

"I told you so", because during my earlier meeting with Conway and Reuther they said this was the real problem, that Stevenson would make a deal with Johnson and become Johnson's vice presidential candidate, or vice versa. And I got angry with Reuther and Conway--that was <sup>in our</sup> ~~their~~ earlier meeting in Detroit--and I said, "No, that wouldn't happen. Kennedy and Johnson are more alike in terms of their voting records, tending to very conservative voting records." I said, "They're more likely to get together than <sup>B</sup> Then it happened. So a lot of people were crying. (Luverne <sup>not so</sup> and Cindy Conway) and May Reuther were crying about this, this awful situation. I was not feeling that kind of an emotion. I felt that it was a fairly good decision based on politics of the country.

CONNORS: In order to wrap up the south?

SCHRADE: Yeah, sure and--

CONNORS: Have somebody so strong in Congress.

SCHRADE: Yeah. And probably the reason Kennedy won was because of that. Even though Johnson's voting record was not to my liking, neither was Kennedy's, except they had made some changes going into the '60 convention trying to win liberal support. And it was obvious afterwards that they tended in that direction, anyway, and both became liberal presidents.

But during the afternoon, the Michigan delegation,

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Reuther-Williams pro-Kennedy delegation, were in a state of rebellion and caucusing for a long time. Under the platform there was a meeting room. The convention was at a standstill. So I suggested to Reuther and Conway--Roy Reuther was also with us during that period--that we get Johnson's statement supporting the most liberal platform that the Democratic Party ever had and specifically supporting the civil rights plank, which was rare for Johnson to do. He had not done anything like that up to his point. And Reuther said, "No, [Leonard P.] Woodcock and [Doug] Fraser, our guys from the UAW there and Williams are running this thing. They'll be all right." Well, the thing kept going on and on. We were watching on television in Reuther's room. And Bob Kennedy came by with Bob Oliver, a friend of his from Texas, and--

CONNORS: Robert Oliver from the CIO?

SCHRADE: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think he was in the insurance industry after that. Maybe even then.

CONNORS: Yeah, he left the CIO before the merger, I believe.

SCHRADE: Yeah, yeah. So I took the risk of raising this suggestion again, of saying, "Let's get this statement over there" and Bob Kennedy said, "That's a great idea"--it kind of jolted Walter a little bit--"but how are we going to do it?" So Bob Oliver says, "I've got a badge." So he

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pulled the badge out and Bob said, "Paul, would you take it over?" I said, "Sure." So I went into the convention with a Texas delegate badge on to deliver this Johnson civil rights support statement and then couldn't get in <sup>to the meeting</sup> The ~~Con~~ police were guarding the doors. Nobody could get in. But Neil Staebler's son was around and said, "There's a back door. I'll get you in."

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So I went in there, and in this smokey room, people were just screaming about Kennedy's betrayal by putting Johnson on the ticket. And Woodcock at that point was speaking, and I remember one of the lines, he said, "Look, we wanted a man who could make decisions--to really slam it at Stevenson, who didn't seem to be able to in some instances--"and so we got a man, he makes his first decision, and we're rebelling." And people said, "Yeah!" So I grab Woodcock's arm and said, "Read this, just the first paragraph." He sort of slapped me off and kept speaking. I showed it to Doug Fraser and he said, "Oh, my God." So we both went and got Woodcock's attention and he gave the floor back. So he read this thing and then got ~~Williams~~ to recognize him again, and he read this thing. And you could just feel the pressure go out of there, that here Lyndon wasn't as bad as we thought he was. At least he was going along with the civil rights plank and the party platform, which people didn't expect.

So that solved that problem very quickly. They came to a conclusion that they <sup>could</sup> vote no, which was just a gesture on the floor because it didn't mean anything. They wouldn't put up a candidate against Johnson for the V.P. nomination, which is what they were proposing at that point. So that really settled things.

Bob was very pleased that it happened that way. So I think after that, Bob became very trusting, and that's very difficult to get from the Kennedys. If they know you can perform and you're loyal, you're in. So I had a good relationship with Bob after that, although I didn't see him much until after his brother got killed, and then we did get together on a number of projects.

