

Interview Date: September 3, 2003

Subject: Joe McDermott, State Employee, Capital Region President, Two-term CSEA President.

In August 1997 and on September 3, 2003, CSEA conducted an interview with long-tenured officer and former CSEA president, Joe McDermott. McDermott began his career in 1957 as a clerk for the Department of Transportation. The interviews chronicle McDermott's journey through State service and his affiliation with CSEA, attaining his Region President position, and later becoming CSEA President. Throughout the course of the interview McDermott details his interactions with former CSEA Presidents William "Bill" McGowan, Ted Wenzl, and current President, Danny Donohue. The interview details the loss of the PS & T Unit and CSEA's subsequent affiliation with AFSCME, and his eventual run for the presidency of CSEA.

McDermott speaks of the internal restructuring that took place when McGowan became President. McDermott discusses the differences in CSEA membership from upstate to downstate as well as, state and local government representation. McDermott credits McGowan with changing the structural organization of CSEA. McDermott discusses the significant changes that occurred with the inception of the NYS Taylor Law and the recognition of CSEA as a collective bargaining agent.

McDermott talks about the evolution of CSEA and how he believes that it was the Taylor Law that was the creation of the real union movement for public employees of NYS. McDermott also acknowledges that these changes began a gradual peeling away of CSEA membership and a competition with other unions seeking to represent their members. McDermott highlights the emergence and growth of the local government divisions and local political subdivisions in the late 1960s and early 1970s. McDermott also discusses the necessary changes which allowed greater interaction between local government divisions and state membership and how they built camaraderie and cohesive policies.

McDermott discusses the end of Wenzl's tenure as president and the election of McGowan. McDermott credits McGowan for his problem-solving skills and his devotion to membership. McDermott talks about the importance of volunteerism and how it was a major part of CSEA's success. McDermott stresses the emergence of local leadership throughout the state and the critical role that they played in moving CSEA forward.

McDermott provides accounts of his efforts, at McGowan's request, to get rid of the contract with The Civil Service Leader, which was CSEA's media partner at the time. McDermott outlines the process by which CSEA successfully began the creation of its own newspaper, The Public Sector. McDermott credits The Public Sector with highlighting the mindset of unionism, selling the organization, and bringing CSEA into the spotlight. McDermott makes the point of how crucial The Public Sector was in centralizing, defining, and communicating CSEA's activism, policies, and political agenda. McDermott notes that one of the cornerstones of McGowan's administration was his adherence to safety and health issues which would later become McDermott's issues as well.

McDermott recalls the contentious nature of the PS & T decertification and how this led to CSEA's affiliation with AFSCME. McDermott highlights the raiding threat that CSEA faced by the Teamsters and by SEIU, both during and after the PS & T decertification. McDermott credits McGowan with realizing that an affiliation with AFSCME would ultimately prove to strengthen both AFSCME and CSEA. McDermott stresses the role that internal politics played both within AFSCME and CSEA and how it transpired during and after the affiliation process.

McDermott stresses the multitude of personalities from both CSEA and AFSCME, and how they sought to broker and consolidate leadership positions. McDermott speaks in-depth about the internal debate within CSEA as to whether the delegates or the board of directors runs CSEA, and how that ultimately led him to take McGowan to court.

In his second interview, McDermott reflects on the politics of the era and addresses CSEA's need for an organizing department to prevent the union from continuing to lose benefits through legislative action. McDermott touches upon how instrumental organizing became in wielding CSEA's influence and when combined with its affiliation with AFSCME, how it provided both organizations with extraordinary political clout. McDermott notes this political clout translated into legislative victories including preventing the IRS from taxing unused sick leave and vacation time. McDermott describes how instrumental CSEA was in defeating Ed Koch in the primary and electing Mario Cuomo Governor.

McDermott also notes the difficulties and challenges in the relationship between CSEA and Governor Cuomo during his tenure. McDermott discusses CSEA's instrumental endorsement of then Governor Bill Clinton and how that helped forge a long-term relationship

with the Clinton Administration, thereby providing CSEA direct access to policy and decision-makers at the national level.

