

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

George Hardy, Charlie Levey, Bob Crain

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Service Employees International Union
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for

The Oral History Program

December the 13th, we've got Charlie Levey, George Hardy and Bob Crain, from the Service Employees, and we're just going to talk.

Crain: Now, just so that we get the record straight on the this thing, how old are you? Where were you born? and when?

Levey: Let me say this. I'll be eighty years old if I live, December 29th of this year. I have been in the labor movement for almost fifty years and during my tenure of office down through the years I was a member of the Commercial Checkers of the ILA. Right after World War I and at that time there were no motor vehicles, there were just Teamsters who drove trucks and I was a member of the Commercial Checkers of the International Longshoremen's Association. And I remember well when the Longshoremen assembled on the

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bulkheads of these various piers in New York City. Particularly I worked for the Munson Steamship Lines. They used to throw them a brass check and they fought each other to get that brass check so that they could work in the particular ship that was in the harbor. There were no stevedores in those days. When I say stevedores I don't mean these corporations or these companies that operated stevedoring agencies, so to speak. Stevedores in those days were men that were identified on the docks who had a crew of men that they used to load or unload the ships and at that particular time I noticed that there was no such thing as racketeering. What I was impressed with in the trade union movement is because they stood side by side on issues that affected their well-being so to speak. In other words, the ILA had unionized the barges, the tub boats, such as the Moran Towing Corporation, who is today one of the large companies that operate tug boats in the port of New York. And the shipping industry at that time was based on coaling a vessel which would take them sometimes forty-eight hours to coal a vessel. And I remember at the time when I was there that they had the oil - they started the first oil burner and they didn't use many people. They would fuel the ship and it would leave, like the (name of ship or place)...

Crain: That's automation Charlie.

Levey: ... well I wanted to get at beginning - I wanted to get into the . . .

Crain: When you said you'd been fifty years, that's - you said 1901?

Levey: Well, fifty years that I have to say there's a gap between time. I was there in 1920 and then I...

Crain: O.k., let's just get a little bit of history about you and then we'll talk about some of the later things.

Levey: I'm talking about myself.

Crain: Well let me ask you a couple of questions so we can really kind of identify like where you come from. You were born, what, 1898?

Levey: 97. December 29, 1897.

Crain: Where?

Levey: In Brooklyn, New York.

Crain: My wife's from Brooklyn. All right, who did you live with? Mother? Father? Did you have a lot of brothers and sisters?

Levey: My mother and dad.

Crain: How many brothers and sisters?

Levey: I have a brother and a sister and my father was employed by the Fleet Supply Base of the United States Navy. Because Brooklyn...

Crain: Is a big naval yard.

Levey: ... was a naval base at that time.

Crain: Yeah, Brooklyn Naval Yard. And your dad was a civilian employee of the ...

Levey: A civilian employee.

Crain: Right. There was never nothing like unions or anything for them then.

Levey: No. Nothing.

Crain: And you grew up with a brother or sister. You and...

Levey: There were very few unions. I'd like to emphasize, Mr. Crain, that the only unions that I knew that had influence in the labor movement at that particular year, it was the International Longshoremens Association. The Railroad Brotherhoods were pretty strong at that time, I learned as I went along. And the needle trades weren't well organized and the services industries weren't organized at all. What I'm trying to get at is how I came into the service industry.

Crain: Well we'll get there. Don't worry about it. I mean some of the history is even you though. What kind of a - you lived in Brooklyn. What kind of a place did you live in? Apartment? A house?

Levey: We always lived in an apartment house on the top floor because the rent was cheap.

Crain: Because you had to walk up , no elevators.

Levey: ... on the lower floor. My dad didn't make too much money and of course he was a little bit and we just - our way of life was just normal.

Crain: What did you use for heating? Coal?

Levey: Yeah, coal and for refrigeration we used ice.

Crain: You'd go down - I mean you'd put the card in the window?
Or did you have to go down and get it off the truck?

Levey: Well they would bring it up by the bucket. You'd buy
it and they'd bring up or we'd bring it up ourselves.

Crain: You mean you'd lower a bucket out the window?

Levey: No, I don't recall bringing a bucket out the window.
It was just - the ice man would deliver ice on his
back. He'd bring it up...

Crain: Yeah, I remember -- (inaudible)

Levey: ... the coal, as I recall, we'd have to come down and
bring it up ourselves. You had to come down. They'd
unload a load of coal then you had to take your bucket
for coal and bring it up to your apartment.

Crain: But the guy came around, the drayman though, he was
driving a horse and wagon in those days.

Levey: Yeah. Everything was horse and wagon. The transporta-
tion system at that time of the gaslight era - it was
all horse. And the manual type driving. There was no
electric transportation at all.

Crain: The gas light era. As a young man in Brooklyn, in an
apartment house living kind of thing, what the hell
kind of activities did you - what kind of games did
you play? Did you play in the street? Did you play
ball? Like now?

Levey: Well, no, really, well I played ball. We had a lot
of lots there in that area. We lived at one time in

the Flushing area and then in the Bedford section of Brooklyn and of course we played ball, I was the umpire and they generally kicked the shit out of me. I was always the umpire and I - as far as I recall, my decisions were never respected. The kids used to fight and there were gangs, you know. But they were not thieves in a sense. You had the Irish would tackle the Jews; the Jews would fight the Italians and if you passed a Catholic church, hey Charlie, tip your hat. But they meant nothing about it. There was no outlets. When I went to New York City, for example, walked through the Waldorf Astoria, I'd always smell this food, delicious food. They had no refrigeration and the elite used to dance and they would say the women are dancing and wearing pink gowns tonight. The only place there was a shortage of money was among the poor. And most of the people...

Crain: Most of the people were poor.

Levey: ... and they worked long hours but I would say this, when a holiday would - you had a holiday that was Christmas or a Jewish holiday and they had a chicken on the table, food was cheap. They were happy. Nobody felt the impact of misery, so to speak. And there were no welfare agencies. Nobody paid attention. When a person couldn't pay their rent they put them out in the street and they put a tarpaulin over their furniture

and a plate and when would walk by and they'd fill up the money and then they'd move in. I asked my dad one time, I said, I might say this, I have a high regard for my father. He's a good man. But he did like to drink. It was true among the people that worked for the navy yard or

and - we lived over a saloon. The place, I remember called *Serbachs(?)*. This is German. They had a water trough on the outside and used to say water(?) your horses here and get yours on the inside. I remember that. My dad used to laugh. He said, you know what, he said, when I moved in this house they were all what you call flats, you know, bedrooms and that's all there was to it and he said I moved in and I paid \$3.00 a month and they gave me three months concession for moving in. So after I was in that for six months I paid my rent and he said I was there for nine months for \$3.00. Somebody put me out in the street and it was cold and Mama was sitting, he says, on the steps and the first thing you know we got another \$3.00 and moved back in again. Before the sheriff came around they moved back in again. Some of the things he said - of course most of the people were poor in those days.

Crain: Yeah but do you think *conditions* were better?

Levey: I would say this. You didn't hear about mobs. You didn't hear about people trying to rob each other.

There's a tremendous sense of dedication to each other under the so-called sweatshop conditions that existed...

Crain: You didn't hear about kids on drugs... and the hell with it...different world.

Levey: The education process was good. The kids that graduate today, they can't add, they can't write. I had a very simple education but I can add and write, percentages and so on. So...

Crain: Why do you think that, today, that kids are on dope *→ there's everything* and in those days they weren't

Levey: In those days...

Hardy: I only knew about three hopheads in my day. I only knew three hopheads in my whole childhood, growing up. *as a kid*

Levey: Well I would say, it must be remembered that in World War I the patriotism was beyond question a great thing. Everybody was patriotic. My brother was drafted and I was in *Muscle* Shoals, Alabama, waiting to be drafted, which I was, and Armistice Day when I was at the school house ready to be inducted, you know it was the end of the war, people were happy

Crain: Well that was true all the way up to World War II, tho, Charlie.

Levey: ... tremendous sense of dedication except one thing.

Nobody had money. And you were lucky to have your grandmother or your grandfather. My grandmother, she died - she was 103 years old. And my dad took her in. It was my mother's mother. We had room for her, / ^{it was} a little bit tight but there was room. There was never any question about taking care of each other. This was what I would say a tremendous sense of dedication. His attitude down through the years, I found that true on the job. And when I talk about the ILA, see, it's a most inspiring era for me personally because I identify with character, dignity and loyalty to the union that I had the pleasure to represent down through the years. That's why I came in here. It was fascinating. It had a lot of color. Now I just want to mention while I'm on this story here. The line that I worked for, the Munson(?) Steamship Lines, when Walter Munson became chairman of the United States Shipping Board and he took all these German miners, I'm trying to remember now, one was called Martha Washington, the Southern Cross and a few others I can't remember and these were German liners and these ships had refrigeration. You can imagine that they had dressed beef that came in from Argentina, South America. They brought in salted(?) hides for the tanneries. They brought in crude rubber and coffee and these big ships - they

were tremendous, but they were so far advanced in technology - as a young kid I - it's very difficult to really appreciate what I was seeing you know. And I worked on these ships and it impressed me a whole lot but the point I want to raise here is that at that particular time if you recall, they had the *Wood* Steamship Line, the *Mora Castle* - I worked on the old *Mora Castle*

Crain: The one that burned?

Levey: No, the old one.

Crain: The one before the one that burned.

Levey: *Mora Castle*, the old one. And it was a ship that had the black bow, gold lettering, and it used to go to Havana, Cuba. Munson Steamship Lines never went to Havana, Cuba. Munson Steamship Lines covered the
(inaudible)

all these little shipping ports and the reason I'm familiar with it, because our line used to bring 75% of the brown sugar into this country and we used to go to refineries (inaudible) and when they would unload these ships a sack of sugar, of brown sugar, weighed about 375 pounds and when they unloaded it off the ship, it came to the refinery, it was weighed by the customs and they had a tax on it. Now they would bring the sugar in during the hurricane season, which is around August and September,

but in those days we could never follow the eye of the hurricane. They had no airplanes and these ships used to come in battered. We'd never know when it would hit the *north of* Cape Hattaras. Our ships were in tremendous distress. Now I worked on these ships and we used to bring in linseed,

, somewhere up in Jersey as I recall - so many years back. They had no farm subsidies in those days. What they'd do, they'd load a ship - it could be of apples or potatoes and then they'd take it out the three-mile limit and they'd dump it.

That's how they - highly subsidized to keep the price up. But they'd dump it.

Crain: (talking along with Levy, inaudible)

Levey: ... and then of course we had situations the same as we have today, in those days the ships that would fly the foreign flags - Norwegian, *flags and so on*. They paid cheap wages. But they used those ships for the same reason that they try to do now. That has never changed and I remember, they gave the assignment of a ship in Wehaukan(?) and it took us ten days to unload *pulp* and we put them on freight cars and we sent them to Canada and from Canada they sent it back again. This was a ¹¹¹ / to subsidize the paper industry. We made this kind of stuff that they had. Now not to get away - to get away from this situation

about shipping - I had a great love for the trade union movement because I worked there in the long-shoreman's work, there weren't blacks. Let me make that - they were Irish and Polish. But they were husky guys and when they saw a checker, not necessarily myself, they'd tip their hats to us. All we had was a lead pencil in our hand because we had to cube(?) the freight and the locomotive engine would be lowered into a ship and it probably had 148 parts to it and if one part was missing, you know you couldn't do much with the locomotive engine get lost. We used to give *count marks?* we used to watch these things. We'd have to go over the side of the ship - I couldn't swim but I had lots of guts, *a young punk,* and I'd go down the rope ladder ice and sleet and those longshoremen would stand around and help you out, you know, make sure you're safe, had a high regard. So actually, when we had a strike, when they blew a whistle the port was down cold. And that was it. I made five dollars a day.

Crain: That was big money.

Levey: This was over fifty years ago. But when I worked on a ship and they wanted to get that ship out of port, you worked day and night, twenty-four hours around the clock. You made \$21 and maybe you'd do that for about six or seven days and they'd give you one hundred and fifty

bucks, it was a lot of money. And I used to go up on Broadway, meet all the gals and blow it, you know, smoke cigars, had a helluva good time. Now I'm gonna get away from this ship business to tell you exactly what happened.

Hardy: Well Charlie before you- now when you come off the docks and then your entertainment, you're going high^{tone}would be up on Broadway and meet some gals where, around Times Square?

Levey: Yeah, like

Hardy: It's still the same now, isn't it?

Levey: Right. The , the Sherry Netherlands, all that ...

? It's cheaper now George, you wouldn't hang around there.

Levey: Well what they did in that era is they believed in drinking and dancing and romancing and stuff like that.

Hardy: McBride told a story the other day about being poor. Charlie reminded me, he says I come from a - one of guys who was telling this story to McBride said I come from a town in Alabama that's so poor the house had no water, no running water, no bathroom, it was in an out-house. He said oh, it was poor, no streets, no nothing. He said we had a pump our water by hand and he says well I'll tell you how poor it was, he says, the only - the town's only prostitute was a virgin.

Crain: Did you have virgins in those days? I guess you did.

Levey: Yeah, I think so. Let me say this to you about just one thing I should add. When a ship came into port, they generally carried 110,000 sacks of linseed. That would be about what they would carry and then they would splice the bags and would suction them up into the plant and make linseed oil and the--probably the 110,000 sacks might be owned by possibly thirty or forty farmers and they would have their own agents. They had to protect them but the agents they had used the same checkers and the same union. So we made a deal.

we slept(?) for seven nights and days and seven nights, everybody was happy. Feed us steaks and all that. The thing is this - that basically there were situations developed in my time that it's worthwhile discussing now - when I mention the Moran Towing Corporation - in you checked the port of New York, even ask (name) he'd tell you how big they are. And I knew old man Moran. I got to know him because he got me in trouble. He came up to me one day and he was mad and he said "I understand that you were going to take care of the flour, sacks of flour that came in" he says. "Make sure, he says, (inaudible) he says the canal boats, they have them all covered with cork and asphalt, all that kind of crap. He says everything would be fine. But in the meantime they brought them in from Buffalo and instead of bringing

them down on rails. In the meantime, the port manager who was a sea captain (inaudible)

Once in awhile captains periodically would take care of the ports. He said to me now you watch that, he says, that flour might be caked(?). So I was carried away. The result was there was about five thousand sacks of flour was caked and we got the ? . I was suspended for six months. But that didn't matter. I went to work in Brooklyn which was another local

Crain: (Talking over Levy, inaudible)

Levey: I went to work down there loading rails. I was making twelve dollars a night. \$84 a week. In those days it was a lot of money. I never ran out of money but then at the same time we had instead of the Federal government dismantling the liberty boats they used during the war or those west coast boats, they sold them. And they started competing with each other and first thing you know, we had problems on the docks in New York. So I gave up this job - I did various things - nothing that I can recall as outstanding and I finally got into the labor movement which I liked because it was clean and I thought it was a great thing. So I would just plan to talk about my...

Crain: Well what got you into the - I / ^{mean} here you are at an \$84 a week job and now, all right, you've done some things that - how did you get into the labor from there?

Levey: ... I'm going to explain that.

Crain: How did you get into labor?

Levey: I want to explain that. I had a friend of mine, in the neighborhood, his name was Izzie Schwartz. He had a brother named Louie Schwartz. Louie was my friend. And naturally Izzie Schwartz and I were never that close but the brother and I were and this Izzie Schwartz went to prison, found guilty of raping a girl. And I don't believe he was really involved in this at all. I believe he went to prison innocently (sic). It was an unfortunate situation. He had no money to protect himself. The girl put the finger on him and as I recall it was a tragic situation but, being a young man, at my age, it didn't mean any - you know, it didn't get to me as a serious matter. While he was in prison - this is an interesting thing - he met Little Augie...

Crain: Ah, Little Augie.

Levey: ... the gangster. They became friends and when they got out of prison this Izzie Schwartz became friends with this guy George Scalise who was finally General President of this union. Now how they became friends I don't know. But it was probably through Little Augie I would assume. And this Scalise, he got what you call a branch charter from a guy name of Polar(?) in New York, who had a charter for Garage Washers and

Polishers Union - whatever, I can't recall - so he gave him the branch charter. So he had his office in New York and they went out and whatever they were doing, the first thing I heard about him was that they were anxious to get a window cleaners charter. You know, after I left the schools I wound up - I was traveling around the country - I wound up in Chicago. And I went over to the Building Service Employees and I became very good friends with Paul David, Gerry Horan, in my early days and I said Paul, I said, I'd like very much to go back home, like to get a charter for the window cleaners in Brooklyn. And the window cleaners in New York all were union. They were union. And the fellow that ran that union was a guy by name of Paul (?). He was international vice president of this international union. And so when I asked Gerry Horan, they gave me a charter to organize the window cleaners in Brooklyn, ^{Paul?} (name) resisted. He said he didn't like that. But in the meantime there was a deal between the window cleaning companies that they would not - the Brooklyn window cleaners wouldn't take work from New York and New York wouldn't take window cleaning from Brooklyn. So I got the charter. Innocently. And went out and organized. I wound up in jail there. Kicking me around. We did a helluva job. I was aggressive. And finally, I got the feeling that something wasn't

right. The name of Little Augie crept in and I didn't even know who the hell he was. So they started pushing me around. That was Izzie Schwartz and George Scalise and when they bothered me, tell me to mind your own goddam business. I went back to Chicago and found out that they made a deal and they sold out. They grabbed the money and that was the end of that local. It was Local 3, Window Cleaners Union. And I want to tell you, to me this was something - I didn't think it even possible. Now I went back to Chicago and I told Paul David - and I want to say this, Paul David, in my estimation, he was a very honest man. Very honest man. I don't believe there was a...