CONNORS: So the other possible candidate that labor would have preferred would have been like [Henry] Scoop Jackson or somebody--

SCHRADE: Yeah. <sup>for</sup> More Symington, I think.

CONNORS: Symington.

SCHRADE: Symington was <sup>acceptable</sup> more to most of the machinists and a lot of the other unions. I know when I went on the floor to deliver this message, I saw some of the people when I had convinced to go with Kennedy, because Symington was a possibility, or even Jackson, a guy like Dick Richards, who <sup>State Senator</sup> was one of the great liberal Democrats in California, and Joe Rauh, who was a friend of ours and our general counsel

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at one period in our history. And I saw John Snyder, president of Lockheed Machinists Lodge, just screaming at me, "You double-crossed us." And I said, "I didn't do it." [laughter] "It happened. Now we've got to go with it." So they were very angry. In fact, Joe Rauh was hysterical on the floor, saying that Walter had let us all down and that Kennedy had let us down with the Johnson thing. Joe changed his mind after that, but at the moment he was probably-- He wasn't a really pro-Kennedy guy, anyway. He was willing to go with that, but Johnson just stuck in his craw as it did many people.

CONNORS: So it was quite a political education, I suppose.

SCHRADE: Yeah.

CONNORS: What was the attitude here in the region? What were the politics at that time? It was Region 6. Did the Region go along with Kennedy without any kind of a--?

SCHRADE: Yeah, not too many problems. Yeah.

CONNORS: Now, who was regional director at this point?

SCHRADE: [Charles] Bioletti.

CONNORS: Bioletti was still regional director at this point. Okay.

SCHRADE: But he was faltering. He had an illness where he became very depressed, couldn't function very much, and it was beginning to really rankle a lot of people in the local unions that they weren't getting the kind of leadership or

support they wanted. I was watching that very closely and keeping in touch with people in the region, because I had left the region because of that, in order to give <sup>him</sup> his space and give him an opportunity to perform. So it really wasn't just my presence as his assistant director from '55 to '57 that was causing his problem. It was just something very deep within him that he wasn't solving. So that became more and more of a problem and gave me some opening to begin organizing for director in the region. Because one of the things I liked about working in Detroit was that I had a better sense of how the International Executive Board and the officers function, particularly Walter's office where I worked. But I didn't like all the bureaucratic chores as a staff member that went with it. I think the highlights of my service there was to work with Reuther and to work with Jack Conway, who was really an excellent organizer in terms of getting work done and moving and giving Walter this opportunity to really give good leadership to the union.

But my work in the Democratic convention was the kind of work I'd like to do--trying to put things together and make things go. I also was in charge of the [UAW] Twenty-fifth Anniversary banquet for Walter with three tiers of head tables and 5,000 people at one of the big halls downtown. I was in charge of that. And it worked very

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well. I was also in charge of organizing-- Going into negotiations, I think, in 1959 or '60, either going into the '59 negotiations or the '61-- I'll have to check the dates on that. But we organized a massive picket line of retirees from the UAW around the GM building. We brought people in by bus loads from Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, all around Michigan, just a mass. It was a beautiful sight, the demonstration, and it was in line with the Reuther program to the UAW's, generally, to continue to provide additional health care and additional benefits for people already retired. Then we had a major rally in 1960, about 25,000 senior citizens and UAW members, working members, at the county fairgrounds, a big auditorium out there, and we had Symington, Humphrey, and Kennedy, who were the three major candidates at that point. I don't know if Johnson was invited or not.

CONNORS: Was that in support of health care for the aged?

SCHRADE: Yeah, it was <sup>fr</sup> their positions on social security, Medicare, and so forth, in the Congress.

CONNORS: Because I know that the bill that was defeated prior to Medicare, which was I guess was 1964 or so, was the Forand Bill--

SCHRADE: Yeah.

CONNORS: --which came up in the late fifties and was defeated. And I know that labor went all out for that

Forand Bill. They still lost, but one of [George] Meany's statements in about 1959 or '60 was that, "Well, we lost it, but we can see by the votes that we did get it. It's only a matter of time."

SCHRADE: Yeah.

CONNORS: I know the UAW was strongly in support of the Forand Bill, too.