Key Words:

Activists

Affiliation

AFL-CIO

American Federation of State and Country Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

Benefit Annual Fund

Board of Directors

Collective Bargaining

Condon-Wadlin Act

Constitution

Contract Negotiations

Council 82

CSEA

DC 37

Delegates

Democratic Party

Lady Garment Workers

Local Government Division

Membership

Political Action Division

Professional, Scientific and Technical Unit

SCIU

State Division

Strike

Taylor Law

The Civil Service Leader

The Public Sector

Key People:

Andy Stein

Barbara Fauser

Bea McCoy

Bill Hennessy

Bill Lucie

Bob Fitzsimmons

Bob Guild

Bob Latimer

Bruce Weingard

Danny Donohue

Dave Stach

Dick Cleary

Dorothy McTavish

Ed Koch

Irene Carr

Irving Flaumenbaum

Jack Rice

Jean McGowan

Jerry McEntee

Jerry Wurf

Jim Featherstonaugh

Jim Lennon

Jim Moore

Jim Roemer

Jimmy Gripper

Joe Feeley

John Francesco

John Lindsay

John Raymond
Lee Frank
Malcolm Wilson
Marge Caron
Mario Cuomo
Marvin Baxley
Mary Sullivan
Nelson A. Rockefeller
Rich Berstein
Ruth Sanderson
Sam Cirillo
Sol Bendet
Ted Wenzl
Tom McDonough
Tom Quimbly
Victor Costa
Victor Gotbaum
William "Bill" McGowan

CSEA HISTORY PROJECT

Extract of Video Interview with Joe McDermott

Interviewer: Let's begin at the beginning of your career in public service. You joined the union first day. Where did spirit come from?

McDermott: Not sure about union spirit per se, always a rebel, stuck up for the underdog. When I grew up, we were taught that unions were bad things. It's hard to define. My father was a union carpenter... mother worked in factories in capital district.

Member of Ladies garment workers.

Weren't the best thing in the world... dominated by leftists...

I came to work for NYS in 57, quit college, couldn't afford it, hired by Ruth Sanders, DOT.

Wanted me to take a job with canal division in Waterford. Had to turn it down. Anything else?

Job in office, reluctant to hire male.

Had taken typing, hired me as a clerk. Recruiter for CSEA -- this is our union. Dues were a dime every two weeks, they went up to a quarter, and there was a stink about that.

Everybody went through her office, she talked everybody in to joining.

That's how it grew.

Int.: Then it was primarily an association.

McD: it was not a union, interestingly, it represented almost every single state employee.

Difference explained. Everyone was eligible.

Int.: How did you get more involved.

McD: Interestingly, at first I didn't pay a lot of attention... too busy working. They had a newspaper... Civil Service leader... had lists of upcoming exams. We always looked to see what exams, to try to get promotions. I began learning by reading the weekly. Outside publisher. Used to read the column about the law... civil service. Became interested in how that affected everything. As I got promoted... was in the engineering field, out in the Adirondacks, got my ballot for the local... my name was on it. It was a lot different then.. how you got on the ballot. They put my name on the ballot... it was the first I heard about it.

I sent it back in and was elected.

Early 60's. After that, maybe two years, I went to main office of DOT -- on a promotion.

...decided to get involved in CSEA local to get to know the people.

Mainly women... generally middle-aged. President of the local -- John Raymond, very active statewide. .. Attempting to get nominated... that was in 67

Int: 67 important year...

McD: Yes.. Taylor law, headquarters on Elk Street... bad building... he became commissioner of DOT and head of the Democratic party.

Those years, even Malcolm Wilson was a CSEA member. No stigma. Changed with Taylor Law. Divided into bargaining units.

Int: The McDermott curve?

McD: No, not familiar with it... not mine. Good thing or bad thing?

Int: Talk about Taylor law....

McD: Before that they had a Wadlin act... collective begging. Talk about necessary things -- no recognized rights. Politicians in power... very effective... house union...kiss up to politicians. Still have to work with politicians. Truth -- Taylor law very good for public employees. Fights within... delegate meetings unbelievable free for all. Used to argue about every bill...probably biggest -- over the Taylor law. They opposed it... were afraid of it. In the long run, it was the creator of the real union movement...

What it did was divide us. (explains)

Security people.. people in uniform. They immediately opted for different representation.

council 82. First peeling away.

