some miles from this new town of Manchester Revival of where I baptized about four hundred people, I married a girl there. I was then a few days from twenty years old. I married just before Christmas, and I was twenty the following February. My wife then was a piano player and a wonderful musician, not a trained musician, but a musician by ear. After living there for some time, we traveled through Virginia and people raised enough money that we had our own tent and we had a tent with the capacity of about 1,500 people seating capacity. We had our own trailer. We hauled our tent, and we preached throughout Big Stone Gap, St. Charles, Norton, Arno, and Bloomfield, Virginia; Thorpe, West Virginia; Welsh, West Virginia; Keystone, West Virginia; throughout that area we preached for over a year. That one year, the first year of my marriage, I have the record that that year I preached 365 sermons in that one year which was the exact average of one sermon a day. However, sometimes I would preach two and three sermons in one day and some days not at all. But I preached that many sermons that year. In the beginning this married life was a new world for me. However, I did not have any children by my wife, not during this period at least.

I wanted to go still deeper in religious faith. I believed that if there was such a thing as a second work of grace called Sanctification, and a third work of grace called Baptism of the Holy Ghost, then I could not understand why that the three graces were not good enough to give the same power that St. Peter had and St. Paul, to lay my hands on the blind and see again, and even necessarily lay my hands on the dead and rise. The Bible to me taught very clear that through faith any disease can be healed, regardless of what it was. And I believe that if I prayed for any sick person and they did not get well, that it was not God's fault, it was my fault. And it was my fault because I did not have maybe another grace, maybe a fourth, maybe something beyond this so-called Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Maybe I needed another one, maybe I was not as good as I thought I was. And I began to severely criticize myself. I began to search myself that I had not reached the position that I had thought that God expected of His representatives on earth. I felt that a representative of God should be as pure, as clean, and powerful with his Agent which is God, as any of the Apostles were. I saw no reason for not being that way because this Christ has already died, raised from the dead, and gone to heaven, and expounded the power to the Apostles and the Apostles laid hands on others and expounded it to them. So, in May at the divine healing meetings of which I always, at all churches, had preached that anyone that was sick of any disease, blind or otherwise, "You come to the front, and by praying and by faith in God and knowing of all and the laying on

of hands, you shall be healed." Many, many healings occurred, many that even astonished the most optimistic person. I recall many of these healings that I asked doctors about, and they said it was true that there was a genuine miracle accomplished. But I ran into a Waterloo in letting a man down. A man came 300 miles to my services to be healed; he was born blind. He had no pupils. And I did not consider that beyond the power of God, to put a pupil back in the head. I considered that if God could heal a blind eye where there was a pupil, he could heal a blind eye where there was no pupil. And I made that decision and I made my decision to stick to that and either prove that or get out of the ministry. And it was my Waterloo, because the man was never healed. From that ministry and from that revival, I went home.

I went out in the mountains and I fasted. I fasted for twenty-one days. I did not eat one bite. I drank water and prayed to God for whatever this blessing was, it was necessary to carry out the mission of God on earth that it be given to me by His grace to show that there was a God in Heaven and life after death. I ended this fast and I went back to my church on Horse Creek, Kentucky, where I had built this tabernacle and I called that church to a meeting. And I told them either we are going to have Pentecost or we are not going to have Pentecost. We are either going to have this faith or we are not going to have this faith. Let's either face up to the fact that this man in Lenton, Indiana, was not healed. Let's get down together. Let's all do as they did on the day of Pentecost and all of us fast ten days

and nights as they did on the day of Pentecost. Let's face up to the facts. We are not facing up to the facts. We are shouting on heathens that does not show any evidence. We do not see any crooked legs being straightened. We do not see any cut off legs growing back. We do not have any pupils coming back into the head of those that lost a pupil. If God is not powerful enough to put a pupil in the eyeball, then He is not powerful enough to create a man in the first place. That was what I said to those people. And one hundred and ten of us went into a fast in that church. We did fast ten days. We did not eat one bite during that ten days. However, it did not end up with one hundred and ten, some dropped off after the first day, some the second day, some the third day. When the tenth day arrived, we only had twenty-two. But there were twenty-two people stayed there and fasted in that church and prayed for ten days and nights. We did not receive that baptism of what we then had dug up a terminology for. We called it the Baptism of the Holy Ghost in Fire. We expected the real tongues of fire as they had on the day of Pentecost in the Bible. We expected a physical appearance of fire when we received such baptism. We did not receive it. We adjourned that meeting and I did not want to go in another pulpit after that. And I did not, and I have not yet been in another pulpit.

I then went into the coal mines and went to work. I went to work for the Fordson Coal Company. I worked there a year. I left there and went up to Lynch and Benham, Kentucky. I worked

there about six months. I was very unsettled, very unhappy because I had no training for this kind of work. My training was for the ministry and I had given that up. My whole life seemed to come to an end. I did not seem to be trained for anything. Going back into "normal" and retraining for school teacher did not interest me in the least. I did not care about being a school teacher. And I know that I never again could walk into a pulpit and preach with the fervent faith that I formerly had because I had completely lost that faith. I did not argue that it could not be gotten, I did not argue that religion was wrong, I did not argue that churches were not right. I just argued that I did not reach what I thought the Bible taught. And if I could not reach what the Bible taught, I could not honestly preach; and therefore, I could not be a minister any more. And that decision was firm, and I never changed that from that day until this.

I finally returned to my father's home which my father now has sold. He moved to Barbourville, Kentucky. He got considerable money for his farm and his timber. My father was, what would be called in that country, wealthy. He bought several other homes in town. My sisters under me could be near the town school, so they both became school teachers. My two brothers who are still under them, went through high school but did not become interested in school teaching. With my father, we put up a store in

Barbourville for a very short while, about six months. And I was just as unhappy in that store as I was if I was in the pulpit. I did not want to sell groceries.

One day a man came through on his way to Detroit, Michigan. And I asked him about Detroit, and he had been in Detroit before, and he encouraged me to go with him. I told him if he would stay all night with me I would. And he did stay all night. The next day I made arrangements with my father to take over the store and the next day I left my wife, and now I had one baby less than a year old. It was born in January and this was in the fall of that year, 1924. This was, in fact, just after Christmas. It was January, about January the 3rd or 4th. I landed in Detroit January the 8th, 1925. I was restless.

I first went to work for the Ford Motor Company in Highland Park, and that is the first time in my life that I ever saw a new jungle. A jungle that was far worse in my thinking than the jungle back 12 miles from Barbourville, Kentucky, or even 45 miles back in those high timbers of Red Bird because here I met humanity. I met people that I could not talk to because they could not understand me. And every person I spoke to, the first answer there was, "What part of the South are you from?" I wondered why they said that because at that time it did not occur to me that my manner of speech was so easily detected. You had everything in the Ford Motor Company. You had practically every foreign language you could think of, Polish, Italian, Hungarian, Serb and

many others. I was working in the Powerhouse Department, taking red-hot metal from the furnace. They heated this metal and handed it to a power hammer man who hammered it into an axle -- a T-Model Ford axle, 1925.

A buddy came up with me, there was another one who came with me from my home town. There were three of us who came up here. One who was just passing through and me and another man named Carter. He only lasted one day on this job, and he quit. He went back to Kentucky. I stayed on the job for about three weeks. Then I got my identification card. I went to the time keeper's office, they called it, and I said, "Write out my time, I'm quitting." And they asked me why I was quitting, and I told them because "This is not for human beings. Human beings are not supposed to work on a thing like this. This is for something else. It is not a place for man to work, and I am not going to work like this. If that is the way I am going to live, I don't want to live. I do not want to work here." But they talked me out of quitting and gave me a job in the office as a time clerk. I came in the next day dressed up as a time clerk and stayed on that job for about three months, under a man by the name of Mr. McGinley. The general superintendent of production was named Drysdale. Mr. Drysdale had taken a liking to me and begged me to go back on production and learn to become a supervisor. He told me that he had built himself up from the bottom. He was now getting $12,000 a year, and that I too could do that. I asked him how long it would take and he said he did not know, but it might take four or

five years. I asked him how long it would take to become a foreman, and he said, "It depends on how fast you learn. In my opinion you can become a foreman in six months because I will move you around from different jobs so you learn all the jobs. I will make a job-setter out of you."

So, I left the office and went to work for Mr. Drysdale as a job-setter. As a job-setter, I ran into another problem. And really this problem occurred first in this office where the office workers were not supposed to eat outside with the production workers. Then on the job-setting, it was the same segregation. The job-setters did not eat with the production workers either. I faced this problem up to Mr. Drysdale, and he said that was a rule when I could not eat with the other group. I had to eat with my group. I rebelled against this and that incurred an argument with Mr. Drysdale and I quit. I only worked there on this new job that was going to build me up to supervisor, I only worked a little over a week till I ran into this question of not being able to sit with whoever I wanted to during lunch hour. That was the only reason I quit Ford, it was just that, because I could perhaps have done well if I had done well and built up as a supervisor. But I could not accept that.

Then I peddled milk in Detroit, beginning in that summer of 1925 around June. I peddled milk a very short while at Shelhoff Cream until fall. Fall came and I went to work for the Murray Corporation and learned my first trade. That was the first time

I ever had a trade outside of my ministry. I learned to be a metal finisher. I got my brother-in-law up here and trained him as a metal finisher. I worked there for about a year and a half and then went to Briggs. I worked at Briggs for some while and then quit again and went back to peddling milk three years and then went back to Briggs again.

I was at Briggs in 1932, during the depression. In '30 I did not work at all. There was no work. I was called back in '32. I was out two years. I was called back in '32 in the fall. I heard of a union, and that was the first time I ever heard of a union. Never knew there was such a thing. Even though I worked in the coal mines, I had heard very little about the unions in the coal fields. I had heard that there had been a union there, but it had smashed, but there was nobody that discussed the union where I worked. I did not even know who John L. Lewis was, even though he was from my part of the country. I had not had enough interest to know what the meaning of John L. Lewis was. I did not know a thing about him. Then, I began to inquire as to what was this union and what was its duties, what did it do, and they told me that if we had a union in the shop, the people would get better wages, there would be better working conditions, etc. I agreed all of that was needed and needed very badly. I had read financial reports of the income of these companies and I felt that certainly improvement could be made.

There was no such thing as seniority in the shop; there was no such thing as the oldest man working the longest, or in the lay offs, laying off the men with the least seniority. The word

seniority was not in the dictionary as far as the automobile shop was concerned. When you were laid off, you never knew whether you would get back to work or not. If you got back to work, you may be hours before you even went to work, and you only got paid for the hours that you worked. I remember in that same fall of 1932, we would meet the boss at the gate every morning asking him to work that day. He would be waiting for us there, and he would tell us whether to go in and whether to stay out. Sometimes he would say to come in and when you got in, you would still stay in there three or four hours without working and finally you would get a chance to go to work. The wage structure had completely changed during this two years of depression. The wage structure now had changed to what they called a gang bonus system, and the metal finishers started out at 45¢ an hour and the gang bonus. I believe one time I received some where around two or three per cent on this 45¢ called gang bonus which gave me about 48 or 49 cents. I do not recall ever drawing it more than once. Then they did away with this gang bonus.

I was transferred to the Highland Park Plant, finishing the balloon body of the Ford car. There were 120 of us on that one line, there were 400 and some metal finishers on the three lines on that floor. We were cut to a strict gang bonus and no base rate whatsoever. No one knew what he was getting. We were told by the boss that he did not know what we were getting, that it was a gang system and they could only figure it out at the end

of the day as to how much was made that day. And it had to go through several bookkeeping systems and it might be several days before it is reported. Anyway, when payday came, we still did not know what we were earning or what we were going to draw until we actually got the check. And for 101 hours I drew $25.25. I then knew whatever the gang bonus was, it was no good. I at least knew that. It was no good. Then I really became interested in the union.

Up until then I had heard about it, but was not particularly interested. I had heard of the Industrial Workers of the World. I ran into a boy who told me what their address was and I went down there, and I met a man by the name of F. R. Cedarvoll and I joined the IWW. And I immediately went into organizing. This was at the end of November, 1932. And by January 23, 1933, I had all the metal finishers organized. Practically all of the power hammer employees which in those days hammered out the wrinkles in fenders and tops of automobiles before we metal finishers took it and finished the metal. We had approximately nine hundred members in the Briggs Mack Avenue Plant.

What caused the strike? The last day we worked was on Sunday. We had been working seven days a week for several weeks. On this Sunday the boss demanded that we work overtime. Now we had already been working 14 hours a day, but we did not want to work overtime on Sunday. He insisted that we do work overtime, and he said that if we did not work overtime that Sunday, to not to come to work Monday morning. So we did work till ten o'clock

Sunday night. We were told to be back the next morning at seven. And that period between the argument with the boss which was around three-thirty Sunday afternoon and ten o'clock that night, we all whispered around and mutually agreed to come in Monday morning but not go to work and not take our tools out of the tool crib. That was understood and agreed.

So when we came in Monday morning, not a metal finisher, not a power hammer man took a tool out of the tool crib. And in those days all workers had their tools out of the tool crib in order to go to work. He was supposed to get there before work time early enough to get his tools out of the tool crib and be on the job when the whistle blew. We were there, but we did not take a single tool out. The boss came down and asked us what the matter was. And we told him that we wanted to negotiate an agreement, that we would not have to work this kind of overtime and we wanted to know exactly how much an hour we were going to get. We wanted a set rate per hour. And he asked us, "How much is that?" And we told him, "We want 55 cents an hour." Within a short while the crib man closed the crib and left the crib. He was instructed by the company to do so because he was not a member of our group.

Then the boss came down and told us we were all fired, straight down the line, "Go to the paymaster's office, all of you." Well, we did not go to the paymaster's office, we spread ourselves throughout the entire shop and told everybody we were fired, all the metal finishers, nearly everybody walked out. And

in about fifty minutes we had 9,000 people on Manchester all out. We had not prearranged for any union hall or any place for anyone to go, no gathering place or anything. Immediately, I and several of the other boys spread out, looking for a place to have a meeting. We searched around and we found an old theater on the corner of John R and Victor. We arranged and got the latch cut and got everything arranged within a couple of hours, so people would come there for a meeting. In the meantime, we had other people walking up and down Manchester with brooms they borrowed from restaurants and with a sign on it that they had handwritten, "Don't leave Manchester until you get notice of meeting." That way we helped them on Manchester for that two and a half hours that we got a place for them to meet. Then we changed the signs on the brooms and there were about fifteen brooms being carried up and down Manchester. Then we changed the sign "Go to union hall, corner of Victor and John R." And of course, the union hall did not even begin, the theater did not even begin to hold the people. It held just a fraction of our people. But they milled around there, some four or five thousand people. We organized our picket captains, we set up committees, we did the necessary things of which the IWW leadership was experienced in.

We also had in our midst another union which we were not familiar with and that was known as the Auto Workers' Union, which seemed to have no membership in our shop but seemed to have a large membership in the Mack Avenue Plant, of which we knew very little about. At least we met that day a man by the name of Phil

Raymond, and he told us that he was the secretary of the Michigan Auto Workers' Union. And he told us that we should set up picket captains, we should have a picket line, we should set up a kitchen for cooking and so forth. And of course, F. R. Cedarvoll of the IWW gave us the same information, so it was not very long that we had these many little details organized. The next day the Mack Avenue Plant struck, which was struck actually by the Auto Workers' Union, not the IWW because as far as I know the IWW did not have one member in the Mack Avenue Plant. All union members, whatever they had which we never did know how many they did have, but whatever it was, it was Auto Workers' Union members. All the picket signs were Auto Workers' Union.