Crain: Did he have both legs when you knew him?

Levey: Yeah, he had disease later on. He and I were very good friends. There were things happening after I went back there that made me wonder what the hell's going on because I learned that in order to organize in those days you had to get the o.k. If you organized in Brooklyn, Augie had to give the o.k. You organized in the Bronx, Dutch Schultz had to give the o.k. If you organized in the garment center, Louie Lefky had to give the o.k. This is the way it went. It was - and the employers were guilty because they dealt with these detective agencies. That's the early days. And if you went out and organized and you had a union and

everything was nice and quiet, they'd say let's have a strike. That's the way they made money.

They'd say let's have a strike. Now what happened, let me say this to you, I may be rambling on a little bit because you got me - you just can't correlate your thinking and pick up the loose ends. Let me just say what happened here. When Roosevelt was elected president of the United States and with the NRA came Section 7A and - to give the workers a right to organize and bargain collectively. But elections in those days weren't binding. All they would do is take the Blue Eagle away. And I thought gee whiz, if we're going to organize, this is the time to do it. So I went back - I was in Chicago - I'd come back home and I'd go back to Chicago. So I went up there and I said I'd like to have a charter to organize the theater industry and this is why I have a scrapbook dealing with the subject matter which I would give it to you if it were here. I don't have it, see. I went and I got this charter. It was called Local 118. And I put on a vigorous organizing drive - this was before 32B was chartered - and I was getting publicity - a hell of a lot of publicity - and I organized - at one time I think I had close to 3,000 members. Some paid and some didn't pay. The international never kept records to - you know, they weren't

particularly concerned about what you were doing. But when my local got large and became prominent in New York the news media started contacting Gerry Horan and Gerry Horan made statements which is in the clippings that I have and they started - he said to me, listen Charles, he said, don't give us any big deals. We don't want no big unions. We want a lot of little unions. Because they had nothing. They were afraid you'd build a big union, they'd lose their grip on the international. Now this is how I learned it very early. So I said - I'd see Paul, I said, "Paul, what the hell is Gerry worrying about?" He said "well he ain't worrying. He thinks you ought to break up your activities, like have a local in the Bronx, in Brooklyn..." I said "well there were chains, you know like *the Warner* second corporation and there was Loews and *Scoville* and all that." So in any event, never the international/had no money and the theater industry, they produced the pictures and they were the exhibitors, you know, and they had the power to do whatever they wanted to do. But anyway, I found that I was fighting a futile cause as Solly Rosenblatt at the time was the administrator of *the* amusements and I had a lawyer down there who was a friend of his and he suggested - he said, "why don't you have an election." Then he says, "you won't have no trouble." Sol was a

friend of ours. I didn't have no trouble, I just lost the election, that was all. It was quick in paying out. The money was - I struck at Paramount and they offered me a job, like a payoff. I refused it. But I got to know Eleanor Morehouse Herrick in New York, who was very good friends with Martha Perkins, Ma Perkins, and Wag at that time was threatening the Wag Act. And as this thing was going on the mobs were drawing away. They were getting away because things were becoming under Federal control and they were a little bit cautious and I can't explain why, but it loosened up a little bit. The trouble wasn't as bad as it was. But I called a strike in Staten Island. They beat me. I picketed those chains in New York. I didn't have the money and I didn't last too long. But in any event, with the exception of the Wag Act the whole concept of organizing took on an entirely different look. International unions were all starting to move in but they didn't have organizers. They were never equipped to do the job. When I had my office on 45th Street Duke Framy(?) called me one day and he said, "would you do me a favor?" I said "sure, what do you want me to do?" He said "will you take in the treasurer and the press agents of the theaters in New York?" I said "sure." The guy, even when he came in, the guy would talk Shakespearean to me. Shakespearean, it was a tremendous thing.

Crain: It must have been a rejected act.

Levey: Well, just to give you some idea. So in there I - during the time that I had organized the theaters, I had the largest local in the city in New York. There was no 32B. There was a little Brooklyn Local 51. They had a handful of members. The elevator operators and starters were with another international union. In fact, I made speeches against our International with this guy. Didn't mean nothing to me. His name's Mat Fiore. But while I was in there a guy by the name of Ralph Whitehead, he came in there and he represented what they called - he had one of the four A's. One of the A's was circuses and the cabarets, another one was the burlesque theaters, another was the legitimate theaters, and the fourth A was chorus girls. Well I was doing a helluva job. So he was an actor - he came to me and said "would you do me a favor?" I said "yeah, Ralph, what can I do for you?" He had his office in the Bond building. He said "I gotta go to the West Coast." He said "would you do me a favor and watch my office for me?" I said "Oh, yeah, I'll do that for you." So I sat in his office and a Gibson girl came in. I was a compatible young man then. And she said "is Ralph here?" And I said "no, he's on the West Coast." And she said "I wonder if you could do me a favor, give me the answer I'm looking for." "Oh," I said, "I'll try." She said "my daughter's

doing a trapeze act at the Gayety Theater Minsky. And he offered her five dollars, he'd pay her more if she'd take her brassiere off. Do you think it's advisable to do it? I said no. For five dollars a day I said I'd keep my brassiere on. Well I'm glad, she said, it makes me very happy. Well it makes me happy too. In the meantime I figured I'd get... she thought I was a helluva guy. But let me just say this to you. Ralph Whitehead was an actor and he said to me, I want to talk to you Charles. I said what do you want to talk to me... He said let's meet on Columbus Circle under the fountain. The fountain's nothing but pigeon shit all over you. Christsake they're flying all over and crapping all over you. He was an actor. He sat down and he said I'd like you to be my general organizer. I said let me think about it. I'm not too sure I want it. So it just so happened, if you were an actor the other actors recognized you. If you weren't an actor, they had no use for you. So it just so happened that - I can't think of the fellow's name. He was married to (name) Sutherland. This guy opened up a nightclub. Harry Bannister. That was his name. He opened the first nightclub in New York City. All union. So Ralph says come on down with me, he says, we'll sign the application. So I went down and when I seen these

guys with lipstick - Jesus Christ, they scared the hell out of me, I started - they were all a bunch of fags. I realized that / ^{wasn't} my idea but I took off like nobody's business.

Crain: That's what they wanted you to organize, huh?

Levey: Yeah. Now I'm going to go into the - I want to say this to you here. This Local 118, we folded it. I went back to Chicago...

Crain: Well when you folded you had three thousand members.

Levey: Yeah, I folded up. I couldn't win the strikes because the fact is that for every time I issued a book these exhibitors would buy up the books. They had as many union books in their files as I had in my office. It was legal.

Crain: They'd buy them up and hand them out to anybody they hired, right?

Levey: No. It would - you know, you just kept - you signed the people up and they wouldn't stay with you long enough because they - what they would do, they'd take - if I - I had the front of the house, if you understand the theater industry, they called the front of the house which included ushers, ticket takers, ticket sellers and cleaners and stuff like that. And as / ^{soon as} as I'd get these kids in there they'd put tuxes on them, called them treasurer, assistant treasurer. They would snap at each other. They knew how to fight back.

Levey: You have to realize in my time - things change as years go by and Scalise came into the picture and I want to get back to this because I'm losing track of the whole discussion. At the time, when I had 118, and it wasn't going too good, I had no money to subsidize it. The theater industry would have given me all the money I wanted - to leave them alone. But I've always valued my union and I'm never involved with fast money and I'm one of the Vice Presidents of - living off my pension is all I have now. I'm not trying to leave you the impression I'm defending myself. What happened was every time Jerry Horan came to New York he would call me and he'd say, tell George Scalise I'm here. I want to see him. It's about this . What really happened was, I was friendly with Jerry Horan but it appears to me what happened that when the mobs came in - and I'm saying mobs - I got called to come over to Brooklyn - Prudential Building - and Jerry Horan was sitting there with George Scalise and he says to me "From now on you keep your nose out of anything here. George Scalise, ^{Eastern} he's the representative, he wants you to do something, you do it." Well I hated him for what he did / ^{with} the window cleaners so I picked up and left town. I couldn't work for a guy like him. Now that's around 1929 with the window cleaners and the theater situation came in probably

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right after the NRA, after Roosevelt became president of the United States - 1932. And he - I figured it's no place for me. I went back to Chicago. I was selling, doing odd jobs. So he became what they called the eastern representative. Have to get you straight on this. And he flexed his muscles. I recall before he became eastern representative, in Burrough *Hall*, Brooklyn, New York, there was an Elks Club, beautiful building. In those days they didn't have Cadillacs. If they did, I wasn't aware of it. But they had Packards. They had a Packard there and on it it said "To our beloved George." And at that particular time he said "I'm giving myself a testimonial. Here's twenty tickets - \$10 apiece. So I told him to go fuck himself. I wasn't going to sell them. And I didn't. But I did go up to the banquet that night. The place was loaded - judges, politicians - he couldn't even make a speech. He was grossly incompetent. And I looked at him and I said "Geez, it's an amazing thing." But you know what? When the banquet was over the Elks Club closed down. He didn't pay the bill. They went out of business. Bankrupt. So anyway, trying to piece this thing together, I was out of the picture completely and I decided it's no place for me. Then I came back to Brooklyn and at that time 32B was chartered, I think it was around 1934,

Crain: That was with Bambrick.

Levey: Yeah, Bambrick.

Hardy: Do you remember a guy named Shea, who was in New York, maybe

Levey: We had a guy named Shea in Pittsburgh.

Hardy: No, this was New York.

Levey: Shea with the stagehands?

Hardy: No, Shea was - no, I know who you're thinking of.

This guy was Shea in New York. He was one of the guys that went down to see Sam Gompers to pick up the charter in 1921. I guess he's gone since that time.

Levey: ^{in '21} Don't ask me, I was around.... But let me emphasize a point here. It's very difficult to correlate these things, you know. Every time you think about something you come back to it.

Crain: That's all right. That's all right. (inaudible)

Levey: Let me just say this to you. Jim Bambrick, in my estimation, was one of the great labor leaders of our time. He never did nothing for me but I have a lot of respect for him. When he organized that strike - one of the greatest strikes that ever happened in the labor hist... in the labor unions anywhere in the world - when they struck New York they had 5,000 reporters there and photographers.

Crain: What year was this?

Levey: I think it was 1935.

Crain: They struck the Building?

Levey: Yes. And it took them five days to call that strike. It was so methodical. He had a big map that showed where they were going to strike. And I recall, I was there with the apartment house took them a day-by-day picket signs, and I had tremendous admiration for the guy. Although I helped out in the strike - I was at Columbus Avenue helping out for free. And he - this strike that he called - because - he did it so effectively that I had a tremendous admiration for the guy. I really did. And it's pretty well-known that the garment industry really gave him his start because they backed him. But it was the idea that when he took down the city of New York - one of the greatest strikes that ever happened anywhere in the world. It's unfortunate that he got involved the way he did but it was Mayor LaGuardia who saved Local 32B. Local 32B had no money to carry that strike because it was widespread.

Hardy:
Crain: Were you there when Jerry Horan came in and said he was going to give them a million dollars? The whole international treasury?

Levey: Well he didn't come in exactly - it was just paper talk. He - what really happened - Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, who was pro-labor - brought the unions into City Hall

and the buildings hired Walter Gordon Merritt
 as their attorney, the guy who ^{broke} wrote the Danbury(?) ^{Watters}
~~"How to Strike."~~

Crain: Oh, way back then?

Levey: Yes, he represented these buildings and when he took
 a look at what he had going for him he said "Baby,
 we don't want to get rid of this union. We'll save
 it." I had a little bit up here and I could see the
 moves. And I want to tell you this. They had - they
 got themselves an arbitrator and they called it some
 kind of award that saved the union, they got a raise
 and everything else and they finally had the ^{Real Estate}
 (inaudible) ^{Advisory Board}
 and Mr. Scalise, he was the eastern representative who
 represented the mobs. So he had to be there. So he
 was in the mayor's office. He never talked because if
 he opened his mouth you knew how stupid he was. So
 they used to say George Scalise is here in the negotia-
 tions but he doesn't talk. He just keeps gazing out
 the window and they called him poker face George.
 But they didn't know how stupid he was like I knew him.

Hardy: You know what Meany told us? We had him at our last
 Board meeting. And he said it was the most - strangest
 negotiations that he ever seen because he was in with
 helping 32B and the employers ^{were} were Walter Gordon Merritt,
 the REAB, the Real Estate Advisory Board in one room.

32B was in another room with Meany. And all by himself, because Mayor LaGuardia wouldn't even talk to him, was George Scalise.

Crain: In another room, huh?

Hardy: Yeah. And nobody ^{told} hold him - the strike was all worked out between Meany and 32B and Walter Gordon Merritt and the Real Estate Advisory Board and George Scalise, who was the eastern representative in those days, had not a damn thing to say. Meany told us the story two weeks ago in Washington at a Board....

Crain: Why did the Real Estate Board want to save 32B?

Levey: Because Walter Gordon Merritt, who was an attorney with a rich background had broken up the Danbury Hatters Union - you must realize at that time the Wagner Act already was enacted and collective bargaining was mandatory but what he saw here was a chance to make some money. If he had the Real Estate Advisory Board, the way New York was, he'd make millions, which he did.

Crain: Oh, yeah. You've got to negotiate every year and you...

Levey: Yeah, (inaudible)

Hardy: Bob, he wanted to preserve the integrity of the union so the union (inaudible, Crain overtalking)

Crain: something to negotiate with, yeah.

Hardy: Well I run across that same situation in San Francisco. It's interesting. But about five years later we ran across the Industrial Association. Now they were the

ones that were hired to destroy the unions in 1921 with the American Plan. And they had set up workshops to train carpenters and building tradesmen and professional people to work nonunion and they had a school down there on Market Street near Third. And my first dealings with them was in the bowling alley strike in 1937 and after we got into the strike I think I got them - it was the first union contract that they ever signed - in San Francisco - the American Plan was in effect but the Industrial Association signed with us, the first contract. For bowling alleys and pin setters. Now the next time that we moved out of the musician union(?) We moved the 109 *Golden Gate Ave.* in San Francisco. Bill Storey, who represented the employers council wanted to sell me all the furniture in the Industrial Association for the classroom - the *folding?* bowling pins(?), gave me a helluva deal. But I didn't buy them because I didn't like the Industrial Association. Although I had a lot of respect for Bill Storey. And I asked him "well why are they going out of business.?" He says "you know what happened to us from 1919 until right now," in 1932, the Wagner Act, you know that's forty-two years ago. He says "we destroyed the unions." And he said "we had a hell of a record for destroying the unions but we also destroyed ourselves." There was no more clients. So then *it was this* the new thing

is to give just a little bit to make the union so they don't die out, such as Walter Gordon Merritt did in 32B. You see, it was a new idea that these guys were so antilabor had destroyed everything. That these leaders found themselves - you might say on welfare, so to speak - and they then adopted this plan where they'd give you a good union agreement, give you the protection - but never the union shop, you know. Always having aces in the whole to keep the union down that they'd always be in negotiation every year. Then they'd come in with ^{their} / big legal fees. And of course, you know, every time the union gets a wage increase then them bastards always raise the rents about a thousand times more than the wage increase, you know. I remember San Francisco and I guess/^{it's} the same in New York - when we took the average square feet we were down into mils and they were getting twenty cents a square foot more on the settlement, you know - it's just wrong, that's all.

Levey: It might be interesting (for you to see?) - there was a - you know there are those here who were in this activity that could tell it a little better than I can, but I have to say what I saw on the sideline based on the fact that when I came on the ILA, I had some idea about unionism. I had some idea how it functioned

Although I was just a member. I was able - I had the capacity to see through this thing here. And of course in New York they had the Midtown Association. Also the real estate group, the garment area. But the Real Estate Advisory Board, they got a preferential union shop. The union was saved. Walter Gordon Merritt saved the union because he could make money and he did make ...

~~Crain:~~ Well he made millions.

Crain:
Levey: He's got to have somebody to negotiate with.

Levey:
Crain: Now ...

Levey: Let's get down to another area.

Crain: Well let me ask you a question about Scalise. George says he's *in the other room* and you say that he was stupid and - but he had a lot of power.

Levey: Well let me ...

Crain: What the hell was the power based on?

Levey: Let me get you down to the power. I'm not saying he had a lot of power. I haven't gotten around to that. What I want to do is explain to you what happened here. In 1937 Jerry Horan issued about a dozen charters here in the United States. It was on St. Patrick's Day. For some unknown reason he signed these charters - two of them in Pittsburgh, Local 29 was signed on St. Patrick's Day, 1937. And so was the window cleaners. There were others.

Crain: Did he sell them?

Levey: No. Jerry Horan - there was a situation in Chicago where Oscar Nelson represented the union, the International Union. The International Union was at 130 N. Street, *the flat jointers union was at 130 W. Line St.* It was a small office. McFetridge at that time was the first International Vice President and Charlie Woods was a vice president and they had another vice president in Seattle I can't recall. And they had a convention, I think, in Columbia, British Vancouver. They had one in the Bismarck Hotel that I attended myself - about 80 delegates there.

Hardy: You went to Bismarck?

Levey: Yeah.

Hardy: I have a picture of that in the hall. I didn't know you were there.

Crain: McFetridge was there. He's in the back row.

Levey: He was there... Anyway, just to continue on, I just want to keep close to the situation. Now, what happened, McFetridge died. He probably died early in 1938...

Crain: Not McFetridge. Horan.