Int.: Didn't CSEA finally adopt it.

McD: Factions -- anti faction was led by a fellow who was Vice President... Name? They had 20,000 members in NYC -- had a lot of clout. He was dynamic.

A great number of factions fighting passage. When it passed, even then, the anti-faction was constantly raising objections to it.... all sorts of things to make it fail.

In my perspective, it was very important.

Int.: CSEA independent... dynamics.. two powerhouses...

McD: Not sure I understood NY mindset... different mindset. NYC always a hotbed ... left-leaning... clearly had a different mind set.

Great dynamic differences still.

Opposing Taylor Law was discussed by groups... always dialogue...with CSEA...some rub off...

Int.: One of stories... John Lindsay wasn't the strongest mayor... sanitation law ... created a restriction on striking, but gave collective bargaining rights.

McD: It was a compromise... in 1967 I was just learning what it was all about. Issue: can you strike or not strike... They did not want to allow strike. Lot of states allow it. Ultimate weapon. Not a smart thing to do. Compromise, yes. Story: public transit.. bus system... two different groups... one north and south, one east and west. One couldn't strike, the private sector could. Never knew if it was true. ... As I remember... constantly tried to get it amended. But not that way.

Int.: Growth, explosion after enactment.

McD: All I remember -- we kept getting more members.... concerted effort to grow membership. When I was president of local... agenda.. grow... membership from 1100 to close to almost 9 6 per cent of eligible... lot of growth in local government division. Nassau county... Westchester county joined then add to the membership.... other counties etc came in... saw that local gov't.. folks wanted representation. grew CSEA to great degree. ..

becoming more entangled in the greater size... because of growth... were looking at structure.

Elected officers statewide -- there was a time when they changed presidents every year... ... other names... Ted Wenzel in 67 when Taylor Law came in.

Debating structure.... changing election of officers to more regionalized A. Victor Costa -- chairman of committee -- in charge of reorganization. Reported meeting after meeting, until early 70's regionalization plan passed.

Int.: How regionalization came into existence.

McD: Delegates considered... over 3 years... a lot of us saw it as a way to force locals to interact. We couldn't operate without reportability....no direction... no leadership... staff wasn't large... negotiating contracts... no hands on the reins out there. Threats of strike... in the 60's... after Wenzel... state employees voted illegally to strike. Testing it... no organization... approaching 200,000. Concerned ... regionalize.. force locals to activate and interact. Example -- Cap Dist -- when we regionalized,... the only local group to come to a meeting was Rensselaer County. The state people had no concept of how local division interacted... goal -- act in concert...

Fought over for years, generally favored.

Int.: There was a move out to the region offices...

McD: They worked out of Albany or out of their homes... once in a while director would wander out in the field. People weren't getting the direction ... adhere to policies.. So, staff was placed in each region office.... same structure... six.... enumerates. Interesting and dynamic people.... a new crop of leadership came forward. Irving Flegenbaum... Nassau county... Sol and Irving had been elected to VP on statewide basis. The rest of the state... new leadership. Change in leadership changed format internally... lack of centralization.... names officers...

Concept of regionalization... Albany, no central figure. Cap. Dist. Conference... social. I set my goal to get elected of Capital region. Outcome -- Board of Directors -- policy... largest group

came from Cap. Dist. Organized region and Board to get them to work in concert. I had my hand in every decision.

Int.: First priorities as region president. Heady time in the early 70's. A lot of growth -- people said you were bursting with ideas.

McD: You tend to forget some of the issues. So many issues -- going back before region presidents -- delegate level -- full time paid president. Wenzel -- in 67 worked for Dept. of Ed, was a retiree. We didn't pay our officers, except for expenses -- great arguments -- full time? House union, lawyers ran it, talk about that later.

Ted Wenzel, kind of like part time... debated the idea of paid presidency. Argument with Tom McDonough was opposed to it. Went home a day early from a delegates meeting, fatal mistake -- we voted in favor of it. Equal to the highest paid state employee on payroll. Came home to a lot of rancor -- That's how... paid officers. In late 60's... dot was controlled by highway engineers... wasn't recognized bargaining agent. Met with management, commissioner... people went to them first. As an outcrop of that, Wenzel lived in Delmar, same as leader of engineers group. This fellow got to pick # of members -- to the chagrin of me and other local presidents... quite upset... new employee, part time basis -- friend of his... she knew nothing about problems.

