

nothing that deviated from the Lyndon Johnson position at that point, although Johnson was in a position of seeking negotiations with North Vietnam and the Vietcong at that point. But it gave no hope to the people who wanted peace in Vietnam, to give us a viable campaign, because people were moving against the war generally in the country, and we felt that the Humphrey campaign could not be a winning campaign without a strong peace plank. And that proved to be, because Humphrey's only deviation from the Johnson position was in a Salt Lake City speech a couple of weeks before the elections where he took a big jump in the polls but just wasn't quite able to make it.

CONNORS: Too little too late, I guess.

SCHRADE: Yeah.

CONNORS: Outside the convention you had rioting, police rioting in the streets, and inside the convention was pretty raucous, too, I understand.

SCHRADE: Yeah, because the convention itself was set up on a secure basis. There were check points and all kinds of checks to get in there, and if you didn't have your credentials with you or any kind of problem at all, you were blocked, you were stopped. So there was very tight police control over the convention itself, not only because of what was going on outside, but inside as well. The Johnson forces and the Humphrey forces were in control of

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the convention and wanted to keep us down, those who were seeking peace in Vietnam. So it was frightening at times the way the convention was going, because people were really getting outraged by all of this heavy pressure out of Texas from Johnson, and we had no real control ourselves in the convention.

And outside the convention, it just got really crazy because, with Mayor [Richard] Daley as head of the police forces in Chicago, the police just attacked the peace demonstrators in the city who were trying to persuade the convention to end the war, and legitimately so. So there was really a vicious, brutal kind of attack by the police and a lot of people getting really injured.

CONNORS: There was a draft Teddy [Edward F. Kennedy] movement there that I read about. In fact, Jesse Unruh was one of the people who was behind that. Was that more of a formality or a courtesy kind of thing? Or was there anything--?

SCHRADE: No, Jesse was a very strong Kennedy supporter and had been and was really hurt by Bob being killed because he and Bob were very close. And I thought there was a valid attempt. Steve [Stephen] Smith, the brother-in-law, was in town, in a way managing or overseeing that, and there was a real effort to do that. I opposed Jesse on that because I thought, emotionally, I couldn't stand it to have Ted

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Kennedy there and have his life threatened, being at risk at that point, and I didn't think the country could stand another assassination, not that it would have happened, but there was a real risk there and I just wouldn't go along with it. So it didn't get very far.

CONNORS: Well, Humphrey won on the first balloting, and, after that, was it just a matter of a formality of finishing off the convention?

SCHRADE: Yeah.

CONNORS: Well, how did you approach that, now? I mean, you, as a Democrat, had to support Humphrey after that. So so what--?

SCHRADE: Yeah, well, I was in pretty serious condition physically, because I hadn't been out of the hospital too long and was still very weak and not really back at work. And I had to reevaluate my position because I had taken a hard position in the support of Robert Kennedy, we'd lost him in a very tragic way, so I had to begin considering what I was going to do because I really had a very bad time with-- Walter [P.] Reuther was my mentor for so many years, and since the endorsement of the union was there for Hubert Humphrey, I decided to do my best to be party to that, because there was a heads-and-shoulders difference between him and Richard [M.] Nixon, whom I had known for many years in his politics here in California, and felt that Humphrey

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was the only choice. In fact, because I was under question all the time on ~~that~~ in the union and outside, in the Party, I joined with a couple of other people and made strong pro-Humphrey statements in a New Republic article just to let people know where I stood. And during that period, we had organized the New Democratic Coalition. Don [Donald] Peterson and I were the co-chair, he representing the McCarthy forces and I representing the Kennedy. We had a lot of wonderful people in there, most of whom made it in politics after that. So it was difficult supporting Humphrey because he wasn't taking a hard position against the war, but there was constant pressure on him to do that, and he finally did, as I said before, in his Salt Lake City speech. So it was just a question of not only proving myself but being more realistic about what the situation was at that point.

CONNORS: How did the New Democratic Coalition come about? What were the origins of that?

SCHRADE: Well, because the party was under the domination and control of Johnson and, in a way, Humphrey, we felt that there had to be some changes in the Party, that you build sort of a left liberal labor operation within the party to keep challenging. And that's what we did. We kept after the Democratic National Committee on a number of issues during that period for two, three, or four years

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during the life of that--

CONNORS: Well, ~~did~~ the rule change that came about around McGovern? Was that part of the New Democratic Coalition?