We then organized a Joint Council of the Mack Avenue and the Highland Park Plants. We met over on Mack Avenue and Lillibridge. In our group there were about twelve and in the Mack Avenue Plant there were about forty. We were very great in the minority. And there we saw that the Auto Workers' Union was really the power, and that we were very small compared to them. We were convinced that they had a greater membership than we had. We even discussed among ourselves if we should not all become Auto Workers because we did not feel that this kind of division of two unions, when we really did not have any union, if both got together it did not mean anything, there would be an error. Now we mutually agreed that we would all then join the Auto Workers' Union, and we did. We did all join the Auto Workers' Union. We did not throw away our Wobbly cards, at least I did not, but I

also was willing to join the Auto Workers' Union too, in order to keep down any dissension. So was the other leadership. Of course, F. R. Cedarvoll did not go for that. We went against his orders, but we did it in spite of him and in spite of his advice. We all joined the Auto Workers' Union. Then, unbeknown to us in a way, all leadership, chairmanships, and most all directions were from the Auto Workers' Union.

Then in a short while, which I cannot recall now exactly the length of time, but we were faced with Governor Comstock's State Police. One morning about three hundred of Comstock's State Police showed up at the Highland Park Plant. They were all the way over to Victor from Manchester and none of us boys could get closer to the Mack Avenue Plant than Victor, which is one block away from the plant. The plant is on Manchester. We tried several times to break the line. We organized and did break the line finally, but several of our boys got their heads smashed in, some went to the hospital, one became permanently deranged, and many went to jail, but we did get back on the picket line. We re-established our picket line. Then an order came through from the State perhaps that we were allowed a round circle of pickets on Mack Avenue, as long as we did not interfere with the exit of the plant. At that time, Mr. Ford himself visited the Mack Avenue Plant. He had a tremendous escort to escort him in the John R entrance of the Highland Park Plant. It was then the State Police which had been there about a week.

One certain morning, it might have been a Monday, I do not recall now, or it might have been some day through the week; but one morning our picket line was faced with about two hundred State Police, each one with a pocketful of Briggs workers' badges. And they began to walk up to our pickets, right on the line, and call the boy's name, pull him to one side, and pin a badge on the lapel of his coat. It was not his badge; it was just a badge. And told, "Take this badge and go in there and go to work or you are through as far as Briggs is concerned. You will never work there as long as you live." And for some reason they were able to call him by his name. They amazed us. They seemed to know the man's name; they never failed to call the man's name when they called him out of the picket line. It would scare the worker and the worker would go in. And with that campaign, within three days they completely broke our picket line. They had everybody back to work with the exception of about eight hundred of us which they never asked to go to work, they never pinned any badge on. They did not want us in the first place. We had a conference. At that time, Detroit Briggs came out with a full page ad in the Detroit News saying that they were willing to call off this strike and not discriminate against anybody. They were willing to meet the ones on the outside. We formed a committee of which I was on and another boy by the name of Leon Pody, which was assistant to Dick Leonard for some time. Little John Anderson was on the committee which was president of Local 15 for a good many years. The three of us and others I don't remember because in future

years they faded out and I can only remember those two which I was continually associated with after that. We met with Briggs and Briggs assured us that all of us boys would be returned to work immediately as soon as the jobs opened up. It might be a few days before we got called back, but we would all be called back to work. And we went home waiting for our call, but the call never came. Not a single one of us was ever called to work. I then realized that I was all through.

So, I went back to the Mack Avenue Plant, which I had been transferred from, interviewed the Industrial Relations man there and he told me they had nothing whatsoever against me and they would call me back to work just as soon as possible. But they had to be very careful where they put me because the workers in the shop might kill me. The workers in the shop now hated me because I had caused them to lose so much time. And he said, "We have to be very careful, Mr. Jones, where we put you because the workers in the shop may kill you. They hate you so bad." I really did not believe anything he said. Neither did I believe that he was going to put me back to work. I continued searching for work. I finally found a job at the Hudson Motor Car Company at their Hudson Body Plant on Harper, just a few days before the following Christmas, which was close to a year. In fact, I think it was five days before Christmas, and I got the job, metal finisher. Before I had worked two hours, I observed a person standing straight behind me. He stared at my back and finally worked himself around

to stare at a side view of me. He never did get straight in front of me because he could not because my front was facing the wall on the work bench where I was metal finishing. Then he left and in about twenty minutes another person came and told me they wanted to see me down at the office and to bring my tools with me. I put all my tools in the tool box and went down to the office and I was informed that they did not want me. So the most I got there was about three hours of work.

I began to believe that from other employment offices I had gone to before that, that there was a possibility of photographs of my picture in these employment offices because many places I found they needed metal finishers, and they would say, "Just a moment." And then after a few moments they would say they did not need any. So I became suspicious that there was a possibility that they were able to identify me just at their windows. I was not able to get a job any more. That was near Christmas.

Neither was I able to get a job in January of the next year, nor February. Finally, in March of the next year I got a job. This is 1935. I got a job at Budd Wheel under the name of Walter Loper. Apparently, they missed my identification if they had one. So, I was successful in getting into that shop on the Dodge line. They had the contract building the Dodge body. This body was swung to the ceiling. This first time I ever saw a continuous circle line about three hundred yards long. Like a wheel the bodies were swung to the ceiling and they traveled,

went around and around. And that was the beginning of the moving production line for the body. They had already had the moving production line in effect for fenders which they had taken off the work bench, for the front parts which they had taken off the work bench and the other parts of the body. They had already taken all of those off of work benches and had moved them to moving belts, moving lines. But this was the first time I ever saw the whole automobile body on a moving line. I had not heard of it in any other plant either. In that plant, and at that time, wages had built up considerably in the Detroit area and we were better off. We were getting 80 cents an hour as a metal finisher.

Looking around, I found a couple more IWW's working on this line -- no Auto Workers. I did not see any of them. So me and these other two wobblies were successful in organizing all the metal finishers on that line, which was around four hundred. We organized a sit-down, or a stoppage, we did not call it a sit-down. We just came to work and when the whistle blew at seven o'clock, we did not go to work. We were all at our work station; but when the line started moving, we still had not opened our tool boxes. We had not put any tools into the body; we just stood there and let the bodies go by. Of course, the line did not move over fifteen minutes until unfinished bodies were moving into the finished area of the line. The boss came running down the line and asked us what was wrong. He stopped the line. None of us cared to identify ourselves as leaders because we knew if we did, we would be fired.

He asked me what was wrong, and I told him I did not know. It just looked like nobody wanted to work. He asked others and I do not think he ever got any better information than he got from me or any better answer.

Finally, he came back again and asked us all to huddle in one place and let the superintendent talk to us. So, he gathered us together where an automobile body that an inspector did not pass was pulled off the line and set to one side. And this superintendent got up on top of this body, made a platform up there so it wouldn't mash in the body and got up on top of it to speak to us. And the four or five hundred of us were gathered around the body. And he told us, "I know why you stopped, because 80 cents you feel is not enough money." And he said, "Boys, I want to tell you we do not have the bugs out of this body yet. We are not making money. But just to show you that we are on your side and we feel that you need more money, we will give you another nickel. We will give you 85 cents. Now go on back to work." He started crawling off the body. And of course, we never moved. We still looked as though we were waiting for another speaker. And he kept looking at us and saying, "Are you going to work?" We would not say yes or no. We just sat there because we had already whispered among ourselves after the 5 cent proposal was made to remain in our positions and not move. That already went around the ring of which he did not know. And we did not move.

He allowed us to stay in that position for about fifteen minutes before he came back himself and crawled back upon that body. Now when he crawled back on the body, he said, "This looks like you boys know what you want but won't tell me. You are putting me in an unfair position. I am not going to stand up here and bid for your labor. Why don't you form a committee and come in and see me and let's negotiate. And if you boys will get together, I will get off of this body and I will leave and you can get together and form the committee. And then the rest of you go on back to work and the committee will come down to my office. I will negotiate with you, whatever you want, and I will see if we can get together. If we cannot get together, you stop the line again." He crawled down again. Again we whispered around and we never moved. We were in no mind of forming any committee because we knew that committee would get fired. And we still stared at where there ought to be a speaker but was not any speaker, and we still never moved. This time he let us stare for about an hour.

It was fully an hour before there was a reception again. And the next time it was a new man. He was supposed to be the plant manager. He came and he got up on top of the body and he said, "Boys, take it or leave it. I am going to give you a 10 cent raise which is 90 cents an hour. Take it or leave it. If you do not want it, you are fired. Get out. I will hire more metal finishers. If you want it, go to work. That is all,

boys." And he got off. We whispered around and we agreed we would take it. So, we went to work.

We worked for about a week and we pulled almost identically the same thing again, with the exception that we did it at the noon hour. This time we felt a little braver and we had formed a committee. And we told again when they asked us what we wanted, and we told them that all we wanted was recognition of our committee. "We do have a committee, and they are willing to identify themselves. And we want to negotiate." They refused to do that. But they did agree to give us another nickel, which made it 95 cents. We took the 5 cents and went back to work without our committee being recognized and continued that way for about three weeks.

In the meantime, we were trying to get other people into our union. Then for some reason they had, and we do not yet know how, they had found out who our leadership was and we were all picked off one at a time and fired. I was one of them. And I guess that was pretty well the end of unionism at that particular time at the Budd Wheel Plant. Again I was without a job.

The government had set up the NRA, National Relations Act, of which the union had an appointee on that board by the name of Mr. Bird. And the manufacturers had their man, I do not remember which was which, but one was Nicholas Kelly, and the government had a man by the name of Mr. Wolman. I went down and interviewed these three men in the First National Bank Building, I believe.

Bird talked to the manager of the Briggs Industrial Relations and he agreed for me to come down there. I went down there. I fell for that again, and was interviewed by this Industrial Relations man, which I should know well. Again he promised me a job in such a way that he led you to believe he was telling the truth, even though he lied to me so many times previous. Yet I fell for it. And I wasted about three weeks going back over to his place about twice a week until finally I woke up. It was the same old game he had played with me two years previous and he had no intention of hiring me. Then I went back to the board again.

And again I talked to Mr. Bird, the labor representative of this board, and Mr. Bird told me he had just what I wanted. He said that the plant manager of Motor Products, a man by the name of Mr. Kelso wanted a union man. He did not want an anti-union man. He wanted a union man. He said, "Now, Lloyd, this is the pitch. There are already three or four unions in Motor Products. And Mr. Kelso wants to build the Auto Workers' Union - AFL." And he said, "I know you belong to the IWW, but you would join the Auto Workers, wouldn't you? If you are willing to join the Auto Workers and go in there and organize the Auto Workers' Union, Mr. Kelso will give you a job. He will not only give you a job, he will give you time off to work around among the boys and organize them." I told him I would accept the job. I would be glad to accept it. And I did accept it.

I went in and he had a special job for me welding the window frame where it was butt welded together. Sometime the butt weld was loose. It did not contact right. So it was my job to weld it better or else complete it to where it would pass inspection and then to metal finish it, file it off, grind it, put it into position to fit the body. In other words, it was metal finishing in a different sense, but it was a much easier metal finish than small metal finishing. The little welding went along with it, of which I was experienced in welding. Now the only ones I had to do were just the frames that failed to get butt welded in the first place and get polished and get ground off through the regular procedure that was used in the shop. So, sometimes there would be three and four hours I didn't have a single panel to work on. And that was it. That was the way it was supposed to be. That was the hours that I was supposed to browse around among the boys and get them into the union.

Of course, my first job was to go over and get in the union myself, which I did. I went over and talked to the local boys. And there were only about seven or eight who belonged to the union. I went over and joined the union and the very night that I joined, the boys made me the secretary-treasurer of the local. They did not have a local in the first place. They had no treasury. They did not have even a dollar in their treasury; but anyway, I was their secretary-treasurer. I had many talks with the boys which is only five or six or seven in the union. We would go out to the beer garden and sit. And I told them my background experience, and

they thought we ought to be able to organize this plant, and we ought to be able to organize it within a very short while. And they agreed that they had had a union in there before, but lost it. At one time they had a considerable number, perhaps five hundred members, but they had lost them all. In the Auto Workers they had had a strike. And it had destroyed their union. They did not have any members now. So, I set up an Organization Committee and started organizing. I went to work there in March. By November the fifth, I had better than two thousand members out of 3,500 employees. We struck the plant, November the fifth, 1935. We have a very disciplined strike. We had good picket lines. We were well and solidly organized.

At that time when we struck, Dick Frankensteen did not have a member in that shop that we knew of, never heard anyone say that they belonged to Dick Frankensteen's Union or Art Greer's Union either. We had never heard of anybody belonging to either of those two unions. Dillon was then the opponent president of this new Auto Workers' Union under the AFL charter. It was after Dillon's representative had recommended that we go back to work without any gains, that then Dick Frankensteen called a mass meeting. He ran a fly leaf on our picket line and distributed leaflets all among our pickets and our slackers, calling for a special mass meeting of his union at the Schiller Hall on Gratiot near Vernor Highway. I believe it is at the corner of St. Aubin. Apparently, all of our members went to that meeting, at least the hall was full. And at that meeting he told them that if they would join his union that

he would guarantee them 25 cents an hour wage increase. And it appeared to me that they all joined. It looked about that way to me, that they all joined.

We had not yet asked for anything because we had not had a chance to have a conference to ask for anything, but we had intended to settle for 10 cents. And we had told our members that if we could get 10 cents, we would go back to work. We had told them that just talking among them. And of course, it was generally conceded that even if we got a nickel, we would go back to work because we had been out for over a month. As long as we could hold the organization together, but Dick told them that he would get them 25 cents, so they joined his union. Well, it was the same human beings, and it was the same picket lines, and the same faces on the picket except it was just another union. But we were still on the picket line. That went on for some more weeks. Apparently, during all this period these boys were faithful members of both unions. The union hall and the mess kitchen, the kitchen at picket headquarters were AFL Local 89 and all the activity was Local 89 and yet on the picket line there was signs of both unions and that seemed to be the only activity of the new union. It did not contribute anything to the pickets or to the kitchen. In fact, we had our own committees that went out on farms and got cabbage and potatoes and things like that for our kitchen where we fed the people. There was no change in anything it appeared to us, except that somebody was willing for

a new face to show up in a conference room if there could be a conference, but up until now there had never been a conference in the first place. Because Mr. Kelso had not agreed to meet anybody.

Mr. Kelso had sent out a complaint around among us that we had so many unions he did not know which one to negotiate with. It was then that I realized that Mr. Kelso's plans in the first place for me to come in there was to make it just that way -- so many unions that no union could rightfully claim jurisdiction over the rank-and-file and in that way he could break all the unions. And I called Mr. Kelso by telephone and told him so. I said, "I see what your real reason is. You did not want a union in the first place. You wanted so many unions that there would be no union. Well, we are going to give you a god damn union whether you like it or not." So we remained there. We fought.