Levey: I mean Horan. He died early in 1938. I pieced this together. But when he died he was eastern representative of the International in New York City. ^{So} /he went to Chicago and I believe that the mobs had the meeting

where McFetridge sat in on it.

Crain: Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Horan died. Scalise was the eastern representative and he comes to Chicago. And he's sitting in for the mobs.

Levey: The mobs met over there and he came to Chicago. I wasn't there. I'm going on assumptions, because I didn't sit in there. I couldn't remember the hierarchy. I was the guy (inaudible)

Crain: (inaudible)

Levey: I was getting screwed. Period. So when they had that meeting they were frightened about 32B being such a large union. It would swallow up the International. This is the mobs now I'm talking about. Horan is dead. So they brought Scalise ^{until he got President} (in the meeting?) and asked him to protect their interests. Their equity that they had. And they gave Mr. McFetridge buildings such as... The flat janitors Union, he did not organize the flat janitors. He organized the school janitors and custodians. So he's in there. And in 1938 or 1939 I was... He - right after Horan died George Scalise, Izzie Schwartz said to me "George wants to see you." I said what's he want. He said "well he's got something for you." So I went up there. He said "I'd like you to go to Pittsburgh and take care of the organizing." I have the letters. I want to show you what looking letter... You would be amazed if you saw -

his name's on top - the International's right under it. It's a peculiar letter. It's a precious thing to see. So he said to me "you go down, I'll pay you \$75 a week." So I went there supposedly for thirty days or ninety days - I never got out of there in the first place. But nevertheless, I went there. In the meantime, George Scalise asked me to attend the AFL convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, which was either 1938 or 1939. I went. McPetridge went. And ^{Ed Mulman?} (name) of Cincinnati, he was a delegate. And I think that was the extent of it, see. I don't remember - and McPetridge was mad because he had his room right next to George Scalise's. And I never did see him at all at the convention. He used to slip out. He hated Scalise with a vengeance. So when I was down there I said to George Scalise "where's my expenses?" He never paid me a nickel while I was there. He left me stranded in Pittsburgh. But I was organizing quickly and I was able to get by. So he said "yeah, here's \$200." I said "you owe me a hundred" so he took a hundred back. So I said ^{the hell} how/do you expect me to stay here? He said "well you leave with me." I had to eat spaghetti every night for about four days. I thought I was (inaudible)

Crain: was a hell of a difference between this one and that one, huh?

Levey: That wasn't McFetridge. That was Scalise. And then ...

Crain: This one, we had steak for lunch every day.

Levey: ... and then when I was eating my spaghetti dinner I was surrounded by hoodlums. You know, let's face it, these guys looked like murderers.

Hardy: Did you know Two-gun Louie Alteri?

Crain: Did you meet him?

Levey: I met him, yes. ^{He got shot down.} I'm glad you reminded me of that.

^{I wanted to get to this one.}
(inaudible) So, anyway, he said to me you're going to play pinochle tonight. You know, not do you want to play? You know, you were like a captive. I said "we", I said (inaudible) He said well, we'll spend the evening playing pinochle. So we had Bowman playing pinochle. And Bowman's hands was trembling like...

(End side 1)

While I was there we went to see the World Series.

The Yankees were playing the Reds.

Crain: In Cincinnati.

Levey: Yes.

Crain: 1939.

Levey: Yeah. And they were playing the Reds and then he gave a party at the Beverly Hills Night Club. The place had burned down...

Crain: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Levey: You wouldn't believe but he had Henny Youngman there. He ^{had} and - Billy Green was there. ^{Tadewey} (name) was there. I was there. And he entertained different people I never knew. He had Sally Rand, the fan dancer. He put on - it was getting late, he held the band over for another, you know ^{round.} (inaudible)

Hardy: Sally Rand must have got through playing the World's Fair in San Francisco...

Levey: She was there. In any event, this is about the way it worked. So what happened, after (it was all over next day?) they circulated pictures of him when he was in prison, with his number. ^{It was fuckin'} This was something embarrassing. I ran home. I told that I'm leaving. It didn't bother him.

Hardy: Do you know who did that?

Levey: I have an idea.

Hardy: Who would you guess?

Levey: You tell me and I'll tell you who.

Hardy: McFetridge.

Levey: Probably so. I didn't know...

Hardy: I heard that he did it.

Levey: Well let me get to...

Hardy: Who did you think (inaudible)

Levey: Well I'd rather not...

Hardy: I know who got blamed for it. My old man. But my old man didn't do it.

Levey: Will I figured (when you say that to me?). I never believed anything Scalise said because everything, he had a motive. I went ...

Crain: I thought that was Denver, they gave those pictures out.

Levey: Huh?

Crain: Denver. Was it at Denver...

Levey: No, It was Cincinnati, Ohio.

Hardy: It was Cincinnati because I know he blamed the old man for it.

Hardy: Right after that, you know, 1940, we

Levey: He went to prison right after that. He didn't take too long

Hardy : I know. Well it was coming to a head (inaudible - everyone talking at once)

Crain: You had your ^{beef} meeting in San Francisco in 1940 didn't you?

Hardy: No, 39. Because 40, it came to a conclusion, in May of 40 it was all over. In 39 we were on our way to the State Supreme Court. We had got vindicated and in the meantime, the May convention came up in Atlantic City. I met with Bill *See* last night and we were talking...

Levey: Anyway, it's very difficult to correlate your thinking. But it's very interesting as you piece this thing together what happened. And - I didn't know McFetridge too well. When I went to the convention in 1940, as I

Levey: recall from San Francisco that was introducing your dad, (To run him) for president of this International. At least that's my vague memory that I have. But in any event, Bambrick was making a speech and he talked about Abe Lincoln, I knew right there and then he was going to prison. Every labor leader, including Dave Beck, when he started talking about Lincoln I knew they were going to jail. But in any event, it's been my experience when they started to talk about ...

Crain: Well Dave Beck, what was he talking about? He was in Cin..., no St. Louis it was.

Levey: Well he had a convention and he started talking about Abe Lincoln ...

In any event, Mr. Crain, I want to say this to you. One day I had a call from McFetridge (inaudible) I got a call from Bill McFetridge and he said to me - that was before the Atlantic City convention. He called me. He said "listen, can I see you?" I said "what about?" He said "I want to talk to you." He said "my aunt lives in ^{Turtle} Title Creek, Pa., and I'd like very much to talk to you." "All right, come on down." So he and ^{Barbara} came they stopped at the Hotel and called me and I went over there and we had

a sandwich and coffee and he said that he'd like to be the general president and he said he'd like to get rid of Scalise, that he was a thief, that he was this and that and so on. I said "Look Bill, I'll be honest with you, he is a thief. And I want to tell you he's no good. And I'm willing to put my - whatever I can, I'll do it for you. Because I think it's the right thing to do." I had a great sense of dedication to the trade union movement. And I said "If you think like I do and I think you do, I'll be more than glad to help you." Two days later Scalise heard about it and I arrived at his office, he wanted to throw me out of the 28 story building. He said "you're fired." I told him he could go to hell.

Crain: Well did you talk on the phones or anything?

Levey: I don't recall how he knew. But anyway, I called McFetridge and I said "I've been cut but I don't mind it a bit. I'm going to stay (right by?) and you go ahead and I'll push as much as I can."

Crain: Maybe McFetridge had

Levey: But anyway, I stood my ground and I said "You can't fire me. I'm going to stay right here." I did. I said I denied it. But one thing that happened there was they decided their offices should be west of New York to get away from Dewey. Which was a great problem to the New York locals. Particularly 32B. And I said...

Crain: What did they want the locals ⁱⁿ the International west of New York?

To get out from the prosecutor. Yeah, they were prosecuting them.

Levey: That's how Cooper became Secretary-Treasurer and Tim Dwyer became a vice president and all these fellows became - and he never promised me anything and I didn't want anything. I worked for every general president except Bill Quesse. I worked for all of them.

Crain: Bill who?

Levey: Bill Quesse. I never worked for him but I worked for all the others...

Crain: Quesse. Yeah, well he was the first one wasn't he?

Levey: Yeah, he was the first one but I worked for all of them and one day in 1942 he called me - he wrote me a letter I have, thanking me for everything I did for him. I was satisfied. I said if he's a clean labor leader, that's all I wanted.

Crain: All right, this is McPetridge, right?

Levey: He showed me - he was a man that dignified his position. At this early stage, I'm not saying later on when he had a taste for money and that I don't know, he died very wealthy and I had nothing to do with that at all but he didn't owe me nothing. I never traded with him and I did what I thought was good for the labor movement. And he called me and I met him in Erie, Pa.

and he was with Flory(?), the International President of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers and he introduced me. Then what happened there was he said to me "I'll be talking to you. I haven't forgotten what you did for me." And I said "well I'm all right the way I am." And so on and so forth. So McFetridge, in some respects, I had a feeling that he suffered from schizophrenia. There was something wrong about the guy. The way I got him. I could never make him out. I could never figure him out too closely. But he said to me "you know, Sullivan is too smart for me. He don't call me..." This and that. This is the way he was. And he was out to get Dave Sullivan. And he asked me to help him. And I said I wasn't 'going to do a God damn thing for you." I said "I want to set you straight. I put my life on the line for you. And I've been around here a long time and I knew Jerry and I heard about you driving Bill Quesse around, you're his uncle and all that. As far as I'm concerned, if you want to fight Dave Sullivan you go ahead and fight him yourself. I don't want no part of it." And he said "Well, he's no good here and he's no good that." And he really said a lot of things that were - to me as far as that went - and then he dug out about \$36 worth of vouchers and (name) and that whole bunch, you know, and they finally - they resigned. It

was in 1945 that I was nominated to run for president of the international, vice president of the international union. And then after he had more or less torn down Dave Sullivan as a man of authority, to make a decision involving his own members, he tore him down. He caved in - he had to. He had no choice. Then he was satisfied. He said to me "Do you mind if I move you down as vice president and move Dave Sullivan up?" I said "As far as I'm concerned, put him right up on top because I don't care about this title anyway."

So that's what happened. Shortman came back. Sullivan came back. And then when they started to dump Tim Dwyer because he didn't go along politicalwise I begged him to keep him and let me go. I didn't care about it.

George, (inaudible) + you know about that
I didn't care too much about it. But let me get back again. George Scalise called me *just before he* was picked up. He said "I'm at the William Penn Hotel. I'd like to see you." So I took Dave Glavin over with

me. Dave Glavin worked for the Gulf Oil Corporation, *for a guy,* I said "Come on Dave, let's see what he has to say, that big old son of a bitch." Went up there he had these bags made of alligator. I'll never forget, he was laying on the bed. And he said "What'll *you eat* (you have?) Charles." I said "Oh, I'll have a cup of coffee." and Dave Glavin said "I'll have..." Dave

likes a glass of liquor. He had a drink of booze. And George Scalise is saying to me "You know, comes a time in your life where you stop to think about - ^{your family} I'd like my kids to go to college." I said "what are you doing right now George." He said "I read books. I stay home." And deep down in my heart I didn't believe a word he said anyway. Because he was a captive of the mobs. So I was surprised when he picked up that phone in that room and he called Padway. Padway was General Counsel for the AFL. And he was his lawyer. I can't imagine anything like that. And he's talking to him. And at the time I didn't pay too much attention to the conversation. But he left and he checked into the Commodore Hotel and he ^{they} picked him up in his pajamas. Now, if any man ever suffered the misery, ^{silk} moments of anxiety like I did, I don't know how I endured it. Because what happened after he went in there, they start (bothering?) me, the Dewey forces, To come to New York to testify against George Scalise. And what was it - he ^{put in} (credited?) a voucher for \$750. While he was worrying about living clean he was still stealing. Now let me say this to you in all sincerity. I was served with a subpoena and I didn't like to go to New York. I had a new life here, respected, and I'm one of the people (to look up) small town you know.

So the chief of the detective bureau, a guy named, I think it was Monahan, called me and said "We have an eight state reciprocity arrangement ^w

if you don't want to go, don't go.

But it got so damn bad that I just said "well I'll go anyway." So I went. When I arrived at the airport there were four motorcycle cops.

Crain: Four motorcycle cops.

(several minutes of silence on tape)

Levey: ... I looked out and I was amazed and I said what's going on here and he said "we have to protect you. We have to give you the protection because you're coming down, it's a serious situation." I said "I don't need no protection." But nevertheless, they were there, blowing their sirens. I landed in the Pennsylvania Hotel. I went to my room. Two policemen were sitting outside the room.

Crain: (inaudible)

Levey: Hilton. Right by the Pennsylvania Railroad Station.

Crain: Penn Station.

Levey: Yeah, they used to go to the Pennsylvania Hotel.

Crain: The one that's across the street that's the Statler now?

Levey: Yeah. So they made a big deal out of it. And in any

event, I was sitting in special sessions when they were trying him. Was sitting there and his attorney was Martin Littleton, I think was his attorney. And he cross-examined me. First of all he called me an entrepreneur and I didn't know what the hell it was so I went and looked in the dictionary. It's supposed to be jack of trades...

Crain: Master of none.

: Jack of all trades and master of none?

Levey: Yeah, something like that.

Crain: ... Really kind of a promoter, a business man

Levey: They said - the prosecutor said "On this day wasn't George Scalise in the hotel William Penn?" I said yes. "Can you tell us what did he have for breakfast?" I said "well, he had ham and eggs or bacon and eggs - I have no recollection. I paid no attention to him." "Can you tell us what you had?" You know, and so on, can you tell us what Mr. Glavin had? And kept on going. Then he showed me the *he collected* \$750. So I said well, by that time -(I couldn't do well?) I was stiffening up so I asked the judge if I could have a recess. So he had to give me a recess. I was a bit shook up. He
don't you feel good?
impressed
You know, I / the judge as being a cleancut guy
but I wasn't that cleancut, I got
involved with that bastard. So anyway, he - I said -

this guy - answer the question yes or no. And I said "Well I'm not going to answer yes or no. My answer is that we spent \$750, He could have spent it and I wasn't there. I'm not going to be ...? He said "You'll have to answer. This is a court of law." I said "well that's my answer, your honor. He said he spent \$750, who am I to say he didn't? If you ask me something else, pertinent to this situation - I just couldn't testify to the fact that he didn't spend it. He could have easily spent \$750." Well he said "Do you spend \$750?" I said "I could but I don't"

hell of a lousy position to put him in. I didn't want to send that man to prison to be honest with you. Let me bring you back to another point - how I suffered, With these guys here. As I'm going on - while I was sitting in the back of the room there was a Chinaman there. He talked English. He had to testify against Scalise. I asked him "what are you doing here?" He said "The union, Chinaman in all the union." So I found out when he testified in court and they asked him how he came into the union and he said "Me no like union. Chinamen one big happy family but Mr. Scalise say make you more happy." But anyway, as I was walking out of the Special Sessions Court I'm grabbed by the special intelligence from the Internal Revenue Service.

They showed me their cards and said "you're wanted over at the special intelligence of Internal Revenue. We would suggest you ought to go over and see Mr. Larry *Keyes, I forgot his name* he wants to talk with you." So I went over there and this guy's asking me questions. I realize - I ^{*don't*} look up to see he's got his badge on - they put their badge on see. He says "did you notice my badge?" And I said no. He said "You know, we're special intelligence of Internal Revenue. You're involved in a conspiracy to violate the tax laws." I said "I think you're right." "How'd it happen?" I said "well, I'll tell you how it happened Mr. Keyes. I got a telephone call from George Scalise. Now I'm supposed to get \$75 a week. But after a year I got nothing. Then he called me up and he said he'd talk to me at nine o'clock the same night. But I could hear the quarters dropping down the telephone - booth where he called from, see, and he said 'I put you down for \$6,000. Now *I'll give you* the money to pay for me.' I said, George you shouldn't do that. It's conspiracy. He said 'Well I put it down. I want you to take care of it.'" So I didn't know what to do. I figured if I (tell on him?) he may go to jail. So I thought and thought and said well I'll cover the son of a bitch. I covered him - I had no choice -

So he said "you're confessing?" I said "no, I'm making a statement. If you want to call it confession it's all right with me." So he said to me "what about this \$500 that you took ^{Local} from 32J?" See, when I was over in Pittsburgh I was the international representative of the (south building service?). I was secretary-treasurer of 32A, which is now Ottley's union. I was secretary-treasurer of 32J and I was secretary-treasurer of the joint council.

Hardy: You were before Al Perry?

Levey: Yeah, before Al Perry. I had all that but no money. And then what they do, they come in - one day I was in New York, they said "give us - we need \$500." I said "How am I going to do it?" He said anyway you want. The only I could do it, I had to make it out to my name and cash it and give him the \$500. So he said to me "what about the \$500?" But (I kept thinking about it?) It just so happened that when I went to Pittsburgh I said to to Sam Sindel "Well I didn't know at the time. Mr. Sindel, ^{I'd} / like to keep a record of all the income and all the disbursements. I'd like CPA reports." So when he made the CPA reports he knew about this \$500. "If I were you" he said, "I'd include it in your income tax because ^{he} you took the money ."

It was exactly what happened. So Mr. Keyes, he was elated that - Sindel would have showed up and told him -

he said he'd filed for that, he'd put that in there. But the result was they sent me back the money that I paid. I kept it. But these are some of the horrors that I went through and of course as far as Bill McFetridge is concerned, I think most of us, we are familiar with his activities. But I'd like to make my closing remarks. They kept no records in the early days and Paul David, Bill McFetridge had no heart. This man had one leg and he fired him and he was pretty rough with Gus Van Heck, who built the flat janitors Local 1. And I'll never forget when he said to him "Now when you're nominated, remember, you decline the nomination. No speech," He said to him. And I was rather surprised at McFetridge because his International spent a large sum of money to build him a house on a lot . So I think this about brings it up to - as far as I can remember offhand, what happened here. It was just a situation - you have to recognize the fact that almost every international was involved in one way or another with the mobs because they were in control, that the employer was dealing with those mobsters and they had no alternatives, *that includes* (inaudible) *the Needle trades, ?* and many, many unions down the line, particularly where the mobs held power, you know, to make a determination. I know that I organized the *World* Baking Company in Brooklyn and as they got going the guys showed up

with guns

Told me to leave D.C.