First time I met pres of CSEA at 33 Elk St. began to explain my feelings.. he totally blew me off. While I got no satisfaction, it set me in a direction that affected all of CSEA -- determined to solve problem of how picked, and president not listening to problems. I determined I would fix mechanism of how to pick negotiating team. Organizing state division -- change constitution of how to pick team -- required regions to have a say. Still in effect. Peer selection. Big issue. Argued about every law in the hopper, wanted to debate constantly -- favorite was to amend constitution. Writing half the changes... took a lot of time and effort -- got it reduced in size and addressed the issues of structure and organization. No rules, no agenda, basically put in place through my efforts. Fingers in pie -- hands in up to my elbows.

Int.: Part of your effectiveness was in rallying your troops.

McD: Absolutely -- I couldn't do it personally -- I organized -- nickel and dime person -- go and deal with leadership at each level, local or board members --- terrible amount of clout -- nothing without capital region -- people would pay attention to it. I was more forward thinking about us being an organization.... do things... better managed... and a lot of things wouldn't have happened the way they happened. Management talked to me about changing structure... I would round up the votes. Or raise the issue... local noise.... very effective that way. It helped me rise within the organization. Education programs... on our own.. early days, more volunteerism -- people are very busy. Most families two or 3 income, work more than one job -- less time. Then, people had more time -- more involved. An hour a year concept. No, everybody expects a few people to do it all. Now... Reward. Staff becomes more important... back in the early days.. volunteers did everything. Nowadays, staff has expertise in just about everything. Needed to grow education dept. -- story about adding staff. How departments started.

Using clout ...

SECOND VHS TAPE:

Int.: What happened with Ted Wenzel's tenure as president of CSEA.

McD: He kept getting reelected.... attempts to unseat him... The workings were controlled by Jack Rice -- partner in prominent law firm... keep the account under control -- he did everything. Had office next to president... connecting door... a lot of dissent by then... no centralization. Began to usurp that.. we had no leadership. Wenzel got mad at Jack -- locked him out... to a great degree, we didn't want to see them gone -- leadership in general. Discussion of upstate vs. downstate philosophies... regions, votes, dissent... in this instance, not far apart. Rice very effective, connections... we didn't want to see that disappear... Wenzel adamant. Secret meeting in Syracuse, he showed up, ... hell to pay. Adamant -- looked at compromises... lawyers worked at HQ. Two were Roemer and Featherstonehaugh. others ... four... looking for

compromises... decided to form their own... lobbied the board... the board voted to support change.. people who knew CSEA -- closer working relationship with that level. We supported change. Knew they thought the same way we thought. We would not be left in the lurch. Led to his own ouster. Wenzel ousted Rice, we ousted him. That's the way he went out the door. Remembrance of Wenzel confronting him. Was very happy to see him go. Lots of accusations... recounted it so many times they couldn't get an accurate vote... cards with punch holes --- pres, board, regions, all on one ballot... every time you shook them, more would fall out. Bill McGowan very union-oriented person -- thrilled .. staunch unionist. Ted was far seeing in a lot of ways. Remembrance of meetings... HMO's... Ted was involved in CHP -- he saw this years before anybody... thing of the future. Hell of a mind... not union-minded.

McGowan election thrilling... drove halfway, sworn in by a president -- I swore him in... he was already sworn in.

Int.: Was Bill the western region president?

McD: Yes -- maybe the election before that -- executive vice president. McDonough -- remembrance... car accident.. disabled... ran and lost...Bill moved up... exec. v.p.... when he ran for pres.... in and out time frame. Lists original region presidents. When McGowan moved up, Lattimer moved up. Other names, the stable base of reelected. Quick story about reelected. Danny Donohue became president of Region 1. Couldn't run unopposed, I had to find opposition. Story of finding and funding an opponent. Danny and Joe running unopposed. Silly rule...

repeats driving and swearing in McGowan...