Then there was a meeting of a third union, the AFL Polishers' Union. They voted to forget about all of us and go back to work. It was then that Ed Hall, the secretary-treasurer of the UAW-AFL, had instructions to call a special mass meeting of us and sell us on going back to work because if we did not go back to work the Polishers' Union was going to go back to work and was going to cause general chaos. And we helped that special mass meeting and voted to go back to work without any concessions from the company, without any agreements of any kind. And we voted to

go back to work because we were afraid by the polishers going back that it would ruin everything. And we went back to work, and everybody went back to work. But about the second or third day, I am not sure which, Dick Frankensteen's outfit walked out, back out on strike again. Apparently, it was the afternoon shift. I was on the day shift. It was the afternoon shift that phoned the picket line before quitting time and I looked out and saw a picket line on the outside. So, we got mad because they did it unbeknown to us. It looked like they were trying to frame us into a position of calling us scabs. So, we all walked out before quitting time, wanting to know what this picket line was about. And that caused the strike to start all over again. Nobody would go back to work the next morning. It was then that Kelso had the State Police to bring horses inside the shop and they brought bales of wheat and straw in there for the horses to lay on; and apparently, they were intending to try to break the strike by a scab system. And it was then that our people became so confused between the Auto Workers' Union and the UAW and Dick's Union, the AIW, and then we heard of a few Art Greer's members, we began hearing about that until the people did not know what to do. Matt Smith's Union was not effective here although we did have men in the shop, but they went along with us. They walked our picket line and supported us all the way through in the strike.

Then, Matt Smith, Dick Frankensteen, Art Greer, and others of which I am not familiar with who they were got notice of a meeting and were invited to come to a meeting at the Schiller

Hall. I was told this meeting was not a meeting of the rank-and-file; it was a meeting of the leadership of the different unions in Detroit. I went to that meeting, and there for the first time, I met Matt Smith. I had never heard of Matt Smith before. I had heard of him, but I had never seen him. And I was told that what they wanted to do was to unite all these unions into one, otherwise we could not win strikes. Now this is after we were back on the picket line the second time. And again we had everybody out of the shop. There was no scabs. The proposal of MESA was that there be two grades of members -- one group would be called MESA No. 1 and another group be called MESA No. 2. And the No. 2 was going to be the production workers and No. 1 was going to be the skilled workers. I for one immediately got on the floor and told them that I would no more go for that kind of a union then I would go when I was in the Ford Motor Company, of sitting in a separate group when I ate my lunch. And that I felt that this was the same spirit, and the same kind of thinking, and it little mattered to me whether that thinking came out of the head of a union boss or come out of the head of a company boss. I felt it was the same kind of thinking. And I would not, under any circumstances, go along with anything like that. I was willing that we all get together in the union, and we should all be under one union. But I had no use for the AFL Trade Unions of about fifty different varieties, and that my hopes and my goal was that some

day we would have in all the automobile plants one union to negotiate with everybody. And if that is what they want, I am willing to surrender my membership in whatever I am now a member of and I told them, "I am a member of the Auto Workers' Union and I am also a member of the IWW. And I will surrender both, if we can get one union and everybody join that union and get back on that picket line and win that strike." Matt Smith would not go along with that. No, he would not go along with that. Neither would he go along with changing the name. It still had to be Mechanical Educational Society. We did not go for that because we did not think we were all mechanical or you could call a sweeper a mechanical; we did not know their meaning of the word mechanical hardly. We were not sure of how that word could fit in. We wanted something that said "United" instead of mechanical. We wanted the word "United" in our name. Well, anyway, that meeting got nowhere. That meeting broke up.

Then Dick called a meeting of his people and they voted to go back to work. But we would not let them go back to work. The next morning we were on the picket lines. We would not let Dick's people go back to work. We were successful in barring them, but there were some knocked in heads in that fight. And two days later Ed Hall called a special meeting, and we were told to go back to work, and we were supposed to go back to work, and then Dick's group would not let us go to work. And then Dick's group would not let us go back to work. So, that is when the

company started the campaign of getting boys to go to work in regard to unionism and scab. And they did. People became disgusted with unions and they had forsaken all unions and did go back to work, not many out of our membership. After the week or so of scabbing, we still had better than 2,000 out.

It was then that we had another organized whispered group among us, and that was called, "The Invisible Eyes of Labor." The president of my union, Loren Houser, told me that he was a member of a new organization that he was sure it could win this strike for us. And I said, "Well, who is that?" And he said, "Well, they are called the "Invisible Eyes of Labor." He said, "I want you to go to a meeting and see what you think of it." "Okay, I will go." So, I got in the car with two or three more and there also was another group there. They were standing around hearing this conversation so they jumped in cars and went too. But it was planned that way. They were already members. I did not think so. I thought they were just going for the same reason I was going, to see what this was all about. But it was not true. They were already members. There were three carloads that went to this meeting.

The meeting was in a private home. It was in a basement. And when we got there Houser knocked on the basement door and someone opened the door. And I was more or less pushed from somebody behind me and found myself in a dark room. There was not a single light in that room. You could not even see a white handkerchief in front of you. And then I was led over to

a certain place which I at the time did not know what part of the building I was in because you could not see down there. And I was told to get on my knees, and there was somebody else on their knees on my left side and also on my right side. And after I got down on my knees, the lights turned on.

When the lights turned on, there stood in front of me, a guy dressed up in a big garb like a Ku Klux Klan garb, all white with a big crown on his head. And on each side of him stood a sergeant of arms with a rifle, sitting with the butt down against the ground like a soldier would be when he is at ease. Behind me was a man with a pistol which he put up against my ribs. And I was told it was a gun, and that it was against my ribs. And then we were addressed by this robed man with a sort of like a lecture, taking him about five minutes to tell us of the great mystery of the "Invisible Eyes of Labor" that was organized in the days of the building of Solomon's Temple. And that they had been in existence ever since the days of Solomon's Temple. And that they were strong and they reached the four corners of the earth, and blah, blah, blah, blah. It sounded like Scripture more than it sounded like union. The kind of quotations they were giving. Then they went into a tirade of what happens to an unfaithful member. And they recited some of the most vicious manners of killing a person that I had ever heard of. Cutting out his guts and strawing him, and stretching him on a stretcher, and they just went on and on and on of what all happens to an unfaithful member. And then I was informed that I was already a

member and did not know it. A member was drafted by the choice of his fellow workers that qualified him under their principles. Then, after all of this, I was told to stand. There were three of us on our knees. We stood up, and then we were handed a bullet. And we were told that, "See, now we were now handed this bullet in peace. If you betray this organization, you will be handed this bullet through the power of the force sufficient behind it to go through you." They did not say power, but you could interpret it that you would be shot. I considered that a joke, got out of there, and I just considered it a bunch of stupid idiots had never interested me in the slightest bit, never saw another meeting, never was in another meeting, and never discussed it with any of my fellow workers. I might have cracked a joke with Lauren Houser, "Well, what kind of an idiot are you?" or something like that. But beyond that, I was not at any more of those "Invisible Eyes of Labor" meetings. That was the end of them for me.

Then, the boys suggested that since there were a lot of scabs going back to work, a lot of them were Catholic, a lot of them were "Invisible Eyes of Labor," and a lot of them were Ku Kluxers, a lot of them were IWW's, a lot of them were Auto Workers' Union; why don't we form a big committee and go down there about five o'clock in the morning, an hour before work time, with burning crosses in burning circles, so we would represent the Catholic as well as the Ku Klux, and let's hang them on that fence.

They had a picket fence around the Motor Products on Mack Avenue, but they had a larger high wire fence on the Warren Avenue side. And let's burn a cross over in Chandler Park as big as we can get it. And let's declare permanent war against Motor Products and let's see to it that no man scabs again. If he does, if killing is necessary, then kill him. We are not going to have any more scabs. I agreed to that program along with the rest of the boys.

We went out and got our lumber. We got us two, 2 by 6, 14 feet, nailed them together, sawed a notch out of them near the top of one of the 2 by 6 and put a 2 by 6 crossways, near the top of it. So, we had us a cross 14 feet high, and the crosspiece about 8 feet. We went over during the day and dug our hole and got it covered up with leaves so nobody during the day going into Chandler Park would see that hole. And that night we were prepared to do this. They used my house; I then lived on Gladwin. They used my house as the headquarters and in my house all night from about six in the evening until five the next morning we had about fifty gallons of fuel oil in my bathtub. We had it half full and we would pour more into it when we needed it. We soaked rags all night in fuel oil. And wrapped them around our crosses, and wrapped them around our circles. And wrapped that big cross we had. We had that big cross there in back of my yard so that nobody could see it. We intended to carry that around three o'clock in the morning, take it to Chandler Park, drop it in this big hole. And then we were going to have a guard there with a real gun to see to it that nobody took it out. And that was

going to be lit at six o'clock in the morning. Now it was winter. Six o'clock is early. It is not daylight yet. So, that was all done. The cross was carried over there, put in the hole properly.

Everything clicked perfectly. At 5:30, all of the crosses and all of the circles were hung on the picket fence on Mack Avenue and they were hung on the wire fence on Warren Avenue. And our guard was willing to kill and themselves so that no scab was going through regardless of what it cost. Even if it cost their own lives. We were serious. We meant it. We closed the gate. I was on the Warren Avenue gate and I was with the committee that closed the gate, put a chain around it, told the watchman to hand us the lock. He would not do it and we said, "Either hand it over or die." He handed it. We locked the gate. Boys on the Mack Avenue side did the same thing, and all of the crosses were lit. And all of the circles were lit. And of course, they did not burn long. They burned half an hour or so.

Anyway, it cluttered Warren Avenue and it cluttered Mack Avenue and all the traffic jammed. After a short while, there were several hundred cops there at both places, breaking the jam. And of course, we had our own automobiles crisscrossed all over Warren Avenue. We had our automobiles crisscrossed all over Mack Avenue. We did not intend to have any traffic go through. And no traffic did go through until about noon. But no scabs went to work either. And there were no scabs that went to work for about four or five days. There was not even one that went

to work. Finally, we were forced away from these picket lines by police at these gates. These gates were opened, and finally scabs began to go back in again.

It was then that the great John L. Lewis was holding his first meeting in Cleveland, Ohio. Announcing that he was going to become the head of a new organization known as the Committee for Industrial Organization of the Industrial Industries of America, including auto, steel, textile, cement, and all the rest of the industrial industries. I went to that meeting. I left here in the evening. We had a terrible snow that night. I got in a ditch on my way to Cleveland. I left here the day before so I was all that night in this ditch until the next morning. A farmer pulled me out and got me into Cleveland. The meeting was at night.

That was the first time I ever met John L. Lewis. I heard his speech, I thought it was the greatest speech I had ever heard in my entire life. I thought I had heard some of the greatest ministers in the world. I had heard Billy Sunday. I went to Bloomfield, West Virginia, and went in Billy Sunday's two week revival. I stayed there the entire two weeks just to learn his technique of preaching, his manner of speech, and kept all of his verbatim sermons, copied them by hand into my own handwriting so I could pick out what I thought was good. But Billy Sunday never could speak like John Lewis. And nobody else that I have ever heard could even begin to compare with John Lewis as a speaker.

I came back to Detroit just about as high in the air as a man could be but without a nickel in my pocket and without a job or anything else on earth. But I really believed that the world was changing, that the working class of this country was going to get a union. It was going to get a voice about their job and rights to negotiate and bargain. So, I pitched right in wholeheartedly on this. I was for it one hundred per cent because I did not care about the AFL as it existed anyway, and would not even have joined it in the first place if I had not already heard of the possibilities of John Lewis doing this at that convention in the fall of 1935, of which I had heard about even before I joined the UAW at Motor Products in March of that same year. I had already heard that there was a movement on, to do what Lewis was doing. And that was really, if it had not have been for that, I would not have accepted Kelso's proposition to join the Auto Workers in the first place.

So, what happened here? Then there was a campaign for a special convention of the UAW and to join John Lewis' Committee, and at that time there was no discussion of pulling out of the AFL. Lewis made it very clear that he had no intentions of pulling out of the AFL to set up and succeed in organizing the mass industries and he believed that once he organized the mass industries, the AFL would accept it as a reality and there would not be any kicking out of the AFL. So, on that basis we went to work. Well, what we wanted, we wanted autonomous convention of the auto workers.

There had only been one convention. That was an appointee convention. All the delegates were appointed by the AFL and it was not really a convention. It was a joke, and that was held in Detroit in 1935.

So, from my local, Local 89, Motor Products, I was elected as a delegate to this convention which was to be held in South Bend, Indiana, in April. And I did go. I hitchhiked down there. I had no money. I had not had any money for so long I did not know what the thing meant. I hitchhiked to South Bend. I slept in other people's rooms on the floor. I had no room of my own, never did have a room of my own all the time while I was at that convention. And as it turned out, I was elected as an International Board member. I and Walter Reuther from Detroit. And altogether, there was 11 board members elected, and one what they called "vacant chair." The resolution was passed that we leave a vacant chair on the Board of Directors to be occupied by whoever the independent unions wanted to put on, after the independent unions had got together themselves and agreed to join the UAW that they then elect from their group a man to take that vacant chair. Naturally, the convention adjourned.

Skeels: Before you went into the convention, was there much feeling that Homer Martin was going to be elected president?

Jones: Homer Martin is the only one that had made a campaign to become president. He had made an open campaign to be president. He made no bones in public speeches, made several speeches at

our Motor Products Factory. He could cry wonderful. Tears rolled out of his eyes in the big mass meeting of the Motor Products workers at the old Schiller Hall at Van Dyke and Mack. We heard Homer Martin that night. He did tell us that he was going to kick out Dillon and was going to become president. At this convention in South Bend, which was made up of three groups, stool pigeons, communists, and sincere trade unionists. Which of those forces was the greatest I yet would not be able to say. It turned out later that the chairman of the Constitution Committee was a stool pigeon. He was on the pay roll, I believe, at the Chrysler Corporation. It turned out that many of our members of the Arrangements Committee, of the Constitution Committee, and of many other committees were outstanding pay off men in various espionage organizations that the corporations had set up. By the way, the president of Plymouth Local 51 was a delegate there, and he was a pay off man for the Chrysler Corporation to the other espionage stools. And he was paid to be president by Chrysler and paid to see to it that that local did not get any bigger than a certain number of membership. Beyond that he reported it to the company so the company could fire them. They wanted a union, but they did not want it to get bigger than a certain size. That was the policy that Chrysler had. So between our stool pigeons and our communists and our trade unionists, we had a wonderful convention.

Skeels: Was Mortimer ever thought of as being a serious contender for the presidency?

Jones: Mortimer could have been the president at any time if he had wanted to have been. I wanted Mortimer. See, we had had national caucuses before this convention. I had met people from Cleveland. I had met them from Toledo. I would say that Cleveland, Ohio; Toledo, South Bend, and Wisconsin was ninety per cent of our union, fully ninety per cent. Michigan had nothing. The whole state of Michigan did not have as much union as South Bend, Indiana, alone. South Bend, Indiana, had more union than the entire state of Michigan. Michigan was without any organization. However, they had had under Dillon two or three years before that, I believe, over a hundred thousand members but they had all dropped out or all quit. This was to be done all over again.