SCHRADE: Well, this was an effort by Reuther to put the presidential candidates on the spot on this by showing them mass support available to them and their political campaigns. And I think it's a really a good way to operate, because you force the issue into the campaigns and they make commitments at that point, particularly when they're up against one another in this kind of a three-way debate, in a sense. So they each got to make their best effort and--

CONNORS: They have to outdo the other.

SCHRADE: Yeah. At one point during the thing, I went to Reuther and I asked, "What lineup? Who speaks first, second, third?" He said, "You're in charge here. You work it out." So I was prepared. I had three pieces of paper, one, two, three, on them, and I offered them. And Symington was the guy who said, "Well, you ought to cut those." And I said, "You cut them." ~~So we~~ <sup>That</sup> broke them up. Then we worked out the thing that way. It was a

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really wonderful meeting. And here Jack Kennedy performed in such a way that he began to show a real margin over Humphrey and over Symington, because he was always well prepared, a very charming person, a young and vigorous kind of appearance. And people began moving. You could see where he had not been too well known, maybe some skepticism about him, but his support began developing that way, and we could begin to see that. And I think that may be why Reuther said "he's the guy" rather than Johnson Symington, or Humphrey.

CONNORS: But did you find that sort of change developing in your own thinking and in your own feelings toward the guy developing where before you may have thought he was too much of a politician, too much of a conservative democrat? In yourself, did you start to say, "Wait a minute. I like this guy"?

SCHRADE: I really wasn't that persuaded at that period. I think I was mainly persuaded because he was somewhat flexible in his voting in the Senate in the late fifties and going into the '60 campaign, but that he was a better choice than Lyndon Johnson. Since Stevenson wasn't going to make it, we had to do something and had to move in with someone who had a good chance to win, and we thought that Kennedy had that chance at that point. So it was really the typical risk you take in politics. Is the person you

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go all out for going to perform as you wanted afterwards?

CONNORS: Well, afterwards, I guess Kennedy did show himself to be pretty good for labor. Is that the case?

SCHRADE: Yeah, yeah.

CONNORS: The aerospace negotiations that came up in 1962, for instance.

SCHRADE: Right.

CONNORS: Maybe we could talk about that now. Or is there more in between that we should talk about before that? Those negotiations where he set up the panel.

SCHRADE: He set up the panel. Well, I still hadn't made this transition back to California--

CONNORS: All right. Well, let's make the transition.

SCHRADE: --which happened in the '61, '62 period.

CONNORS: Okay. So that was in the meantime.

SCHRADE: So as I mentioned before, the illness of Bioletti became a serious matter, and he started talking about disability retirement and just getting away from the job. Reuther and I had been out there for an educational conference, which the national education department had worked on, so it was a very big affair with a big banquet at the end where Reuther was going to speak. In going into the banquet room before we went through the doors, Bioletti just halted and said, "There's nobody in there. You're just setting me up for a terrible humiliation." So Walter

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had saw this for the first time. We had reported some of these situations to him, but it's not really believable until you really experience it. And Walter said, "Something's got to be done." Bioletti's friends and family began saying, "You've got to change. You've got to get out." So that began to go into that kind of a process where he began to back away.

I had maintained some lines into my own Local 887 with other people around the region and knew I wasn't going to have an easy time of running, but decided, after canvassing the region-- I spent some time in '61, a few trips into the region assessing where the support was and who else had support. There were, let's see, ~~##~~ about three or four candidates who began to appear: Ernie West, who was the assistant director under Bioletti out of McDonnell Douglas [Local] 148; Arnold Callan out of the Ford local <sup>560</sup> up north, who was the sub-regional director; Rex <sup>Maynard</sup> ~~Maynard~~, who was the old-style Reuther right-wing guy. I didn't expect <sup>mainly</sup> Maynard to get very far. Callan and West represented fairly important blocs of votes in the region. So the contest began to develop and a lot of things happened during that period.

But I think the crucial point where I was making my decision, I went to Reuther and said, "Look, I think I've got a chance in the region. It's going to be a tough race,

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and I want to leave here and go back to the region." We talked it over, and he said, "Well, look, why don't you take a leave of absence, and if you don't make it, you come back to my staff." And I said, "No, I think a clean break is really necessary. You have decided to be neutral in the campaign, officers like Mazey and [Richard] Gosser and [Norman] Matthews are not going to be neutral. They're going to have candidates. And I think that my best bet is not to maintain my ties this way with you, to just go out and run." So he argued against that. And I said, "No, I've made up my mind about that."