Soon after that, we were at Mental Hygiene -- McGowan and I walking outside... what do you want me to do... you get rid of Civil Service Leader. Problems.. subsidiary outside organization... lucky if we got four pages...we were spending over a million dollars a year.. no control... editorial policy... photographer would flash his newspaperman's camera and he had no film in the camera.. The cost.. issue... politics involved in... Andy Stein was very active in NYC politics -- son of owner of law Review and paper that published the Leader. They put articles in -- so much non-CSEA stuff. No control. The effort... people afraid of change... board...afraid.... split on the issue... friction between downstate and paper owner.. watched over... stories... pix in paper... a lot of NYC and LI stories... easier, no staff upstate... news local NYC.. Wanted to see county news, etc.... how to accomplish this job... courted constantly by Leader. Attempted for 2 years -- McGowan on fence... ultimately -- board member from Audit & Control -- told me about company doing print work was non-union. Final nail -- groundswell -- denied -- McGowan went through the roof -- Board voted Leader out -- lot of rancor -- unsure of success. Got Public Sector started, beautiful., became centerpiece... whole thing was CSEA. No piecemeal... complaints - told the story of CSEA... one of best.... it's a union, it's not civil service anymore, and this is the union newspaper. Changed a lot... color...more modern... most very happy.

Int.: There had to be a lot of behind the scenes activity to have a newspaper ready to be up and running.

McD: That's true. I couldn't tell you... we were very lucky in that regard.. far seeing staff people... got my picture in there... clout... details.. decided we wanted a staff person in each region.. that reported right to the director... editor separate from pr dept.... editorial control... committee was not put in place in the beginning. Membership oversight.. worked very well... paper says the message it ought to... right staff people .. clearly were problems.... company, union issue, who, where printing. Lot of changes.. computerization process -- the whole process has evolved, videotapes, computers, word processing -- different when we started. Now, it's inside to a great degree.

Int.: Public Sector define an identity for CSEA?

McD: The Civil Service leader was like an institution and there was a lot of fear for change. But

the institution wasn't the union. You can't sell your union with a different concept...

Benchmarks -- Taylor Law, organization, leadership, Public Sector important milestone -- redefined -- new tone -- selling the organization and yes, it was a defining moment.

Int.: Some examples where Public Sector helped move the membership .. helped CSEA advance its agenda.

McD: When it comes to lobbying the legislature, getting the word out is difficult. You have to have a centralized, defined policy statement. (interruption) Getting executive dept to change direction -- very important... you can't have leadership say, get your members to do this. Explain the thing... singularly. Sell a direction... state policy -- best handled by the Public Sector. If they see it and care... leadership can say you read it -- read it and talk to your legislators.. make phone call... leadership defined it.. make the right. That's terribly important.

Int.: One of CSEA's most important victories, and the Public Sector had a hand in it, was the enactment of the PESH Act. A good example.. educating membership.

McD: That was one of the cornerstones of Bill McGowan's administration. Top of the agenda -- the way that got passed --a constantly pointing out what was wrong. Built up crescendo of hazards in the workplace.. they in turn made the right kind of lobbying efforts. Kind of thing... issue of Fed. gov't.. make us lose free sick leave and vacation -- they were going to tax it. CSEA and AFSCME -- caused such an uproar, picked up every group got on the bandwagon and this paper made that a reality.

Int.: Explains the notes printed in the Sector.

McD: I think people underrate the ability to mass lobbying. If the issue is right, you can do mass lobbying. The ability to get into the sight of your members. The only vehicle... on a consistent basis.. says the same thing -- our newspaper.

You have to be careful not to overdo it... important to pick your big issues that way.

Int. Another thing effective -- used it to go out to every elected official.. same info and approach.

McD: That's a good point. People don't realize the comp list... long list of local officials.

We all remember the terrible tragedy that happened in Schuyler county -- four members murdered on the job. 3 were local activists. My thought was not only a safety issue... but we need to sell the idea to local officials that this is a concern of their employees but their concern... not to get strident... but about the need to fix things at low cost without a lot of turbulence. Pointed out good things local gov't.. was doing -- this got other groups to be willing -- we weren't picking on them -- I'll go along and fix things. As they fixed the problems... big outcome from a devastation. That's the way the Sector helps the issue -- it's a tool to talk to bosses and management -- not just the bad but the good.

Int.: Let's talk about one of the other major events in CSEA history. Scientific and technical split off - PEF. How?