So, Wyndham Mortimer called us in a caucus. We were going to draft Wyndham Mortimer as president in spite of him. And Wyndham got the wind of it that we were going to draft him. We had the votes. We counted our caucus and we had enough votes to draft him whether he liked it or not. Wyndham Mortimer got wind of it, and he called us to a caucus and he informed us that under no circumstances were we going to elect him president. And he explained, "You are a baby in the woods. You don't even have an organization. You don't have anybody organized in Michigan, and you will never succeed in organizing the auto workers with me as your head because the manufacturers will use me to prejudice the workers against you on your union because they will tell everybody that I am a member of the Communist Party." And he did

not deny that he was not a member and he did not say that he was, but he certainly left the impression that he probably was a member of the Communist Party because he did say once on the floor of the convention, "I would rather be a member of the Communist Party than to be a stool pigeon." And that is about as near to denial of being a member of the Communist Party that I ever heard Wyndham Mortimer give. So, there was no choosing him because he would not permit himself to be chosen. There was not, at that time, any belief that Homer Martin was a stool pigeon, not among the delegates. They would not have elected him if they had thought that.

Homer Martin had a good name among all us delegates, and I knew all the delegates. I do not think there was a delegate there that I did not know after I had spent time with them in national caucuses. Nobody believed that Homer Martin was a stool pigeon, but nobody believed that Homer Martin had stability. They knew he was a great speaker. We also had already known that he would say one thing today and something different tomorrow. We had already found in public speeches he had made around the country. He said one thing in one town and something a little different in another town. And we were already skimmish about that. But we also thought maybe that could be straightened out, that it would not continue. So, he was the only candidate for president. Oh, I believe South Bend did run. I believe South Bend, Indiana, did run a man for president.

After the adjournment of that convention, we all returned to Detroit, that is the delegates who were from Detroit, all enthused by the way the convention was handled and the adjournment of it. At the time, there seemed to be no thought of factionalism or there had not been any divided caucus groups, etc. It was all with one goal in mind, that was to organize the unorganized automobile workers of America. Soon after we returned to Detroit, we had our first meeting and our program was to set up an Organization Committee of fifty. We wanted to get, first, all the plumber people we knew who were experienced in labor organization and then we wanted to get other people into our group to build up at least a committee of fifty that we thought were willing to devote their time because we had no money. There was no money in the treasury. The best I remember, I think the financial report will show that we only had about $26,000 in the treasury of the international union at the time we returned to the Hoffman Building which was the headquarters then of the UAW in Detroit. And our paper was still being published in Cleveland, Ohio.

It was not long until we had brought in Dick Frankensteen representing his independent organization which had, I believe, about thirteen local unions. They had had a meeting. They had voted to amalgamate. They all came in as one group. But in the MESA we had difficulty. Currently, the MESA had two leaders who were about equal in influence among the so called Mechanical Educational Society of America's membership. That was Matt Smith and John Anderson. John Anderson was willing to come in

and accept things as was and take his chance in a meeting of all the independents as to whether he would fill this vacant chair. Dick Frankensteen also was willing to take his chance on that position. If you understand what I mean, the agreement was that once all of these independents agreed to amalgamate the UAW, they were to hold a conference of their own and elect a man to fill the vacant chair. Matt Smith, the secretary of the MESA, which apparently in their organization was really the boss of the organization. They did not have a president like the UAW. He was not willing to go along with taking his chances in a vote of all the independents in one conference. He insisted on a prenegotiated agreement that he be the one to get the vacant chair on the International Executive Board. Well, Dick Frankensteen, of course, would not go along with that, neither would John Anderson, nor any of the rest of the potential leaders of the future, such as R. J. Thomas who later became the president of the UAW, which then was in that group. Finally, they had to go out and take the MESA's vote by local unions of the MESA rather than in a conference as a whole because Matt Smith's influence was sufficient to prevent a membership meeting of the MESA on that subject. So, the result was that John Anderson went out and contacted the various local unions and all MESA organized unions within Detroit voted to come in spite of their superior officer, Matt Smith. And I believe there were about seven local unions that John Anderson was able to bring into the UAW. The membership he brought in was, I

believe, about one-third as large as the membership that Dick Frankensteen brought in. The group that Art Greer brought in really did not come in under the leadership of Art Greer. It was many other leaders in the Hudson Local. Art Greer happened to kind of be the fortunate one to be called the leader, but in reality there were many men in the Hudson group who were as capable, if not more capable than Art Greer; so they brought that group in. I would not say that Art Greer even had much influence on them coming in. I think the other people were the ones. And besides his organization only existed in the Hudson Plant. It may have had a few members other places, but it was not important.

So, it was that after Anderson went out and brought his in and the Hudson group came in, they had their meeting and they elected Dick Frankensteen by unanimous vote. He did not even have an opposition. John Anderson did not even run. And Dick Frankensteen came in and filled the vacant chair and the day he came in, the day he was sworn in, the board elected him as the organizational director of Detroit rather which was the beginning of a leadership pact between Walter P. Reuther and Dick Frankensteen. At the time, they were both just board members of the UAW. But, I am sure that Walter Reuther felt that he should have been the elected one to that position of organizational director of Detroit. However, that did not become any sharp issue in the immediate future of our organizational campaign.

Our immediate problem was to develop slogans for organization and to have open air mass meetings with speakers that could get up and just talk about unionism and organization. We felt that such meetings should not be in front of any factory or any plant, but should be in open parks where no boss if he saw an employee from his shop at such a meeting, could accuse him of being there for that purpose because it was a public park. A man than could have been there by accident with his wife and children and not necessarily there because of any knowledge that there was going to be a meeting. However, it was the job of the Organization Committee to inform all contacts and all people they knew in all shops to be at that meeting even though they were just supposed to be casually at the particular park. These open air meetings were every night, not just once a week, but every night in all of the public parks around Detroit --Clark Park, Chandler Park, and the other many parks. I do not think there is any park that I did not make speeches in during that organizational period. And this was an every night job of the members of the Organization Committee. Then, of course, we would have our meetings in the Hoffman Building, of the committee of fifty. And we would discuss and debate slogans, and I believe the most outstanding slogan that never died, and has not died yet in labor organization, that is, "Be wise -- organize." We felt that that struck home to any common worker that for some reason he seemed to not be wise unless he got organized. It seemed to be an insult to an ordinary

worker in the shop if he stayed back and left marked on him the opposite meaning to be wise, which would mean, of course, be dumb, stay unorganized. I frankly believe that that slogan did more for organizing the auto workers than the problems in the shop which was plenty. Wages were low, working conditions almost to the point of impossibility, and no question but what the auto industry was the most slave driven industry in the American economy. Nevertheless, I believe that "Be wise — organize" caused more people to join the union than even the issue of the problems in the shops.

We developed many other slogans, and we felt the need for songs and music. And we adopted the song written by an old member of the IWW. The song was "Solidarity Forever." I believe that it was Joe Hill that wrote that song. That song, in a sense, became the property of the Organizing Committee in the UAW and spread throughout all other industries, steel, glass, cement, rubber, and all the rest of them. It was a song that struck home to any picket line, struck home in any membership meeting. It never wore out; it has not worn out yet. It is still the song of the boys when they get together and are mad at the boss about something. Even when they strike in a wildcat strike, they will huddle together in a bar and start singing, "Solidarity Forever." Those are the two leading things which have out lived all other slogans, all other songs. Those two things are still living, that slogan, "Be wise — organize" and the song, "Solidarity Forever."

We had already spread pamphlets to practically every plant in Detroit. We were having public speeches in all these public parks. This went on for some time. We were not asking for membership. We were just spreading the news of unionism. But we realized that it was about time now for us to start concentrating on individual plants and begin to get people to sign up into the union. So, these assignments were allocated to various people. I was given all of the Bohn Aluminum Plants and Murray Corporation of America. That was my assignment in particular. There was no objection to helping anyone else anywhere. But particularly, it was necessary for me to report on these particular plants, what was going on and what I was doing.

The first plant that I concentrated on was a Bohn Aluminum Plant on Michigan Avenue at 23rd. This plant was very small. I believe it had somewhere around 1,200 employees. In a very short while, we had that plant organized. In the meantime, we were in the process of organizing the other plants. In the Murray Body, which had around seven thousand employees, I only had about eight or ten key people in the union. At that time we would sign these people up at only a dollar to join the union, and it was not hard to get a dollar out of the people in those days to get into the union. However, while I was busy organizing the Bohn Aluminum Plant on 23rd and Michigan, the stool pigeons were busy in Murray's, hunting out the Organizing Committee. They seemed to sense that somebody was active within their plant.

We struck the Bohn Aluminum Plant with a sit-down strike in December, 1936. There had already been a strike going on in Flint which had not yet terminated. The Flint strike was going during this period when our sit-down strike was going on. I am not sure. At that particular time it seems as though the joining of the union was slowing down some. Many thousands of workers were giving us an answer, "Wait, let's see what happens in Flint." That was our problem in Briggs. That was our problem in Murray Body, and that was also our problem in all the big industrial plants; but not too much our problem in small plants. We seemed to be getting along very well in those. In fact, I had an active committee in all the Bohn Plants. They had seven plants at that time. I had an active committee in Fry Products, and also had an active committee in a small plant on Joseph Campau. But the committee in Murray Body was discovered by the corporation and all the whole group was fired, every last one of the members of that committee was fired. At that time it consisted of nine. It was not too long, however, before we discovered which one of the nine was the stool pigeon that reported the other eight, even though the stool pigeon himself allowed himself to get fired which we discovered later.

The sit-down strike in Bohn Aluminum was progressing well. Everybody stayed in the shop. We were able to get soup and food to them and feed them. We were able to go out and buy about a hundred pair of skates. We gave them roller skates, and they

used that for exercise. We had committees inside the shops that did the housework and arranged for their lunches and kept the things running properly so they would be in no kind of attack by the employer or the city officials or anyone else of the conduct of the sit-down strike. You must remember that this plant had about as many women in it as it did men. It was very important to us that the morals of the male and female remained normal in that plant during this period when they were staying in there 24 hours a day. These things we were extremely successful in, and there never was any kind of a scandal in any of our sit-down strikes where males and females were involved in staying in the plant 24 hours per day. We had matrons and we had police bosses of our boys and girls that saw to it that that one thing was cared for to prevent any kind of a scandal that might prevent us from being successful in organizing the unorganized.

This company finally surrendered and called us into conference and I called Dick Frankensteen, the organizational director. He came down and the day before Christmas we signed what was the first contract that I ever was able to sign in the auto industry. Up to then, all I had ever done was lose a strike. I began to think that you weren't supposed to win them; you were supposed to lose them. That one I won, and that is the first victory that I ever had in the labor movement. That was my day of encouragement beyond any hopes that I had had up to that time. It encouraged my organizational efforts, it doubled my energy in determination to organize the other plants.

In fact, the next day after the settlement of that strike, which was on Christmas, I hung around the Murray Plant all day in overalls and my Murray badge hanging on me, although I was not an employee of the Murray Corporation. The following week I was there day and night, in all of the bars I was still acting as a worker. I kept my hands dirty, my face marked, and within a very short while I had the new committee set up, and then things began to pop in other plants. We had another sit-down strike in the plant on Joseph Campau, which was a short duration strike and a contract signed there. Then, the third plant of Bohn Aluminum on Hart Street was our third successful organization.

Membership was continuing in Murray. Men now were brave enough to come to closed membership meetings--mass meetings of the rank and file. We were able to put out pamphlets in front of the shop and announce that we were going to speak that night at a certain hall, and the hall would be full of Murray workers who were not afraid to come in. We did not have union halls in those days; we had to rent public halls because the unions did not have enough money to own a hall. We could rent. About the third or fourth public organization meeting I had in Murray was in the old IOF Hall on Brush. Someone threw a tear gas bomb through the window into the middle of the hall and there was somewhere around seven or eight hundred people in the meeting. They got out. We went out, stood on the concrete steps, the front porch of the hall, and still continued our speaking, and the people still stayed there. None of them left that I could notice.

We still had around seven hundred people at eight-thirty, nine o'clock at night standing around while I and others made speeches in the open air. Practically every person that was in that meeting joined the union either that night or the next day because they were mad because that tear gas bomb was thrown through that window.

Instead of that tear gas bomb scaring them, if that was thrown by an agent of the company, it was the greatest favor that they ever did us because that was the beginning of real organization in Murray. For the next three or four days, twelve and fifteen of us outside the plant and some fifty inside the plant were busy writing up members, signing them up into the union. We were successful to organize our Gate Committees, our Strike Committees. We knew where we were going to have a strike.

Long before this, we were putting out union buttons in the shop. We were telling all of our people to keep their buttons hid secret. They may get fired. After while, we had so much strength in the shop that we announced in a public meeting that on a certain day, which was yet several days in the future, we were going to have what was called "Button Day." And on "Button Day" everybody in the shop was to fly open their jackets or their shirt, or their coat, or run their hand in their pocket and draw out their button, pin it on their chest and boldly face the boss with a union button on his chest. There was much campaigning on "Button Day." "Button Day" was the word everywhere. It was

natural the boss was wondering what "Button Day" was going to show--how many people were going to show to be members of the union. Well, when "Button Day" came, bosses, after the union was organized, told me in conversations that the very ones that they thought were in the union, had no button. The very ones they were positive that had not joined the union, pinned a button on their chest and looked him right in the face and said, "I am the guy who has joined the union." There was no man discharged on "Button Day." In the shop at that time were around seventy-five hundred employees. We had about twenty-five hundred in the union. Not a soul was discharged.

However, we were well aware that they would be discharged within a very short while if we did not now strike. "Button Day" was intended to first show the company our strength before we called on the workers for a strike. We did not want to call a strike first and let them guess how many members we had. We wanted them to know how many members we had before we struck. So, after "Button Day" it was only a matter of two or three days until the day came which no one knew among the seven thousand workers at Murray what shift and what aisle we were going to strike, except I, myself. I had an Organization Committee of 65. Not one member of that Organization Committee knew when I was going to strike the plant. I did not take a chance on any one of the entire membership, fearing that it may be the wrong one and be exactly the one that would probably inform the company and

throw guards against the strike and prevent us from succeeding in closing down the plant. We had key men to lock, previously arranged, to lock each of the seven gates at the Murray Corporation. We had key men arranged to turn off the electric power in all of the floors and all of the buildings of the Murray Corporation. There was not a single detail that we had not worked out and planned in advance.

We told them exactly what part of the preceding of the strike where they fit in to do these things. In fact, all of the Organization Committee was instructed that every hour they come to the window and look out on Russell. Now the Murray Corporation plants faced Russell and the building was seven stories high. The leaders, the 65, were instructed to come to the windows every hour and look out on Russell, and if it was ready for the sit-down strike, they would see me in front of that building that is now torn down which is now the parking lot on the opposite side of Russell. But at that time, there was a building there and I told them they would see me in front of that building, waving my hands. I had these men coming to those windows every hour for five days before I called the strike. There were other reasons for that which would be too much to go into detail here.

Anyway, it was the fifth day when they came at eleven o'clock in the morning and saw me on Russell waving my hands. In forty-five minutes there was not a human worker inside the Murray Corporation and there was not a gate that was not locked.

And there was not a gate that was not under the guard of the union, not the plant protection of the Murray Corporation. These things may not be legal nowadays, perhaps it was not legal in those days, but that is the way it was done. Keys were taken from plant protection. And the gates were locked. The plant protection was told to get away, that we were going to hold this plant until we got ourselves a union in that shop. And we meant just that. We did not allow in any boss, any supervisor, not even the owner of the Murray Corporation, not even the president, Mr. C. W. Avery, the president. We did not even allow Clarence Avery to stay in that plant. Our committees went into all the offices, administration offices, the drawing rooms, the map rooms, the office workers and told them to get out. "Get out of this plant," and in forty-five minutes there was not one human being in the plant. It was then that we set up, ourselves, not the company, proper patrol for protection in the shop to prevent fires, to see that the electric power was taken care of, to see that the power house men maintained the heat, and all of those things were prearranged and all set and was cared for properly.