SCHRADE: That was part of it, yeah. Yeah.

CONNORS: And there were chapters of the New Democratic Coalition?

SCHRADE: In some places, yeah.

CONNORS: Because I remember back in Providence [Rhode Island] in those years, there was a--

SCHRADE: Yeah, and New York had a very strong Democratic coalition. Yeah, New York City.

CONNORS: And then it went out of business or dissolved itself?

SCHRADE: Just pretty much dissolved, yeah. It was difficult to carry on. We didn't have all that kind of money. Most of us were just spending our own money to participate in the meetings and so forth. But it did become a base for a lot of other people running for office and winning. Tom [Thomas] Bradley was part of it, and Allard Lowenstein. Peterson was very active in his state of Wisconsin, Bella Abzug, a lot of people, Ronnie Eldridge, a lot of great people.

CONNORS: Yeah. Well, I'd like to talk about two things, I'm not sure in which order. Maybe we could talk about labor relations back in Region 6 to sort of get us away

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from the fireworks.

SCHRADE: I want to do some research on that.

CONNORS: Oh, you want to do some-- Okay, we can--

SCHRADE: I haven't really done my homework on those guys.

CONNORS: That's okay. We can pick that up--

SCHRADE: And I've got to go back over that for the later session.

CONNORS: Okay, I can just exchange my notes later on. I mean, the two things that I would like to get at--

SCHRADE: You know, my problem is that the Kennedy experience was such an overwhelming thing, and I've been going through a lot of that recently. We've been doing some reinvestigation, we've got some new information supporting a second gun theory, and I'm involved in this Robert F. Kennedy High School thing. So it sort of dominates my head at this point.

CONNORS: Okay, well, next time.

Tell me if I'm wrong, but I think the merger of Rockwell, Rockwell International [Corporation] and the merger of McDonnell and Douglas sort of-- I wanted to get at whether that created any kind of change in the collective bargaining relationships that had been established and had-- Well, if you want to think about that, if that's a reasonable question--

SCHRADE: Yeah.

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CONNORS: Well, let's talk about disaffiliation with AFL-CIO. I think I can cue you on some of the things that led up to that. This is going back to 1966, the UAW [United Auto Workers] protested the ILO [International Labor Organization] boycott that the American Worker Delegation staged against the Polish president of the ILO. Do you remember any discussions around that particular thing?

SCHRADE: Yeah, there was also some trashing of the leadership of the ICFTU [International Confederation of Free Trade Unions] and the staff, I remember, by George Meany. And wasn't there a pullout by the AFL-CIO at that point--?

CONNORS: Not at that point. They pulled out a little later. But they were very unhappy with the leadership of the ICFTU because they weren't sufficiently anticommunist, I guess is what it was.

SCHRADE: Yeah, right.

CONNORS: They were older socialists who had been around since World War II, so they had a whole, very different point of view from George Meany and Jay Lovestone and Irving Brown. That created a debate on foreign policy within UAW.

SCHRADE: Within the UAW [International Executive] Board. Most of it had to do with the ILO and the ICFTU. There had also been Victor [Reuther]'s exposure of the CIA [Central

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Intelligence Agency] involvement in a lot of the AFL-CIO's overseas activities and the kind of reactionary regimes that the AFL-CIO was supporting along with the government, which always seemed to us a contradiction, because Meany's attack on the unions in the so-called communist countries was that they were government controlled, and yet here, at the same time, he was accepting money from the State Department and AID [Agency for International Development] and involving himself with the CIA and corporate leadership in this country to involve himself in Third World countries. It seemed to be somewhat the same thing, only an American version, of this kind of government involvement with the unions in overseas activities. So all of that kind of gelled into a position of our talking about leaving the AFL-CIO.

Walter was concerned, at that point, with making it too much of a foreign policy point, so his other criticisms of the AFL-CIO became more of the basis for our discussions about the policies of the AFL-CIO, which finally led to our break, because he was concerned about organizing activities, collective bargaining activities, and so forth. There's a lot of paperwork on this. There's a real exchange going on.

CONNORS: An exchange between regions and locals with the international?