McD: Go back to when the Taylor Law was enacted -- PERB divided the state into a number of bargaining units. CSEA had a very active group of volunteers in PS&T bargaining unit. Reps, officers, very well represented. A lot of call for more of their issues addressed in negotiations. Prominence. ... dissent from members in PS&T about agreement with across the board raises. Disparity grew, CSEA insisted on a coalition basis. ...had to be some organization. ..attention to concerns...disenfranchised on salary issue. No protection -- house of labor... SEIU was always attempting to stir up dissent....ASFSCME challenged CSEA... broke them financially... they picked up the security unit.. but they were financially broken. The true history... I don't know... there was attempt on the part of Governor Rockefeller... if you were on the ball you were getting a promotion.. from grade 3 to grade 23 ... share of our retirement costs. State employees felt pretty good about Rockefeller. People in his administration thought CSEA was too big. Clout in the legislature. Afraid. cabal... dept of labor.. wanted CSEA reined in. ... 3 challenges in a row... some things we did wrong. better attention to negotiations. ..Biggest complaint that lost... weren't representing them. They were over-represented. Resentment high between institutional.

Losing PS&T best thing? No reason to lose it. Close election. Retrospect, they weren't any better off. Still pattern bargaining. We were still the big dog. We set the pattern. You make the deal that other units can't do better. Lattimer and I stayed on ... DOT was abolishing a whole title series... created a title for me... to stay in the bargaining unit.

Int.: Loss of PS&T unit allowed for affiliating AFSCME.

McD: Created a lot of changes... leaders in activism...I moved up the ladder, not just the affiliation.

Int.: AFSCME had some history with CSEA --

McD: ..and not all good, either.

Int.: Right. What happened that brought AFSCME into the scene.

McD: Even in Wenzel's years, there was talk of AFL-CIO affiliation. It never came to votes.. he took a trip to California -- other states. Major talks of AFL-CIO -- they wouldn't allow us as an entity. Other groups didn't want another large public employee group. We kept having these challenges. ... When the decision was finalized that we lost PS&T, tremendous uproar -- loss of 50,000 members -- how would we survive. Lost income, activism, leadership. Locals survive? There was talk about other unions, Teamsters, others, coming after us...McGowan immediately saw problem as major -- haphazardness and lack of leadership -- secretly he set up a meeting with Gerry Worth -- made a phone call -- want to come down and talk to you. Roemer and Featherstonehaugh made the trip with him -- we would like to affiliate with an international union as protection against raiding. What AFSCME would be willing to offer. High level staff members in the meeting.. they cut a deal on a workable agreement. Needed to do something like this -- promise from Worth -- case could be made to the board -- during the decertification attempt -- but Worth was on such bad terms with AFL-CIO to agree if it was a policy. It wasn't true. McGowan came back...I was region president... I was the first one to find out... told me about the meeting... wanted to affiliate for protection... I was in favor of it... do my best to cement the votes. Then he told the other folks... unscheduled board meeting.. locked door, ...after hours and hours, we decided to affiliate with AFSCME.

Int.: CSEA played a role when Worth died and Gerald McAntee. What was that all about?

McD: I believe it was the 79 CSEA convention at the Concord -- we had been affiliated then -- Victor Gotbaum had ambitions to run against Gerry Worth. With CSEA backing, he could broker the convention against Worth with CSEA support plus DC37 -- that this block could ramrod enough votes. Private meeting -- last minute -- Bob Lattimer insisted that I would have his proxy vote. We had never allowed that -- said, sure. Gotbaum attempted to sell us on this idea, and Irving was in favor... tried to convince us. Irene Carr abstained... split evenly, when I threw Lattimer's no vote in. Jump ahead.. after Worth died. I had gotten to know McAntee invited him to the Friar Tuck Cuomo was Lieut. Gov., Wanted to run against Koch. ... My idea was to back Cuomo. CSEA never been embroiled in a major way, invited Mario to Region 4 as keynote speaker, also invited McAntee to be keynote speaker! McGowan, Roemer & Featherstonehaugh were in a meeting with Gotbaum the night Worth died. Gotbaum wasn't interested in the same direction as I. McAntee called me about Worth's death, kept it quiet. I had the inside track for both. Special meeting, McGowan and I got along well... I had gotten elected as International VP, and we agreed to never split our vote.... I could not vote for Victor... McAntee knew I wanted him... all were counting on us... meeting with each with officers of CSEA... split... I was the holdout... some other officers... said... you two know them better... quandary about how to vote. AFSCME board, Victor, Bill and I were missing. Walked into the room, Victor withdrew. Big commotion... Lucy didn't win because CSEA had such a large vote. McAntee pulled the election out. ...