We did not allow any employee, any person, to enter the Murray plant until the next day. The next day, Mr. C. W. Avery, the president of the Murray Corporation, along with certain personnel came to my office which we called the dog house, which was a very small office on Clay and we wrote out a pass for the president of the company and all other top supervision that we

thought was sufficient and necessary to go in the plant. Those same men kept those, even Mr. Avery kept his, and showed it to me ten, twelve years later. He said it was one souvenir he would never throw away. He would always keep that as memory of the day his plant was organized.

Our strike did not last long. It was only three days. The end of the third day a settlement was made, an agreement was signed, and the workers returned to work. Of course, a complete contract was not negotiated at that time, but an agreement was worked out that there would be a contract negotiated, which was negotiated within the next two or three months. It had taken us that long to negotiate a contract. But our company was ignorant of what we meant by shop steward, what we meant by a building steward which in some unions are called district stewards. At our shops we always maintained the name of building steward. They did not know anything about these many details that were necessary for unions to successfully carry out and patrol and maintain proper working conditions and keep grievances down to a minimum in the shops. Many of these things were new to us too. We too did not know too much about it. We learned as we went along. We improved our contracts as we went along. Our contracts was yearly contracts for a good many years. From the settlement of that strike, March 2, 1937, until long after the war, there was not one single wildcat strike, there was not a single stoppage of work in the Murray Corporation during this period. That is the story of the organization of Murray.

Along with that went the falling into line of Fry Products which had their sit-down the day that Murray settled. Theirs lasted some eleven days before they settled. In other plants under my jurisdiction, we had all of the Bohn Aluminum Plants organized, separated from our plant. We did not want an amalgamated local. We gave them a charter of their own. And also Fry Products had a charter of their own because the Murray workers did not want an amalgamated local, neither did I. I didn't feel that it should be an amalgamated local.

You asked me why did we pick on GM. Why did the union organize General Motors before Chrysler for example or some other plants? It was not that we planned anything of that type. First, Wyndham Mortimer was placed as organizational director of Flint, and Dick Frankensteen as organizational director of Detroit. Now Wyndham Mortimer, of course, had many more years of experience in the labor movement than Dick. But I do know that many, many men went to Flint to help Wyndham Mortimer. Many from Detroit, and I believe that what happened was that Mortimer just simply had more manpower, more knowledge of organization, an organization with more ability. Now he placed Bob Travis in charge of organization in Flint. I don't think the UAW, even from that day until this, has ever developed any man with as much ability as an organizer as Bob Travis. I think Bob Travis was one of the greatest organizers that ever went into the labor movement.

I think the fact that General Motors was organized first, that credit can go solely and exclusively to Bob Travis. The name of Mortimer might have brought to Travis men with greater ability as organizers, and gave Bob more help than generally would be given to a young man like Dick Frankensteen that hadn't been in the labor movement very long. But anyway you look at it, Bob Travis had a team of men that knew how to organize. And that, and that only, is the reason why General Motors was organized first, not that the international union and our Executive Board made any decision to organize General Motors before we organized Chrysler, or the Detroit plants, for that matter, where the body plants in Detroit at that time, together were much larger then the Chrysler Corporation in number of employees. So much for that question.

Now I want to speak of some of the instances that show you when a man gets real serious in his organization activity, how brave he becomes and how determined he is to win. Dick was well aware that he was behind in organization of Detroit, comparing it to General Motors in Flint. I cannot give the details of how and when this strike came about; but anyway, Dick was involved in an organized strike of the Briggs plants, the Meldrum Plant of the Briggs Division. This strike had been dragging for some time and it began to appear that they were going to lose the strike. And there was a threat sent out by the Briggs Corporation that unless the workers returned to work the next day, they were all going to be discharged.

Dick had already, at that time, developed in Detroit, I think, the strongest organized flying squadron anywhere in the labor movement in the country. There was somewhere between 500 to 800 active members of this flying squadron. The core of it, of course, was in the Dodge, now known as Local 3, the plant on Joseph Campau. But that flying squadron had members from all the plants. I was a member of that squadron, and people from all the other plants were active under Dick's leadership in the flying squadron. It was more known as Dick's flying squadron than it was Local 3 or the Dodge flying squadron.

Dick called us to a special meeting at the Dodge Union Hall which at that time was at the corner of Milwaukee and Joseph Campau. We gathered there around midnight. After we had spent some time there, drinking soup and coffee, and eating sandwiches, that the union had reached a crisis in Detroit, Dick appeared on the platform and told us that Briggs was threatening to fire all of the employees at the Meldrum Plant. And unless we had the guts to see that this did not happen, and unless we were willing to even risk our lives to save the union at Meldrum Plant, there was a possibility of the whole organizing program sagging and possibly even disappearing. And that Briggs had succeeded in 1933 in breaking the beginning of unionism in Michigan; and it would be a great reward--or crown in Briggs' name--if they could succeed in breaking the union or starting the union backwards.

After much lecturing and enthusiasm built up among us, the members of the flying squadron, about five or six hundred of us there, were exposed to our picket signs that we were to carry at the Meldrum Plant. Well, the sign wasn't very large. I believe it was written on a card about 3 x 5 inches long. It had been rounded on the end you carried it, but it hadn't been rounded on the other end. It was very square, and it was good wood too. We were told that it was our job to see that no scab went in the Meldrum Plant, and if we succeeded in keeping scabs from going into the Meldrum Plant, it might be the cause of saving the union. We stayed there till some time around five o'clock in the morning. And we went to the Meldrum Plant. We were there more than an hour before any workers came around. We were in the front of the plant, solid in front of the entrance. We were about ten abreast in a circle with our small sign and heavy stick. We were determined men and we meant business. We were not kidding anybody, police or anyone else. We were not going to let anyone get into that plant. While we were marching here, men would come up, apparently the ones that would have went to work if we hadn't been there, and we would tell them that the plant is closed. Nobody is working today and, "go on down the street, go on the other side or go meet your buddies, but don't stay here in front of the gate." They would shuffle off. That continued to happen up until near work time, until we had shuffled off more than a thousand people. They now pretty well had gathered on the opposite side of the street, watching us as we marched in front of the plant.

Then, a short time before work time, I judge about five minutes before work time, the police began to gather. The police numbered somewhere between 250 and 300 policemen. They were opposite us in front of the Meldrum Plant. They also had a sound truck. And the chief of the police group spoke over the sound equipment, informing us that he did not want any trouble, that we were illegally holding this plant, and that he expected us to peacefully move ourselves from the entrance, and that he would like to talk to our leaders and if I remember right I believe he even spoke of Mr. Frankensteen, he would like to have a conference at the sound truck and see if we couldn't work this out peacefully and not have any trouble. Of course, Dick Frankensteen and the others gathered around the sound truck, we were on the opposite side and not very able to know what was being said.

But for some reason or other in a short while, Dick was permitted to speak over the sound equipment. In the first part of his talk, I don't think the police knew what he was going to say and couldn't make up their minds whether to stop him or let him continue talking because he did not apparently say what they were expecting, yet they couldn't say he wasn't going to say it later on. I don't know if anything was agreed to. But I could see that from the anxiousness of the police, they were not particularly happy about what he was saying because he was again more or less making a speech to enthuse us boys to strengthen our picket line. Then, a very short statement Dick said, "When I leave this

mike, I'm marching over to your side. I will stand in front of all you boys and if the police want to kill anybody, it will be me. I am not afraid, and we are not going to give up and we are not going to let any scabs go in this plant. If the cops want to fight, I think this will be their opportunity." He left the mike. He came to our side. He presented himself in front, and we stood still and it was as quiet as quietness could be for some five or ten minutes. We were sure there was going to be blood shed on the street. It didn't happen. Nothing happened. Finally, the police gradually broke up and went away.

We did win; we were triumphant. In two or three hours, we got a report that the contract had been signed and we scattered back to our homes. How it would have happened if we hadn't of done that, of course, history will never know because it never occurred. But I do believe that that was the crisis of organization in Detroit. I do not recall dates sufficiently to tell you whether this was immediately after the victory in General Motors, or a little before that victory. But I believe that at about this time, or maybe just the day before this, the victory had occurred in Flint. Because after the Meldrum victory, the Briggs' workers began to join the union by the thousands, literally thousands. I was not over there at the Briggs plant, but I am told that over three hundred men were used to sign up the workers in Briggs for about two straight days, since they were joining the union so fast in the plants of the Briggs Corporation. The

Meldrum victory was a victory for the Briggs' workers, and it was a victory for the organization in Detroit. How it would have turned out if we had lost at Meldrum only history -- only God -- knows and there is no history to tell us.

You spoke to me about Homer Martin and problems of the international. At this time, of course, I was a member of the Executive Board. And our board, of course, had a majority and a minority in policy. The minority group in this administration of this board was Lester Washburn from Lansing, Walter Reuther and myself from Detroit. Almost all decisions on the board we found ourselves for some reason on one side, and the majority of the board on the opposite side on practically any issue. It seemed to make no difference what we were for, even if it was something they were for the day before. If we were for it, the majority of the board voted against it. There was one thing that we wanted as a matter of policy in organizing the industrial union. We had discussed this before we brought it to the board. We did not want our International Union to become a bunch of little charters, small plants all over the United States with a charter and at least one delegate vote at a convention. We were afraid that under a set up of that type that anybody could control the international union, even if he was anti-union, and was a racketeer, he would not have any trouble controlling the union if he had enough of small shops with a charter and the charter delegates alone could out vote mass unions that had to have a delegate for every five or six hundred members in the shop. So,

we wanted to be sure that where there was a cluster of small plants in a given area, that they all become members of one local union, in other words, what is known as an amalgamated local. We were well aware of the fact that if we presented this to the board, it would be defeated. It would be impossible to get such a policy or resolution past the board. So in order to get this over in front of the board, we were successful in getting one of Homer Martin's board members by the name of Tucci to present this resolution. Tucci did not have the impression he was presenting it for us, but we were successful in leading him to believe that it was for him and that if he could get that over the board, we told him we were going to be against it; but if he could get that over the board, it would put a star in his crown. And if ever there was a poor boy who needed a star, he did. This resolution was typed out in detail. It got into the hands of Tucci. Tucci brought this up in the board, and explained the importance of the amalgamated local. We wanted it, and we were the only ones who did want it. We spoke against it, to make sure it passed; and it did pass. That is some of the history of what occurred in the way of factionalism and how you had to maneuver to get something by that was worthwhile.

Many people ask me questions about Homer Martin. Was he an honest man, was he a sell-out, did he sell out to the Ford Motor Company, etc.? Of course, I do not know anything about whether he did or did not sell out or got any money from the Ford Motor Company. I was against Homer Martin, but that was not the reason.

And I am sure that the same reason I had against Homer Martin was the majority reason that caused Homer Martin to lose out as leader of the UAW. I believe Homer Martin was a sincere man, but Homer Martin was unstable in all of his thinking. Today he would be for a program, he would be enthusiastically recommended to the board, the board would accept it and vote for it, and two days later, Homer Martin would be in some other city making a public speech and would be speaking just the opposite to his own program that he had presented to our board. That occurred many times. It was a constant problem with Homer Martin to try to find out what Homer Martin was for. What he was for today, he seemed to be against tomorrow, and he seemed continuously have that change of heart and opinion about policy and important things that to us were things that could not be taken so lightly and changed so easily. This began to build up the opposition to Martin and the fear that Martin was not a great man and could not remain a leader of our union.

That was part of the beginning of the factionalism within the union. Of course, there was more to it than that, too. We had two men in the UAW, two outstanding men, which I am sure, right from the beginning had in their minds the belief that they were going to someday be the top man in the UAW. I don't speak this as evil to either man, or that it was wrong to have this feeling; perhaps it is the way it should have been. But from the very beginning, I, as a member of the Executive Board felt that somewhere

in the future either Dick Frankensteen or Walter P. Reuther was going to be the president of our international union. I had discussed that with myself and thought that over and I was of the firm conviction that one of those two men would be its leader within a few years time. That struggle for leadership between these two men, of course, divided the union into two factions. At that particular time it seemed that all of the what we would call the right-wingers, people who seemed to not be so progressive, desired a strong union, seemed to flock to the Homer Martin side. And Dick Frankensteen seemed to become not a leader of the Homer Martin side as much as relying on the Martin group to put him into leadership. I never felt that Dick Frankensteen took over that group. I always felt that Homer Martin still dominated it, and that Dick Frankensteen only found himself as among the group but not its leader. Homer Martin was still its leader. That might have been one of Dick's tactics. That might have been his thinking that let Homer remain as leader for another convention and "then later on I can remove Homer Martin once I have succeeded in defeating the other group." It might have been his thinking. Anyway, the picture as I saw it at the time was that Dick Frankensteen was not really the leader of the right-wing group. It seemed to be a considerable group or committee that led the Martin side. Dick and Homer Martin and board members from Georgia, and the board member from South Bend, Indiana, and a few others seemed to be the leaders as a group, but no one particular person seemed to be the leader of the group. The group seemed to be about equal among themselves.

There was at that time high ambition to organize Ford. Chrysler had been organized, Briggs, Murray, the body plants, small plants, independent plants, had pretty well all got into the union. There was one exception. That was the Ford Motor Company. We were in a hurry. We were anxious to get, in particular, the Big Three in the union. We had two, but we were lagging on Ford. That seemed to come up as the great future of whoever was going to be the head of the union. It seemed to simmer down to whoever organized Ford would be the man that eventually would be named as the leader of the UAW. Therefore, it became a struggle as to who was going to organize Ford. Let us put it in another way, it became a struggle between Dick Frankensteen and Walter P. Reuther as to which of those two was going to get the credit or was going to be the most successful in succeeding in organizing Ford.

I recall in the last board meeting we had before the coming convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Our board meeting was in Milwaukee. The board convened about two weeks before the convention and remained in session until convention time. Organization activity was going on in the Ford Motor Company at that time. Many tactics had been used to organize Ford. Men had been called from other shops to distribute leaflets in front of Ford, jails had been filled with leaflet distributors and many other things had occurred. One time there was a mass gathering in front of Ford of organized workers of the other shops in Detroit to try to impress the workers at Ford that everybody was in the union but them. They

had nothing to fear but fear itself. They should get into the union. And Ford too probably felt that this program of the union would be effective and it was his intention to break it up.

That was the time of the so-called overpass at Ford. The incident where Walter P. Reuther and Dick Frankensteen got confronted by the Ford Motor Company plant protection, who were experienced men in judo or whatever it is to handle a man physically. It did seem that Dick Frankensteen got the advantage of Walter on that occasion. These plant protection men pounced on Dick, bent him over, and pulled his overcoat down on top of his head and covered up his head with his dress coat; while Walter was standing to one side apparently waiting to get banged too, but the picture showed Walter on the granite. And it looked like Dick got the advantage as far as the photographer was concerned who did this photograph.