So I just quit the staff, took my severance pay, which became my campaign fund--part of it--and went back to work in the shop. I just cancelled my leave from North American Aviation [Inc.] and went back to work and worked a good deal of the time, although I took time off to go out and campaign as was necessary and took more and more time off without getting fired for absenteeism. So I built a campaign and got as many staff persons as I could to support me. There was some concern that I didn't have Reuther's endorsement, but I explained the situation, what was going on, that he was going to be neutral because he didn't want to have this conflict with the officers and that I would have no problem working with him since he'd offered the leave of absence if I was elected. So I was

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able to maintain support that way. I had good support from my own local. Jack Hurst, who had succeeded me as vice president, was in my camp along with a lot of the other people in the local. So I ran a campaign, got around the region enough. My most important bridge was to move into the auto locals because I came out of an aerospace local, and an aerospace worker had never been director of the region. Everyone in the past had been from an auto plant. And that tradition was something pretty difficult. But I think I had learned enough in being around negotiations in GM, Ford, and Chrysler, on Reuther's staff in Detroit, to push issues and to know enough to build some confidence. But it was still very difficult. It finally came down where Callan was the only candidate in the race.

CONNORS: Did Ernie West pull out?

SCHRADE: Yeah, he pulled out.

CONNORS: Did he support you?

SCHRADE: I'm not sure now.

CONNORS: We'll have to ask Ernie about that.

SCHRADE: Yeah. I'm going to have to check that out, too. <sup>my</sup> votes came from someplace. I think he did bring in Local 148. I'm not quite sure. I haven't looked at that breakdown in a long time. I should have. Maybe we can do that next session.

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CONNORS: Sure, yeah. We can always go back.

SCHRADE: And see what votes were. But anyway, we were counting the votes on the basis of how many hard-core votes-- If people were in a meeting with Reuther alone or with some of his people or had a group meeting with us, how many would hold the line against Walter's most persuasive arguments? Because he was always good at working out compromises, especially with a person who was his friend and ally like I had been. He was in a position where he could compromise you out of your situation. So we counted our votes. We had just about 59 percent of the votes where we felt the people could stand up to anything that Reuther threw in trying to work out a compromise. I think we had something like 65, 68 percent of the vote, anyway, but there's some we just wouldn't trust in a situation like that. And it appeared Callan was not able to move in on any of our votes, so we went into the convention pretty strong.

And exactly what I predicted happened. Reuther approached me and said, "We can't have a bloodbath in the region. The officers who are opposed to you are really upset." I said, "Look, the votes are there and I'm going to use them. Those votes are mine and I've earned them and people want me to do that, and I'm not going to double-cross my own people when we've got the votes." And he

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said, "Well, I don't think you should say it that way." I said, "That's exactly the way it would be, and that's the way they would feel, and they would be right." So then he had Bill [William] Beckham, who was on his staff and a friend of mine--I worked with him a lot with negotiations in the region and went through the strike together with him in '53 too--and Leonard Woodcock, and they tried to persuade me. They spent hours at it. I just wouldn't budge. So Woodcock finally threw up his hands and said, "Well, I think you'll make a good director." So at least the pressure seemed to be off at that point, but we never stopped organizing against that kind of pressure right on in.

So Woodcock said, "Well, what's going to happen to Callan?" I said, "He'll be out of the contest in a couple of days." I knew he was going to be out the next day, but I didn't want to predict that. Because his people were working on it to try to put the region together. We found out that Callan had a really bad drinking problem that his friends knew about, and so his whole campaign began to fall apart.

So I went into the convention in '62 and got another unanimous vote, which put me in a position of some independence from Walter's politics. It gave me a position on the board where I was his supporter but I could also

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challenge a number of situations, which actually did occur over a period of time. I felt very comfortable with that, and Reuther wasn't very concerned about that, because he liked independence and independent thinking and challenges because he knew he wasn't always right on things and wanted to be. So it worked out to be a very good relationship for a long time.