(inaudible)

Stayed in the labor move-

ment
~~nobody to say who made the rules.~~ They had a strike in New York City, the Exterminators, and they were losing that strike, I went in there and beat them and they settled. They got a payoff. That's the kind of stuff that went on. I couldn't see that. I think right now the labor movement...

Crain: What happened to Izzie Schwartz?

Levey: Izzie Schwartz died. I think Izzie was the creator of a lot of problems that I was involved in. I think he did me a lot of harm for no reason at all. He was hungry for money. He even - his own brother - he hurt his own brother. I told you that he met Little Augie in the reformatory and that's how the think started.

Hardy: Was Scalise always having the babes when you were around?
 Everytime I saw Scalise he wanted a broad.

Levey: Well I had no knowledge of that. He had a girlfriend and...

Hardy: Who was the girl, his secretary, Ann Kay?
 She did most of his work.

Levey: I want to tell you something. I'm going to give you a copy of the letter that he wrote to me. It is a masterpiece. You see his name on the top. You wouldn't believe it. I'm going to give you that as a momento. I mean it. I have a scrap book I'd be glad to give you. I never saved... *Charlie,* (Jerry Horan had himself kidnapped.)

Crain: ←

Levey:

You never heard of that did you?

Hardy: No, I know at one time everybody was kidnapped.

Levey: Now getting back about Louie Altieri. Louis Altieri - they called him two-gun Louis Altieri and they shot him down. They killed him. And at that time Burke moved up in position. I don't say Burke had anything to do with that. I really can't. And I won't. If I knew I wouldn't say it either because it's not my makeup. ^{He} (I?) had nothing to do with it. But you know, Al Capone's brother-in-law, Frank Diamond, was on the payroll of Local 25. And ^{they} used to use symbols, when they gave him money, they made a little notch next to his name.

Again:

Hardy: (?) Listen, I know somebody who called Tom Burke Scalise's gunman.

Levey: Well, I will say this to you. Anytime I had an activity where the mobs were involved, like in Detroit, Michigan, like I went to Wheeling, West Virginia, and I walked in to see those guys. They were really mobsters.

He'd say "Don't go down there anymore. I can handle that from here." Which indicates that he was... The mobs - they had some foothold in this International and I believe they even allowed McFetridge ^{there,} in their

I honestly do, I believe it. I can't prove it but I know that Burke must have been shelling out money to those guys. He had to because he couldn't have

made the deals like he was making. I went down there and I - Wheeling, West Virginia - settled their strike.

Hardy: Were you there when the auditor for 66A, the elevator - ^{Matt} Mac(?) - Taylor's auditor got ^{bumped} knocked off? In Chicago?

Levey: I was there then.

Hardy: That's when Bart got the elevator operators ...

Levey: Yeah, I was there. I remember Taylor ^{I have vague} (inaudible) ^{memories about him,}

And a lot of stuff - I remember ^{when} Oscar Nelson was representing and I remember...

Hardy: You know Charlie, you speak of Oscar Nelson. I met him as a young boy. And he was the most distinguished type of gentleman. He had that gray silvery hair and he was an orator - the like of (?) I've never seen in my life. One of the greatest orators I ever heard. And if you go through the history of our International, before Quesse, it was always this guy writing the letters and making the thing. And even up - Sam Gompers issued our charter and they wrote our constitution except for one day that Quesse was - Oscar Nelson wasn't there and that's when the wording of our constitution was - you know, our constitution was written, I found out, by Sam Gompers. And I was amazed because he gave us all of the workers around the schools. That would have meant anybody working in public schools and public buildings, were our workers. And we never did see

When
 that, you know. /we were fighting for this jurisdiction we already had it and never knew it because nobody had the God damn records but the AF of L. And we wouldn't have known until we got it dug out which Meany gave us permission to go back to the records that they got formed in the AF of L. They're building a library for the AF of L and all of our records are being broken down and they got our whole section and there it was. And then you see in the actual handwriting of Samuel Gompers, changing our constitution. It was an amazing thing for me to see. And having seen Oscar Nelson in 1932-34, something, when we had the beef with the Civil Service...

Levey:

So did 32B.

Hardy:

No, in San Francisco. He came out, we had a beef with the Civil Service workers. We wanted to strike and during the depression they cut our pay a dollar an hour. They said, well the American building meetings(?) with guys, they had a company union, they sent them up there saying that... and they had reached into the - through the political deal of the Mayor Roth at that time and the guy at the Department of Public Works *Tom Reardon,* (name ^D a democrat, they had the city tied up, democrats or not. And the day they give the contract out to American, of course, in those days, why the fire department and the police department closed the show down. ~~And that's~~

And that's where my father ran into trouble. But we weren't going to take this dollar a day laying down. And they sent all of their stooges plus the Civil Service stooges to the *Tim Reardon, Mayor Rock ?* and they gave us a story that if we strike they would use the Danbury Hatters who fined our union for striking and picketing, you know, the Fox theaters and all those big shows of those days, Paramount, and all of them... At that time the fear of God was put into these Civil Service people and we couldn't get a strike vote. So we said look, we want to get separated from the Civil Service workers. We got the strike. And Oscar Nelson came out to San Francisco and he had a big meeting and that's where we agreed to have two unions.

Crain: 66A, huh?

Hardy: That's where 66A - it was first Local 66 and when Matt Taylor of the Elevator Operators came over, he had 66 ^{is} and the Elevator Constructors so we got - and put an A on theirs, so it became 66A and I think they gave them \$25 or \$50 which was more than ample to make up for the stationary and the guys had a big feast on the additional money. But we had then two unions. Local 9 retained the charter and the Civil Service broke away. Now that was the only way we could. But this Oscar Nelson - he was an alderman when he came to my house, when he went

out to see my dad. And when he went back to Chicago he was impressed with my father and the next thing I knew, when Paul B. David made him the International representative and from there on in he made Building Service Vice President. That was years ago. I don't know, he must have come on after you Charlie.

Levey: Well your dad - first of all, there's a little more ground that can be covered in that area. Oscar Nelson, as I remember, became a judge.

Hardy: Yes, he did. He was an alderman and then a judge.

Levey: He was a very competent individual. As I mentioned before, Paul David was in my judgement an honest guy. He was dying from disease. But I knew him when - he impressed me as being an honest, true guy. He had a little place - he never kept files - if you sent him any money he gave you a receipt, about the end of it, you know. What happened, if you recall in Atlantic City McFetridge became the General President. And what happened was that your dad was not the International Vice *President when I ...*

Hardy: He got fired.

Levey: Yes. So I felt that your dad got a lousy deal. Now this is not saying that to you because you're here. I knew your dad ran a good union and I had an idea who the good representatives were in the International Union.

Like I felt sorry for Jim Bambrick. I think that they - they pushed him into something and he went to prison...

Hardy: You know, it's a funny thing, everybody liked Jim Bambrick. Dave Sullivan liked him. . .

Levey: Including myself.

Hardy: And another guy who liked him was George Meany. George Meany was telling me last Board meeting that it was unfortunate he got mixed up with Scalise. He said he was forced to take the payroll. The payoffs, I should say.

Levey: It was, you know, the contracting industry in New York sort of lent itself to temptation. These guys work and if they got that work they gave them money for these jobs and stuff like that. But I had a great admiration for Jim Bambrick because he ran a strike that I don't think will ever be duplicated in the history of the labor movement. This is my honest opinion. I want to tell you I - nobody could possibly run a strike with very little money the way he did it, planned it. It was one of the greatest strikes as I've mentioned before, that ever - we ever had in the history of the labor movement.

Hardy: Well you know we wrote a strike manual and anybody that's ^{been through to} threw a strike at that time of the garment center, the ^{RAB} RAV, it's a job in itself, it's just tying up those office buildings in New York and the elevator operators

and everything in those days. My God, it's a tremendous thing. It took in hundreds of buildings. The logistics would drive you nuts.

Levey: I'd like to get back to your father. I went out to Chicago. You know Bill Cooper at that time was the secretary-treasurer and I came into Chicago to see McFetridge and he said you know McFetridge is on the West Coast. I said where is he? He's stopping at the Biltmore Hotel. So I took a plane and went out to see him. I was taking a little time off for vacation. So I went out to see him and - it was just before Labor Day. He had Barbara(?) with him. He was staying at the Biltmore. ^{Hotel} And he said "what are you doing tomorrow?" I said "really nothing too much." He said "well would you like to go to the races?" I said "yes." So he gave me tickets to Delmar Racetrack. ^{Suppose to be} Bing Crosby's private box. I went. And then I came back and we talked and he asked me where I was going. I said "I'm going to San Francisco." He said "what are going to do down there?" I said "I'm going to see my friend Charlie Hardy." He said "you're going to see Charlie Hardy! What are you going to see him about?" "I'm going to see him, he's my friend." ^{"Bill,"} And I said I'm going to see him. And I went out to see him and of course, your dad was suspicious of me. Wondered

why I came out there. I said "Charlie, I come to pay you a visit. I just talked to Bill McFetridge." And he said "is he dead yet?" So he said "come on." And we went ^{out} - I saw you from the - listen you didn't

...

Hardy: And I said "Who's that son of a bitch out there? One of McFetridge's assholes?"

Levey: And we went down and we - I went down with him and he settled a grievance and then your mother and he and I we went out to have dinner in some restaurant somewhere near San Jose, it was nice. And then they gave me a button(?), a diamond button.

Hardy: We were going broke furnishing every visitor...

Levey: By the time I got back McFetridge was right behind me.

Hardy: You know you were saying that Paul David was an honest man. Well I don't think he was honest. I just think he was surrounded by an environment that he couldn't control. Because every time my dad would go to an Executive Board meeting they'd all be in the meeting and they'd start talking, you know, and Paul B. David would say "well what are we building a big treasury for? Somebody else is going to come in and take it away from us. We're working, we're building up the treasury. We ought to split up the pot now." And that's the God's truth. That's an actual quote because in those days Charlie, Jerry Horan was so God damned frightened of

the mob he was drinking day and night and he didn't know when the hell he was going to be shoved out and Paul B. David, he couldn't do much but - it was an odd thing about Paul B. David, all through the years that I knew him, see I was the recording secretary and I'd get letters from him. And you're right about trade union principles, he was sound on it. Now when you look at the history of our union, it amazes me - that's why I went back to Oscar Nelson - we had a strike in the 20's, in the office buildings and all of the officers of Local 1 got sent to prison. And I never realized this until I talked to Bill Lee last year in Chicago. Remember we were - and I told him we were going to do a history and I wanted to get it - I think Burke ^{had} just passed away and I said I just missed a good section of the godfather, it would have been a hell of a thing and Burkett had promised - you know, he was going to do the thing for me, put it on tape and everything. I told him I don't give a shit about things but I said " you did a good job organizing here. We had every show and organized and the office buildings wouldn't recognize us until we got the elevator constructors." And I - he said "Well George, I told you, I'm going to tell you the whole story and I'm going to give it all to you." And I kept waiting and then we got in a beef with him and I had to put his union under trusteeship but he was

still going to go and give me the record because I didn't knock him off the payroll. Shit, Burke was a good man. In fact, he was the only guy of all them that had a treasury. He had almost \$800,000 in Local 25 and he didn't...

Levey: Yeah and he had that medical (center?).

Hardy: Yeah. So when you look at it, he knew how to run a union. He knew how to have a solid union. And all these guys ^{holler} (bawling?) about him should be - they're all broke and stealing the money and he took a good piece of it but he kept the union financially sound. All these years, Burke had a sound union. Financially sound I should say and he had pretty good agreements. At the end he was getting a little phoney but that was old age you can mark it down to. But dealing with this Oscar Nelson, I saw that he distributed a pamphlet about the low wages and conditions and how the people lived in the basements of these apartments and that they were being framed by the real estate board. And it was one of the most honest and sincere pamphlets - if you look at that pamphlet today you can really see the struggles of the workers that exist today. You know, trying to break out of poverty, was in this appeal to the tenants of these apartments. All done by Oscar Nelson. Oscar Nelson left (RAC?) You know I showed you that - the funeral of Quesse -

I showed that picture at the headquarters. Did you ever see it? Where I said now read this. This is a very funny story. You'd have to know the people involved. They had the funeral in the Chicago Federationist and it shows the hearse and all the flower trucks and Quesse and a big story, because he was a very popular man in Chicago. And then it tells the story how Oscar Nelson writes the story up that they gave the letter made on the death bed by Quesse in which he wanted his good friend, Oscar Nelson, to take over Local 1. And it was a death bed and it was his wish to the membership. Now, it's a funny thing, when he gave it to the secretary to read, the secretary emotionally filled up with tears and said "My god, I couldn't read it. I'm just heart-broken." He couldn't read the letter, which said that Oscar Nelson, on a death bed, was to take over Local 1 of the International. So the next guy got the letter and he too went to read it and he couldn't go on any longer and three guys couldn't read the letter and finally Oscar Nelson, he read the the god damn letter. He got the record and he said "well let's comply with the late Quesse's wish." They stole the International right at that meeting. And that's the god's truth. You can read it right on the walls Charlie. Now that's how capable Oscar Nelson was. Now he didn't keep the job long. He resigned right after that and became

vice president of the Chicago Federationist. And in 1927 he was the group that said that radio was becoming of age and applied for a radio station. They got WCFL, a 50,000 watt station. We still have it today. He was - the big job that he was looking for was the alderman in Chicago. That was the job. It was better than the unions or anything to be an alderman. And he became an alderman. And then finally he got to be a judge. And that was his ultimate goal and he got to be a judge in Chicago and then he passed away. Now we don't read much about Oscar Nelson. But as I look at it now - you know, I honestly feel Charlie, that Oscar Nelson, not Quesse, was really the man and the moving group that petitioned to the AF of L in 1912 and all through the years until we got our charter in 1921. And I was telling the last Board meeting that the AF of L in those days represented the unions in Canada. They no longer do it, it's a Canadian Labour Congress now. But we had a meeting, of all places, Montreal, with Aime Gohier we started our union in Montreal. They ^{granted} (planted?) our charter in Montreal and it was , it was a very interesting thing about the charter. We had a federal charter from the directly affiliated local unions

they call them now. In our days we called them the federal charter, directly affiliated by Sam Gompers. And when you've got ten thousand members and you were strong enough, they gave you an international. And we were one of the last internationals I think Sam Gompers organized before he passed away in 1924. But he gave us this charter. Now if you look around and see the work that went to get it. Oscar Nelson took our federal chartered union and they were organized - McFetridge used to say they were the oldest - but I think they were 1911 or 1912 they were chartered - Local 1 - before Local 1 they were a federal union. Now while they were a federal union - it was during this time that Oscar Nelson was working with the building trades. And who were the ones that recommended a charter? The Plumbers Union. And the Building Trades people in Chicago. In those days they built the office buildings, as they do even to this day, union, and as soon as it was open it went non-union. So the Building Trades said well if we get the janitors in these apartment houses and office buildings - and they were really farther ahead I guess than all of the other unions in the United States. Then, when they needed repairs it wouldn't be done by non-union plumbers or non-union painters and carpenters, it would be done by the Building Trades under union conditions. And that

was the whole theory of the existence of our union with the Building Trades. We actually are international. It's not a creation of Sam Gompers but a creation of the Building Trades of that day that had a lot of sense it seems to me, a lot of foresight, to protect their work after they had finished it so that they would have the maintenance of buildings - the electrical work, the plumbing work, the painting and all of the things that go with it - after the structure was built and occupied. As you look at this whole thing you see that even when he became the head of our International he gave that up to be vice president of the Chicago Federationists and they had a great labor leader at that time...

Levey: Yeah, I know who you mean, I can't think....

Hardy: I can't think of his name either but he was a hot labor leader. I read the history of Sam Gompers...

Levey: A great orator too.

Hardy: Yeah, yeah. Terrific. You know Chicago I guess had more of the great labor leaders than any section of the country and you just have to admire - Eugene Debs is one you know you think (of?) but Fitzpatrick. Fitzpatrick was another great labor leader. Victor Omander(?) from the *Seafarers*...

Levey: That's the guy...

Hardy: And there was another guy there... There was a whole bunch of prominent fellows when I was a boy - hear

them discuss it and read about it - just great labor leaders. Now that came all out of this group in Chicago. It's a fascinating history, I guess, of our union but when you looked at the arrest of our leaders - they had them on a conspiracy to raise the rents of the thing and forcing the people to pay the wages because you'd negotiate a wage increase, the owners would then be forced to raise the rent to pay it - that was a conspiracy and they sent our officers of our unions to jail. Three of them went to prison. Now Bill Lee, in Chicago, Bob, the last time we were there in the organizing meeting, I guess it was 1976, last March, he told me he just joined the Bakery Wagon Drivers and the state Fed had made a motion to send a committee to go see the governor of Illinois, who was in New Orleans at the time and say that these people were martyred to the labor movement, they must be released. And he went down there with these fellows and he said they were great and we just told the governor that these people were being framed, that all they were doing was asking for a wage increase, it was just an actual coincidence that the wages were paid and then they'd have to raise the rents to pay the wages, you see, and they had it as a conspiracy to racketeer and everything on these poor union guys and at that time, knowing Chicago, they had no break at all. They

had no political standing so to speak. So this is why the leaders of our Local 1 went to jail and there was a strange thing there - it was a very liberal governor and I think his son today is something in the labor movement...