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SCHRADE: Mostly between Reuther and the Executive Council. He wanted to lay a basis for departure if we were going to. He felt that at some point he could negotiate a settlement with Meany, kind of restructuring the council and some of its programs on organizing and bargaining and so forth. He counted a lot on some of the old CIO unions, but they weren't forthcoming with the kind of push that he wanted inside the Executive Council.

CONNORS: That would have been for instance, the Communication workers?

SCHRADE: Yeah, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers [of America] and some of the other old CIO--

CONNORS: Packinghouse, I suppose.

SCHRADE: Packinghouse, yeah.

CONNORS: Ralph Helstein was around then?

SCHRADE: Yeah.

CONNORS: Well, the Reuthers had a very different attitude towards foreign policy--

SCHRADE: Yeah.

CONNORS: --just getting back to that for a minute. For instance, they weren't against receiving delegations from Eastern European union federations.

SCHRADE: No.

CONNORS: Whereas, that was completely shunned by Meany, as you mentioned.

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SCHRADE: Right.

CONNORS: Well, what was the logic behind Walter's and Victor's acceptance of these groups as--Did they accept them as legitimate organizations? Or did they figure that the people the people contact would be--?

SCHRADE: Yeah, that that kind of relationship ought to occur, because we never got involved with the WFTU [World Federation of Trade Unions] for instance--the UAW attacked that organization, as well--but felt that there ought to be communication going on constantly between workers and unions throughout the world. You know, they mainly considered themselves socialists or social democrats and therefore related more to the European socialists and social democrats and their attitudes about the other countries behind the so-called Iron Curtain. So they felt that there ought to be some kind of world movement and relationships that way. They weren't as closed-minded as George Meany and Jay Lovestone, those characters.

CONNORS: Walter called for a special convention of the AFL-CIO, or maybe a special meeting of the Executive Council, to go through all this stuff, but that meeting never took place.

SCHRADE: Yeah, his reason for that, as I remember, was that he was tied up in "big three" auto bargaining and just couldn't deal with that, because there was a crisis in

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bargaining during that period. He just wouldn't do it. He may have had other reasons for not doing it, or felt that it was not going to be an opportunity to change anything, that he was just going to get outvoted, period, because Meany was in full control of that Executive Council. Walter didn't have the kind of support that would take on George Meany in the old CIO unions. So, tactically, it was probably a retreat.

CONNORS: Well, how did the whole disaffiliation idea fly back home? I mean, you would have to disaffiliate from the state fed [California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO] and from the local labor councils and stuff. That's kind of a traumatic--

SCHRADE: Yeah, but there were key groups in the union that were not having good relationships with the state fed. For instance, we weren't, and that was one of the reasons why I felt that succession or departure from the AFL-CIO was a good idea. The state fed, at that point, was dominated by Tommy [Thomas L.] Pitts, a fairly conservative, to put it mildly, leader of the organization, and heavily controlled by some of the Building Trades unions. So in terms of getting legislative help, we weren't getting it. In fact, we were getting opposition on some of our legislative program.

The other thing was on endorsements. There's a

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separate COPE [Committee on Political Education] operation which you affiliate with as a particular union, and what happened was that we would pay our full per capita tax, other unions would not, yet they would come in late sometimes with their per capita tax and outvote us on endorsements. We felt that was undemocratic. In fact, we were campaigning for a union shop inside the AFL-CIO where everybody paid their per capita and didn't trick us into these decisions. So we felt that independence in the state, which is what we were doing, anyway--we had to fly independently a lot of our political endorsements and legislative work--that we were wasting our money being forced by our own constitution to pay a per capita tax to the state fed and to COPE and getting screwed by the group that ran it. We tried to get along with them, and we were getting along in the county fed with Bill Bassett. We had very good relations. But he was in a bad relationship with Pitts, too. So, in a way, we tried to build a coalition in the state within the state fed but it wasn't working. And, as I remember, Bob Johnson, who was regional director of the UAW in Illinois, was also having the same problems with the Illinois state fed. So in key situations in fairly large states, that became more of a reason to disaffiliate from the AFL-CIO.