During our board meeting in Milwaukee, it was a constant interruption in our board meeting by either Dick watching Walter to see that Walter didn't get an airplane and fly back to Detroit and have some big front page publicity on something he did at Ford. The two men were continually watching the activity of the other to see that he did not get more publicity than he got. In fact, if there is a recording of that board meeting, you will notice several occasions that Walter spoke on that issue. There seemed to be a concern here as to who gets the most publicity. You will also find that Dick spoke on the same subject. The board meeting, while it was necessary to conduct its affairs for the arrangements of the convention, financial structure, and so forth, I remember when the

financial report was made and we had $500,000 in the treasury or close to it, and Dick jumped up and said, "Well, at last we have become half of a millionaire." That board meeting was as tense, I guess, as any board meeting ever had.

One time during the session, Homer Martin got so mad at Walter P. Reuther that he jumped up and ran around to Reuther's chair and started pounding Reuther on top of his head with his fists clenched. Put in mind some old woman hitting one of her children on top of the head with her two fists. It wasn't a punch; it was like a hammer type, striking straight up and down, gritting his teeth, and making a sort of a noise through his teeth, he was so mad. Reuther merely bowed his head out of the way, and did not even seem to get mad about it. He seemed to be cool, and told Homer Martin to go back and sit down and to behave himself. It didn't seem to excite him the least bit. He seemed to be expecting something of that type. I admired Reuther for that coolness, and the way he accepted the attack of Homer Martin. He didn't get mad; he didn't seem to even be disturbed by it. He so calmly told Homer Martin to go on back and sit down and behave himself, as a father would speak to a nine year old child. And the effect of Homer pounding Walter's head, I don't think was any greater than the effect of a nine year old child pounding on his father's head.

There were many factional issues that came up in that board meeting. And there was a real struggle for power, national caucuses had been held before this board meeting of both sides, each was now calling all the strength he could get. Each had an outstanding trade name. One group's trade name, of which I was on that side, was called the Unity Caucus. And the other side which had his trade name, Progressive Caucus. So, the Progressive Caucus was the Homer Martin, Dick Frankensteen, and the majority of the board group. The Unity Caucus was Walter Reuther, Lloyd Jones, and Washburn, as far as the board was concerned; that was all that was in our group. And of course, George F. Addes who was not a member of the board, he was an officer of the union, and the vice-presidents who had voice but no vote on the board were on our side. The structure of the constitution at that time was that the president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer had a voice but no vote on the board. All five of the top officers were on the side of three members of the board, Reuther, Washburn, and myself. That was the two groups that were going to face each other in a very short while when the convention convened which was nearer each day to its first meeting.

There was much trying to exchange and convince one another to swing to the other side. That part, of course, got hotter after the delegates came piling into the city. I remember, particularly, one time in this board meeting Dick Frankensteen who I always felt like me personally and I did like him personally, seemed to have a strange feeling that since we liked one another so well, how come

that we couldn't be on the same side in the International Union in this factional fight. As good friends as we were, I still was with the Unity group, and Dick was with the Progressive group. So, Dick just came out plain and asked me while the board was in session, "Why it was that him and I couldn't see alike and be in the same group? What did I have against him? And what did my group have against him? Did we think he was not for the union? Or just what grievances we had against him?" I asked Dick if he really wanted me to tell him what our group feared in him. He said, "Yes, he did." Well, it might have been stupid of me, perhaps politically I should have been a little smarter; but I just blurted out and said, "Dick, our group is afraid that if you become the leader of this union that you will lead off a faction like you had in Dodge and become a little independent union and destroy the chances of us organizing the auto workers as a whole. We don't trust you as a leader. We are afraid of you and we don't want you." I might even have said something else that made Dick madder than what I have just repeated here. At least I got a pound in the mouth with Dick's fist and broke one of my front teeth. However, Dick was sorry. Before the day was over, we shook hands after much anger and tempers flying, even danger of something worse than just temper. And by the next day again, we were capable of smiling at each other, drinking coffee together, and talking over our factional difference.

After the convention convened, our division was so strong that in the convention there was a chance and a very good chance of bloodshed. Again we had the experience of seeing delegates come to the convention with the famous Meldrum plant 2 x 2. The Martin group, on the second day of the convention, occupied all the front seats near the platform, and each had a 2 x 2. That afternoon, I think, all delegates had a 2 x 2, whether they were in the front or whether they were in the rear of the convention. There were times when some issue that was a hot issue where the two groups had strong feelings about, in opposition to one another, as high as a hundred delegates would be on the floor at once and would crowd in the front part of the convention near the rostrum and would be lightly picking one another with those 2 x 2, and for a while there you just felt that some moment there was going to be a general riot right on the floor of the convention.

I don't recall which day or how long the convention had been going on, but this all ended when the great father of the labor movement, John L. Lewis, came to the convention. John L. Lewis spoke at that convention, perhaps was the greatest speech of his career, or one of the greatest speeches of his career. I never forget the references he made to factionalism and the way he explained the dangers of factionalism destroying the union. He made what he called a unity proposal. At that time, there was a real fight that we eliminate the three vice-presidents that were set up in the South Bend Convention and only have one vice-president.

That was the proposal of the Progressive Caucus, in other words, the Homer Martin group. Apparently, the program was to elect Homer Martin president and Dick Frankensteen vice-president, which, of course, perhaps was acceptable to Dick because there was a possibility of reversing the position of those two men in conventions to come. The other side wanted to maintain the three vice-presidents as we had it. That was one of the main issues that was in danger of causing a riot on the floor of the convention. John L. Lewis in his speech recommended that there be five vice-presidents. In other words, he was just going to take them all in and make them all vice-presidents, one big family, one big happy family, just all of them be vice-presidents. Well, it worked anyway. It saved the day. It saved the split in the UAW at that particular time, and it prevented a riot at the convention.

From there it was a question of settling down to elect board members and try to corral a majority on the Executive Board. The Unity group went to work, caucusing day and night. The Progressive group went to work, caucusing day and night. Constantly changing its slate of board members. Continuously looking for a new candidate that was on the other side but had some delegate votes he could swing to their side. Tonight I would be on the slate for re-election of board member and tomorrow night I would be off the slate. Then the next night I would be back on the slate and the fourth night I would be back off again. Sometime it wasn't the fourth night; it was the fourth hour. Things got so hot that they

changed the hour. We would have one caucus and we would have one set of candidates for the board, and two hours later we would have another caucus and we would have an entirely different set of candidates for the board. Continuously shuffling, trying to find which group on a slate would give the greatest strength and the possibility of winning. My group, which I thought all the way through would hold me as a member of the board, discovered that I didn't have as much strength as I thought I had. When nomination time came, at that time, the board members from the state of Michigan were elected as a whole. The whole state voted for its board members. And at the time of nomination, to my surprise, it was Vic Reuther, substituting Lloyd Jones on our slate. Dick Frankensteen succeeded in defeating that by getting on the floor and proving that Vic Reuther had not been a member of the union twelve months, and therefore could not qualify as a candidate. I felt then that I would be replaced on the slate. No, what happens is that the convention adjourns, we have another night of caucuses which went on all night until break of day next morning. And during the long night, they tried to get Tracy Doll on our slate. Tracy Doll was in the other group, and it was a constant switch back and forth until in the final analysis they did wind up placing me back on the slate. But so much distrust had occurred, so many delegates of our group was for us that now switched to the other side because of their feelings being hurt by taking a man off of the slate and then putting him back on again. And in the final analysis of the mix up, at least I as an individual lost as

a member by one half of one vote. The next man above me was Morris Fields from Dodge Local 3, which won the day, was the seventh board member elected and I was one half of one vote below him.

That did not stop factionalism. That did not stop the thinking of the Progressive group versus the thinking of the Unity group. The great speech of John L. Lewis which cooled us off for the period of that convention. It didn't cool any longer than it took us to get back to our own local unions. I returned to my local, now not a member of the Executive Board, I was still president of my local because in the constitution at that time you could be a president of a local and a member of the board. However, the constitution was changed at the Milwaukee Convention, that you couldn't be both. I wasn't sure but what I was just destined to be defeated as a board member at that particular time and remain as president of my local union.

I came back to Detroit, reported to my local, and informed the local union that I was not going to be able to work for nothing. And a motion was made at the membership meeting to put me on the pay roll of the local as its president at $40 a week. That was my set salary and remained my salary for some two or three years as president of Local 2. It finally reached $50 and then progressively went on up to its final top after the war at $130 a week which is the highest it ever reached.

When we returned from the Milwaukee Convention, in less than a month there was a national caucus called again and all of us flocked together. Homer Martin had suspended members of the board. I don't recall the exactness of these things. Other men who were not members of the board probably could give you better detail; but anyway, Homer Martin went into the act of suspending anybody on the Executive Board that didn't follow his program or didn't go along with the way the "great" Homer Martin was going to run this union. The time had come when it seemed to be that the president of the union was going to be a great man and was going to speak with authority and the members of the board were going to obey him or they were not going to be members of the board. They were going to be suspended by the international president, and this was Homer Martin's procedure. He first suspended one board member, then two, and finally he even suspended vice-presidents, five that had been elected on the recommendation of John L. Lewis.

In the meantime, I now as an active member of a local union, formed a Committee of Presidents. This Committee of Presidents had taken an airplane and went to Washington, had a conference with John L. Lewis. And we told John L. Lewis that our union was going to come apart, was going to go under unless he stepped in and took a strong position and suspended Homer Martin as president of our international union. We spent some three hours with John

L. Lewis, the committee of ten local presidents. We were the presidents of the largest local unions at that time in the UAW. We returned to Detroit, and in a very short while, John L. Lewis sent his two top men to Detroit, which was Phil Murray and Sidney Hillman. A meeting was called of the International Executive Board, and Sidney Hillman and Phil Murray instructed the UAW International Executive Board that they were there under the orders of John L. Lewis to straighten out the factionalism within the UAW. They stayed in that board and in every session of that board, of which I was not a member but aware of the history of it, until they had succeeded in winning over a majority of the board in a vote to call a special convention. And they did pass that resolution on the board. A deal was made, of course, by Phil Murray and Sidney Hillman that there would be a special convention and that one R. J. Thomas would be elected its president. That deal was made with Thomas to get Thomas away from the Martin group. He was in the Martin group. Other promises were made to other members of the board which were on the Martin side because Martin at that time had a majority. He wouldn't have had a majority if he hadn't suspended any members of the board, but he suspended enough members of the opposition on the board so that with the ones on his side he had a majority. The deal that was made within the board I don't know the details of. You'll have to get that from others.

But anyway, the special convention was called. The convention call came out that the convention would be in Cleveland. This convention did not have a complete curriculum as an average convention. It specifically called for change of constitution on officers and the election of new officers and board members. The convention convened in Cleveland. Finally, Homer Martin recognized some two months before this convention that he had lost and had no intentions of going into the local unions and trying to win a majority of the delegates to that convention. Instead, Homer Martin announced at the convention that the UAW was not going to be in Cleveland, but was going to be in Detroit. So, Homer Martin came out and announced that there was going to be a special convention and it was going to be in Detroit. The John L. Lewis group, the majority of the board, announced it was not going to be in Detroit, it was going to be in Cleveland.

So, it was more or less up to the delegates to decide which one of these conventions was the real convention. But what really happened was that about ninety per cent of the delegates throughout the United States went to the Cleveland Convention. And about ten per cent went to the Homer Martin convention in Detroit. That was the beginning of the two UAWs. One UAW-CIO, and the other one just UAW, which finally got back affiliated with the AFL, and was called the UAW-AFL. But the next big fight now was no more with Homer Martin, but was within our own group as to who was going to be its leader. None of the outstanding men that were with Martin

during the factional fight up to this point were now with Martin. They all came to the Cleveland Convention. They all went along with Sidney Hillman and Phil Murray and agreed that Homer Martin was not a leader, not a real leader.

Now the question was at the special convention called in Cleveland as to who was to be our president. Now the question was, was there going to be one vice-president, three vice-presidents, or five vice-presidents? The constitution at present called for five vice-presidents. Well, to our surprise, the committee from John L. Lewis, which was Sidney Hillman and Phil Murray, announced at the very first opening of the convention that there was going to be no vice-president, that the issue of vice-president becomes so factional that this union is not going to have any vice-president at all. And that if the president died, the secretary-treasurer would take his job and someone from the board elected by the board would take the position of secretary-treasurer. This was a recommendation, they said, from John L. Lewis; and of course, anything John L. Lewis said at that time was acceptable because we believed that Lewis knew what was right and we were already convinced that Homer Martin and his group didn't know much of anything. So, we were willing to listen to almost anything that was told to us with the recommendation of John L. Lewis. Then, when it came down to electing officers again, we got into the same feeling of personalities.

It was whispered around the convention before public announcement that the committee from John L. Lewis had decided that R. J. Thomas was to be our president. We didn't object to that too much, but we

heard something else which didn't sound so good to our ears. And that was that a deal had been made before the board was broken up in Detroit, before Homer Martin was thrown out, that a deal had been made with Thomas. That the only reason Thomas had left Homer Martin and came to our side was because he was promised the job of president. That was what we objected to. We did not want to sell the job of president to some man merely because he was on the wrong side of the fence and he would not change his convictions just in order to be president of the International Union. We didn't think any convictions of that type were good enough. However, later in the convention, we were told and sold that that was not the case. They agreed that they had promised Thomas that he would be president, but they didn't feel that Thomas had bought this offer as a condition of leaving Homer Martin, but that Thomas had been convinced by the committee that Homer Martin was not the right kind of a man to lead the UAW.

Nevertheless, the delegates at that convention were for another man to be president of the UAW. They wanted George Addes as president. And every night, the songs all over the hotel and hotel lobbies, out on the street were snake dances, and the only thing you could hear was that "George F. Addes is our leader." Of course, the song doesn't use the word George F. Addes, it just says, "Addes is our leader, we shall not be moved." I believe that fully ninety per cent of the delegates at that convention at that time were for George F. Addes as president of the UAW, despite any recommendation of John L. Lewis or anyone else. In fact, I am

sure those delegates would have elected George Addes president, in spite of a committee John Lewis sent, if Addes himself had had given this leadership and accepted the candidacy as president. But no, Phil Murray and Sidney Hillman had got a hold of Addes and they had convinced Addes that he shouldn't be president. They had convinced Addes that he should remain as secretary-treasurer of the union.

Up to this point, nobody wanted Thomas for president of the UAW. Then, Addes called a special caucus of the delegates, and politely informed all of us that he was not a candidate for president; we couldn't draft him because he was not going to run. Even after that there were still snake dances in the streets, crying for George Addes as president. It was then that Lewis' men, Sidney Hillman and Phil Murray, became fearful even they could not control this convention. They started calling caucuses of each large local union that had from 8 to 75 delegates, called them to a caucus in their private hotel room, and selling them that Thomas had to be president. It became a joke around the lobby of the hotel that the boys would be singing "Addes is our leader" as they went in Sidney Hillman's hotel room, and they would be coming out saying, "Thomas is our leader." It was true that the lecture that Sidney Hillman gave the delegates, of which I led my delegation into his room and heard his lecture. He pointed out to us very strongly that the union was young and inclined to hero worship. True, he said that Thomas was not a great leader,

he said, "Neither do you need a great leader. You don't want a hero. You want to build leadership in your own local. Don't build leadership in the international to where this man can lead you wrong or lead you astray." He sold us on the idea of forgetting about a hero and a great man like Addes as president and accept a man like Thomas which was not a leader, and none of us believed that he was a leader, but build around Thomas strong leadership in the form of an Executive Board, secretary-treasurer and officers around him. That was their pitch and their sale and the thing that leaders of our local unions accepted and finally went into the convention and did vote for R. J. Thomas and that is how Thomas did become the president of the UAW.