Levey: He's in politics.

Hardy: I don't know who it is but when I heard his name I seemed to remember Bill Lee telling me that he was the same grandson of the governor that let our guys out of jail. As soon as he came back from Louisiana he gave them all a pardon. And that's that guy - you remember we used to go to Local 1's dance party with those Belgians and there was a guy named Brown, wasn't he? A little Jewish fellow - a little fellow - the Belgian dancers - he bargained his homes and everything for bail money for them?

Levey: Yeah, (inaudible)

Hardy: Not Barney. This was the guy from Local 1. They mortgaged their homes so these leaders could get out of jail and they kept him on the payroll.

Dave Brown I think his name was.

Levey: One thing that I - one thing that puzzles me - first of all, as far as Paul David's concerned there wasn't any money during his administration as the secretary-treasurer. There wasn't any money there at all that they could spend. They had no money. And as far as

Bill McFetridge, and not because he's dead, I would say the same thing now if he were alive because I don't say something just to be saying it. I didn't like what he did with Paul David and I didn't like what he did with Gus Van Heck.

Hardy: go to Barney(?) You could go to to
Pete Connors and the whole bunch...

Levey: Pete Connors - he gave Pete Connors a job to be president of the school custodians but he didn't pan out so well. But McFetridge, he was president of the school custodians in Chicago, he was president of the flat janitors, he was international president. How? As far as I'm concerned, I don't like the people that play a major role in building a union to get kicked out or to be mishandled. I think he was entitled to have his say at the meeting. He denied him that right. And I didn't think it was fair. No more fair than anything else because I'll tell you something here. I just - Paul David, I've known him for a number of years and some of these guys become captives of these mobs and can't help themselves. You know they come in with their guns. This is true with a lot of unions. And I believe that Tom Burke, why, he built this hospital, this medical center and had the money and all that and he still had to shell out to these mobs. He had to do it. He was ^{because} -/I know the history of that local.

Now, it's been my experience that when Jerry Horan died and they said "look, ^{Bill} you're going to be president of the flat janitors union and you George, you're going to be International President," then he compromised *with evil*. I don't give a damn if he's alive or not alive, but that's what happened. And I couldn't see that guinea. First of all, he was totally incompetent. *He's still alive.* And he never did this, the labor movement, any good.

Hardy: Well you know, you look at the history of course, all of us *can look at it* but Scalise's days, which was just a minor part of the racketeers, we were very fortunate, we didn't have the problems of (will he buy off?) and everything, we didn't have the problems of a lot of money, you know in our industry I always figured there wasn't enough money *for them, Charlie,* it was just a chicken shit deal where to get it you had to take nickels and dimes and it come too slow for Scalise and that - Scalise probably was shaking down the owners and that's what they really convicted him on.

Levey: I think - you know he signed a ten-year contract with Loew's theaters in New York, ten years.

Crain: *For ten years?*

Levey: Well that's all right. I mean I know he got money - they (may have) got money in large sums - I'll have

to agree with you that they were getting money one way or another. I have no....

Crain:

Hardy:- Well you couldn't get the money out of the dues. I mean you couldn't shake down the membership but you could shake down the guys that owned the building.

Levey: The only thing that - the reason that I have tried to keep close to what you want to say, the history of this International Union is no different from the problems involving the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of the...

Hardy: Well Charlie, you know I asked one time, I says "how did Two Gun Louie Altieri come in?"

Levey: Who?

Hardy: Two Gun Louie Altieri. How did the racketeers get into our union? How did they get into the Garment Workers Union?

Well actually what happened, the employers hired these gangsters. You know, I remember a story - and I don't know which gang it was because - at the time - but the apartment house owners in Chicago, the flat janitors, hired Al Capone and his boys, really, to get our union to hell out of there. So what we did - I think we went in with the Legs Diamond mob and Legs Diamond protected Quesse. And when Legs Diamond - I don't know whether he was killed or was eliminated - that's when the shit hit the fan because that put Capone in

charge, that's where this guy Scalise was from, he was a Capone type. So actually, as long as Legs Diamond was alive nobody would touch our union. The employers wouldn't touch them or anything. They were afraid and I think this is what happened practically in every city because when the employer brought in these goons they were no match, you know, what the hell can you do once you debate an issue and then you go to _____ and then they just take a little guy that can pull a trigger and that evens up all of the goddamn debating, ^w Whichever guy pulls the trigger wins the argument. And that's just what happened. Capone was pulling the trigger and they just moved in on every....

Levey:

I wouldn't debate anything you say George. I think you've got a pretty (good) grasp. But there's only one thing that happened here - we had - in the early days we had Bergoff(?) and what? ^{Went del} Del.. ^e Operators a Strike Breaking Agency, that's all they ever did. And the mobs controlled the Washington Detective Agency in New York. It was with the inception of the Wagner Act that the mobs had to get the hell out of there. They had no choice. They had to go. And this was the beginning of what we call really true - the unions were run according to the way they should run. Of course, restrictive legislation in my judgment many

times had a diverse effect on the unions because the Taft-Hartley law was, in my judgment, designed to circumvent the growth of the labor movement and the Landrum-Griffin law was designed to destroy the integrity of the leadership of the unions. And they succeeded both ways. But I like to remember the old days like I said. (inaudible) ^Jin my judgment exemplified the greatest in trade unionism and honesty. Then that changed too with the times, see.

Hardy:

You know when we got in trouble with Scalise, he suspended my father and myself and my brothers and all the officers of Local 87. We were all fired. And here's all your work. And that guy came here into L.A. through Charlie Woody and all of his union and put in a guy named Ray Panella from ^{the} *Bartender* who has never been in our union but connected with the mob back east. Now we had to make a stand so we decided to make the stand at San Francisco. And we called meetings in Portland and Seattle and Seattle sold us out. That Fletcher, he made a deal and left us high and dry. (I don't know many?) meetings we had and - well to make a long story short, you really end up fighting and you don't know who your friends are. And it's a very interesting thing because I was on the opposite end where you know, they were giving

us a lot of shit and I was a little too young and too goddamn much nerve for myself and I guess the safety of the family but to me Scalise was nothing but a greasy pig. He looked like a fuckin' horror, and he was a pimp and everything else and I just didn't like that type of person. He was the most greasy thing. Now he came out, we had , we got pictures of him with his white shoes on and all that shit back in the 30's...

(End tape #1)

Charlie Levey, George Hardy, Bob Crain - Tape #2

Hardy: You know, I was saying that this is not our president, to the old man, I said "Pa, this son of a bitch is a greasy pig. He's a disgrace. He can't..." "Yeah, you're right." He was stupid. He come to our meeting up at 109 Golden Gate Avenue in San Francisco and he says— you know, I'm expecting a great talk from a great trade unionist and he got up there and he said 'I'm glad to be with you...' and you know, and he said "let's have a drink" and everybody went into the next room and ^{he} bought beer for the house and 'cause we had a little bar in the joint at the time and I says to myself, that guy's general president, I says Jesus... But all I knew him, you know, everywhere I seen him, Burke would be with him and he would always want a broad. Every city he went to he wanted a broad. For Christ's sake, that's all he did. I don't know, he must have been the screwingest president we ever had, you know...

Levey: Yeah. I want to say this to you. He not ^{only} was totally incompetent, I want to tell you that man threatened my life a number of times. George, I never caved in. And I want to say this too. I'm not saying anything against McFetridge. What I was trying to say for the record here was that they had a meeting in Chicago and without the elective process so to speak, he

became general president - A guy that doesn't understand anything about the labor movement and McFetridge was willing to go along, to be the president's *of Flat Janitor's Local.*

Hardy: Well you know Charlie when we got suspended in 1939 I never knew this, but we wrote a letter to Meany - we had several charters sent back saying that we weren't going to ~~be~~ ^{pay} our per capita tax contribute to a pimp and that this man should be out. We wrote to J. Edgar Hoover. We wrote to the President of the United States and not a fuckin' soul did one goddamn thing to help us to fight these fuckin' racketeers.

Levey: You didn't write - not Meany.

Hardy: To Bill Green. Now I now have possession in the International from going down to the Executive Board and getting the record - one year before Scalise had turned around and suspended my dad and myself and everybody in our union, he was written a letter by President William Green of the AF of L that he had charges that his union was being run by racketeers and that he was a racketeer and they were selling jobs and every other goddamn thing and then one year later he (used?) a guy named Meyer Lewis who was the district AF of L representative here, teamed up with the goddamn Teamsters Union at that time, beginning of the rise of Dave Beck,

to use the entire facility of the AF of L and our mailing list to denounce my father and myself and mail it to all of the unions in our membership, that we were no goddamn good. Now when you look at these things that you ^{looked} / for help for from Green, it didn't exist. It didn't exist anywhere. And really, the only help we ever got was from the trade union movement itself in San Francisco and the labor council. They all chipped in and formed a defense fund for us and all of us got money and we were able to hire attorneys and were able to defend ourselves in the court. And it was hard to defend yourself in in the court. At that time only two internationals were - had ever been overruled from any ruling of the general presidents. They had a sort of an understanding that everything that the labor movement did, the leaders, was o.k. That it always operated in the law. Nobody would believe that this Scalise was a rotten bastard. And there was nothing you could do. Now nobody in the International - you know, we wrote to everybody, every piece of literature (we went and gave out\}) Nobody took any effect of it. Now here the AF of L we pleaded for help, we pleaded with everybody. And it was a funny thing, we had nothing to do with it. We were in San Francisco and Dewey gave orders, I guess to arrest George Scalise and he must

have been in the hotel in his pajamas as Charlie said, because you know where the bastard was when he issued the order? San Francisco. So Scalise must have thought we did it. Now I never ever did meet - only once after when he was running for president I *think*. But I never ever met him and I just say this here, if it wasn't for Tom Dewey I don't think anybody'd have got rid of Scalise because he was put up by *Westbrooke* Pegler. Now *Westbrooke* Pegler wrote an article on my dad because he worked for the Scripts-Howard newspaper and that then was number one ...

Levey: I think Hearst.

Hardy: No, he worked later for Hearst. His first job was for Scripts-Howard and that's where he won his Pulitzer prize or something. And then after that he went to work for Hearst and he was blasting Scalise every day but once he got him convicted, his popularity dwindled after that. He had no more cause. He'd sent (name) and some of them to prison and he also broke up the IATSE scandal and then Dewey took Scalise off the market. And that ended the investigation. But when you look back at the history of the union, in spite of all of that, actually I blame the employers. I blame them for all of the corruption that existed because they made it possible for them bastards to

come in. Now you know, it's a funny thing, when they came in they accused my father of stealing \$40,000. Now my father never had \$40,000 in the treasury of all of the unions in the whole west coast and the International never had \$40,000. And you know, to make a charge like that and - the trial judge at the time was our Executive Board and three of the guys on the Board that had prison records and were out on parole - and that was going to be our jury and we said no way. Now at that time I was very fortunate because Harry Bridges was the head of the CIO. And John L. Lewis had issued a charter to give to us but Jack Shelley - you remember Shelley?

Levey: Yes I do.

Hardy: Well he had a boss named George Kidwell. He was the Director of Industrial Relations. I went over to see him. Governor Olson had *appointed him to the state.*

Levey: That's when he became the mayor, didn't he?

Hardy: Shelley did. But his ^{boss} was was the head - the guy named Kidwell and he called me he says "you can always join the CIO. Stay with the AF of L, it's got a history and a tradition. You can always get out of the AF of L but stay in there and fight them." So we followed his advise because Harry Bridges had the charter. But looking back now Bob, ^{+ Charlie} I think I'd have been better if I'd have took the CIO charter. Because we'd have been farther ahead because it seems all this -

you know, you get over one thing then you got this fellow McPetridge, who come in on a white horse and he looked like a great guy but as Charlie says - Charlie went to the 1948 convention, the International in Seattle - He had two resolutions... One, my health is bad and thank you, but I can't serve. The other was, I'm vigorous and strong.

~~Crain:~~ Tell us about it Charlie, I think that was funny.

Levey: I would like to - first of all, nobody was sure - they were going to dump two vice presidents. I want to say this George, first of all, it's going to be very difficult to find a person that's so dedicated and loyal to the trade union movement that puts in the long hours that you do. I haven't experienced that type of president during the many years that I worked for this International Union. As a matter of fact, my life was a hard one. I was left stranded in Pittsburgh, I had to make the grade, I built a large union when we had no union in this International ^{of} that had any significance. You are absolutely right when you say the employer was responsible for bringing the mobs into these unions - ^{through?} to these detective agencies - and what they wanted mainly was the union to clash with the employer so they could bleed both the union and the employer and they did it with Standard Oil.

They milked a lot of places. Certain strikes were legitimate. 32B was a legitimate strike. I think it was a well-run organization and of course I'd have to say I also heard about - I didn't believe it - that you dad held out \$40,000 in permit fees at the Golden Gate Fair. But I never believed that and I know he was a liar to begin with. He was a liar because he didn't pay me my wages. I worked for the guy. But nevertheless, I think this union generally is clean; it has proven itself because a lot of people in my days when I organized didn't lend themselves to unionization. You couldn't get a superintendent living on the premises to strike because the only place he could - you know, it was his home and very difficult. But I think Bill Quesse was an honest and decent labor leader. And Judge Oscar Nelson was a great guy and I also want to again to say that Paul David was a decent guy and I also want to tell you that Horan became a captive of the mobs because when he came to Brooklyn to tell me I'm through, I knew what was happening then. I knew what was happening. You know, it's an amazing thing they didn't kill me. Listen, I want to tell you, you mentioned a name to me. You said to me about the corpus delecti of ^{Henry ?} Al Baker.

Crain: No Corpus Delecti Baker.

Levey: And I know exactly what you mean. Now Baker didn't work for the International, he was another bum, the same as Izzie Schwartz. He was his lieutenant. And I understand there were circumstances around that I'd just rather not get into but - what I detected mainly was the mob - the movement of the mobs at different stages. I organized with - Dick Walsh and I organized together. We talked about it yesterday. Dick Walsh and I, we had our offices next door to each other and he retired as vice president here of the AFL-CIO and also General President (of IATSE?). We were talking about the old days, he and I, how we went out to organize. He's an honest man. But we also heard about the _____ and Browns(?) and so on and so forth. But there's a lot of people that became part of our International Union, members, where they didn't lend themselves entirely to unionization but we still were able to bring them in because - 32B left its mark. We did a hell of a job between 32B and 32J and 32E. You know it was a tremendous thing. But right now - if I were about twenty years younger I could express myself as I see it but sometimes they say when you get old, you know you like to remember the way it was, not like it is. Sometimes it's true. But I remarked - I was talking to the publisher of

Post Gazette here about a week ago or so. We were discussing Jimmy(?) and I told him - he's not anti-labor but I told him that labor has to get off its ass and start moving and take a second look because otherwise they're going to be in deep trouble. Now the building trades for example, nothing new, it's half union and half non-union and pretty soon they'll be all non-union unless they bring them guys to the top that want to work and do a job. The mercantile industry, the stores, I organized all department stores ...

Hardy: Tell then about your Pittsburgh strike Charlie - what a great record you had in Pittsburgh.

Levey: I organized all department stores and what's happening here, as they build the suburban outlets, they dilute the influence of the union. They could take on a union and fight because instead of having one store, they've got ten stores. You know what I mean.

Crain: A part of that is the way that the NLRB is has divided jurisdictions up. I mean if they make you take the whole goddamn chain in an area you really can't do it.

Levey: ... not necessarily what I'm saying to you is basically you can't unionize / ^{the} suburban outlets that's all. They just can't be unionized. (They don't lend(?)
(there are)
themselves to unionization because/very few fulltime

employees, they're all extras. And they don't care to join the union.

Crain: Well they're housewives too, working as sales people.

Levey: Yeah, and you go from there - you go to the hotel industry. Get nothing but motels and they don't lend themselves to unionization. And if you sat through this convention and you were talking about resolutions, of bringing these Jap televisions in here and bringing Taiwan goods and bringing all that - listen, there's no end to that sort of thing. We're going down, down, down, down and we're not moving up. I don't have any idea how they're going to cure the situation. And we don't have the leadership. We're lacking - we have probably in California because of George Hardy - where you don't have a George Hardy, you don't have that kind of union any more. That's the way it is. You show me a good leader and I'll show you a good union.

Crain: Well you know, I kind of think that there are a hell of a lot of people now who want to work nine to five and they don't/^{really}want to work too hard. Now when you were organizing when did you start work? You worked when the people worked, that you had to organize. And if you were organizing theater janitors, when do you have to get out there? You'd have to get out there

eleven to three in the morning. And if you were organizing flat janitors you'd have to be out on the street at five in the morning when they were out washing the sidewalks. If you're organizing school janitors you're out there between three in the afternoon and eleven at night because that's when the school janitors work. And ^{I've} / listened to George for so many years now and what it really gets down to is that you can give all the reasons in the world that you can't organize people but you can't organize them unless you get off your ass. And we have union people who sell out to them. Here in this city I think that 770, the Retail Clerks are ^a / great union, once it organized the damn markets and got a body to deal with and they deal with the Associated Markets or whatever Fox calls his outfit now and they bargained with them and they stopped. And we don't have organized in this whole damn town a department store. There are no department stores organized. And yet, Service Employees are still organizing buildings - and the buildings scattered all over hell and gone. Hospitals are all in the suburbs now.