Walter kind of held out hope that we could negotiate

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something with George Meany. Because I remember one board meeting we held in Washington about this, and he yelled at me, "You're a hawk on the AFL-CIO and a dove on Vietnam." I said, "No, I'm consistent. I'm for instant withdrawal from both." [laughter] But I think he had kind of lost it at that point, in terms of building within the AFL-CIO, to have a more important say by building a power base within the AFL-CIO. He didn't have it and expected to back in the merger days. I think I may have mentioned this before, but after the merger occurred in New York, we went back to his hotel room and he said, "Well, we've got the Industrial Union Department as part of the AFL-CIO structure. Now we've got a power base within the AFL-CIO," but it just really didn't work that way. A lot of good work by the Industrial Union Department, but as far as trying to do much within the Executive Council which was dominated by George Meany and his idea of veto power, it just didn't work. And I think that was ultimately the reason why we got out.

CONNORS: Well, I've read in the biographies of Walter some of the speculation on what he thought his relation to George Meany would be and that he possibly thought that Meany would retire before him and that he would maybe have a shot at becoming president of the AFL-CIO, or, conversely, that he was so ensconced in the UAW that he

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would never want to give that up, as he would have to.

SCHRADE: Yeah.

CONNORS: Well, what was the-- Do you know--?

SCHRADE: My feeling is that he really wanted to be very close to George Meany as his number-two guy and eventually become president of the AFL-CIO, because he did become president of the CIO, so there's some precedent there for his seeking that position. And he was the kind of person who was interested in national-international politics, very deeply so, and from that kind of a base he could do more, because he had been through this with John [F.] Kennedy as president. Everything he wanted from John Kennedy had to be cleared with George Meany, and things were blocked occasionally because Kennedy went along, even though Walter was much more important to John Kennedy, politically, than George Meany was. But this idea of protocol from the Kennedy administration blocked Walter quite a number of ways.

CONNORS: Well, did you have to explain this or do any kind of politicking back in the region here to get the disaffiliation idea accepted? Or was it one of those things where people said, "Okay, let's go"?

SCHRADE: No, it wasn't very difficult at all because we were running a very progressive political program in legislation and stuff and very deeply involved in the

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membership on this. We did a lot of work--

CONNORS: You know, it's surprising that after-- You know, it took a lot to make the merger happen, and then one of the main unions leaves. That's a little disconcerting. That must have been disconcerting to certain people in certain other unions that were allied.

SCHRADE: But one of the other things I talked about before was that-- And it goes to the question that competition is not necessarily a bad idea within the trade union movement, and that's why the CIO and AFL had such a-- There are good aspects to that. During the sixties it was also important for us because many of us were against the war, and George Meany was a real supporter of taking on the war in Vietnam. And in terms of the farm workers' movement, our competition with the AFL-CIO there, even when we were in the AFL-CIO, was important to building the farm workers movement, because as we carried a more progressive line in the farm worker organization [United Farm Workers], the AFL-CIO came in ^{as} to compete with us. So it seems to me, tactically, in a way, it was good to have this kind of competition between sort of conservative and progressive forces in the labor movement.

CONNORS: One of the statements that--

SCHRADE: Although cooperation is a very important thing. So how do you work out competition and cooperation within

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an American labor movement? That's always been the dilemma.

CONNORS: Organizing was a big issue here in the disaffiliation. I've got an item that was carried in Solidarity for February '67, and it's entitled "To Clarify UAW's Position with the AFL-CIO." It's a text of an administrative letter sent to all the UAW locals by four top officers at the instruction of the Executive Board. It says, "The AFL-CIO lacks the social vision, the dynamic thrust, the crusading spirit that should characterize the progressive modern labor movement." That sort of sums it up, I guess, as far as the seeing of maybe a bureaucracy there where you should have a real vital kind of organization. And the other point that is made is that the level of organizing has not run concurrent with the growth of the labor and the working class itself.

SCHRADE: Yeah, well, during this whole discussion about disaffiliation with AFL-CIO, all these problems began to come up onto the table, so we had a broader base for arguing for changes in the AFL-CIO or disaffiliation. Chief among them was organizing, our failure to keep up with the expanding work force. And Walter's particular problem was dealing with raiding between unions, one union after another. We had solved our problem in the early fifties with the machinists union [International Association of

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Machinists], because we were raiding each other, and finally worked out a no-raid agreement and a mutual assistance agreement and then joint collective bargaining in the aerospace industry. So he was approaching it from that basis. And there was a no-raid agreement prior to the merger with a process worked out so that if there were competing claims for a particular group of workers, there would be an AFL-CIO mediation-arbitration system. But in the overall need for organizing, his concern was that, on any kind of organizing campaign, Meany would allow a particular union to veto. So if there was a meeting on organizing drives, any one union who objected to the drive or wanted to do it without some other unions involved, he would just not go along. So he allowed particular unions to veto organizing drives, and Walter wanted to get over that kind of hurdle but wasn't able to. So it didn't appear that, in terms of moving on organizing, that that was going to work.