CONNORS: Well, I want to backtrack a little bit on this overall story segment here. But I think what I'll do first is flip this tape over. We're just about done on this side.



TAPE NUMBER: VI, SIDE TWO

NOVEMBER 28, 1989

CONNORS: I want to ask you something that I just brought up during our short break here, which was that it must have been very annoying and frustrating to have this attitude on Reuther's part that said, "I'll be neutral", but the upshot was that he wasn't neutral; he really wanted you to step back and to step away. Now, didn't you have any kind of rancor in your own attitude towards Reuther after that? Or did you say, "Well, this is how they play, so I can--"

SCHRADE: Yeah, of course I did. I'd worked hard for him on the staff, I'd moved the region around back in '49, our caucus<sup>^</sup> did, making it a Reuther-supporting region for the first time in its history. In the '53 convention I went out on a limb for him on the expulsion of the communists who were alleged to be so and all of these things. And you expect it. You expect, "Well, maybe this time. But in 1955, I had seen him undercut Jack Conway, who was his key administrative assistant, had really helped put the union together, had done great service during the period when he was injured and Jack stepped into the GM-Ford-Chrysler negotiations really designing strategy and working with the officers. Here was this guy who'd obviously done more for Reuther than anybody, certainly more than I had, and yet, when Jack wanted to become regional director in the

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Illinois and other states region, Region 4, Walter just backed off and wouldn't support him and wouldn't agree to it. So it put Jack in a very bad position. Jack finally pulled out. When Doug Fraser wanted to run on the west side of Detroit--Doug Fraser was on Walter's administrative staff when I was there too--~~and~~ Walter just backed off, and Doug was one of his really loyal supporters. So I knew this was the pattern of Reuther's politics. Generally, what he argued was, "Well, if I go out and my close loyal allies run for office, then the other officers see this as a Reuther power grab, and their position in the union is undermined." And there was some--

CONNORS: Yeah, I can see some reason to that.

SCHRADE: --validity to that, but that also means that-- this might sound like an ego trip--if you've got better people who can do these jobs than those who are going to be selected, why not? In building an organization, your image is not unknown in the world, and Fraser obviously was a better person, and he won. I was on the staff at the time. I became his campaign manager <sup>in</sup> ~~of~~ Solidarity [House]. I was raising a lot of money for him, because I knew that's what he needed and Reuther wasn't going to do anything like that. But if I went around coming from the same office, Reuther's office, we'd have some leverage in building a campaign for him. Conway, who had obviously

been a wonderful regional director and had the capacity to become president of the union, which is the only pathway to the presidency--regional director, vice president in a major department, and on to the presidency--Jack would have been a great successor to Reuther after Walter got killed, but Jack was in no position to be there. So we lose as a result of Reuther's policy of not supporting his friends.

CONNORS: Well, when did Conway leave? He went and he joined the Kennedy administration.

SCHRADE: Yeah, '61.

CONNORS: So he left in '61.

SCHRADE: Yeah. Yeah.

CONNORS: Did Walter try to stop that?

SCHRADE: He couldn't have. Jack had the strong feeling he needed the change, that here was a man whose presidency he could help shape, and he'd done enough for Reuther at that point, anyway--he'd been there <sup>from</sup> since 1946 until 1961--and just felt the need for that change. he was very attracted to-- He and Kenny O'Donnell were very close friends, and Kenny had a lot of respect for Jack because Jack did a lot of the work in the UAW to get Kennedy <sup>the</sup> ~~to~~ nomination and help win the presidency. So that was a good place for Jack Conway to go. It proved out to be that way, because he helped put together HUD [Department of Housing and Urban Development]. He was deputy to Robert Weaver, Housing <sup>Home</sup>

Finance Agency, and Jack helped put the strategy and the legislation together to make it a major department.

CONNORS: Well, let's just backtrack for a minute. When you came back to California, had the job you had before at North American been frozen or something when you went back to work? What was that? Was that an experimental--?

SCHRADE: No. It was senior expeditor, troubleshooter kind of job, which gave me a chance to roam around and do my politics, too, although my politics were more outside <sup>with</sup> the other locals at this point. But I did want to get reacquainted and let people know I was around.