Int.: In the mid 80's there was a split between you and McGowan... culminating with your election. What was the genesis.

McD: He had run for election in the early 80's and it got challenged. We had to run the election

over again. We had had a discussion. He said he would not run for re-election.... He decided that he be on the ballot for the special election -- he apologized. You have to finish your term. He agreed. He moved back to Buffalo, and essentially, I was in charge. ... Skeletons in the closet. He agreed to come in a couple a days a week.

He had appointed a new administrative assistant -- Bob Guile decided that he was going to run CSEA when Bill was away. Difference of opinion.

Budgets were always late, this year, 1985, November.. Dave Stack, our comptroller put our heads together... on what was in and what was out. What Bill wanted, usually, Bill put it off -- Dave and I had to do it on our own.... We had a meeting in NYC, ironed out the last details. One item was... reorganizing the staff. I saw a beautiful plan... how to reorganize... it was a little to book, pared it down, gave it to Dave. We were getting ready to go to Honolulu... Jimmy Moore.. would give him a copy. Moore called me up, wanted to know what was in. I didn't usually share ahead of time. He wheedled a copy out of me, and unbeknownst to me -- he contacted McGowan about the reorganizational change. Bill was upset.... I had provided a copy to another officer before him. Started major war -- ran through 1986 and 1987 .. we were at loggerheads... he didn't trust me any more... mostly.. we wanted to fire the director of organizing. ...so much friction... zero funded... fell on me... turned into a real two way disagreement. The piece de resistance was caused by Jim Featherstonehaugh... the attorneys knew we had this agreement about him retiring... Jim discussed with NYS appointment to some board without Bill's knowledge... Bill viewed this as an attempt to push him out -- I had no hand in the thing. Bill saw it as a cabal and went ballistic. Wanted to fire the Attorneys, bring the legal business in house, as a way of shaking loose control. Major point of friction. ... Featherstonehaugh was an excellent lobbyist...I thought we were losing potential clout and actual clout... Turned into a major faction fight.

Int: Into that mix comes you as Exec VP controlled the board.... controversy...

McD: The argument still exists. Under the not-for-profit law, the Board has the say on policy... even with the president. It's not the way we operate. but the way the law reads. I tried not to be the bad guy on everything, but the fight over the lawyers caused so much friction that set the tone. He made a mistake in the process... won some battles -- I got my licks in, too. Example.. the treasurer retired, and Bill was going to appoint the treasurer. The constitution said the Board will fill the vacancy. He wouldn't be able to put somebody in over my objections. .. He appointed somebody, and had the delegates rubber stamp his appointment. ... I took him to court.... I got the treasurer thrown out and got the board to appoint the person I wanted. Mary Sullivan. He took all my responsibilities away from me. I had nothing better to do than campaign for the presidency. Spent a year and a half campaigning all over NY. In 1988, I stood for election against Jimmy Moore... I beat him by a very large margin.

Int.: Even though McGowan changes the law firm, wins court cases,... he decides to step aside.

McD: He was tired. in office ten plus years. It wears you out.... He was planning it all along.... I had done his work for him... most of those years he was in favor of my moving ahead. Most people thought I would try to put it all back, and I was personal friends with Roemer and Featherstonehaugh... we didn't want the lawyers running the organization. McGowan hired Marge Coureau -- worked in house, resigned as a partner and she was fairly well-liked, and Bill hired her as General Counsel. We kept her on for a time, then I had to let her go.

OVER THE SHOULDER SHOTS OF MCDERMOTT'S CLIPPINGS. VARIOUS ZOOMS AND PANS, TURNING OF PAGES.

JOE AT COMPUTER SCREEN OF PUBLIC SECTOR, ROGER EXPLAINING AND DEMONSTRATING.