CONNORS: Well, was that big L.A.-area organizing drive, did that happen around-- Was that happening?

SCHRADE: Yeah, that happened in the sixties.

CONNORS: That happened in the sixties?

SCHRADE: We participated in that. And it was one way that this could have worked, but it wasn't being transferred to other areas at that point. It was an L.A.-Orange County

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drive. And we participated fully in that because, again, Bill Bassett was the secretary and a more progressive guy in the AFL-CIO and was easier to work with.

CONNORS: Is Bassett still around, do you know?

SCHRADE: No, I'm sure not. Siggy [Sigmund] Arowitz proceeded him. I guess he died, Bassett died, and then Arowitz took over, and now [Bill] Robertson.

CONNORS: Robertson.

SCHRADE: Yeah. But that was useful. We were helping other unions and they were helping us, and we were pooling organizers to go after a particular target. So you had several unions working on one plant for one union, and it was really a very good thing. Bill Gilbert headed that for a long time. *of the National AFL-CIO*

CONNORS: The upshot of this whole thing was sort of a "you-can't-fire-me-I-quit" kind of thing where the AFL-CIO suspended UAW for non-payment of dues.

SCHRADE: Yeah. We started withholding per capita tax, yeah.

CONNORS: But by that time, within the UAW, it was certainly considered disaffiliation not expulsion.

SCHRADE: Right, yeah. We wanted to be disaffiliated, on the record. And here in California, as soon as the decision was made, we stopped per capita tax to the state fed prior to when we were supposed to. But Walter allowed

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the UAW in the Illinois fed to do that, and I tried to get an agreement on it and couldn't right away. It was being discussed, discussed, discussed, and I finally just said, "We're going to stop it." We built a fund here with that per/capita tax for our own political group and then set up our own CAP Councils, Community Action Program Councils they were called, as a way to develop our political-legislative work. So we started off with a large sum of money which we kept in sort of a kitty which we used to help the farm workers and particular programs. It was a good sum of money to have, which meant that we were actually able to do our work in a better way because we had the funds to do it. Walter got angry about that, but he kind of went along with it after a while when I told him the reasons for it, what a waste it was to just keep handing it over to the state fed.

CONNORS: Well, the people in the state fed--some people-- must have really squawked because that's a good chunk of money there, and they certainly had to curtail some of their own activities on the staff.

SCHRADE: Sure. That's right, yeah. Very angry about that and began-- That's one of the reasons Reuther got involved with saying, "Why did you do this?" and so forth. We explained to him and finally got away with it.

CONNORS: Well, then, following the disaffiliation, the UAW

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linked up with the [International Brotherhood of] Teamsters in the Alliance ~~for~~ Labor Action.

SCHRADE: Yeah, I oop a plea on that one. I was in the hospital. [laughter]

CONNORS: Yeah, I suppose this would have been in July or certainly after that.

SCHRADE: Yeah. In fact, the day that Robert Kennedy was killed, we went up that morning to meet with Einar Mohn, because Einar was one of the better people in the Teamster leadership at that point. We had a meeting with him to just talk about this. So in a way, it was a good idea, and we did get some things done with the Teamsters union. It was when Frank Fitzsimmons was president. I was pleased because we took a hardline position against the war as the Alliance for Labor Action-Teamsters-UAW coalition. Frank Fitzsimmons' son was about to be drafted or serving in Vietnam, so he had a personal interest, and it wasn't so much of a political or ideological thing with Fitzsimmons. We did get a telegram from Einar Mohn and Fitzsimmons to the People's Park rally right after our merger convention. So, in a way, it served our interests in certain ways. We also got them involved in farm worker union activities, so it was--

CONNORS: What? Smoothing out the problem between the Teamsters and the farm workers.

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SCHRADE: Yeah. We worked out a no-raid, mutual assistance agreement, where the Teamsters had always been making sweetheart deals with the growers and raiding the farm workers. So that got worked out. So there was some--

CONNORS: Well, what justified uniting in this kind of activity with the Teamsters as far as what your guess of what Walter's point of view would be? He knew it would gall George Meany, I'm sure.