Levey: Let me - you brought up a point here. What I said to you - the whole concept of the bargaining process continues to change because our lifestyle changes.

In the mercantile industry today, instead of having your department stores downtown and nowheres else, they have them in all the suburbs and areas... If I had to strike them like I did twenty-three years ago I couldn't beat them. It would be impossible even to try them because they don't have a payroll so to speak. And not only that, let's take a look at the office building situation. As I see it anyway. I'm not in the ball park anymore but as I see it, I want to remind you that this fuel situation today makes it absolutely impossible for private people to own a building. It can be only - people can succeed to hold banks and insurance companies and you know our buildings in the city of Pittsburgh to day, half of them - more than half are owned - not right now, by (Equitable Life?) and banks because fuel costs are so high, and of course the labor costs are high but - they use fewer people - but this is what's happening here. And so here again you got another change. (There's a^A?) problem here involving the building trades, they probably let things slide by you know and let it go and let it go and they put themselves in deep trouble and I don't know how the hell they're going to resolve their differences. I heard these speeches. I sat through this convention from the beginning to the end because I came here -

and even though I'm not active in the trade union movement, I wanted to see what's being said here. And resolutions and speeches after speeches, how are they going to circumvent bringing goods from foreign countries? The world has shrunk, we're closer together. There is no substitute for what they're doing. They have no - they absolutely don't know how to handle the solution. It's a difficult situation. Here's Japan, they don't have no _____, they don't have an overhead that costs them billions and billions of dollars to maintain an army, a navy, an air force, so they're sitting on top of the world. We're defending them. So there's something wrong and to me personally, what I believe and I want to say something here - I have been in the vanguard for the black people insofar as I could remember because I always had a warm feeling for those people that I feel they've been denied the right to earn a livelihood. We do have a situation that they have to take a second look at this situation. By that I mean we have Negroes, blacks, that instead of having one job they have three jobs. Three jobs and not one job. There's quite a few of them doing it. ^{It's} /not just limited to one. They have three jobs. And of course that's something you have to take a second look at this

situation. Not anybody - I think we should have a shorter work week and fewer days and things like that. The future that lies ahead is bleak but I'll tell you something here, I honestly say this, here in California you have a trade union movement that really is doing a great thing for the working people. You can't organize by sitting around doing nothing. You see, I know how you operate. I take a look and I'm envious to tell you the truth. When I see everybody is doing their share. You've got a Council that works, you have meetings, you have all that sort of - a lot of these places don't even have meetings. They don't even talk to their people. When I worked, I worked. I want to tell you something, I worked hard. I worked hard and I want to also tell you this, I retired and I'm living on my pension. That's all I have and believe me when I tell you, I never made a buck that wasn't an honest buck. I worked hard.

Crain: Well you see, I think to work hard is the key because you can talk about the problems which are political problems so we want to elect decent politicians but when you talk about the days that you were organizing, from the '20s and the '30s and the '40s, but into the '20s and into the middle '30s we didn't even have any law. I mean we have the NLRA or whether it's the Wagner Act or whether it's Taft-Hartley or whatever

amended by Landrum-Griffin and everything, but we got some protection to some degree. Not as much as we want and maybe it'll be better next year. But we've got some protection. You could get killed before. I mean organizing in New York, I can't believe the stories I hear about organizing the garment factories or you know, you go up in a loft somewhere and a guy takes over and you take a long step down the elevator shaft or something. You could get killed. So when you tell me that we've got real problems of decentralization, you know, we're decentralizing. If we've got something to sell, if organizing is good, we should be able to sell it. If it isn't any good and the people don't need it, they should do - they can do without us. When the bosses are good nobody needs a union. You need a union when you need protection and if the people need it they're going to go to us if we give them the story and if we work hard and if we go at it. And I've heard too many stories about the old times when you not only had to fight the boss and you had to fight the boss's henchmen and you also had to fight your own central labor council who didn't think the janitors deserved a union. And I've heard - George tells me of the times when they'd go to the AFL - they'd go to the state Fed meetings and the sargeant-at-arms was passing around with sawed off baseball bats to hit

the guys on the head. Janitors? Who the hell ever heard of a janitor, shut up, you. And when I hear that I think that we need a little more of that dedication that put our union together. Hard work. Willingness to go beyond a 9 to 5 job. How the hell can you organize hospital workers - and I keep telling this to young people - they work three shifts, you've got to see all three shifts. And then there's a fourth shift, the dietary shift comes on. It's the same thing with the janitors in the theater and the janitors in apartment buildings or the janitors in office buildings or department stores. They work when the people aren't there. That means the organizer has to be there when the people aren't there. And I look at it and you know, o.k., sure, Taiwan and Hong Kong and Japan, those are political issues. Part of our problem is that we've been sitting on our can. I have a question to ask now. Think of a little question like this one. What did you think of Franklin Roosevelt? You know, personally, what did you think of Franklin Roosevelt?

Levey: You mean...

Crain: Yeah. No. Yeah.

Levey: ... thought he was a great man. Great president.

Crain: How did we get him?

Levey: Well they voted - he was elected because people were hungry.

Crain: Partly, you know, but Sidney Hillman worked his ass off to get him elected.

Levey: Well I realize that.

Crain: Well I mean it was the old union technique. The old knock on the door. The house call.

Levey: Would you agree to this Mr. Crain...

Crain: Bob, please ...

Levey: Let me just say this to you Bob. I - like I say, I'm from the old school and I agree with you, the only way to organize is to go out and do a job. But members never came - we had to sell them on the idea that it usually was a good thing for them. But now one thing that's happened here, in the last twenty-five years that I can go back , the employer knows more about us than we know about the employer. It is very difficult for the union to get in and do the job because in the early stages he was dumb. We were able to tantalize them. That's what happened in Pittsburgh. Because they were busy making money. The unions showed the employer how to run his plant. How he can operate five days a week. The unions showed him. John L. Lewis showed them how to bring technology to the coal mines, showed how to do these things and

the same with the steel workers, guys like Phil Murryman(?) showed these big steel operators how they could operate their plants and still give them shorter work weeks. The unions play a major role in our economy. They do, they're very important, a tremendous integral part. What we're lacking here right now is leadership. We have in America a very poorly informed membership. Listen, I was in New York and I haven't got this on your tape, I went to Special Sessions Court where a window cleaner, president of Local 2 was indicted. Now the indictment had to do with a conspiracy and a conspiracy's criminal. It's like, suppose / ^{there} was to deal made - whatever it was - to make money and to keep another guy out of business and so on. But they asked this president the name of his union and he didn't know. See, he didn't know the name and still he was president of the union. Now what we have here in America is a very poorly informed membership today and this is one of the things that is troublesome. Now the labor reform bill gives you the right to have an election and rather than contain the union over, you know, over a period of years until they think it's time to destroy the election process and these are some of the things that are important because first of all, let's take - it's not important but it's a supposition.

The guy goes in an office building in Pittsburgh. I'm (not saying?) he gets a lot of money. He gets \$4.74 an hour. That's not a lot of money today but that's what he's getting. He's \$4.74 an hour, gets a \$6,000 life insurance policy then he gets major medical \$250,000 and 365 days of Blue Cross, Blue Shield, three weeks vacation with pay and he ~~doesn't~~ ^{doesn't} done a damn thing, just goes and becomes heir to something that took years to build. They don't think about Charlie Levey. Let me tell you something, when I left nobody was sorry. Nobody asked me to stay. I was sorry. ^{Charlie Levey} I got the shit kicked out of me and I landed in jail in Pittsburgh too frightened and they go in there and it comes so easy, so this is the problem here. They get all the gravy.

Hardy:

Crain: You're really right there. Nobody knows what...

Levey: And I'm saying to you the most important ...

Hardy: Well I think nobody knows and if they do know they don't give a goddamn.

Crain: No, but you know George, we haven't told the story. Everybody - you're right, they take it as if they deserve it.

Hardy: When you say we haven't told... We have the best informed membership I guess of any International. ^{We put out} (inaudible) ^{a monthly paper + a local paper.}

Crain: George, we're only 600,000 people and we're not enough

but Charlie's right though. The guys take it as a matter of course. They don't know what blood went in to get the damn thing. You know that.

Hardy: What was - Charlie, now you went into Pittsburgh. You had no help. What was the first agreement we got in Pittsburgh?

Levey: You mean the money?

Hardy: Yeah, first with an employer. What was the first contract you signed...

Levey: About \$28 a week or something like that.

Crain: For who?

Levey: Some was getting \$9, \$10 a week.

Crain: For who?

Levey: Department stores.

Crain: Department stores.

Levey: \$22 a week, first contract.

Crain: That was a hell of a ...

Hardy: What was that? With department stores?

Levey: That was May Company. It was May, then Kauffman's, Gimbels... Let me just say this to you. You...

Crain: The forty-eight week.

Levey: For forty-eight hours then it went to forty-four...

Crain: Get a vacation?

Levey: Yeah, they weren't getting vacations. I think we got vacations and then they didn't get any holidays. I mean we got them in a hurry. Let me say this to you.

You are so busy fighting to advance the cause of your membership (that sometimes) you're too close to the ^{forest} source to see the trees. I maintain that our people don't read all the printed material that's given to them. They don't. I believe that we have to have personal contact. You have to meet them head on. They don't read that stuff. Now the reason that you people are a success, you've got a fighting union. All along California is different is different than a lot of the - on a regional basis this is not true every place else. Now (we're) coming to the ^{public} employees - it's a new field we're coming into. It's a goddamn lucky thing that they're coming in or we'd be in a hell of a situation. It's a big field. With tremendous potential. Because we're coming more and more into a welfare state we're going to have more and more public employees. Right now we're in competition with the machine. The machine is destructive. For Christ's sake (if you're) down in Pittsburgh, you go two blocks you got ten banks. banks and quick lunches you know. You don't need waiters - Arbys, MacDonalds - so that change is taking place and it's a gradual change. What I'm saying, when they talk about the reform bill, that's wonderful, great, they need it (to get) quick action. But they don't need a reform bill if they don't organize. And that's

what they're not doing.

Hardy: Well that's what I'd say, all the laws in the world won't help us if we don't get out and organize. And right now, as I told them today, shit, 90 million I think it is, *what is the work force now - 98 million?* We've got 16 million organized, say 13½ in the AF of L, about 20 million. So we got 20 million, that makes 78, 79 million unorganized workers. Five million in the state of California. They're out there. The unions have an opportunity Charlie to organize now as well, even with the laws. At least we got laws now. The employers, as you say, are not dumb any more - no more dumb.

Levey: They have understudies, they know all about us. They know how to move...

Crain: And the colleges have caught them.

Levey: The lawyers are smarter.

Hardy: One of the real tragedies - you know it's UCLA here, they have a labor - a guy named Mark Carson(?) from Chicago, he had a labor course. And everybody, oh, they all love Mark Carson. But the next week he taught business and everything the labor leaders told him, he told the business. So they got firsthand information. Now we've got our own department and I hope to Christ none of them get fancy and start writing new books.

~~Crain:~~ What few secrets we have we've got to protect.

~~Hardy:~~ Charlie you know, you're talking about Pittsburgh. You know, when we talk about the racketeers and everything and that's just a small part of the labor movement and it's really a shame that the press and the radio, they concentrate on say a one Scalise in our lifetime. You know, there is a lot of them but in our International there was one Scalise - there might have been a couple of guys pretty shade. Now that isn't too bad of a record when you look that we kicked him out, we built the union. The only thing that bothers me, as I said, is that the employers have really got the advantage because they got the money today, they can destroy the union by locking us out, they can really give us the works. Now you went through that department store strike. You look at that Kauffman(?) strike, you were out for a long time and you had a meeting up in Canada, McFetridge called a meeting and I don't know why the hell we ever went to Canada for the meeting. I'll never understand that damn meeting but they all went up there, Charlie gave a pitch for help for his strike and everybody sent him money. Now I never understood, if he wanted the money, rather than call us all to a meeting to go to Canada, it would have been much better to send an appeal out and ask for the - just the air fare

that it would cost to go to Canada and back and you'd have had enough money to win your strike.

Levey: When I went on strike I had \$80,000. When I retired I left the union \$230,000. You know, we spent money. I don't recall too much - first of all, Scalise is a forgotten - his name came up in order for background of this International.

Cran:
Hardy: You should talk about history, yeah. You know as we talk about history though Bob, as they talk and listen to us talk they will not talk - or record, they'll record the Two Gun Louis Altieri, the Tom Burkes and the Scalise's and Augie - but they will not tell of the real struggle that took place in Charlie Levey's life, of going into Pittsburgh with no money, practically driven out of New York by the Scalise forces and isolated down in Pittsburgh and if they knew he was going to make a success and had a treasury they'd have probably moved in on there but nobody liked to live in Pittsburgh. It was a hell of a town to get to. You've got to agree it has no direct link ...

Levey: They came after I had the local... Al Baker arrived with another ^{they} partner. He said "we're on the payroll." And I said "You get out of this town quick or you won't get out of here." I said "get out." I chased them out. I never saw them no more because *I was in my*

a place where I had them cornered. But anyway, I'd like to emphasize one point here. You've got to work twice as hard today than we ever did before because of inflation. It gradually destroys our liberties. It - deprivation is a way of life. People are scared to move. My rent where I live - I moved in and paid \$240 a month. It's up to \$413 and my electric bill (runs it \$500). It's pretty hard *to* *for me to* really get by I want to make it very clear to you because our pensions don't have escalator clauses.

You get up, you just stay where you are. And that applies to every working man so that when you go in and try to organize people they're scared to death to move in. Afraid. They can't stand strikes. There are very few unions that could subsidize a strike. Now you might say to me, well in New York they strike and get unemployment compensation. They don't get it, ~~they get it~~, they get supplement pay. They don't get anything in Pittsburgh. As a matter of fact, first of all, I think an employer wants you to establish that you're a decent guy, you're honest - they'll do business with you is the way I see it. You've got this Rosemary Trump up there and she seems to be doing a pretty good job. I don't see her, she's up in Monroeville. If I was younger, you know, if I

was a younger man today I'd go back working. I think I could almost duplicate what I did in Pittsburgh, (I'd have?) everything unionized - department stores, theaters...

Crain: What happened to theaters?

Levey: They don't have pictures. They're closing them down one by one.

Crain: Oh year, television now, that's all.

Hardy: Well you know now that's a good conversation piece. Charlie, I'm glad you mentioned you don't have theaters. Now you know we sort of grew out of the theater janitors and amusement up in the San Francisco area is protected by the arts you might say - the actors and the musicians and the stage hands and going back to the early concert halls of our nation. But when you looked at the old days - now when you went into Pittsburgh the only competition you had was radio. And everybody really came to union meetings. Didn't you have a better turnout in those days than you do now?

Levey: My first meeting I had 600.

Crain: What was the last big meeting you had?

Levey: Well you mean...

Crain: The turnout.

Hardy: The biggest meeting you ever had, what was it?

Levey: Well, (how do I know?)

- Crain: Well say any time. When was the biggest meeting you ever had?
- Levey: Well the biggest meeting I had at one time was the office buildings. I had 1200 showed up.
- Crain: When was that?
- Levey: *2, 3 years ago*
- Crain: Yeah,
- Levey: If I remember, I would say - I'm retired - it would be about twelve years ago or so.
- Crain: *And one of the problems,* young people coming in today, they get all these benefits and -/well don't you think that the crime in the downtown area has something and to do with keeping people, *and* the TV, away from union meetings?
- Levey: I wouldn't say - first of all, I think some of - didn't come out to the meeting because it costs them a dollar carfare to get there.
- Crain: Then there's parking.
- ~~Levey:~~
~~Hardy:~~ Well there are so many different angles...
- Crain: Yeah, there's television - but then Charlie mentioned another reason, *is just a minute ago,* there are people holding two and three jobs. We've got a lot of that.
- Hardy: Well - the lower wages - you know, you've got four dollars and what, eighty four cents *in your scale*
- Levey: The fact remains that there are a lot of factors

involved. If we're going to continue to have inflation at the rapid pace that we have it today. George, it's going to be hard to bring these people into the union because they don't have any money (and are) afraid of strikes. Because you know - let me just say this to you here - it's been my experience in dealing with the National Labor Relations Board - I filed a charge against an employer one time, unfair, you know, an unfair labor practices charge because they didn't bargain fairly with me. You know what the Board said? When he asked you to take a cut in pay he made you an offer. That's collective bargaining. Then the next time around they reversed themselves, depending who the hell called the office in Washington. I want to say this to you. When I ran a union in Pittsburgh, the employers didn't want the strikes. I showed him that it was much better to give us a raise and continue to work and build up responsibilities and people have access to the office. I would be able to tell them - I says if you're 90% occupied, average, you're making money. You know, and I would prove my point and make them go with it. And when it came to the bank and they said we're losing money, I said well raise your rent, you own the building. See, things like that. What we're saying here, basically, is that this new concept of the process of

organizing and bargaining collectively is two different things, it's brand new. New to this - because first of all, if you go into a place that's non-union and the wages are skimpy, the guy has to come up to the level that we want - he'll say "well if I give you that I'm going to go broke. I can't do that," or all that sort of stuff. So you have a fight on your hands. If you give them less than the going rate they say "how come you did it here. Why can't you do it for me?" It's not as easy which one may think. But to me, basically, we're organized. We got areas that are non-union and are not organized, they must be on the outskirts. The big businesses today, what they do is they're changing the whole - what they're doing today is they want a payroll. The main thing, they want a payroll. They'll build a beautiful motel, beautiful, beautiful lights, beautiful rugs, shag rugs, everything you can think of but no help. This is what's happening here. And a lot of people are out of work. So I don't know what the hell...