I want to further comment that despite the fact that we were against Thomas, we had no faith in Thomas; in the coming years after that we did learn to love Thomas, not as a great speaker, he never could make a good speech, but as a man which grew with his job, as a man that did everything he could to build the union on an honest basis, as a man that was a tobacco chewing, honest man. We felt that we had, even though we did not have a great orator, we had an honest man at the head of our union. We felt that we had a man that didn't know much when he started, but four or five years later, he knew as much as was necessary to be our international president. There was, of course, differences in opinions, but the majority of our people went along and nobody ran against Thomas for a good many years.

Not until the issue of communism became a great issue in the UAW did the rank and file ever start looking for another leadership other than Thomas. If communism had never been an issue in the UAW, no man could have ever unseated R. J. Thomas as president of the UAW. I believe he would have remained president until he died. But with that new handle, that new cudgel, communism, and particularly after the war when the hysteria of McCarthyites was spreading throughout our country, the fear that communism was going to take over, the same force began to show its ugly head among the rank and file of our membership. And everybody began to look at their president and ask questions, "Did you ever hear of him being in a communist meeting somewhere?" They began to ask questions about their plant chairman, their chief steward, just anybody. They didn't care who it was, if it was the little assistant steward, a man that collected dues in the shop, anybody who had any activity in the union, they began to look at him twice to see if he wasn't a bogey-boo from Moscow. Certain forces within our union explored this situation. A new fight came in our union and a new split came in our union, and a new group of factionalisms.

Our Convention in Cleveland when we elected R. J. Thomas as president, the caucus groups had mutually agreed to end caucuses and never again to have any caucuses anywhere at any time in the future. But after the communist issue became an issue in the union, again we began to see that violated. We began to see the

communists develop in caucus groups, the socialists develop in caucus groups, and men with political ambitions of various kinds becoming leaders of these caucus groups.

Communism became the issue, and then during the war, of course, the communists went for piecework in the shops. Slogans to outproduce Hitler became a great issue in the shops throughout the United States. Russia was being attacked, which I always felt the communists felt was more or less their country. They were for piecework. They were for almost anything in order to outproduce Hitler to win the war. And even that was used by the politicians within the UAW. Many of us labor leaders and all during this period, I was labor leader and president of my local union, I, too, was for outproducing Hitler; and I was in favor of anything to get more war equipment into the hands of our soldiers. I didn't think that an eight hour day or a twelve hour day, or any number of hours was too much if he was able to work to outproduce Hitler because I felt that a home soldier had nothing to fear equivalent to our boys who were in the battle front. But if you were too slow on production, you were suspected of being a communist. In caucuses, these new caucuses that were now raising their heads among the rank and file of the UAW, were raising this issue, "He's for piecework; he must be a communist. He is for more production; he must be a communist." Until it even became an issue in a convention, resolutions on the question of piecework, that there be no piecework. A majority of the

members of the union, at that very moment, many delegates who were fighting against piecework had piecework in their shops and had piecework in their shops for years. Men who were close enough to know these things to be true would hear their speeches and then go to them and say, "What's the matter with you? You know you have piecework in your own shop. Why are you speaking against piecework? You have never raised the issue before." In fact, many, many of the General Motors plants had piecework in them. Yet, the directors and leaders of the GM Divisions were continuously crying, "He who is for piecework must be a member of the Communist Party."

That issue of factionalism developed through the communist gear, was the force that put R. J. Thomas out of the UAW as a top leader. It also threw out what I consider one of the greatest leaders the UAW ever had, and that was George F. Addes. It hurt many of our leaders. It was probably much farther away from communism than the very ones that were pointing fingers of suspicion at them that they were communists. I felt then and feel yet that McCarthyism which is nothing than the communist scare, did more harm to the UAW, has weakened its fiber and its structure more than any issue that has ever been in existence. It split the CIO. It split all factions within the whole labor movement. It was the final cause of the CIO getting so weak that they have had to humbly put its tail between its legs and crawl back into the AFL, which I have never believed was for the best interests of the rank and file membership of the union.

Today, in my judgment, unionism is big business, almost equivalent to the manufacturers. Today, it seems to be the style for conferences on new negotiations to start some three months before the expiration of a contract, but sit and crack jokes and smoke cigars and play around until just a night before the contract expires. Then they seem to go in spasms, seem to have all the newspapers on their side and favorable that they are now negotiating night and day, they are struggling, they are burning the midnight oil, and so on, so on, so on, which I think is only propaganda to sell the rank and file some clause that has been slipped in the contract that will do them harm and will weaken their union. I believe that all of these many weaknesses that have come into the union in the last seven or eight years can go back and be accounted for on the one issue--McCarthyism, the communist fear. I think that that issue weakened the union and will remain in the blood circulation of the labor movement probably from now on and indefinitely. Perhaps another generation will rise and will change that, but to me that is questionable.

I think the labor movement of England today is even more militant than the labor movement of America. I think militancy is a thing of the past in the labor movement. I recall in the organizational days of '36, '37, '38, we would have openly criticized the AFL and said, "Oh, yes, they are fifty years old. But they are no good, they are not militant. They are not for the workers any more." And others would say, "Well, maybe in

twenty years we will be like them, doing it the same way." And we quickly came to the defense of the CIO and said, "Never will the CIO become like the AFL, with its top labor leaders that were high salaried." It was always a great issue that our union paid its leadership equal wages with its workers in the shop. We were not going to have potentates of labor with high top salaries. But all of those things that we thought would never occur have occurred. Gradually, convention by convention, salaries and expense accounts have gone up, until today, to be an international representative of any union, any union in the AFL that I am aware of, there may be one or two internationals that is an exception that I am not aware of; but all that I know of, a position as an international representative which is merely a member of a bargaining group that is to go out and help local unions settle their grievances and assist in their negotiation and not boss them or direct them. His real job if he is on the servicing staff, is to aid and assist the local union in its grievances. If he is an organizer, his job is to go out to unorganized plants like we did in '36 and '37 and organize them. But now their duty, regardless of which one of those two positions he holds on the staff, entitles him to the kind of salaries and expense accounts that are not given to what they call business agents.

The business agent profession now is equivalent to practically other professions that require high school, college and apprenticeship. In fact, the pay check today of a so called international

representative or business agent is superior to school teachers, superior to many professions that require high school and college and additional training; while these men, many of them are not even of eighth grade education. I don't think this is right. I do not think that those kind of pay makes the rank and file in the shop feel that that is his buddy, that that man represents his interests. I think today the unions with their business agents, the international representatives have put themselves up above the workers, representing the worker, however, but still above him, better automobiles, better clothes, better living, better community to live in, better home to live in, until the workers themselves are beginning to feel that they are paying dues in order to have another boss. So, now they have two bosses instead of one. I hope these things will be debated and discussed in years to come, that the youth that is now entering the labor movement will correct these things and bring the labor movement back to where it belongs, by, of, and for the workers, and keep its leadership, its officers from the top down as men from its own ranks, and understands its problems and is part of its group.

This Cleveland Convention, as you know, was the fruits of the division that had been in the UAW. John Lewis' trained men, Phil Murray and Sidney Hillman, had come into Detroit and had spent many weeks in the International Executive Board meeting and had succeeded in taking away from Homer Martin the leadership of the Executive Board and finally got them to agree to call a special

convention to bring about a new election which naturally meant ousting Homer Martin and his leadership of the UAW. The fact of the matter is Homer Martin was so sure it would not happen that he did not even attend the Convention. He made no effort to attend the Convention. What he did do was go out and build up his faction and have a convention of his own, separate from the UAW. He reaffiliated with the AFL and called his division the UAW-AFL.

But we went through with the regular electing of delegates to the Convention. By saying "we" I mean all of the unions throughout the country. There might have been a few unions that were with Homer Martin and sent delegates only to his convention. But as far as I know, the UAW as a whole was somewhere between 90 per cent and 95 per cent at this Cleveland Convention. At the Cleveland Convention I do not think there was any intention there of changing the constitution with the exception of the structure of the top officers. If you remember the previous Convention in Milwaukee, the factionalism was so great at that time that John Lewis' hopes for bringing about unity in the UAW tried to make all of the top leaders vice-presidents. So, he recommended that we change the constitution from three vice-presidents to five vice-presidents, hoping that this would bring both factions into top leadership and would bring unity to the UAW. Of course, it did not work. It only made it worse. Homer Martin proceeded to suspend from the Executive Board all anti-Martin Board members and

even vice-presidents and pretty well eliminated any hopes of any kind of a unity.

So, at this Convention, I might say here this Convention was controlled, led, and directed by Sidney Hillman and Phillip Murray. We were there under their recommendations and we were under their leadership. They recommended that we eliminate all vice-presidents and have no vice-presidents whatsoever. They recommended that we change our constitution that the secretary-treasurer would serve as a vice-president in case of an emergency, or in the case of death of the president, the secretary-treasurer would become president; and the secretary-treasurer's position would be filled by the Board. I believe that is correct. It may be that there was some setup to go back to the rank and file for secretary-treasurer, but I do not think so. I think the secretary-treasurer, if there had been a death which never occurred, would have been elected from the Board.

At this Convention we still had the problem of a split now within our own group. We had broken away from the Martin group which used to be called the Progressive group and our group was called the Unity group. Now, there is no Progressive group at this Convention, but there are elements of the Progressive group, which now are, in a sense, in leadership at this Convention. R. J. Thomas who was one of the top leaders of the Progressive group is now recommended by Sidney Hillman and Phil Murray to be the new president. This was to the rank and file delegates at this Convention a laugh. Nobody believed that that would be accepted.

In our thinking George F. Addes, along with Walter Reuther, was top leadership of the Unity group and was to be our new international president. When the rumors got out that Thomas was going to be our president and that Dick Frankensteen, who was also identified as a member of the Progressive group, was going to be in the top leadership, not as a vice-president because that was going to be eliminated. Under their recommendations, the intention was to retain Addes as secretary-treasurer, elect Thomas as president, and let the chips fall where they may for Board members which meant in a sense Walter Reuther and Dick Frankensteen were going back to electing themselves as Board members.

These things did not seem to be too objectionable to the rank and file, but there definitely was a strong feeling that we did not want R. J. Thomas as our international president. We did not feel he had the ability. He was not a good speaker. All we knew about him was more or less what Phil Murray and Sidney Hillman were trying to tell us at the Convention. By the second or third day of the proceedings at that Convention the rank and file delegates gave clear evidence that they were not going to support Thomas. There were snake dances on the streets all through the night up until two and three o'clock in the morning, singing, "We want Addes. Addes is our leader. We shall not be moved." These snake dances marched through lobbies of all the hotels, up and down the streets, practically everybody was in these snake dances. That, of course, is when Phil Murray and Sidney Hillman began to show their real leadership as labor leaders. They began to call

a caucus of each local delegation. It became a joke around the hotel. The chairman of the local delegation would march up to Sidney Hillman's room. On the way up the stairs, they would be saying, "George Addes is going to be our president, don't care what they say, we're going to elect Addes." Twenty minutes later, you would see them coming down that stair. "We're going to support R. J. Thomas. It's the only way to save our union. I'm sold. I'm convinced."

I went up that stairway leading my delegation from Local 2, positive that I would not be convinced by no Sidney Hillman to support R. J. Thomas for president. I was determined it was going to be Addes. But I must admit after twenty or twenty-five minute lecture by Sidney Hillman, after his complete discussion of the whole history of the UAW of what caused its splits, not branding Addes as a factionalist or Reuther or anyone else, but just plain telling us that Thomas, a man that had not been too strong in the Martin group, and of course, had not been in our group at all, would be more of a leveling effect in the UAW and by electing him president. He had pledged to make no major move without consulting the CIO which at that time meant John L. Lewis. After many repeatings of Thomas' pledges, we left the room like everybody else saying, "Yes, we will vote for Thomas." Thomas was elected president of the UAW. George Addes was nominated for president, but declined and was elected secretary-treasurer at that Convention. After the election of Thomas and Addes, the whole theme of the delegates' convention quickly turned toward the major problem of the auto workers.

That was to organize one of the Big Three that had not yet come into the labor movement, that is, the Ford Motor Company. Much had been discussed on this. The resolution was passed at this Convention that John Lewis himself sent a man of his own free choice into Detroit to organize the Ford Motor Company. The rank and file delegates felt that while Walter P. Reuther and Dick Frankensteen had ability, there was sufficient jealousy between the leadership of the two that neither of the two would ever be successful in organizing Ford and it would be better if Lewis sent a special organizer in here who had full and complete jurisdiction over the organizing of the Ford Motor Company. That resolution, as I remember, was passed unanimously.

We all came back to Detroit feeling that our union had gained ground. We had elected ourselves a president that had committed himself to follow the policies of the CIO. We elected a secretary-treasurer that was closer to us and we knew that he would follow the line of the CIO because that had always been his line and now we had turned over to the real father of the labor movement, John Lewis, the organizing of the Ford Motor Company. So, it gave us a new spirit. A new determination to see that the last one of the Big Three came into the union. Many officers like myself returned to their locals and reported these things, spirited up the rank and file, built up hope, told them it would not be long until there would be a headquarters set up somewhere over in the vicinity of the Ford Motor Company's Plant and that we would be on our way to organizing the unorganized workers of the Ford shops.

I cannot recall how soon this occurred, but it did within a very short while occur.

John Lewis sent a man by the name of Mike Widman to Detroit. He set up a headquarters on Michigan Avenue and Wyoming and immediately began to employ various organizers, some right out of the shop, some company men he knew as company men, men, in fact, that were Ford Servicemen. In fact, I do not think that we common workers and leaders of the union realized what Widman was doing. Undoubtedly, his experience and background taught him enough to know that stool pigeons on his pay roll were better than to be just on the pay roll of the Ford Motor Company. So, he did put on his pay roll men he knew were Ford Servicemen and Ford stool pigeons. But he got results and that was what counted. He did more within a ninety day period than had been done in all the long history of the long struggle in the Rouge Plant up until his entrance in the field of organizing Ford.

The Ford Motor Company was organized in the largest sit-down strike in the history of the labor movement. I do not recall the exact date of that sit-down strike, but it happened. I might make a few mentions of activity before the sit-down strike. Usually, pamphlet passers will go over to the Ford Rouge Plant to pass out pamphlets and they ended up in jail. Dearborn police were strictly controlled by the Ford Motor Company. They would haul away pamphlet passers from the gates of the Ford Plant to jail. It was then that Widman called upon all local unions in the Detroit vicinity to send pamphlet passers over there and to send so many that the

police could fill up the jails and there would still be pamphlet passers left to pass out pamphlets and that was just what occurred. There were times when there were as high as seven hundred people in a jail house and in the large lot that they had at Dearborn to corral the pamphlet passers. But there would still be another several hundred left, surplus that was still passing out the leaflets. That occurred over and over in the Ford Rouge Plant. Also Widman used an airplane with a loud speaker to fly over the plant. Workers coming out of the shop would hear a voice coming from the sky telling them to "Be Wise, Organize, Join the Union." It worked.