SCHRADE: Yeah.

CONNORS: Just like stick something to old George after all those number of years, still--

SCHRADE: But Walter was a master of organizing power and using power, and this was one way of doing something other than working within the AFL-CIO where he was very frustrated because of Meany's conservative policies. I don't think it was something that was going to be very useful in the long run, because, taking the Teamsters and the way they deal with their own membership and deal with the Mafia and so forth, it was not such a great idea. It did fall apart after a while.

CONNORS: It fell apart? It wasn't dissolved formally or anything?

SCHRADE: I don't think so.

CONNORS: It just sort of fell apart? Well, did you have any close personal contact with the local Teamsters here in

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L.A., like District 42?

SCHRADE: Some, but we didn't have too much going with the joint council. My relationship was mainly with Einar Mohn and his staff and working politics and farm worker problems and so forth and that kind of thing. Because they weren't raiding us. They were raiding other unions, generally, but we didn't have that kind of difficulty with them, because that's the period when Andy Anderson was the head of the group and the Teamsters were known as "Anderson's Raiders" stacking up lots of victories by raiding weak unions and that sort of thing.

CONNORS: Cannibalism.

SCHRADE: Yes.

CONNORS: Was there any thought of reaching out to other nonaffiliated unions like [United] Mineworkers [of America] or UE [United Electrical Workers]?

SCHRADE: Yes. In fact, the [United] Rubber [Cork, Linoleum, and Plastic Workers of America] Workers joined the ~~ALAD~~^{ALA} at one point. And uh, they were--I think--

CONNORS: Was [International Union of] Mine, Mill, Smelter [Workers] one of the--?

SCHRADE: I don't think so, because Mine, Mill went to the Steel Workers.

CONNORS: Steelworkers, yeah.

SCHRADE: I think also some talk with the teachers union

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what was
ALAD
stand (P)?

[American Federation of Teachers]. Yeah, there were efforts to recruit other unions into the fold.

CONNORS: What do you suppose put the end to it? That it wasn't clearly formulated what it was supposed to do? Because if you read the statements that were written when the group was launched, it was really quite a positive sounding thing. You know, "We're going to do what the AFL-CIO is refusing to do. We're going to get out there and organize and educate."

SCHRADE: Yeah. I don't know exactly how to be more specific about how it withered away. Well, one thing is Walter got killed.

CONNORS: Yeah, that's right. That's right, yeah.

SCHRADE: In 1970. So that was only less than two years later.

CONNORS: And maybe Leonard wasn't into--

SCHRADE: Yeah, what happened in the Teamsters with Fitzsimmons. Let's see--

CONNORS: That's true. I don't have the dates for that, not with me, for the Teamsters' shuffle. Well, yeah, Walter died in May of '70, and that must have been a terrible, frightening blow to the organization. Was that disbelief? I mean, that was another leader who exited the stage. What happened in the aftermath?

SCHRADE: Yeah, personally, and organizationally it was a

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terrific shock to all of us, because we had only known Walter as the only president of the UAW. In a way, we do now, because he was such an effective leader and so we were just kind of grasping around just to try to hold the organization together and trying to choose a successor. That became an immediate problem, so we had to focus on that. And then lose May Reuther at the same, just get totally wiped out, and Bill Wolfman who was with Walter.

CONNORS: Who was he? Was he the--

SCHRADE: He was a bodyguard at that point and a relative.

CONNORS: His nephew or cousin or something like that?

SCHRADE: Yeah, a nephew of May's. And Oscar Stonarov, who had such a big impact on the UAW, he was the architect on Solidarity House, also-- And they were heading that way, the UAW education center up in northern Michigan.

CONNORS: And that was new at that time, is that correct? That the education center had--

SCHRADE: Yeah, it was in the building stage, yeah. Walter spent a lot of time up there.

CONNORS: And the small plane they were in malfunctioned.

SCHRADE: Yeah, one of the executive jet charter planes, a small jet that Walter used like taxi cabs. It was finally discovered that the altimeter had been miscalculated. At least that's one of the theories, because it was a foggy, rainy night, and I guess they did see the airport, but from

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time to time I guess there was low visibility and they crashed in trees ~~just~~ before landing.

CONNORS: Well, did the ^{file} Executive ^{file} Board meet within hours or days of Walter's death?