Hardy: What is the problem of unemployment in Pittsburgh?

Levey: They have - it's about - how much - I think about 10% of the people are not working there now. The mills are down, you know.

Crain: You know, Charlie when you did a job in Pittsburgh and in New York and George did it on the Coast and

and from everything I knew about history, it's kind of a contradiction because nothing that you said that's handicapped organizing didn't exist then. You've got 10% unemployed in Pittsburgh; we've got 9½% in Los Angeles; we've got 7% in the state of California. We've got bad unemployment and some of our unions are moving, they're organizing. In the depression when it was so damned hard, people would hit you on the head, competition between the unions, the AF of L here the CIO over here and both of them banging heads together. Unemployment 16, 18, 25%. The unemployment was God awful and the only thing somebody had was first the what? The FERA and the SERA and then finally we got the Welfare and we got the WPA and the CCC and ^{every} other alphabetical thing there was that Roosevelt could think of to help. But we organized in about a two-year period of time when the CIO came into existence, what? In 1936, 37? Five million people. Now we've got all ^{the} handicaps now but we at least got the law and we have much less fear. We're going to call a big strike at Kaiser, we struck Kaiser three or four years ago, struck them and shut them down and we got 4,000 people working there and you know what the first thing we did was? We called the meeting with the stewards and the picket captains and we called the cops in and had the cops give them a little lecture on what was going to be

tolerated and we talked to the cops. This is where we're going to have the picket captains and keep your nose clean and everything was fine. We had a few people busted for doing some things. But you remember in the old days - and I'm sure it was true in Pittsburgh where they had the goons - that in the old days the goddamn cops were the enemy. In Los Angeles we had the red squad. A labor leader comes in and starts to organize and the next thing you know you're down in the tank. And so I think that really part of the problem is that it isn't just the young people that get everything because our older people got it for them. See you got what? You first got them a vacation. You first got them a sick leave. You first got them a wage increase. You first got them a health plan. You got them a dental plan. You got them everything. Part of it is is that the types that we get to organize - all of them want to start at the top.

Levey: I agree with you 100%. I just want to say about Kaiser - in one area your success may not be as great as in another area. It all depends on where your strike is ...

Crain: Oh yeah, we know that.

Levey: Let me just say this to you. I am not throwing in the towel. What we're talking about is how do we go about getting these people into the union? Where do we go

from here and what do we expect them... What I'm saying to you is, it's harder now because of inflation. The people are afraid to move. You know the rents are high, a guy is out of work, he's got kids, he has no way to subsidize himself and the union can't say " come out on strike, I'll give you a hundred dollars a week when you're striking..." So he does have a resistance, it's not an easy thing. And again, if you go into areas to increase the wages, they want to come up to where it is every place else then you have a hard time to get it all at one time. But one thing about this - (they've got) all the office buildings organized, they have all the theaters unionized, they have department stores unionized, now what these bastards did see, they open up the suburban outlets and they use more (inches?). This is a new concept again of merchandising.

Hardy: And you know as you leave the metropolitan area Charlie and you go to the suburbs all unions become weaker.

Levey: That's right.

Hardy: And that's the purpose of shopping centers and stores - even the factories - get them away from the ...

Levey: That's right. Yeah, everything... No payroll.

Hardy: You see, Bob tells the story about the National Guard. The National Guards are always established in the heart

the city. In New York it was when (the merged?) organization in what 55? Was right in 32nd Street or over 55th Street was it?

Levey:

³⁴
24th Street.

Crain:

You know they built the National Guard armories in the middle of town. They never build them out on the shores to defend us against the invaders. They build them in the middle of the town to protect us against the union organizers. And you look all the way back into the late 1800s when they started building the armories, when we started a National Guard. The goddamn places in Chicago and in the East were always built on a site close by the factory areas. You know it's a really amazing thing.

Hardy:

You had one of the big steel strikes - several of them in 1921. Now do they still in Pittsburgh talk about the strike, what the Homestead...

Levey:

Well once in awhile...

Hardy:

What steel mill was it in Pittsburgh?

Levey:

It was the...
the

Crain:

Well/Homestead thing was way back though. I mean they've had several of those...

Hardy:

There is a Homestead ^{mill} ~~Steel~~ isn't there?

Levey:

Yeah. United States Steel.

Crain:

Yeah, well... they had a big one in the 1890s - a

really big one and then they had them all through from 1915 all through the - up into the 1920s and then they had a few beauties in the 30s.

Levey: Yeah, well I had a *police* there when I came, he beat the shit out of me. The building was gardens owned by a guy was a big official in American Smelting Company. He had a couple of those cops down there. But the Teamsters came out there and they wrecked the (apartment) buildings. said "they can't do this to our Charlie." They put - the guys they lit up that building. They had cops all over the joint. We finally beat them anyway.

Hardy: You know Charlie, I think that is the answer to the labor movement today...

Levey: ... I want to tell Joe I'm coming down. Let me just say this to you here. I listened - did you ask me a question?

Hardy: Yeah, I was asking...

Levey: About U.S. Steel?

Hardy: Well not the U.S. Steel in - it seems to me Charlie that in our days - more so in your days - that the labor leaders were more dedicated. They were not afraid of being arrested. They were not afraid ... Today they're afraid to stand up and fight. They're afraid to give the goddamn scab a kick in the ass

because they know they'll be arrested. And the unions are afraid they're going to be fined.

Levey: Let me just...

Hardy: And in the old days what the hell did they have? They put you in jail, at least you had a meal.

Levey: In the old days everybody was interested in organizing. They all had something in common. And now you don't see the labor leaders. If you come to the Central Labor Union you'll see just a few of them. They're not of the same vintage they were when I organized forty years ago. They're too complacent. Let me just say this for example about the steel Homestead strike. I had a situation where Helen Fritt (?) sold one of her buildings. You know *Fritt family?* and who bought it but the May Company, for expansion. There are forty employees and most of them are black. They've been there for years, (at an age?) where I couldn't even get them a job. So I sat down and I wrote her a letter, Helen Fritt, I wrote her a personal letter and I told her that this wasn't a union matter, *I understood* I said she was a great philanthropist, she was doing things for worthy causes and so on and so forth. I said that when she sold this building that these people would no longer find - have no work for them, no jobs, they had no income. This guy named *Witty*, about two days later he called me. He said "Miss

Fritt got your letter." He held it up and said "which one do you think would like to retire?" I said, (all of them?), if possible. But he said "I couldn't do that." They retired fifteen employees, some got \$75 a month, some got \$50. Then she put half a million dollars in a trust fund for the other buildings she had.

Crain: Oh for God's sake.

Levey: It's the Fritt family. When the Mellons bought a building, you know, through these mergers I wrote a letter to Richard Mellon. His lawyer called us (and said) "We will pension these people off." So they're no longer the bastards like you talk once they got the money you know. This is the new generation, like Heinz. I helped kick his campaign off.

Hardy: Heinz 57 varieties.

Levey: Yeah, this John Heinz. You mention my name to him any time you want to and it'll help you.

Hardy: I want you to talk to him about the guards bill Charlie when you get back. You know Schweiker(?), the Republican down there. He was a very good liberal but he went with Reagan.

Levey: Yeah, I helped him too but I'll tell you - I'll tell you something. He got mad because I didn't give him any money. I'm not with the union any more.

Hardy: Well he's a millionaire. What the hell...

Levey: Well he wanted money for his campaign. We didn't give it to him.

Hardy: You know Charlie, you look back at the labor movement and all the struggles you went through. Would you go into the labor movement if you had to do it all again?

Levey: No.

Hardy: You don't think so?

Levey: No. I don't think I would because I'll tell you, the labor movement was a tremendous challenge to me. It was very powerful. You know, when I got pinched I even liked it. I enjoyed doing the job. The people enjoyed coming to meetings. There was never a Sunday I didn't have 400 or 500 people come to the meeting and they talked and it was an inspiration. All that's changed now.

I appreciate what you're doing. I'll tell you another thing. I did business with big corporations. They respected me and I respected them. And now what do we get? Those guys we did business with, they're retired and gone. Another guy comes in, he just came from and doesn't know his ass from a hole in the ground. I think the Bell Telephone Company cancelled out the windows. We can get it cheaper. I said if I could get cheaper telephone

service you son of a bitch I'd do that - we serviced you during the war when you didn't have a window cleaner. Well that's the way it is. So you know, all these things are material. The only thing is, you got to keep going. If you don't keep going you're going to dry up and die. I listen to these - the thing that impressed me more - the speeches that I've heard - were these guys that were concerned about foreign goods coming into this country. You know what? The world's shrunk. They're never going to stop it. I don't know how. You can call it free trade, fair trade, I've heard these speeches year in and year out. Listen there were times even in the labor movement when we went out on strike, when I struck the big Loews Theater on Broadway there was a big sign "AF of L movie operator now working on the inside." (The kind) of shit that we got.

Hardy: I had the same thing.

Levey: You know, I know - in the building trades they supported us and sometimes they didn't. The building trades worked all through the department store strike. It burned my ass. But I still maintain when they had a situation where I could help them I did. I didn't care what they did. I was working out with Eddie Leonard one day and and General President passed

I didn't know it. He said "that's not one of our guys." I said "you watch, you'll see he'll be out of there within minutes." I called up the management of the building and I said "Get that goddamn plasterer out of there right now, I'm in the building." *Or, I said*
you won't open in the morning. The phone rang and he was gone. Eddie Leonard

he said "that meant a lot to me." He never forgot it. I said (Rafferty or no Rafferty), that's (the way) he works with me. The way I operated was a good solid union.

Hardy: You had a lot of fine labor leaders up there. You had Eddie Leonard as you know...

Levey: *Hunter* Wharton, I had Charlie .

Hardy: You had Abe(?) Bowman.

Levey: I had I. W. Abell and I had Dave MacDonald. Listen, when the steel workers were CIO and we were AF of L, when he had a strike you know what I did? All the wives that needed work they came to me, I put them to work. I didn't give a shit about labels. It doesn't bother me. I don't give a damn whether it was CIO or AF of L or nothing. I put the to work because they needed jobs. And they remembered that. They remembered that. Listen...

Hardy: How'd you get along with I.W. Abell?

Levey: very nice.

Hardy: Very nice, huh?

Hardy: *Hunter* Wharton?

Levey: Very nice. I could sit and talk....

Hardy: Eddie Leonard?

Levey: I gave him money (to run) for mayor. I got along with everybody. I got along with people...

Crain: Well you were there when John L. Lewis was organizing the damned steel mills there.

Levey: Yeah. There was a lot of unions that were in the making. Listen, I want to tell you something. I might've been the smartest guy in the world - I went up - when I came there I went up to see the guy, his name was Kirkpatrick and he was the president of the *Coppers* Building Company and I told him he was president of the Chamber of Commerce and I said "you know there's a lot of word around here that I'm a racketeer and I work for a thief and Scalise is my boss." I said "You know it'd be a nice thing if you'd let me talk to these building operators. Let them see this racketeer. He said "Would you like to meet them?" He said to me "Some have never seen a labor leader." I believe that. So I said "you let me know when the building owners want to meet and they have a luncheon, I'll be there." So (on a Wednesday?) Jesus Christ, they had 200 people

there, even if they didn't own buildings, just to see me. I made a speech, you know they were taking pictures of me all over. By two days later everybody had my picture. I just couldn't go into a building - they said here he is. And you know, I've talked to about ten company unions. they didn't stop(?) but one by one, I knocked them off and - what the hell, you have to take a chance. I let them know because the CIO was going in there and like Dave Glavin, we had Gulf I signed the first contract with the Gulf Oil Company ever in America. First union. And (I said) Dave Glavin was dispatcher. He says "what can you do for my people?" I said "well, we'll try to improve their conditions, work out proposals for demands we hope will be reasonable. I can't make any promises. I'll do the best I can. A big corporation, they got a lot of money but how much we can get, I don't know. But I'll tell you this much, it'll benefit your people." He said to me "Good. Give me twenty applications." So I gave him

(End Side 1, Tape 2)

Hardy: What questions have you got left Bob?

Crain: You know, one thing that I remember you telling me, you got one and then you'd get another and then you'd lose one...

Levey: Yeah, it's strange, I'm up with George Hardy.

Crain: ... and you never got more than eight or nine at a time.

Levey:

Crain: That's what I'm really kind of curious - what was the biggest score you ever made in Pittsburgh? Because I know - you know, it's one thing to affiliate a whole damn bunch but when you go out and you go to a building and you get ten...

Levey: I want to tell you George...

Hardy: You know - you didn't hear that question.

Levey: What?

Hardy: I always - I never had any big, big union membership organized. Mine always came one, two, three, six or five. And I notice sometimes a guy organized one hundred, two hundred... and I never really had that much satisfaction during my whole career in the labor movement. What was the largest number you ever organized? Carnegie Tech?

Levey: Well, I would say - no not necessarily, I got - I got CMU. I got a couple of hundred. That wasn't the largest. It took a hell of a fight to beat them. I had University of Pittsburgh. It became a - expanded - they expanded quite a bit. I got Gulf Oil for example of one, I got 140 people there. We got a hundred here and then

and then I got ten here. When I came in it wasn't that *rosie* give you an idea. You know, Pittsburgh rates three in housing the largest corporations in the world. Now that would say - that's the toughest place to organize. Now what happened, I organized the *Century* Building. It's a building. It had a few people in there. I went to the Peoples Pittsburgh Trust Company. A guy you got any applications? Yeah. Six people. He said "Come back next week and (we'll) talk about it." So before next week was up, you know, I happened to walk by; I don't see the building any more. The bastards demolished it. (laughter) I just told them I couldn't find the building. It was crazy. I said I must be nuts. I went up there and I said to him "I looked for the building. What happened?" He said "We tore it down. We demolished it. We were going to do it anyway." I said "Why didn't you call me? I went looking for the building, I couldn't find it any more. You leveled it all. You tore it down." That ain't all. Then I went down to organize the Century Building and they sold it. They practically gave it away. It was another bank. And also, they had a habit of - if they had tenants, they'd take them in and give them rent almost free just so they had a checking account. That's what I had to (live through).

It wasn't easy. *Coppers* Building, they didn't want to do business with us, they got the CIO and then they got an independent and then they got me. And that same guy kept me and he says - and then he got the Building Trades. So he says "Well, I'm stuck. I should have listened to you." "Well, it's not too late now, do you want to listen to me now?" He said "Yeah. I'll tell you what, you sit down and negotiate ^{with} me a contract.. I'll get applications here. I'll get them." And I said "When I get these applications I'll talk to the Building Trades, see if we can't take the pickets off." Which I did. Went down there, I asked the electricians, I said "Don't worry about that. You can *get all the electrical work* with the union. Just give me a little time. I want to get my feet on the ground." The result was the electricians got most of the buildings in town. It wasn't a whole lot, but they got them. Wasn't nothing come easy - department stores, same thing, had a fight on my hands. Theaters...

Hardy: What were some of the funny incidents in negotiations
Charlie

Levey: In negotiations -
went up there to negotiate with him and he said to me
"Bring up a big committee" he said to me. You know,

I'm smarter now by forty years. Even if you get dumber by the year, you get a little *smarter* unless they say you're getting senile. So this guy said "get a good sizeable committee. We can have a conference. This is Kirkpatrick(?) , the smart son of a bitch. So we got the night cleaners, we got the day janitors, we got - in those days we had manual type elevator operators. I got engineers. So he said to me "Do you have an idea of what they're paying in other buildings?" I said "Oh yes." He said "How do we compare?" I said "Well, let's put it this way Mr. Kirkpatrick, you compare pretty well but the wages are still low. It's not my basis of negotiation." "Well" he said "we're paying much more money than down here." I said "Well possibly there. But in general." So he talked and talked. He said "By the way, I represent a large corporation. I'm going to give a raise, but ^{they'll ask} what do you base your raise on?" So I said "You know butter went up thirty cents a pound." His little beady eyes a little mean at that time. He said "You're right, it did go up thirty cents a pound. What you say, if we put two pounds of butter on the table, each family should have at least two pounds. Don't you think?" I said yeah. "Well in that case we'll give an increase

of sixty cents a week. Good day sir." I had to fight my way back in there (drowned out by laughter) You know, when I organized Gulf, they give me this application

because (name) asked me, weren't we good to you and didn't we do that to you? Which was true that

my whole family. He said "that's all right, but we should be in the union. I believe in unions." He became the president of the union

in a hurry. So anyway, we had the meeting and I looked around there, and they had *Penkerton + Burns + fuckin' Gulf.*

I was glad to (have them). So I'm making a speech and I said well, you realize this - I want to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, I come from New York.

I've been in the (area?) and I've looked the situation over and I think a union is good for you, and all that sort of stuff. Then I said *Yeowse*, let me put it

this way. I'm not a guy that believes that to win something you've got to have a strike to get it. I believe in getting out, making advances, collective bargaining.

has a right - if you have a complaint

and they bring it to Gulf Oil. Not a bad speech. They called me and negotiated with me. If I'd said the other I'd have never got in their door. I told

them all this shit because I've seen these guys
and I say, I'm going to give them this kind of a
speech otherwise

I had no choice. But it worked out.

Crain: Don't we have the Pinkertons or the Burnses?

Levey: Pinkertons, Burns...

Hardy: Pinkertons' in the East and Burns we have in Portland.
We've got some of them.

Crain: That's really ... (talking together)

Hardy: But the ones is the Pinkertons up
in Jersey. There's a whole bunch...