CONNORS: Yeah, you'd been gone for--what?--seven years or something?

SCHRADE: Since '55, yeah. I left the local in '55. Six years.

CONNORS: Did you find much change in how the shop worked and what the union politics were, what labor relations were at North American?

SCHRADE: Yeah, labor relations were a lot easier. There was still a struggle on lots of issues and bargaining and grievances and so forth, but Jack Hurst was a good, steady kind of president. During that period he'd built a new local union hall, and we had a really wonderful headquarters which got an honor award from the AIA [American Institute of Architects]. And generally, it was

easier, because I had been part of the bargaining process both in the local but also through the fifties, as I was assistant director in the region, and then on the aerospace staff, and occasionally would come out and be involved in the bargaining out of Reuther's office. So it helped develop this relationship. So the company wasn't as difficult, particularly with me in there coming from the staff with an objective, and that's becoming regional director. So they didn't fuss with me too much.

CONNORS: Well, was Eugene D. Starkweather still around?

SCHRADE: Still there, yeah.

CONNORS: Still there. He was head of labor relations?

SCHRADE: Yeah. He had become vice president and was a major figure in the corporation as a result of this new relationship, too, and his prestige in the corporation developed because of that.

CONNORS: In the region and in the local, who could you consider allies and loyal supporters?

SCHRADE: Well, part of the old Reuther caucus<sup>u</sup> that we'd developed in the late forties, early fifties, people in my own local, certain staff members who were always very important politically.

CONNORS: Staff at regional office?

SCHRADE: Regional and national staff assigned to Los Angeles. And within locals where they might be split, I

had some friends and could go for part of the delegates out of that local. So we did a lot of strategy sessions, and the staff was very helpful on this because they'd kept in tune, and they were aware of Bioletti's problem and were very depressed because the region wasn't doing anything or going anyplace, and that wasn't what they wanted from the union. They wanted to be able to work and move and do things, and it wasn't possible with Bioletti not functioning very well, if at all.

CONNORS: Well, you had opposition, but did you have enemies, as such? People who really would do anything to see you undermined?

SCHRADE: Oh, yesh. Rex <sup>main</sup> ~~Maynard~~, for one, who was part of our early group, who felt that the anti-<sup>gk</sup> Communist cause was still paramount. He was one. I'm going to have to go back over the records to check out the names. Louie Ciccone, the old Trotskyite out at Local 216, a wonderful guy, but he was "you and all those Reuther people!"

CONNORS: What is 216? Where is it?

SCHRADE: It was the General Motors Southgate local, a very militant, strong local and Louie was one of the old-timers there. He finally came around. He said, "You're the best regional director we've ever had." I was the first regional director he ever voted for. [laughter] He was always in opposition. But that was because we were dealing

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with the farmworkers movement, we were organizing a lot of new members in the region who had a more militant position with the auto companies, the antiwar movement. So the old left began moving, because that's where some of my opposition was, because we'd been the Reuther group and suspect politically and so forth.

CONNORS: Well, this time Reuther doesn't really have any opposition nationally, either, does he? I mean, there would be probably people who would--

SCHRADE: Just token opposition. Very small.

CONNORS: Just take a stand?

SCHRADE: Yeah. And that's one of the problems.

CONNORS: And [John W.] Livingston is gone by this time.

SCHRADE: Gone, yeah.

CONNORS: [William] Kircher is gone.

SCHRADE: Kircher is gone.

CONNORS: I know Paul Russo is--

SCHRADE: He's around but--

CONNORS: He's in foundry division [Forge and Foundry Department, UAW], I think. He ends up there.

SCHRADE: A couple of the other opponents I had were Bill Goldman and John Allard. John had been a longtime activist and had run for director in the forties, part of the old left. Bill Goldman was his ally in Local 230, was on the staff of the union. And one of the good memories of

*Correct, full name of William Goldman*

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opposition sessions was my early meeting with Allard and Goldman at dinner one night, saying, "I know you're opposed to me, I know you've got good reason to be, but I want to see those reasons diminish. The way I see us putting this region together-- I said, "Because I think I'm going to win, and I want your support after the campaign. I don't want you to change your position. Do what you have to do in the campaign. <sup>\*\*</sup> But afterwards, let's get together. I see this as a coalition of the old left and the new left", which broke them up. They thought that was pretty funny. [laughter] They didn't see me in that role, then they changed their minds afterwards, because Bill became the first assistant director I ~~had~~ *appointed*

CONNORS: Well, did you see yourself as a new left force? The people you were allied with?