SCHRADE: Yeah, met right after the funeral in Detroit, a major event in the history of Detroit because thousands of people turned out. And the two daughters were just devastated by this, Linda and Lisa, just left without a mother and father who were a very important part of their lives. Lisa has written a book recently that is somewhat critical of Walter's relationship with the family, but also a very loving kind of book, as well.

But at the funeral, I remember that most of us had assumed that Leonard Woodcock would be his successor and was Walter's choice, but Victor, at the funeral, grabbed each one of us and said, "Walter had changed his mind about that and I want you to know that." He said he thought Doug [Douglas] Fraser would be a better choice, which was okay with me, because I had been having very serious political problems with Leonard, anyway, and felt that he was undermining me here in the region. So when we met, we began talking about the process [^] this was just a few weeks after Walter had been reelected, and the convention was, I think, in April of '70, March or April, and here it was May, just a few weeks after his reelection. And one of the

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big events for us was that he really attacked Richard Nixon for the secret war in Cambodia. It was his strongest antiwar statement at that point, so it was very good for all of us. So we began caucusing^u at that point, those for Leonard, those for Doug. And we were in the minority for a period of time but then had the potential for the majority to elect Fraser on the board. I think there were twenty five of us at that point, twenty-six with Walter. And so we started counting and campaigning for-- I think it happened only within a matter of a few weeks where the decisionmaking was going on and the board would meet. I'm not sure about the dates, but I think it was just a matter of weeks after the funeral.

One of the things that was happening was that Emil Mazey was assigned the job of interviewing each board member.

CONNORS: Well, did he become sort of the interim or acting--?

SCHRADE: Well, he, [↓] under the constitution, was the acting president. Secretary-treasurer is the number two spot. He operates in the absence of the president. And he didn't want to be the president, I gather, so he began interviewing. I think he would have accepted a draft because a lot of his activities within the board were in competition with Walter, even though he was trying-- I

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think it was good for a number two person not to be just a
psychopant for the president.

CONNORS: Sure, a yes-man.

SCHRADE: And besides, he was one of the only ones against
the war during that period. So it was very good.

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SCHRADE: So anyway, Mazey went through this process of interviewing each to find out where we stood. It finally came down to a fairly even split, with some undecideds, between Fraser and Woodcock. The magic number to win, of course, was thirteen in a group of twenty-five of us, and we knew we had eleven or so votes sure, and there were three persons whom we directed Doug to who were open to discussion with Doug, and who we wanted Doug to talk to. But at an interim board meeting before the decision was made, I got very concerned about what Doug was doing. I thought he and Leonard were communicating in some way during this period that made me feel that Doug was not as hardlined about winning as we thought he ought to be. So I discussed that with Kenny Bannon and Jack Edwards. The three of us were sort of heading the caucus for Fraser.

CONNORS: Just where were those guys from? Where's Jack Edwards from?

SCHRADE: Jack Edwards was the first black vice president. Kenny Bannon was the vice president in charge of the Ford [Motor Company local]. Both were from Detroit locals. So I discussed this these guys, and so we called Doug in and Doug says, "Oh, no, I'm gung ho. I'm going full speed ahead," and so forth. Well, this was the day of

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the funeral, I guess. We had a board meeting that day just to sort of set up the process and so forth, because we then all went to a reception for International Affairs Department. It was an International Affairs Department of the UAW function where foreign guests were being greeted. So we all went there with Victor. So I began moving around the group, talking to each board member who was with us, "Let's ^{shore} ~~take~~ up Doug, because we've got the votes to win if ~~he'll~~ ~~you'll~~ talk to these three guys." What happened was we finally went to a vote, and Doug had not talked to these three guys--

CONNORS: Who were the three guys?

SCHRADE: One was Kenny Robinson, one was Joe Tomasi. Kenny was the director of the region that Woodcock had been director of, and they'd been close, but there was something of a split. And one other, ~~he's not sure of.~~ Any one of them would have shifted the majority to Fraser. Joe Tomasi was Toledo, that section of Ohio. In any event, we went to a vote on the thing, and it wound up thirteen to twelve for Woodcock, which put me at risk, because Leonard had already been starting to undermine me here in the region through the president of my local, Henry Lacayo, who Leonard wanted as director, because we had a confrontation on this at the '70 convention, before Walter died.

CONNORS: What was that confrontation?

*Bob
Johnston
from
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