Crain: Well there's that Florida based outfit too
(Talking together, inaudible)

Levey: You have situations sometimes that develop - a funny
thing - in this Gulf Oil, before I
put that big building up, you know, they used to have
their offices in the Gulf Building. Mr. Hunt was the
president of Corporation of America
and he came downstairs with a package under his arm.
So the guard said "I know you're Mr. Hunt but I have
to have a letter before you take this package out of
here." He said "if you know I'm Mr. Hunt why do you
need a letter?" He said "well that's the rules."
He said "Well I'm sorry but you'll either have to go
up and get a letter or you're not taking any package
out of here." So in the morning Hunt has the manager

well he said that son of a bitch wouldn't even let me out with my own package" He said "well, maybe I'm at fault. We have a strong security system. But that's the way it is, you send him up I want to talk to him." Sent him up, he gave him \$50.

(inaudible)

Crain: You say that if you had it to do over, you'd do something else though, huh?

Levey: Well... If I had it to do over again I don't know - I wouldn't - probably - don't know whether - I don't think I'd want to go through it anymore. From what I see here, it's a question that really - it's one that - you can't answer a question of this type and really be - a fair answer. You know, what the hell, I don't think - you have to understand one thing. My life in the labor movement was rather difficult. I had a hard time. Even Scalise and McFetridge wasn't entirely fair with me in some respects.

Crain: McFetridge was fair with McFetridge is all. But that point, you accomplished something now.

Hardy: You know what McFetridge would at a Board meeting Bob? I think it's one of the reasons that I really - you know, when I first met McFetridge I thought he was the greatest man in the world. If he had told me to go do this, I'd have done it. I have admired him beyond any man I guess I ever knew. And as I got to the Board

meetings I'd fold my hand up like this in a fist and that seems to be the way my nerves would get. Because he would pick on Charlie and he'd start taking him on. Now he wouldn't say nothing to me because - and he wouldn't say nothing to Dave because Dave had had that big beef with him in New York. Remember he tried to throw Dave off and threw my - well he didn't, Scalise threw my father off, but they had a convention and they tried to steal the union away from Dave of something and he had a big meeting and apologized but for some reason or other he was - he had a mental problem of some kind - because he would go in there and deliberately pick on Charlie. And it would get so goddamn bad I'd have to interrupt, or Dave, you know and the goddamn heat because I don't know why he would do that and it was unfair that Charlie would take the brunt at every goddamn Board meeting and I couldn't stand it. So then I went to Dave and I said "Look Dave, you got to run against this bastard. And I'll nominate you." Now that's four years before he got out of office and Dave wouldn't do it. I said I won't tell the because I'm going to nominate you. And Dave wouldn't run. We were in Chicago. And - at the convention. He wouldn't run and I said "you'll beat him Dave. I'll give/^{you}everybody on the Coast and with what you've

got we could throw him out. Why should we take this shit at every Board meeting?" We had a guy named Walter Collins. Oh, he was a bastard. And he'd go in to Walter and he'd set you up deliberately. He'd say "Walter, have I got anything that's coming up on the agenda?" Because he would prepare the agenda for the Board meeting. --

Then out of the blue he'd have this on your problem(?) this, this, this, this, just to make an asshole our of you. You know. So when Dave finally, when McFetridge had bought the home and gave it back to us and said "Get your goddamn house off my lot." I knew he was gone. You know, he had a home down in Florida. He had the lot. And he had a motion put in - he stepped out of the room - I guess Burke(?) was the stooge and he come in and said he was - we should buy a home for our general president. Dave Beck's got a home. Our president's just as good as Dave Beck. And so the Board made the motion. And then McFetridge was a very wealthy man. He had all the porters and buildings and property and he decided he had - the income, the IRS says that they were going to charge that home down in Florida as income. And he didn't want to pay that. He knew enough about that end, he says to me, I come into Chicago and he called me in just prior to the Board meeting and he said "I want you to get your goddamn house off of my

lot. I almost fainted. I says "Well, Bill, you don't want the house just tell me, we'll take it back." He said "get it to hell off my lot." And I thought this guy has really flipped, you know, because we voted on the house twice. You know. People don't realize that. He did it wrong the first time. I think Tommy gave Burke a long shot on _____ and it wasn't quite the way it was supposed go. So when Al Hearn came on the Board they put another motion through to make it legal, see. So we gave him a house twice to protect his ass and to get the minutes and to get Burke to make the right motion. Then he called me and didn't get it in and then I got a call one time from from

Collins - I am to come to Chicago, I'm not to tell anybody I'm coming. I am to come there and stay at the hotel and at so and so time I am to go to this number where McFetridge lives. What the hell kind of shit was that so I called Dave Sullivan and said "Dave, I got ..." He said "well I got one too." I said well that's good. /^{He said} "You're not supposed to tell Fairchild you're in town." I said what the hell is this guy. So I didn't want to get in that position so called Fairchild and told him we were coming to town. Then Dave and I, we

went over, at the exact time, I think it was in the evening and he had one of these new flats down there along Lake Shore Drive, you know, when you look over - we had dinner there one time at one of those apartment houses. It was around in there and he says to us - he was in his robe and he met us at the door and and he says "I'm awfully sick and I want you fellows to know I appreciate every thing you're doing, I've been sick" and this and that. And he gave us speech 98 and the next thing you know, you're emotionally filled and Dave said "Don't worry Bill, we'll take care of the union. You don't have to worry if you're sick. Take it easy. We're concerned about your health." After his health improved we wished to hell the son of a bitch had died.

(Mr. Hardy takes a phone call here)

Crain: I think that McFetridge is the only guy that ever got
He got rich. Nobody else got
rich.

Levey: He was a character.

Crain: Well I remember - you know that big expose...

Hardy: Well anyway, Charlie, McFetridge must have blown his top. Now he came out here you know and he wanted me to run against Sullivan in 1964 and I told him "You know Bill, I don't know what your beef is with Fairchild. You haven't proven one charge against him. As far

as we're concerned we've got to give him

now if you've got something different.

He said no he he said he's a crook. And I said "Well you've got to give us more than just that.

You've got to give us something we can prove.

If he's a crook we'll throw him out." He hemmed

and hawed. And then he told me I could be the

general president, move my office to California, elect

my own secretary. I said "Bill I've been with the

union a long time. I think this beef is unnecessary.

But I have to tell you, I'm nominating Dave. I'm

going to nominate Dave Sullivan. I know he as well

as I don't want any beef. You'll probably beat us.

You'll probably win the election but I want you to

know when you do, I'm out. I'm through. I don't

want another to do

I can't work under

these conditions." And he said "Oh, no." Well when

he had the beef, he had the convention, I never

realized he slipped so much at that convention.

(he?)

Remember the rally we had and/sent all the winos up

to crash the party and they couldn't get in the meet-

ing hall and he did everything to disrupt the thing

but Dave handled the meeting good. And it was a

victory.

Levey:

He called me. I said "Look Bill, when I worked for

you I was loyal to you

(inaudible)

I worked for Dave and I was loyal to him. That's the way I am.

Hardy: Well it was a little different for me because he came out with Bill Lee and offered these things to me and he had stopped and saw Doretta and Deredi wouldn't come down to head up the (laws committee) so he probably reached Doretta as Chairman of the Laws and Doretta just/couldn't make it after we said he could fly down and go back every night if his wife/ you know, it would be no different. He could come down, attend the convention, go in the morning, come the next day. But he wouldn't do that so we got Al Hearn and Dick Cordtz and they did as good a job as Doretta did.

Levey: Is he still down there?

Hardy: Yeah, he was going to quit this year and then all of a sudden he went for another term. I don't talk to him anymore, since that time. I always felt that...

Levey: Yeah, he wasn't fair with you. He was an opportunist.

Hardy: Yeah, I just figured he was hooked and I had nothing to do - I thought he was going to quit this time and he decided to run for reelection.

Levey: I think I'm going to run down, I'm tired.

Hardy: You're tired. Charlie I want to tell you something. Of all the years we've known each other, (it's) a long time, and my father before me, I always, always

liked you.

Levey: Thank you.

Hardy: I always trusted you and always was glad to call you a friend. And I'm just glad you came our here to this convention. the convention today - you notice today Charlie, the convention, the AFL-CIO convention today, everybody seemed to have left and everybody was listening to the resolutions. They weren't talking so much. Did you notice that? There was less buzzing and distortion.

Levey: Well there were fewer people there too (inaudible)

Hardy: Did you like that speech that the guy from the NAACP, that new Chairman...

(Interruption for phone call)

Levey: about this speech, I thought he made a very impressive talk. But then those guys - I guess he made that kind of speech before.

Hardy: I never heard a guy in my life in NAACP...

Levey: Make a labor speech?

Hardy: Make a labor speech. Now that fellow made such a wonderful speech. He should have been a labor leader instead of a judge. He was on the FCC and quit.

Levey: He's a lawyer - see this goes against - see he's an orator and this man was just excellent. Now

he'll make that - he reminds me of Dave Beck. I heard Dave Beck make a speech in 1955 then he came to Pittsburgh and he made the same speech.

Hardy: I think, Charlie, that's true I guess of a lot of guys but it reminds me of the time - who the hell was it? Tom Mooney. Remember Warren Billings and Tom Mooney, the labor martyrs?

Levey: You had them make a speech at your convention.

Hardy: Well Tom Mooney got out of jail and we were the first to march up Market Street with our flags flying you know. Led the parade. I was in the first row with our banners - I had been paying assessments ever since I come into the union in 1932 to get him out. And he got out of jail and he made a speech outside - it was always a speech where he went over to see his - wanted to get out to see his mother buried or something and they wouldn't let him out of San Quentin and his poor mother, "the casket went by San Quentin and I wasn't even able to see the funeral..." Then I went about a week later, they had a meeting of the labor movement up in San Diego. So Charlie Woody, ^{who} was in LA, was up there with the State Fed meeting - or a meeting of the union group - and Charlie Woody went out to the airport and bought him in on his car. So he met Tom Mooney and he come into the Senator Hotel. He made the same speech. So then after that he he went to Oakland and he spoke there - made the

same speech. He broke down at the exact same place. He went to Los Angeles and made the same speech and when he breaks down - he broke down I think three times in each speech - and he said at the same place he broke down, had tears and emotions, then went on. He went to New York but he made one mistake, he come out and gave credit to the CIO unions for getting him out of jail and after that he was a dead duck. The Board of the CIO just

we're not going to worry about - now Warren Billings was a good man. He - you know he was really a young kid, good active trade unionist. And he went to prison and he was a two-timer. He had been convicted for blowing up PG&E Electric towers or something. And then he got out and thing thing, was framed for this murder you know. He didn't have a fair trial at all in that thing. They proved conclusively that Billings and Mooney should have never been sent to jail. The only reason they weren't hung and I never found out until later that President Wilson was told that the Bolsheviks in Leningrad had captured the American ambassador and also the staff and they were going to execute them if they executed Warren Billings and Tom Mooney. And he had to commute their sentence

life in imprisonment. Otherwise they would have been dead. And anyway, when he was to get out he stayed in jail two weeks to fix the watches of the convicts in there because he was the only watch repairer in the whole prison. And he stayed behind Tom, after all those years - Bob, and fixed all the watches and then when he got out he went into the watch business in San Francisco, repairing watches. I took all my watches, my dad's and everybody. He was a very fine man. I think Warren Billings was one of the kindest and most humane men I ever knew. He was just a good trade unionist, attended the labor council - right up until the time he died. I think right after he attended our convention he passed away.

Levey: Well let me say I - Well anyway Bob Crain, I don't know whether the material - whether you got anything or not because I had some stuff that I correlated which is but I'm going to mail you George Scalise's letterhead.

Hardy: Charlie, anything you've got on labor history. Now I don't want to take all of your momentos but you know, we want to have them on hand in the International. Anything you've got. We've got Arthur's records, we've got...

Levey: I had a lot of stuff but some way or other you know

I tore it up. I had a lot...

Crain: Oh, they get away. You know, about fifteen years ago we decided in put our papers in bound volumes. And we went back to look for some of the papers and we didn't have them. So we offered a five dollar reward for every paper we didn't have / and we listed the months that we didn't have. And some of them came cut up - I think we got most of them before we were through. But you know, nobody has the stuff and everybody kept it separately so that McFetridge had his records over here and there just isn't any history.

Levey: The problem with this International Union first of all, it had no organizers, it had no system to report income, disbursements - anybody who wanted a charter, they gave it to them (inaudible) kept off the air here. George Scalise was absolutely no good. I mean just absolutely no good. And one day he called me, before I went to Pittsburgh, he said - first of all he said to me was that they were trying a guy for stealing bonds. And he said "this is the juror list." He said "(If there's anybody you know on this list(?)) (this is my friend(?)). I said you must be out of your goddamn mind.

fix jury

So right after that, about a week later he called me again. I often thought he wanted to knock me

Hardy: Well you know I heard a story one time. Meany told a story about Scalise. He told the one about LaGuardia not allowing him in the room. But he told us one that in the old AF of L building, you know when Green was president, Meany was secretary-treasurer. As it is, there was no communication between Meany and Green. They didn't get along and Green would tell him nothing. And when Meany came down from New York it was with the idea that Green would retire. And I think it was twenty years later he finally died and then Meany got the job. He did a long apprenticeship. Well he was telling us the story that he was in the old AF of L building in Massachusetts or Rhode Island or some place back there and he heard a lot of whispering and a lot of excitement and it was like a trusted guy, he was a janitor as well as a trusted friend of Bill Green's. And he left and was gone for a couple of days and he come back and he was smiling and then all of a sudden he found out what it was all about. Green had heard that Scalise was selling charters.

Levey: Selling what?

Hardy: Selling our charters. Selling them. It was in Jersey. It might have been the days you were talking about. And that he was so secretive because - you know how he was - Green was a preacher and he never heard of

anybody selling a charter for money. And the sanctimonious bastard he was, he actually was shocked. Now Meany tells the story that the guy went over to New York and he met George Scalise. And very quietly says "I'm on a special error for Mr. Green. And we have a very serious report that you're selling charters." He says "You sold a charter over in Jersey." And the guy says "Yes I did. I sold it for \$5,000. And I sold another one for \$2,000." And he says "Well you can't do that." And he says "Why can't I?" He says "Because those charters are issued to members." He says "well all right, if I can't do it..." So he calls the guy up and says "Lookit, I can't sell you a charter. I'll give you your money back. You send the charter back." Now you might have been the guy that bought the charter back. He had to give the \$5,000 back to the guy.

Levey:

Well he had a guy - Listen, they had a guy by the name of Winter, Cincinnati, Ohio - that he sold a charter to that I know. So he had the charter and with the charter he had the union and he had the business. Listen, that son of a bitch was capable of doing a lot of stuff. I don't know how it is that I'm alive. He was going to throw me out of a 28-story building. I told him "you Dago son of a bitch." I fought him you know. Fought him. He says

"You're fired." I said "All right. Go fuck yourself you Dago bastard." I left see. I went back to Pittsburgh and kept right on working.

Hardy: I don't see how the hell he could fire you from your own union.

Levey: Well he wouldn't know better. He was ignorant.
inaudible

Hardy: He didn't know nothing about ...

Levey: I'll tell you, a funny thing, the guy that wound up with most of the money was McFetridge.

Hardy: Well he was a business man. You know where he worked? I just found out in the history. McFetridge had the first Board meeting and he says after the '40 convention where he, Scalise was arrested and the convention broke up, he says that / ^{there's} government men all over checking around but when he checked with the government they didn't have these guys on their payroll and they didn't recognize any of them. And they were asking a lot of questions about the International and he says when he checked he says they don't know them over at the government and the FBI or anything so he didn't know what the hell it was, who was looking for him or anything. I think he was scared stiff himself. He had everybody sign the minutes so everything could be made a report of, the financing. Gees, we had real, real, democratic union

in 1940 because...

Charlie, we'll put this away and guard it with our life. It's for posterity. You were here before I was even around and you did a great job for this International. I happen to be the International President now and International Presidents for years to come after me are going to remember that it was a Charlie who made and dedicated his whole life to building an organization for us in Pittsburgh. And it happens that in Pennsylvania now that's it's the third largest state of membership. You started it Charlie.

Levey: Sometime I'll give you an idea why McFetridge would get angry me. Well, it's another long story again but briefly, quickly - you see he was sold on Bill Cooper in so many ways. And I never did a job for (Bill Cooper). But when I did down and did a job that he couldn't do and I succeeded in doing it some way or other, McFetridge would be pissed off at me. Funny guy.

Hardy: Well I was on his list one time. He cut all my expense money away from me...

Levey: He said to me - he called me up one day - you know if you didn't agree with him he got angry. He calls me up one day and says to me "Here are green stamps, here / ^{are} red stamps. Now when they're paid up they get

a green stamp. If they're delinquent, we put a red stamp in the book." I said "you must be kidding. You mean you're going to pay death gratuity benefits on the stamps in the book? There's thousands of stamps floating around New York. We pay off what's in the records , not on stamps. Whose idea was that?" He said "Don't you think it's a good idea?"

Hardy: It was his idea.

Levey: Well that was Cooper's idea.

Crain: It was huh. Cooper's?

Levey: Yeah. So that got him angry. So when he seen him at the Board he was pissed off at me. But he never did it because he was wrong. It's the same thing with the death gratuity benefit.

Hardy: Well see he didn't use stamps. He gave them a quarterly card.

Levey: Anyway, I succeeded - right now let me say this to you. I'm glad that you are the General President and I feel that anything I ever did was worthwhile. That's all I can tell you. This is how I feel about it. The International's in good hands and you're a dedicated trade unionist and everybody's (going to benefit). That's what this is all about. So what the hell.