SCHRADE: Yeah, because in my days in Detroit in community activities I had been very active with the more left of the political candidates of the party, been very active in the sit-ins in the civil rights movement in Detroit, because they were developing at the department stores <sup>like J.C. Hudson's</sup> and [?] and so forth.

CONNORS: Well, let's talk about that for a minute. I didn't realize that you had been that active in the northern civil rights kind of scene.

SCHRADE: Yeah.

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CONNORS: This was Detroit. Was it NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People], or CORE [Congress of Radical Equality]?

SCHRADE: Yeah, NAACP, but also some of the people from ADA [Americans for Democratic Action], I was a member of that-- and the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union]. One of my functions at Solidarity House was hosting people who came in. The Swedes came in, who were much further left than the UAW and our friends and allies. They provided all the furniture and decorations for what's called the Scandinavian room in Solidarity House. Reuther was big into architecture and had wonderful taste and stuff. So I was aware of what the Swedish labor movement was doing in politics and economics. And Norman Thomas was in town at one point, and I'd never met him, had read his stuff, and invited him over for lunch at Solidarity House. Reuther sort of looked down his nose at that. Walter didn't like that kind of an association because of his public image. And I said, "This is a nice, sweet man, and socialism is--" He didn't attend the luncheon. So we did that. One other thing ~~he was~~ <sup>we were</sup> able to do was <sup>help</sup> Pete Seeger <sup>to</sup> ~~was~~ barred from using the Detroit Art Institute for a concert, and I joined with Ernie Mazay, who was Emil Mazey's brother--Ernie was head of the <sup>ACLU</sup> EIO--and we were able to ~~to~~ <sup>get</sup> a court order that Seeger could sing there.

Q. b. k. that?

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CONNORS: That he could sing there.

SCHRADE: Could ~~sing~~ there, yeah. And we were able to maintain the concert. But the civil rights movement began building up. I met [Ralph] Abernathy and [Martin Luther] King [Jr.], who came in to meet with Reuther <sup>in 1959</sup> a couple of times. I stayed in the room. I was supposed to bring them on in, but I sat in and took notes and listened in on this stuff and was very impressed by King at that point. So I got involved with the coalition in Detroit doing the sit-ins and demonstrations and stuff.

CONNORS: Okay. So getting back to our regional directorship, what was the the program whereby you would come in there and say, "Okay, we're going to change things here"? Obviously you wanted to change things there, because everybody, including yourself, thought that things had stagnated. Did you have a real program of action that you had to sell? What was the process?

SCHRADE: Well, selling it wasn't too <sup>hard.</sup> ~~bad~~. We carried on a lot of education meetings and discussions of where we were and what we had to do. I just didn't can a program and lay it out and say "this is what we're going to do", because people don't function very well that way and are not very supportive. So we began running a lot of education conferences and upgrading summer schools, doing good discussions at regional conferences and so forth to bring

the region together. One of our major programs was organizing new members. We were down to about 35<sup>000</sup> to 40,000 during that period, although the region had less members than that in the past. But there were real opportunities there. There was an upswing in the economy, we didn't have union shops at our major aerospace companies, and that became part of our program.

CONNORS: Is that where you were looking for new membership? Mainly in aerospace?

SCHRADE: No, new plants, already organized shops where we didn't have union shops, expanding the bargaining unit at North American Aviation, which we did do. We picked up four or five thousand new members that way, because the company over the years had eroded the bargaining unit by redefining jobs and taking people out of the unit. Neil Manning did the essential work along with the law firm George Arnold used to run. But Neil was a zealot on this, and he wouldn't give up a person and did a lot of the groundwork research for the lawyers. So we were able to expand the bargaining unit as well as win a union ship finally during the sixties.

CONNORS: When was that won? Do you remember?

SCHRADE: Let's see, we had the vote in '62 and lost it. We took the plunge and went for a two-thirds vote of the total bargaining unit and lost it just by two or three

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