The whole spirit, the whole feeling, of the Ford workers was "This is it. We've got now a chance. We're going to get into a union that will win." They were right. They did get in the union. The sit-down occurred and the Ford Motor Company recognized the union. This, of course, helped many other local unions. Take, for example, my local, Local 2. For over a year we had a standing agreement with our company to sign a union contract with a check off system of the dues. But they had informed us that since Ford Motor Company was their exclusive customer and while they agreed to it, they could never sign it until Ford recognized the union. When Ford recognized the union, immediately we went into negotiations. Our company signed the check off contract. We believed that we were the first ones in the Detroit area that had a check off contract, after the Ford recognition of the union.

I would like to relate a little experience we had in getting our own membership to accept a check off. For some reason, there were many members of our union that had been propagandized that a check off system of dues would mean the union would lose its vigilance. Once the officers of the union collected your dues through the check off, they would not have to take care of your grievances. But without the check off, if they did not take care of your grievances, all you had to do was quit paying dues and money talks, they would say. That way they would have a better union. Some would point out that the coal miners had had a check off for years and their grievances were not settled because the union got their dues money whether the grievance was settled or not. They would stress that under a check off system, that the boss of the union can raise your dues anytime he wants to and that he can make special assessments anytime he wants to. These anti-union shop speeches were very difficult to overcome. It was difficult to convince the rank and file that these were absolute lies. Only by change in the International's constitution could assessments be made. A local officer or international officer could not make special assessments. They could only be made by a convention of the whole International and constitutional change in the constitution.

Nevertheless, it was my opinion that in the mass meeting that element would have won if we had not been so fortunate to have from the CIO that great man, Leo Krzycki, at this meeting. He was the last speaker. Leo Krzycki rose after hearing all the

debate, pro and con against the check off system. He rose and made a few statements in Polish and the majority of our membership were Polish. Then he gave the history of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and what the check off had done for them. Within twenty minutes, Leo Krzycki said, "Let's not wait. Let's just see how these people feel. I believe they really want a union. Do you want a check off or do you not? Let's see your hands up." I almost fell off my chair. I could not see a single hand in the membership meeting that was not up. And there were a minimum of 2,000 people at this meeting. Every hand was up. Now everybody wanted a check off. The result was that the vote went over unanimous, despite the fact that 20 minutes previous I did not think we could win that point.

I want to record, to the best of my recollections, some of the basic things that I think have affected the UAW in many ways over a period of years. Let us, for example, take the issue of piecework or incentive plans, which became a great political issue that actually was a sort of a platform slogan that Walter Reuther used to build himself from a Board member that received the lowest vote of all of the candidates for the Board that was elected at the Buffalo Convention. I believe, we elected seven Board members and Reuther was lowest of the seven. That was the time when Reuther was at his lowest ebb of influence in the UAW. The very fact he was the lowest elected Board member indicates he was at his lowest ebb.

After that sometime, we had this conference at the Masonic Temple. President Roosevelt had channeled information through the top leadership of the union that the Congress of the United States was in a mood to really crack down on labor, possibly even abolish the union in its entirety in order to get what they felt was more production to win the war or many reasons which particularly the congressmen who were anti-labor in the first place were trying to present to Franklin D. Roosevelt. At least they had convinced Roosevelt that unless something was done in the labor movement that they were going to take it in their own hands, and Roosevelt felt that whatever they did would not be good for the labor movement in general.

Now some of the main issues here were to establish in the shop around-the-clock work. They wanted the shops to go seven days a week. They wanted swing shifts. Most contracts that the UAW had at that time had clauses in it for time and a half for Saturday and double time for Sunday. The proposal was here to forget about Saturday as time and a half and Sunday as double time as such. Since it was going to be a swing shift, the first day of your week might be Sunday. We adopted a program of a forty hour week as straight time and you get time and a half for over forty hours a week. The issue was raised--what about double time? Does that come in after forty-eight hours? Much discussion was made on that. I do not think there ever was anything particularly said on that issue. But the union did at this conference adopt the main things recommended by the President of the United States.

But along with the recommendations that Roosevelt had made, he also had promised us that he in turn would go to the Congress and try to get a law passed that no man in industry would get over $25,000 a year. He, too, would contribute and sacrifice for the winning of the war. What we were supposed to do was to first sacrifice Saturday's time and a half and Sunday's double time. There was also a proposal to freeze the prices of all commodities and to freeze wages, and you could not get a wage increase across the Board at anytime. The only way you could get a wage increase would be where it was only adjusting classification and that War Labor Board would lay out a classification and the job description system so that you could turn to this formula, like a dictionary, and find out whether your group or your classification was entitled to an adjusted wage which would never anymore be called a wage increase but would be called an adjusted wage. There were many hundreds of classifications in the auto industry at that time. You would be called one thing in a body plant and the same operation in a different plant would be called under an entirely different classification. There was much work that had to be done at that time in the field of what is a classification. What is the job description? Do we call that job one thing in Murray Corporation and another thing in Briggs? Do we call the same operation, the same job, a third job in General Motors and a fourth name in Chrysler? In the Research Department of the UAW we had discovered as many as eight different classification names for almost identically the same kind of work and operations. These were the things that the War Labor Board was supposed to work out formulas for and give us..

If we were below the wage that was supposed to be paid to that kind of job description, we would get wage adjustment. For example, in Murray Body a crank press operator was supposed to come to a certain price. Now, a press operator was another price, but the word "crank" had a lot of meaning in it. We asked what do you mean press operator one wage, crank press another? And they explained that a press that had an axle in the top that held up the upper half of the pressing die that turned each turn of the operation to produce a molded item was called a crank press. Well, in our shop all of our operators were called press operators. So, when we looked into the field of crank press and went through our shop and took a look at our presses, we discovered that all of our presses were crank presses. So, we appealed to the War Labor Board and we got a seven cent wage increase for all the press operators in Murray. That is just an example of what they classified as wage adjustments, even though wages were frozen. This technique was used by the UAW throughout its industry and many wage increases actually occurred under the name wage adjustments.

Somewhere down the line in all of this activity, there were slogans in the shop that we, the workers, were the men behind the man that was behind the gun that was fighting Naziism in Europe, and that if we are the men behind the man that is using the gun, then it only goes to reason that we cannot win the war unless the man behind the man that is behind the gun can outproduce the same type of a person in Germany. So then the slogan came out for the production workers that we must outproduce Hitler. "What! Are

we patriotic? Are we so selfish that we want time and a half for Saturday when a soldier in a fighting field did not know when quitting time came. There was no such thing as a quitting time. Did the aviator, the fighter in the fighter plane and the bomber in the bombing plane, while over the field of the enemy, turn around and fly his airplane back to the field base and say it was quitting time?" These things turned over in the minds of the common worker and the worker realized that we, too, were as much in this war as the soldier with a gun and as the bomber and as the airplane fighter that brought down the enemies' bombers. It was then that the slogan became general that it was our job to outproduce Hitler. That was the only way that we could win the war. We had information of the tremendous lack of war equipment in Russia. We had the knowledge that Russia had millions of soldiers but no guns. Men were willing to fight and well trained to fight the enemy, which at that time was Germany, but had no jeeps to surround the enemy, had nothing practically to really fight with. It was our job to produce the equipment. The automobiles, the jeeps, the airplanes, the guns, were not only for our boys that were in the services, but particularly were to be given to the empty hands of the Russian soldiers that were willing to die. The soldier should have a reasonable chance to defeat his enemy before he died or at least an even chance to fight the enemy.

There were meetings beginning to be held then, particularly department meetings. You must remember that this was a large shop with twelve or fifteen thousand employees in one plant. We had two hundred to two hundred and fifty departments. Each department had two, three, four hundred employees, enough to fill up a union hall. Sometimes we would schedule department meetings all day long. Mornings there would be department meetings of the midnight shift just coming off from work. Around noon there would be department meetings of the shifts that were coming off from work. And in all of these hundreds of meetings every day in the week from Monday to Saturday, the discussions would be on the subject of winning the war and outproducing Hitler.

That is when somewhere down the line, proposals were made for piecework. If the worker, despite the fact that he is patriotic, had a wage, knowing already under elementary time standards that he was to produce so many pieces per hour, if he had an incentive, he would get more pay, if he produced more pieces within that same number of hours. It might give him an added incentive. Although this did not sound like patriotism, it did appeal to the selfishness of the guy that still wanted to make more money and you have always had that in the human race. I, and many thousands like me in the leadership of the union, recognized that that selfishness existed. It was common to understand that when you talked to workers and when you hear them pleading with the officers of the union to get promoted to a higher paying job. You always hear that. That is one economic problem of the common working man that seems to never

cease. He is not getting enough pay. War or no war, he is still not getting enough pay. He wants to be promoted to a higher paying job. Let us say he was producing at the rate of a dollar an hour or a hundred pieces an hour or eight hundred in a day. If he produced nine hundred in the same eight hours (remember we had three, eight hour shifts and you could not give him more hours), we would in twenty-four hours get ten or fifteen per cent more production which meant more opportunity to put more tools in the hands of the soldiers to defeat the enemy.

So, many labor leaders began to campaign for the incentive plan, piecework, any method to get the worker to produce more, to outproduce Hitler. This became a great issue in the labor movement. In national caucuses, in conventions, state conventions, county conventions, county conferences of the CIO, within cities where no one met but just the locals within that city, these programs and resolutions were made and debated in hundreds and hundreds of different union halls and in county council halls and in state halls and all over the country and finally in national conventions. In piecework we meet the need to outproduce Hitler, was the thinking and philosophy of many labor leaders. Other labor leaders took advantage of this, wanting again to promote themselves in the same manner as the common worker wanted to get a higher paying classification. It was the same spirit, the same attitude. They felt that they could use this incentive and piecework doctrine to promote themselves by being against the piecework and incentive plans. They knew they could refresh in the memory of the common

worker in the shop how he was abused during the depression of '31, '32, and '33 all the way up to '36. How the company drove him to higher and higher production standards and then the next year cut the rate per hundred and the second year he would be producing twenty per cent more than he had produced the previous year. More than a hundred per cent now just becomes a hundred per cent. And he had again to build up his incentive by producing twenty per cent more than he had in the previous year in order to get any additional pay.

All these things were brought out, with politicians taking advantage of it. They said that the preachers of the incentive plan and piecework are anti-union, that we were company men, and that it was not good for union, not good for the labor movement to adopt incentive plans or piecework systems. Looking for top jobs in the International, as well as some looking for top jobs in ordinary unions, such as president, secretary-treasurer, top building steward, or top district chairman that did not have to work and were paid by the company for their activity, all such opportunists ridiculed the incentive and piecework plans, found fault with them, said they were company thinking, and began to say that leaders that preach this are not pro-union anymore. They are beginning to think like the company thinks. They have been in office too long. Their mind is changing to a company mind. They are getting converted to the company's way of thinking. All this propaganda in shops, in council meetings, in state conventions, and finally international conventions did not, I admit, hurt the

ones that were anti-incentive and piecework. It did definitely build political leaders that probably would never have been top, had it not been for this kind of thinking and this kind of propaganda. I do feel that anybody that gained any prestige or higher office or gained momentarily in anyway through taking the advantage of the prejudices of the worker against the incentive plans did abuse their power, did abuse their leadership, and did use it as much for selfish gain as the common worker did in the shop trying to get himself promoted to another classification. I do not think they used everything within themselves to win the war. I think they took advantage of the war similar to certain manufacturers that took advantage of the war to raise the prices of war materials. I think all of those kinds of people belong in one category whether he was in the labor movement or whether he had a million dollars invested in a private little factory of his own. I think all those kind of people in our America looked in the same direction and were not actually working to the good and welfare of all the people of America.

I want to give you just a little history of why it was so easy for a labor leader in the war period to make himself popular by being anti-incentive and piecework. Let us take, for example, my personal experience. My trade in the auto industry was metal finishing. Metal finishers even before the 1929 depression never thought of working for less than 90 cents an hour. Usually, the wages were from $1.00 to $1.45 an hour. In fact, I did meet

a whole body of finishers at Fisher Body that were getting as high as $1.75 an hour. These metal finishers considered themselves entitled to more pay than the average tool and die maker.

Now, in 1932 is when the big wage slash came hard in the auto industry. For example, a metal finisher that never knew himself to get less than 90 cents an hour was offered a proposition of take it or leave it in the fall of 1932 of 45 cents an hour with gang bonus. They were encouraged and told that this gang bonus perhaps would still make them a dollar an hour. I, and many thousands like myself having to work, no other place to work, no other trade we knew, had to take it whether we liked it or not. For some weeks, perhaps months, 45 cents and bonus did give you more than your 45 cents. But the mystery of the gang bonus system was that there was never anyway for the common worker to understand the mathematical methods that were used to figure out the bonus. The company promised you that every morning your bonus would be published on the blackboard. You would come in in the morning and look at your previous day's operation. It would say, for instance, 180 per cent bonus and the next day, maybe, 200 per cent and on down for the two weeks. Those days you only got paid every two weeks. Some of the workers kept a record and at the end of the two weeks, they would divide the number of days work by the total amount of the bonuses for that period and they would find themselves with an average of 175 per cent or 180 per cent. Well, naturally that meant they would get 85 cents or 90 cents instead of 45 cents, which was the base rate. But then when their pay check was handed

to them, they would see that they only got 55 cents, only ten cents above the base rate. They would run to the boss and ask him how come. The percentage looked like it averaged 85 cents and here you only got 55 cents. And the boss would go through a long discussion and say, "Well, you don't understand that the sweepers are on this bonus and the electricians are on this bonus, and the loaders down on the next floor below you are on this bonus and some of those fell down on their jobs and they swept away all that percentage that you were looking at during the week. It wound up in the latter part of the week when we took them in that there was not that big of an average." This wrangling and fighting and battling went on the entire fall of 1932. I believe that was true throughout the auto industry. I am only referring to the body plants, Briggs, Budd Wheel, and Murray, which I was familiar with and I was also familiar with the workers in these plants.

Then along in November, 1932, when we were right in the middle of the production of the '33 model cars, the companies took away our guaranteed base of 45 cents and said it was on gang bonus period. Then we began to draw less than 45 cents an hour with our gang bonus system. I recall in particular the last two weeks that I worked at Briggs before the strike of January, 1933, that for 101 hours I drew $25.25. I photographed that check. I wanted to remember that as a souvenir. It was the following Monday after the payday on Friday that I along with hundreds of other workers were successful in pulling a strike at the Briggs

Highland Park Plant. Briggs at that time had the Ford Plant in Highland Park rented or leased. The next day the strike spread to Mack Avenue and became a big strike, the first big strike in the history of the auto industry in the State of Michigan. That strike, however, sad to say, was broken up by the Democrat Governor Comstock by sending in some 175 State policemen, succeeding in breaking the strike, blacklisting over 1,500 of us. Some of us never got back into the auto industry after that, some for short periods of time.

Now, this is what caused such a tremendous build up of hatred in the auto worker for piecework and bonus plans and gang bonuses, and it was no trouble for a smart labor leader to just remind the boys in the year of 1942 of the bad years of 1932, and it was not hard to convert the average worker. He did not want any incentive plan or piecework of any kind, war or no war. That is how some boys built themselves in the UAW on that propaganda.

Other organizations in the UAW, while they sacrificed the time and a half for Saturday as such, and double time for Sunday as such, were not vigilant labor leaders. They forgot to place clauses in their contract making provisions that when the war was over, these clauses would be reinstated. To the best of my knowledge, the majority of the auto workers of today have not won back what they lost at that time and got back time and a half for Saturday as such.